

Autauga County Schools
2021-2022 Parent & Family Engagement Plan
Parent and Family Engagement Written Policy (Sec. 1116 (2))



Sec. 1116(a)(2)(A))Describe how the Local Education will involve parents and family members in jointly developing the local educational agency plan under section 1112, and the development of support and improvement plans under paragraphs (1) and (2) of section 1111(d).

Autauga County 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 ESSA:

- Invite all parents to participate in school and district committees, such as the Federal Programs Advisory Committee, AdvancED Accreditation Committees, and ACIP Committees.
- Hold a Parent Advisory Committee meeting for parents of students in the Title I program to review the LEA plan and discuss how Title I funds will be used to support the plan.
- Provide parent access to LEA and school parent and family engagement plans and continuous improvement plans via each school's website.
- Distribute an annual survey to facilitate parent and family input and involvement in the development of LEA and school parent and family engagement plans and continuous improvement plans. This will include parent and family involvement in the process of design, review and improvement of the overall Title I program.
- Include parents and family members in the planning and implementation of changes in Title I status of schools, such as applying for Title I schoolwide status.
- Notify parents and family members via a variety of contact strategies including newsletters, emails, phone calls, school and district websites and school marquees. Take home notices are translated as needed.

Sec. 1116(a)(2)(B))Describe how the Local Education Agency will provide the coordination, technical assistance, and other support necessary to assist and build the capacity of all participating schools within the local educational agency in planning and implementing effective parent and family involvement 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.

Autauga County Schools will provide the coordination, technical assistance and other support necessary to assist and build the capacity of all participating schools within the LEA in planning and implementing effective parent and family involvement activities. The district will ensure that all parental requirements of Title I Part A are met and that parent engagement initiatives are being implemented in a relevant and meaningful way. This will take place through regularly scheduled school visits, through a comprehensive review of documentation and through the delivery of specific school support as needed. In addition to frequent communication and school visits, support will be offered by providing:

- Quarterly meetings with school instructional teams offering guidance, support, resources and opportunities for collaboration between schools and district staff in developing meaningful family-school engagement initiatives.
- Periodic meetings with principals throughout the year to communicate current expectations, to review guidelines, and to discuss/support relevant matters specific to schools.
- An information and resource notebook which includes timelines, current information and requirements, checklists, samples, research-based professional learning articles, guidance on the implementation of effective parent and family engagement strategies, and meeting resources; additional resources will be provided throughout the year and upon request.
- A monthly parent newsletter template that includes required information for parents, to be customized by each school and distributed to all families
- Support for school staff to participate in outside sources providing professional learning related to parent engagement.
- A district-level Director of Federal Programs who will provide guidance, researched-based professional learning, monitoring and support for the implementation of meaningful parent engagement practices to ensure meaningful, effective ESSA compliance.
- Information regarding available resources and initiatives offered by the ALSDE including webinars, parent engagement toolkits, parent and family engagement publications, network opportunities, checklists and templates.
- Community resources to be accessed to support and share with parents, including district and community EL and adult literacy opportunities (Autauga County Family Support Center, First Baptist Church of Prattville), GED information, Autauga County Extension Center, parenting support, public library services, and others as they become available.
- An informative district website to link with school websites.

Sec. 1116(a)(2)(C))Describe how the Local Education Agency will coordinate and integrate parent and family engagement strategies under this part with parent and family engagement strategies, to the extent feasible and appropriate, with other relevant Federal, State, and local laws and programs.

To coordinate and integrate the parent and family engagement strategies of Title I with the parent and family engagement strategies from other programs, Autauga County Schools will create a support network so that programs, initiatives, and community can help each other achieve success. Networking with others will create the opportunity for groups interested in developing effective parent engagement strategies to learn from each other, both within and across communities. We will provide opportunities to share strategies and successes and to build knowledge to help improve our efforts. Parents and partnering organizations can combine the knowledge they have from multiple areas so that they can work together to create community solutions more easily and quickly. Peer networking will also increase the racial, ethnic, and cultural diversity of the sources of information and help available in communities. By connecting diverse groups of families, agencies, and community members, we hope to expand the perspectives and "voices" that are engaged in assisting and learning from each other. Organizations where such coordination will occur include:

- Family Support Center;

- Autauga County Extension Center;
- Parenting with Love and Limits;
- Autauga County Health Department;
- Department of Human Resources;
- First Baptist Church of Prattville (ESL classes);
- Helping Families Initiative with the DA's Office;
- Alabama Youth Home; and
- Head Start.

Sec. 1116(a)(2)(D)) Describe how the Local Education Agency will conduct, with the meaningful involvement of parents and family members, an annual evaluation of the content and effectiveness of the parent and family engagement policy in improving the academic quality of all schools served under this part, including identifying—(i) barriers to greater participation by parents in activities authorized by this section (with particular attention to parents 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.

Autauga County Schools will conduct, with the involvement of parents, an annual evaluation of the content and effectiveness of this parental involvement plan in improving the quality of its Title I, Part A schools. The evaluation will include identifying barriers to greater participation by parents in parental involvement activities (with particular attention to parents 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 identify 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. An annual districtwide parent survey will be administered each spring either by paper or electronically. The school district will use the findings of the evaluation to design strategies for more effective parental and family engagement, and to revise, if necessary (and with the involvement of parents) its parental involvement policies. A Parent Advisory Committee at the LEA level will meet to discuss the school's recommendations, evaluate the effectiveness of the parent involvement program and set goals. These goals will then be presented to the LEA's Federal Program Advisory Committee. The members of the Federal Programs Advisory Committee will rate the service provided for the school system on a 1-4 basis. These results will be tallied and presented to the committee members and the Title I staff at the end-of-school meeting. Changes in procedures will be implemented based on the approval of the committee. Parent comments of concern, discontent, or disagreement with the current programs (Letter of Discontent or Disagreement) may be sent to the Federal Programs Administrator.

Sec. 1116(a)(2)(E)) Describe how the Local Education Agency will use the findings of such evaluation described in the section above (Sec. 1116(2)(D)) to design evidence-based strategies for more effective parental involvement, and to revise, if necessary the parent and family engagement policies described in this section.

Based on survey results, Autauga County Schools will design evidence-based strategies for effective parent involvement. Strategies will correlate with the National Standards for Family-School Partnerships and Joyce L. Epstein's Framework of Six Types of (Parent) Involvement. The following best practices will serve as the framework for the program design:

- Create a welcoming school climate.
- Provide families information related to child development and creating supportive learning environments.
- Establish effective school-to-home and home-to-school communication
- Strengthen families' knowledge and skills to support and extend their children's learning at home and in the community.
- Engage families in school planning, leadership and meaningful volunteer opportunities.
- Connect students and families to community resources that strengthen and support students' learning and well-being

LEA and school staff will develop strategies for each of these categories, implement the strategies as intended, and revise the plan as needed to best meet the needs of stakeholders.

Sec. 1116(a)(2)(F)) Describe how the Local Education Agency will involve parents in the activities of the schools served under this part, 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 such agency for the purposes of developing, revising, and reviewing the parent and family engagement policy.

Autauga County Schools will involve parents in the activities of the schools by establishing a Parent Advisory Committee. The committee will meet quarterly to discuss both school and district parent and family engagement activities and to discuss revisions needed to the parent and family engagement policy. Members of the Parent Advisory Committee will be comprised of parents and family members from all participating Title I schools and will adequately represent the needs of the population to be served. The district will provide full opportunities for the participation of parents with limited English proficiency, parents with disabilities, and when applicable, parents of migratory children.

In order to build capacity for Parent and Family Engagement, the Local Education Agency will ensure effective involvement of parents and will support a partnership among the schools involved, the parents, and the community to improve student academic achievement, the LEA shall:

Describe how it will provide assistance to parents of children served by the school or local educational agency, as appropriate, in understanding such topics as the challenging State academic standards, State and local academic assessments, the requirements of this part, and how to monitor a child's progress and work with educators to improve the achievement of their children.

Autauga County Schools will provide assistance to parents and family members in understanding the following topics:

- a) Challenging state academic standards,
- b) State and local assessments,
- c) Title I requirements,
- d) How to monitor a child's progress,
- e) How to work with educators to improve achievement.

A variety of parent and family engagement activities will be scheduled at all schools. All schools have an Open House where parents are informed about school and district policies and procedures and their children's curriculum. Information regarding the best ways to communicate with each child's teacher will be provided, increasing the likelihood of school success. Schools also hold their Annual Title I meeting where Title I requirements are discussed. Parent Report Card Day is held throughout the district. This is a day where students are not at school and teachers meet individually with parents and family members to review state and local assessment results and the academic standards. Teachers are required to post lesson plans on their websites and document parent contact as part of the School-Parent Compact. Monthly newsletters give strategies on how parents can support the learning process and share various opportunities to volunteer in classroom.

Describe how it will provide materials and training to help parents to work with their children to improve their children's achievement, such as literacy training and using technology (including education about the harms of copyright piracy), as appropriate, to foster parental involvement.

The school district will, with the assistance of its schools, provide materials and training to help parents work with their children to improve their children's academic achievement, such as literacy training and using technology, as appropriate, to foster parental involvement. Each Title I school in Autauga County has an area where parenting materials are housed. A computer is available for parents to use. Rosetta Stone English language acquisition software is available at all schools for students and ESL parents to come to the school and participate in the "Learn English Together" program. Take home reading programs are in place for Title I and ESL parents to work with their children at home on reading skills. For Spanish speaking families bilingual book bags are sent home. A series of parent and family workshops are available to help parents improve their parenting skills. Flyers with all of the workshops listed are given to student, parents, school staff members, and various community agencies.

Describe how it will educate teachers, specialized instructional support personnel, principals, and other school leaders, and other staff, with the assistance of parents, in the value and utility of contributions of parents, and in how to reach out to, communicate with, and work with parents as equal partners, implement and coordinate parent programs, and build ties between parents and the school.

Throughout the school year, the district will conduct training related to increasing parent and family engagement, improving effective school-family communication, creating a welcoming environment, partnering with families to increase student academic achievement, and building relationships with community stakeholders. Local schools will identify additional staff and parental needs through formal and informal needs assessments. All faculty and staff of Title I schools will receive ongoing training on effective communication strategies to build parent capacity. Title I schools will consider parents' input in planning the training for effective communication practices. The Federal Programs Administrator, the school principals, and the Title I contacts at each school will facilitate the operation of effective parent centers, conduct ongoing staff and parent trainings, and build community-school partnerships.

Describe how it will to the extent feasible and appropriate, coordinate and integrate parent involvement programs and activities with other Federal, State, and local programs, including public preschool programs, and conduct other activities, such as parent resource centers, that encourage and support parents in more fully participating in the education of their children.

Autauga County Schools will coordinate and integrate Title I parent and family engagement strategies with parent and family engagement strategies found in other programs. Organizations and programs where such coordination will occur include:

- Family Support Center;
- Autauga County Extension Center;
- Parenting with Love and Limits;
- Autauga County Health Department;
- Department of Human Resources;
- Helping Families Initiative with the DA's Office;
- Alabama Youth Home; and
- Head Start.

Information and presentations are made available for the counselors, Title I staff, principals, and individual schools' staff. Autauga County Schools will also collaborate with presenters from the above listed agencies to provide parents with information and present a series of parent workshops on parenting strategies. Furthermore, the Title I Parent and Engagement Policy is written in conjunction with the LEA Parent Engagement Plan required by the ALSDE (Program Review).

Describe how it will ensure that information related to school and parent programs, meetings, and other activities is sent to the parents of participating children in a format and, to the extent practicable, in a language the parents can understand.

The school district will ensure that information related to the school and parent programs, meetings and other activities is sent to the parents of participating children in an understandable and uniform format, including alternative formats upon request, and, to the extent practicable, in a language the parents can understand. Each Title I school distributes both the local school and the LEA Parent and Family Engagement Plans to families at the beginning of each school year. Because of the high population of Hispanic and Korean parents, these plans are generally translated into both Spanish and Korean languages. Notices for parent meetings are translated in Spanish by the EL Specialist and are available in other languages via TransACT, the online compliance and communication center. LEA parent meetings are held throughout the year for parents and families of EL students. During these meetings, the EL Specialist

discusses areas such as school culture, state and county required assessments, Title I program, how to help your child at home, and the Autauga County Code of Conduct and Student Handbook. Presentations are translated for Spanish and Korean speaking parents verbally and on the PowerPoint slides. School-related handouts and the Autauga County Code of Conduct and Student Handbook are sent home to all parents requesting a copy in Spanish or Korean. The LEA maintains contracts for interpreters in Spanish, Chinese, Korean, and French. The LEA has also purchased Language Line to assist with all interpreting needs. Language Line is a phone service that provides immediate access to translators in over 200 languages.

Describe how it will ensure and provide such other reasonable support for parental involvement activities under this section as parents may request.

Throughout the year, parents may request other support for parental involvement activities. As these needs arise, the schools and the LEA will provide the reasonable support as needed. We will maintain open lines of communication with all parents and encourage them to voice their concerns and their needs. To ensure that the framework for support is in place, we will make certain that at least two parents are included as members of the Continuous Improvement Plan (CIP) team at each school to assist in developing the CIP. The LEA Parent Advisory Committee will have representation from every school. We will encourage parents to participate in other LEA committees such as the Professional Development Planning Committee, the Policy Revision Committee, LEA'S Strategic Planning Committee, the AdvancED Accreditation Committee and the At-Risk Advisory Council. At the beginning of each school year the Autauga County Board of Education will notify the parents of each student attending any school in the school system to inform them of their right to request information regarding the professional qualifications of the student's classroom teacher. Also, the school will provide timely notice to parents/guardians if their student has been assigned to, or is being taught for four or more consecutive weeks, by a teacher who does not meet applicable state certification or licensure requirements at the grade level and subject area in which the teacher has been assigned.

Describe how the LEA may involve parents in the development of training for teachers, principals, and other educators to improve the effectiveness of such training.

To build and support school staff capacity, parent feedback will be utilized in the development of training for teachers, principals, and other educators. Professional learning will be tailored to focus on responses generated from parent surveys in regard to how schools and parents can effectively collaborate to impact student academic success. Professional learning activities which will include:

- Supporting a minimum of three professional learning opportunities for staff to take place throughout the year on topics identified in surveys and evaluations;
- Creating a family-friendly school environment (parent presentation);
- Discovering effective communication strategies;
- Sharing data with parents and setting student academic goals; and
- Providing informal professional learning (such as providing tips on effective parent newsletters, inspirational and informative posters for display, providing informative brochures, etc.)

Describe how the LEA may provide necessary literacy training from funds received under this part if the local educational agency has exhausted all other reasonably available sources of funding for such training.

The LEA may provide necessary literacy training for parents from Title I, Part A funds, if the school district has exhausted all other reasonably available sources of funding for that training. This will occur if it is found to be a need. At this time, it has not been identified as a need.

Describe how the LEA may pay reasonable and necessary expenses associated with local parental involvement activities, including transportation and child care costs, to enable parents to participate in school-related meetings and training sessions.

The LEA may pay reasonable and necessary expenses associated with local parental involvement activities, including transportation and child care costs, to enable parents to participate in school-related meetings and training sessions. This will occur if it is found to be a need. At this time, it has not been identified as a need.

Describe how the LEA may train parents to enhance the involvement of other parents.

Autauga County Schools will develop and utilize a District Title I Parent Leadership Team. The purpose of the team is for parents from each school to come together quarterly throughout the school year to collaborate and provide support and ideas for how to take a leadership role at their school. The motto is "Linking Home and School for Student Achievement." The mission of the team is to encourage parents and school staff to work together toward removing barriers, strengthen the family-school partnerships, and positively impact student academic success. The role of district Title I staff is to provide opportunities for quarterly meetings, provide current research, resources, and guest speakers in support of family-school engagement, and receive recommendations and advice from the group to understand what the district can provide to help schools nurture family-school engagement. Team members will actively participate by taking action at their school through sharing information with schools, reaching out to encourage and include parents in school-based opportunities that are offered, and working with Title I school contacts and principals as key planners and decision makers in increasing parent and school staff capacity.

Describe how the LEA may arrange school meetings at a variety of times, or conduct in-home conferences between teachers or other educators, who work directly with participating children, with parents who are unable to attend such conferences at school, in order to maximize parental involvement and participation.

Parent meetings will be offered at various times throughout the day to accommodate varying schedules of parents. Meetings will be held during school and after school. If needed, in-home conferences will be scheduled, but teachers must be accompanied by administrators. Furthermore, lack of transportation oftentimes keeps parents from attending school activities. Holding a parent meeting/school event within the community allows parents to be closer to the event, minimizing transportation issues. Also, parents who are uncomfortable attending school functions held at school facilities may feel more comfortable attending a school function held at a familiar location within their own community. Therefore, all schools are required to hold a minimum of one parent

meeting/ school event at a community location, outside of regular school hours. Meetings can be held at a church, a park, a community center, a local business, or anywhere familiar within the specific community.

Describe how the LEA may adopt and implement model approaches to improving parental involvement.

All approaches to improving parental involvement will be adopted and implemented by soliciting parent input and by utilizing evidence-based approaches to effective parent and family engagement. Currently, Autauga County Schools utilizes the National Standards for Family-School Partnerships and Joyce L. Epstein’s Framework of Six Types of (Parent) Involvement as the framework to guide our parent and family engagement activities. The following best practices serve as the framework for the program design:

- Create a welcoming school climate.
- Provide families information related to child development and creating supportive learning environments.
- Establish effective school-to-home and home-to-school communication
- Strengthen families’ knowledge and skills to support and extend their children’s learning at home and in the community.
- Engage families in school planning, leadership and meaningful volunteer opportunities.
- Connect students and families to community resources that strengthen and support students’ learning and well-being

LEA and school staff will develop strategies for each of these categories, implement the strategies as intended, and revise the plan as needed to best meet the needs of stakeholders.

Describe how the LEA may establish a districtwide parent advisory council to provide advice on all matters related to parental involvement in programs supported under this section.

Autauga County Schools will establish a Parent Advisory Committee to provide advice on all matters related to parental involvement throughout the Title I program. The committee will meet quarterly to discuss both school and district parent and family engagement activities and to discuss revisions needed to the parent and family engagement policy. Members of the Parent Advisory Committee will be comprised of parents and family members from all participating Title I schools and will adequately represent the needs of the population to be served. The district will provide full opportunities for the participation of parents with limited English proficiency, parents with disabilities, and when applicable, parents of migratory children.

Describe how the LEA may develop appropriate roles for community-based organizations and businesses in parent involvement activities.

To further develop our parent and family engagement plan, partnerships among community-based organizations and business will be established. Community organizations and businesses will be encouraged to offer support in identifying needs and implementing strategies for improved parent and family engagement. They may provide guest speakers, locations for meetings, and monetary donations for parent needs. Community-based organizations and businesses will be key partners in our support network and will be provided multiple opportunities to share strategies to build knowledge and improve our efforts. Organizations where such partnership will occur include:

- Family Support Center;
- Autauga County Extension Center;
- Parenting with Love and Limits;
- Autauga County Health Department;
- Department of Human Resources;
- Helping Families Initiative with the DA’s Office;
- First Baptist Church of Prattville (ESL classes);
- Alabama Youth Home; and
- Head Start.

Sec. 1116(f)

Describe how the Local Education Agency, to the extent practicable, shall provide opportunities for the informed participation of parents and family members (including parents and family members who have limited English proficiency, parents and family members with disabilities, and parents and family members of migratory children, parent and family members of homeless children, and parents and family members of immigrant children), including providing information and school reports required under section 1111 in a format and, to the extent practicable, in a language such parents understand.

Autauga County Schools and each Title I school, will provide opportunities for the engagement of all parents and family members. Provisions will be made for informed participation of parents and family members with limited English proficiency, disabilities, and parents of migratory children, as practicable. District and school staff will collaborate with the EL Specialist and community partners in an effort to accommodate removing barriers that may prevent family participation. Information and required school reports (as established by Section 1116 of the ESSA) will be provided, as feasible, in a language and format parents understand. Language accommodation provisions will include:

- Translation services through the EL Specialist
- Various community support systems, such as Family Support Center
- Hiring of services as needed
- Autauga County Schools’ website content translation (generated by website)

Adoption of Plan:

This LEA Parent and Family Engagement Plan has been developed jointly with, and agreed on with, parents of children participating in Title I, Part A programs, as evidenced by agendas and sign in sheets from the Autauga County Schools Parent and Family Engagement Advisory Committee and the Federal Programs Advisory Committee meetings.

This plan was approved by Autauga County Schools and will be in effect for the period of one year. The school district will make this plan available to all parents of participating Title I, Part A children on or before October 1, 2021.

The Autauga County Board of Education recognizes parents as partners in the planning process for Title I programs. Therefore, parents are encouraged to submit comments or concerns about this parent and family engagement plan. If parents disagree with the components of this plan or the implementation of the Federal Programs in Autauga County, they may complete a Letter of Discontent or Disagreement and mail it to the following people:

Dr. Rachel Surles, Federal Programs
Autauga County Board of Education
153 West Fourth Street
Prattville, AL 36067

Federal Programs Director
Alabama State Department of Education
P. O. 302101
Montgomery, Al 36130-2101

Autauga County Schools ensures that all persons will be afforded equal access or participation on the basis of selection criteria included in the law. This includes gender, race, national origin, color, disability, age, or migrant, ESL, neglected or delinquent, and homeless children.