

Bear Grass Charter School Parent Engagement Policy

The board 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 board believes that the involvement of all parents and family members in Title I schools increases the effectiveness of the program and contributes significantly to the success of the program. School officials 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 schools. 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'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 and family members and guardians 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 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'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. Bear Grass Charter School will operate as school-wide program.

School-wide programs may provide a comprehensive support to offer improved opportunities for all students in the school to meet the school's academic standards.

School-wide programs 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

Each year, school officials must invite parents of students participating in Title I programs 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 officials 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. 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 in activities throughout the school year.

The superintendent shall ensure that this system-level parental and family engagement policy and plan is developed with, agreed upon with and annually distributed to parents and family members of participating students. This parent and family engagement plan shall describe the means for carrying out school-level policy, sharing responsibility for student academic achievement, building the capacity of school staff and parents and family members 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.

In addition, school officials 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 and the process of school review and improvement by including parents on the School Improvement Team and any committees that review the Title I program;
2. provide coordination, technical assistance and other support from various departments necessary to assist and build the capacity of all participating in planning and implementing effective parent and family engagement activities that are designed to improve student academic achievement and school performance;

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;

4. with the meaningful involvement of parents and family members, conduct an annual evaluation of the content and effectiveness of the school system 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. This evaluation will include identifying:

- i. barriers to greater participation by parents in activities authorized by this section (with particular attention to parent who are economically disadvantaged, are disabled, have limited English proficiency, have limited literacy, or are of any racial or ethnic minority background),
- ii. the needs of parents and family members to assist with the learning of their children, including engaging with school personnel and teachers; and
- iii. strategies to support successful school and family interactions.

5. Use the findings of the annual evaluation of the Parent and Family Engagement Policy to design evidence-based strategies for more effective parental involvement, and revise, if necessary, the parent and family engagement policy.

6. Involve parents in the activities of the school, which may include establishing a parent advisory board comprised of a sufficient number and representative group of parents or family members served by the local educational agency to adequately represent the needs of the population served by the agency for the purposes of developing, revising, and reviewing the parent and family engagement policy

7. 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;

8. 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;

9. with the assistance of parents, ensure that teachers, specialized instructional support personnel, the principal and other staff are educated in the value of parents and family members as partners in the educational process and understand how to work with, communicate with and reach out to parents and family members as equal partners in education;

10. 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, which may include education about the harms of copyright piracy;

11. coordinate and integrate, to the extent feasible and appropriate, parental involvement programs and activities with federal, state, and local programs, including public pre-school programs and conduct other activities in the community that encourage and support parents to more fully participate in the education of their child;

12. 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;

13. ensure that parents are involved in the school’s Title I activities; and

14. provide such other reasonable support for Title I parental involvement activities as requested by parents.

E. NOTICE REQUIREMENTS

School system officials and Title I school personnel shall provide effective notice of the following information as required by law. The notice must 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:

- a. the reasons for the child's identification;
- b. the child's level of English proficiency and how such level was assessed;
- c. methods of instruction;
- d. how the program will help the child;
- e. the exit requirements for the program;
- f. if the child has a disability, how the language instruction educational program meets the objectives of the child's individualized educational program (IEP);
- g. 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
- h. notice of regular meetings for the purpose of formulating and responding to recommendations from parents.

2. System Report Card

Each year, school system officials shall disseminate to all parents the public school system report card containing information about the school, including, but not limited to:

- a. the following information both in the aggregate and disaggregated by category: 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;
- b. the performance of the school on academic assessments as compared to the state as a whole and the performance on academic assessments as compared to the state and school system as a whole;
- c. the percentage and number of students who are: i. assessed, ii. assessed using alternate assessments, iii. involved in preschool and accelerated coursework programs, and iv. English learners achieving proficiency;
- d. the per pupil expenditures of federal, state, and local funds; and
- e. teacher qualifications.

3. Teacher Qualifications

- a. At the beginning of each year, school system officials shall 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

- b. 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 is not “highly qualified” as defined in the No Child Left Behind Act and or teaching out of their licensure area.

4. Parental Rights and Opportunities for Involvement

- a. Each year, the principal or designee of a Title I school 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.
- c. Each year, the principal or designee of a Title I school 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, school officials shall publicize on the school website and, where practicable, on the website:

- 1. the school report card; and
- 2. information on each assessment required by the state and, where feasible, by the school system, organized by grade level. The information must include:
 - a. the subject matter assessed;
 - b. the purpose for which the assessment is designed and used;
 - c. the source of the requirement for the assessment;
 - d. if available, the amount of time students will spend taking the assessments and the schedule of the assessments; and
 - e. if available, the time and format for distributing results.

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