

Orange Public Schools

Title I District Wide Parent and Family Engagement Policy

In support of strengthening student academic achievement, each local educational agency (LEA or school district) that receives Title I, Part A funds must develop jointly with, agree on with, and distribute to, parents of participating children a written parent and family engagement policy that contains information required by section 1116(a)(2) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). This policy establishes the LEA's expectations for parent and family engagement, and describes how the LEA will implement a number of specific parent and family engagement activities, and is incorporated into the LEA's Annual School Plan (ASP).

Part I: General Expectations

The Orange Public Schools district agrees to implement the following statutory requirements:

- The school district will put into operation programs, activities and procedures for the involvement of parents in all its schools with Title I, Part A programs, consistent with section 1116 of the ESEA. These programs, activities, and procedures will be planned and operated with meaningful consultation with parents of participating children.
- Consistent with section 1116 of the ESEA, 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 ESEA, and each include, as a component, a school-parent compact consistent with section 1116(d) of the ESEA.
- The school district will incorporate this district wide parent and family engagement policy into its LEA plan developed under section 1112 of the ESEA.

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, parents with disabilities, and parents of migratory children, including providing information and school reports required under section 1111 of the ESEA in an understandable and uniform format and, 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 ESEA, is not satisfactory to the parents of participating children, the school district will submit any parent comments with the plan if requested by the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE).
- The school district will involve the parents of children served in Title I, Part A schools in decisions about how the one 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 one percent reserve goes directly to the schools.
- The school district will be governed by the following statutory definition of parent and family engagement, and expects that its Title I schools will carry out programs, activities, and procedures in accordance with this definition:

Parent and 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 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; and

(D) the carrying out of other activities, such as those described in section 1116 of the ESEA.

Part II. Description of How District Will Implement Required District Wide Parent and Family Engagement Policy Components

1. The Orange Public Schools district will take the following actions to involve parents in the joint development of its district wide parent and family engagement plan under section 1112 of the ESEA:

- a. Develop and disseminate surveys as a means of collecting information for use in the development and refinement of the *Districtwide Parent & Family Engagement Policy*
- b. Engage parents and other key stakeholders in annual roundtable discussions and town hall meeting led by the Superintendent of Schools
- c. Engage parents in bi-monthly parent council meetings designed to promote two-way communication involving student academic learning and districtwide programming (*ex: advisory councils, bilingual education councils, special education parent advisory group, etc.*)

2. The Orange Public Schools district will take the following actions to involve parents in the process of school review and improvement under section 1116 of the ESEA:

- a. Ensure that the Office of Community Engagement is aligned and works cross-functionally with all departments and schools to promote integrated supports to families
- b. Host community and partner town hall meetings to build awareness of partnerships and elicit input on how to better meet parent, family, and community needs with the goal of supporting student achievement
- c. Ensure that School Leadership Councils have active and regular parent and community meetings and uniformly support department initiatives
- d. Continuously communicate any updates to the *Districtwide Parent & Family Engagement Policy*

3. The Orange Public Schools district will provide the following necessary coordination, technical assistance, and other support to assist Title I, Part A schools in planning and implementing effective parent and family engagement activities to improve student academic achievement and school performance:

- a. Ensure School Leadership Committees (SLCs) have active parent and community members that are representative of their school communities;
- b. Designate executive level leadership to support and provide annual training to all SLCs to foster and maintain parent and stakeholder engagement in school-level planning and decision-making
- c. Offer continuous opportunities for families to engage in the planning, implementation, and review of academic offerings within the district (*Monthly Chat & Chews, Parent Webinars, Parent University, Superintendent's Parent & Student Council, Special Education Parent Advisory Council, Bilingual Parental Advisory Council, Early Childhood Parent Advisory Council, etc.*)
- d. Establish inter-district and intra-district learning opportunities, including site-visits and school walk-throughs, to provide parents with insights into school/district offerings.

4. The Orange Public Schools district will coordinate and integrate parent and family engagement strategies in Title I, Part A with parent and family engagement strategies under the following other programs: [Insert programs, such as: Head Start, Parents As Teachers, Home Instruction Program for Preschool Youngsters, and State-operated preschool programs], by:

- a. Coordinate and integrate parent and family engagement strategies designed to support early childhood programming (*ex: Preschool Intervention and Referral Specialists (PIRS), Early Childhood Advisory Councils & subcommittees, etc.*)
- b. Coordinate and integrate parent and family engagement strategies designed to support student subgroups (*ex: Special Ed Parent Advisory Group, Bilingual Advisory Council, Superintendent's Parent Council, etc.*)
- c. Provide parental supports via the registration/enrollment/advertisement committee
- d. Issue community needs assessments and surveys

5. The Orange Public Schools district will take the following actions to conduct, with the involvement of parents, an annual evaluation of the content and effectiveness of this parent and family engagement policy in improving the quality of its Title I, Part A schools.

The evaluation will include identifying barriers to greater participation by parents in parent and family engagement 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 school district will use the findings of the evaluation about its parent and family engagement policy and activities to design strategies for more effective parent and family engagement, and to revise, if necessary (and with the involvement of parents) its parent and family engagement policies.

- a. Develop, disseminate, and review the results of district and school level parent surveys to identify and analyze trends
- b. Conduct an evaluation of the Parent University to determine ways to expand the offerings
- c. Include school leadership, SLCs, culture and climate teams, PTO's/PTA's in the needs assessment process

6. The Orange Public School district will build the schools' and parent's capacity for strong parent and family engagement, in order to ensure effective involvement of parents and to support a partnership among the school involved, parents, and the community to improve student academic achievement, through the following activities specifically described below:

A. The school district will, with the assistance of its Title I, Part A schools, provide assistance to parents of children served by the school district or school, as appropriate, in understanding topics such as the following, by undertaking the actions described in this paragraph –

- 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, and
 - how to work with educators:
- a. Provide assistance to parents to better understand state standards by providing bi-annual parent workshops; inviting parents to the UCEA's annual conference and the NJDOE's technical support sessions
 - b. Provide assistance to parents to better understand testing and alternative assessment by providing bi-annual parent workshops; inviting parents to the UCEA's annual conference and the NJDOE's technical support sessions
 - c. Provide assistance to parents to better understand student performance expectations by providing bi-annual parent workshops, inviting parents to the UCEA's annual conference and the NJDOE's technical support sessions.

B. The school district will, with the assistance of its schools, provide materials and training to help parents work with their children to improve their children's academic achievement, such as literacy training, and using technology, as appropriate, to foster parent and family engagement, by:

- a. Disseminate monthly parent letters in the core content areas

- b. Offer annual family nights in an array of academic areas (mathematics, ELA, STEM, etc.)
- c. Offering multiple opportunities throughout the year to train parents on technologies used in support of instructional programming
- d. Offering multi-session workshops and webinars to improve parents understanding of social emotional learning and related supports

C. The school district will, with the assistance of its schools and parents, educate its teachers, pupil services personnel, principals other school leaders, and other staff, in how to reach out to, communicate with, and work with parents as equal partners, in the value and utility of contributions of parents, and in how to implement and coordinate parent programs and build ties between parents and schools, by:

- a. Engage parents and other key stakeholders in annual roundtable discussions and town hall meeting lead by the Superintendent of Schools
- b. Engage parents in bi-monthly parent council meetings designed to promote two-way communication involving student academic learning and districtwide programming (ex: Advisory Councils, Bilingual Education Councils, Special Ed Parent Advisory Group, etc.)
- c. Ensure that the Office of Community Engagement is aligned and works cross-functionally with all departments and schools to promote integrated supports to families.

D. The school district will, to the extent feasible and appropriate, coordinate and integrate parent and family engagement programs and activities with Head Start, Home Instruction Programs for Preschool Youngsters, the Parents as Teachers Program, and public preschool and other programs, and conduct other activities, such as parent resource centers, that encourage and support parents in more fully participating in the education of their children, by:

- a. Engage parents and other key stakeholders in annual roundtable discussions and town hall meeting lead by the Superintendent of Schools
- b. Coordinate and integrate parent and family engagement strategies designed to support early childhood programming (ex: Preschool Intervention and Referral Specialists (PIRS), preschool/early childhood advisory councils & subcommittees, etc.)
- c. Coordinate and integrate parent and family engagement strategies designed to subgroups of (ex: Special Education Parent Advisory Group, Bilingual Advisory Council, etc.)

E. The school district will take the following actions to ensure that information related to the school and parent programs, meetings, and other activities is sent to the parents of participating children in an understandable and uniform format, including alternative formats upon request, and, to the extent practicable, in a language the parents can understand:

Fully utilize available communication vehicles to disseminate information to parents that is in an understandable and uniform format via:

- a. School/district website
- a. The Orange District app,
- a. Class Dojo and Remind communication apps
- a. Translation services in multiple languages
- a. Community blasts (emails, phone, and social media channels)

Part IV. Adoption

This District wide Parent and family engagement Policy has been developed jointly with, and agreed on with, parents of children participating in Title I, Part A programs, as evidenced by Dr. Gerald Fitzhugh III.

This policy was adopted by the Orange Public Schools district on September 11, 2024, and will be in effect for the period of one year. The school district will distribute this policy to all parents of participating Title I, Part A children on or before September 30, 2024.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Gerald Fitzhugh, II, Ed.D." with a horizontal line underneath the signature.

Gerald Fitzhugh, II, Ed.D.

Superintendent of Schools