

Great School District

2017-18 Parent and Family Engagement Policy

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Revised June 15, 2017
555 Main Street
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greatschooldistrict.org

What is family engagement?

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Family Engagement means the participation of parents and family members in regular, two-way, and meaningful communication involving student academic learning and other school activities, including ensuring:

- (A) That parents play an integral role in assisting their child's learning.
- (B) That parents are encouraged to be actively involved in their child's education.
- (C) That parents 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.
- (D) The carrying out of other activities, such as those described in Section 1116 of the ESSA.



About the Parent and Family Engagement Policy

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In support of strengthening student academic achievement, the Great School District (GSD) has developed this parent and family engagement policy that establishes the district's expectations and objectives for meaningful family engagement and guides the strategies and resources that strengthen school and parent partnerships in the district's Title I schools. This plan will describe GSD's commitment to engage families in the education of their children and to build the capacity in its Title I schools to implement family engagement strategies and activities designed to achieve the district and student academic achievement goals.

When schools, families, and communities work together to support learning, children tend to do better in school, stay in school longer and enjoy school more. Title I, Part A provides for substantive family engagement at every level of the program, such as in the development and implementation of the district and school plan, and in carrying out the district and school improvement provisions. Section 1116 of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) contains the primary Title I, Part A requirements for schools and school systems to involve parents and family members in their children's education. Consistent with Section 1116, the GSD will work with its Title I schools to ensure that the required school-level parent and family engagement policies meet the requirements of Section 1116(b) and each include, as a component, a school-parent compact consistent with Section 1116(d) of the ESSA.

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**When students, schools, families, and communities work together,
we can achieve GREATness!**

Jointly Developed

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During the annual State of the District meeting in May, all families were invited to participate and provide suggestions and ideas to improve this district parent and family engagement policy for the 2017- 2018 school year. The district sent an email to all families informing them about this meeting and posted an announcement on the school district website. During this meeting, families also reviewed and discussed the District Improvement Plan. Additionally, each Title I school used its Parent Advisory Council to review the district parent and family engagement policy before the end of the school year.

Upon final revision, the district parent and family engagement policy was incorporated into the District Improvement Plan, which was submitted to the state. Families are welcome to submit comments and feedback regarding the policy at any time on the school district website or by submitting written comments to your child's school. All feedback received by July was included with the policy for this school year

The district parent and family engagement policy was posted on district and school websites, distributed during the annual Title I school meetings early this school year, and made available in the schools' parent resource centers.

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Strengthening Our Schools

This year, the district family engagement coordinator (FEC) will provide assistance and support to all Title I schools to ensure family engagement requirements are being satisfied and that family engagement strategies and activities are being implemented. Title I schools will receive notifications and resources from the district and the FEC to help them improve and strengthen family engagement. In addition to frequent communication and school visits, the district and the FEC will hold monthly meetings and trainings with its Title I schools' principals and school FECs to review family engagement plans and activities.

Additionally, the district will convene a summit in March for principals and FECs to review parent and family engagement requirements and plan opportunities for family engagement activities and meetings for the remainder of the school year.

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Reservation of Funds

The GSD will reserve 1 percent from the total amount of Title I funds it receives in FY18 to carry out the parent and family engagement requirements listed in this policy and as described in Section 1116 of the ESSA. Furthermore, the GSD will distribute 90 percent of the amount reserved to Title I schools to support their local-level family engagement programs and activities. The district will provide clear guidance and communication to assist each Title I school in developing an adequate family engagement budget that addresses their needs assessment and parent recommendations.

Each Title I school will host an annual School Improvement Forum in May for families to provide suggestions how these family engagement funds will be used in the upcoming year at the district and school-level. Comment cards and minutes from these meetings will be reviewed by the district to determine areas of need for the upcoming school year and consider changes to the family engagement budget.

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Opportunities for Meaningful Parent and Family Consultation

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Input and suggestions from parents and family members are an essential component of the district and school improvement plans that are developed each year. All parents of students eligible to receive Title I services are invited to attend two meeting opportunities described in this section to share their ideas and suggestions to help the district, schools, and students to reach our student academic achievement goals.

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Annual District Survey ~ April 3-7, 2018 Family input on the use of Title I funds to support family engagement programs may be provided through the annual district survey. The survey will contain questions related to the family engagement budget as well as a section for families to provide their comments.

School Improvement Forums ~ May 1-3, 2018 During this week, each Title I school will host a forum for parents and family members to participate in roundtable discussions to review the schoolwide plan, the school's parent and family engagement policies as well as provide input on the family engagement budget and programs. Each Title I school will send invitations home and email and text parents notifying them about the date and time of the forum. Information regarding the School Improvement Forum will also be made available on the school websites.

State of the District Meeting ~ May 22, 2018 All parents are welcome to hear the latest updates from the Achieve County School District as well as review and provide input into the district parent and family engagement policy and the comprehensive District Improvement Plan for the 2018-19 school year. Notices regarding this meeting will be emailed to all parents in advance of the meeting. The district will also communicate information regarding this meeting on the school district website.

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Unable to attend these meetings? Please visit

www.greatschoolsdistrict.org/TitleI to review the meeting documents and minutes and leave your input.



Scan the code with your smartphone or tablet to access family engagement information from the GSD website

The GSD will build the schools' and parents' capacity for strong family engagement, in order to ensure effective involvement of parents and family members and to support a partnership among the Title I schools, parents, and the community to improve student academic achievement through the following districtwide activities and programs such as Academic Parent-Teacher Teams (APTTs). APTT is an evidence-based family engagement model that builds partnerships with parents. With the teacher, families set student academic goals to be addressed through at-home learning activities and strategies.

Of Parents:

The GSD will work as a district and through its Title I schools to provide assistance to parents in understanding state and district academic information connected to their student's learning and progress, as well as information regarding the Title I program and APTT. The GSD will provide classes for parents to gain knowledge about the challenging state academic standards, local academic assessments, as well as the required assessments for Tennessee students including alternative forms of assessment. The dates and locations for these classes and APTT meetings will be posted on the district website and shared through each Title I school's newsletter. 8A

The GSD will also coordinate pages on the district and school websites that will contain resources and materials, including parent guides, study guides, practice assessments, and APTT activities, to help parents work with their children at home. Copies of these materials will be made available at all Title I schools for those families who may have limited internet access, including copies in Spanish. To assist parents with understanding the online student information system and other digital educational resources (including education about the harms of copyright piracy), the GSD technology specialists will partner with Title I schools to host workshops for parents. Dates and times for these workshops will be determined and announced by each individual school. 8B

The GSD has established a districtwide Parent Advisory Council comprised of family representatives from each Title I school's Parent Advisory Council to provide advice on all matters related to family engagement in Title I, Part A programs. Community leaders and business partners will be invited to serve on this council. The district will also encourage collaboration and participation with community partners by posting recordings of council and other district meetings on the website and increase participation by utilizing video conferencing technology to accommodate the schedules of these valuable partners. 8E

The GSD will coordinate and integrate the district's family engagement programs with the local preschool program and other federal and state funded preschool programs in the district by inviting faculty and staff from those programs to attend planning meetings focused on family engagement activities. In the spring, the elementary schools will host Kindergarten Ready days so parents may tour the schools and receive information to help prepare them and their children for kindergarten. The GSD will also coordinate with these programs to ensure that parents are informed about available resources. 8F

Of School Staff:

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The GSD will conduct three trainings during the school year for principals and school FECs to learn and discuss strategies to increase family engagement, improve school family communication, and build ties with parents and the community. These trainings will be redelivered to the faculty 8D

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and staff of Title I schools. If the school is implementing APTT, the GSD Family Engagement Leadership Team (FELT) will conduct an APTT training for the entire school staff. The purpose of the FELT is to coordinate the sustainability and growth of APTT in the district. The GSD will also host a training for appropriate school staff and faculty that will focus on creating welcoming environments and improving two-way communication with families.

To ensure that information related to district, school, parent programs, APTT meetings, and activities is available to all parents, each Title I school is required to send home and post online information for parents and family members in an understandable language and uniform format. At the beginning of the year, school staff will be trained on parent notifications and resources to be sent home in parents' native language, where applicable, and providing interpreters at parent events and APTT meetings. Information posted on the district website will be translated to the extent practicable. The district will also utilize school phone call systems, district and school websites, local news media, and other school message systems to post information for parents.

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Parent and Family Engagement Evaluation

Each year, the GSD will conduct an evaluation of the content and effectiveness of this parent and family engagement policy and the family engagement activities to improve the academic quality of the Title I schools through an annual parent survey and the School Improvement Forums.

Beginning in April, each Title I school will send home a survey and email a link to the survey for parents to provide valuable feedback regarding the parent and family engagement activities and programs. These surveys will also be posted on the district and school websites for parents to complete. In addition to the annual survey, each Title I school will also use the School Improvement Forum to facilitate group discussions to discuss the needs of families and to design strategies for more effective family engagement. The GSD will use the findings from the school forums and the survey results to design strategies to improve effective family engagement, to remove possible barriers to parent participation, and to revise its parent and family engagement policies



Accessibility

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In carrying out the parent and family engagement requirements established by Section 1116 of the ESSA, the district family engagement coordinator will communicate and collaborate with the Office for Student Support Services to ensure full opportunities for participation of parents with limited English proficiency, parents with disabilities, and parents of migratory children including providing information and school reports in a language parents can understand.

For Parents

- Annual Parent and Family Survey: April 3-7, 2018
- School Improvement Forum: May 1-3, 2018 – Local School Site
- State of the District Meeting: May 22, 2018 – County Board Office

For Schools

- Welcoming Schools Training: August 23, 2017 – County Board Office
- Principal and FEC Meetings: First Wednesday of every month

Adoption

This districtwide parent and family engagement policy has been developed jointly and agreed upon with parents and family members of children participating in Title I, Part A programs as evidenced by the collaboration of parents, school, and district personnel at the annual State of the District meeting.

This policy was adopted by the Great School District on June 15, 2017 and will be in effect for the 2017- 2018 academic school year. The school district will distribute this policy in multiple ways to all parents of participating Title I, Part A children on or before September 1, 2018.

