

## **2.016 Parent and Family Engagement Policy (Title I)**

The Ascend Leadership Academy Board of Directors recognizes the value of family engagement in a child's academic success and believes that the education of children is an ongoing cooperative partnership between the home and the school. Parents and other family members are their children's first teachers; therefore, the continued involvement of parents and family members in the educational process is most important in fostering and improving educational achievement. The School shall strive to support parents and provide parents and family members with meaningful opportunities to become involved in the programs offered by the Title I program for Targeted Assistance in our school. The Board encourages parents and family members to participate in the design and implementation of the programs and activities in order to increase the effectiveness of the school system's Title I program in helping students meet state and local achievement standards.

### **A. DEFINITION OF PARENT AND FAMILY ENGAGEMENT**

For the purposes of this policy, the term "parent and family engagement" means the participation of parents, guardians, and other family members in regular, two-way, and meaningful communication involving student learning and other school activities, including ensuring the following:

1. that parents and family members play an integral role in assisting their child's learning;
2. that parents and family members are encouraged to be actively involved in their child's education at school;
3. that parents are full partners in their child's education and parents and family members are included, as appropriate, in decision making and on advisory committees to assist in the education of their child; and
4. that the school system utilizes activities to support parent and family engagement in the Title I programs.

### **B. PURPOSE AND OPERATION OF TITLE I PROGRAM**

The Title I program is a federally supported program that offers assistance to educationally and economically disadvantaged children to help ensure they receive an equitable, high-quality, well-rounded education and meet the school system's challenging academic standards. The Title I program provides instructional activities and supportive services to eligible students over and above those provided by the regular school program.

Through the school-wide Title 1 Program, School, we offer a Targeted Assistance program that will provide services to eligible students most in need of assistance in the school, as determined by objective criteria established by the Board in cooperation with our Managing Director. Eligibility criteria includes, for example, standardized test scores, teacher observations and input, and other measures of student progress.

Ascend Leadership Academy's targeted assistance program shall be based on effective means of improving student achievement and shall include evidence-based strategies to support parent and family engagement.

### **C. ANNUAL MEETING AND PROGRAM EVALUATION**

Each year, school administration must invite parents of students participating in the Title I program to a meeting to explain parental rights, discuss the programs and activities to be provided with Title I funds, and solicit input on the Title I program and this policy. In addition, school administration must provide parents and family members a meaningful opportunity annually to evaluate the content and effectiveness of the Title I program and the parent and family engagement policies and plans. This information will be collected in the form of parent surveys specific to the Title I program and its offerings. Data collection will include learning gains and end of year proficiency scores of those children served in the program. Climate surveys related to parent involvement in activities and events will also be used to assess the overall program. Information collected from these proceedings will be used to revise Title I programs and parent and family engagement plans.

#### **D. PARENT AND FAMILY ENGAGEMENT EFFORTS**

The Board believes that the involvement of Title I parents and family members in the design and implementation of the Title I program will increase the effectiveness of the program and contribute significantly to the success of the children. The Title I staff and all school personnel shall strive to conduct outreach to parents and family members and involve them in activities throughout the school year. Outreach will include messages and invitations in our weekly newsletter, on our website and targeted email campaigns for parents of student participants. These meetings and activities will also be advertised on the school published calendars and on the website.

The Managing Director shall ensure that this system-level parent and family engagement policy and plan is developed with, agreed upon with, and annually distributed to parents and family members of participating students. Our Title I program shall jointly develop and annually distribute to parents and family members a written parent and family engagement plan that describes the means for carrying out school-level policy, sharing responsibility for student academic achievement, building the capacity of school staff and parents for involvement, and increasing accessibility for participation of all parents and family members of children participating in Title I programs, including parents and family members who have limited English proficiency, who have disabilities, or who are migratory. The plan will involve parents in the planning and improvement of Title I activities and will provide for the distribution to parents of information on expected student achievement levels and the school's academic performance. This effort will work in tandem with our School Improvement Team which shall have members that represent students in the Targeted Assistance program, students who are ELL and students with disabilities. Should the School Improvement Team prove unable to achieve enough membership of these parent representatives, we will create a subcommittee specifically designed to include parents of students in the TAP and ensure their input is included in the development of the Title I program and that the Title I program is represented in the yearly School Improvement Plan.

School officials will invite appropriate personnel from private schools, business leaders, non-profit organizations and other individuals or consulting firms with expertise with effectively engaging parents and family members in education. Outreach will include invitations to private and non-profit agencies in Lee County who provide equity and access

to resources and support for at-risk families and private consultants or business leaders who can provide additional support, resources and expertise for at-risk students and families. The Managing Director or designee shall establish any additional procedures necessary to achieve timely and meaningful consultation with these groups in accordance with federal law.

In addition, the administration and Title I school personnel shall do the following:

1. Involve parents and family members in the joint development of the Title I program and school support and improvement plan and the process of school review and improvement by including parents on the established School Improvement Team and any other appropriate committees that review the Title I program;
2. Provide coordination, technical assistance, and other support necessary to assist and build the capacity of all participating members in planning and implementing effective parent and family engagement activities that are designed to improve student academic achievement and school performance; these include Title 1 Family nights, parent conferences, and Curriculum nights
3. Coordinate and integrate parent and family engagement strategies in the Title I program to the extent feasible and appropriate with parental engagement strategies established in other federal, state, and local laws and programs; these include mandatory notices of student eligibility criteria, identification process, and serve expectations as well as parent participation in required meetings including IEP and ELL placement or evaluation meetings
4. Conduct an annual evaluation of the content and effectiveness of the school's parent and family engagement policies and program in improving the academic quality of the school and assisting students to meet the school system's academic standards; During this process the School will identify:
  - barriers to greater participation of parents (with particular attention to parents who are economically disadvantaged, disabled, have limited English proficiency, 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
  - strategies to support successful school and family interactions.this includes collecting data through climate surveys, disaggregating student performance data on state exams, interpreting student learning gains data on internal benchmarking and progress monitoring tools and interpreting the Internal Ready Reports that demonstrate the Schools ability to meet established targets and goals by subgroup. We will use these findings to design evidence-based strategies for more effective parental involvement, and revise, if necessary, the PFE policy.
5. Strive to eliminate barriers to parental participation by assisting parents who have disabilities and parents who are economically disadvantaged, have limited English proficiency, are migratory, or have other backgrounds or characteristics that may affect participation; this includes scheduling parent meetings when convenient for families and offering multiple opportunities for these meetings, providing child care during these meetings and events, providing home language materials and documents, and

- providing multiple means of communication including hard copy invitations and information in the parent's home language.
6. Provide outreach and assistance to parents and family members of children who are participating in Title I programs in understanding the state's testing standards, the assessments used, Title I requirements, and all national, state, and local standards and expectations through such efforts as community-based meetings, posting information on school websites, sending information home, newsletters, workshops, and newspaper articles;
  7. Design a parent-student-school staff compact that sets out respective responsibilities in striving to raise student achievement and explains how an effective home/school partnership will be developed and maintained; this is included in our family handbooks and the Title 1 participation documents and agreement
  8. With the assistance of parents, ensure that teachers, specialized instructional support personnel, principals, and other staff are educated in the value of parents as partners in the educational process and understand how to work with, communicate with, and reach out to parents as equal partners in education; this is included in our Staff handbooks and Board operating manuals which outline expectations for instructional staff to include parents in their child's education, offering a variety of parent volunteer and participation opportunities and providing targeted parent conference dates in fall and spring.
  9. Distribute to parents information on expected student proficiency levels for their child and the school's academic performance, and provide materials and training to help parents monitor their child's progress and work with educators to improve achievement through such methods as literacy training or using technology; this is accomplished in our weekly newsletters, website and published calendars. This is also expressly communicated in all Title 1 family nights, Curriculum nights, and one on one parent conferences.
  10. Coordinate and integrate, to the extent feasible and appropriate, parental involvement programs and activities with federal, state, and local programs, including public preschool programs, and conduct other activities in the community that encourage and support parents to more fully participate in the education of their child; this is accomplished through our wide-spread outreach for parent participation driven by the School, the PTO, and the School Improvement Team for a variety of academic and extra-curricular activities that involve parents in their students education
  11. Strengthen the partnership with agencies, businesses, and programs that operate in the community, especially those with expertise in effectively engaging parents and family members in education; this will be accomplished through our general outreach programs led by the Managing Director and including Board members and Foundation Board members in recruiting community and business leaders' support
  12. Ensure that parents are involved in the school's Title I activities; and
  13. Provide such other reasonable support for Title I parental involvement activities as requested by parents.

## **E. NOTICE REQUIREMENTS**

The Managing Directors and Title I school personnel shall provide effective notice of the following information as required by law. The notice will be in an understandable and uniform format and, to the extent practicable, in a language the parents can understand.

#### 1. Program for English Learners

Each year the principal or designee shall provide notice of the following to parents of English learners identified for participation in a Title I, Part A or Title III funded language-instruction educational program:

1. the reasons for the child's identification;
2. the child's level of English proficiency and how such level was assessed;
3. methods of instruction;
4. how the program will help the child;
5. the exit requirements for the program;
6. if the child has a disability, how the language instruction educational program meets the objectives of the child's individualized educational program (IEP);
7. any other information necessary to effectively inform the parent of the program and the parental rights regarding enrollment, removal, and selection of a program for English learners; and
8. notice of regular meetings for the purpose of formulating and responding to recommendations from parents.

These expectations will be met through proper notice to all meetings related to IEP or ELL plans and may be given in the parent's home language. Access to the Parents Rights is also made available on our Website;

#### 2. School Report Card

Each year, the School shall disseminate the school report card containing information about the school including, but not limited to:

1. student achievement, graduation rates, performance on other school quality and/or student success indicators, the progress of students toward meeting long-term goals established by the state, student performance on measures of school climate and safety, and, as available, the rate of enrollment in post-secondary education;
2. the performance of the school on academic assessments as compared to the district and state as a whole;
- c. the percentage and number of students who are:
  1. assessed,
  2. assessed using alternate assessments,
  3. involved in preschool and accelerated coursework programs, and
  4. English learners achieving proficiency;
4. the per pupil expenditures of federal, state, and local funds; and
5. teacher qualifications.
6. The School report card will be posted according to NC statute and the information will be available as it is disseminated to Schools and permission is granted to release the formally approved School Performance Grades and correlating data. The School Improvement Team will also access and interpret the School Report Card data to review, revise and update a yearly School Improvement Plan inclusive of the Targeted Assistance Program and allocated resources.

#### 3. Teacher Qualifications

2. At the beginning of each year, the School will notify parents of students who are participating in Title I programs of the right to request certain information on the professional qualifications of the student's classroom teachers and paraprofessionals providing services to the child.
3. The principal or designee of a Title I school shall provide timely notice informing parents that their student has been assigned to or has been taught for at least four consecutive weeks by a teacher who does not meet applicable state certification or licensure requirements at the grade level or subject area in which the teacher has been assigned.
4. Parental Rights and Opportunities for Involvement
  1. Each year, the principal shall provide notice to parents of the school's written parent and family engagement policy, parents' right to be involved in their child's school, and opportunities for parents and family members to be involved in the school.
  2. Each year, the principal shall provide notice to parents of their right to request information regarding student participation in state-required assessments.

#### F. WEBSITE DISTRIBUTION OF INFORMATION

Each year, the School shall publicize on the website;

1. the report card described above and
2. information on each assessment required by the state organized by grade level. The information must include:
  1. the subject matter assessed;
  2. the purpose for which the assessment is designed and used;
  3. the source of the requirement for the assessment;
  4. if available, the amount of time students will spend taking the assessments and the schedule of the assessments; and
  5. if available, the time and format for distributing results.
  6. This information will be shared in the published calendars, weekly newsletters, reminders, and through curriculum nights and Title 1 parent meetings

The Managing Director shall develop any administrative procedures necessary to implement the requirements of this policy.

Revised and Adopted: October 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2019