

Sumter County School District

Parent and Family Engagement Policy



What is Family Engagement?

Family Engagement means the participation of parents and family members 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.
- (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 other activities, such as those described in Section 1116 of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).

About the Parent and Family Engagement Policy

In support of strengthening student academic achievement, the Sumter County School District (SCSD) has developed this parent and family engagement policy that establishes the district's expectations and objectives for meaningful family engagement and guides the strategies and resources that strengthen school and parent partnerships in the district's Title I schools. This plan will describe SCSD's commitment to engage families in the education of their children and to build the capacity in its Title I schools to implement family engagement strategies and activities designed to achieve the district and student academic achievement goals.

When schools, families, and communities work together to support learning, children tend to do better in school, stay in school longer and enjoy school more. Title I, Part A provides for substantive family engagement at every level of the program, such as in the development and implementation of the district and school plan, and in carrying out the district and school improvement provisions. Section 1116 of ESSA contains the primary Title I, Part A requirements for schools and school systems to involve parents and family members in their children's education. The school district and its schools will provide full opportunities for the participation of residential facilities in its school attendance area are included in the parental involvement correspondence and activities. SCSD will work with its Title I schools to ensure that the required school-level parent and family engagement

policies meet the requirements of federal law and each include, as a component, a school-parent compact.

Jointly Developed

During the annual District's Input meeting in May of 2025, all parents were invited to participate and provide suggestions and ideas to improve this district parent and family engagement policy for the 2025- 2026 school year. The district notified all parents of the virtual meeting through flyers sent home in the Wednesday courier as well as announcements posted on school and district websites. Upon final revision, the district parent and family engagement policy was incorporated into the CLIP which was submitted to the state. Parents are welcome to submit comments and feedback regarding the policy at any time on the school district website or by submitting written comments to your child's school. All feedback received by May 25, 2025 was considered for revisions to this policy.

During the summer of 2025 parents were invited to the District Leadership Retreat. During this meeting, the Consolidated LEA Improvement Plan (CLIP) and the District Strategic Plan was reviewed.

The district parent and family engagement policy will be posted on the district and school websites, distributed during the annual Title I meetings held in the fall, and made available in the schools' parent resource centers in the format and language most applicable to parents.



Strengthening Our School

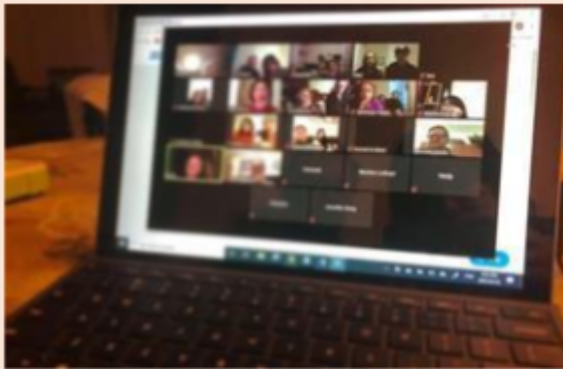
This year, the district family engagement coordinator (FEC) will provide technical assistance and support to all Title I schools to ensure family engagement requirements are being satisfied and that family engagement strategies and activities are being implemented. Title I schools will receive notifications and resources from the district and the FEC to help them improve and strengthen family engagement. In addition to frequent communication and school visits, the district and the FEC will hold parent meetings and staff trainings with its Title I schools' principals and school parent involvement coordinators (PICs) to review family engagement plans and activities.

Additionally, the district will implement effective parent and family engagement activities with the collaboration of schools, parents, and other community stakeholders.

Reservation of Funds

The SCSD will reserve 1 percent from the total amount of Title I funds it receives in 2025-2026 to carry out the parent and family engagement requirements listed in this policy and as described in federal law. Furthermore, the SCSD will distribute 90 percent of the amount reserved to Title I schools to support their local-level family engagement programs and activities. The district will provide clear guidance and communication to assist each Title I school in developing an adequate family engagement budget that addresses their needs assessment and parent recommendations.

Each Title I school hosted an annual input meeting for parents to provide suggestions on how these family engagement funds could be used in the 2025-2026 school year at the district and school-level. Survey results and minutes from these meetings were reviewed by the district to determine areas of need for the upcoming school year and considered changes to the family engagement budget. If you have suggestions, please contact the FEC in the district office.



Opportunities for Meaningful Parent Consultation

Input and suggestions from parents, family members, and community partners are an essential component of the district and school improvement plans that are developed each year. All parents of students eligible to receive Title I services are invited to attend two meeting opportunities described in this section to share their ideas and suggestions to help the district, schools, and students to reach our student academic achievement goals.

District Input Meeting ~ March, 2026

All parents are welcome to hear the latest updates from the Sumter County School District as well as review and provide input into the district parent and family engagement policy and the Consolidated LEA Improvement Plan for the 2026-2027 school year. Notices regarding this meeting will be advertised in multiple ways in advance of the meeting. The district will also communicate information regarding this meeting on the school district website.

School Input Meetings ~ January-February, 2026

During this time, each Title I school will host a meeting for parents and family members to participate in roundtable discussions to review the school wide plan, the school's parent and family engagement policies as well as provide input on the family engagement budget and topics for school staff training. Each Title I school will provide notifications in multiple ways. Invitations will be sent home as well posted on the school website communication platform to notify them about the date and time of the forum. Information regarding the School Input meeting will also be made available on the school websites.

Input on the use of Title I funds to support family engagement programs may also be provided through the annual district survey. The survey will contain questions related to the family engagement budget and school staff training for parents to provide their comments.

Building Capacity

The SCSD will build partnerships between its Title I Schools, families, and community with the goal of developing mutual support for student achievement. To develop capacity for this support, the SCSD will implement a variety of family and community engagement initiatives.

Of Parents - The SCSD will provide families with information about the overall Title I program and its requirements. The district works with its Title I schools to help families understand academic expectations for student learning and progress. The State's challenging academic standards, and local and state assessments—including alternative assessments, will also be provided. The district also offers assistance to parents in understanding use of its online student information system and other digital resources, including the harms of copyright piracy, through its technology specialists. Notifications about these opportunities will be posted on the district website and shared through school messaging systems, newsletters, and social media postings.

The SCSD will coordinate and integrate the district's family engagement programs 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 such as, the local preschool program and other federal and state funded preschool programs in the district. The district will invite faculty and staff from those programs to attend planning meetings focused on family engagement activities. In the spring, schools will host Ready for Kindergarten tours in collaboration with Head Start, Middle and High School Transition Nights, and College and Career Fair so parents may receive information to help prepare them and their children for the next academic or career path.

Of School Staff - The SCSD will conduct four trainings during the school year for faculty and staff to learn and discuss strategies to increase family engagement, improve school-family communication, and build ties with parents and the community. These trainings will be delivered to the faculty and staff of Title I schools. The SCSD will also host a training for appropriate school staff and faculty that will focus on ways to effectively communicate with families/creating welcoming environments.

To ensure that information related to district, school, parent programs, and activities is available to all parents, each Title I school is required to send home and post online information for parents and family members in an understandable language and uniform format. At the beginning of the year, school staff will be trained on parent notifications and resources to be sent home in parents' native language, where applicable, and interpreters will be available at parent events and meetings. Information posted on the district website will be translated to the extent practicable. The district will also utilize school telephone systems, school websites, local news media, and other school message systems to post information for parents.

Parent and Family Engagement Evaluation

Each year, the SCSD will conduct an evaluation of the content and effectiveness of this parent and family engagement policy and the family engagement activities to improve the academic quality of the Title I schools through an annual parent survey and the School Input Meetings.

Beginning in March, each Title I school will send home a survey and provided a link to the survey for parents to provide valuable feedback regarding the parent and family engagement activities and programs. These surveys will also be posted on the district and school

websites for parents to complete. In addition to the annual survey, each Title I school will also use the School Input Meeting to facilitate group discussions to discuss the needs parents of children eligible to receive Title I services to design strategies for more effective family engagement.

The SCSD will use the findings from the school forums and the survey results to design strategies to improve effective family engagement, to remove possible barriers to parent participation, and to revise its parent and family engagement policies.

Accessibility

In carrying out the parent and family engagement requirements established by Section 1116 of the ESSA, the district family engagement coordinator will communicate and collaborate with the Office of Teaching and Learning to ensure full opportunities for participation of parents with limited English proficiency, parents with disabilities, and parents of migratory children including providing information and school reports in a language parents can understand.

Mark Your Calendars

For Schools

Parent Involvement Coordinator (PIC)

Meetings August, 2025
September, 2025
October, 2025
November, 2025
December, 2025
January, 2026
February, 2026
March, 2026

Building Capacity with Staff

Sessions September, 2025
November, 2025
January, 2026
March, 2026

For Parents

School Input Meetings

January - February, 2026
All Schools

District Input Meeting

March, 2026
Sumter County Board Office

Annual Program Evaluation Survey Night

April, 2026

Adoption

This districtwide parent and family engagement policy has been developed jointly and agreed upon with parents and family members of children participating in Title I, Part A programs as evidenced by the collaboration of parents, school, and district personnel at the annual parent input meeting.

This policy was adopted by the Sumter County School District on July 9, 2025 and will be in effect for the 2025-2026 academic school year. The school district will distribute this policy in multiple ways to all parents of participating Title I, Part A children during the fall semester.

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