

IGBL: Family Engagement and Empowerment

Policy

In support of strengthening student academic achievement, the District receives Title I, Part A funds and therefore must jointly develop with, agree on with, and distribute to parents and family members of participating children a written parent and family engagement policy that contains information required by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). This policy:

- Establishes the District's expectations and objectives for meaningful parent and family engagement
- Describes how the District will implement several specific parent and family engagement activities
- Aligns with the District's plan submitted to the Ohio Department of Education

Core Values

The District is committed to the authentic engagement of families/parents and community partners that reflects the following core values:

- All parents have dreams for their children and want the best for them.
- All parents can support their children's learning.
- Parents and school staff should be equal partners in the education of children.
- The primary responsibility for building partnerships between home and school rests mainly with school leaders and staff.
- Our community partners and stakeholders are valuable contributors to the education of our students in preparing them to compete in the 21st Century Global Economy and are critical to the success of The Cleveland Plan and the continued vitality of the region.

Vision

Every school will welcome every family and student (regardless of race, ethnicity, religious or sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, linguistic differences, or family structure), community agencies and volunteers, actively engaging them as partners in student learning and school improvement

The District agrees to implement the following requirements:

- The school district operates programs, activities, and procedures for the engagement of parents and family members in all its schools with Title I, Part A programs. These programs, activities, and procedures will be planned and operated with meaningful consultation with parents and family members of participating children.
- The District works with schools to ensure that the required school-level parent and family engagement policies, including a school-parent compact, align with the Every Student Succeeds Act requirements.
- The District and schools provide full opportunities for the participation of parents, including parents with limited English proficiency, with limited literacy, with disabilities, of migratory children, who are economically disadvantaged, or of any racial or ethnic minority background. The District provides parents with all required information and school reports in an

understandable and uniform format, including alternate formats upon request. The District also provides these reports in a language parents understand to the extent possible.

- If the plan for Title I, Part A, is not satisfactory to the parents of participating children, the District includes any parent comments when submitting it to the Ohio Department of Education.
- The District and schools use the following definition of parent and family engagement in programs, activities, and procedures:
 - Parent and family engagement means the participation of parents in regular, two-way, and meaningful communication involving student academic learning and other school activities, including ensuring:
 - Parents play an integral role in assisting their child's learning
 - Parents are encouraged to be actively engaged in their child's education at school
 - Parents are full partners in their child's education and are included, as appropriate, in decision-making and on advisory committees to assist in their child's education
 - Other activities are carried out, such as those described in Section 1116 of the ESSA

Joint Development of Plan

The District engages parents and family members in developing its plan, including:

- Reviewing District and school policies and the Academic Achievement Plans each school year and revising them based on input and feedback from parents
- Identifying evidence-based family engagement strategies for each priority in the Academic Achievement Plans to create strong family/school partnerships.
- Reviewing resources to develop these policies and plans, including individual school meetings, completed workshop evaluations, annual parent survey results, District parent meetings, workshop discussions, and parent-teacher conferences
- Posting this policy and all school policies on the District and school websites and welcoming parent comments and suggestions
- Revising this policy continuously to include relevant ideas and best practices.

This policy is a working document subject to review and revision.

Technical Assistance

The District provides coordination, technical assistance, and other support necessary to assist and build the capacity of all schools in planning and implementing effective parent and family engagement activities to improve student academic achievement and school performance. These supports may include meaningful consultation and collaboration with community-based organizations, business leaders, philanthropic organizations, faith-based leaders, or individuals with expertise in effectively engaging parents and family members in education.

District staff, including the Executive Director of Family and Community Engagement, provide guidance and support on the appropriate use of parent and family engagement funds and review school parent and

family engagement policies, Academic Achievement Plans, and School-Parent Compacts to ensure compliance and best practices for building effective school, family, and community partnerships.

Annual Evaluation

The District conducts, with the meaningful engagement of parents and family members, an annual evaluation of the content and effectiveness of this policy in improving the academic quality of its schools.

The evaluation identifies barriers to greater participation by parents in activities, with particular attention to parents who are economically disadvantaged, are disabled, have limited English proficiency, have limited literacy, or are of any racial or ethnic minority background. In addition, the evaluation identifies the barriers and needs of parents and family members to assist with the learning of their children, including engaging with school personnel and teachers and strategies to support successful school and family interactions.

The District designs evidence-based strategies and revises, if necessary, its parent and family engagement policies based on the evaluation findings.

The District annually surveys parents to determine whether parent engagement needs are being met effectively and appropriately through parent and family engagement programs. The District provides the surveys via phone, paper copy, or electronically. The District uses survey results to develop strategies for school improvement, revise the District and school parent and family engagement policies, and plan future parent workshops and meetings. Evaluation areas include academics and school leadership, parent and family engagement activities and programs, and school climate.

Reservation of Funds

The District engages parents and family members of children in decisions about how the percentage of Title I, Part A funds reserved for parent and family engagement is spent and ensures that no less than 90 percent of the 1 percent reserved goes directly to Title I schools.

During the Annual Title I meeting, each school shares the parent and family engagement activities budget and recruits parents to serve on the Parent Advisory Committees or School Parent Organization. Parents from the Parent Advisory Committee or School Parent Organization serve on family engagement committees and help develop Title I action plans for programs and activities utilizing Title I funds. The FACE Network Partner, principal, and a parent must sign the Title I action plan.

Coordination of Services

The District coordinates and integrates parent and family engagement strategies, to the extent feasible and appropriate, with other relevant Federal, State, and local laws and programs. These programs include Head Start, Council for Economic Opportunities in Greater Cleveland, Cuyahoga County Universal PreK programs, and the Ohio Department of Education Early Childhood Expansion. The District facilitates a smooth transition for parents and students from these programs to the District by working collaboratively with these outside agencies and hosting an annual event to welcome these families.

Building Capacity of Parents and Staff

The District builds parent and family capacity for strong engagement by providing materials and training on such topics as:

- Literacy development
- Social-emotional learning
- The importance of attendance
- Science Technology Engineering and Math (STEM)
- The instructional core
- Career and college readiness
- Using technology

The District annually surveys parents and families to determine topics for workshops and other offerings to include in the Parent University programs offered by the District and in schools.

The District also assists parents in understanding the following topics:

- The challenging State academic standards
- The State and local academic assessments, including alternate assessments
- The requirements of Title I, Part A
- How to monitor their child's progress
- How to work with educators to create strong family, school, and community partnerships.
- Volunteerism
- Parent leadership and advocacy
- 3rd Grade Reading Guarantee
- High School Graduation Requirements
- Social-Emotional Learning
- Attendance

Schools offer programs, workshops, and events linked to their academic achievement plans' strategic priorities. Schools that have space develop family resource centers with resources and materials to build their capacity to support student learning and social-emotional development. Schools host workshops to familiarize parents and families with online tools to assist with career and college planning, test preparation, and gain familiarity with computer-based programs used to support the instructional core. Schools create resource areas, bulletin boards, or post information about resources available in the community, school programs and events, and Parent University offerings. Schools provide tips and ideas to parents on helping their children with core content subject areas.

The District provides workshops and training opportunities to principals, teachers, and other staff to deepen their understanding of:

- How parent and family engagement contribute to school improvement
- The value and importance of family engagement
- How to reach out to, communicate with, and partner with parents and families of diverse backgrounds and cultures

- How to implement and coordinate parent and family programs to build strong partnerships between families and schools

The District and schools use the following methods to communicate with parents and families

- Social Media
- Electronic newsletters (e-communicator and The Cleveland Plan News) and school newsletters (electronic and paper)
- Report cards, interim progress reports, and graded classroom work, projects, and exams
- Online grade books
- Parent/Teacher Conferences scheduled at times convenient for families
- Communication apps – Class Dojo, Remind, CMSD app, etc.
- Phone calls and recorded IVR messages
- Text messages and email
- Paper and online flyers
- Home visits
- Virtual meetings and webinars
- District and school websites

For parents and families to participate in parent and family engagement programs, workshops, and events, the District:

- Pays reasonable and necessary expenses associated with parent and family engagement activities, including transportation and childcare costs, to enable parents to participate
- Trains parents to enhance the engagement of other parents
- Maximizes parent/family engagement and participation in their children's education by arranging school meetings at a variety of times
- Conducts phone and/or virtual conferences between teachers or other educators who work directly with participating children for parents who are unable to attend those conferences at school
- Adopts evidence-based strategies to improve parent and family engagement, such as Parent Cafes, Student-led conferencing, Grade level consultancies, and Parent/Teacher data teams
- Establishes a District Parent Advisory Committee to provide advice on all matters related to parent and family engagement in Title I, Part A programs
- Develops appropriate roles for community-based organizations, businesses, faith-based organizations, and others in parental and family engagement activities

History

- Adopted: June 28, 2018