



BUTTS COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM

District Level Parent and Family Engagement Policy
Butts County School System
2020-2021

In support of strengthening student academic achievement, the Butts County School System (BCSS) receives Title I, Part A funds and therefore must jointly develop with, agree on with, and distribute to parents and family members of participating children a written parent and family engagement policy that contains information required by Section 1116(a)(2) of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). The policy establishes the district's expectations and objectives for meaningful parent and family engagement and describes how the district will implement a number of specific parent and family engagement activities, and it is incorporated into the district's plan submitted to the Georgia Department of Education.

The Butts County School System agrees to implement the following requirements as outlined by Section 1116 of ESSA:

- 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 ESSA and each include as a component a school-parent compact.
- If the district plan for Title I, Part A 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 Georgia Department of Education.
- The school district will be governed by the following definition of parental engagement and expects that its Title I schools will carry out programs, activities, and procedures in accordance with this definition in Section 8101 of ESSA:

Parental engagement means the participation of parents in regular, two-way, and meaningful communication engaging 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 engaged 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.*



**DESCRIPTION OF HOW THE DISTRICT WILL IMPLEMENT REQUIRED
DISTRICT PARENT AND FAMILY ENGAGEMENT POLICY COMPONENTS**

JOINTLY DEVELOPED

The Butts County School System will take the following actions to engage parents and family members in jointly developing its district's plan under Section 1112 and in the development of support and improvement plans in accordance with ESSA:

- Provide multiple opportunities on varying days and times each school year for all parents and community members to review/revise the district parent and family engagement policy.
- Seek input on the parent and family engagement policy from members of the District's Parent Advisory Council during one of their meetings.
- Notify parents and the public of all meetings to review and revise the Comprehensive Local Education Agency (LEA) Improvement Plan (CLIP) (the Comprehensive Needs Assessment, District Improvement Plan, Parent and Family Engagement Policy, Foster Care Transportation Plan, and Title I, Part C ID&R Plan (when applicable)) in multiple ways including: school system website, flyers, automated phone/email messaging system, social media, newsletters, and/or press releases.
- Each Title I school will invite all parents and family members to provide input on and jointly develop the School Improvement/Title I Schoolwide Plan and if applicable, the Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI) or Targeted Support and Improvement (TSI) Plan annually. Invitations for the multiple meetings may be in the form of flyers, letters sent home, newsletters, automated phone/email messaging system, school website, and/or social media.
- Provide multiple opportunities on varying days and times, open to all parents, for the purpose of reviewing the CLIP.
- Notify parents and the public of all meetings to review the CLIP in multiple ways including the school system website, flyers, automated phone/email messaging system, social media, newsletters, and/or press releases.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

The Butts County School System 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:

- Hold quarterly technical assistance meetings for school-level parent liaisons offered at varying dates and times to provide effective and engaging practices inclusive of all families.
- Provide templates, samples, and other documents for schools to use in carrying out Title I family engagement activities and to build parent capacity.



- Facilitate and present on special topics at Title I schools per request from the school.
- Ensure schools meet Title I parent and family engagement requirements.
 - Provide ongoing technical support through phone, email, and meetings.
 - Provide feedback to parent liaisons for program improvement.

ANNUAL EVALUATION

The Butts County School System 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 regarding strategies to support successful school and family interactions. The school district will use the findings of the evaluation of 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.

- The Director of Federal Programs will be responsible for the evaluation of the parent and family engagement policy. This evaluation will take place in the spring of each school year.
- Surveys will be made available to all parents of Title I students via electronic and paper copies. The survey will be translated into Spanish and provided to limited English proficient parents. Parents will be informed of the survey via a cover letter and paper copy sent home with students, at school events, on the school system website, in school and district parent newsletters, by paper copies in the district office, and on the district Facebook page.
- Parent input from the fall survey will be used to plan for the newly-started school year. Parent input from the spring survey will be used to determine if parents' needs based on the fall survey were met. Fall and spring survey responses will be compared and contrasted to determine strengths and weaknesses in the program.
- The Director of Federal Programs will conduct an annual review of the program based on surveys, multiple stakeholder feedback meetings, observations, and parent engagement data and revise practices as needed. The review will include identification of trends, patterns, strengths, weaknesses, and needs.
- The Director of Federal Programs and school-level parent liaisons will design evidence-based strategies based on needs for more effective parental engagement and will revise, if necessary, the parent and family engagement policies described by the law.



RESERVATION OF FUNDS

The Butts County School System will engage the parents and family members 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 reserved will be distributed directly to Title I schools with priority given to high needs schools.

- Families will be given the opportunity to complete a parent survey twice a year to give feedback on how Title I funds should be spent.
- Parents will be given multiple opportunities to give feedback during parent workshops on how Title I funds should be spent.
- The Director of Federal Programs will tier funds to schools from highest to lowest based on academic needs.
- Funds reserved by the district shall be used to carry out activities and strategies consistent with the Parent and Family Engagement Policy, including not less than one of the following:
 - Supporting schools and nonprofit organizations in providing professional development for district and school personnel regarding parent and family engagement strategies, which may be provided jointly to teachers, principals, other school leaders, specialized instructional support personnel, paraprofessionals, early childhood educators, parents and family members.
 - Supporting programs that reach parents and family members at home, in the community, and at school.
 - Disseminating information on best practices focused on parent and family engagement, especially best practices for increasing the engagement of economically disadvantaged parents and family members.
 - Collaborating or providing subgrants to schools to enable such schools to collaborate with community-based or other organizations or employers with a record of success in improving and increasing parent and family engagement.
- The Director of Federal Programs will ensure through the budget process that not less than 90 percent of the one percent reserved goes to Title I schools.

COORDINATION OF SERVICES

The Butts County School System will coordinate and integrate parent and family engagement strategies under Title I, Part A with parent and family engagement strategies, to the extent feasible and appropriate, with other relevant federal, state, and local laws and programs including Bright from the Start, children with limited English proficiency, children with disabilities, neglected and delinquent youth, public preschool and other programs, and conduct other activities that encourage and support parents in more fully participating in the education of their children by:



- Coordinating with program directors to host a Pre-Kindergarten informational session for incoming parents.
- Coordinating with the English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) and Special Education directors to host events for parents of English Learners (EL) students and children with disabilities.
- Translating important parent correspondence into a language that a significant percent of the students and families speak. Documents which are not translated will contain a statement for identified languages indicating who to contact for translation assistance.
- Maintaining a Parent Resource Center housed in each school. The PRC will contain a variety of materials for parents to utilize and check out including books, DVDs, CDs, pamphlets, and other resources. Many materials will be available in identified languages.
- Parents who do not have access to a computer or the internet will be able to use the designated computers at the Central Office and at individual schools.

The school district shall implement the following practices to meet the federal requirements under Title I to provide for the representation of Butts County students residing in neglected and delinquent institutions:

- Parent engagement is recognized to be critical to the success of all students including those students residing in neglected and delinquent facilities in Butts County. In the absence of a parent or guardian, the representative of the neglected and delinquent facility should act in place of the parent in regards to parental engagement activities. The engagement of the representative should be geared to increase student attendance and achievement and decrease delinquent behavior. If the representative of the facility is unable to act, instructional staff may act in the place of the facility representative.
- BCSS will collaborate with neglected and delinquent facility representatives for program ideas as well as invite them to participate in offered parent trainings and meetings regarding parent engagement. Various activities offered at the schools will be geared to assist the students after their release from the facility.
- BCSS will regularly communicate with neglected and delinquent institutions within the district. BCSS will provide appropriate school representatives, including the school-level parent liaisons, the Director of Federal Programs and the Director of Student Services, information on students residing in these facilities to promote enhanced communication and assistance. BCSS will provide the neglected and delinquent institutions with contact information for BCSS officials that may assist them throughout the year.

BUILDING CAPACITY OF PARENTS

The Butts County School System will, with the assistance of its Title I schools, build parents' capacity for strong parental engagement by providing materials and training on such topics as literacy training and using technology 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 Georgia Standards of Excellence.



- Georgia Milestones.
- Title I, Part A requirements.
- How to monitor their child's progress.
- How to work with educators to improve the achievement of their children.

Title I schools will be provided with materials related to the listed topics to host parent workshops. All Title I schools will hold an Annual Title I Meeting open to all parents and stakeholders for the purpose of reviewing the requirements of Title I, Part A. Student agendas will contain the current school year's Title I information sheet which all parents will be able to access. Parents will be informed of the school district's student information system where they can create an account and monitor their student's grades, assignments, and absences. All parents will be provided with the opportunity to partake in parent-teacher conferences.

The school district will:

- Provide schools with necessary materials to host parent workshops on enhancing parent engagement, literacy, using technology (including education about digital citizenship and the harms of copyright piracy), child development, understanding assessments, preparing for standardized tests and other topics as requested by parents in Title I schools.
- Provide materials and training, with the assistance of schools, to help parents work with their children to improve academic achievement, such as literacy training and using technology as appropriate, and to foster parental engagement.

BUILDING CAPACITY OF SCHOOL STAFF

The Butts County School System will, with the assistance of its schools and parents, educate its teachers, specialized instructional support personnel, principals, 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, and as requested by parents by:

- Sending all correspondence to parents on BCSS or school letterhead or with the BCSS/school logo visible.
- Keeping the language simple, free of jargon, euphemisms, and slang. All acronyms and abbreviations will be defined.
- Including a statement in some documents in another language informing the parent that the document is important, should be translated if needed and who to call for assistance. Important documents will be translated into identified languages and provided to parents as needed.
- Including contact information on all documents for parents who have questions or need further assistance.
- Providing schools with materials and resources to conduct staff trainings. Each school will hold four staff trainings per year.



- Incorporating parents as co-presenters in staff trainings.
- Educating administrators and staff members on the most recent and relevant information regarding parental engagement in education including the benefits of parent engagement, parent-teacher conferences, communication and engaging parents in homework.
- Providing assistance regarding parent engagement to new principals.
- Providing other reasonable support to parent engagement activities under section 1116 of ESSA as parents may request.

BUILDING CAPACITY FOR ENGAGEMENT

The Butts County School System may also provide additional services in order to build parents' capacity for engagement in the school and school system to support their children's academic achievement, such as the following discretionary activities listed under ESSA:

- Engaging parents in the development of training for teachers, principals, and other educators to improve the effectiveness of that training.
- 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.
- Paying reasonable and necessary expenses associated with parental engagement activities, including transportation and child care costs, to enable parents to participate in school-related meetings and training sessions.
- Training parents to enhance the engagement of other parents.
- Maximizing parental engagement and participation in their children's education by arranging school meetings at a variety of times or conducting alternative conferences between teachers or other educators who work directly with participating children with parents who are unable to attend those conferences at school.
- Adopting and implementing model approaches to improving parental engagement.
- Developing appropriate roles for community-based organizations and businesses, including faith-based organizations, in parental engagement activities.

ACCESSIBILITY

To the extent practicable, the district shall provide opportunities for the informed participation of parents and family members (including parents and family members who have limited English proficiency, parents and family members with disabilities and parents and family members of migratory children), including providing information and school reports required under Section 1111 of ESSA in a format and, to the extent practicable, in a language such parents understand.

In carrying out the parent and family engagement requirements established by Section 1111 of ESSA, the Director of Federal Programs will communicate and collaborate with the Director of Student Services to ensure full opportunities for participation of parents with limited English proficiency, parents with disabilities, and parents of migratory children.

