



Alachua County Public Schools District-Wide 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 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, other family members, and/or 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
- a. Effective Communication
- b. Volunteer Opportunities
- c. Learning at Home
- d. Involving Families in Decision-Making and Advocacy
- e. 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 (DPFEP)
- Activity Funding for Parent and Family Engagement (PFE)

Title I families will be invited through periodic notices, personal and written contacts, school marquee announcements, posters, Aptegey messaging, 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, usually within 30 days of the start of the school year as practicable. 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. Mid-year meetings will be considered by school administration as practicable for their site and community.

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's 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 HIPPPY (Home Instruction for Parents of Pre-School Youngsters) and VPK (Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten). 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. <i>Please Note:</i> The term "Homeless" Coordinator is used solely to identify the name of the position currently designated to assist Students Without Shelter.
Title I, Part A & Title III (ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages))	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. Previous activities have included checking requirements for graduation, providing GED (General Educational Development) testing, and educational field trips as appropriate to centers.
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, Middle, and High School Transition, Homework Routines, Reading Strategies, Summer Learning Opportunities, Strategies to Address Testing Anxiety, etc.
Counseling Services with Student Services	The Title I Department will collaborate with Student Services for a District-wide Contract with ParentGuidance.org to provide Virtual Mental Health Events, Unlimited Family Coaching via text and live phone calls, and staff coaching for program facilitation. ACPS Title I will support 40% of the contract with the remaining percentage funded by the Mental Health Allocation and IDEA funds.

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. *Please Note:* This meeting may have multiple parts, for example, a spring meeting to glean information from stakeholders for the following year as well as a fall meeting to follow up on how input was reviewed and utilized and 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.

Content and Type of Activity	Person Responsible	Anticipated Impact on Student Achievement	Timeline	Evidence of Effectiveness
Provide access to “Parents Make A Difference” – a monthly newsletter and Daily Learning Planner for parents available in both English and Spanish.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Title I Staff ● Title I Lead Teachers 	Improve the ability of families to work effectively with their child and school staff.	August - June	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Usage data from the Title I website. ● Results of both District and School-based Stakeholder Surveys.
Provide District Level Family Engagement activities at flexible times/dates and with flexible presentation mode	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Title I Staff 	Improve the ability of families to work effectively with their primary age child, teachers, and school staff.	August - March	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Sign-in sheets ● Agendas ● Evaluations ● Social Media ● Video Analytics
Facilitate the distribution of the Title I Beginning of School Packet that includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>District Parent and Family Engagement Summary Brochure</i> ● <i>School Parent and Family Engagement Plans</i> ● <i>Home-School Compact</i> ● <i>Parents’ Rights Letter</i> ● <i>Complaint Procedures</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Title I Director ● Title I Staff ● Title I Lead Teachers 	Increase communication by providing updates on events, family notifications, and resources.	August - September	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Signed Parents’ Rights Letters ● Signed Home-School Compacts

Hold school-level Title I Annual Meetings at flexible times/dates and with flexible presentation mode.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Principals ● Title I Staff ● Title I Lead Teachers 	Increase understanding of Title I Part A programs, requirements, and budgets while also informing families of their rights to be involved in related decision- making.	August - September	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Agenda ● Minutes ● Sign-in sheets ● Family input and 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. Training on the use of materials can be provided upon request.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Title I Staff ● Title I Lead Teachers 	Increase communication and improve the ability of families to work effectively with their child; develop collaborative relationships with teacher; increase family engagement and student achievement.	April	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● School surveys ● Sign in sheets ● Family input and evaluation results
Facilitate Home-School Communication Systems (for example, “Nicky” folders and/or student planners) at school-wide Title I schools for students in grades 2-8.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Title I Staff ● Title I Lead Teachers 	Increase communication and improve the ability of parents to work effectively with their child. Develop collaborative relationships with teachers. Increase parent engagement and student achievement.	August - September	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● School surveys ● Annual Meeting Sign in Sheets ● Family input and evaluation results

Staff Training

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

Content and Type of Activity	Person Responsible	Anticipated Impact on Student Achievement	Timeline	Evidence of Effectiveness
Train Title I Lead Teachers on home-school communication systems / student planners, provided by Title I funds, with the expectation that Lead Teachers will then train their school’s faculty, students, and families.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Title I Staff ● Title I Lead Teachers 	Improve effective communication between home and school. Improve family engagement and student engagement.	August - September	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● School surveys ● Annual Meeting Sign-in Sheets ● Family input and 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.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Title I Staff 	Improve effective family engagement activities and increase student achievement	August - May	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● PFE Engagement Activity Logs ● Sign-in sheets ● PFEP Evaluation Reports

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 full-length versions of the plan in English and Spanish, and other languages as practicable, as well as making copies available District Title I Office and at each school in the Parent and Family Resource Area
- 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
- Drawing special attention to the availability of translation services on the ACPS website when and as practicable
- 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 of Title I documents families in their primary language to the extent practicable
- 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.

Activity	Person Responsible	Anticipated Impact on Student Achievement	Timeline
Paying reasonable, allowable, 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. <i>Special Note:</i> Only 10% of the entire PFE budget for a school can be used toward the purchase of foodstuffs for all PFE events.	Title I Lead Teachers	Increase participation by reducing barriers for families.	August - May
Offering Parent and Family Engagement opportunities as is practicable for the school and appropriate to the event at a variety of times (for example: morning, afternoon, evening, etc.); providing virtual options (for example: Zoom, Google Meets, recorded sessions, etc.) that are posted to the school's website, etc.; having make-up sessions made available to families; as well as prioritizing the need for central locations to families.	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, parks, libraries, and/or 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

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



Date Signed