



District-Wide Parent & Family Engagement Policy

JEFFERSON PARISH PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM

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I. Louisiana Parents; Bill of Rights (2014) Including Additions (Aug. 1, 2018)

- To examine textbooks, curriculum, and other materials used in their child's classroom
- To inspect child's school records, including
 - Academic
 - Health Records
 - Mental Health Counseling
 - Vocational Counseling
 - Notification if child is taken or removed from school without parental permission
- To be notified when medical services are offered
- To be notified of criminal action taken against or by their child
- School shall not discriminate against child based on religious beliefs
- To receive written notice and option to opt out of surveys asking:
 - Student's sexual experienced or attractions
 - Student's family beliefs, morality, religion, or political affiliations
 - Mental health for the student or family member
 - Written notice and ability to opt out of instruction associated with sexual activity.
- Public schools shall NOT be required to release records or information regarding a student's medical or health records or mental health counseling records during an investigation of child abuse or neglect by law enforcement or Dept. of Children and Family Services if the parent is a target of the investigation, unless the parent has gotten a court order.
- Receive a child's education records within 10 business days of the request.

- Access the final school calendar at least 30 days prior to the beginning of the school year
- View a complete listing of all school fees and the purpose of each
- View any school uniform requirements on the school's website
- Be promptly informed if their child is at risk of not being promoted to the next grade level

II. Introduction and Statutory Requirements

The Jefferson Parish Public School System agrees to implement the following statutory requirements:

- The school district will put into operation programs, activities and procedures for the engagement of parents of all of its schools with Title 1, Part A programs, consistent with Section 1116 (b) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). Those 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 family engagement policies meet the requirements of Section 1116(b) of the ESEA, and each include, as a component, a school-parent compact consistent with Section 1116(d) of the ESEA.
- The school district will incorporate this district-wide family engagement policy into its LEA plan developed under Section 1112 of the ESEA.
- In carrying out the Title I, Part A family engagement 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 ESEA in an understandable and uniform format and, including alternative formats upon request, and to the extent practicable, in a language parents understand.
- The Jefferson Parish Public School System, School Board, and Superintendent recognize that family engagement must be a priority for children to learn and achieve academic success. Parents and families provide the primary educational environment for children; consequently parents are vital and necessary partners with the school system throughout their children's elementary and secondary school careers. The term parent shall refer to any caregiver who assumes responsibility for nurturing and caring for children, and includes parent, grandparents, aunts, uncles, foster parents, stepparents, and others. The concept of family engagement shall include programs, services, and/or activities on the school site, as well as contributions of parents outside the normal school setting.
- It shall be the policy of the School Board and each public school in Jefferson Parish, in collaboration with parents, grandparents, teachers, students, administrators, and other educational resources, to establish, develop, and maintain strategies and programs that are intended to enhance the engagement of parents and other caregivers that reflect the needs of the students, parents, and families served by the Board, in accordance with applicable state and federal laws and regulations. As part of the family engagement

program, it shall be the responsibility of every school to create a welcoming environment, conducive to learning and supportive for comprehensive family engagement programs that have been developed jointly with parents/families.

III. District Level Responsibilities

At the district level, the School Board shall:

1. Involve parents in the joint development and amendment of the school district's plan, which includes components of the district's family engagement program, to be submitted to the Louisiana department of Education. Such engagement shall involve, but not be limited to, the following:
 - a. Appointing to, and interacting with, each school's School-wide/Leadership Team, which is actively involved with assessing needs and addressing these needs in the school;
 - b. Conducting open public workshops on major issues;
 - c. Holding regular School Board meetings, with opportunities for the Board to receive public input and comments; these meetings are live-streamed and televised on the Jefferson Parish Public School System Cox Cable network with periodic replays for greater public exposure;
 - d. Requiring each school to conduct open house meetings;
 - e. Encouraging school based family organizations, such as PTA, PTO, etc.
2. Provide coordination of various programs that involve parents, technical assistance, and other support necessary to assist every public school in Jefferson Parish in planning and implementing effective family engagement programs and strategies.
 - a. Coordinate and integrate family engagement programs with other programs and activities that promote parent engagement.
 - b. Conduct, with the engagement of parents, an annual evaluation of the content and effectiveness of the use of components and strategies. The evaluation shall attempt to identify ways of improving the academic quality of the schools served by the Board, including identifying barriers to greater participation by parents in educational and family engagement activities, particular attention shall be directed to parents who are economically disadvantaged, disabled, have limited English proficiency, have limited literacy, or are of any racial or ethnic minority background. The School Board and each school shall use finding of such evaluation to design strategies for more effective family engagement, and to revise, if necessary, the family engagement policies and procedures.
 - c. Distribute to parents information about the Jefferson Parish School District's family engagement program, as well as provide proper notification to parents about specific services or special programs, as required by state or federal law. Notification shall also include, at the start of school each year, the right of parents to request and receive timely information on the professional certification of their children's classroom teachers.

- d. Submit the Consolidated Application plan to the Louisiana Department of Education including comments of parents of participating children who are not satisfied with components of the family engagement program.
- e. Address parent outreach for potential direct student services options, such as public school choice and tutoring.
- f. Coordinate and integrate family engagement programs among the Neglected and Delinquent and At-Risk Facilities, the child's family, and the LEA.
- g. Distribute to parents of participating students the complaint procedure of the Louisiana Department of Education.
- h. Inform and notify parents and organizations of the existence of a family information and resource center established by the state to provide training, information, and support to parents and individuals who work with parents, School Boards, and schools.

IV. School Level Responsibilities

As part of the family engagement program, the School Board shall encourage each public school and require those school receiving federal Title 1 funds under the jurisdiction of the Jefferson Parish School Board to:

- a. Convene an annual meeting, at a convenient time, to which all parents of participating children shall be invited and encouraged to attend, to inform parents of their school's educational programs and to explain components of the family engagement program, and the right of the parents to be involved.
- b. Offer a flexible number of meetings, services, and/or off school campuses, at various times of the day to maximize family participation, and may provide transportation, child care, appropriate refreshments, and/or home visits, as such services relate to family engagement.
- c. Involve parents in an organized, ongoing, and timely way, in planning, review, and improvement programs, including the planning, development, review, and improvement of the school family engagement policy and the point development of the school wide family engagement program plan.
- d. Provide parents, especially those of participating children in ESEA programs:
 - 1. Timely information about educational and family engagement programs:
 - 2. A description and explanation of the curriculum in use at the school, the forms of academic assessment used to measure students' progress and the proficiency level students are expected to meet.
 - 3. If requested by the parents, opportunities for regular meetings to formulate suggestions in a timely manner.
- e. To the extent feasible and appropriate, coordinate, and integrate parent engagement programs and activities with other outreach educational programs, such as ELL Instruction, Early Childhood Education, Academics, Student Support, IDEA, Achievement and Accountability, Technology, Safety and Discipline, Head Start, Family and Social Services, and other programs.

V. **Shared Responsibilities**

As part of the family engagement program, to build a capacity for engagement, the School Board and each public school under its jurisdiction shall:

- a. Provide assistance to parents of children served by the school or Board, as appropriate, in understanding such topics as the state's academic content standards, state and local academic assessments, the components of the Board's family engagement program, and how to monitor a child's progress and work with educators to improve the achievement of their children.
- b. Provide material and training to help parents work with their children in improving academic achievement, such as literacy training and using technology, as appropriate.
- c. Educate teachers, pupil services personnel, principals, and other staff, with the assistance of parents, in valuing the usefulness of their contributions. Also, reach out to, communicate with, and work with parents as equal partners, implement and coordinate parent programs, and build ties between parents and the school.
- d. To the extent feasible and appropriate, coordinate, and integrate parent engagement programs and activities with other educational programs, such as ELL Instruction, Early Childhood Education, Academics, Student Support, IDEA, Achievement and Accountability, Technology, Safety and Discipline, Head Start, Family and Social Services, and other programs.
- e. Ensure that information related to school and parent programs, meetings, and other activities is sent to parents in a format and, to the extent practicable, in a language the parents can understand.
- f. Involve parents in the development of training for teachers, principals and other educators to improve the effectiveness of such training.
- g. Provide necessary literacy training from federal and state funds received if the Board has exhausted all other reasonably available sources of funding for such training.
- h. Pay reasonable and necessary expenses associated with family engagement activities, including transportation, appropriate refreshments, and/or childcare costs, to enable parents to participate in school-related meetings and training sessions.
- i. Train parents to enhance the engagement of other parents.
- j. Arrange school meetings, at a variety of times and places, or conduct in-home conferences between teacher or other educators who work directly with children, with parents who are unable to attend such conferences at school in order to maximize family engagement and participation.
- k. Adopt and implement a model approach for improving family engagement.
- l. Recognize family activities and/or contributions outside the normal school setting that enhance student academic achievement, such as tutoring, improving attendance, and contributing and preparing school/classroom support materials and services.
- m. Establish a district-wide parent advisory council to provide advice on all matters related to family engagement in programs.

- n. Develop appropriate roles for community-based organizations and businesses in family engagement activities.
- o. Provide each other reasonable support for family engagement activities as parents may request.
- p. Provide full opportunities for the participation of parents with limited English proficiency, parents with disabilities, and parents of migratory children, including providing necessary information and school reports required in a format, and to the extent practicable, in a language such parents understand.

VI. Parent's Responsibilities

The School Board realizes that a child's education begins at birth. Parents and family members, as their child's primary teachers, play a vital role in the intellectual, social, and emotional growth of their children. A child's development and success is dependent on the direct support a child receives at home. In an effort to promote responsible and successful parenting skills, the Board expects parents to:

- a. Make sure children attend school regularly and arrive at school on time.
- b. Assure proper hygiene and daily cleanliness of their children.
- c. Make sure children are dressed properly, in accordance with the uniform or dress code.
- d. Make sure that children get adequate amounts of sleep nightly.
- e. Visit and discuss their child's academic progress regularly with teachers.
- f. Discuss academic progress and school events regularly with their child.
- g. Instill proper respect for parents, teachers, and other adults.
- h. Volunteer in child's classroom, school, or related activities to the extent feasible and appropriate.
- i. Attend school-sponsored programs in which their child may participate.
- j. Join and be active in parent/teacher organizations.

VII. Statement of Compliance

Each student in grades 4 – 12 and each parent or guardian of a student in grades 4 – 12, shall annually sign a Statement of Compliance, in accordance with state law. For students, the Statement of Compliance shall state that the student agrees to attend school regularly, arrive at school on time, and follow school and classroom rules. For parents, the Statement of Compliance shall state that the parent or legal guardian agrees to ensure his/her child's daily attendance at school, ensure his/her child's arrival at school on time each day and attend all required parent/teacher conferences.

VIII. School-Parent Compact

Each school shall jointly develop with parents a school-parent compact that outlines how parents, the entire school staff, and students will share the responsibility for improved student academic achievement and the means by which the school and

parents will build and develop a partnership to help children achieve the State's high standards. Such compact shall:

- a. Describe the school's responsibility to provide high-quality curriculum and instruction in supportive and effective learning environment that enables the children to meet the state's student academic achievement standards, and the ways in which each parent will be responsible for supporting their children's learning, such as contributing services outside the normal school setting; and participating, as appropriate, in decisions relating to the education of their children, and positive use of extracurricular time.
- b. Address the importance of communication between teachers and parents on an ongoing basis through, at a minimum:
 - i. Parent-teacher conferences in elementary schools, at least annually, during which the compact shall be discussed as the compact relates to the individual child's achievement;
 - ii. Frequent reports to parents on their children's progress;
 - iii. Reasonable access to staff, opportunities to volunteer and participate in their child's class, and observation of classroom activities; and
 - iv. Family activities and/or contributions away from the school site that enhance academic achievement.

IX. Other Programs

In conjunction with the district services rendered under the Board's Family Engagement Program, the School Board shall maintain contact and communication with social service and health agencies, faith-based institutions, and community groups to support key family and community services and issues. In particular, Jefferson Parish School Board has a strong relationship with and support from community and/or governmental organizations such as Families in Need of Services (FINS), Families Helping Families, Volunteers in Public Schools (VIPS), Partners in Education, and District Parent/Teacher Association. One of the primary goals of these groups is to support, supplement, and assist in improving the engagement of parents of the children in the Jefferson Parish Public School System.

X. Parent Council and Advisory Groups

This year, parents can apply to serve on the Superintendent's Parent Council. The application process will begin on September 7, 2018 and will be advertised through several methods. Jefferson Parish Public School System also has a Bilingual Parent Advisory Committee (BPAC). If you are interested in participating in BPAC, please contact Karina Castillo at 504-349-7829 or karina.castillo@jppss.k12.la.us.