

Parent and Family Engagement Policy

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to encourage and facilitate the engagement of parents of students participating in Title I funded educational programs at Higher Ground Academy (HGA) schools to support student academic achievement (This policy is adopted by HGA Elementary 010, HGA Middle Site 050, HGA secondary Site 030). HGA is committed to the goal of providing quality education for every student. We want to establish partnerships with parents and with the community because everyone gains when the school and home are working together to support high achievement of our children. Parents and families play an extremely important role as children's first teachers. Their support for their children and for the school is critical to their children's success at every step along the way.

II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

Part I. HGA agrees to implement the following requirements:

1. HGA 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, consistent with section 1116 of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). Those programs, activities and procedures will be planned and operated with meaningful consultation with parents of participating children.
2. Consistent with section 1116, HGA 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 section 1116(d) of the ESSA.
3. In carrying out the Title I, Part A parent and family engagement requirements to the extent practicable, HGA 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.
4. HGA will incorporate this district wide parent and family engagement policy into its district plan developed under section 1112 of the ESSA.
5. If the district plan for Title I, Part A found in the State Educational Record View and Submission (SERVS), developed under section 1112 of the ESEA, is not satisfactory to the parents of participating children, HGA will submit any parent comments with the plan when HGA submits the plan to the Minnesota Department of Education.
6. HGA with a Title I, Part A allocation of over \$500,000, will involve the parents of children served in Title I, Part A schools in decisions about how the 1 percent of Title I, Part A funds reserved for parental involvement is spent, and will ensure that not less than 90 percent of the 1 percent reserved goes directly to the schools.

7. HGA will be governed by the following definition of the term “parent” includes legal guardian or other person standing in place of a parent (such as a grandparent or stepparent with whom the child lives, or a person who is legally responsible for the child’s welfare).
8. Parental involvement 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 at school;
 - 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. that other activities are carried out, such as those described in section 1116 of the ESEA. **Part**

II. Description of How the District and School Will Implement Required Components

1. HGA will engage parents and families who have Title I students in developing/revising the district and school policy.
2. HGA will take actions to engage the parents and families in jointly developing the district Title I plan (section 1112) which is in the SERVS application and the development and review of the Schoolwide or Title I Targeted Assistance Plan. If applicable the Comprehensive Support and Improvement and the Targeted Support and Improvement plan, in the schools’ identified for improvement plans. [Section 1111(D) (1)(2)]
3. HGA will coordinate technical assistance and other support that is necessary to build the capacity of staff in planning and implementing effective parent and family engagement activities to improve student academic achievement and school performance. This could include meaningful consultation with employers, business leaders and philanthropic organizations or individuals with this experience in effectively engaging families in education.
4. HGA will coordinate and integrate with federal, state, and local programs, including public preschool programs, to implement effective parent and family engagement strategies that improve student achievement and school performance.
5. HGA will take actions to conduct, with the engagement of parents, an annual evaluation of the content and effectiveness of this parent and family engagement policy (programs/activities) in improving the academic achievement of Title I students and the schools.

Reviewing and evaluating the parent and family engagement activities/programs:

- a. Identify barriers and the needs of parents and family members that keep them from participating in their child’s education especially the economically disadvantaged, disabled, limited English proficiency or any racial or ethnic minority.
 - b. Identify the needs of the Title I parents and family members to assist the learning of their children and the teachers and school staff.
 - c. Identify strategies to support successful school and family interactions.
6. HGA will use the findings of the evaluation to design evidence-based strategies for more effective parent and family engagement as necessary and to revise the parent and family engagement policy as necessary.

7. HGA will involve parents in activities at the school. This could be establishing a parent advisory board that represents the population of Title I parents and family members, that develops, evaluates, and reviews or revises the parent and family engagement policy.
8. HGA will convene an annual meeting, at a convenient time, when the parents of participating children are available to attend. The Title I annual meeting will inform parents about the Title I program, explain the requirements of parent and family engagement and the rights and responsibilities of the parents to be involved.
9. HGA will offer flexible meeting times during morning, evening, or weekends.
10. HGA will involve parents in the planning and review of the school improvement plan and the joint development of the schoolwide plan when applicable. If the schoolwide plan is not satisfactory to the parents, submit comments on the plan when submitted to the district. [Section 1114(b)]
11. HGA will help parents of Title students with:
 - a. Timely information about programs offered to engage in their child's education.
 - b. An explanation of the curriculum, state and local academic assessments including alternate assessments, and the achievement levels of the state academic standards.
 - c. If they request, opportunities for regular meetings to hear their suggestions and participate in decisions related to their child's education.

Part III. Description of the Shared Responsibilities for High Student Academic Achievement

HGA will jointly develop with Title I parents a school-parent compact that outlines how parents, the entire school staff, and students will share the responsibility for improved student academic achievement to meet the state academic standards. The compact should:

1. Describe the curriculum and instruction that help their student meet the state standards, identify where their child is performing and discuss ways the parent can support their child's education at home and at school.
2. Talk about the importance of the teachers and parents communicating on an ongoing basis at a minimum:
 - a. Conduct a parent-teacher conference in elementary schools, at least annually, during which time the compact is discussed as it relates to the individual child.
 - b. Provide frequent reports to parents on their children's progress.
 - c. Provide information on how parents can contact staff and staff can best contact parents, opportunities to volunteer and participate in their child's class, and observation of classroom activities.
 - d. Make sure that two-way meaningful communication between family members and school staff is addressed and when at all possible, is in a language the parents and family members can understand.

Part IV. Accessibility

HGA will meet the requirements of parent and family engagement of Title I, to the extent practicable, we will provide full opportunities for the participation of parents with children with limited English

proficiency, parents with children with disabilities, and parents of migratory children, including providing information and school reports in a format and, to the extent practicable, in a language such parents can understand.

Part V. Adoption

This Policy was revised by the Board in the February 2024 Board meeting. HGA will share this policy and make it available to the community through the school website.

Resources:

Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), Section 1116, PDF of the federal law

Titles I and II, Compliance Guide and Monitoring Tool, on the Minnesota Department of Education's website

Title I, Part A, Parent and Family Engagement Toolkit, Texas Education Agency and Region 16 ESC, Statewide Parent and Family Engagement Initiative

Parent and Family Engagement (PFE) in Title I, Part A Programs, State of Washington, Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction

Local Educational Agencies (LEA/District) and School Policies, Georgia Department of Parent and Family Engagement

Family and Community Engagement, United States Department of Education