

TITLE I PARENT AND FAMILY ENGAGEMENT POLICY GUIDELINES

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Waukegan Community School District

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The District recognizes the importance of parent and family engagement in children's education. Therefore, the District shall provide appropriate opportunities for parents and family members to become involved in the design and implementation of the District's Title I Program activities and, more generally, in improving the academic achievement and school performance of their children. As used in these policy guidelines, "parent(s)" shall be understood to include a student's legal guardian(s) where applicable.

The federal Title I laws and regulations required that these District-level parent and family engagement policy guidelines, along with any school-level supplementary guidelines, shall be developed jointly with, agreed on with, and distributed to parents and family members of participating students.

District-Level Parent and Family Engagement Guidelines and Initiatives

At a District level, under the leadership and direction of the Director of Elementary Curriculum and Instruction and the building principals, the District shall:

1. Involve parents and family members in the planning, review, and improvement of the District's Title I Program Plan.
 - a. Such parent and family member participation shall occur through multiple mechanisms that may include surveys, representation on applicable work teams, and, as may be applicable, participation in school-based or District-based meetings that serve an advisory function related to the Title I Program and its goals.
 - b. If the District's Title I Program Plan is not satisfactory to the parents or family members of participating children, the District shall submit any parent or family member comments about the Program Plan to the State when the Plan itself is submitted.
 - c. An annual review of the District's Title I Program Plan will be conducted each spring and may include an analysis of state and local assessment data, a review of grade level needs and of the services provided, survey data, and a summary analysis of the effectiveness of Title I services.
2. Involve parents and family members in an annual evaluation of the content and effectiveness of these District-level parent and family engagement policy guidelines. The evaluation shall focus on:
 - a. the extent to which existing parent and family engagement strategies and activities aid in improving student achievement and the academic quality of the schools;
 - b. identifying barriers to greater participation by parents in parent and family engagement activities, with particular attention given to parents who are economically disadvantaged, are disabled, have limited English proficiency, have limited literacy, or are of any racial or ethnic minority background;
 - c. identifying the needs of parents and family members to assist with the learning of their children;
 - d. identifying strategies to support successful school and family interactions; and

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- e. identifying possible changes to the strategies being used to implement the District's parent and family engagement policy guidelines and, if necessary, recommended revisions to the policy guidelines.
3. Include parents and family members in the planning of specific parent and family engagement activities.
 - a. In connection with Title I schools, such parent and family input may be obtained through both District-level and school-level meetings and other initiatives.
 - b. Parents and family members of children receiving Title I services shall also be involved in decisions about the use of any Title I funds reserved to carry out parent and family engagement activities. Priority must be given to high-need schools. Use of the Title I reserved funds must include the funding of at least one of the following activities:
 - Supporting schools and nonprofit organizations in providing professional development for district and school personnel regarding parent and family engagement strategies. These professional development activities may be provided jointly to teachers, principals, other school leaders, specialized instructional support personnel, paraprofessionals, early childhood educators, and parents and family members.
 - Supporting programs that reach parents and family members at home, in the community, and at school.
 - Disseminating information on best practices focused on parent and family engagement, especially best practices for increasing the engagement of economically disadvantaged parents and family members.
 - Collaborating, or providing sub grants to schools to enable such schools to collaborate with community-based or other organizations or employers with a record of success in improving and increasing parent and family engagement.
 - Engaging in any other activities or strategies that the district determines are appropriate and consistent with the district's parent and family engagement policy.
 4. Provide coordination, technical assistance and support to school personnel regarding parent and family involvement and communication strategies and activities to improve student achievement and school performance.
 5. Build the schools' and parents' and family members' capacity for parent and family engagement by:
 - a. Providing parents and family members with information on state academic standards, the school curriculum, student assessments, monitoring their child's progress, and working with their child's educators to improve achievement.
 - b. Providing materials, training, and other resources to help parents and family members work with their children to improve academic achievement.
 - c. Providing teachers, student services personnel, principals, and other staff with professional development resources/opportunities that address the value and utility of the contributions of parents and family members to school activities and student learning; how to reach out to, communicate with, and work with parents and family

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members as equal partners; implement and coordinate programs for parents and family members; and build ties between parents and family members and the school.

- d. Coordinating school-sponsored parent and family engagement activities with other community initiatives
 - e. Providing information and notices related to programs, meetings, and activities to parents and family members in an understandable format, and, where practicable, in a language that they can understand.
6. Ensure that District-level and school-level personnel advertise specific opportunities for parent and family member involvement, engage in outreach activities, and structure specific parent and family member opportunities in a manner intended to encourage and facilitate the full involvement and participation of parents and family members who are at a socio-economic disadvantage, have a disability, have limited English proficiency, or have limited literacy.

School-Level Parent and Family Engagement Plans and Activities

As District-wide expectations, ALL schools (even those schools that are not designated as Title I schools) and ALL specialized programs (e.g., alternative education programs) shall:

1. Incorporate within the school/program improvement planning process goals and initiatives that focus on encouraging and facilitating parent and family engagement.
2. Involve parents and family members in regular, two-way, and meaningful communication addressing student achievement through formal mechanisms (e.g., report cards and progress reports, parent-teacher conferences, school and classroom newsletters, etc.) and through less formal communications (e.g., telephone contacts, notes sent to parents, updates provided through the student information system, etc.). The communication channels established between the schools and parents and family members are intended to ensure that:
 - a. parents and family members play an integral role in assisting their child's learning;
 - b. parents and family members are encouraged to be actively involved in their child's education;
 - c. parents and family members are full partners in their child's education and are included, as appropriate, in decision making that involves the education of their child; and
 - d. District personnel respond in a timely and reasonable fashion to parents' and family members' reasonable requests for information or for meetings to address concerns and decisions relating to their child's education.

In addition, each school designated as a participating Title I program school shall also:

1. Develop jointly with the parents of students participating in the Title I Program (and then implement and monitor) written school-level parent and family engagement guidelines that

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supplement and complement these District-level guidelines and that include at least the following:

- a. A list of any additional, specific, school-based means for carrying out any of the capacity-building strategies identified in section 5 (above, within the list of District-level Guidelines and Initiatives); and
 - b. A "School-Parent Compact" that outlines how parents, school personnel, and students share responsibility for the student's achievement and growth, and that identifies the means by which the school and parents will build and develop a partnership focused on enabling student achievement.
2. Schedule and hold (at a minimum of two different times) an annual fall meeting for parents and family members at which a representative of the school shall provide parents and family members with an overview of the school's participation in Title I, the parent and family engagement components of the Title I Program, and the rights of parents and family members under Title I. This annual meeting regarding the Title I program shall also serve as an opportunity to present information to parents and family members regarding academic standards, the school curriculum, the methods of student assessment, and the means of monitoring their child's progress.
 3. Working in coordination with District-level initiatives, involve parents and family members in the planning, review, and improvement of the District-level Title I Program Plan and any school-specific Title I programming and parent and family engagement activities. When such planning and evaluation activities occur in connection with school-wide processes, school personnel shall monitor and attempt to encourage the representative participation of parents and family members of children who are participating in Title I programs.
 4. The implementation of these parent and family member policy guidelines at the school level shall be under the leadership and direction of the building principal, with support and assistance provided by the Director or Elementary Curriculum and Instruction.

Cross Reference: WASB PRG 342.5 Sample Policy 1

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