

Douglas County School System
Title I Local Education Agency (LEA)
Parental Involvement Policy
2015-2016

PART I

GENERAL EXPECTATIONS

The Douglas County School System agrees to implement the following statutory requirements:

- The school district will put into operation programs, activities and procedures for the involvement of parents in all of its schools with Title I, Part A programs, consistent with section 1118 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA). These programs, activities and procedures will be planned and operated with meaningful consultation with parents of participating children.
- Consistent with section 1118, the school district will work with its schools to ensure that the required school-level parental involvement policies meet the requirements of section 1118(b) of the ESEA, and each include, as a component, a school-parent compact consistent with section 1118(d) of the ESEA.
- The school district will incorporate this districtwide parental involvement policy into its LEA plan developed under section 1112 of the ESEA.
- In carrying out the Title I, Part A parental involvement requirements, to the extent practicable, the school district and its schools will provide full opportunities for the participation of parents with limited English proficiency, parents with disabilities, and parents of migratory children, including providing 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.
- If the LEA 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.
- The school district will involve the parents of children served in Title I, Part A schools in decisions about how the 1 percent of Title I, Part A funds reserved for parental involvement is spent, and will ensure that not less than 95 percent of the one percent reserved goes directly to the schools.
- The school district will be governed by the following statutory definition of parental involvement, and expects that its Title I schools will carry out programs, activities and procedures in accordance with this definition:

Parental involvement means the participation of parents 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 at school;*
- (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 1118 of the ESEA.*

PART II.

DESCRIPTION OF HOW DISTRICT WILL IMPLEMENT REQUIRED DISTRICTWIDE PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT POLICY COMPONENTS

1. The Douglas County School System will take the following actions to involve parents in the joint development of its districtwide parental involvement plan under section 1112 of the ESEA:

This policy is reviewed throughout each school year and updated annually. Sources used in the development of this policy include the annual Stakeholder Planning Meeting, individual school PAC meetings, completed workshop evaluations, annual parent survey results, parent meeting and workshop discussions and parent-teacher conferences. This policy and all school policies are posted on our system and school websites where they are available for parent comments and suggestions. This policy is a working document subject to review and revision.

2. The Douglas County School System will take the following actions to involve parents in the process of school review and improvement under section 1116 of the ESEA:

School Improvement Plans are reviewed and updated annually. Parent Advisory Council and School Council meetings will be held during the year to monitor progress on school and district parental engagement goals. Each Title I school will hold an annual meeting to discuss the review and implementation of the Title I plan, and how Title I funds for parent involvement activities will be spent. The Douglas County School System will host an annual Stakeholders meeting to review the Consolidated Application-Comprehensive LEA Improvement Plan (CLIP). The invitation for this meeting will be posted on the district's website and advertised on Douglas County Happenings. The district will also utilize the ParentLink phone message system and NotifyMe for advertisement.

3. The Douglas County School System will provide the following necessary coordination, technical assistance, and other support to assist Title I, Part A schools in planning and implementing effective parental involvement activities to improve student academic achievement and school performance:

The Title I Department will provide guidance and support on appropriate use of parent involvement funds and review school Parental Involvement Policies, School-Parent Compacts and Action Plans to ensure compliance. The Parent Involvement team will meet on a monthly basis to review policy and procedure and stay current on Parental Involvement strategies and trends.

4. The Douglas County School System will coordinate and integrate parental involvement strategies in Part A with parental involvement strategies under the following other programs: Head Start, Babies Can't Wait Early Intervention Program and Pre-Kindergartens, by:

The Parent Outreach Facilitators (POFs) and/or Instructional Lead Teachers (ILTs) will coordinate with Head Start and Pre-Kindergartens to facilitate a smooth transition for both parents and students from these programs to local elementary schools. Yearly parent orientations, facilitated by DCSS Title I staff will be held at Douglas County Head Start to help pre-K parents make the transition to Kindergarten. Working collaboratively with outside agencies, the Parent Outreach Specialist, the POFs and the ILTs will promote Kindergarten registration through various communication strategies, such as flyers, public notices, and phone calls.

5. The Douglas County School System will take the following actions to conduct, with the involvement of parents, an annual evaluation of the content and effectiveness of this parental involvement policy in improving the quality of its Title I, Part A schools. The evaluation will include identifying barriers to greater participation by parents in parental involvement 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 school district will use the findings of the evaluation about its parental involvement policy and activities to design strategies for more effective parental involvement, and to revise, if necessary (and with the involvement of parents) its parental involvement policies.

Parents are surveyed annually to determine whether parent engagement needs are being met effectively and appropriately through the implementation of the parent engagement programs. Parents are given the option to complete the survey via paper copy or electronically (Survey Monkey). The findings of this survey are used to develop strategies for school improvement and/or to revise the LEA and school-level policies. These findings are also used in planning future parent workshops and meetings. Areas evaluated include academics and school leadership, parent involvement, Title I, school environment, and the school Parent Engagement Program.

6. The Douglas County School System will build the schools' and parents' capacity for strong parental involvement, in order to ensure effective involvement of parents and to support a partnership among the school involved, parents, and the community to improve student academic achievement, through the following activities specifically described below:

A. The school district will, with the assistance of its Title I, Part A schools, provide assistance to parents of children served by the school district or school, as appropriate, in understanding topics such as the following, by undertaking the actions described in this paragraph --

- the State's academic content standards,
- the State's student academic achievement standards,
- the State and local academic assessments including alternate assessments,
- the requirements of Part A,
- how to monitor their child's progress, and
- how to work with educators:

Distribute National PTA Parent's Guide to Student Success (English and Spanish) by grade level that helps parents understand what their children will be learning. Conduct Common Core Georgia Performance Standards (CCGPS) parent workshops to inform parents about their child's curriculum. Conduct parent workshops to inform parents of testing tips for State and local assessments.

B. The school district will, with the assistance of its schools, provide materials and training to help parents work with their children to improve their children's academic achievement, such as literacy training, and using technology, as appropriate, to foster parental involvement, by:

Title I schools will offer computer access to parents in the Parent Resource Centers to aid in their knowledge and use of technology. Laptops are also available for check-out at most Title I schools to prepare parents for 21st century technology, assist them with computer literacy and allow them to help their children with homework and/or school projects. Teacher facilitated workshops will provide tips and ideas to parents on helping their children with core content subject areas. Parents are given the opportunity to check out a wide variety of resource materials from the Parent Resource Centers to use at home with their children.

C. 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 and schools, by:

Title I staff will provide professional development, to teachers, pupil services personnel, principals and other staff during each school year. Parent Leaders may help facilitate this professional development. Topics addressed can include: Communicating with Parents, Homework: Including Parents in the Process, The Basics of Parent Engagement, Diversity and Inclusion: Promoting Cultural Competency, Get in the Game: A Parent Engagement Playbook, Enhancing School-Home Relationships Through Student-Led Conferences, and Turning Volunteering into Schoolwide Victories.

D. The school district will, to the extent feasible and appropriate, coordinate and integrate parental involvement 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 parent resource centers, that encourage and support parents in more fully participating in the education of their children, by:

The Parent Outreach Specialist, the POFs and the ILTs will work with early education programs to coordinate parent involvement efforts to have a greater impact on the community. Yearly parent orientations, facilitated by DCSS Title I staff will be held at Douglas County Head Start to help pre-K parents make the transition to Kindergarten. The school district and all Title I schools will promote the Parent Resource Centers in the district. Transition assistance and resources will be offered at all transitional levels.

- E. The school district will take the following actions to ensure that information related to the school and parent- programs, meetings, and other activities, is sent to the parents of participating children in an understandable and uniform format, including alternative formats upon request, and, to the extent practicable, in a language the parents can understand:

The school district and schools will translate written communication in a language parents can understand, when possible and feasible. Schools can use contracted services of an interpreter and/or translator when needed, if allocated and applicable. Translating and interpreting services and devices may also be used.

- F. Provide other reasonable support for parental involvement activities under section 1118 as parents may request.

POFs and ILTs will serve as the school-based intermediary contact for concerns, comments and requests from parents and community members. The POFs will respond to these concerns and comments and requests as needed and appropriate. If required, they will involve other school or district level personnel.

PART III.

DISCRETIONARY DISTRICTWIDE PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT POLICY COMPONENTS

This LEA Parental Involvement Policy includes the following additional paragraphs listing and describing other discretionary activities that our county, in consultation with its parents, chooses to undertake to build parents' capacity for involvement in the school and school system to support their children's academic achievement, such as the following discretionary activities listed under section 1118(e) of the ESEA:

- paying reasonable and necessary expenses associated with parental involvement activities, including transportation and child care costs, to enable parents to participate in school-related meetings and training sessions;

Title I schools may allocate parental involvement funds for reasonable child care costs that will enable parents to attend parent meetings and/or workshops.

- training parents to enhance the involvement of other parents;

Schools will encourage parents to participate in the overall school community and share knowledge with other parents obtained at parent meetings, workshops or from the Parent Outreach Facilitator and Parent Resource Center.

- developing appropriate roles for community-based organizations and businesses, including faith-based organizations, in parental involvement activities; and

Community-based organizations, businesses and faith-based organizations may support schools by providing student and parent incentives and by serving as guest speakers for events such as Career Day.

PART IV.

ADOPTION

This Districtwide Parental Involvement Policy has been developed jointly with, and agreed on with, parents of children participating in Title I, Part A programs. This policy was adopted by the Douglas County School System and will be in effect for the 2015-2016 school year. The school district will distribute this policy to all parents of participating Title I, Part A children.