

Catoosa County Schools

Title I Parent and Family Engagement Policy

Approved May 3, 2016 for School Year 2016-17

What Is Parent and Family Engagement?

Title I is a federal program that supplements the education of students in high poverty schools. Research shows that 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. Therefore, Title I supports genuine family participation in the education of children in Title I schools.

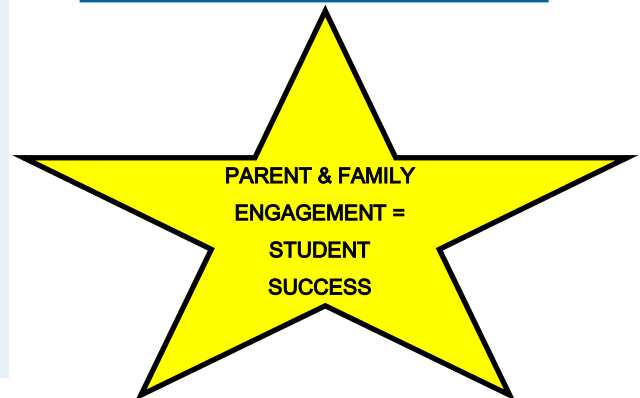
Catoosa County Schools will use the following definition of parent and family engagement to guide family activities. It is expected that Title I schools will carry out programs, activities and procedures in accordance with this definition:

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

- (A) That parents may request regular meetings.
- (B) That parents play an integral role in assisting their child ' s learning;
- (C) That parents are encouraged to be actively involved in their child ' s education at school;
- (D) 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;
- (E) The carrying out of other activities, such as those described in Title I.



The District Advisory Council evaluates the Title I parent and family engagement policy and makes changes based on input gathered throughout the school year.



About the Parent and Family Engagement Policy

In support of strengthening student academic achievement, Catoosa County Schools has developed this parent and family engagement policy that establishes the district ' s expectations for 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 the District ' s commitment to engage families in the education of their children and to build capacity in its Title I schools to implement parent and family engagement strategies and activities designed to achieve the district and student academic achievement goals.

Title I, Part A provides for genuine parent and 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. Principals invite all families to participate in writing and implementing school improvement plans.

Title I legislation contains requirements for schools and school systems to involve families in their children ' s education. Therefore, the District will work with its Title I schools to ensure that the required school-level parent and family engagement policies meet the requirements of Section 1118 (b) and each include, as a component, a school-parent compact found in the legislation.

If the system plan for Title I, Part A, developed under section 1112 of the ESEA, 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. Each policy requests such input. The system policy has an attached cover sheet requesting input.

Reservation of Funds —How does Title I money get to schools?

The Catoosa County School District:

- Will reserve at least 1 percent from the total amount of Title I funds it receives in FY17 to carry out the parent and family engagement requirements listed in this policy and as described in the Title I legislation.
- Will distribute 90 percent of the amount reserved to all Title I schools to support local-level parent and family engagement programs and activities.
- Will provide clear guidance and communication to assist each Title I school in:
 1. Developing an adequate parent and family engagement budget that addresses needs assessed and parent recommendations.
 2. Meeting with Title I coordinator regularly to consult with principals regarding Title I budgeting.
 3. Collecting input from School Parent Advisory and District Advisory regarding Title I budgeting and Programs offered.
 4. Seeking input regarding how funds are allotted for parent and family engagement activities.

Title I eligible schools have planned programs designed to improve high quality parent and family engagement. In the fall all parents

Jointly Developed

During the annual District Advisory Council meeting in May, all parents are invited to participate and provide suggestions and ideas to improve this district parent and family engagement policy for the upcoming school year. The district announces to all parents informing them about this meeting by posting in school newsletters, inviting them at Title I meetings, and posting an announcement on the school and district websites. During this meeting, parents also review and discuss the Comprehensive LEA Improvement Plan (CLIP). See the insert on the following page.

Additionally, each Title I school uses its parent advisory council to review the district parent and family engagement policy at both fall and spring meetings. Input is sought at all parent meetings, as well. Mid-year system PICs facilitate a parent café where parents and community take a fresh look at this policy. Suggestions are presented to the annual District Advisory Council that approves the policy at the meeting in May.

Upon final revision, the district parent and family engagement policy is incorporated into the CLIP which is submitted to the state. Parents are welcome to submit comments and feedback at any time on the school district website or by submitting written comments to Title I schools. All feedback is considered for the policy for the next school year.

The district parent and family engagement policy is posted on district and school websites, distributed during annual Title I school meetings early each school year, and made available in family resource centers, as well as all family meetings.

receive a questionnaire requesting the kinds of workshops, activities, etc., they desire to help them promote the academic growth of their children.

In the spring all parents receive a more comprehensive evaluation. The system creates charts representing school and system data. Schools create plans of action for all parent and family engagement activities based on parent input as well as assessed need from student achievement. Each school requests funds according to these desired activities in their schoolwide plan.

This information from parents provides suggestions on how these parent and 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 parent and family engagement budget. See page eight for sample input card.

Opportunities for Parent Consultation

Input and suggestions from parents are essential components of district and school improvement plans that are developed each year. All Title I parents are invited to attend the District Advisory Council meeting described in this section to share their ideas and suggestions to help the district, schools, and students reach student academic achievement goals.

In May, all parents and community are welcome to hear the latest updates from Catoosa County Schools as well as review and provide input into the district parent and family engagement policy and the Comprehensive LEA Improvement Plan for the upcoming school year. The District communicates information regarding this meeting through school newsletters, parent meeting agendas, and on the school district website:

catoosa.k12.ga.us

The spring annual evaluation survey and fall survey contain questions related to the parent and family engagement budget as well as sections for parents to provide comments. Evaluations and requests for input are evident at all parent and family engagement meetings. Schools welcome parent input and comments at any time regarding their schoolwide plans. All parent feedback will be considered for revised plans for the next year. Plans are posted on school websites for parents to view and post feedback throughout the year. We also distribute an annual survey asking parents for their suggestions on plans and the use of funds for parent and family engagement. Parents can also give feedback at any time at family centers, school offices or parent activities. Schools are encouraged to seek parent input through newsletters.

Strengthening Our Schools

District parent involvement coordinators (PICs) provide assistance and support to all Title I schools to ensure parent and family engagement requirements are being implemented. Title I schools will receive notifications and resources from the district and PICs to help them improve and strengthen parent and family engagement.

In addition to frequent communication and school visits, the Title I department assists through:

—**The Catoosa County Parent and Family Engagement Handbook** and the Catoosa County **Title I Procedural Manual** that delineate approved practices, checklists and resources to increase and respond to family engagement.

—**Consultation** for the school improvement process— System level parent support is provided to each Title I school in this process.

—Parent involvement coordinators and the Title I coordinator review and respond to parent comments from evaluations solicited from meetings and results of fall and spring surveys.

—Monthly parent involvement coordinator meetings are held where professional learning, networking and updating occur. PICs attend regional and state meetings to keep current.

—Quarterly documentation reviews are done onsite to follow school progress on compliance implementation and documentation.

— System parent involvement coordinators attend and help plan school-based parent meetings.

Parent and Family Engagement Evaluation

Each year, Title I will conduct an evaluation of the content and effectiveness of this parent and family engagement policy and parent and family engagement activities. This is done to improve the academic quality of Title I schools using an annual parent survey and policy checklist.

Beginning in February, each Title I school will send home a survey for parents to provide valuable feedback regarding parent and family engagement activities and programs. System PICs create bar graphs from parent responses to make each school and system survey easier to understand.

These are shared with parents, parent advisory councils, faculties, principals and the District Advisory Council. Graphs are invaluable in the policy revision process.

In addition to the annual survey, each Title I school asks parents to evaluate meetings and program effectiveness. This is done at every parent and family engagement activity to determine the needs of parents of children eligible to receive Title I.

Catoosa County Title I parent and family engagement uses the findings and survey results to:

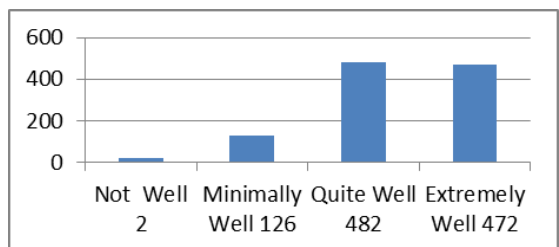
1. Design strategies to improve effective parent and family engagement,
2. To remove possible barriers to parent participation, and
3. To revise its parent and family engagement policies.

Each Title I school has a parent involvement coordinator (PIC) who serves parents and staff. PICs meet with system PICs monthly to grow professionally and share effective strategies.



Comprehensive LEA Improvement Plan (CLIP)

Parents and community are invited to planning meetings to help develop the Catoosa County CLIP. Notification of each meeting is posted on the system website. The Title I Coordinator attends meetings hosted by the system parent involvement coordinators in order to gather input. Parents and community are included in discussions and are asked to submit written responses to areas addressed in CLIP.



How well does the school encourage you to play a role in the **school improvement planning process**?

Building School and Parent Capacity*

Catoosa County Title I builds schools' and parents' capacity for strong parent and family engagement. In order to ensure effective involvement of parents and to support a partnership among Title I schools, parents, and community, Catoosa County Title I stresses the capacity builders that follow on the next pages .

*Building capacity refers to growth by being supplied resources, training, and opportunities for learning.



District Advisory Council is open to parents of all Title I students.



Parents learn about Parent Portal, Internet safety, and how to use technology in assisting their children.



The school district and schools, provide materials and training to help parents work with their children to improve academic achievement, as literacy training, and using technology, as appropriate, to foster parent and family engagement:

Schools provide parents with materials and training to help them work with their children to improve academic achievement. This is accomplished through workshops and resources to help them assist their children academically. Newsletters, websites and written material provide parents with information to help them work with their children at home. Training is offered that will educate parents and give them the knowledge to further support their children's education. An example is a common offering known as Math 101 where parents are taught how to "do" math in a conceptual manner as their children are taught at school.

Materials and training are provided to parents in such areas as literacy and technology, thus helping them develop the skills to help their children improve their achievement levels. This is accomplished in part by these actions:

- Handouts are available at every parent meeting explaining the Georgia Performance Standards.
- System Title I distributes a newsletter (*Home & School Connection* in English and Spanish) to be used in part or whole for parents. *Home & School Connection* addresses a variety of parent issues.
- Vital Title I information is stuffed into Snack Packs that are sent to the homes of qualifying families each Friday.
- System and school level parent involvement coordinators participate in community literacy organizations such as the Family Collaborative and Catoosa Citizens for Literacy. Parents are made aware of free GED, adult education and parenting classes.
- Parent Involvement Coordinators work with Title I schools in planning and facilitating activities such as technology, science, and reading nights for parents.
- In some schools parent and family engagement plans include a technology workshop for parents during the school year. Recommended workshops include "How to Use the Parent Portal to Monitor Student Achievement" and "How to Use Online Assessment."
- Resources and parenting books are available for parent checkout and housed in school family resource centers.

Parents learn how to do math in the methods their children are learning.



The school district will, to the extent feasible and appropriate, coordinate and integrate parent and family engagement programs and activities with Head Start, Even Start, Home Instruction Programs for Preschool Youngsters, the Parents as Teachers Program, and public preschool and other programs, and conduct other activities, such as family resource centers, that encourage and support parents in more fully participating in the education of their children .

Schools and system distribute and share information about school events and activities for parents. These help support student learning and promote academic achievement. System parent involvement coordinators (apart from regular distribution and advertisement of family center activities,) notify other programs of appropriate activities in schools. School-based PICs issue specific invitations to parents of students involved in parent activities in other school programs.

Special attention is given to parents from other programs by inviting them to participate in school programs and events focused on improving school transition. Schools offer programs and visitations. Parent involvement coordinators work with the corresponding organizations to strengthen communication and enhance potential participation. System PICs communicate regularly with these organizations' leaders at the Catoosa County Collaborative, Catoosa Citizens for Literacy, and email.



The school district will take the following actions to ensure that information related to school and parent programs, meetings, and other activities is sent to the parents of participating children in an understandable and uniform format,

Homework Dictionaries are available for checkout in multiple languages in family resource rooms.



Materials explaining various parts of the Title I A legislation and *Homework Dictionaries* (multiple languages) have been purchased for parents. These materials are written in jargon-free and non-English language thus making them easier for parents to read and understand. Additionally, brochures explaining the components of the Title I program have been purchased for parents. The materials contained in these brochures explain how children can benefit from participation in this federally funded program. These materials also provide an explanation of school compacts and their purpose in improving student performance. The annual meeting handout/brochure along with Testing in Georgia, Georgia Standards of Excellence, How to Communicate with Your Child 's Teacher and Title I Schoolwide Components are distributed at every meeting and always available to parents at the school and online. These documents are available in multiple languages. Readability is always a consideration.

Information and key documents will be provided in appropriate languages and understandable format when needed. Parents are given materials, correspondence and information in appropriate languages, according to the school population, and in a format that is family-friendly. Parents are offered interpreter services so they may fully participate in school events and activities that are provided for parents. If at all possible, every effort will be made to translate documents into languages parents can understand.

The Catoosa County Enrollment Center alerts system parent involvement coordinators when speakers of other languages enroll their children. They, in turn, alert school-based parent involvement coordinators. Parent involvement coordinators poll teachers periodically for students whose home language is not English to find out their needs.

The school district will, with the assistance of its Title I schools, provide assistance to parents of children served by the school district or school, as appropriate, in understanding topics such as:

- State academic **content standards**,
- State student **academic achievement standards**,
- State and local academic **assessments** including alternate assessments,
- Requirements** of Part A,
- How to **monitor** their child’s progress, and
- How to **work with educators**.

The Catoosa County School District and local schools provide information to parents regarding curriculum, instruction and assessment in a variety of ways. Through parent newsletters, pamphlets, parent meetings, and school websites, each school shares vital information about Georgia curriculum. Academic status is explained, and discussed both orally and in writing with parents. System PICs have provided a brochure explaining Georgia Standards of Excellence.

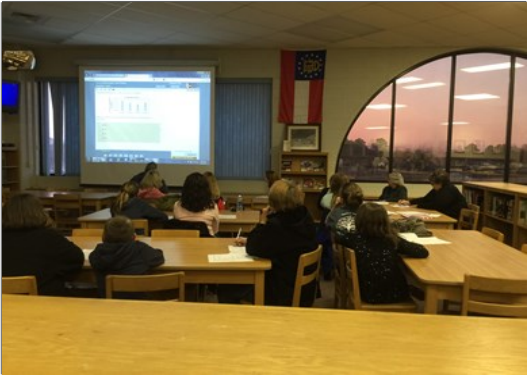
Through information shared at each school’s annual Title I meeting and through written materials designed for parents, components of schoolwide programs are shared with parents. Schools personalize the annual meeting agenda and distribute handouts regarding testing in Georgia schools and schoolwide program components.

Emphasis is placed on the importance of students being ready for tests and how parents can do their part to help their children perform at their best on the state’s Milestones. Test Prep nights are common offerings.

Through parent newsletters, school websites, parent-teacher organizations, school councils, and other parent meetings, par-

ents are informed of the requirements of Title I and how they can work with their children’s teachers to monitor and participate in student progress. Parents are encouraged to take advantage of the Parent Portal and parent-teacher conferences. Helping parents understand that they are needed in decisions that are made about the education of their children is a priority. Thus, every effort is made to offer meetings at times when parents can attend and become more informed about issues relating to their children’s progress in school. Input and participation is sought continuously regarding ways parents can be a part of the decision-making process relating to their children’s education. System parent involvement coordinators publish and distribute a pamphlet—*How to Communicate with Your Child’s Teacher*.

Parents taking a Milestones practice test



The school district will, with the assistance of its schools and parents, educate its teachers, pupil services personnel, principals and other staff, in how to reach out to, communicate with, and work with parents as equal partners, in the value and utility of contributions of parents, and in how to implement and coordinate parent programs and build ties between parents . ★

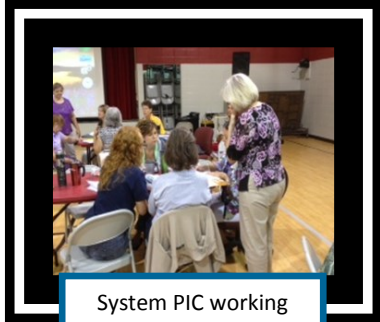
It is the belief of Catoosa County Title I that a strong parent and family engagement program is vital if our children are going to make optimal academic progress. This requires that all stakeholders hold to this belief if it is to be accomplished. Presentations, communication and partnerships are made to each Title I faculty regarding this important belief.

How is this accomplished?

- ⇒ Quarterly contact is made with each school staff. This provides communication or training regarding different ways the District, schools and parents can work together to reach goals. These contacts encourage use of best practices and ideas on how to reach out to parents in meaningful and productive ways.
- ⇒ System parent involvement coordinators, with assistance from parents, present at the Catoosa Instructional Fair.
- ⇒ System parent involvement coordinators meet with Title I principals at least two times during the school year.
- ⇒ In addition, system parent involvement coordinators developed the *Catoosa County Title I Parent and Family Engage-*

ment Handbook for all administrators and school-based coordinators. The purpose of the guide is to present basic resource information that will assist schools in strengthening family support programs.

- ⇒ Title I broadcasts through Parent Teacher Organizations (PTO), school councils, parent newsletters, and school websites, that parents are indeed a child’s first teacher.



System PIC working with West Side Elementary Faculty

Provide other reasonable support for parent and family engagement activities under section 1118 as parents may request:

Individual Catoosa County schools constantly provide opportunities for parents to request additional support and to offer suggestions and input on the improvement of parent and family engagement programs. Even when Title I budgets do not allow such activities, other funding sources are sought. District and School Parent and Family Engagement Advisory Councils are ways parents may request other means of support, including different activities or types of workshops to be offered in Title I schools. The goal is that parents will be encouraged to become involved actively in their children's education. Local schools and the district seek parental requests at all opportunities through activity evaluations, surveys and regular meetings.

Catoosa County Schools will provide full opportunities for the participation of parents.

In carrying out parent and family engagement requirements established by Title I, district parent involvement coordinators will communicate and collaborate with the Office for Student Support Services to ensure full opportunities for participation of parents:

- ◇ with limited English proficiency,
- ◇ with disabilities, and
- ◇ of migratory children.

This means that Catoosa County will provide information and school reports in a language parents can understand.

Schools and system provide information and school reports required under section 1111 of the ESEA in an understandable and uniform format and, including alternative formats upon request, and, to the extent practicable, in a **language parents understand**. The system parent involvement coordinators routinely translate documents as needed. A list of translators is maintained at the system office. All documents are examined for readability levels.



Father and son participate in literacy breakfast learning about and receiving grade-specific journals to use at home.

Mark Your Calendars

Annual Spring Survey due March 15, 2017
Annual Meetings August 11, 2016

This districtwide parent and family engagement policy has been developed jointly and agreed upon with parents of children participating in Title I, Part A programs. It is the product of collaboration among parents, school and district personnel at the District Advisory Council. This policy was adopted by the Title I District Advisory Council on May 3, 2016 and effective for the 2016-2017 school year. The school district will distribute this policy to all parents of participating Title I, Part A children on or before August 31, 2016.



Cover Sheet
Catoosa County Parent and Family Engagement
Policy/Plan

We want your input. Please take this policy and make suggestions below or on the document itself. We want to improve parent and family engagement in Catoosa County Title I schools. Let us know how Title I can do a better job serving your family either in programs or funding. Return this document to your parent involvement coordinator, and she will forward it to the Title I Office at the Catoosa County Department of Education. Thank you!

Suggestions:



We need to hear from you about what we can do to improve your child's education. Check below how we can do that best:

- I would like a conference with my child's teacher.
- I need more information about what my child is learning this year.
- I want to know how Title I money is being spent on my child's education.
- I would like to make the following suggestion regarding how Title I money is spent: _____

Other _____
My name is _____
Phone _____
Email _____

Return to your child's teacher.

Input card is always available for your suggestions anytime, any meeting and anywhere at your Title I school.



The Catoosa County Title I parent and family engagement policy has been developed jointly with, and agreed on with, parents of children participating in Title I, Part A programs, as evidenced by Lisa Miller, Title I Coordinator.

This policy was adopted by the Catoosa School District on May 3, 2016 and will be in effect until its next revision May 2017.

Catoosa County Title I parent and family engagement will distribute this policy to all parents of participating Title I, Part A children on or before the first day of school.

(Signature of Title I Coordinator, Lisa Miller)

(Date)

