

Montgomery Public Schools Parent and Family Engagement Policy 2017-2018

Parent and Family Engagement Written Policy (Sec. 1116 (2))

Sec. 1116(a)(2)(A))

A. Describe how the Local Education will involve parents and family members in jointly developing the local educational agency plan under section 1112, and the development of support and improvement plans under paragraphs (1) and (2) of section 1111(d).

Each year, parents of students enrolled in Title I schools will be invited to serve on the LEA Title I Advisory Council to provide suggestions/revisions on the LEA Title I Parent Engagement Plan. The LEA will conduct an annual survey to evaluate and analyze the results to determine improvements for the subsequent school year. The previous year's policy will be disseminated to participants prior to the meeting. During the meeting, the plan will be reviewed and discussed. Changes will be made according to the committee's recommendations.

Sec. 1116(a)(2)(B))

B. Describe how the Local Education Agency will provide the coordination, technical assistance, and other support necessary to assist and build the capacity of all participating schools within the local educational agency in planning and implementing effective parent and family involvement activities to improve student academic achievement and school performance, which may include meaningful consultation with employers, business leaders, and philanthropic organizations, or individuals with expertise in effectively engaging parents and family members in education.

The LEA will create the Office of Family and Community Engagement to combine resources and efforts to plan and implement parent and family involvement activities. Principals will receive training on how to engage parents throughout the school year and assistance with developing, implementing, and reviewing all required plans. Parent liaisons/designees will receive monthly training on a variety of topics such as Parents as Leaders, Effective Communication with Parents; and Attendance Awareness. The LEA will partner with the Montgomery Education Foundation to model required monthly parent and community meetings to help build capacity in schools. The LEA will also provide assistance at Annual Parent Meetings, workshops, on-site visits, and parent conferences as needed.

Sec. 1116(a)(2)(C))

C. Describe how the Local Education Agency will coordinate and integrate parent and family engagement strategies under this part with parent and family engagement strategies, to the extent feasible and appropriate, with other relevant Federal, State, and local laws and programs.

Programs such as Head Start, Pre-K, and HIPPIY will be included in all communication from the Office of FACE. Any materials and resources will be shared with Title I schools will also be shared with these programs. There will be ongoing collaboration with the coordinator of Migrant Education as well as the coordinator for English Language services. Each Title I school has a parent involvement plan included in their ACIP. Separate funding is provided to Title schools to carry out parental involvement activities. Communication between school and home is supplemented and enhanced through Title I resources.

Sec. 1116(a)(2)(D))

D. Describe how the Local Education Agency will conduct, with the meaningful involvement of parents and family members, an annual evaluation of the content and effectiveness of the parent and family engagement policy in improving the academic quality of all schools served under this part, including identifying—

(i) barriers to greater participation by parents in activities authorized by this section (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)

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Barriers to greater participation such as parents' lack of comfort; teachers' misperception about parents' abilities; and tension in relationships between parent and teacher will be eliminated if possible. All literature disseminated to schools for parents will be in an easy to read format in both English and Spanish. All media outlets including social media will be used to inform parents of important events. Schools will also use the School Messenger automated phone system to share information. The local District Parental Involvement Policy will be available on the district's website as well as on the website for each Title I school.

(ii) the needs of parents and family members to assist with the learning of their children, including engaging with school personnel and teachers

Title I schools will host monthly meetings at various times that will focus on a variety of topics pertinent to parents to help them with the academic success of their children. The LEA will also provide a professional development day for parents to visit the school (Parent Visitation Day on Oct. 6th) and meet with school personnel regarding the academic progress of their child. The LEA will strongly encourage parents to gain access to the INOW Parent Portal so that they can always be informed of their child's attendance, grades, discipline.

(iii) strategies to support successful school and family interactions

The LEA will partner with the Montgomery Education Foundation to model required monthly parent and community meetings to help build capacity in schools. These meetings will allow parents to voice concerns and form groups to work together for solutions. Meetings held in this "networking" format will be at the discretion of Title I schools who request the support of the MEF.

Sec. 1116(a)(2)(E))

E. Describe how the Local Education Agency will use the findings of such evaluation described in the section above (Sec. 1116(2)(D)) to design evidence-based strategies for more effective parental involvement, and to revise, if necessary the parent and family engagement policies described in this section.

The LEA will continuously research best practices to engage parents and families. Survey results will be used to design and/or revise more effective parent and family engagement strategies and activities.

Sec. 1116(a)(2)(F))

F. Describe how the Local Education Agency will involve parents in the activities of the schools served under this part, which may include establishing a parent advisory board comprised of a sufficient number and representative group of parents or family members served by the local educational agency to adequately represent the needs of the population served by such agency for the purposes of developing, revising, and reviewing the parent and family engagement policy.

The LEA will establish a Parent Advisory Council for the purpose of developing, revising, and reviewing the Parent and Family Engagement Policy. Title I schools will also establish a Parent Advisory Council to develop, revise, and review the school's Annual Continuous Improvement Plan, Parent-School Compact, and any other plan or document requiring parental input.

In order to build capacity for Parent and Family Engagement, the Local Education Agency will ensure effective involvement of parents and will support a partnership among the schools involved, the parents, and the community to improve student academic achievement, the LEA shall:

G. Describe how it will provide assistance to parents of children served by the school or local educational agency, as appropriate, in understanding such topics as the challenging State academic standards, State and local academic assessments, the requirements of this part, and how to monitor a child's progress and work with educators to improve the achievement of their children.

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All Title I schools will host an Annual Title I Parent Meeting to inform parents of academic standards and expectations. Parents will receive an academic assessment report for their child at the beginning of the school year. Parents will receive an academic progress report at the midpoint of each grading period. Parent-teacher conferences to review a child's academic progress will be scheduled at a time that is convenient for the parent and the school. Title I schools will offer training to parents through parent meetings, family literacy and math nights. Parents are also invited to serve on the Parent-School Compact Committee.

H. Describe how it will provide materials and training to help parents to work with their children to improve their children's achievement, such as literacy training and using technology (including education about the harms of copyright piracy), as appropriate, to foster parental involvement.

The LEA has required all schools to host monthly parent meetings. Any materials relevant to improving a child's academic achievement will be distributed. Title I schools will also offer parent workshops during the course of the school year. The LEA will also support schools in hosting workshops for parents on a variety of topics including literacy and technology. All Title I schools have a parent resource area or room where parents can retrieve materials on a variety of topics.

I. Describe how it will educate teachers, specialized instructional support personnel, principals, and other school leaders, and other staff, with the assistance of parents, in the value and utility of contributions of parents, and in 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 school.

Professional development focusing on parents as partners and building parents as leaders will be held during the summer for principals and at the beginning of the school year for teachers, instructional support personnel and other school leaders. Each Title I school will create a Parent Advisory Council which will include parents who have students currently enrolled in that Title I school. Title I schools will also use social media, webpages, and apps such as Remind 101 to reach out and communicate with parents.

J. Describe how it will to the extent feasible and appropriate, coordinate and integrate parent involvement programs and activities with other Federal, State, and local programs, including public preschool programs, and conduct other activities, such as parent resource centers, that encourage and support parents in more fully participating in the education of their children.

Programs such as Head Start, Pre-K, and HIPPIY will be included in all communication from the Office of FACE. Any materials and resources shared with Title I schools will also be shared with these programs. There will be ongoing collaboration with the coordinator of Migrant Education as well as the coordinator for English Language Services. Transitional activities such as "JumpStart" will be available for children entering kindergarten. District-wide registration will be held in the spring for incoming students. All Title I schools have a parent resource area or room where parents can retrieve materials on a variety of topics.

K. Describe how it will ensure that information related to school and parent programs, meetings, and other activities is sent to the parents of participating children in a format and, to the extent practicable, in a language the parents can understand.

The Title I Program ensures that all parents of Title I students receive information and school reports. Notices of school programs, meetings, or other activities will be published on each Title I school's website, displayed on school's marquee if available, activated through the School Messenger phone system, announced over the school's PA system at a time when parents are present such as morning arrival or afternoon dismissal. The LEA has access to software that translates the information to be sent home for the Spanish-speaking students so that the parents can understand the material. Translators will be provided as needed.

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L. Describe how it will ensure provide such other reasonable support for parental involvement activities under this section as parents may request.

Parents will have the opportunity to make suggestions to the school via the website or a school's suggestion/comment box. Parents will also be able to voice concerns or make suggestions during monthly parent meetings. Interpreters/translators will be provide upon request and availability through the District EL Coordinator.

M. Describe how the LEA may involve parents in the development of training for teachers, principals, and other educators to improve the effectiveness of such training.

Surveys regarding the development of training for teachers, principals, and other educators will be provided to parents and the results will be used to improve the effectiveness of such training.

N. Describe how the LEA may provide necessary literacy training from funds received under this part if the local educational agency has exhausted all other reasonably available sources of funding for such training.

The LEA may provide funds to facilitate literacy training if the local LEA has exhausted all other reasonably available sources. Title I schools will make a written request to the program director.

O. Describe how the LEA may pay reasonable and necessary expenses associated with local parental involvement activities, including transportation and child care costs, to enable parents to participate in school-related meetings and training sessions.

The LEA may pay reasonable and necessary expenses associated with local parental involvement activities, including transportation and child care costs, to enable parents to participate in school-related meetings and training sessions upon a written request from the local LEA.

P. Describe how the LEA may train parents to enhance the involvement of other parents.

Parent Liaisons will receive monthly training on how to solicit parents as partners and leaders to sustain a strong parent presence. The LEA may use additional programs and resources to train parents. All Title I schools will have at least one representative on the school's leadership team and/or the ACIP.

Q. Describe how the LEA may arrange school meetings at a variety of times, or conduct in-home conferences between teachers or other educators, who work directly with participating children, with parents who are unable to attend such conferences at school, in order to maximize parental involvement and participation.

The LEA will offer flexible meeting times to maximize parental attendance. Home visits may be implemented to reach parents who are not able to attend school meetings. Phone calls from teachers or other educators will be made to parents to share information in the event they are not able to attend school meetings or need clarification on information sent home.

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R. Describe how the LEA may adopt and implement model approaches to improving parental involvement.

The Parent and Family Engagement specialist will research best practices and model approaches to improving parental engagement and implement practices and models appropriate for the district. The Parent and Family Engagement Specialist will also collaborate and consult with other school districts on parent engagement programs.

S. Describe how the LEA may establish a districtwide parent advisory council to provide advice on all matters related to parental involvement in programs supported under this section.

The LEA will establish a districtwide Parent Advisory Council. Parent liaisons/designees of Title I schools will be notified via email to submit the name of a parent who may be willing to serve on the council.

T. Describe how the LEA may develop appropriate roles for community-based organizations and businesses in parent involvement activities.

The Office of Family and Community Engagement was established to assist in developing roles for community-based organizations and businesses in parent involvement activities. Community leaders and business partners will be invited to serve on the Parent Advisory Council, and to join the monthly meetings hosted at Title I schools. The creation of a master list of community partners providing support and resources to schools will be reviewed and updated annually. With the assistance of the legal department, a Memorandum of Understanding will be requested of all community volunteers and partners.

Sec. 1116(f)

U. Describe how the Local Education Agency, to the extent practicable, shall provide opportunities for the informed participation of parents and family members (including parents and family members who have limited English proficiency, parents and family members with disabilities, and parents and family members of migratory children, parent and family members of homeless children, and parents and family members of immigrant children), including providing information and school reports required under section 1111 in a format and, to the extent practicable, in a language such parents understand.

The LEA may offer workshops on parenting to help families learn about child development and how to support student academic learning. Parenting workshops will cover a number of different issues, such as children's language development and learning styles, parent nurturing and discipline strategies, child abuse prevention, and nutrition and health practices. The LEA may also offer hands-on training opportunities, or conduct home visits that help parents support their children's learning at home. These sessions offer ideas to families about how to help students with curriculum-related activities, homework, and other academic decisions and planning.

This LEA Parent and Family Engagement Policy has been reviewed and jointly agreed on with parents of children participating in Title I, Part A programs as evidenced by the agenda signatures on sign-in sheet and minutes recorded during meeting. The school district will make this policy available to all parents of participating Title I, Part A children by October 31, 2017.

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Gloria Odutola, Federal Programs Director
PLAN APPROVED BY (*Person or Entity*)

October 31, 2017
DATE OF APPROVAL