

Board of Education Policy

PARENT AND FAMILY ENGAGEMENT POLICY

The Board of Education believes that positive parental involvement is essential to student achievement, and thus encourages such involvement in school educational planning and operations. Parental involvement may take place either in the classroom or during extra-curricular activities. However, the Board also encourages parental involvement at home (e.g., planned home reading time, informal learning activities, and/or homework "contracts" between parents and children). The Board of Education directs the Superintendent of Schools to develop a home-school communications program in an effort to encourage all forms of parent and family engagement.

Title I Parental Involvement - District Level Policy

Consistent with the parent involvement goals of Title I, Part A of the federal No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB) and its reauthorization in the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), the Board of Education will develop and implement programs, activities and procedures that encourage and support the participation of parents of students eligible for Title I services in all aspects of their child's education. The Board also will ensure that all of its schools receiving Title I, Part A funds develop and implement school level parental involvement procedures, as further required by federal law.

For purposes of this policy, parental involvement refers to the participation of parents in regular, two-way, and meaningful communication involving student academic learning and other school activities. At a minimum, parent engagement programs, activities and procedures at both the district and individual school level must ensure that parents:

- Play an integral role in assisting their child's learning;
- Are encouraged to be actively involved in their child's education at school; and
- Are full partners in their child's education and are included, as appropriate, in decision-making and on advisory committees to assist in the education of their child.

The federal definition of the term "parents" refers to a natural parent, legal guardian or other person standing in *loco parentis* (such as a grandparent or stepparent with whom the child lives, or a person who is legally responsible for the child's welfare).

District and school level Title I parent engagement programs, activities and procedures will provide full opportunities for the participation of parents and family members (including those who have limited English proficiency, parents and family members with disabilities, and parents and family members of migratory children).

As further required by federal law, parents of students eligible for Title I services will be provided an opportunity to participate in the development of the district's Title I plan, and to submit comments regarding any aspect of the plan that is not satisfactory to them. Their comments will be forwarded with the plan to the State Education Department.

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Parents also will participate in the process for developing either a comprehensive or targeted “support and improvement” plan when the school their child attends is identified by the State as needing this plan.

Parent participation in development of district wide Title I plan

The Board, along with its Superintendent of Schools and other appropriate District staff will undertake the following actions to ensure parent and family member involvement in the development of the District wide Title I plan:

Conduct daytime and evening meetings in various locations throughout the District as determined and deemed necessary in response to occasional parent surveys.

Development of school level parental involvement approaches

The Superintendent of Schools will ensure that all District schools receiving federal financial assistance under Title I, Part A are provided coordination, technical assistance and all other support necessary to assist them in planning and implementing effective parent and family engagement programs and activities that improve student achievement and school performance. As appropriate to meet individual local needs, the Superintendent will:

Conduct daytime and evening meetings in various locations throughout the District as determined and deemed necessary in response to occasional parent surveys.

Building capacity for parental involvement

To build parent capacity for strong parental involvement to improve their child’s academic achievement, the District and its Title I, Part A schools will, at a minimum:

1. Assist parents in understanding such topics as the state’s academic content and challenging academic standards, state and local academic assessments, Title I requirements, how to monitor their child’s progress and how to work with educators to improve the achievement of their child. To achieve this objective, the District and its Title I schools will:

Conduct parent workshops, conferences, and distribute materials as appropriate. The District may also provide training to parents to help other parents understand the role they can play in helping their child.

2. Provide materials and training to help parents work to improve their child’s academic achievement such as literacy training and using technology (including education about the harms of copyright piracy). To achieve this objective, the District and its Title I schools will:

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Sponsor literacy programs and activities that bond families around reading and utilize the public library; provide information about the essential components of reading or math instruction to enable parents to support the instructional practices used by the teacher; train parents in the use of the Internet to enable them to access their children's homework; communicate with teachers; and review information posted about schools in improvement, supplemental educational services, public school choice, and other opportunities to promote student achievement.

3. Educate its teachers, specialized instructional support personnel, principals and other school leaders, and other staff with the assistance of parents, in understanding the value and utility of a parent's contributions and on how to:
 - reach out to, communicate with, and work with parents as equal partners;
 - implement and coordinate parent programs; and
 - build ties between parents and the schools.

To achieve this objective, the District and its Title I schools will:

Involve and include parents in developing training for parents in the District that is focused on communication with District and building personnel, coordination of parent programs, and other ways to create a positive home-school connection in order to improve the effectiveness of the training.

4. Ensure that information related to school and parent-related programs, meetings and other activities is sent to the parents of children participating in Title I programs in an understandable and uniform format, including alternative formats, upon request, and to the extent practicable, in a language the parents can understand.

Coordination of parental involvement strategies

The District will coordinate and integrate strategies adopted to comply with Title I, Part A parental involvement requirements with parental involvement strategies adopted in connection with other Federal, State, and local programs, including public preschool programs, It will do this by:

Establishing relationships and facilitating meetings between parents and local agencies including but not limited to Head Start, Reading First, Early Reading First, Even Start, Parents as Teachers, Home Instruction Program for Preschool Youngsters, and State-operated preschool programs. Parent surveys and follow-up communication will help to guide articulation needs and provide data to plan for parent workshops and meetings. Parent-Teacher Conferences are also scheduled three times during the school year to give parents the opportunity to discuss and to get information pertaining to their child's academic progress for grades kindergarten through five and once yearly in grades six through twelve. The middle school incorporates a team scheduling model allowing for daily meetings with

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the grade six teaching team. Progress reports and reports cards are available three times yearly in grades Kindergarten through five and four times yearly in grades 6-8. Parents have daily access to grades and attendance via the student management system Parent Portal. Parent representatives serve as voting members on the Board of Education. The Parent Teacher Organization also facilitates opportunities for parental involvement. Other activities that promote parent involvement include, but are not limited to, parent and student after school and evening events including but not limited to, “Prime Time,” “Spring into Reading,” Parents As Reading Partners (PARP), International Café, Science Fairs, Arts Shows, Award ceremonies, Moving-up ceremonies and graduations, displays of students’ artwork in the District Central Office, student recognition and Board of Education meetings.

Review of district wide parent and family engagement policy

The Board, along with its Superintendent of Schools and other appropriate staff, will conduct, with the meaningful involvement of parents and family members, an annual evaluation of the content and effectiveness of this parent and family engagement policy in improving the academic quality of Title I schools, including the identification of barriers to greater participation by parents in activities under this policy, and the revision of parent and family engagement policies necessary for more effective involvement. To facilitate this review, the district will conduct the following activities:

Parent Involvement Policy 1900 shall be evaluated for both its effectiveness and efficacy on a regular basis, but no less than once during each school year. Parents will be invited to a Title I review meeting each spring which will also include volunteer instructional staff, and administrators. The topics of discussion will include the following: a clear explanation of the purpose of each title funding program; the amount of funds received for each program and how they are allocated; the level of parent involvement in school-wide activities; and parent involvement requirements as described in the NCLB legislation. After the discussion, parents and all stakeholders will be given an opportunity to review, plan, and help improve our Title I programs for the upcoming school year. The meeting will end with a question and answer session. All concerns and suggestions conveyed by parents will be recorded and addressed in a timely fashion. The literature that will be distributed during this meeting will include: a summary of parental involvement activities; Title funding allocations; and a description of current Title I programs and services. Lastly, all stakeholders will be able to provide input in the development of the Title I Plan for the upcoming school-year. Translation of the policy is available upon request.

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Ref: 20 USC §6318(a)(2), No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (§1118 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act)
U.S. Department of Education, Parental Involvement, Title I, Part A, Non-Regulatory Guidance, April 23, 2004

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