Houston County School District

District Parent and Family Engagement Plan

2022-2023

Revised May 24, 2022

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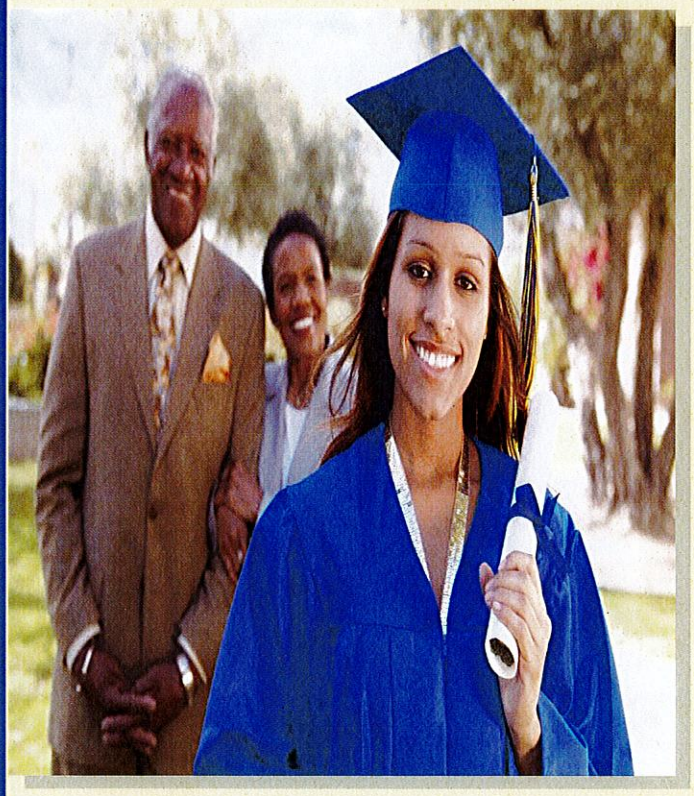

What is Family Engagement?

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:

- That parents and families play an integral role in assisting their child's learning.
- That parents and families are encouraged to be actively engaged in their child's education.
- That parents and families are full partners in their child's education and are included, as appropriate, in the decision-making process to assist in the education of their child.
- The carrying out of other activities, such as those described in Section 1116 of the ESSA.

About the Parent and Family Engagement Plan

In support of strengthening student academic achievement, Houston County School System (HCSS) has developed this parent and family engagement plan that establishes the district's expectations for family engagement and guides the strategies and resources that strengthen school and parent/family partnerships in the district's Title I schools. This plan will describe HCSS'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 more. Title I, Part A provides for substantive parental 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 the Every Child Succeeds Act (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 HCSS will work with its Title I schools to ensure that the required school-level parent and family engagement plans meet the requirements of the federal law and each include, as a component, a school-parent compact.

Jointly Developed

HCSS provides stakeholders e.g., parents, teachers, students, school officials, and community partners multiple opportunities to jointly develop, review and revise Title I documents including the Parent and Family Engagement Plan. The Federal Programs department provides Shared Decision Making (SDM) opportunities annually. Stakeholders are notified and invited via announcements posted on the district and school websites, social media, and fliers in Title I schools. Participating stakeholders will receive information and will be able to provide suggestions and ideas to improve the Federal Program Plans and Comprehensive LEA Improvement Plan (CLIP).
Stakeholders are welcome to complete an on-line feedback form and/or at any time on the district website. All feedback received will be considered when revising the plans for the 2022-2023 school year.

Upon final revision, the district Parent and Family Engagement Plan will be incorporated into the CLIP which is submitted to the state.

The District Parent and Family Engagement Plan will be made available on the district and Title I schools' websites, during the Annual Title I School Meetings and in the schools' Parent Resource Centers.

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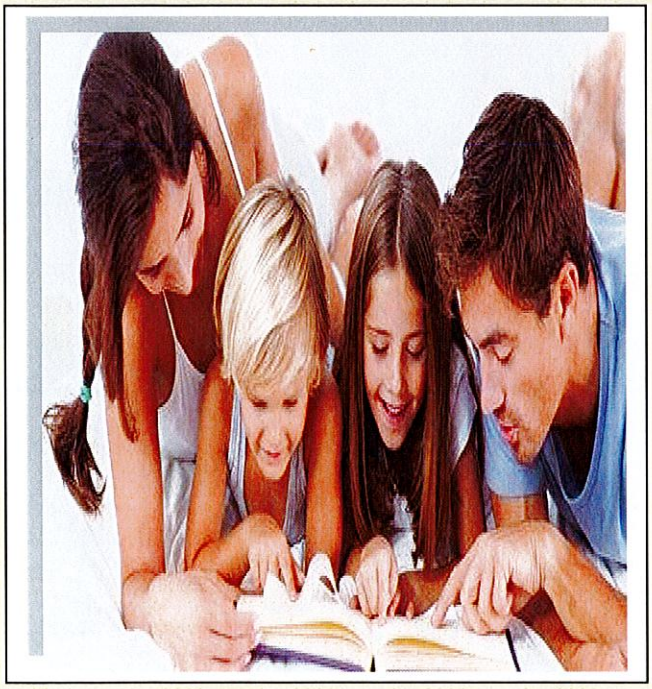
Strengthening Our Schools

The Federal Programs Director and/or District Family Engagement Coordinator will provide professional learning/technical assistance to principals and school-level Family Engagement Liaisons on a regular basis through planned meetings, on-site visits, webinars, emails and phone calls to ensure parental engagement requirements are being met. Assistance will be provided to Title I schools in the development and implementation of a 1-Year Action Plan that includes academically-focused parent events covering Literacy, Technology, Testing and Assessments, Curriculum Standards, and ESOL, as well as, activities that support a welcoming school environment, transitions, professional development of staff, shared decision making and community collaboration. Throughout the year, Title I schools will be given guidance and timelines to follow. These notifications and resources will help improve and strengthen family engagement. A Title I Meeting will be held in July for the Family Engagement Liaisons to officially kick-off the new school year and set the tone for family engagement. Additionally, a Mid-Year Meeting will take place in the second semester and will provide Title I program updates, state of the program information, program evaluation documentation and steps for preparing for the upcoming school year.



Reservation of Funds

The HCSS will reserve 1 percent from the total amount of Title I funds it receives in FY23 to carry out the parent and family engagement requirements listed in this plan and as described in federal law. The HCSS will distribute 90 percent of the reserved amount to Title I schools unless all Title I principals agree for the reserved amount to remain at the district level to support district and school level family engagement programs and activities. The district will provide clear guidance and communication to assist each Title I school in developing an adequate parental engagement budget that addresses their needs assessment and parent recommendations.

Each Title I school will host an annual Share Decision Making Meeting and will conduct a parent survey in the spring to gather input and suggestions on how these parental engagement funds will be used in the upcoming year at the district and school-level. Feedback forms and minutes from these meetings will be reviewed by the district to determine areas of need for the upcoming school year and consider changes to the parental engagement budget.

Opportunities for Shared Decision Making

Input and suggestions from parents and family members 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 an input meeting 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 Shared Decision Making Meeting~ *Spring 2023*

All stakeholders are welcome to hear the latest updates from the Houston County School District as well as review and provide input into the district Parent and Family Engagement Plan and the Comprehensive LEA Improvement Plan for the 2022-2023 school year. Notices regarding this meeting will be posted in Title I schools, on social media and on the district's website in advance of the meeting. The meeting usually takes place via an on-line meeting platform and is held at convenient time. A portion of the meeting will be dedicated to open discussions. This strategy will allow stakeholders the opportunity to provide input and to collaborate with other parents and district personnel.

School-level Shared Decision Making Meetings ~ *Spring 2023*

Each Title I school will host an in-person meeting for parents to participate in discussions to review the school's Parent and Family Engagement Plan, School-Parent Compacts, as well as, provide input on the parental engagement budget and parental engagement programs. This meeting is entitled *Voices for the Vision*. Each Title I school will advertise the meeting notifying parents about the date and times through multiple means. These means include but are not limited to school website, social media, invitations, school messenger, fliers, newsletter, email, text message and Class Dojo. Schools will also hold a SDM meeting for their faculty.

Parent Action Team Meetings ~ *On-going*

Each Title I school may have a Parent Action Team that meets at least once a year. All families are invited and encouraged to participate.

Title I Parent Satisfaction Survey ~ *Spring 2023*

Parent input on the use of Title I funds to support family engagement programs will be provided through the annual district survey. The survey will contain questions related to the family engagement budget, welcoming climate, academic support, shared decision making and building the capacity of school staff.

Building School and Parent Capacity

The HCSS will build the schools' and parents' capacity for strong parental engagement, in order to ensure effective engagement of parents and families to support a partnership among the Title I schools, parents, and the community to improve student academic achievement through the following districtwide activities and programs.

- HCSS will maintain a webpage page dedicated solely to Family Engagement. The webpage will contain academic information, resources and materials to help parents support learning at home. A link entitled *Parent University* will be the digital hub connecting parents to information regarding grade level curriculum standards, technology, literacy, testing and assessments and school transition. This district webpage will also contain links to upcoming family events, parent surveys, parent guides, community resources, Title I documents and an interactive family resource center.

- HCSS will assist parents with accessing and understanding how to use Infinite Campus, the on-line student information system, and other digital educational resources, by working with Title I schools to host workshops and on-going drop-in opportunities for parents. Dates and times for these workshops and drop-in visits will be determined and announced by each school individually. Schools may request assistance from the district's technology support staff if needed. The Infinite Campus Parent Portal allows families to monitor student progress and access student data.

- HCSS 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. HCSS will ensure that its Title I schools coordinate efforts with Pre-Kindergarten and Head Start programs to provide information and activities on school readiness and the importance of family engagement. Kindergarten Readiness events and school tours are examples of coordinated events that may be provided for the parents of students participating in these early education programs. Upper grades will coordinate events such as rising Middle and High School transition nights and tours, College and Career Fairs, Dual Enrollment, and CTAE events so parents may receive information to help them and children for the next life stage.

- HCSS will take the following actions to ensure that information related to school and parent programs, meetings and other activities is sent to parents in an understandable and uniform format to the extent practicable, in language that parents can understand. The district will provide required documents and other pertinent information in an understandable format, and to the extent practicable, in a language parents understand. The district and Title I schools shall communicate regularly with parents through a variety of media, including but not limited to:
  Title I Parent Handbook, parent-teacher conferences, parent workshops/events, Parent Resource Centers, Talking Points App, newsletters, fliers, emails, on-line meeting platforms, websites, school messenger system, school marquees, and social media. All information will be presented in a parent-friendly language.
  The districts shall employ a translator to assist in this effort.
  Personnel at the Central Registration complex shall further assist families when culture and language may be barriers.

- HCSS will conduct multiple trainings during the school year for principals and family engagement liaisons to learn and discuss strategies to increase family engagement, improve school-family communication, use data to revise plans and compacts, use of the compact during conferencing, and build ties with parents and the community. These trainings will be redelivered to the faculty and staff of Title I schools. The District Family Engagement Coordinator will visit each Title I school to review and discuss family engagement requirements and initiatives.

Building School and Parent Capacity

- Title I schools will offer parent workshops/activities and a number of volunteer opportunities on a regular basis, at various times, and to the extent practicable provide services to eliminate parental engagement barriers. Each school will provide a minimum of seven (7) family-focused academic based activities a year to cover the capacity building requirements as identified in the federal law. These capacity building events must provide families with useful strategies that are linked to learning and are aligned with the goals identified by the school.

- Title I schools must provide print or digital materials in the form of brochures, pamphlets, newsletters, and make available website links that assist parents in understanding topics such as: Georgia Standards of Excellence, College and Career Readiness Performance Index (CCRPI), Georgia Milestone Assessment (End-of-Course and End-of-Grade), MAPS testing, Record of Progress, How to Monitor their Child's Progress, Help with Homework, and How to Work with Educators. These strategies and topics will be covered during events such as Open House, Parent-Teacher Conferences, Subject Area/Curriculum Nights, Open Classroom Time, Lunch & Learn, and Academic Advisement.

- The district and schools will utilize resources provided through the Georgia Department of Education and the Family-School Partnership Program.

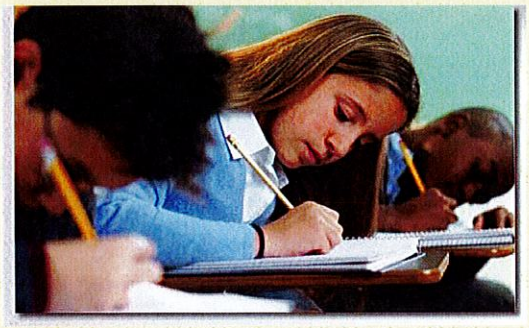
- All parents with student(s) in a Title I school will have access to their school's Title I Parent Handbook. This handbook will contain the following notices: School-level Parent and Family Engagement Plan, School-Parent Compact, Parents' Rights to Know Teacher and Paraprofessional Qualifications letter, Complaint Procedure and Copyright Awareness Notification and PBIS.

- All Title I schools shall hold an Annual Title I Meeting at a convenient time within the first six weeks of school. During the meeting, each school is to inform parents about the purpose, goals, guidelines and expectations of the Title I program.

- Title I schools shall maintain a Parent Resource Center that is strategically located within the school building. Schools shall be responsible for notifying parents about the center's location, hours of operation and available resources. Parent Resource Centers shall provide learning opportunities for parents that promote literacy, parental development, learning at home, information about Title I, communication and decision making.

- The district will recommend that Title I schools send representatives to workshops/conferences related to family engagement, as well as, participate in workshops or technical assistance provided by the Georgia Department of Education.

- School-level family engagement liaisons will conduct four trainings during the school year for administration and school staff that encourages a welcoming atmosphere, open communication and promotes the importance of family engagement.



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HIGH-ACHIEVING STUDENTS

Parent and Family Engagement Evaluations

Each year, the HCSS will conduct an evaluation of the content and effectiveness of this parent and family engagement plan and the family engagement activities to improve the academic quality of the Title I schools through an annual parent satisfaction survey and the Shared Decision Making Meetings.

In the spring, each Title I school will solicit parents to provide valuable feedback regarding the parent and family engagement activities and programs. In addition to the annual survey, each Title I school will also use the Shared Decision Making Meetings to facilitate group discussions to discuss the needs parents of children eligible to receive Title I services to design strategies for more effective parental engagement.

The HCSS will use the findings from the schools' SDM meetings 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 plans.

Mark Your Calendars

Parent University Webpage
August 2022-May 2023

StoryWalk Family Literacy Event
Fall 2022 and Spring 2023

Parent-Teacher Conference Day
October 2022

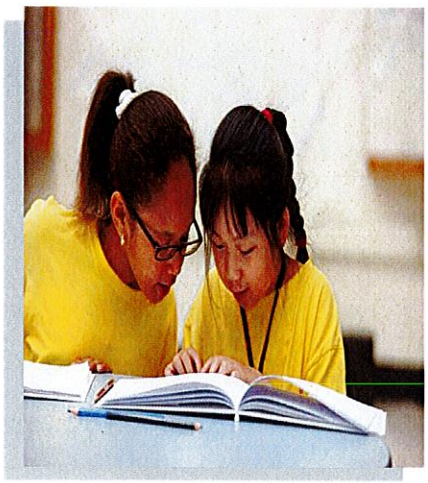
Family Engagement Month Celebrations
November 2022

Parent Satisfaction Survey
February 2023

Voices for the Vision Input Meeting
(District and Schools)
March and May 2023

Accessibility

In carrying out the parental engagement requirements established by Section 1116 of the ESSA, the district family engagement coordinator will communicate and collaborate with Student Support Services and District and School Effectiveness 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.



Plan Approval

This districtwide parent and family engagement plan 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 Shared Decision Making Meeting.

This plan will be in effect for the 2022-2023 academic school year. The school district will make this plan available in multiple ways to all parents of participating Title I, Part A children on or before September 30, 2022.