

DISTRICT PARENT AND FAMILY ENGAGEMENT POLICY



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**BENTON COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT
PARENT AND FAMILY ENGAGEMENT POLICY**

PART I

In support of strengthening student academic achievement, Benton county School District 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 of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA.) The policy establishes the licensed education agency's (LEA's) expectations and objective for meaningful parent and family engagement activities, and it is incorporated into the LEA's plan submitted to the Mississippi Department of Education.

The Benton County School District agrees to implement the following requirements as outlined by Section 1116:

- The school district will put into operation programs, activities, and procedures for the involvement of parents 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 of participating children.
- Consistent with Section 1116, the school district will work with its schools to ensure that the required school-level parental involvement policies meet the requirements of Section 1116 of the ESSA, and each include as a component a school-parent compact consistent with Section 1116 of the ESSA.
- The school district will incorporate this LEA parental involvement policy into its LEA plan developed under Section 1116 of the ESSA.
- In carrying out the Title I, Part A parental involvement requirements to the extent practicable, the school district and its schools will 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 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 parents understand.
- If the LEA plan for Title I, Part A, developed under Section 1112 of the ESSA, is not satisfactory to the parents 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 involve the parents of children served in Title I, Part A schools in decisions about how the one percent of Title I, Part A funds reserved

for parental involvement is spent, and will ensure that not less than ninety-five percent of the one percent reserved goes directly to the schools.

- The school 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 this definition:

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

- (A) That parents 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 included, as appropriate, in decision-making and on advisory committees to assist in the education of their child.*
- (D) The carrying out of other activities, such as those described in Section 1116 of the ESSA.*

PART II

DISTRICT WIDE PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT COMPONENTS

1. The Benton County School District will take the following actions to involve parents in the joint development of its LEA Parent and Family Engagement Policy:

In the development of the Comprehensive Plan for Improving Student Academic Achievement, the Benton County LEA will give all parents the opportunity to provide input. Prior to the beginning of the school year, all parents will be invited to participate in a stakeholders meeting. The Consolidated LEA Improvement Plan (CLIP), School Improvement Plans, Schoolwide Plans, Parental Involvement Plans, and Parent Compacts will be reviewed and open for input from parents and other stakeholders. These plans will also be distributed and made available for review at all Title I meetings and activities. The announcement of these reviews will be placed in the local newspaper, on the school district website, and flyers will be sent home with each student.

2. The Benton County School District will take the following actions to involve parents in the process of school review and improvement under Section 1116 of the ESSA:

The Parent Involvement Coordinator, PTO and other parent participants will organize and direct each school's parent open house at the beginning of the year, along with other parent involvement activities for the entire school year. Stakeholders will be recruited to help with developing/revising the School Improvement Plan, Parent Involvement Plan, and Schoolwide Plan. At each Title I Annual Meeting, parents will be informed of upcoming meetings and

opportunities to get involved and provide input. In addition, our Parent Involvement Coordinator will provide copies of the plans at all parent involvement activities and sign-up sheets for parents and other stakeholders interested in becoming involved. Notifications of parent meetings will be placed in the local newspaper, on the district website, and informational flyers will be sent home with every student.

3. The Benton County School District will provide the following necessary coordination, technical assistance, and other support to assist Title I, Part A schools in planning and implementing effective parental involvement activities to improve student academic achievement and school performances:

The Title I Director and Parent Involvement Coordinator will work closely with each school to provide guidance and support. This support will include working together to provide opportunities for collaboration and sharing best practices and resources between schools. The Parent Involvement Coordinator will assist in the coordination of community services from such agencies as the Health Department, the Department of Family and Children Services, and homeless shelters. The Parent Involvement Coordinator will facilitate the smooth operation of family literacy programs. The three Title I eligible schools will work with community services, school based programs, and other programs in schools when feasible to improve student achievement, promote parental involvement, promote family literacy, and provide opportunities for smooth transition to school. The Benton County Medical Center and the Benton County Sheriff's Department are examples of some of the resources that are available to support the instructional program.

The Parent Involvement Coordinator will be assigned to each school one day a week. This will help to ensure that the Parent Involvement Coordinator is directly involved with parent activities at the school. The Title I Department, counselors, administrators, and PTO at each school will work together to plan and implement effective parent involvement activities. They will attend various workshops, training, and webinars throughout the year to stay abreast of effective and creative activities. The Title I Director will update the administrators at the monthly Superintendent Board Meetings. The schools and parents will be provided Title I Parent Handbooks.

4. The Benton County School District will coordinate and integrate parental involvement strategies in Part A with parental involvement strategies under the following other programs:

Benton County Schools provides Special Education Teachers and Speech Pathologists to help meet the needs of students at Headstart. The schools are also available to assist with parent activities provided by Headstart. Parent orientation and transitional activities are coordinated yearly with the elementary schools. In addition, parent activities are coordinated with the

Migrant Education Program and the ESOL Program to ensure that parents of students in these programs have the opportunity to be involved as well. Parents of Migrant and ESOL students are invited to all Title I parent meetings and activities.

5. The Benton County School District will take the following actions to conduct, with the involvement of parents, an annual evaluation of the content and effectiveness of the parental involvement policy 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 school district will use the findings of the evaluation about its involvement and to revise, if necessary (and with the involvement of parents) its parental involvement policies. Annually, through PTO, School Councils, Parent Workshops, etc., parents will be given the opportunity to evaluate the effectiveness and appropriateness of the Parent Involvement Policy. Surveys will be sent home to all parents, posted on the district website, and placed in the Involvement Policy and shared with all stakeholders.

6. The Benton County School District will build the schools' and parents' capacity for strong parental involvement to ensure effective involvement of parents and to support a partnership among the school involved, parents and the community to improve student academic achievement through the following activities described below:

A. The school district will, with the assistance of its Title I, Part A schools, provide assistance to parents of children served by the school district by undertaking the actions described in this paragraph:

The Parent Involvement Coordinator and Title I Director will assist schools in providing materials and activities that help parents understand the Title I requirements, standards, assessments, how to work with the teachers and administrators, and how to monitor their child's progress through PowerSchool Parent. The schools will hold scheduled conferences throughout the year and host parent meetings through Open House, PTO, and specialized parent involvement meetings. Parents will be provided information about community based agencies and organizations where additional support may be obtained. All information will be available in other languages as needed.

B. The school district will, with 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.

The Parent Involvement Coordinator will assist the schools in providing parent workshops and activities. A parent resource center/area will be available at each school. Technology and individual assistance will also be available to parents as needed.

C. The school district will, with the assistance of its schools and parents, educate its teachers, pupil services personnel, principals and other staff on how to reach out to, communicate, and work with parents as equal partners, in the value and utility of contributions of parents, and how to implement and coordinate parent programs and build ties between parents and schools by:

The Parent Involvement Coordinator, volunteer parents, and support staff will attend parent involvement conferences, participate in parent involvement webinars presented by the GADOE and other sources, write and review the parent involvement policy and the parent compacts. Information on parental involvement will be shared with all staff at faculty meetings and grade level meetings. Various parent trainings and activities will be held throughout the year to help build ties between parents and schools.

D. The school district will, to the extent feasible and appropriate, coordinate and integrate parental involvement programs and activities with Head Start, public preschool and other 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 by:

The school will maintain resource centers and encourage parents to visit the centers. Pre-K and Head Start parents will be invited to attend Kindergarten orientation and be a part of the walk-through visits in the spring of each year.

E. The school district will take the following actions to 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:

Benton County Schools will send parent information, flyers, and other materials home to parents in a simple, understandable format, including in other languages as needed. A translator will also be available for parent meetings and conferences as needed.

F. Provide other reasonable support for parental involvement activities under Section 1116 as parents may request.

Benton County Schools is committed to accommodating parents and providing parental involvement activities as much as possible or feasible. Parent surveys will be used to gather information about the wants and needs of parents.

PART III.

DISCRETIONARY DISTRICT WIDE PARENT INVOLVEMENT POLICY COMPONENTS

In order to further build parents' capacity for involvement in the school and school system to support their children's academic achievement, the following discretionary activities listed under Section 1116 (e) of the ESSA will be implemented:

- Involving parents in the development of training for teachers, principles, and other educators to improve the effectiveness of that training
- Providing 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
- Paying reasonable and necessary expenses associated with parental involvement activities, including transportation and child care costs, to enable parents to participate in school-related meetings and training sessions
- Training parents to enhance the involvement of other parents
- Maximize parental involvement 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 parents who are unable to attend those conferences at school
- Adopting and implementing model approaches to improving parental involvement
- Establishing a district parent advisory council to provide advice on all matters related to parental involvement in Title I, Part A programs
- Developing appropriate roles for community-based organizations and businesses, including faith-based organizations, in parental involvement activities

PART IV

ADOPTION

This Benton County School District Parental Involvement Policy has been developed jointly and agreed on with parents of children participating in Title I, Part A programs as evidenced by documented survey results.

The policy was adopted by the Benton County School District and will be in effect for the 2021-2022 school year. The school district will distribute this policy to all parents of participating Title I, Part A children.