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# PARENT & FAMILY ENGAGEMENT PLAN 2020-2021

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**Tuscaloosa City Schools**



AUGUST 27, 2020  
DR. MIKE DARIA, SUPERINTENDENT

## **Parent and Family Engagement Written Policy** (Sec. 1116 (2))

### **Sec. 1116(a)(2)(A))**

**Describe how the Local Education will involve parents and family members in jointly developing the local educational agency plan under section 1112, and the development of support and improvement plans under paragraphs (1) and (2) of section 1111(d).**

A Tuscaloosa City Schools representative group will collaboratively develop the Parent and Family Engagement Plan; a draft of the plan will be distributed to the Federal Programs Advisory group, parent and family liaisons from each Title I school, and each local school for review by school and parent leaders; the primary planning group will consider any suggestions or feedback; and comments and suggestions received throughout the academic year will be maintained to be included in evaluation and annual revision sessions.

### **Sec. 1116(a)(2)(B))**

**Describe how the Local Education Agency will provide the coordination, technical assistance, and other support necessary to assist and build the capacity of all participating schools within the local educational agency in planning and implementing effective parent and family involvement activities to improve student academic achievement and school performance, which may include meaningful consultation with employers, business leaders, and philanthropic organizations, or individuals with expertise in effectively engaging parents and family members in education.**

The Tuscaloosa City Schools will provide resource guides to assist in the development of plans; training will be offered to school leaders, to include administrators, faculty, and parents; suggested timelines will be established to assist schools in effective planning; and outlines of necessary documentation will be provided to local schools to assist with the implementation and monitoring of the school's program. Regular parent meetings will be conducted (i.e. PTA, PTO, etc...). Parents will be encouraged to be involved and support learners at home by "training" on state content standards and strategies.

Funding will be provided to each Title I school (90% of the 1% reservation of Title I, Part A funds) to support the development and distribution of the district's written parental and family engagement policy in addition to parental and family engagement activities included in the parental and family engagement policy and/or improvement plan.

### **Sec. 1116(a)(2)(C))**

**Describe how the Local Education Agency will coordinate and integrate parent and family engagement strategies 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.**

The Tuscaloosa City Schools will coordinate and integrate parent and family engagement strategies including; conducting transition programs from pre-K to kindergarten, pre-K programs, including HIPPPY program, and local daycares to include school visitations, distribution of enrollment information, and counseling related to academic expectations; participating in a *Parent Leadership Academy* in partnership with the University of Alabama in order to improve communication related to our schools' curricula, school

improvement plans, expectations, procedures, and transition strategies. For the 2020-2021 school year, we have 43 parents representing 20 schools, participating in PTLA. Additionally, parent participants in the *Parent Leadership Academy* will also have the opportunity to serve on the Superintendent's Parent Advisory Council (SPAC). The Superintendent's Parent Advisory Council is authorized to provide input on Title I parent involvement school and district-level programs. The SPAC provides and shares Title I program information updates received from the district.

**Sec. 1116(a)(2)(D))**

**Describe how the Local Education Agency will conduct, with the meaningful involvement of parents and family members, an annual evaluation of the content and effectiveness of the parent and family engagement policy in improving the academic quality of all schools served under this part, including identifying—**

- (i) barriers to greater participation by parents in activities authorized by this section (with particular attention to parents who are economically disadvantaged, are disabled, have limited English proficiency, have limited literacy, or are of any racial or ethnic minority background)**
- (ii) the needs of parents and family members to assist with the learning of their children, including engaging with school personnel and teachers**
- (iii) strategies to support successful school and family interactions**

A representative group from the Tuscaloosa City Schools will survey parents and family members to evaluate the effectiveness of the program including, but not limited to, parental and family engagement strategies and barriers to greater participation. This survey will be offered in the spring and disaggregated in the comprehensive needs assessment process in order to assist in the development of the district improvement plan.

**Sec. 1116(a)(2)(E))**

**Describe how the Local Education Agency will use the findings of such evaluation described in the section above (Sec. 1116(2)(D)) to design evidence-based strategies for more effective parental involvement, and to revise, if necessary the parent and family engagement policies described in this section.**

A Tuscaloosa City Schools representative group will disaggregate and examine findings from the survey administration in the spring. These data will be used to design and/or revise the district Parent and Family Engagement policy, as well as, evidence-based strategies for improvement.

**Sec. 1116(a)(2)(F))**

**Describe how the Local Education Agency will involve parents in the activities of the schools served under this part, which may include establishing a parent advisory board comprised of a sufficient number and representative group of parents or family members served by the local educational agency to adequately represent the needs of the population served by such agency for the purposes of developing, revising, and reviewing the parent and family engagement policy.**

At least on an annual basis, a representative group of school and parent leaders will evaluate the parent and family engagement programs within the various schools of the Tuscaloosa City School System. As part of this evaluation, the following measures will be collected and analyzed: participation by parents in various school activities; conference logs, parent perception surveys; faculty perception surveys; and project accomplishments by PTA organizations. Focused attention will be on the areas of communication, participation, and the resulting influences toward the ultimate goal of increased student achievement. An analysis of workshop evaluations related to parenting and parent involvement will be conducted especially as it relates to the curriculum and goals of each respective school. Where possible, connections between parent and family engagement and student performance will be analyzed. An analysis of this information will be used to plan for the upcoming school year, modify plans, assure proper attention is given to all sub-groups of students (disabled, English-language learners, poverty, etc.), and to eliminate any barriers that might exist between the school-home partnership.

The Tuscaloosa City Schools will also establish a districtwide Superintendent's Parent Advisory Council comprised of parent representatives from each Title I school as well as each non-Title I school. The Superintendent's Parent Advisory Council provides advice on all matters related to parent and family engagement in Title I programs. Community leaders and business partners will be invited to serve on this council, as well.

**In order to build capacity for Parent and Family Engagement, the Local Education Agency will ensure effective involvement of parents and will support a partnership among the schools involved, the parents, and the community to improve student academic achievement, the LEA shall:**

**Describe how it will provide assistance to parents of children served by the school or local educational agency, as appropriate, in understanding such topics as the challenging State academic standards, State and local academic assessments, the requirements of this part, and how to monitor a child's progress and work with educators to improve the achievement of their children.**

The Tuscaloosa City Schools will, with the assistance of its Title I, Part A schools, provide assistance to parents of children served by the school district or school, as appropriate, in understanding topics such as the following:

- the State's academic content standards,
- the State's student academic achievement standards,
- the State and local academic assessments including alternate assessments,
- the requirements of Part A,
- how to monitor their child's progress, and
- how to work with educators
- provide workshops for parents and family members
- ensure and maintain two-way communication between home and school

These topics will be addressed through an annual meeting conducted at each school within the first month of the school year; by providing informational packets to parents; through periodic teacher-parent conferences; and assuring that School-Parent Compacts are in

place and in use. Materials will be developed such that they are in a language and format that parents of varying English skills may understand them.

**Describe how it will provide materials and training to help parents to work with their children to improve their children's achievement, such as literacy training and using technology (including education about the harms of copyright piracy), as appropriate, to foster parental involvement.**

Parents will participate in their child's reading and writing development through materials provided by both the district and school levels all year-long. Materials and training will be provided to families through the following:

- Curriculum and family workshops throughout the school year
- Curriculum materials/grade level expectations provided to families at Open House, Parent Visitation Day, conferences, and the Annual Title I meetings
- Technology trainings
- Offer Spanish translation for parents and district personnel to improve communication
- Provide access to tools and resources necessary for school faculty to engage parents in their children's education
- Provide *Parent Project* Training for parents who need assistance with helping their child academically and behaviorally
- Provide H.E.L.P. (Helping Education Linking Parents) for developing a pro-active, preventive program to address and reduce out of school suspensions involving local law enforcement and school officials
- Provide Home Instruction for Parents of Pre-School Youngsters (HIPPY)

**Describe how it will educate teachers, specialized instructional support personnel, principals, and other school leaders, and other staff, with the assistance of parents, in the value and utility of contributions of parents, and in how to 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.**

The Tuscaloosa City Schools is committed to providing continual professional development in the areas of conferencing, communication, and relationship development skills; sharing strategies that work from one school site to another; supporting PTA activities; and fostering an atmosphere of importance related to the welcoming and encouragement of parent involvement in the local schools, community meetings to engage parents in our strategic plan. Parent Visitation Days will be October 14, (Elementary Schools), October 15, (Middle Schools), October 20 (High Schools), 2020, where we will actively engage parents and families in their child's education.

- Superintendent's Parent Advisory Council (SPAC) will meet quarterly to strengthen ties between parents and schools. The first semester meeting dates are September 24, October 24, and December 3, 2020. The 2<sup>nd</sup> semester meeting dates are January 14 and February 11, 2021. These sessions will be from 4:45 to 5:15 p.m.
- Parent and Family Engagement Liaisons from each Title I school will meet bi-monthly to develop and refine strong partnerships with parents and family members
- Review policies that support family-friendly cultures that are conducive to developing strong family and school partnerships.
- Implement activities that establish a welcoming parent and family culture, such as:

- i. Meet and Greet
  - ii. Parent Visitation Day
  - iii. Open House
  - iv. Parent Teacher meetings
  - v. LIBROS Bilingual Family Literacy Program
  - vi. Hispanic Family Support Meeting
  - vii. SPAC Council Recognition Ceremony at the board
  - viii. Parent PLC
- Parent Teacher Leadership Academy (PTLA)
  - Provide opportunities to enhance learning in all schools through extended learning experiences

**Describe how it will to the extent feasible and appropriate, coordinate and integrate parent involvement programs and activities with other Federal, State, and local programs, including public preschool programs, and conduct other activities, such as parent resource centers, that encourage and support parents in more fully participating in the education of their children.**

The Tuscaloosa City Schools will integrate parent involvement programs and activities with other Federal, State, and local programs in order to encourage and support parents in more fully participating in the education of their children by the following:

- Seeking out and assisting with the connections between agency programs with that of the schools within the Tuscaloosa City School System
- Make available, as possible, the inclusion of staff members from the various agencies into workshops and training sessions offered to public school faculties
- Assist with the development of effective communication systems
- Integrate parent involvement activities with Pre-K programs
- Distribution of educational resources for Kindergarten preparation

**Describe how it will ensure that information related to school and parent programs, meetings, and other activities is sent to the parents of participating children in a format and, to the extent practicable, in a language the parents can understand.**

To ensure that information related to district, school, and parent programs, meetings, and activities is available to all parents in an understandable and uniform format, each Title I school will send home a district-wide calendar of events with information for parents at the beginning of the year. Parent notifications and resources will be sent home in parents' native language, where applicable, and interpreters will be available at parent events and meetings. The district will also utilize Black Board Communications, Transact, YouTube, PeachJar (e-flyers), school websites, Remind App, Twitter, Facebook, local news media, and other school message systems to post information for parents.

Additionally each school will develop a one page document entitled *School Improvement for Parents*. This document serves to inform parents and community members of school improvement goals, strategies and action steps implemented to meet those goals, and how parents and community members can assist in achieving the goals.

**Describe how it will ensure provide such other reasonable support for parental involvement activities under this section as parents may request.**

The Tuscaloosa City Schools will consider parental requests for additional supports and act accordingly. Parental requests can be made at the school and district level via verbal or written requests.

**Describe how the LEA may involve parents in the development of training for teachers, principals, and other educators to improve the effectiveness of such training.**

The Superintendent's Parent Advisory Council will meet quarterly during the 2020-2021 school year. During these meetings, teacher training, professional development, and parent and family engagement activities will be discussed. Committee members will have opportunities to provide feedback and suggestions for future plans.

**Describe how the LEA may provide necessary literacy training from funds received under this part if the local educational agency has exhausted all other reasonably available sources of funding for such training.**

The Tuscaloosa City Schools will provide funding for activities such as literacy training, technology training, etc... in order to assist parents work to improve their child's academic achievement. The LEA will also provide funding for tools/resources necessary for schools to engage parents in their children's education.

**Describe how the LEA may pay reasonable and necessary expenses associated with local parental involvement activities, including transportation and child care costs, to enable parents to participate in school-related meetings and training sessions.**

The Tuscaloosa City Schools will work with local schools to provide necessary funding for parent involvement activities, including but not limited to, transportation and child care costs to enable parents and family members to participate in school-related activities.

**Describe how the LEA may train parents to enhance the involvement of other parents.**

The Superintendent's Parent Advisory Council (SPAC) will serve as professional development for parent representatives from each Title I school. One of the expectations of the SPAC will be to inform other parents at the school level regarding teacher training, professional development, and parent and family engagement activities.

**Describe how the LEA may arrange school meetings at a variety of times, or conduct in-home conferences between teachers or other educators, who work directly with participating children, with parents who are unable to attend such conferences at school, in order to maximize parental involvement and participation.**

The Tuscaloosa City Schools supports conducting meetings at times that are best suited for optimal parental participation. Annual Title I Parent Surveys provide insightful

information regarding ideal meeting times. Parents also have the opportunity to make suggestions and provide feedback at any time.

**Describe how the LEA may adopt and implement model approaches to improving parental involvement.**

The Tuscaloosa City Schools leadership team is consistently researching innovative models and approaches to strengthen parent and family involvement in our schools and create more opportunities for parent and family participation.

**Describe how the LEA may establish a districtwide parent advisory council to provide advice on all matters related to parental involvement in programs supported under this section.**

The Tuscaloosa City Schools will establish a districtwide Superintendent's Parent Advisory Council comprised of parent representatives from each Title I school, as well as, non-Title I schools. Parent Advisory Council members provide advice on all matters related to parent and family engagement in Title I programs. Community leaders and business partners will be invited to serve on this council, as well.

**Describe how the LEA may develop appropriate roles for community-based organizations and businesses in parent involvement activities.**

The Tuscaloosa City Schools will invite community members to participate in the Superintendent's Parent Advisory Council. This council is comprised of parent representatives from each Title I school, as well as members of non-Title I schools, community-based organizations, and businesses. Roles for all members will be clearly defined prior to the first meeting and communicated both verbally and in written form.

**Sec. 1116(f)**

**Describe how the Local Education Agency, to the extent practicable, shall provide opportunities for the informed participation of parents and family members (including parents and family members who have limited English proficiency, parents and family members with disabilities, and parents and family members of migratory children, parent and family members of homeless children, and parents and family members of immigrant children), including providing information and school reports required under section 1111 in a format and, to the extent practicable, in a language such parents understand.**

The Tuscaloosa City Schools utilize ParentLink to verbally communicate with parents in both English and Spanish. Further, the district offers a service, Language Line, to communicate in other languages. Language Line offers interpreters in over 200 different languages. The student/parent handbook and school compacts are sent home in both English and Spanish. Transact is an additional service funded by the Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE) and is used for translating school documents in many different languages. Lastly, schools with a high number of limited-English proficient students also employ bilingual ESL Coaches who assist with translating and interpreting.

This LEA Parent and Family Engagement Policy has been developed jointly with, and agreed on with, parents of children participating in Title I, Part A programs as evidenced by: Federal Advisory Council Meeting and Superintendent's Parent Advisory Council. The school district will distribute this policy to all parents of participating Title I, Part A children on or before September 30, 2020.

PLAN APPROVED BY



Dr. Mike Daria  
Superintendent

September 1, 2020

DATE OF APPROVAL

## PARENTS RIGHT-TO-KNOW REQUIRED INFORMATION

### (1) INFORMATION FOR PARENTS-

#### (1) INFORMATION FOR PARENTS-

**(A) IN GENERAL.**—At the beginning of each school year, a local educational agency that receives funds under this part shall notify the parents of each student attending any school receiving funds under this part that the parents may request, and the agency will provide the parents on request (and in a timely manner), information regarding the professional qualifications of the student's classroom teachers, including at a minimum, the following:

**(i) Whether the student's teacher—**

**(I) has met State qualification and licensing criteria for the grade levels and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction**

**(II) is teaching under emergency or other provisional status through which State qualification nor licensing criteria have been waived; and**

**(III) is teaching in the field of discipline of the certification of the teacher.**

**(ii) Whether the child is provided services by paraprofessionals and, if so, their qualifications.**

**(B) ADDITIONAL INFORMATION.**—In addition to the information that parents may request under subparagraph(A), a school that receives funds under this part shall provide to each individual parent of a child who is a student in such school, with respect to such student—

**(i) information on the level of achievement and academic growth of the student, if applicable and available, on each of the State academic assessments required under this part; and**

**(ii) timely notice that the student has been assigned, or has been taught for 4 or more consecutive weeks by, a teacher who does not meet applicable State certification or licensure requirements at the grade level and subject area in which the teacher has been assigned**