



Barrow County School System

Boldly Committed to Student Success

Title I System Parent and Family Engagement Policy

What is Family Engagement?

Family Engagement means the participation of parents 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, advisory committees, and school governances to assist in the education of their child and school leadership.
- (D) The carrying out of other activities, such as those described in Section 1116 of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).



About the Parent and Family Engagement Policy

In support of strengthening student academic achievement, the Barrow County School System (BCSS) has developed this family engagement policy that establishes the system's expectations for family engagement and guides the strategies and resources that strengthen school and parent partnerships in the system's Title I schools. This plan will describe BCSS'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 system 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 system and school plan, and in carrying out the system 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 BCSS will work with its Title I schools to ensure that the required school-level family engagement policies meet the requirements of Section 1116(b) and each include, as a component, a school-parent compact consistent with Section 111d(d) of the ESSA.

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Jointly Developed

During the annual Comprehensive Needs Assessment in the spring, all parents were invited to participate and provide suggestions and ideas to improve this system family engagement policy for the 2018-2019 school year. The system obtained parent input through our comprehensive needs assessment survey, feedback forms posted on the system website, as well as quarterly system parent advisory committee meetings. During this meeting, parents also reviewed and discussed the Streamlined Comprehensive LEA Improvement Plan (SCLIP). Parents also completed an additional communications survey to help streamline ways of communication throughout the district. Upon final revision, the system family engagement policy will be incorporated into the SCLIP which is submitted to the state. Parents are welcome to submit comments and feedback regarding the policy at any time on the school system website or by submitting written comments to your child's school. All feedback received was included with the policy for this school year.

The system family engagement policy is posted on system website, and made available in the schools' parent resource centers, as well as in local agencies including local libraries, housing authority etc.

Strengthening Our Schools

This year, the system Family Engagement Specialist (FES) will provide assistance and support to all Title I schools to ensure family engagement requirements are being satisfied and that parent engagement strategies and activities are being implemented. Title I schools will receive notifications and resources from the system and the FES to help them improve and strengthen family engagement. All elementary schools will receive support in the implementation of Academic Parent Teacher Teams (APTT), an innovative program that helps build parent capacity to improve student achievement. Schools will also receive training throughout the year to build staffs' capacity in understanding the importance of parent involvement. In addition to frequent communication and school visits, the system FES will assess and provide feedback to the Title I schools regarding each of their family engagement policies. The system will assist schools in the spring with obtaining increased responses on the Comprehensive Needs Assessment Survey used to gain input from all parents.

Reservation of Funds

The BCSS will reserve 1 percent from the total amount of Title I funds it receives in FY17 to carry out the family engagement requirements listed in this policy and as described in Section 1116 of the ESSA. Furthermore, the BCSS will distribute 95 percent of the amount reserved to all Title I schools to support their local-level family engagement programs and activities. The system 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 Comprehensive Needs Assessment in the spring for parents to provide suggestions how these family engagement funds will be used in the upcoming year at the system and school-level. Feedback forms, survey results and minutes from these meetings will be reviewed by the system to determine areas of need for the upcoming school year and consider changes to the family engagement budget.



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Opportunities for Meaningful Parent Consultation

Input and suggestions from parents are an essential component of the system and school improvement plans that are developed each year. All parents of students eligible to receive Title I services are invited to attend various meeting opportunities described in this section to share their ideas and suggestions to help the system, schools, and students to reach our student academic achievement goals.

State of the System Reception ~ November 2018

Every fall, the Parent and Family Engagement Department hosts a parent reception where the Superintendent and other system leaders present to the community and families current planning and status of the system. This event is advertised in multiple ways to ensure everyone is invited. Parents are encouraged to ask questions and provide input.

Spring Planning Meetings ~ Spring 2019

All parents are welcome to hear the latest updates from the BCSS, as well as review and provide input into the system family engagement policy and the Streamlined Comprehensive LEA Improvement Plan (SCLIP) for the 2018-19 school year. Notices regarding these meetings will be sent to parents in advance of the meeting. The system will also communicate information regarding these meetings on the school and system websites.

Summer Title Planning ~ Summer 2018

In June 2018, the school system will host a session with schools to finalize their improvement plans for the following school year. Parent representatives per school are invited to participate in this process. School teams will work on finalizing family engagement policies, budgets, and programs.

System Parent Advisory Committee

A system advisory committee made up of parent representatives from each Title I school meets 3-5 times per school year. They provide input to system leadership regarding all facets of parent/family engagement.

Parent input on the use of Title I funds to support family engagement programs may also be provided through the annual system survey. The survey contains questions related to the family engagement budget as well as a section for parents to provide their comments.

Family Engagement Evaluation

Each year, the BCSS will conduct an evaluation of the content and effectiveness of this family engagement policy and the family engagement activities to improve the academic quality of the Title I schools through an annual parent survey, the Comprehensive Needs Assessment, feedback forms and the system Parent Advisory Committee.

Beginning in February, each Title I school will send home a survey for parents to provide valuable feedback regarding the family engagement activities and programs. These surveys will also be posted on the system and school websites for parents to complete. In addition to the annual survey, each Title I school will also use the Spring Comprehensive Needs Assessment 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 BCSS will use the findings from the school spring planning meetings and the survey results to design strategies to improve effective family engagement, to remove possible barriers to parent participation, and to revise its family engagement policies.

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Building School and Parent Capacity

The BCSS will build the schools' and parents' capacity for strong family engagement, in order to ensure effective involvement of parents and to support a partnership among the Title I schools, parents, and the community to improve student academic achievement through the following system wide activities and programs such as Academic Parent -Teacher Teams (APTT). APTT is an evidenced-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. BCSS is implementing APTT in all of its elementary schools. Implementation at the middle school level is being evaluated for the 2018-2019 school year.

The BCSS will work with the system and through its Title I schools to provide assistance to parents in understanding state and system academic information connected to their student's learning and progress, as well as information regarding the Title I program. The BCSS will provide opportunities for parents to gain knowledge about the state-adopted standards and the achievement standards, as well as the required assessments for Georgia students including alternative forms of assessment. Multiple opportunities will be provided through APTT, resources on system and school websites as well as system and school meetings.

The BCSS will also provide a page on the system Web site 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 BCSS technology specialists may partner with Title I schools to host workshops for parents as needed or determined from parent input. Dates and times for these workshops will be determined and announced by each individual school and/or by the system webpage and system parent link phone message system.

The BCSS will coordinate and integrate the system's family engagement programs with the Head Start program and other state funded preschool programs in the system by inviting faculty and staff from those programs to attend planning meetings focused on parent engagement activities. In the spring, the elementary schools will host Kindergarten Ready days so parents may tour the schools and receive information to help prepare them and their children for kindergarten. The BCSS will also coordinate with these programs to ensure that parents are informed about available resources.

To ensure that information related to system, 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 system 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. Information posted on the system website will be translated to the extent practicable. The system will also utilize school telephone systems, school websites, local news media, and other school message systems to post information for parents.

The BCSS will conduct trainings during the school year and summer Title Planning meetings for principals, school leaders, and parent leaders to learn and discuss strategies to increase parent engagement, improve school-family communication, and build ties with parents and the community. These trainings may be offered to the faculty and staff of Title I schools. Schools will receive instruction at least 2 times each semester in order to educate staff on the importance, value, and strategies to build family engagement for its students. The system Family Engagement Specialist will also provide opportunities for visit each Title I school to review and discuss family engagement requirements and initiatives.

The BCSS has established a system wide Parent Advisory Committee comprised of parent representatives from each Title I school to provide advice on all matters related to family engagement in Title I, Part A programs. Community leaders and business partners may be invited to serve on this council as well.

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Accessibility

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



Your Calendars

Adoption

This districtwide family engagement policy has been developed jointly and agreed upon with parents of children participating in Title I, Part A programs as evidenced by the collaboration of parents, school, and district personnel.

This policy was adopted by the Barrow County School System on May 1, 2018, and will be in effect for the 2018-2019 academic school year. The school district will distribute this policy to all parents of participating Title I, Part A children on or before September 1, 2018

For Parents

Academic Parent Teacher Team Meetings

Each school has their own dates for these meetings which will be posted on district and school websites

Superintendent Title I Reception

November 2018

Annual Parent Survey

February, 2019

Comprehensive Needs Assessment

Spring 2019

Local school site

Title I Workshop

June, 2018

Professional Development Center

Feedback Forms

District and School Websites

District Family Engagement Coordinator

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