

# Muscogee County School District



## Parent and Family Engagement Policy

### What is Parent and Family Engagement?

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

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

### What is Title I?

Title I is a federally funded program that provides funds to schools with high percentages of economically disadvantaged students to help ensure that all children meet challenging state academic content and academic standards. Title I provides services that are in addition to or above and beyond what the district is providing for every student/school.

### Reservation of Funds

The MCSD will reserve 1% from the total amount of Title I funds it receives for the 2019-2020 school year to carry out the Parent and Family Engagement requirements listed in this policy and as described in Section 1116 of the ESSA. The district will provide clear guidance and communication to assist each Title I school in developing an adequate Parent and Family Engagement budget that addresses their needs and parent recommendations. Each Title I school will survey parents to gather input on how these Parent and Family Engagement funds will be used at their school.

### Muscogee County School District

#### Parent and Family Engagement Policy 2019-2021

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**Mission:** To inspire and equip all students to achieve unlimited potential.

**Vision:** The MCSD is a beacon of educational excellence where all are known, valued and inspired.

**District Goals:** By July 2023, the Muscogee County School District will implement a Leadership Development Program, Personalized Learning, a Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) with a "Culture of Kindness".

# About the Parent and Family Engagement Policy

In support of strengthening student academic achievement, the Muscogee County School District (MCSD) has developed the 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. The plan will describe the MCSD'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 parent and family engagement at every level of the program, such as 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, the MCSD 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 and each include, as a component, a School-Parent Compact consistent with Section 1116 of ESSA.

## Jointly Developed

All parents were invited to participate in meetings and complete surveys that provide suggestions and ideas to improve the District's Parent and Family Engagement Policy for the 2019-2020 school year. The district asked parents to take a survey to give input on the policy. The policy and survey was posted on the district website. The district also holds a Comprehensive LEA Improvement Plan (CLIP) Meeting informing all parents about the District's Parent and Family Engagement Policy. During this meeting, parents can review and discuss the development of the policy. Upon final revision, the District Parent and Family Engagement Policy will be incorporated into the CLIP, which will be submitted to the state. Parents are welcome to submit comments and feedback regarding the policy at any time by submitting feedback forms to their child's school. All feedback received is considered when revising the policy for the new school year. The District's Parent and Family Engagement Policy will be posted on the district's website, distributed by each Title I school at the beginning of the school year, and made available in the school's 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.

*The six standards are:*

- *Welcoming All Families Into The School Community*
- *Communicating Effectively*
- *Supporting Student Success*
- *Speaking Up For Every Child*
- *Sharing Power*
- *Collaborating With The Community*

Each year, the district's Parent and Family Engagement Program Specialist provides assistance and support to all Title I schools to ensure parent and family engagement requirements are being satisfied and that parent engagement strategies and activities are being implemented. In addition to frequent communication and school visits, the program specialist will provide technical assistance to each school regarding parent and family engagement policies and practices. In efforts to improve the effectiveness of the policies and practices for the upcoming year, the Parent and Family Engagement Program Specialist will hold meetings to strengthen parent and family engagement.

## Accessibility

In carrying out the Parent and Family Engagement requirements established by Section 1116 of ESSA, the district Parent and Family Engagement Program Specialist will communicate and collaborate with district office personnel to ensure full opportunities for participation of parents with limited English proficiency, parents with disabilities, and parents of migratory children. Information will also be provided in a language parents can understand.



## Adoption

The MCSD 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 evidenced by the collaboration of parents, school, and district personnel. This plan was adopted by the Muscogee County School District on June 7, 2019 and will be in effect for the 2020-2021 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 October 1, 2020.

## Parent and Family Engagement Evaluation

Each year, the MCSD will conduct an evaluation of the content effectiveness of the Parent and Family Engagement Policy and activities to improve the academic quality of the Title I schools. In February, each Title I school will send home a survey flyer to inform parents of the district's Annual Parent Survey. There will be an online and hard copy of the survey to allow stakeholders to give their input. All parents are invited to participate in the survey made available on the district and schools' websites. The MCSD will use the findings from the school survey results to design strategies to improve effective parent and family engagement, to remove possible barriers to parent participation, and to revise its Parent and Family Engagement Policies.

## Building Parent and School Capacity

**The MCSD will build parent and school staff capacity to strengthen parent and family engagement throughout the district.**

### Building Parent Capacity

- Schools will educate parents in understanding the school goals, state academic standards, school curriculum, and standardized assessments such as Georgia Milestones and End of Course tests.
- Schools will provide workshops on various topics to assist parents with the educational needs of their children, as well as provide information regarding the Title I program. The dates and locations for these classes will be shared through school newsletters, websites, marquees, and automated messages.
- Schools will provide workshops and educational literature for families to learn more about transitioning from pre-k to kindergarten, elementary to middle school, middle to high school and high school to other postsecondary opportunities and careers.
- The district and schools are committed to encouraging opportunities for parents and family members to serve as parent leaders by organizing events, volunteering at school, participating in PTA/PTO, and networking with each other and with the community.
- A parent resource room/area is located at each Title I school. The resource room contains resources and materials, including parent guides, study guides, and practice assessments, and additional resources to help parents work with their children at home. These resources are available at all Title I schools to help build parent capacity.

### Building School Capacity

- The MCSD will make every effort to ensure that information related to district, school, and parent meetings and activities are available to all parents. Parent notifications and resources will be sent home in the parent's native language, where applicable, and interpreters will be available at parent events and meetings when necessary.
- The MCSD will coordinate and integrate the district's family engagement programs with the Head Start program and other 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 receive information to help prepare them and their children for kindergarten.
- The MCSD will conduct multiple trainings for the school staff to learn and discuss strategies that will increase parent and family engagement, improve school-family communication, and build strong ties with parents.
- The MCSD 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 provide information regarding the Title I program.