

Lee County Public Schools

District Wide Family Involvement Policy

PART I. GENERAL EXPECTATIONS

The Lee County School Board recognizes that the education of each student is a responsibility shared by the school and the students' families and promotes partnerships that will build family involvement capacity and participation in promoting academic, social, emotional and physical growth of all our children. The Lee County School Board will integrate this family component into the school division plan for achieving high standards for all students as mandated in the parental involvement goals of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001.

The Lee County School Board 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 of its schools with Title I, Part A programs, consistent with section 1118 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). Those programs, activities and procedures will be planned and operated with meaningful consultation with parents of participating children.

Consistent with section 1118, the school district will work with its schools to ensure that the required school-level parental involvement policies meet the requirements of section 1118(b) of the ESEA, and each include, as a component, a school-parent compact consistent with section 1118(d) of the ESEA.

The school district will incorporate this district wide parental involvement policy into its LEA plan developed under section 1112 of the ESEA.

In carrying out the Title I, Part A parental involvement 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 when the school district submits the plan to the State Department of Education.

The school district 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 95 percent of the one percent reserved goes directly to the schools.

The school district will be governed by the following statutory definition of parental involvement, and expects that its Title I schools will carry out programs, activities and procedures in accordance with this definition:

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) the carrying out of other activities, such as those described in section 1118 of the ESEA.

The school district will inform parents and parental organizations of the purpose and existence of the Parental Information and Resource Center in the State.

PART II. DESCRIPTION OF HOW DISTRICT WILL IMPLEMENT REQUIRED DISTRICT WIDE FAMILY INVOLVEMENT POLICY COMPONENTS

1. The **Lee County School Board** will take the following actions to involve families in the joint development of its district wide family involvement plan under section 1112 of the ESEA:
 - a) organize the Lee County Title I Division Family Advisory Committee;
 - b) convene three annual meetings, (October, January and March) to ensure all stakeholders are represented in the written review/revision process of the Division Family Involvement Policy;
 - c) ensure all stakeholders are represented on the DFA Committee (family representatives from each school, principals, teachers, central office supervisors, Lee County Board of Supervisors, community members, business leaders, community service workers, and school board members;
 - d) provide all participants a copy of Section 1118 and Title III requirements and the current Division Family Involvement Policy;

- e) conduct group discussions for the purpose of consultation, advising and evaluation;
- f) utilize committee members recommendations for the implementation procedure for this policy;
- g) utilize members input to assess the progress of the policy and revise as needed;
- h) evaluate the policy on an annual basis to determine its effectiveness and revise the policy based on this evaluation;
- i) ensure flexibility and accessibility within the division administration to provide collaboration of other educational programs that focus on high student achievement and values diversity and equity in each child's learning (Head Start, Reading First, parent-teacher groups, and Parents as Teachers Program);
- j) publicly advertise meetings and make them open to all parents;
- k) provide assistance to individual schools in planning and implementing strong family involvement activities, programs and procedures.

2. The **Lee County School Board** will take the following actions to involve families in the process of school review and improvement under section 1116 of the ESEA:

Individual schools will:

- a) enlist family members to serve on the School Improvement Plan Committee;
- a) establish a school level Family Involvement Advisory Committee that will develop a Family Involvement Plan and e procedures for the implementation of the plan;
- b) hold two annual informative meeting offered at a variety of times to maximize the opportunity for parent participation (Objectives; instructional strategies, SOL curriculum content, student assessment data and how schools are rated, educational literacy and parents rights and responsibilities);

- c) provide other family activities and workshops based on the assessed needs and interests of the school community;
- d) develop a Family/School Compact in cooperation with parents and teachers and promote its use for high student achievement (the compact will contain language that attends to the literacy and language levels of families);
- e) ensure that all communication will be in a format that is understandable to families;
- f) utilize computer/telephone (School Reach Program) to communicate with families.

3. The **Lee County School Board** will provide the following necessary coordination, technical assistance, and other support to assist Title I, Part A schools in planning and implementing effective family involvement activities to improve student academic achievement and school performance:

- a) utilize local and state personnel to provide schools technical assistance and support in the development and implementation of a quality Family Involvement Program;
- b) provide materials and training to empower families to become active participants in their child's educational program such as literacy training, use of technology, Virginia's academic content standards and student academic achievement standards, and how to monitor a child's progress and work with educators to improve student achievement;
- c) provide professional development for teachers, pupil services personnel, principals, and other staff in the following areas:
 - values and utility of contributions of families,
 - how to reach out to families,
 - how to communicate and work with families as equal partners,
 - implementing and coordinating family programs,
 - building ties between families and the school.

4. The **Lee County School Board** will coordinate and integrate family involvement strategies in Part A with family involvement strategies under the following other programs: Head Start, Title III, Part A, Power School Alert, Parent Connect, and Parent Link, by:

- a) collaboration and sharing family resources, information and materials among programs;
 - b) co-sponsoring workshops and professional development activities that encourage and support family participation in the education of their children.
5. The Lee County School Board will take the following actions to conduct, with the involvement of families, an annual evaluation of the content and effectiveness of this family involvement policy in improving the quality of its Title I, Part A schools. The evaluation will include identifying barriers to greater participation by families in family involvement activities (with particular attention to families 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 Family Involvement Policy and activities to design strategies for more effective family involvement, and to revise, if necessary (and with the involvement of families) its family involvement policies.

The Division Family Involvement Advisory Committee will formally evaluate the plan as to its effectiveness in improving the quality of its Title I, Part A schools family involvement through:

- a) review of written evaluations completed by families and community members at division meetings and individual schools;
 - b) evidence of success of increased family involvement as documented by sign-in sheets for attendance;
 - c) teachers, principals and staff increased support and participation through documented family conferences;
 - d) identify barriers and ways to overcome barriers which may limit participation for those who are economically disadvantaged, disabled, have limited literacy/English proficiency or of any racial/ethnic minority.
6. The **Lee County School Board** will build the schools' and family capacity for strong family involvement, in order to ensure effective involvement of families and to support a partnership among the school involved, families, 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 families of children served by the school district or school, as appropriate, in understanding topics such as the follow:

- develop clear, meaningful, two-way communication between school and home (Parent Connect, Power School Alert, Web-page event calendars, Parent Link, personal conversations, conferences, formal and informal meetings;
 - provide orientation/Open House time for disseminating information about the State’s academic content standards and how they correlate with the curriculum (each subject and grade level);
 - coordinate program activities that include defining the State’s student academic achievement standards:
 - personnel will prepare and present workshops related to State’s student academic achievement standards
 - administrators and teachers will assist families in understanding the State and local academic assessments including alternate assessments and how to monitor their child’s progress using the assessment data
 - utilize an understandable and uniform format and, including alternative formats upon request, and, to the extent practicable, in a language parents understand;
 - provide personnel with training, including:
 - effective two-way communication strategies to build strong home/school learning partnerships;
 - creating an inclusive environment that welcomes and respects families;
 - effective parent – teacher conferences;
 - working with parents to foster learning at home and how to monitoring homework.
 - provide training for families on how to work with educators, including:
 - strategies to foster learning at home;
 - parents role in supporting child’s academic success (family literacy, effective parent-teacher communication);
 - leadership roles (resolving problems/conflict management).
- 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 family involvement, by:
- support school level Family Resource Centers (provide resources, materials and supplies to assist families to become active participants in their families educational development, including but not limited to technology, literacy, health services, and etc.);
 - provide parents on-going training and assistance related to student academic success:

- nutrition,
 - utilization motivation,
 - attendance,
 - monitoring homework assignments,
 - family literacy,
 - technology (media resource).
- c) The school district will, with the assistance of its schools and families, educate its teachers, pupil services personnel, principals and other staff, in how to reach out to, communicate with, and work with families as equal partners, in the value and utility of contributions of parents, and in how to implement and coordinate family programs and build ties between families and schools, by:
- develop clear, meaningful, two-way communication between school and home;
 - provide orientation/Open House time for disseminating information about the State's academic content standards and how they correlate with the curriculum (each subject and grade level);
 - coordinate program activities that include defining the State's student academic achievement standards:
 - teachers prepare and present workshops related to State's student academic achievement standards,
 - administrators and teachers will assist families in understanding the State and local academic assessments including alternate assessments and how to monitor their child's progress using the assessment data.
 - utilize an understandable and uniform format and, including alternative formats upon request, and, to the extent practicable, in a language parents understand;
 - provide personnel with training, including:
 - effective two-way communication strategies to build strong home/school learning partnerships,
 - creating an inclusive environment that welcomes and respects families,
 - effective parent – teacher conferences,
 - work with parents to foster learning at home and how to monitor homework;
 - encourage utilization of school Family Resource Centers.
- d) The school district will, to the extent feasible and appropriate, coordinate and integrate family involvement programs and activities with Head Start, Title III,

Part A, preschool, and other programs through family resource centers that encourage and support family participation in the education of their children, by:

- Collaboratively providing monthly workshops that involve families and community resource persons in activities that disseminate information related to:
 - nutrition and other health related issues,
 - safety,
 - how to utilize talents of families in schools,
 - sensitivity of diverse family situations,
 - strategies for engaging families in school (reaching uninvolved families),
 - community services that are available for family support,
 - fathers as important contributors to family involvement.
- 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:
- families will be informed of school activities through both formal and informal communication:
 - Division newspaper (bi-annual distribution in the local newspaper),
 - School newsletters,
 - Division and school Web-page,
 - Power School Alert (phone service),
 - Flyer,
 - Radio announcements,
 - Local newspaper,
 - Letters,
 - PTO Meetings.

PART III. DISCRETIONARY DISTRICT WIDE FAMILY INVOLVEMENT POLICY COMPONENTS

NOTE: The District Wide Family Involvement Policy may include additional paragraphs listing and describing other discretionary activities that the school district, in consultation with its parents, chooses to undertake to build families' capacity for involvement in the school and school system to support their children's academic achievement, such as the following discretionary activities listed under section 1118(e) of the ESEA:

- a) involving families in the development of training for teachers, principals, and other educators to improve the effectiveness of that training;

- b) providing necessary literacy training for parents from Title I, Part A funds, if the school district has exhausted all other reasonably available sources of funding for that training;
- c) paying reasonable and necessary expenses associated with family involvement activities, including transportation and child care costs, to enable parents to participate in school-related meetings and training sessions;
- d) training families to enhance the involvement of other parents;
- e) in order to maximize parental involvement and participation in their children's education, arranging school meetings at a variety of times, or conducting in-home conferences between teachers or other educators, who work directly with participating children, with families who are unable to attend those conferences at school;
- f) adopting and implementing model approaches to improving parental involvement;
- g) establishing a district wide family advisory council to provide advice on all matters related to parental involvement in Title I, Part A programs;
- h) developing appropriate roles for community-based organizations and businesses, including faith-based organizations, to support family involvement activities;
- i) providing other reasonable support for family involvement activities under section 1118 as parents may request.

PART IV. ADOPTION

This District Wide Family Involvement Policy has been developed jointly with, and agreed on with, parents of children participating in Title I, Part A programs, as evidenced by sign-in sheet for Family Involvement Advisory Meetings.

This policy was adopted by the Lee County Schools on 12/10/2013 and will be in effect for each school year. The school district will distribute this policy to all parents of participating Title I, Part A children at the beginning of each school year.

Mark Carter, Division Superintendent

(Signature of Authorized Official)