

# **Alachua County Public Schools**

## **Title I Parent and Family Engagement Plan**

### **ACPS Commitment to Parent and Family Involvement in the School Program**

The School Board of Alachua County recognizes and values parents and families as children's first teachers and decision-makers in education. The Board believes that student learning is more likely to occur when there is an effective partnership between the school and the student's parents and family. Such a partnership between the home and school and greater involvement of parents in the education of their children generally result in higher academic achievement, improved student behavior, and reduced absenteeism.

The Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESSA), as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015 (ESSA), defines the term "parent" to include a legal guardian or other person standing in loco parentis (such as grandparent or stepparent with whom the child lives, or a person who is legally responsible for the child's welfare). This definition is consistent with F.S. 1000.21, which defines the term "parent" as "either or both parents of a student, any guardian of a student, any person in a parental relationship to a student, or any person exercising supervisory authority of over a student in place of a parent".

For purposes of this policy, the term "family" is used in order to include a child's primary caregivers, who are not their biological parents, such as foster caregivers, grandparents, and other family members, and responsible adults who play a significant role in providing for the well-being of the child.

In cultivating partnerships with families and communities, the Board is committed to the following:

- a. Relationships with Families
- b. Effective Communication
- c. Volunteer Opportunities
- d. Learning at Home
- e. Involving Families in Decision-Making and Advocacy
- f. Collaborating with the Community

### **Engagement of Families**

The District will involve parents and families in the review, planning, and development of the Title I programs including the:

- School Improvement Process
- District Parent and Family Engagement Plan
- Activity Funding for Parent and Family Engagement

Title I families will be invited through periodic notices, personal and written contacts, school marquee announcements, posters, Sky Alert messages, website postings, and surveys to participate in activities to identify goals and/or discuss funding allocations and decisions regarding District Parent and Family Engagement activities. Annual surveys specific to each school will be provided to school community stakeholders, especially parents, to glean feedback from the school's community about the effectiveness of PFE activities as well as ideas for future parent and family engagement activities.

School-based Title I Annual Meetings are held at the start of the school year. These meetings, conducted by the school Principal and Title I staff, are intended to inform families of their school's participation in a School-wide or Targeted Assistance Title I program.

School-Level Parent and Family Engagement Meetings convene in the Spring of each year during which focus groups discuss activities and funding, identify goals and objectives, and review input collected through written surveys and minutes from school-level SAC or Parent/Family Input Meetings. The District Parent and Family Engagement Committee uses the activity evaluations and survey information from individual schools for the review and revision of the District Family and Parent Engagement Plan.

As required, a percentage of the district's Title I allocation will be set aside for Parent and Family Engagement. School-based Parent and Family Engagement allocations are used for activities designed to meet the specific needs of students and families at each school. These activities are identified and developed through an overall consensus during the review process and in conjunction with School Advisory Councils or Charter School Boards as applicable.

### **Technical Assistance**

The District will provide coordination, technical assistance, and other supports necessary to assist Title I schools in planning and implementing effective parent and family engagement activities which build the capacity of families to improve the academic achievement of their child and overall school performance through the following activities:

- On-going site visits conducted throughout the school year by the Title I staff
- Title I Lead Teacher trainings and thorough ongoing consultation
- Systematic reviews of Parent and Family Engagement budgets and activities to ensure trainings/workshops have an academic focus
- Professional Learning Communities and Staff Development that focus on working with and engaging families, while scaffolding the characteristics of family friendly schools
- Annually evaluating school-level Title I programs including Parent and Family Engagement Plan implementation
- Ongoing communication provided, to the extent practicable, in the various languages of the community
- Offering family activities that relate to various cultures, languages, practices, and customs as a means to help bridge economic and cultural barriers
- Providing resources for families to use at home to work with their child to improve academic achievement
- Encouraging the building of relationships *between schools*, for example, between nearby and/or feeder schools, as well as between individual schools and *their community*, such as, partnerships with businesses, universities, ACPS Student Services and/or ACPS Volunteer Services, etc.

### **Coordination and Integration**

The District will coordinate and integrate the following Parent & Family Engagement programs and activities with other Federal, State and Local Programs, to the extent feasible and appropriate, in an effort to provide information and teach parents how they can help improve their children academic achievement at home.

Program	Coordination
Title I, Part A & Early Childhood Education	The Title I Department provides ongoing collaboration and coordination with the Early Childhood Staff and school staff to provide programs for Early Childhood Education families including HIPPI and VPK. Supplemental resources and staff are provided for instruction throughout the school term and to aid with the transition to Kindergarten each Spring.
Title I, Part A & C (Migrant)	The Title I Department provides ongoing collaboration with the Migrant Education Coordinator to provide support and program information. Staff and migrant families are invited to participate in District and School level Title I Parent and Family Engagement events. The Migrant Education office provides to the Title I office a list of participating families 2 to 3 times annually. English-Spanish materials, including the digital newsletter, "Parents Make a Difference", are available in each Title I school's Parent and Family Resource Area and on the Title I website. Title I funds may be utilized to purchase materials for students and families to aid in the transition to Kindergarten to be distributed at Kindergarten Round-up.
Title I, Part A & Title IX (McKinney-Vento)	The Title I Department provides ongoing collaboration with the Homeless Coordinator to provide support and program information. Title I funds a portion of the Homeless Coordinator's salary to provide comparable services to eligible students attending non-Title I schools, as well as the salary for 2 Social Workers to aid eligible families and identification of relevant services.
Title I, Part A & Title III (ESOL)	The Title I Department provides ongoing collaboration with the ESOL Coordinator to provide support and program information. English-Spanish materials, including the digital newsletter, "Parents Make a Difference", are available in each Title I school's Parent and Family Resource Area. Schools may also contact the ESOL Coordinator for assistance with securing translators where and as able.
Title I, Part A & D (Neglected and Delinquent)	The Title I Department provides ongoing collaboration with the Title I Part D Teacher Specialist, Executive Director of Secondary Curriculum, Juvenile Justice Education Manager, and center staff, including assigned school counselors, to coordinate Parent and Family Engagement activities.
Parent Academy	The Title I Department will collaborate with the Parent Academy to enhance services provided to Title I families and the community, such as providing supplemental training or materials related to Kindergarten Transition, Homework Routines, Reading Strategies, Summer Learning Opportunities, Strategies to Address Testing Anxiety, etc.

### **Annual Evaluation**

The District will involve parents and families in an annual evaluation of the content and effectiveness of this Parent and Family Engagement Plan in improving the academic quality of the Title I schools by:

- Collaborating with the Parent Academy staff regarding Parent and Family Engagement offerings.
- Conducting reviews of school-level Parent and Family Engagement evaluation reports and the Title I District Parent and Family Engagement stakeholder feedback.

- Meeting annually with the Parent and Family Engagement Committee composed of representatives from Title I schools for input into the development of the District Parent and Family Engagement Plan, including reviewing survey results, analyzing participation data, and identifying barriers to parent and family participation. NOTE: This meeting may have multiple parts, for example, a spring meeting to glean information from stakeholders and a fall meeting to follow up on how input was reviewed and utilized as well as to capture any timely ideas for proceeding toward mid-year.

### **District Parent/Family Engagement Activities**

The District will implement the following activities as a means to build the capacity for strong parent and family engagement and to support a partnership among the school, families, and community to improve student academic achievement.

<b>Content and Type of Activity</b>	<b>Person Responsible</b>	<b>Anticipated Impact on Student Achievement</b>	<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Evidence of Effectiveness</b>
Provide access to parent newsletter: "Parents Make A Difference" – A monthly newsletter and Daily Learning Planner for parents available in English and Spanish.	Title I Staff Title I Lead Teachers	Improve the ability of families to work effectively with their child and school staff.	August - June	*Usage data from the Title I website. *Results of District and School-based Stakeholder Surveys.
Provide District Level Family Engagement Workshops at flexible times/dates and with flexible presentation mode	Title I Staff	Improve the ability of families to work effectively with their primary age child, teachers, and school staff.	August - March	*Sign-in sheets *Agendas *Evaluations *Social Media/Video Analytics
Facilitate the distribution of the <i>Title I Beginning of School Packet</i> containing: *District Parent and Family Engagement Summary Brochure *School Parent and Family Engagement Plans *Home-School Compact *Parents' Rights Letter *Complaint Procedures	Title I Director Title I Staff Title I Lead Teachers	Increase communication, provide updates of functions, family notifications, and resources	August - September	*Signed Parents' Rights Letters * Signed Home-School Compacts
Hold school level Title I Annual Meetings at flexible times/dates and with flexible presentation mode.	Principals Title I Staff Title I Lead Teachers	Meeting to explain school's participation in Title I, Part A Programs, Title I, Part A requirements; Review Part A and Parent and Family Engagement budgets and inform families of their rights to be involved in these programs and decision making.	August - September	*Agenda *Minutes *Sign-in sheets *Family input & evaluation Results

Utilize Title I funding to provide materials to families of pre-school age children to aid in the preparation for and transition into their Kindergarten year.	Title I Staff Title I Lead Teachers	Increase communication and improve the ability of families to work effectively with their child; to develop collaborative relationships with teachers. Increase family engagement and student achievement	April	*School survey *Sign in sheets *Family input & evaluation results
Facilitate Home-School Communication Systems / student planners at school-wide Title I schools for students in grades 2-8.	Title I Staff Title I Lead Teachers	Increase communication and improve the ability of parents to work effectively with their child; to develop collaborative relationships with teachers, and increase parent engagement, and student achievement.	August - September	*School survey *Sign in sheets from Annual Meeting *Family input & evaluation results
Support a Family Liaison in schools, by request.	Principals Title I Lead Teachers	Increase family engagement, student attendance, and student achievement.	August - May	*Goals for each criterion will be established jointly with the school administrator at the beginning of the year.

### **Staff Training**

The District will provide the following professional development activities to educate the teachers and school staff in how to reach out to, communicate with, and work with parents and families as equal partners. These trainings will focus on how to implement and coordinate family programs, and build relationships between families and the school.

<b>Content and Type of Activity</b>	<b>Person Responsible</b>	<b>Anticipated Impact on Student Achievement</b>	<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Evidence of Effectiveness</b>
Training of Title I Lead Teachers from schools using home-school communication systems or student planners provided by Title I funds, with the expectation that Lead Teachers will train their faculty, students, and families.	Title I Staff Title I Lead Teachers	Improve effective communication between home and school. Improve family engagement and student engagement.	August - September	*School survey *Sign in sheets from Annual Meeting *Family input & evaluation results
Provide Title I Lead Teachers with opportunities to collaborate and share best practices for Parent and Family Engagement activities and provide a medium for accessing effective activities, including use of the "Family Friendly Schools" training modules.	Title I Staff	Improve effective family engagement activities and increase student achievement	August - May	*PFE Engagement Activity Logs *Sign-in sheets *PFEP Evaluation Report

## **Communication and Accessibility**

The District will provide opportunities for full participation in Parent and Family Engagement activities for all families including those with limited English proficiency, disabilities, and migratory children by:

- Providing the District Parent and Family Engagement Plan Summary via links and QR codes directing families to the full-length versions of the plan in English and Spanish, and other languages as practicable, as well as making copies available at each school in the Parent and Family Resource Area and the District Title I office
- Posting the detailed District Parent and Family Engagement Plan in English and Spanish, and other languages as practicable, on the District Title I website and linked to each Title I schools' website
- Working to have an audio version of the Parent and Family Engagement Plan posted to the District Title I website for the visually impaired that will also be linked to each Title I school's website
- Contracting with the United Language Group to provide translations for Title I documents, to the extent practicable, for families in their primary language
- Collecting, reviewing, and monitoring student data that reflects changes in population to ensure that information is available to families in their primary language, to the extent practicable.

## **Discretionary Activities**

This Parent and Family Engagement Plan includes the following discretionary activities that the District, in consultation with the parents, chose to undertake to build parents' and families' capacity for engagement in the school and school system to support their children's academic achievement.

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Person Responsible</b>	<b>Anticipated Impact on Student Achievement</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
Paying reasonable and necessary expenses associated with Parent and Family Engagement activities, including transportation and child care costs, to enable parents to participate in school-related meetings and training sessions.	Title I Lead Teachers	Increase participation by reducing barriers for families.	August - May
Offering Parent and Family Engagement opportunities at a variety of times (for example: morning, afternoon, evening, etc.) as well as providing virtual options (for example: Zoom, Google Meets, recorded sessions, etc.) to families as is practicable for the school and appropriate to the event.	Title I Lead Teachers	Increase participation by reducing barriers for families.	August - May
Prioritizing the need for centrally- located meetings in the community, including museums, theatres, and other places that offer opportunities for whole families to attend together, will be considered on a case-by-case basis depending on the needs and focus of each PFE event.	Title I Lead Teachers	Increase participation by reducing barriers for families.	August - May

## **2023-24 DISTRICT-WIDE PFE EVALUATION RESULTS\***

*\*These results reflect 36 of 39 schools reporting for the 23-24 school year.*

There were 185 *school-based* activities offered throughout the district for parents and families to attend. Of those families, 6061 attended at least *one event*. 1,607 families participated in PFE activity *planning*.

Families also *volunteered* with their child's classroom and academic-related activities. 1,115 volunteered *inside* the classroom as readers, teacher helpers, etc. 2,844 families volunteered *outside* the classroom as field trip chaperones, evening activity facilitators, etc.

*Contact from schools* with families was also made. This included 12,741 calls home and 12,615 face-to-face meetings; 496 home visits; and 765,413 written communications sent home from school staff to student families.

## **TITLE I COMPLAINT PROCEDURE**

A "Title I Complaint" is an allegation that the administration has violated a federal or state regulation or guideline pertaining to the Title I program. Administrative procedures for handling complaints are designed to resolve the complaint at the lowest level possible.

Procedure: All Title I complaints will be processed as follows:

- Title I Complaints should first be addressed to the local school principal. A parent who has a complaint may have a conference with the principal and appropriate school personnel. The principal is expected to make a good faith effort to resolve any differences. Within fifteen (15) calendar days after becoming aware of the complaint, the principal will notify the Director of Title I of the issues under dispute and the action(s) that the school has taken.
- If the complaint has not been resolved, the parent may meet with the district's Director of Title I or the designated representative to discuss his or her concerns. The Director will explain to the parent any federal regulation or state guidelines that apply.
- Within fifteen (15) calendar days after the conference, the Director will send a written report to the parent that sets forth any agreement or decision reached during the conference. The report will be sent to appropriate persons.
- The parent has the right to appeal to the state education agency (SEA) a decision of the local education agency (LEA) within thirty (30) calendar days from the receipt of the written report.
- All survey comments of "unsatisfactory" from parents of participating children will be submitted with the district's LEA plan to the SEA.

## ASSURANCES

In support of strengthening student academic achievement, Alachua County Public Schools receives Title I, Part A funds and, therefore, jointly reviews and develops a written Parent and Family Engagement Policy that is distributed to parents and families of participating children that contains information required by Section 1116(a)(2) of Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). The policy establishes the school district's expectations and objectives for meaningful parent and family engagement and describes how those activities will be implemented.

- Schools will conduct outreach to all parents and family members and implement programs, activities, and procedures for the involvement of parents and family members in all of its Title I, Part A programs consistent with Section 1116 of Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). Such programs, activities, and procedures shall be planned and implemented with meaningful consultation with parents of participating children. [ESSA Section 1118(a)]
- Schools will work to ensure that the required school-level parent and family engagement policy is developed under subsection (b): each school served under this part will develop a Home-School Compact that outlines how parents, the entire staff, and students will share the responsibility for improved student academic achievement and the means by which the school and parents will build and develop a partnership to help children achieve the State's high standards. [ESSA Section 1116(d)]
- Schools will, to the extent practicable, 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 in an understandable and uniform format, as well as alternative formats upon request, in a language parents understand per the Title I, Part A parent and family engagement requirements. [ESSA Section 1116(e)(f)]
- Schools will involve parents and family members of children receiving services under this part in the decisions regarding how funds reserved are allotted for parental involvement activities. [ESSA Section 1116(3)]
- Schools will be governed by the statutory definition of "Parents and Family Engagement" as defined in ESSA Section 8101, and are expected to carry out programs, activities, and procedures in accordance with this definition.
- Schools will use funds reserved under this part to carry out activities and strategies consistent with the Parent and Family Engagement Policy as outlined in ESSA Section 1116(3).



**Signature of Superintendent**

08/07/24

**Date Signed**