

Parent/Family Engagement

The Fayette County Public Schools (FCPS) system recognizes that parent/family involvement is essential as we work to achieve our mission “to create a collaborative community that ensures all students achieve at high levels and graduate prepared to excel in a global society.” Accordingly our vision for family engagement states, “All student will graduate from high school prepared for college and careers, ready to excel in a global society. In order to achieve this, we will foster collaborative family partnerships. FCPS envisions a Districtwide culture conducive to meaningful engagement of families and collaborative partnerships to support student learning, enrich educational experiences and prepare students to excel as successful citizens in a global society.

DEFINITIONS

Parent or family consists of a biological, adoptive or foster parent; other adult serving as a parent such as a close relative; legal or educational guardian; and/or a community or agency advocate.

DISTRICT RESPONSIBILITIES

The Superintendent and Board will initiate and be accountable for developing the following vital collaborative activities to address the schools’ responsibility in the above-stated process:

- The FCPS system, starting with IAKSS staff and the Board, will create and maintain a responsive and welcoming atmosphere that values and respects parents and families and community partnerships.
- The District, starting with the Superintendent and Board, will support parents and families as advocates and partners for lifelong learning and as decision-makers and active participants in school issues and programs.
- FCPS will assist parents, families and guardians in acquiring techniques to support their students’ learning and will develop tools to help establish those areas where support is needed.
- The District will undertake purposeful initiatives to involve parents and family members, wherever appropriate, in a variety of instructional and support roles both within as well as outside of the schools. These shall include creating greater awareness, and promoting more effective operations, of the existing opportunities provided by law for parent/family engagement.
- The District will take the initiative in working to break down all cultural barriers and negative perceptions that stand in the way of education being recognized as a vital part of each child’s development into full and productive citizens of the community.
- The District, with assistance from the Equity Council, will take the initiative in working to address issues related to educational equity and to provide strong advocacy for the achievement of all students, regardless of cultural or ethnic factors, socio-economic status, gender, native language or conditions of identified disability.
- The District will work closely with all Family Resource/Youth Service Centers, social workers and Title I staff in coordinating access to support services for children and their families, in keeping with goals of the District Improvement Plan for academic achievement.
- The District will work closely with all parent and community groups in all schools in supporting parent and family initiatives that enhance academic achievement.

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DISTRICT RESPONSIBILITIES (CONTINUED)

- The Superintendent and Board, working with IAKSS staff and school staff, will assist schools in identifying those areas where professional development is necessary in helping teachers, administrators, and staff to work effectively with families. The Superintendent and Board will determine ways to provide that opportunity for professional development.
- The District Parent/Family Engagement process will become an ongoing part of the District Improvement Planning process.
- This policy will be made available to each parent and/or family on the District web site and at the IAKSS Office.

SCHOOL RESPONSIBILITIES

This policy requires coordinated efforts of Superintendent, Board, IAKSS and all school staff, as well as parents/families, students, and community. The issues of parent and family engagement are critical to the academic success of each student in the FCPS system; it is also fundamental to a healthy system of public education that expects all students to achieve at high levels. Therefore, the following expectations exist for each school in the system, in order to ensure that students have every opportunity to acquire and achieve the capacities established by law, as well as those established by the FCPS Board of Education.

1. Each school will write and embed purposeful parent and family engagement strategies into school culture as a part of its School Improvement Planning process. This shall include, but not be limited to, the following information:
 - methods that will be used to promote purposeful school-to-home communication that are sensitive to variances in comprehensive opportunities/abilities, including access to online communications.
 - identification of professional development needs for teachers, administrators, and staff to address working effectively with all families, especially those of culturally diverse backgrounds and special educational needs.
 - demographics of all students; awareness of, and follow up with, those families requiring home visits or off-site conferences.
 - determination of types of learning at home that should take place to support all learning at school.
 - ongoing training for parents/family members about School Based Decision Making (SBDM) practices and SBDM committee engagement.
 - definitions regarding what constitutes effective parent/family engagement at each school and how that involvement will positively impact student achievement.
 - efforts and measures employed to elicit minority and special needs representation/participation in the educational processes at each school.
2. Each school will demonstrate an effort to reach families that are underrepresented in school settings, face transportation or child care challenges, lack the confidence or time, and/or have limited literacy or limited English language skills.

Parent/Family Engagement**SCHOOL RESPONSIBILITIES (CONTINUED)**

3. Each school will schedule an annual meeting for families that is convenient and offered at times that are as flexible as possible to all constituents (a.m. and p.m., possibly). These meetings should ensure that families have multiple learning opportunities to understand how to support their children's learning and will provide:
 - a description and explanation of the school's curriculum;
 - a description and explanation of the forms of academic assessments used to measure student progress;
 - an explanation of the proficiency level students are expected to meet;
 - a description and explanation of all school programs, family involvement initiatives; and the parents' rights to be involved in decisions related to the education of their children.
4. Each school shall work closely with all parents, parent groups (PTA, SBDM) and community groups in supporting parent and family initiatives that enhance academic achievement.
5. Each school shall provide flexible opportunities for organized, on-going, and timely family participation in planning, review, and improvement of school programs (to include, but not be limited to, the Title I program).

As all parent/family engagement plans will be a part of the District Improvement Planning process, they will be subject to the same implementation/impact checks as other planning pieces. However, as this initiative is vital to the success of students in FCPS, all schools' parent/family engagement strategies will also be submitted to IAKSS staff in the Family and Community Engagement (FACE) office.

The staff will also provide training and support for schools to help them reach the District family/community engagement objectives. Information on the status of school-family engagement and training will be shared with both the Equity Council and the Board of Education. IAKSS Family and Community Engagement and Title I staff will also review this policy annually for any needed revisions.

RELATED POLICY:

02.4241

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