



2019-2020

Parent and Family Engagement Plan

Revised August 1, 2019

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:

- That parents play an integral role in assisting their child's learning.
- That parents are encouraged to be actively involved in their child's education.
- 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.
- The carrying out of other activities, such as those described in Section 1116 of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).

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About the Parent and Family Engagement Policy

In support of strengthening student academic achievement, the Meriwether County School District (MCSS) 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 MCSS'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, MCSS 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 meetings in the spring, all parents are invited to participate and provide suggestions and ideas to improve the district parent and family engagement policy for the 2018-2019 school year. The district uses advertisements via social media, district and school websites, automated calling system, emails, and flyers to inform parents about the meeting. During the meetings, parents also review and discuss the Comprehensive LEA Improvement Plan (CLIP). Additionally, each Title I school uses its Parent Advisory Council to review the district and school improvement plans.

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 regarding the plan at any time on the district website or by submitting written comments to their child's school. All feedback received by May 26, 2018 is included with the plan for the 2018-2019 school year.

The district parent and family engagement plan is posted on district and school websites, distributed during the annual Title I school meetings held prior to October 1, 2018 and made available in the schools' parent resource centers.

Strengthening Our Schools

The district utilizes the PTA's National Standards for Family School Partnership, adopted by the State Board of Education in 2010, to support family and community engagement.

A district Family Engagement Coordinator (DFEC) will provide technical assistance and coordinate district family engagement activities with the school Family Engagement Coordinators (SFEC) to ensure the six standards are being satisfied and that processes and activities are implemented and evaluated. In addition to school visits and webinars, the DFEC will hold frequent meetings/trainings with principals and SFEC to review family engagement plans; learn and discuss strategies to increase family and community engagement; and develop effective forms of two-way communication. Additionally, the district convenes a Victory in Progress (VIP) meeting in July for principals to review family engagement requirements, timelines and guidance on Title I, Part A. The district collaborates with Communities in Schools, United Way of Central Georgia and DRIVE Educational System to engage parents and family members effectively in education.

The six standards are:

- *welcoming all families;*
- *communicating effectively;*
- *supporting student success;*
- *speaking up for every child;*
- *sharing power; and*
- *collaborating with the community.*

Reservation of Funds

The Meriwether County School District will reserve 1 percent from the total amount of Title I funds it receives in FY19 to carry out the parent and family engagement requirements listed in this plan and as described in Section 1116 of the ESSA. Furthermore, the MCSS 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 May 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.



State of the District Meeting ~ May 6, 2020

All parents are welcome to hear the latest updates from the Meriwether County School District as well as review and provide input into the district parent and family engagement policy and the Comprehensive LEA Improvement Plan for the 2018-19 school year. Notices regarding this meeting will be emailed to all parents in advance of the meeting. The district will also communicate information regarding this meeting on the school district website.

School Improvement Forums ~ April 6-10, 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 and email and text parents notifying 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.

**Unable to attend these meetings?
Please visit www.mcssga.org to review the meeting documents and minutes and leave your input.**

Building Capacity

MCSS 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 districtwide activities and programs.

Of Parents - The district and through its Title I schools to work to support student success by providing assistance to parents and family members in understanding state and district academic information connected to their student's learning and progress and information regarding the Title I program. The district will provide workshops for parents to gain knowledge about Georgia Standards of Excellence, state curriculum and achievement goals, as well as required assessments for Georgia students including alternative forms of assessment. The dates and location of workshops will be posted on the district website and shared through each Title I school's website and newsletters.

MCSS will also coordinate pages on the district and school websites that will contain resources and materials, including parent guides, study guides, practice assessments, and 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), the MCSS technology specialists will partner with Title I schools to host workshops for parents. Dates and times for these workshops will be determined and announced by each individual school.

MCSS has established a districtwide Parent Advisory Council comprised of parent representatives from each Title I school's Parent Advisory Council 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. The district will also encourage collaboration and participation with community partners by posting recordings of council and other district meetings on the website and increase participation by utilizing video conferencing technology to accommodate the schedules of these valuable partners.

MCSS 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, the elementary schools will host *Kindergarten Ready* days so parents may tour the schools and receive information to help prepare them and their children for kindergarten. MCSS will also coordinate with these programs to ensure that parents are informed about available resources.

Of School Staff - MCSS will conduct four trainings during the school year for principals and school level Family and Engagement Coordinators (SFEC) 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. MCSS 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, and activities are 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 meetings. Information posted on the district website will be translated to the extent practicable. The district will also utilize school phone call systems, district and school websites, local news media, and other school message systems to post information for parents.



Parent and Family Engagement Evaluation

Parents are provided opportunities to participate, as equal partners, in the decisions that affect children and families. The MCSS will conduct an evaluation of the content and effectiveness of this parent and family engagement plan and the family engagement activities to improve the academic quality of the Title I schools

through an annual parent survey and the State of the District and School Improvement Forums.

Mark Your Calendars

For Parents	For Schools
School Improvement Forums April 6 - 10, 2020	Principals Meeting July 22, 2019
State of the District Meeting May 6, 2020	F.E.C. Meetings 2 nd Monday each month
Annual Parent Survey March /2020	Annual Parent Survey March/2020

Beginning in April, each Title I school will send home a survey for parents to provide valuable feedback regarding the 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 School Improvement Forums to facilitate group discussions to obtain input from parents of children eligible to receive Title I services and to design strategies for more effective family engagement. The district and schools will use the findings from the forums and the survey results to implement processes for effective family engagement, to remove possible barriers to parent participation, and to revise district and family engagement plans.

Accessibility

In carrying out the parent and family engagement requirements established by Section 1116 of the ESSA, the district FEC 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, the district will provide information and school reports in a language parents can understand to the extent possible.

Adoption

This district Parent and Family Engagement Plan 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 Forum. This plan was adopted by the Meriwether County School District on July 24, 2018 and will be in effect for the 2018-2019 academic school year. The school district will distribute this plan in multiple ways to all parents of participating Title I, Part A children on or before September 1, 2018.