



Garfield Heights City School District

Parent and Family Engagement Policy **2019-2020**

The Garfield Heights City School District recognizes and values parents and families as children's first teachers and decision-makers in education. The Garfield Heights City School District 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 and family members in the education of their children generally result in higher academic achievement, improved student behavior, and reduced absenteeism. Parent and family involvement is an on-going process that assists parents and families in meeting basic obligations as their child's first educator, and promotes clear, two-way dialogue between home and school so that parents are supported as leaders and decision makers at all levels, concerning the education of their children.

In cultivating partnerships with families and communities, the Garfield Heights City School District establishes the following expectations and objectives for meaningful parent and family engagement:

A. Relationships with Families

1. cultivating school environments that are welcoming, supportive, and student-centered;
2. providing professional development for school staff that helps build partnerships between families and schools;
3. providing family activities that relate to various cultures, languages, practices, and customs, and bridge economic and cultural barriers;
4. providing coordination, technical assistance and other support to assist schools in planning and implementing family involvement activities.

B. Effective Communication

1. providing information to families to support the proper health, safety and well-being of their children;
2. providing information to families about school policies, procedures, programs and activities;
3. promoting regular and open communication between school personnel and students' family members;
4. communicating with families in a format and language that is understandable, to the extent practicable;
5. providing information and involving families in monitoring student progress;
6. providing families with timely and meaningful information regarding Ohio's academic standards, State and local assessments, and pertinent legal provisions;
7. preparing families to be involved in meaningful discussions and meetings with school staff.

C. Volunteer Opportunities

1. providing volunteer opportunities for families to support their children’s school activities;
2. supporting other needs, such as transportation and child care, to enable families to participate in school-sponsored family involvement events.

D. Learning at Home

1. offering training and resources to help families learn strategies and skills to support at-home learning and success in school;
2. working with families to establish learning goals and help their children accomplish these goals;
3. helping families to provide a school and home environment that encourages learning and extends learning at home.

E. Engaging Families in Decision Making and Advocacy

1. engaging families as partners in the process of school review and continuous improvement planning;
2. engaging families in the development of its District-wide parent and family engagement policy and plan, and distributing the policy and plan to families.

F. Collaborating with the Community

1. building constructive partnerships and connecting families with community-based programs and other community resources;
2. coordinating and integrating parent and family engagement programs and activities with District initiatives and community-based programs that encourage and support families’ participation in their children’s education, growth and development.

Implementation

Through the adoption and implementation of a strategic plan, the Superintendent and/or designee will provide for a comprehensive plan to engage parents, families and community members in a partnership in support of each student’s academic achievement, the District’s continuous improvement, and individual school improvement plans. The District’s plan, as well as each school’s plan, will provide for the annual evaluation, through the strategic plan, with the meaningful engagement of parents and families, of the plan’s content, effectiveness, and identification of barriers to participation by parents and families with particular attention to parents who are economically disadvantaged, are disable, have limited English proficiency, have limited literacy, or are of any racial or ethnic minority background; the needs of parents and family members to assist with the learning of their children (including engaging with school personnel and teachers); and the strategies to support successful school and family interaction. Each school plan will include the development of a written school-parent compact jointly with parents for all children participating in Title I, Part A activities, services and programs. The compact will outline how parents, the entire school 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. Evaluation findings will be used in the annual review of the Parent and Family Engagement Policy and to improve the effectiveness of the District plan. This policy will be updated periodically to meet the changing needs of parents, families and the schools.

General Expectations

The Garfield Heights City School District agrees to implement the following requirements as outlined by Section 1116:

- ✓ The school district will put into operation programs, activities and procedures for the engagement of parents and family members in all of its schools with Title I, Part A programs. These programs, activities and procedures will be planned and operated with meaningful consultation with parents and family members of participating children.
- ✓ Consistent with Section 1116, the school district will work with its schools to ensure that the required school-level parent and family engagement policies meet the requirements of Section 1116(b) of the ESSA, and each include, as a component, a school-parent compact consistent with Section 1116(d) of the ESSA.
- ✓ In carrying out the Title I, Part A parent and family engagement requirements to the extent practicable, the school district and its schools will provide full opportunities for the participation of parents with limited English proficiency, limited literacy, disabilities, of migratory children, who are economically disadvantaged, or are of any racial or ethnic minority background, including providing information and school reports required under Section 1111 of the ESSA, in an understandable and uniform format including alternative formats upon request and, to the extent practicable, in a language parents understand.
- ✓ If the Garfield Heights City School District plan for Title I, Part A, developed under Section 1112 of the ESSA, 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 be governed by the following definition of parent and family engagement and expects that its Title I schools will carry out programs, activities and procedures in accordance with this definition in Section 8101 of the ESSA:

Parent and family engagement means that participation of parents in regular, two-way and meaningful communication involving student academic learning and other school activities, including ensuring:

- (A) Parents play an integral role in assisting their child's learning
- (B) Parents are encouraged to be actively involved in their child's education at school
- (C) 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) Other activities are carried out, such as those described in Section 1116 of the ESSA

THE FOLLOWING IS A DESCRIPTION OF HOW THE DISTRICT WILL IMPLEMENT REQUIRED LEA PARENT AND FAMILY ENGAGEMENT POLICY COMPONENTS

JOINTLY DEVELOPED

The Garfield Heights City School District will take the following actions to involve parents and family members in jointly developing its plan under section 1112, and the development of support and improvement plans under paragraphs (1) and (2) of Section 111(d) of the ESSA:

The Garfield Heights Parent and Family Engagement Policy is jointly developed with input from parents and the Garfield Heights City Schools.

This policy shall be reviewed annually based upon input and feedback from parents and will be posted on our district and school websites where they are available for parent comments and suggestions.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

The Garfield Heights City School District will provide the following coordination, technical assistance and other support necessary to assist and build capacity of all Title I, Part A schools in planning and implementing effective parent and family engagement activities to improve student academic achievement and school performance, which may include meaningful consultation and collaboration with Community Based Organizations and agencies, business leaders, and philanthropic organizations, faith based leaders, or individuals with expertise in effectively engaging parents and family members in education.

The Family and Community Engagement Coordinator and/or Federal Programs Coordinator will provide guidance and support on appropriate use of parent and family engagement funds and review school Parent and Family Engagement Policies and School-Parent Compacts to ensure compliance and best practices for building effective school/family/community partnerships.

ANNUAL EVALUATION

The Garfield Heights City School District will take the following actions to conduct, with the meaningful engagement of parents and family members, an annual evaluation of the content and effectiveness of the content of this parent and family engagement policy in improving the academic quality of its Title I, Part A schools.

The evaluation will also include identifying the needs of parents and family members to assist with the learning of their children, including engaging with school personnel and teachers, and strategies to support successful school and family interactions.

The school district will use the finding of the evaluation about its parents and family engagement policy to design evidence-based strategies, and to revise, if necessary, its parents and family engagement policies.

Parents will be surveyed annually to determine whether parent engagement needs are being met effectively and appropriately through the implementation of the parent and family engagement programs. Parents will be given the option to complete surveys via paper copy or electronically. The results of these surveys will be used to develop strategies for school improvement and revise the district and school Parent and Family Engagement Policies. These results will also be used in planning future parent engagement initiatives. Areas evaluated will include academics and school leadership, parent and family engagement Title I activities and programs, and school climate.

RESERVATION OF FUNDS

The Garfield Heights City School District will engage the parents and family members of children served in Title I, Part A schools in decisions about how the percentage of Title I, Part A funds reserved for parent and family engagement is spent and will ensure that not less than 90 percent of the one percent reserved goes directly to Title I schools.

During the Annual Title I meeting, each school will seek input from parents in how best to utilize Title I funds set aside for parent engagement.

COORDINATION OF SERVICES

The Garfield Heights City School District will coordinate and integrate parent and family engagement strategies, to the extent feasible and appropriate, with other relevant Federal, State and local laws and programs: Council for Economic Opportunities in Greater Cleveland, Cuyahoga County Board of Developmental Disabilities, Cuyahoga County Local Education Agencies, Family and Children First Council of Cuyahoga County, Bright Beginnings (formerly Help Me Grow of Cuyahoga County), Starting Point for Child Care and Early Education, The Centers for Families and Children-Head Start Grantee for Catholic Charities and Ohio Guidestone, that encourage and support parents in more fully participating in the education of their children by:

- *Providing assistance in coordinating transitional opportunities for parents and students. Transition nights are held each spring for families with students entering 6th grade*
- *Pre-K orientation*
- *The District maintains a partnership with local mental health professionals who serve students and families as needed both within and outside of the school*
- *College Credit Plus parent meetings*
- *Kindergarten Information Night in spring*

BUILDING CAPACITY OF PARENTS AND STAFF

The Garfield Heights City School District will, with the assistance of its Title I schools, build parents and family capacity for strong engagement by providing materials and training on such topics as literacy development, social emotional learning, the importance of attendance, STEM, the instructional core, career and college readiness and using technology to help them work with their children to improve their academic achievement.

BUILDING CAPACITY OF PARENTS AND STAFF (cont'd)

Assistance will also be provided to parents in understanding the following topics:

- The challenging State academic standards
- The State and local academic assessments including alternate assessments
- The requirements of Title I, Part A
- How to monitor their child's progress
- How to work with educators to create strong family/school/community partnerships
- 3rd Grade Reading Guarantee
- High School Graduation requirements
- Social emotional learning
- Attendance

Title I schools will offer programs and events that are linked to helping parents support their children's success at school. Title I schools that have space will have a resource area, bulletin board, or room to post information about resources available in the community, school programs and events. This will include tips and ideas to parents on helping their children with core content subject areas.

BUILDING CAPACITY OF SCHOOL STAFF

The Garfield Heights City School District will provide capacity building workshops and trainings to school leaders, teachers and other school employees to deepen their understanding of how parents and family engagement contributes to school improvement; about the value and importance of family engagement; how to reach out to, communicate with, and partner with parents and families of diverse backgrounds and cultures; and how to implement and coordinate parents and family programs to build strong partnerships between families and schools.

- *Social Media*
- *Electronic newsletters (Open Line) and school newsletters (electronic and paper)*
- *Report cards, interim progress reports and graded classroom work, projects and exams*
- *Online grade books*
- *Parent/Teacher conferences*
- *Communication apps – Class Dojo, Remind*
- *Phone calls*
- *Text messages and emails*
- *Paper and online flyers*
- *Home visits*
- *District and school websites*

All communications regarding programs, meetings and activities will be provided to parents in a format, to the extent practicable, and in a language that parents can understand.

Reviewed 1/26/2020, Consulted _____, Revised _____, Adopted _____