

## Walker County Schools Parent and Family Engagement Plan

### What is Parent and Family Engagement?



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

- That parents play an integral role in assisting their child's learning.
- That parents are encouraged to be actively involved in their child's education.
- 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.
- The carrying out of other activities, such as those described in Section 1116 of the ESSA.

### About the Parent/Family Engagement Policy

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

### Acronyms

#### ESSA

*Every Student Succeeds Act* (ESSA) is the reauthorization of the original *Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965*. This is the law that governs Title I and other federal educational programs.

#### LEA

*Local Education Agency*-refers to the school district.

#### FEC

*Family Engagement Coordinator*

The person who coordinates the Title I requirements for parent and family engagement at a Title I school with the cooperation of the Title I school principal.

#### CLIP

*Comprehensive LEA Improvement Plan*

This plan is made up of 5 documents: District Comprehensive Needs Assessment, District Family Engagement Plan, District Improvement Plan, Foster Care Transportation Plan, and the Migrant Education Plan.

#### CNA

*Comprehensive Needs Assessment*

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 in their children's education. Consistent with Section 1116, the WCSD will work with its Title I schools to ensure that the required school-level family engagement plans 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**

Parents provide feedback about district parent involvement using the Title I and Title II Survey. The Title I Survey is provided by electronic survey and/or paper and is translated into families' home languages. This feedback is used to guide the annual revision of this District Parent Involvement Plan and provides feedback for the District Comprehensive Needs Assessment. The revised plans are presented for final feedback from the public at a special meeting in July. The district notifies parents of this meeting through SchoolMessenger call/text services and social media. All feedback received by July was included with the plan for this school year. The district parent/family engagement plan was posted on district website, distributed during the annual Title I meetings early this school year and made available in the schools' parent resource centers.



### **Strengthening Our Schools**

This year, the Title I Coordinator will provide 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 Title I Coordinator to help them improve and strengthen family engagement. In addition to frequent communication and school visits, the Title I Coordinator will hold monthly meetings and trainings with FECs to ensure consistent implementation of Title I requirements regarding Section 1116 of ESSA. The Title I Coordinator will hold quarterly meetings with Title I school principals and school FECs to review family engagement requirements, plans and activities.

### **Reservation of Funds**

The WCSD will reserve 1 percent from the total amount of Title I funds it receives in FY18 to carry out the parent and family engagement requirements listed in this policy and as described in Section 1116 of the ESSA. Furthermore, the WCSD 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 consult with parents of enrolled students in April to obtain feedback and suggestions on 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 or survey results from surveys will be reviewed by the district to determine areas of need for the upcoming school year and consider changes to the family engagement budget.



***Based on Spring 2018 Title I Parent Survey, Parent/Family Feedback and results from the District CNA, WCS will provide training to its Title I Family Engagement Coordinators regarding ways to support parents whose work schedules interfere with participation in Title I Family Engagement activities, encouraging father/father figure participation, making the school a more welcoming place for parents/families and how to improve school personnel communication with parents, and working with families as equal partners.***



### **Opportunities for Parent Consultation**

Input and suggestions from parents 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 Improvement Forum-May 2019**

All parents are welcome to hear the latest updates from the Walker County School district as well as review and provide input into the District CNA, District Improvement Plan and District Family Engagement Plan for the 2018-2019 school year. Notices regarding this meeting will be advertised in the local newspaper, posted on the WCS website, Social Media, and sent through text messages using our School Messenger calling system.

#### **Schoolwide Planning Meetings-Spring 2019**

During the spring, each Title I school will host a meeting for parents to participate in reviewing the school's schoolwide Title I plan, the school's parent/family engagement plans, and provide input on the parent/family engagement budget and programs. Each Title I school will send a letter home to parents notifying them about the date and time of the meeting. Information regarding the meetings will also be available on the school web sites.

Parent input on the use of Title I funds to support parent/family engagement programs may also be provided through the annual district and school surveys. The survey will contain questions related to the parental involvement budget as well as a section for parents to provide their comments.

Unable to attend these meetings? Please visit [www.walkerschools.org](http://www.walkerschools.org) in the Spring of 2019 to review the meeting documents and minutes and leave your input. Please direct any questions about the District Family Engagement plan to Phaedra Roberts, Title I Coordinator at [phaedraroberts@walkerschools.org](mailto:phaedraroberts@walkerschools.org).

***Scan the code with your smartphone or tablet to access family engagement information from the WCSD website***



## *Building Capacity...*

The WCSD will build the schools' and parents' capacity for strong family engagement, in order to ensure effective involvement of parents and family members and to support a partnership among the Title I schools, parents, and the community to improve student academic achievement through the following district-wide activities and programs such as Academic Parent Teacher Teams (APTT) and All Pro Dads. APTT is an evidence-based family engagement model that builds partnerships with parents. With the teacher, families set student academic goals to be addressed through at-home learning activities and strategies. Chattanooga Valley Elementary is currently implementing APTT. In the 2018-2019 school year, North LaFayette Elementary will implement APTT. All Pro Dads is an one hour per month program that promotes engagement of fathers/male family members/male figures with their child and the child's school. Gilbert Elementary School, Rossville Elementary School have joined Stone Creek Elementary School, Rock Spring Elementary School, Rossville Middle School, Saddle Ridge Elementary and Middle School, and Chattanooga Valley Elementary School in offering All Pro Dads meetings.

*...Of Parents* - The WCSD will work as a district and through its Title I schools to provide assistance to parents in understanding state and district academic information connected to their student's learning and progress, as well as information regarding the Title I program and APTT. The WCSD will provide 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. The dates and locations for these classes and APTT meetings will be posted on the district website and shared through each Title I school's newsletter.

The WCSD will also coordinate pages on the district and school websites that will contain resources and materials, including parent guides, study guides, practice assessments, and APTT activities, 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 (including education about the harms of copyright piracy), the WCSD technology specialists will partner with Title I schools to host workshops for parents. Dates and times for these workshops will be determined and announced by each individual school.

The WCSD hopes to establish a districtwide Parent Advisory Council comprised of parent representatives from each Title I school's Parent Advisory Councils to provide advice on all matters related to family engagement in Title I, Part A programs. Community leaders and business partners will be invited to serve on this council. The district will also encourage collaboration and participation with community partners by posting minutes of Parent Advisory Council and other district meetings on the website and increase participation by utilizing webinars, Face Time, or other such technology to accommodate the schedules of these valuable partners.

The WCSD 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 by inviting faculty and staff from those programs to attend planning meetings focused on family engagement activities. In the spring, the district will host a Kindergarten Registration and Readiness Fair so parents may register all their children at central registration and receive information to help prepare them and their children for kindergarten, and obtain the school visit schedules. The WCSD will also coordinate with these programs to ensure that parents are informed about available resources.

*...Of School Staff* - The WCSD will conduct three trainings during the school year for principals and school FECs 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. If the school is newly implementing APTT, the WCSD Family Engagement Leadership Team (FELT) will conduct an APTT training for the entire school staff. The purpose of the FELT is to coordinate the sustainability and growth of APTT in the district. The WCSD will also host a training for appropriate school staff and faculty that will focus on creating welcoming environments and improving two-way communication with families.

To ensure that information related to district, school, parent programs, APTT meetings, 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 and APTT meetings. Information posted on the district website will be translated to the extent practicable. The district will also utilize school phone call systems, district and school websites, local news media, and other school message systems to post information for parents.

## Parent and Family Engagement Evaluation

Each year, the WCSD 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 Improvement Forums.

Beginning in April, each Title I school will send home a survey and email 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 Spring Annual Evaluation 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 WCSD will use the findings from the Spring Annual Evaluation 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.

## Accessibility

In carrying out the parent and family engagement requirements established by Section 1116 of the ESSA, the Title I Coordinator will inform the school principals of relevant federal laws 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 Parents

District Federal Programs Parent Advisory Council  
Quarterly Meetings, Date/Time/Location to be determined

Annual Title I Family Survey  
March 19-30, 2019

District Improvement Forum  
May 2019

### For Schools

Welcoming Schools Training  
August 19, 2018

Title I Principals Meeting  
September 6, 2018, January 24, 2019, May 2, 2019

FEC Trainings  
August 19, 2018, September 6, 2018, October 4, 2018  
November 1, 2018, December 6, 2018, January 24, 2019  
February 7, 2019, March 7, 2019, April 11, 2019  
May 2, 2019

## 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 through surveys, comprehensive needs assessment meetings, and the CLIP review meeting.

This plan was adopted by the Walker County School District on July 17, 2018 and will be in effect for the 2018-2019 academic school year. The school district will distribute this plan in multiple ways to all parents of participating Title I, Part A children on or before September 1, 2018 which includes posting on the district website, a paper copy distributed with school level family engagement information at each Title I school, and on file in the reception area of the Department of Education at 201 South Duke Street, LaFayette, GA.