

Hart County Charter System

Parent and Family Engagement Plan

2017–2018
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What is Family Engagement?

Family Engagement means the participation of parents and family members 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 and on advisory committees to assist in the education of their child.
- (D) The carrying out of other activities, such as those described in Section 1116 of the ESSA.

About the Parent and Family Engagement Plan (PFEP)

In support of strengthening student academic achievement, the Hart County Charter System (HCCS) has developed this parent and family engagement plan that establishes the district's expectations and objectives for meaningful parent and family engagement and guides the strategies and resources that strengthen school and parent partnerships in the system's Title I schools. This plan describes HCCS'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 parent and 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 and family members in their children's education. Consistent with Section 1116, the HCCS works with its Title I schools to ensure that the required school-level parent and family engagement plans meet the requirements of Section 1116(b) and each include, as a component, a school-parent compact consistent with Section 1116(d) of the ESSA.

Jointly Developed

During late May/early June of 2017, all parents were invited to participate and provide suggestions and ideas to improve the system's parent and family engagement plan for the 2017-2018 school year. The system placed an advertisement in the local weekly newspaper for two consecutive weeks. The meetings was also posted on the system's website and Facebook page. During the meeting, parents also reviewed and discussed the Comprehensive LEA Improvement Plan (CLIP) and the Title I School Improvement/Schoolwide Plans.

Upon final revision, the system's parent and family engagement plan was incorporated into the CLIP which was submitted to the state. Parents are welcome to submit comments and provide feedback regarding the policy at any time. The plan and corresponding feedback form are posted on the system and school websites for the duration of the school year. Plans are also made available to parents during the annual Title I meetings early each school year.

Strengthening Our School

The system's Parent/Family Engagement Coordinator (PFEC) provides assistance and support to all Title I schools to ensure parent and family engagement requirements are being satisfied and that parent and family engagement strategies and activities are being implemented. Title I schools receive notifications and resources from the Title I Director and the PFEC to help them improve and strengthen parent and family engagement. In addition to frequent communication and school visits, the Title I Director and PFEC hold meetings and trainings with its Title I schools' principals, assistant principals, and school level PFECs to review parent and family engagement plans and activities.

Additionally, the system convenes a planning meeting in the spring for principals, assistant principals, and the school level PFECs to review parent and family engagement requirements and plan opportunities for parent and family engagement activities and meetings for the upcoming school year.

Reservation of Funds

The HCCS reserves 1 percent from the total amount of Title I funds it receives in FY18 to carry out the parent and family engagement requirements listed in this plan and as described in Section 1116 of the ESSA. Furthermore, the HCCS will distribute 100 percent of the amount reserved to all Title I schools to support their local-level parent and family engagement programs and activities. The system provides 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 recommendations.

Each Title I school hosts an annual Planning meeting in May/June for parents to provide suggestions as to how these parent and family engagement funds are to be used in the upcoming year at the system and school levels. Parental input 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 parent and family engagement budget.





Opportunities for Meaningful Parent Consultation

Input and suggestions from parents and family members 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 share their ideas and suggestions to help the system, schools, and students reach the academic achievement goals set forth by the state. Parents are also invited to participate in the following activities/events at which they can provide input and make suggestions.

Parent/Family Engagement Activity Evaluations Ongoing 2017 -2018

After each parent/family engagement activity, parents are asked to complete a short survey regarding their satisfaction/helpfulness of the activity. The responses assist schools in planning, developing, and improving the quality of future activities.

Surveys – Spring 2018

Parent/family input on the use of Title I funds to support parent/family engagement programs is provided through the system's annual survey. The survey contains questions related to the budget. The survey also contains multiple opportunities for comments.

School Title I Planning Week – May /June 2018

Each Title I school hosts a forum for parents/family members to participate in roundtable discussions to review the schoolwide plan, the school's parent/family engagement plans, the P/T/S compacts, as well as provide input on the parent/family engagement budget and programs. Each Title I school will send invitations home to parents notifying them about the date and time of the forum. Information regarding the Title I Planning Week is posted on the school websites and school signs. A reminder is also sent via the system's automated calling system.

State of the District Meeting – June/July 2018

All parents/families are welcome to hear the latest from the Hart County Charter System, as well as review and provide input into the system's parent/family engagement plan, the CLIP for the upcoming school year, and each school's schoolwide/improvement plan. Notices regarding this meeting are posted on the system's website and Facebook page, and in the local weekly newspaper, *The Hartwell Sun*, prior to the meeting.

Building Capacity

The HCCS builds the schools' and parents' capacity for strong parent/family engagement, in order to ensure effective involvement of parents/family members and to support a partnership among the Title I schools, parents, and the community to improve student academic achievement through multiple system-wide activities/events and programs.

Of Parents - The HCCS works within the system and through its Title I schools to provide assistance to parents in understanding state and system academic information connected to student learning and progress, as well as information regarding the Title I program. The HCCS and each school provides activities/events/opportunities for parents/families to gain knowledge about the Georgia Standards of Excellence (GSE), the College and Career Readiness Performance Index (CCRPI), local academic assessments, and the required assessments for Georgia students. The dates and locations of workshops/activities/events are posted on each school's website and the system's Facebook page, listed in the schools' PFEP and compacts, and posted on the school's message sign. Printed invitations/flyers are sent home with students and reminder calls are made using the system's automated phone system.

The HCCS has established a System Governance Team, which is comprised of parent representatives from each Title I school's School Governance Team to provide advice on all matters related to parent/family engagement in Title I, Part A programs. Community leaders and business partners also serve on the Governance Teams.

The HCCS coordinates and integrates the system's parent/family engagement programs with the Head Start Program, other local preschool programs, and other federal and state funded preschool programs in the system by inviting faculty and staff from those programs to attend planning meetings focused on parent/family engagement activities. In the summer, each elementary school hosts a Kindergarten Camp and the Hart County Middle School hosts a 6th Grade Transition Camp. This allows parents to tour the schools, meet teachers and staff, and receive information and materials to assist parents/families in preparing them and their children for the school experience. The HCCS also coordinates with these programs to ensure that parents/families are informed about available resources.

Of School Staff - The HCCS conducts training sessions as needed during the school year for principals, assistant principals, and school PFECs to learn and discuss strategies to increase parent/family engagement, improve school-parent/family communication, and build ties with parents/families and the community. These trainings are redelivered to the faculty and staff of Title I schools. The system's PFEC also makes scheduled visits to each of the schools to review and discuss parent/family engagement requirements and initiatives. The HCCS hosts a training for appropriate school staff and faculty that focuses on creating welcoming environments and improving two-way communication with parents and families.

To ensure that information related to system, school, and parent/family engagement programs and activities is available to all parents/families in an understandable and uniform format, each Title I school sends home a calendar of events with information for parents/families at the beginning of the school year through the PFEPs and the school compacts. Parent notifications and resources are sent in the native language of the home and interpreters are available upon request at parent/family events/activities/meetings. Information posted on the system's and schools' websites and Facebook pages is translated to the extent practicable. The system also utilizes an automated telephone system, school websites and Facebook pages, and the local news media to share information with parents/families.

Parent and Family Engagement Evaluation

Each year, the HCCS conducts an evaluation of the content and effectiveness of this parent and family engagement plan and the parent/family engagement activities to improve the academic quality of the Title I schools through an annual parent survey and the School Improvement Forums/Title I Planning Week.

In the spring, each Title I school sends home a survey for parents to provide valuable feedback regarding the parent and family engagement activities and programs. In addition to the annual survey, each Title I school also uses their School Improvement Forum/Title I Planning

Week to facilitate group discussions to discover the needs parents/families of children eligible to receive Title I services and to design strategies for more effective parent/family engagement.

The HCCS and Title I schools will use the findings from the school forums and the survey results to design strategies to improve effective parent/family engagement, to work to remove possible barriers to parent/family participation, and to revise its parent and family engagement plans.

Accessibility

In carrying out the parent/family engagement requirements established by Section 1116 of the ESSA, the Title I Director and PFEC communicate and collaborate with the Hart County's Office for Student Support Services to ensure full opportunities for participation of parents/families with limited English proficiency, parents with disabilities, and parents of migratory children including providing information and school reports in a language parents can understand.

Mark Your Calendars

For Parents

Annual Parent Survey
Spring 2018

School Improvement
Forum/Title I Planning Week
May/June 2018

State of the System
June/July 2018

For Schools

Welcoming Schools Training
Fall 2017

School Administrators and
P/FEC Meetings
Monthly As Needed

School Forum/Title I Planning
Week – May/June 2018

Adoption

This system-wide parent and family engagement plan has been developed jointly and agreed upon with parents and family members of children participating in Title I, Part A programs as evidenced by the collaboration of parents, school, and system personnel at the annual State of the System meeting.

This plan will be in effect for the 2017-2018 academic school year. The school system will share this plan in multiple ways to all parents/families of participating Title I, Part A students on or before September 1, 2017. The plan will be available at the county office complex, and posted on the system's website/Facebook page and on each school's website.

