

Parent and Family Engagement Policy/Plan
Macon County School District
School Year 2020-2021
Revision Date 0706/20

In support of strengthening student academic achievement, Macon County School System 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 Section 1116(a)(2) of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). The policy establishes the LEA's expectations and objectives for meaningful parent and family engagement and describes how the LEA will implement a number of specific parent and family engagement activities, and it is incorporated into the LEA's plan submitted to the Georgia Department of Education.

The Macon County School System agrees to implement the following requirements as outlined by Section 1116:

- The school district will put into operation programs, activities, and procedures for the engagement of parents and family members in all of 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.
- Consistent with Section 1116, the school district will work with its schools to ensure that the required school-level parent and family engagement policies meet the requirements of Section 1116(b) of the ESSA, and each include as a component a school-parent compact consistent with Section 1116(d) of the ESSA.
- In carrying out the Title I, Part A parent and family engagement requirements to the extent practicable, the school district and its schools will provide full opportunities for the participation of parents with limited English proficiency, limited literacy, disabilities, of migratory children, who are economically disadvantaged, or are of any racial or ethnic minority background, including providing information and school reports required under Section 1111 of the ESSA in an understandable and uniform format including alternative formats upon request and, to the extent practicable, in a language parents understand.
- If the LEA plan for Title I, Part A, developed under Section 1112 of the ESSA, is not satisfactory to the parents of participating children, the school district will submit any parent comments with the plan when the school district submits the plan to the state Department of Education.
- The school district will be governed by the following definition of family engagement and expects that its Title I schools will carry out programs, activities, and procedures in accordance with this definition in Section 8101 of the ESSA:

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

- (A) Parents play an integral role in assisting their child's learning
- (B) Parents are encouraged to be actively involved in their child's education at school

- (C) 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) Other activities are carried out, such as those described in Section 1116 of the ESSA

JOINTLY DEVELOPED

The Macon County School System will take the following actions to involve parents and family members in jointly developing its LEA plan under Section 1112, and the development of support and improvement plans under paragraphs (1) and (2) of Section 1111(d) of the ESSA:

Each year, all parents of students in Macon County Schools will be invited to a work session with the agenda dedicated to development of the LEA plan. In addition to the LEA parent involvement committee, input will be obtained from each school’s parent organizations. All parents will be invited through our “Shout Point” which sends out a voice message, text message, and email. Parents will also be invited through a flyer on the district and school websites and flyers placed in local businesses. This will ensure that parents who did not receive the “Shout Out” will still receive the invitation. The invitation will state the contents of the meeting agenda. All parents will be involved in the planning, review, and improvement of the parent and family engagement plan.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

The Macon County School System will provide the following coordination, technical assistance, and other support necessary to assist and build capacity of all Title I, Part A schools in planning and implementing effective parent and family engagement 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:

Parents are involved on school improvement committees and school councils. These committees formally review the operations of each school and make recommendations for improvement. School/parent compacts at each school provide additional information about school needs.

The Macon County School System will provide district-level support to each school in planning and implementing effective parent involvement programs. District-level staff may include the Executive Director for Curriculum and Instruction, the Special Education Director, the ELL Director and the Title I Director to assist each school with technical support. This technical support will include assistance in revising the school-parent compacts, the School Parent Engagement Policy, and the School Improvement Plan. In addition, Macon County employees a full-time District Level Parent and Family Engagement Coordinator and there is a school-level Parent and Family Engagement Coordinator for each Title I school. The Parent and Family Engagement Coordinator, along with the School Parent and Family Engagement Coordinator will provide on-going monthly support and training for the school staff on topics such as implementing effective parent and family involvement practices. The training for the staff will also include topics such as the School Improvement Plan, the school-parent compacts, ways to build parent capacity, and the School Parent Policy. Funds for materials, supplies, and training will be included in the parent involvement portion of the budget annually.

The Title I Parent and Family Engagement Coordinator, Pre-K personnel, Head Start personnel, and Student Services personnel will be provided by joint agencies so that parents will understand that staff members in these agencies work toward a common goal.

ANNUAL EVALUATION

The Macon County School System will take the following actions to 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 its Title I, Part A schools. The evaluation will include identifying 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). The evaluation will also include identifying the 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 school district will use the findings of the evaluation about its parent and family engagement policy to design evidence-based strategies for more effective parental involvement, and to revise, if necessary, its parent and family engagement policies.

Each year an evaluation of the parent involvement program will be conducted. The LEA committee will meet to assess the effectiveness of the activities presented during the year and ways to increase participation by parents. Information will also be gathered by each school's parent involvement committee/leadership committee and given to the LEA committee for analysis.

Conclusions drawn from the responses of parents will be used to strengthen the parental involvement program each year. Formal and informal data will be used to revise policies and activities on both the LEA and school levels. As suggestions are made throughout the school year, some revisions will be made immediately. Other changes will be considered/made at the annual evaluation meeting.

RESERVATION OF FUNDS

The Macon County School System will involve the parents and family members of children served in Title I, Part A schools in decisions about how the 1 percent of Title I, Part A funds reserved for parent and family engagement is spent and will ensure that not less than 90 percent of the 1 percent reserved goes directly to Title I schools.

Each year, parents will be invited to a work session with the agenda dedicated to development of the LEA plan and to solicit parental input on the spending of the set aside funds. In addition to the LEA parent involvement committee, input will be obtained from each school's parent organizations. Parents will be given the opportunity to have input in the way that the Title I reserved funds will be spent. Parents will be involved in the planning, review, and improvement of the parent and family engagement plan.

COORDINATION OF SERVICES

The Macon County School System will coordinate and integrate parent and family engagement strategies with parent and family engagement strategies, to the extent feasible and appropriate, with other relevant Federal, State, and local laws and programs: Head Start, Student Services, Parent Resource Centers, and Family Connections that encourage and support parents in more fully participating in the education of their children by:

Title I parent involvement staff, Pre-K personnel, Head Start personnel, Student Services, and Family Connections personnel will be provided by joint agencies so that parents will understand that staff members in these agencies work toward a common goal. Special Days will be held to help students in transition from Head Start to Kindergarten, from 5th Grade to Middle School, from 8th grade to the high school. The principals from each school will work together to make the transitions as smooth as possible for the students and parents. Training will be provided to assist parents in understanding items such as the requirements of Title I, components of a school-wide program, components of a targeted assistance program, student content, and performance standards.

A parent resource center will be available for parents to visit at any time during the school day. The parents can ask questions from the parent involvement staff and pick up written materials that contain suggestions on how to work with their children to improve school performance. Workshops are provided on a regular basis at the schools. A parent resource center provides printed materials and videotapes that may be checked out for home viewing. Computers are available for parents to use in the resource center. Topics range from child development to helping a child with reading, writing, and math skills. Materials may also be taken to parents who do not have access to the schools during the regular school day hours.

Principals, teachers, and school staff are updated on ways they can help to build a stronger partnership with parents. As communication is received from parents, it is forwarded to the schools with suggestions as to how the parent involvement initiative can be more successful.

Businesses are involved in partnership with schools to provide support in carrying out their goals. More emphasis will be placed on business partnerships that include parents as a vital component. Currently, some businesses allow employees to present lessons in their areas of expertise so that students can see the school/work relationship.

Provisions are made for parents who do not understand English to have information related to school and parent programs in a language they use at home. For parents who cannot read in any language, parent involvement staff insures that the information is explained to the parents in an understandable manner.

BUILDING CAPACITY OF PARENTS

The Macon County School System will, with the assistance of its Title I schools, build parents' capacity for strong family engagement by providing materials and training on such topics as literacy training and using technology (including education about the harms of copyright piracy) to help parents work with their children to improve their children's academic achievement.

Assistance will also be provided to 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
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Assistance is provided to parents in understanding the:

- a. National Education Goals
- b. State's content standards and student performance standards
- c. School improvement and corrective action process if applicable
- d. Components of a school-wide program
- e. State and local assessments
- f. Requirements of Title I
- g. Ways parents can monitor their children's progress and work with educators to improve the performance of their children
- h. Ways parents can participate in decisions relating to the education of their children

Materials and training are provided to help parents with their children to improve their children's achievement. Teachers, pupil service personnel, principals, and other staff are educated on the value and utility of contributions of parents, and how to interact with, communicate with, and work with parents as equal partners. Appropriate roles are developed for community-based organizations and businesses in parent involvement activities. Training sessions are provided to help parents become full partners in the education of their children. Parents can receive training on the Parent Portal in Infinite Campus, the dangers of internet websites, and copyright law. Input is solicited from the parents as to topics for the training. Information related to school and parent programs, meetings, and other activities are sent home in the language used in the home. A parent resource center will be available for parents to visit at any time during the school day. The parents can ask questions from the parent involvement staff and pick up written materials that contain suggestions on how to work with their children to improve school performance. Workshops are provided on a regular basis at the schools. A parent resource center provides printed materials and videotapes that may be checked out for home viewing. Computers are available for parents to use in the resource center. Topics range from child development to helping a child with reading, writing, and math skills. Materials may also be taken to parents who do not have access to the schools during the regular school day hours. Information concerning state mandated assessments will also be available and appropriate links will be provided for parents to assist their students in preparation for the assessments. This information will also be available on the district and school websites.

BUILDING CAPACITY OF SCHOOL STAFF

The Macon County School System will, with the assistance of its schools and parents, educate its teachers, specialized instructional support personnel, principals, and other school leaders, and other staff 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 schools by:

District and School Level Parent and Family Engagement Coordinators will meet with the faculty and staff at least 4 times per year to develop understanding on the value and utility of contributions of parents. Training will be conducted to help faculty and staff develop ways of improving communication with parents as equal partners. The Title I Director will assist with the trainings.

BUILDING CAPACITY FOR INVOLVEMENT

- ❑ Maximize family engagement and participation in their children's education, arranging school meetings at a variety of times or conducting in-home conferences between teachers or other educators who work directly with participating children, with parents who are unable to attend those conferences at school. Macon County will host meetings at different times to give all parents an opportunity to attend. Ex: One meeting in the morning and another meeting in the evening. In addition, Macon County will partner with Family Connections to reach additional parents. Macon County will partner with the local clergy to get information to parents. Macon County will hold Town Hall meetings in the various neighborhoods to help with transportation issues.
- ❑ Establishing a districtwide parent advisory council to provide advice on all matters related to parental involvement in Title I, Part A programs: Macon County has a district-wide Parent Engagement Coordinator and each Title I school has a school-level parent engagement coordinator. These roles will include helping parents understand Title I requirements.
- ❑ Developing appropriate roles for community-based organizations and businesses, including faith-based organizations, in family engagement activities: Macon County will partner with the local clergy to get information to parents. Macon County will hold Town Hall meetings in the various neighborhoods to help with transportation issues.

ADOPTION

This policy was adopted by the Macon County School System on July 6, 2020 and will be in effect for the period of the 2019-2020 school year. The school district will distribute this policy to all parents of participating Title I, Part A children on or before September 30, 2020.