



**Local Educational Agency (LEA)/District Level  
Parent and Family Engagement Policy/Plan  
City Schools of Decatur  
School Year 2023-2024  
Revision Date 06/15/2023**

In support of strengthening student academic achievement, the City Schools of Decatur (CSD) has developed this parent and family engagement policy that establishes the district's expectations and objectives for meaningful family engagement and guides the strategies and resources that strengthen school and parent partnerships in the district's Title I schools. This plan will describe CSD'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 district 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 district and school plan, and in carrying out the district and school improvement provisions. Section 1116 of ESSA contains the primary Title I, Part A requirements for schools and school systems to involve parents and family members in their children's education. CSD will work with its Title I schools to ensure that the required school-level parent and family engagement policies meet the requirements of federal law and each include, as a component, a school-parent compact.

The City Schools of Decatur agrees to implement the following requirements as outlined by Section 1116:

- The school district will put into operation programs, activities, and procedures for the engagement of parents and family members in all of its schools with Title I, Part A programs. These programs, activities, and procedures will be planned and operated with meaningful consultation with parents and family members of participating children.
- The school district will work with its schools to ensure that the required school-level parent and family engagement policies meet the requirements of Section 1116(b) of the ESSA, and each include as a component a school-parent compact consistent with federal law.
- In carrying out the Title I, Part A parent and 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, limited literacy, disabilities, of migratory children, who are economically disadvantaged, or are of any racial or ethnic minority background, including providing information and school reports required under Section 1111 of the ESSA in an understandable and uniform format including alternative formats upon request and, to the extent practicable, in a language parents understand.

- If the LEA plan for Title I, Part A, developed under Section 1112 of the ESSA, is not satisfactory to the parents of participating children, the school district will submit any parent comments with the plan when the school district submits the plan to the state Department of Education.
- The school district will be governed by the following definition of parental involvement/family engagement and expects that its Title I schools will carry out programs, activities, and procedures in accordance with this definition in Section 8101 of the ESSA:

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) Parents play an integral role in assisting their child’s learning
- (B) Parents are encouraged to be actively involved in their child’s education at school
- (C) 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
- (D) Other activities are carried out, such as those described in Section 1116 of the ESSA

In accordance with Title I guidelines and following educational best practices, this plan will describe how The City Schools of Decatur (CSD) will provide opportunities to improve parent and family member engagement to support student learning. CSD will involve parents and family members in a timely, organized and ongoing manner in the planning, review, and improvement of Title I programs. This includes but is not limited to the following documents: the district’s Comprehensive Needs Assessment (CNA), the Comprehensive LEA Improvement Plan (CLIP), the district Parent and Family Engagement Policy/Plan, school level Parent and Family Engagement Policy/Plan, and school level Schoolwide Improvement Plans/Title I Targeted Assistance Plans.

All parents and family members of children participating in the Title I, Part A program, are encouraged and invited to fully participate in the district level and school level planned parent and family member activities, training, and workshops. Parent and family member engagement funding is set aside at the district level and school level to provide for these Title I parent and family member activities, training, and workshops.

This Parent and Family Engagement Policy/Plan is made available to CSD’s Title I parents and family members, and is available to the local community. This plan is distributed in multiple ways including methods such as: school communication packets, direct mail, distribution at parent and family meetings, posted on district and school websites, etc. This list is not all inclusive, but just a sample of methods of distribution.

All parents, family members, and teachers of eligible Title I children will be invited to an Annual Title I Parent and Family Meeting held in the fall. This will be a meeting, convened at a convenient time, to which all parents and family members of participating children shall be invited and encouraged to attend, to inform parents and family members of their school’s participation under this part and to explain that requirements of this part and the right of parents and family members to be involved.

In addition, parents, family members, and teachers of eligible Title I children will be invited to attend an annual public meeting during the fall and/or spring of each year which will provide an opportunity for these parents, family members, and teacher to have input into the design and implementation of

the Title I program and to establish mechanisms for maintaining on-going communications between school and home. These meetings may include, but are not limited to,

review/discussion/revision of following documents: the district's Comprehensive Needs Assessment (CNA), the district's Comprehensive LEA Improvement Plan (CLIP), the district Parent and Family Engagement Policy/Plan, school level Parent and Family Engagement Policy/Plan, and school level Schoolwide Improvement Plans/Title I Targeted Assistance Plans.

Additional meetings and activities are held periodically during the school year that may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Parent and family member notification of the results of the annual school review to provide parental input opportunities on the school improvement plan
- Reporting of child's progress to parents and family
- Parent/Family/Teacher/Student conferences
- Parent and family questionnaires for providing input for future program development
- Parent and family training and enrichment on parenting skills

CSD affirms and assures the rights of parents and family members with children being served with Title I funds opportunities to participate in the design and implementation of these activities. CSD will provide full opportunity for the participation of parents and family members with limited English, parents and family members with disabilities and parents and family members of migratory children.

## **JOINTLY DEVELOPED**

The City Schools of Decatur will take the following actions to involve parents and family members in jointly developing its LEA plan under Section 1112, and the development of support and improvement plans under paragraphs (1) and (2) of Section 1111(d) of the ESEA:

- Parents, family members, and teachers of eligible Title I children will be invited to attend an annual public meeting during the fall and/or spring of each year to discuss, provide input, and revise the district parent and family engagement policy/plan, the Comprehensive Needs Assessment (CNA), Comprehensive LEA Improvement Plan (CLIP), and the School Improvement/Title I Schoolwide/Title I Targeted Assistance Plan.
- Parents, family members, and teachers of eligible Title I children will be invited to attend meetings on the school's fall curriculum night of each year to discuss, provide input, and revise the district parent and family engagement policy/plan, the Comprehensive LEA Improvement Plan (CLIP), and the School Improvement/Title I Schoolwide/Title I Targeted Assistance Plan.
- Each Title I School will host at least two school level parent and family member meetings during the year, one in the fall and one in the spring, in which parents and family members are invited to review, discuss, provide input, and revise, as needed, the School Improvement/Title I Schoolwide/Title I Targeted Assistance Plan.
- Parents and family members of eligible Title I children will be invited during the spring and/or summer by the school to participate in and end-of-the-year review of the School Improvement/Title I Schoolwide/Title I Targeted Assistance Plan. Parents and family members will review, discuss, provide input, and revise document as needed.

Upon final revision, the district parent and family engagement policy/plan will be incorporated into the Comprehensive LEA Improvement Plan (CLIP) which is submitted to the state. Parents

and family members are welcome to submit comments and feedback regarding the policy at any time on the school district website or by submitting written comments to their child's school. All feedback received will be reviewed and analyzed for further policy/plan revision.

The district parent and family engagement policy/plan is posted on district and school websites, distributed during the annual Title I school meetings during the fall of the school year, and made available at each Title I school.

## **TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE**

The City Schools of Decatur (CSD) will provide the following coordination, technical assistance, and other support necessary to assist and build capacity of all Title I, Part A schools in planning and implementing effective parent and family engagement 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 CSD district Title I coordinator will provide routine assistance and support to all Title I schools to ensure parent and family engagement requirements are being satisfied and that parent and family member engagement strategies and activities are being implemented. Title I schools will receive notifications and resources from the district and from the Title I department to help them improve and strengthen parent and family member engagement. In addition to frequent communication and school visits, the district Title I coordinator will hold scheduled meetings and trainings throughout the year with its Title I schools' principals and Title I lead teachers to review parent and family member engagement plans and activities. Additionally, the Title I coordinator will convene a fall and spring meeting for principals and Title I lead teachers to review parent and family member engagement requirements and plan opportunities for parent and family member activities and meetings for the remainder of the school year and/or the upcoming school year.

## **ANNUAL EVALUATION**

The City Schools of Decatur (CSD) will take the following actions to conduct, with the meaningful engagement of parents and family members, an annual evaluation of the content and effectiveness of this parent and family engagement policy in improving the academic quality of its Title I, Part A schools. The evaluation will include identifying barriers to greater participation by parents in activities (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). The evaluation will also include identifying the needs of parents and family members to assist with the learning of their children, including engaging with school personnel and teachers and strategies to support successful school and family interactions. The school district will use the findings of the evaluation about its parent and family engagement policy to design evidence-based strategies for more effective parental engagement, and to revise, if necessary, its parent and family engagement policies.

In the spring, each Title I school will send home a survey for parents and family members to provide valuable feedback regarding the parent and family member engagement activities and

programs. These surveys will also be posted on the district and school websites for parents and family members to complete. In addition to the annual survey, each Title I school will host fall and spring parent and family member forums designed specifically to facilitate group discussions to discuss the needs of parents and family members of children eligible to receive Title I services and to design strategies for more effective parent and family member engagement. These meetings will also include an opportunity for parents and family members to provide evaluation feedback on the district Parent and Family Engagement Policy/Plan. CSD will use the findings from the forums and surveys to assist in the design of strategies to improve effective parent and family member engagement, to remove possible barriers to parent and family member participation, and to revise its parent and family engagement policies/plans.

Multiple methods will be utilized to solicit parent and family member engagement in the above described activities including but not limited to, flyers, email lists, webpage notifications and surveys, phone calls, etc. In addition, the district and all Title I schools will communicate and collaborate with Student Support Services to ensure full opportunities for participation of parents and family members with limited English proficiency, parents and family members with disabilities, and parents and family members of migratory children including providing information and school reports in a language parents and family members can understand as necessary or applicable.

## **RESERVATION OF FUNDS**

The City Schools of Decatur (CSD) will involve the parents and family members of children served in Title I, Part A schools in decisions about how the 1 percent of Title I, Part A funds reserved for parent and family engagement is spent and will ensure that not less than 90 percent of the 1 percent reserved goes directly to Title I schools.

CSD will insure that not less than 90 percent of the amount reserved will be distributed to all Title I schools to support their local-level parent and family member programs and activities.

CSD will involve the parents and family members of children served in Title I, Part A schools in decisions about how the 1 percent of Title I, Part A funds reserved for parent and family engagement is spent. The Title I, Part A 1 percent parent and family engagement budget along with the planned parent and family engagement activities and programs will be shared each year with parents and family members at the Title I Annual Parent meeting. In addition, the district as well as each Title I school will host spring parent and family member forums designed for parents and family members to provide suggestions on how these parent and family engagement funds will be used in the upcoming year at the district and school-level. Comment cards and minutes from these meetings will be reviewed by the district to determine areas of need for the upcoming school year and consider changes to the parent and family engagement budget.

The district will provide clear guidance and communication to assist each Title I school in developing an adequate parent and family engagement budget that addresses their needs assessment and parent and family member recommendations.

## **COORDINATION OF SERVICES**

The City Schools of Decatur (CSD) will coordinate and integrate parent and family engagement strategies with parent and family engagement strategies, to the extent feasible and appropriate, with

other relevant Federal, State, and local laws and programs as listed below that encourage and support parents in more fully participating in the education of their children as outlined below.

In CSD coordination and integration of services does not often pose a challenge due to the fact that our Title I administrators are most often responsible for multiple programs and meet regularly. This planning across programs allows the district to provide seamless services to students in the following programs: Pre-Kindergarten at the Early Childhood Learning Center, Head Start, Title I services, ESOL (English Learners) services, Special Education and other related Pupil Services, and our Homeless Education Program.

Our Early Childhood Learning Center serves children from birth to four years old. This center offers high quality, developmentally appropriate instruction and service in accordance to all state and/or federal guidelines. The center implements the HighScope framework and OWLS reading curriculum for the four year olds and has attained NAEYC accreditation. By having an early childhood center offering quality instruction and serving all students (special needs, economically disadvantaged, English Language Learners) the district is laying the foundation for a successful transition for students to journey to our kindergarten through second grade schools, Fifth Avenue and Talley Street 3-5 Upper Elementary schools, Beacon Hill Middle school and graduating from Decatur High. Professional Learning and parent involvement activities are collaborative efforts. This collaboration allows the district to maximize funding as well as time and resources. Also, both staff and school and district administrators engage in courses offered by Rollins Center for Language and Literacy at the Atlanta Speech School to receive specific training to continue to increase our capacity for consistently and cogently attacking the achievement gap between our black and white students.

CSD's Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) process has increased communication, coordination, and the integration of educational services at both the LEA and individual school level. MTSS teams composed of classroom teachers, Title I, EIP, ESOL, Migrant, and Special Education teachers, academic coaches, counselors, McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Liaison, McKinney-Vento Homeless Social Worker, parents, and other interested parties meet regularly to assess students' needs using supporting data to determine the most appropriate placement, instruction, strategies and interventions. These MTSS meetings eliminate duplication of efforts, increase program effectiveness, and provide a cohesive instructional plan for all students needing additional academic support.

CSD's McKinney-Vento Homeless Education program is included in all collaborative efforts to eliminate duplication of services, increase program effectiveness, and to provide a cohesive instructional plan for all homeless students needing additional academic support.

## **BUILDING CAPACITY OF PARENTS**

The City Schools of Decatur (CSD) will, with the assistance of its Title I schools, build parents' capacity for strong family engagement by providing materials and training on such topics as literacy training and using technology (including education about the harms of copyright piracy) to help parents work with their children to improve their children's academic achievement. Assistance will also be provided to parents in understanding the following topics:

- The challenging State academic standards
- The State and local academic assessments including alternate assessments

- The requirements of Title I, Part A
- How to monitor their child's progress
- How to work with educators

CSD will, with the assistance of its Title I schools, conduct a variety of trainings and/or workshops to ensure that parents and family members have a working and proficient knowledge of the above listed topics. CSD will conduct multiple training and informational sessions on these topics to ensure said proficiency levels.

CSD will, with the assistance of its Title I schools, will continue to build parent and family capacity by providing additional materials and training on such topics as literacy, mathematical fluency, using technology, college and career readiness, homework, bullying and other topics as deemed necessary to help parents and families to work with their children to improve their children's academic achievement.

In addition, each Title I school will host various workshops throughout the year as requested by parents and family members, or as deemed necessary to support parents and family members in helping to improve their student's academic and social success.

Online resources will also be made available on the district Title I webpage and each Title I school's Title I webpage.

Each Title I school will provide a Title I calendar-of-events listed on each Title I school's Title I webpage and to be sent home to Title I parents and family members. In addition, notices will be provided to parents and family members in multiple ways such as school newsletters, Title I e-blasts, etc., to inform parents and family member of workshops and other upcoming Title I events. Parents and family members are encouraged to visit the district Title I webpage and individual school Title I webpages often for workshop dates and other additional information.

In carrying out the parent and family engagement requirements established by Section 1118 of the ESEA, the district and all Title I schools will communicate and collaborate with Student Support Services to ensure full opportunities for participation of parents and family members with limited English proficiency, parents and family members with disabilities, and parents and family members of migratory children including providing information and school reports in a language parents and family members can understand to the extent practicable.

It will be the practice of CSD and the CSD Title I department to respond to parent requests for parental and family engagement activities in a timely and appropriate manner.

## **BUILDING CAPACITY OF SCHOOL STAFF**

The City Schools of Decatur (CSD) will, with the assistance of its schools and parents, educate its teachers, specialized instructional support personnel, principals, and other school leaders, and other staff 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 schools by:

- Providing periodic trainings during the school year for principals and school Title I lead teachers to learn and discuss strategies to increase parent and family engagement, improve

school-family communication, and build ties with parents, family members, and the community.

- Redelivering trainings to the faculty and staff of Title I schools as deemed appropriate and necessary.
- Providing opportunities for visits to each Title I school by the Title I Coordinator to review and discuss parent and family engagement requirements and initiatives. These opportunities may include training for appropriate school staff and faculty that will focus on creating welcoming environments and improving two-way communication with parents and family members.
- Providing training and other professional development opportunities to develop relationships and remove barriers that prevent positive and effective parent and family interactions in schools.
- Developing systematic, integrated, and sustained organizational policies and practices to facilitate and enhance parent and family engagement within the school.

## **BUILDING CAPACITY FOR INVOLVEMENT**

The City Schools of Decatur (CSD) will, further seek to build parent and family capacity for involvement in the school and district to support their children's academic achievement by paying reasonable and necessary expenses associated with family engagement activities, including transportation and child care costs, to enable parents to participate in school-related meetings and training sessions.

## **ADOPTION**

This LEA parent and family engagement policy has been developed jointly and agreed on with parents and family members of children participating in Title I, Part A programs, as evidenced by meeting agendas, notes, and sign-in sheets on file in the district Title and Federal programs office.

This policy was adopted by the City Schools of Decatur on June 15, 2023 and will be in effect for the period of the 2022-2023 school year. The school district will distribute this policy to all parents of participating Title I, Part A children on or before October 30, 2023.