

Pierce County School District Parent and Family Engagement Plan

2017-18 School Year
Plan Revised May 2, 2017
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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 related activities ensuring that:

- ❖ Parents and family members play an integral role in assisting in their child's learning.
- ❖ Parents and family members are encouraged to be actively involved in their child's education.
- ❖ Parents and family members 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.
- ❖ Other activities, such as those described in Section 1116 of ESSA are carried out.



The focus for our district will be to increase stakeholder (students, parents, family members, community) understanding, trust, and support of the school system.

Parent and Family Engagement Plan

In support of strengthening student academic achievement, the Pierce County School District (PCSD) has developed this Parent and Family Engagement Plan that establishes the district's expectations and objectives for meaningful parent and 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 PCSD'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 parent and family engagement plans, and in carrying out the district and school improvement provisions. Section 1116 of the Every Child 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 PCSD will work with its Title I schools to ensure that the required school-level Parent and Family Engagement Plans meet the requirements of Section 1116 and each include, as a component, a school-parent compact consistent with Section 1116(d) of ESSA.

Jointly Developed

Throughout the school year, each school asks parents for feedback on the LEA Parent and Family Engagement Plan. During the annual District Parent Advisory Council meeting in February, parents were invited to participate and provide suggestions and ideas to improve the district Parent and Family Engagement Plan for the 2017-2018 school year. The district sent the information to the local newspaper and posted it on the district and school websites informing parents about the meeting. During this meeting, parents also reviewed and discussed the Comprehensive LEA Improvement Plan (CLIP). Additionally, each Title I school used a Parent Café meeting to review the district Parental Involvement Plan. Each school sent a flyer home to all parents notifying them about the date(s) and time(s) of the meeting(s). Information regarding the meeting was also posted on the school websites and in the local newspaper.

Upon final revision, the District Parent and Family Engagement Plan will be incorporated into the CLIP which is submitted to the state. Parents are welcome to submit comments and feedback regarding the plan at any time to the District Parent and Family Engagement Coordinator or by submitting written comments to their child's school. All feedback received was considered in the planning process for the school year.

The District Parent and Family Engagement Plan is posted on district and school websites, distributed during the annual Title I school parent meetings early in the school year, and made available upon request in the schools' offices.

Strengthening Our Schools

The District Parent and Family Engagement Coordinator (FEC) will provide assistance and support to all Title I schools to ensure family engagement requirements are being satisfied and that parent and family engagement strategies and activities are being implemented. Title I schools will receive notifications and resources from the district and the District FEC to help them improve and strengthen family engagement.

In addition to frequent communication and school visits, the district and the FEC will hold meetings and trainings with its Title I schools' FECs to review family engagement plans and activities. Additionally, the District FEC and/or the Director of Student Achievement will work with principals and school FECs in the spring to review parent and family engagement requirements and plan opportunities for family engagement activities and meetings for the remainder of the school year and begin planning for the upcoming year.

Reservation of Funds

The Pierce County School District will reserve 1% from the total amount of Title I funds it receives in FY18 to carry out the parent and family engagement requirements listed in this plan and as described in Section 1116 of the ESSA. Furthermore, the PCSD will distribute 100 percent of the amount reserved to all 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 hold Parent Cafés for parents to provide suggestions on how these family engagement funds will be used in the upcoming year at the district and school level. Comments 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.

Parent and Family Engagement Evaluation

Each year, the Pierce County School District will conduct an evaluation of the content and effectiveness of this Parent and Family Engagement Plan and family engagement activities to improve the academic quality of the Title I schools through an annual district parent survey, Parent Cafés, suggestion box input and online stakeholder feedback forms.

Each Title I school will send home a flyer explaining how to access our parent & family engagement survey for parents to provide valuable feedback regarding the parent and family engagement activities and programs. Links to these surveys will be posted on the schools' websites. Paper copies are available at each school's front office. Each Title I school will also use Parent Cafés to facilitate group discussions addressing the needs of parents of children eligible to receive Title I services to design strategies for more effective family engagement. In addition, each Title I school will provide a suggestion box in the foyer of each school and a stakeholder feedback form on the schools' websites.

The PCSD will use the findings from the Parent Cafés, schools' suggestions boxes, stakeholder feedback forms, and survey results to design strategies to improve effective family engagement, remove possible barriers to parent participation, and revise its parent and family engagement plans.

Opportunities for Parent/Family 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. Since PCSD is a Title I school system, all parents are invited to participate in any of the various meeting opportunities provided to share their ideas and suggestions to help the district, schools, and students to reach the challenging academic achievement goals established for the school year.

District Parent Advisory Council Meeting ~ February 2018

All parents are welcome to hear the latest updates from the Pierce County School District as well as review and provide input into the District Parent and Family Engagement Plan and the Comprehensive LEA Improvement Plan for the 2018-19 school year. This review includes disaggregated test data, accountability data, and family engagement information. The district will communicate information regarding this meeting on the websites of the schools and district as well as in the local newspaper.

Parent Cafés

Each Title I school will host Parent Café meetings. During the Parent Cafés we will have authentic conversations to help build relationships and improve students' academic achievements. Also, the Parent Cafés will offer decision making opportunities. Parents will be invited to assist in revising elements of this District Parent and Family Engagement Plan, our schools' parent and family engagement plans, school/parent compacts, schoolwide plans, parent activities, and the parent engagement budget. Invitations regarding the Parent Cafés will be sent to all parents notifying them of the date(s) and time(s). In addition, the information will be available on the schools' websites, and in the local newspaper.

Parent & Family Engagement Survey

Parent input on the use of Title I funds to support parent and family engagement programs may also be provided through the annual Parent & Family Engagement survey. The survey will contain questions related to the parent and family engagement program and budget as well as a section for parents/families to provide their comments. Flyers telling about the surveys will be sent to all families. The flyer will include information about where families can obtain a paper copy. Notices are sent to the local newspaper. Links to access the electronic versions of the surveys are available on the school websites. These surveys are available in English and Spanish.

Scan the code with your smartphone or tablet to access Parent and Family Engagement information from the Pierce County School District Web site.



or <http://www.pierce.k12.ga.us/> Click on Parent & Family Engagement

The Pierce County School District welcomes and values your input! Stakeholder feedback forms can be found on the district & school websites. Suggestion boxes are located in school foyers. Additionally, you may send comments or suggestions to Angie Meadows, ameadows@pierce.k12.ga.us or turn into your school office.

Accessibility

In carrying out the parent and family engagement requirements established by Section 1116 of ESSA, the District Parent and Family Engagement Coordinator will communicate and collaborate with the Director of Student Services and the Director of Federal Programs 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, when feasible.

Adoption

This District Parent and Family Engagement Plan has been developed jointly and agreed upon with parents & family members of children participating in Title I, Part A programs as evidenced by the collaboration of parents, family members, school and district personnel at the annual District Parent Advisory Council meeting and school-level Parent Cafés. This plan was reviewed and revised by the Pierce County School District on May 1, 2017 and will be in effect for the 2017-2018 academic school year. The school district will distribute this policy to all parents and family members of participating Title I, Part A children on or before October 1, 2017.



Building Capacity

The Pierce County School District (PCSD) will build 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 district wide activities and programs.

Of Parents - The Pierce County School District will work with 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 District FEC will work with each school to provide meetings 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 assessment. Additionally, the PCSD will provide literacy and technology trainings for parents. The dates and locations for these meetings/trainings will be posted on the school website; in the local newspaper; notices sent home; as well as shared in many schools' newsletters.

The PCSD will also provide a page on the district website that will contain resources and materials, including articles and study guides, 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 the extent feasible). Schools provide support to parents to assist them with understanding the online student information system and other digital educational resources (including education about the harms of copyright piracy). In addition, the PCSD offers a "Virtual" Pierce County Family Resource Room. Our "Virtual" PC Family Resource Room has valuable activities for Pre-K through 12th grades including instructional videos featuring Pierce County teachers! (www.pinterest.com/pcresourceroom)

The PCSD 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. In the spring, the elementary schools will host days and times so parents may tour the schools and receive information to help prepare them and their children for kindergarten. The District will also coordinate with these programs to ensure that parents are informed about available resources.

The PCSD has established a districtwide Parent Advisory Council comprised of parent representatives from each Title I school 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.

Of School Staff - The PCSD will provide information to principals in order to increase their awareness on the importance of parents in the educational setting. The school FECs will attend training throughout the school year 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 and staff of Title I schools. The district FEC will also provide technical assistance to each Title I school to review and discuss parent and family engagement requirements and initiatives. The PCSD will assist each Title I school with training for appropriate school staff and faculty that will focus on best practices and ideas of how to effectively reach out to parents in a meaningful and productive manner.

To ensure that information related to district, school, and parent programs, meetings, and activities is available to all parents in an understandable and uniform format, each Title I school will send home and post online information for parents and family members about upcoming programs/activities. Parent notifications and resources will be sent home in parents' native language, and interpreters will be available at parent events and meetings (to the extent feasible). Also, information posted on the district website will be translated to the extent feasible. The district will also utilize the automated phone system, school websites, local newspaper, REMIND, and other school message systems to post information for parents.