

# Athens City Schools District Parent and Family Engagement Policy



## **District Parent and Family Engagement Policy Athens City Schools 2019-2020**

In support of strengthening student academic achievement, Athens City Schools receives Title I, Part A funds and therefore must jointly develop with, agree on with, and distribute to parents and family members of participating children a written parent and family engagement policy that contains information required by Section 1116(a)(2) of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). The policy establishes the district's expectations and objectives for meaningful parent and family engagement and describes how the district will implement a number of specific parent and family engagement activities.

The Athens City Schools 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 ESEA.
- 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 families 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 families understand.
- If the district plan for Title I, Part A, developed under Section 1112 of the ESEA, is not satisfactory to the families 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 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:

**Family engagement means the participation of families in regular, two-way, and meaningful communication involving student academic learning and other school activities, including ensuring:**

- (A) families play an integral role in assisting their child’s learning;**
- (B) families are encouraged to be actively involved in their child’s education at school;**
- (C) families 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; and**
- (D) other activities are carried out, such as those described in Section 1116 of the ESEA.**

## **JOINTLY DEVELOPED**

The Athens City Schools will take the following actions to involve parents and family members in jointly developing its LEA plan under Section 1112, and the development of support and improvement plans under paragraphs (1) and (2) of Section 1111(d) of the ESEA:

- Athens City Schools families will be involved in the development of the district parent and family engagement policy, the district improvement plan, and how families will be involved in the development and review of the school improvement/Title I schoolwide/Title I targeted assistance plan, and if applicable, the comprehensive support and improvement and the targeted support and improvement plans.
- Parents are active participants in developing and monitoring our parent involvement plan. Parent representatives will serve on the system Family Engagement Committee and the committees at each individual school.
- Athens City Schools’ family engagement committees and system-wide advisory committee work together to build the schools’ and parents’ capacity for stronger parental involvement.

## **TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE**

The Athens City Schools 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 with employers, business leaders, and philanthropic organizations, or individuals with expertise in effectively engaging parents and family members in education:

- Athens City Schools will provide support and technical assistance to all its Title I schools in planning and implementing effective parent and family engagement practices inclusive of school parent and family engagement policies/plans, school-parent compacts, and all Title I parent and family engagement requirements
- Athens City Schools will provide parent support in accessing parent portals and homework assistance by providing devices to use at each school and instruction provided if needed.
- Athens City Schools will work closely with community and local businesses to help meet the needs of the families.

## **ANNUAL EVALUATION**

The Athens City Schools will take the following actions to conduct, with the meaningful involvement of parents and family members, an annual evaluation of the content and effectiveness of this parent and family engagement policy in improving the academic quality of its Title I, Part A schools. The evaluation will include identifying barriers to greater participation by families in activities (with particular attention to families who are economically disadvantaged, are disabled, have limited English proficiency, have limited literacy, or are of any racial or ethnic minority background). 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 findings of the evaluation about its parent and family engagement policy to design evidence-based strategies for more effective family engagement, and to revise, if necessary, its parent and family engagement policies.

- Athens City Schools will conduct a yearly survey in the Spring of each academic year. The survey will be for all parents/guardians to provide feedback on our school district. The survey will be provided electronically and by paper copy in Japanese, Spanish, and English. Other translations can be made available if needed. The survey results will be tallied and then shared with all stakeholders before the end of the academic school year so that parents/guardians can see results both by school level and systemwide. The results will be posted online on system website for viewing and printing.
- Parents will be actively involved in participating in a yearly family engagement survey which is used to annually evaluate the content and effectiveness of the parental involvement policy in improving the academic quality of the schools served by Title 1-A.
- Family engagement committees meet and discuss the survey results and how they can be used to identify barriers to greater parental participation in parent activities throughout the school system.
- Parents will be involved in the activities at their child's school. Monthly system-wide newsletter and calendars will be sent home with each student to provide updates and details of upcoming activities throughout the school system.

## **RESERVATION OF FUNDS**

The Athens City Schools will involve the parents and family members of children served in Title I, Part A schools in decisions about how the 1 percent of Title I, Part A funds reserved for parent and family engagement that is spent and will ensure that not less than 90 percent of the 1 percent reserved goes directly to Title I schools.

A summary report will be provided at the district level family engagement meetings of the budget for system family engagement activities. This report will reflect the importance of funds to reach out to parents and community to help in meeting the needs of our students.

## **COORDINATION OF SERVICES**

The Athens City Schools will coordinate and integrate parent and family engagement strategies with parent and family engagement strategies, to the extent feasible and appropriate, with other relevant federal, state, and local laws and programs: that encourage and support families in more fully participating in the education of their children by:

- Athens City Schools will coordinate with other organizations, businesses, and community partners to provide additional supports and resources to families such as public preschool programs or organizations to help students transition to elementary, middle, high, and postsecondary schools or careers.
- Athens City Schools will coordinate and integrate Title I-A parental involvement strategies with parent involvement strategies under other programs, such as Head Start, Reading First, Early Reading First, Even Start, Parents as Teachers, Home Instruction Program for Preschool Youngsters, State-run preschool programs, and Title III language instructional programs. Parent involvement activities will coordinate with ESL and Special Education programs in Athens City Schools'.

## **BUILDING CAPACITY OF PARENTS AND FAMILY MEMBERS**

The Athens City Schools will, with the assistance of its Title I schools, build families' capacity for strong family engagement by providing materials and training on such topics as literacy training and using technology (including education about the harms of copyright piracy) to help families work with their children to improve their children's academic achievement. Assistance will also be provided to parents and families 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; and
  - How to work with educators.
- Athens City Schools will provide school-parent compacts for each school that provides understanding on topics such as the State's academic content standards, State student academic achievement standards, State TNReady and local academic assessments, requirements of [ESEA Title I, Part A, §1116©] (parental involvement), how to monitor a child's progress and work with educators to improve student achievement. The schools will encourage all parents to attend parent-teacher conferences to discuss a child's achievement progress.
  - The family engagement committees will provide materials and trainings to help parents work with their children to improve their achievement, such as literacy, technology, mathematics, and homework help to help foster parental involvement.
  - The Athens City Schools will educate school staff with the assistance of parents in the value and contributions of parents, and in working with parents-how to reach out to, communicate with, and work with as equal partners, implement and coordinate parent programs, build ties between parents and the school.
  - School related information on programs, meetings, events, workshops, and other activities will be sent to parents in a format and extent practicable and in a language the parents can understand. Schoolcast and social media will be used to provide verbal communication to all families. It will be sent in English and Spanish. The yearly family engagement survey will be used to provide feedback on the school system each year and will be available to parents in English, Gujarati, Japanese, Spanish, and Vietnamese.
  - Parents will be encouraged to be involved in the activities at their child's school. Monthly system-wide newsletter and calendars are sent home with each student to provide updates and details of upcoming activities throughout the school system.
  - Parents provide input in the design, implementation, and evaluation of the Title 1 Part A (parent involvement program). The family engagement committees at the school

and system level will work together using the yearly survey results to revise the parent involvement plans to reflect current needs for the schools.

- Athens City Schools will provide full opportunities for the participation of parents with limited English proficiency, parents with disabilities, and parents of migratory students, and homeless students. The schools' provide information and school reports in a format and language that parents understand.
- The school system will promote parent involvement and community participation in programs for ELL students, Migrant students, and Special Education students.

## **BUILDING CAPACITY OF SCHOOL STAFF**

The Athens City Schools will, with the assistance of its schools and families, educate its teachers, specialized instructional support personnel, principals, and other school leaders, and other staff in the value and utility of contributions of families, and in how to reach out to, communicate with, and work with families as equal partners, implement and coordinate parent programs, and build ties between families and schools by:

- Involving families in the development of training for teachers, principals, and other educators to improve the effectiveness of that training.
- Providing necessary literacy training for families from Title I, Part A funds, if the school district has exhausted all other reasonably available sources of funding for that training.
- Paying reasonable and necessary expenses associated with family engagement activities, including transportation and child care costs, to enable families to participate in school-related meetings and training sessions.
- Training families to enhance the involvement of other families.
- Maximizing family engagement and participation in their children's education, arranging school meetings at a variety of times or conducting in-home conferences between teachers or other educators who work directly with participating children, with families who are unable to attend those conferences at school.
- Adopting and implementing model approaches to improve family engagement.
- Establishing a districtwide parent advisory council to provide advice on all matters related to parent and family engagement in Title I, Part A programs.
- Developing appropriate roles for community-based organizations and businesses, including faith-based organizations, in family engagement activities.