

SCHOOL-COMMUNITY-HOME RELATIONS PARENT INVOLVEMENT IN EDUCATION

Purpose

The Providence School Board ("School Board") is committed to strong parent engagement and recognizes such engagement as a vital component in improving student achievement. The School Board has charged the Superintendent and staff with the task of building a way of doing business within the Providence School District ("District") to ensure that all parents or guardians, or caretakers of children enrolled in schools within the District are provided the resources and opportunities to remain informed and involved decision-makers in the education of their children.

The purpose of this policy is to increase parental engagement and build strong partnerships with parents/families. The District will monitor the successful implementation of the policy and will communicate frequently the District's beliefs in building effective family and school partnerships that support student learning and school improvement. Student achievement and success will rely heavily on the actions, relationships and strengths of these partnerships. Expectations will be clearly defined to effectively engage parents/families in district programs, activities and procedures. This policy shall apply to all parents or guardians of enrolled children. It shall satisfy the requirements of all applicable federal and state laws and regulations.

The District will be governed by the following statutory definition of parental involvement, and expects that its Title I schools will carry out programs, activities and procedures in accordance with the following definitions:

"Parent" means a biological parent, a legal guardian or other adult person standing in loco parentis (such as a grandparent or stepparent with whom the child lives, or a person who is legally responsible for the child's welfare) involved in supervising children's schooling.

"*Parental involvement*" means the participation of parents/caregivers in regular, two-way, meaningful communication involving student academic learning and other school activities, including ensuring –

- (A) that parents/caregivers play an integral role in assisting their child's learning;
- (B) that parents are encouraged to be actively involved in their child's education at school;
- (C) that 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) the carrying out of the other activities, such as those described in section 1118 of the (ESEA)

"*District*" includes all departments and offices of the Providence School District that have a role in accomplishing the goals of this policy. The Family and Community Engagement Office shall develop, support and monitor district-wide and school-based family engagement activities and report to the Superintendent and School Board on an annual basis.

Family Engagement Vision Statement and Core Values

Family engagement successfully builds positive and respectful relationships between schools and families through shared responsibility, meaningful engagement, thoughtful decision-making, and effective communication in order to provide every student with a quality education that prepares him/her for college, career and life.

Respect - Together, we operate as a team. We respect one another and work collaboratively as a team to support and serve our students and educators.

- Parents are the most influential people in their child's life
- Perspectives of families, students, and educators are valued equally in the school community

Equity - We are guided by the belief that all students can learn and achieve at high levels.

- Students and their families come with more assets than needs
- Every child can and should thrive: academically, socially, emotionally, physically and across the dimensions of culture

Excellence - We strive for excellence in all that we do, and maintain a positive attitude with a determined focus on results.

- In order to achieve excellence, we expect that educators and families, are all focused on students first and foremost
- Welcoming, positive attitudes, a caring disposition, mutual respect and excellent customer service should be the standard for every interaction

Accountability - We share responsibility and accountability for the success of our students and our schools.

- Effective communication between families, schools, and administration is essential to assuring that everything we do together is designed to ensure student success
- Commitment to continuous improvement: families, and educators contribute to creating, reviewing, and improving all aspects of school experience in order to achieve optimal student outcomes

Appreciation for our diversity - We are enhanced by the diversity of our school communities and staff; we embrace and celebrate our diversity.

- Real life experiences of students and their families, and educators matter
- True empathy requires active listening and leads to caring relationships that help students succeed
- We develop trusting relationships between families, schools and administration by building on the assets that families bring

Administrative Authority and Responsibilities

The Superintendent will ensure that the department, both at the district and school-based levels, establishes processes and procedures and designate staff to develop and implement meaningful outreach strategies for parent and family engagement while collecting feedback from parents to monitor continuous improvement efforts.

Providence Schools Parent Advisory Council (PAC)

The district Parent Advisory Council (PAC) shall ensure parents maintain an organized voice in the district; that parents are involved in decision-making processes and procedures, as appropriate and permitted by law; and that parent needs, concerns and issues are communicated to, and addressed by the Superintendent or designee regularly and effectively. The Family and Community Engagement Office (FACE) will oversee, support and be the liaison between the PAC and the district. FACE will assist in planning, executing and facilitating council meetings and offer opportunities for capacity building training, as needed.

The District PAC shall consist of representatives from each school. The Superintendent shall ensure that the selection procedure actually results in a PAC that is reflective of the district's student population, including its racial, ethnic and socio-economic demographics. Parents, school principals and school staff within each school shall develop a method for engaging and/or selecting one (1) parent representative from their respective school. Additionally, one (1) member shall be a representative from the Special Education Local Advisory Committee (LAC), one (1) member shall be a representative from the English Language Learners Advisory Council subcommittee of the PAC (ELLPAC subcommittee) and one (1) member shall be selected by the Family and Community Engagement Office from the community-at-large. The PAC shall meet at least once a month throughout the academic year with its membership, and as practicable and appropriate with the Superintendent.

Shared Responsibility

The responsibility for ensuring that parents are meaningfully engaged in their children's education and are involved in the district's programs, activities and initiatives, is shared by personnel in District Office, schools, and district parents supporting schools and families.

District Responsibilities

The district shall:

1. Ensure that parents are valued as partners in their children's education, and that all school personnel and facilities are welcoming.
2. Develop, with the guidance of parents, the parent involvement policy. The policy must address the requirements of Title I, Section 1118 (a)(2), including the requirements for building capacity for parental involvement, and annually evaluating the content and effectiveness. The evaluation process shall include parental input, including but not limited to the district Parent Advisory Council (PAC), English Language Learners Parent Advisory Council (ELLPAC) and the Local Advisory Council (LAC). This annual evaluation may include a re-evaluation of the Policy's content and an identification of the barriers to greater participation by parents in parental engagement activities (with particular attention to parents who are low income, parents of students with disabilities, parents with limited English proficiency or literacy, and parents of any racial or ethnic minority background). The Superintendent shall ensure a continuous improvement process is followed to determine the effectiveness of this policy and if programs, activities and practices are resulting in positive outcomes for students.
3. The District must conduct outreach to parents to ensure they are informed on the content of this policy.
4. Administer a school culture and climate parent survey, at least annually, to learn about the level of supports and information offered to parents and families to increase student achievement. This information will help inform the annual evaluation referred on item 2 above, as well as to inform the design outreach/engagement strategies used by FACE and the individuals' schools for effective parental involvement for the forthcoming year.
5. Provide materials and training to assist parents in working with their children to improve achievement. The District shall provide informational sessions and workshops to parents on such topics as the State's academic content and student achievement standards, data analysis of school performance and graduation rates, state and local academic assessments, and the monitoring and improvement of student achievement.
6. Offer opportunities to provide input in key decision-making processes, including but not limited to, policy development, school review and improvement, school redesign, as is appropriate and permitted by law.
7. Provide the coordination, technical assistance, and other forms of direct support necessary to help schools with developing school improvement plans that include meaningful, research based promising practices. Schools will have access to helpful resources found at FACE, as well as in the district website including helpful reading materials, meeting space and the district Toolkit for Partnerships on how to build the capacity of parents to become active participants in planning and implementing effective parent involvement activities to improve student achievement and overall school performance. FACE will provide parents with educational and parenting information, assistance with sharing and understanding the district's curriculum and teaching and learning activities, facilitation of parent concerns and building awareness of local, state and national resources.
8. Provide trainings and informational sessions to school administrators, faculty and staff about the impact of parent involvement and the essential practices necessary to build the capacity of teachers and parents on how to work and collaborate with families. Additionally, provide guidance to school administrators in how to implement and coordinate parent programs, build relationships between parents and their schools, and reach out to, communicate with, and work with parents as equal partners. The District shall ensure that information conveyed at school and for parent programs are designed in a format, to the extent practicable, in terminology parents can understand.

School Staff Responsibilities

FACE will provide the necessary supports to school staff including but not limited to:

1. Planning and implementation of family engagement strategies.
2. Assignment of a Parent Engagement Specialist to help guide and implement parent engagement strategies.
3. Coordinate, advice, and offer when appropriate, Professional Development options for teachers to improve communication and relationship building with parents.
4. Individualized technical assistance to individual schools/Principal or designee to provide guidance and facilitation of opportunities on how to involve and engage parents; as well as to present and analyze the data of the Climate and Culture Survey in a yearly bases, but no later than March.

Efforts at the school level shall include, but not be limited, to the following:

1. Administrators, directors, teachers, librarians, literacy/math coaches, teacher assistants, health, clerical and custodial staff and all other personnel shall work diligently and in good faith to ensure that parents are meaningfully involved in the decision-making process at their school. Schools will thoughtfully plan and execute programs and activities that are linked to learning for the purpose of building capacity of parents, increasing student achievement, creating and sustaining strong partnerships with parents and families. The Parent Engagement Policy Administrative Guidelines and Procedures lists specific action steps schools can consider.
2. Develop jointly with, agree upon with, and distribute to parents of participating children, a written school parent involvement policy that describes how the school will address the requirements of Title I, Section 1118 (b)(c) including the requirement for an annual meeting, Home-School-Compacts to address shared responsibility for student achievement, and strategies for building capacity for parent involvement.
3. Ensure Parents are active members on its school improvement team meetings and any other school group working to improve student achievement.
4. Work to develop and support the efforts of organized parent groups, however designated, that seek to create an organized parent presence at the school.
5. Afford parents opportunities for regular meetings or events at which parents can formulate suggestions and participate, as appropriate and permitted by law, in decision making relating to the education of their children, and at which School Staff can respond to suggestions from and give feedback to Parents and concerns or problems raised by Parents.
6. Provide parents multiple opportunities to meet with administrators and teachers to provide information and receive feedback on how their children are doing academically and socially; to have any questions and/or concerns addressed; to learn more about the school's curriculum, school's Title I budget, standards and assessment tools; and, to be informed of volunteer opportunities, school's performance and the proficiency levels students are expected to meet, as measured by District, state, and federal standards.

Shared Responsibilities for High Student Achievement

Each school shall develop, revise and distribute to Parents a School Parental Involvement Policy and a School-Parent Compact. The development and revision should be done in conjunction with parents. The school policy shall outline how parents will be involved in improving the school and engaging families. The Compact will outline the ways in which Parents, School Staff, and Students share responsibility for improved academic achievement and the means by which School Staff and Parents will build and develop a partnership to help children achieve standards as required. The Compact shall describe the school's responsibility to provide high quality curriculum and instruction in a supportive and effective learning environment that enables the children served under this part to meet the State's student academic achievement standards, and the ways in which each Parent will be responsible for supporting their children's learning, such as monitoring attendance, homework completion, and screen time watching; use of social media, volunteering in their child's classroom; and participating, as appropriate, in decisions relating to the education of their children and positive use of extracurricular time; and address the importance of communication between teachers and parents on an ongoing basis through, at a minimum

- Parent-teacher conferences to occur in all schools, at least annually or as frequent as appropriate and attainable to staff and parents during which the Compact shall be discussed as the Compact relates to the individual child's achievement;

- Frequent reports to parents on their children's progress; reasonable access to staff, opportunities to volunteer and participate in their child's class, and observation of classroom activities.

Parents shall be notified of the School Parent Involvement Policy and the Compact in a format and style that is clear, understandable, and uniform, and to the extent practicable, written in a language that parents can understand. The School Parent Involvement Policy and the Compact must be reviewed and revised annually by the end of second quarter, with the input from parents and teachers, to meet the changing needs of parents and the school. Both documents will be made available to the school community at the start of the school year, in and not limited to access in hard copy and posted in the school and district website.

Parent Rights and Responsibilities

Parents have the right to submit feedback/comments/complaints about this policy to the Superintendent or designee if this policy is not satisfactory to them, or if the performance of their school under this Parent Engagement Policy, their School Parent Involvement Policy or their Home-School Compact is inadequate or problematic. The district shall submit all Parent feedback/comments/complaints that it receives along with this policy when it submits said policy to the state.

- Parents will be responsible for supporting their children's learning by ensuring that their children attend school; monitoring the completion of homework and other assignments; attending school meetings, training sessions on district and school based programs and plans, events and parent-teacher conferences; and, maintaining open and consistent communication with school administrators, teachers and other school staff as appropriate by proactively sharing changes to contact information and questions and concerns regarding student progress.

Accessibility

In carrying out the Parent Engagement Policy, the district and each school within the district shall make best efforts to provide meaningful opportunities for the participation of Parents with limited English Language Learners, parents of students with disabilities, and parents of migratory children, including providing information and designing school reports in a format and language parents understand. The district shall document school-based best practices, track accountability measures and monitor the enforcement of this policy.

Legal Reference No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, Title I, Section 1118
Individuals with Disabilities Education Act
RI General Law, Title 16, Chapter 53.1

History

Approved: Jun 28, 2004 Resolution #06-27-04
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