

LAWRENCE COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM

PARENT & FAMILY ENGAGEMENT POLICY



About the Parent and Family Engagement Policy

In support of strengthening student academic achievement, the Lawrence County School System (LCSS) 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 LCSS'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, LCSS 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 ESSA.

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.



*When students,
schools, families,
and communities
work together, we
can achieve
GREATness!*

Jointly Developed

During parent teacher conferences in March, all families were invited to participate and provide suggestion and ideas to improve this district parent and family engagement policy for the 2019-20 school year. The district communicated through the schools to all families informing them about this opportunity. During parent teacher conferences the families were given the opportunity to review and discuss the District Improvement Plan. Additionally, each Title I school had a representative on the district Parent Advisory Council to review the district parent and family engagement policy before the end of the year.

Upon final revisions, the district parent and family engagement policy was incorporated into the District Improvement Plan, which was submitted to the state. Families are welcome to submit comments and feedback regarding the policy at any time by submitting written comments to your child's school. All feedback received by July 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 meetings early this school year, and made available in the schools.

Strengthening Our Schools

The district family engagement coordinator 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 to help them improve and strengthen family engagement. In addition to frequent communication and school visits, the district will hold quarterly meeting and trainings with the Title I schools' family engagement coordinators to review family engagement plans and activities.

Reservation of Funds

LCSS Will reserve 1% 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 ESSA. Furthermore, LCSS will distribute 90% 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 Title I Meeting in May for families to provide suggestions how these family engagement funds will be used in the upcoming year at the school-level. Comments from this meeting will be reviewed by the district to determine areas of need for the upcoming school year and consider changes to the family engagement budget.

At the end of the day, the most overwhelming key to a child's success is the positive involvement of parents. -Jane D. Hill



Building Capacity

LCSS will build the 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 districtwide activities and programs such as Parent Advisory meetings. The Parent Advisory meetings build partnerships with parents.

Of Parents:

LCSS 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. LCSS will provide educational parent nights for parents to gain knowledge about the challenging state academic standards, local academic assessments, as well as the required assessments for Tennessee students including alternative forms of assessments. The dates and locations for these events will be shared through each Title I school's family engagement coordinator.

LCSS will also coordinate pages on the district and school websites that will contain resources and materials 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.

LCSS has established a Parent Advisory group comprised of family 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 with this group.

LCSS 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 meeting focused on family engagement activities. In the spring, the elementary schools host Kindergarten Sneak-A-Peek so parents may tour the schools and receive information to help prepare them and their children for Kindergarten. LCSS will also coordinate with these programs to ensure that parents are informed about available resources.



*Together may we
give our students
the roots to grow
and the wings to
fly.*

Building Capacity

Of School Staff:

LCSS will provide trainings for family engagement coordinators 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. LCSS will also host 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, 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. Information posted on the district website will be translated to the extent practicable. The district will also utilize district and school websites, local news media, and other school message systems to post information for parents.

Accessibility

In carrying out the parent and family engagement requirements established by Section 1116 of ESSA, the district family engagement coordinator will communicate and collaborate with the ELL Coordinator and Special Education Director to ensure full opportunities for participation of parents with limited English proficiency, parents with disabilities, and parents of migratory children including providing informations and school reports in a language parents can understand.

Parent and Family Engagement Evaluation

Each year, LCSS 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.

Title I school will survey the parents to gather valuable feedback regarding the parent and family engagement activities and programs. Schools will also have Parent Advisory meetings to facilitate group discussions to discuss the needs of families and to design strategies for more effective family engagement. LCSS will use the findings from the school forums and the survey results to design strategies to improve effective family engagement, remove possible barriers to parent participation, and revise its parent and family engagement policies.

Adoption

This district wide 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 evidence by the collaboration of parents, schools, and district personnel at the Parent Advisory meetings.