

Long County School District

Parent and Family Engagement Policy

2019-2020
Revised May 13, 2019
468 S. McDonald Street
Ludowici, GA 31316
longcountyschools.org

What is Family Engagement?

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

In support of strengthening student academic achievement, the Long County School District (LCSD) 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 LCSD'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 LCSD 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.

Jointly Developed

During the annual State of the District meeting in May, all parents were invited to participate and provide suggestions and ideas to improve this district parent and family engagement policy for the 2019-2020 school year. The district sent an email to all parents informing them about this meeting and posted an announcement on the school district website. During this meeting, parents also reviewed and discussed the Consolidated LEA Improvement Plan (CLIP). 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 CLIP which was submitted to the state. Parents 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 June 1, 2018 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 all schools' front office areas.

Strengthening Our School

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 quarterly meetings and trainings with its Title I schools' principals to review family engagement plans and activities.

Additionally, the FEC will convene a meeting in May for principals to review parent and family engagement requirements and plan opportunities for family engagement activities and meetings for the upcoming school year.

Reservation of Funds

The LCSD will reserve 1 percent from the total amount of Title I funds it receives in FY20 to carry out the parent and family engagement requirements listed in this policy and as described in Section 1116 of the ESSA. Furthermore, the LCSD 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 April for parents 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.



Opportunities for Meaningful Parent Consultation



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.

Annual Input Meeting ~ May 12, 2020



All parents are welcome to hear the latest updates from the Long County School District as well as review and provide input into the district parent and family engagement policy and the Consolidated LEA Improvement Plan for the 2019-2020 school year. Notices regarding this meeting will be on all school websites, published in local paper and advertised on multi social media outlets to all parents in advance of the meeting. The district will also post flyers throughout the community and at all school front office locations.

School Improvement Forums ~ April 13th – 16th 2020



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 as well as email and text parents to notify them about the date and time of the forum. Information regarding the School Improvement Forum will also be made available on the school websites.

Parent input on the use of Title I funds to support family engagement programs may also be provided through the annual district survey. The survey will contain questions related to the family engagement budget as well as a section for parents to provide their comments.



Building Capacity

The LCSD will build school and parent capacity for strong family engagement. This capacity will ensure effective engagement of parents and family members in supporting partnerships among the Title I schools, parents, and the community with the goal of improving student academic achievement. To build this capacity, the LCSD will implement districtwide activities that build partnerships with parents.

Of Parents - The LCSD 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. The LCSD will provide classes for parents to gain knowledge about the challenging state academic standards, local academic assessments, as well as the required assessments for Georgia students including alternative forms of assessments. The dates and locations for these classes will be posted on the district website and shared through each Title I school's websites.

The LCSD will also coordinate pages on the district and school websites that will contain resources and materials, including parent guides, study guides, practice assessments, and other 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 and the importance of internet safety along with the current laws), the LCSD will partner with technology specialists in the Title I schools to host workshops for parents. Dates and times for these workshops will be determined and announced by each individual school.

The LCSD has established a districtwide Parent Advisory Council comprised of parent representatives from each Title I school to provide advice on all matters related to parent/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 attending and being an active member of the local Family Connections Collaborative.

The LCSD 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, Smiley Elementary will host a Head Start and PreK Tour so students may tour the school. Smiley will also host a Kindergarten Readiness Night so parents may tour the school and to help parents prepare their children for Kindergarten. The LCSD will also coordinate with these programs to ensure that parents are informed about available resources.

Of School Staff - The LCSD will conduct monthly meetings during the school year for principals and the school family engagement coordinator to learn and discuss strategies to increase family engagement, improve school-family communication, and build ties with parents and the community. These meetings will be redelivered to the faculty and staff of Title I schools. The LCSD 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, council 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 council meetings. Information posted on the district website will be translated to the extent practicable. The district will also utilize school phone call systems, social media, district and school websites, local news media, and other school message systems to post information for parents.

Parent and Family Engagement Evaluation

Each year, the LCSD 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 post 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 involving the needs of parents and their children receiving Title I services. In addition, design strategies for more effective family engagement. The LCSD 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

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.

Mark Your Calendars

For Parents

Annual Parent Survey

April 2-23, 2020

School Improvement Forum

April 13th thru 16th, 2020

Annual Input Meeting

May 12, 2020

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 Long County School District on May 13, 2019 and will be in effect for the 2019-2020 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 November 1, 2019.