

# Murray County Schools

## Parent and Family Engagement Policy

2019–2020  
Revised May 13, 2019  
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Chatsworth, GA 30705  
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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:

- (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 ESSA.



### About the Parent and Family Engagement Policy

In support of strengthening student academic achievement, the Murray County School District 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 MCS’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 the Every Student 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. Consistent with Section 1116, MCS will work with its Title I schools to ensure that the required school-level parent and family engagement policies meet the requirements of Section 1116(b) and each include, as a component, a school-parent compact consistent with Section 1116(d) of the ESSA.

## Jointly Developed

During the annual District Parent Meeting in May, all parents were invited to participate and provide suggestions and ideas to improve the district parent and family engagement policy for the 2019-2020 school year. The district posted an announcement on the district website, on each individual school website and advertised in the local newspaper. During this meeting, parents also reviewed and discussed the Comprehensive LEA Improvement Plan (CLIP). Additionally, each Title I school will use its Parent Advisory Council to review the district parent and family engagement policy before the end of the school year.

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 their child's school. All feedback received will be considered and the plan will be revised as needed since it is a living document.

The updated district parent and family engagement policy will be posted on district and school websites, distributed during the annual Title I school meetings at the beginning of the school year, made available in the schools' parent resource centers, and at the school system's Enrollment Center.



## Strengthening Our School

MCS will provide opportunities for Title I teachers and administrators to attend Title I Technical Assistance meetings that include training on programs, activities, and strategies aligned to academic progress and student achievement and focusing on engaging Title I parents. The district will provide updated community resources to assist schools in meeting the needs of Title I parents.

In the spring, school level Title I Coordinators and district personnel will meet to review Parent Input to discuss goal setting for Parent Involvement practices. Parents will also be given opportunities throughout the school year to discuss their needs and to evaluate programs.

## Reservation of Funds

MCS will reserve 1 percent from the total amount of Title I funds it receives in FY20 to carry out the parent and family engagement requirements listed in this policy and as described in Section 1116 of the ESSA. Furthermore, MCS 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 will host an annual School Improvement Forum in May for parents to provide suggestions for how these family engagement funds will be used in the upcoming year at the district and school-level. Comment cards 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 family engagement budget.

# Opportunities for Meaningful Parent Consultation

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 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.

## **State of the System Address ~ January 2020**

All parents are welcome to hear the latest updates from Murray County Schools as well as review and provide input into the district parent and family engagement policy and the Comprehensive LEA Improvement Plan for the 2019-20 school year. Notices regarding this meeting will be shared on social media in advance of the meeting. The district will also communicate information regarding this meeting on the school and district websites.

## **School Improvement Forums ~May 2019**

During this month, each Title I school will host a forum for parents and family members to participate in roundtable discussions to review the schoolwide plan, the school's parent and family engagement policies as well as provide input on the family engagement budget and programs. Each Title I school will send invitations home and post on social media notifying parents about the date and time of the forum. Information regarding the School Improvement Forum will also be made available on the school websites.

Parent input on the use of Title I funds to support family engagement programs may also be provided through the implementation of a district wide parent advisory council to provide advice on all matters related to parental involvement in Title I, Part A programs. The district will also develop appropriate roles for community-based organizations and businesses, including faith-based organizations, in parental involvement activities.



## **Building Capacity**

The Murray County School District will build school and parent capacity for strong family engagement. This capacity will ensure effective engagement of parents and family members in supporting partnerships among the Title I schools, parents, and the community with the goal of improving student academic achievement. To build this capacity, the Murray County School District will implement the activities outlined below.

***Of Parents*** - The Murray County School District will work through its Title I schools to aid parents in understanding state and district academic information connected to student learning and progress. The district will also provide parents with information regarding the Title I program. Classes for parents to gain knowledge about the challenging state academic standards, local academic assessments, as well as the required assessments for Georgia students, including alternative forms of assessment, will also be provided. The dates and locations for these classes will be posted on the school level websites and shared through each Title I school's newsletter and/or social media outlets.

In addition, the Murray County School District will coordinate pages on the district and school websites that will contain resources and materials, including parent guides, study guides, and practice assessments, to help parents work with their children at home. Copies of these materials will be made available at all Title I schools for those families who may have limited internet access, including copies in Spanish. To assist parents with understanding the online student information system and other digital educational resources, the Murray County School District technology department will partner with Title I schools to provide information for parents. Each Title I school will make these resources available to all parents.

The Murray County School District will coordinate and integrate the district's family engagement programs with 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, the elementary schools will hold kindergarten visits for preschool programs so students may tour the schools. Parents will be encouraged to visit the schools with the students during these tours.

***Of School Staff*** - The Murray County School District will conduct four trainings during the school year for principals and school 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 redelivered to the faculty and staff of Title I schools.

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 providing interpreters at parent events. Information posted on the district website will be translated to the extent practicable. The district will also utilize district and school websites, local news media, social media outlets, and other school message systems to post information for parents.

# Parent and Family Engagement Evaluation

Each year, MCS 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 a parent input meeting and the School Improvement Forums.

Throughout the school year, each Title I school will give parents the opportunity to provide valuable feedback regarding the parent and family engagement activities and programs. This input will also be posted on the district and school websites as well as social

media outlets for parents to provide feedback. Each Title I school will also use the School Improvement Forum 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 MCS will use the findings from the school forums and the input 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, district personnel will communicate and collaborate with the Office for Student Support Services and Federal Programs to ensure full opportunities for participation of parents with limited English proficiency, parents with disabilities, parents of migratory children, and guardians of residential facilities including providing information and school reports in a language parents can understand.

## Mark Your Calendars

### *For Parents*

#### State of the System Address

January, 2020

NMHS

#### School Improvement Forum

May, 2020

Local school site

#### District Parent Meeting

May, 2020

County Board Office

### *For Schools*

#### Welcoming Schools Training

August, 2019 –

County Board Office



## 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 State of the System Address.

This policy was adopted by Murray County Schools in May 2019 and will be in effect for the 2019-2020 academic school year. The school district will distribute this policy in multiple ways to all parents of participating Title I, Part A children on or before September 1, 2019.