



MATANUSKA-SUSITNA
BOROUGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

District Parent and Family Engagement Handbook For Title I Schools

Federal Programs
907-746-9239

[Title 1 Homepage](#)



Purpose

This handbook is intended to serve as a guide for Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District's Title I schools to improve their parent engagement programs and meet the requirements under Title I, Part A, according to the standards of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA).

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MSBSD Board Mission and Vision Statement

BP 6171 TITLE I PROGRAMS

The selection of schools to receive Title I funds and the scope of the program will depend on current federal guidelines and level of financial support. To determine Title I funding federal law requires that a district rank all public schools in order of poverty (highest to lowest), determine which schools are eligible, and serve those schools in rank order. The Superintendent or designee shall establish procedures which ensure that partnerships and collaboration are established between the school and parents, families, businesses, and other community members.

The Superintendent or designee shall establish procedures which ensure that the district provides all district schools with the same level of base funding, per student, for highly qualified staff services, research based curriculum materials and instructional supplies. At the beginning of each school year, the ratio of students to teachers and auxiliary staff shall vary as little as possible from school to school. The Superintendent or designee shall maintain annual records to document this ratio and to indicate the quantity and quality of books and equipment at each school. State and local funds must be used in participating schools to provide services that, taken as a whole, are “at least comparable” to services in schools that do not participate in the Title I program.

The parents/guardians of children enrolled in Title I programs shall be involved in planning, designing, implementing, and evaluating these programs in a systematic, ongoing, informed and timely fashion. They shall have regular opportunities to make recommendations on the educational needs of their children and on ways in which they can help their children benefit from the programs. All such recommendations shall receive timely responses.

Through consultation with parents/guardians, the district shall annually assess the effectiveness of parental involvement programs and determine what action needs to be taken, if any, to increase parental participation.

When evaluating the effectiveness of Title I programs, staff shall assess individual student achievements, using data from the state’s annual assessments and other indicator of academic achievement, to determine whether these students’ improved performance has continued over a period of more than 12 months. The results of the evaluation will guide any necessary revision to the school-wide program plan.



Cross References:

(cf. 6190 - Evaluation of the Instructional Program)

(cf. 6000 - Concepts and Roles)

Legal References:

UNITED STATES CODE

Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, 20 U.S.C. §§ 6301-6514, as amended by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (P.L. 107-110)

No Child Left Behind Act which states: “Affording parents and students meaningful opportunities to participate in the education of their children.”

Adoption Date: 08/21/95

Revised Date: 12/04/02

BP 6020

PARENT ENGAGEMENT

To ensure meaningful consultation with parents and to support a partnership among the schools, parents, the community, and to improve students' academic achievement, each school shall build their capacity for parent involvement in ways that may include but are not limited to the following:

1. Provide assistance to parents of children served by the school, as appropriate, in understanding such topics as the State's academic content standards and State student academic achievement standards, State and local academic assessments, how to monitor a child's progress, and how to work with educators to improve the achievement of their children.
2. Provide materials and training to help parents work with their children to improve their children's achievement, such as literacy training and using technology, and as appropriate, to foster increased parental involvement by other parents.
3. Educate teachers, pupil services personnel, principals, and other staff, with the assistance of parents, 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 the school.
4. To the extent feasible and appropriate, coordinate and integrate parent involvement programs and activities with preschool programs such as Head Start, district preschool programs, and other programs and conduct activities, such as parent resource centers, that encourage and support parents in more fully participating in the education of their children.
5. Ensure that information related to school and parent programs, meetings, and other activities is sent to the parents of participating children in a format and, to the extent practicable, in a language the parents can understand.
6. Involve parents in the development of training for teachers, principals, and other educators to improve the effectiveness of such training.

7. Arrange school meetings at a variety of times, or conduct-in-home conferences between teachers or other educators with parents who are unable to attend such conferences at school, in order to maximize parental involvement and participation.
8. Provide such other reasonable support for parental involvement activities as parents may request.
9. Each school in the district will jointly develop with, and distribute to parents, a written parental involvement policy, agreed on by such parents that shall describe the means for carrying out the parent involvement policy. Parents shall be notified of the policy in an understandable and uniform format and, to the extent practicable, provided in a language they can understand. Such policies shall be made available to the local community and updated periodically to meet the changing need of parents and the school.
10. Parents who wish to object to or withdraw their student from a standards-based assessment or test required by the State of Alaska may do so by informing the school principal or designee prior to the scheduled test date(s).
11. Secondary teachers will provide a syllabus outlining course objectives, materials, and activities to be signed by parents at the beginning of a course.
12. Parents can review curriculum standards and materials either online or by requesting information from the teacher or principal.
13. Parents who wish to object to or withdraw their student from an activity, class or program may do so by informing the teacher or principal and requesting an alternative assignment or activity.
14. Schools will notify parents in writing through newsletters social media, or other forms of written communication at least two weeks prior to any activity, class or program that involves human reproduction or sexual matters. Parents may request to view the materials beforehand or opt their child out of the activity, class, or program by informing the teacher or principal in writing. However, opting out of instruction on “human reproduction or sexual matters” does not include curricula or materials for sexual abuse and sexual assault awareness and prevention training required under ASI4.30.355 or dating violence and abuse awareness and prevention training required under ASI4.30.356 (Alaska Safe Children’s Act, informally known as Erin’s Law and Bree’s Law).

The District may establish a district-wide parent advisory council to provide advice on all matters related to parental involvement to schools and to programs within the District.

The District may conduct, with the involvement of parents, an annual evaluation of the content and effectiveness of schools parental involvement policies and programs in improving the academic quality of the schools, including identifying barriers to greater participation by parents in activities (with particular attention to parents who are economically disadvantaged, have disabilities, have limited English proficiency, limited literacy, are of any racial or ethnic minority background or are parents of migratory children), and use the findings of such evaluation to design strategies for more effective parental involvement, and to revise, if necessary, the parental involvement policies described in this section. The District will involve parents in the planning of the Title I district plan and the District Improvement Plan, as needed.

MATANUSKA SUSITNA BOROUGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

Adoption Date: 08/21/95

Revised Date: 12/04/02

Revised Date: 01/19/11

Revised Date: 2/15/12

Revised Date 01/16/19

Revised Date 05/05/21

All MSBSD Title 1 schools are required to have a school level Parent Engagement Policy (formerly known as Parent Involvement Policy). Compliance guidance is below.



SCHOOL LEVEL PARENT ENGAGEMENT POLICY

Statute/Regulation 1118(b)(1)

Each **school** served under this part shall **jointly develop** with, and **distribute** to, parents of students in Title I programs a written parent involvement policy, **agreed upon** by such parents, that shall describe the means for carrying out the requirements of subsections (c) through (f) of Section 1118. Parents shall be notified of the policy in an **understandable and uniform format** and, to the extent practical, provided in a **language the parents can understand**. Such policy shall be **made available to the local community** and **updated annually** to meet the changing needs of parents and the school.

To Meet Compliance:

- Each school must jointly develop, with parents of students in Title I programs, a parent involvement policy. The policy must be agreed upon by parents.
- The policy must be written in a language and format that the parents can understand.
- The policy must be made available to the local community.
- The policy must be updated annually to meet the needs of the parents and school.

Evidence/Documentation

- School-level Parent and Family Engagement Policy.
- Evidence that the policy was developed jointly and agreed upon by parents (e.g. meeting minutes, sign-in sheets, correspondence, emails, meeting agendas, etc.).
- Evidence that the policy is updated annually.



TITLE I ANNUAL PARENT MEETING

Statute/Regulation 1118(c)(1)(2)

An **annual meeting** is held at each Title I school at a **convenient time**, where all parents of participating Title I students are invited and **encouraged to attend**, to inform parents of their school's Title I plan, explain the requirements of the Title I program, and inform parents of their right to be involved in the school improvement plan. The school must offer a **flexible number of meetings**, such as in the morning or evening, and may also provide transportation, childcare, or home visits with Title I funds.

To Meet Compliance:

- The school must hold an annual Title I meeting for parents of participating Title I students.
- Parents must be invited and encouraged to attend.
- During the meeting, the school must inform the parents about the Title I plan and explain the Title I requirements.
- During the meeting, parents must be informed of their right to be involved in the school improvement plan.
- During the meeting, parents must be informed of their options of school choice, if applicable.
- Multiple meetings are held.
- Meetings are held at flexible times.
- Title I funds are used to provide transportation, childcare and home visits if needed.

Evidence/Documentation

- Evidence that the meeting was held (e.g. meeting minutes, sign in sheets, agenda, etc.).
- Evidence that parents were invited and encouraged to attend in multiple ways (e.g. flyers, newsletters, invitations, Connect Ed messages, etc.).
- Evidence that parents were informed of the Title I plan and Title I requirements, their options of school choice, as well as their rights to be involved in the school.
- Evidence that the school holds the Title I meeting separate from other meetings.
- Agendas that include dates and times of meetings.
- Evidence that meetings are offered at flexible times and that transportation and childcare are available (if applicable).
- Evidence that Title I funds were used to provide these services.



Title I Annual Parent Meeting Agenda (bold headings indicate topics needed to be discussed for compliance)

- Introduction of Title I faculty and staff
- **Give an overview of what Title I is and the requirements of the Title I School-wide Program**
 - How funds will be used
 - Parent engagement funds
 - How school-wide plan will be assessed for effectiveness
- **Discuss the school's previous year's progress**
- **Explain what participation in a Title I Program means, including:**
 - Description and explanation of curriculum and programs
 - How to access Title I Plan on the school website
 - Information on forms of academic assessment used to measure student progress in a language parents can understand
 - A timeline for when parents will be informed of their child's progress
 - Information on the proficiency levels students are expected to meet
 - SES opportunities (if applicable)
- **Explain parent engagement policies**
 - District Parent Engagement policy
 - School Parent Engagement Policy
 - Parent –School Compact
- **Opportunities for parents to participate**
 - Being a part of the Title I accountability team
 - Helping make decisions and plan on parent engagement funding uses and events
 - Volunteering in the school
- **Parents Rights**
 - Right to request regular meetings with staff in order to make suggestions
 - Participate in decisions relating to the education of their child
 - Request the qualifications of their child's teacher
 - Submit a written comment on the school-wide program plan when made available to parents to view
 - Request the right to opt their child out of district and statewide testing
- Important dates and how to contact staff



PARENTAL INPUT ON FUNDING ALLOCATIONS ***Statute/Regulation 1118 (a)(3)(B)***

Parents of children receiving Title I services are **involved in the decisions** regarding how reserved funds are allotted for parent involvement activities.

To Meet Compliance:

- The LEA must include parents of students in Title I programs in the decision of how the funds are allotted for parent engagement activities.

Evidence/Documentation

- Meeting minutes, agendas, sign-in sheets, correspondence that documents parent.



INVOLVEMENT IN PLANNING, REVIEW, AND IMPROVEMENT ***Statute/regulations 1118 (c)(3); 1114 (b)(2)(B)***

The school involves parents in an organized, ongoing, and timely way, in the planning, review, and improvement of the Title I programs. This includes:

- ❖ The school-level parent engagement policy; and
- ❖ The joint development of the school-wide program plan.

To Meet Compliance:

- Parents must be involved in the development of the school-level parent engagement policy.
- Parents must be involved in the development of the school-wide Title I plan.
- The parent engagement policy must state that parents were included in its development.
- Discuss the above at the Annual Title I meeting.

Evidence/Documentation

- Evidence that parents were involved in the development of BOTH documents (e.g. agendas, letters, sign-in sheets, meeting minutes).



DESCRIPTION OF CURRICULUM, EVALUATIONS, MEASUREMENTS, AND PROFICIENCY LEVELS *Statute/Regulation 1118(c)(4)(B)*

Each Title I school must provide parents with a **description and explanation** of the **curriculum** in use at the school, the forms of **academic assessment used** to measure student progress, and the **proficiency levels** students are expected to meet.

To Meet Compliance:

- The school must provide parents with a description and explanation of the curriculum.
- The school must provide parents with a description and explanation of academic assessments used to measure student progress.
- The school must provide parents with a description and explanation of the proficiency levels students are expected to meet.

Evidence/Documentation

- Documentation that parents were given explanations for the items above (e.g. letters, print materials, emails, meeting agendas, agenda for Annual Meeting, etc.).



SCHOOL-PARENT COMPACT **Statute/Regulation 1118 (d)(1)(2)**

Each Title I school must **jointly develop** with parents of all children served under Title I a **school-parent compact** that outlines how parents, the entire school staff, and students will share the responsibility for improved student academic achievement and the means by which the school and parents will build and develop a partnership to help children achieve proficiency on the Alaska State Standards. The school-parent-compact describes the school's responsibility to provide high-quality curriculum and instruction in a supportive and effective learning environment that enables the children served under this part to meet the State's student academic achievement standards, and the ways in which each parent will be responsible for supporting their child's learning, such as monitoring attendance, homework completion, and television watching; volunteering in their child's classroom; and participating, as appropriate, in decisions relating to the education of their child and positive use of extracurricular time. The school-parent compact addresses the importance of communication between teachers and parents on an ongoing basis through, at a minimum;

- ❖ parent-teacher conferences at least annually, during which the compact shall be discussed as the compact relates to the individual child's achievement;
- ❖ frequent reports to parents on their child's progress; and
- ❖ reasonable access to staff, opportunities to volunteer and participate in their child's class, and observation of classroom activities.

To Meet Compliance:

- The school must have a school-parent compact.
- The compact must be developed jointly with parents of students in Title I programs.
- The compact must outline how parents, school staff, and students will share in the responsibility for improved student academic achievement.
- The school-parent compact is the means by which the school and parents will build and develop a partnership to help children achieve state standards.
- The school-parent compact must describe the following:
 - The school's responsibility to provide high quality curriculum and instruction.
 - The school's responsibility to provide a supportive and effective learning environment.
 - The ways in which each parent will be responsible for supporting their child's learning.
 - A description of how the school addresses the importance of communication between teachers, staff and parents.

Evidence/Documentation

- A copy of the school-parent compact meeting the criteria above sent to district Title I coordinator
- Evidence that compact was developed jointly with parents and reviewed annually (e.g., Meeting agendas, meeting minutes, sign-in sheets, correspondence.).



REPORTING ACHIEVEMENTS TO PARENTS ***Statute/Regulation 1118(c)(4)***

Parents of Title I students should receive timely information about the Title I programs at their child's school. This timely information should also include a report toward the progress of achieving the goals stated in the Title I Plan and documentation of how these results and information were shared by goal teams with parents, the community, Accountability team and other staff.

To Meet Compliance:

- The school must provide parents with timely information about Title I programs.

Evidence/Documentation

- Documentation that parents were given information about the progress toward the achievement of goals stated in the Title I Plan (e.g. newsletters, meeting agendas, sign-in sheets, emails, web pages)

Why Partnering with Families and the Community Matter



Current research resoundingly states the benefits for student achievement when schools partner with families and the community. A recent report published by the [Harvard Family Research Project, www.hfrp.org](http://www.hfrp.org), cites that despite the findings of studies, educators still tend to treat parents and families as bystanders rather than as partners in the education of students.

Partnering with families and the community yields great benefits for students, parents, and for schools.

Parental and family engagement in schools has been shown to contribute to student success in the following ways:

- improved students achievement as seen through increased math and reading scores
- increased motivation on the part of the student to do better in school
- improved attendance and an increased graduation rate
- better behavior both at school and at home
- improvement in a student's social skills and adaptation to school

Being engaged in the school community also provides rewards for parents:

- an opportunity to closely monitor their child's performance and address any school difficulties is more readily available
- better relationships and communication with their child's teacher are established
- having a voice in decisions that enhance the academic environment and improve their child's educational experience

There are also advantages for schools as well:

- immediate access to parents to gain and increase their support
- improved teacher morale
- approval of teachers and a more well-regarded reputation of the school within the community
- allies that will provide community-wide support for educational excellence
- willingness to work to better the school



The National Network of Partnership Schools, Johns Hopkins University, and Dr. Joyce Epstein identified multiple measures of parent involvement. A framework of six types of parent involvement that schools can employ evolved from her findings. www.csos.jhu.edu/p2000/sixtypes.htm

Six Types of Parent Involvement

Parenting. Assist families with parenting and child-rearing skills. Assist schools in understanding families.

Communicating. Communicate with families about school programs and student progress.

Volunteering. Improve recruitment, training, tasks, and schedules to involve families as volunteers.

Learning at Home. Involve families with their children in learning activities at home.

Decision Making. Include families as participants in school decisions.

Collaborating With the Community. Coordinate community, business, and agency resources and services for families.

These types of parental involvement can be used to create a systemic plan and approach for increasing family engagement. Parents can be the greatest asset in student achievement. Working to develop partnerships with families and the community will yield stronger, higher achieving schools. In the charts that follow, Dr. Epstein provided sample practices schools can employ to engage families in each type of involvement as well as results for students, parents, and educators from participating in family engagement.



How is Family Engagement Funded in Title I Schools?

Commitment to family engagement in learning has been present in several federal programs and pieces of legislation since the 1960s. Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) requires school districts to spend 1% of their Title I funds on family engagement activities. Title I requires School Action Plans to show provisions for family engagement.

Schools do many different activities and gather informal (through conversations, observations, etc.) and formal survey feedback for all events to assist in determining family engagement needs. Title I schools are required to complete, at minimum, four parent engagement activity reports to document family engagement activities hosted by the school. See Appendices A (Sign-In Sheet) and B (Parent and Family Engagement Survey) for copies of the paperwork necessary to submit to the Federal Programs office to document each Title I family activity at the school. Schools submit all documentation paperwork electronically.



The Perks of PIRCs (Parent Information and Resource Centers)

Federal funds allow non-profit organizations in states to financially support a Parent Information and Resource Center, or PIRC. The PIRC connects families, teachers, and school administrators in their efforts to work together to enhance academic achievement of all students. Our Alaska PIRC provides downloadable resources for parent involvement and professional development opportunities to help accomplish this goal. Visit Alaska's PIRC at www.akpirc.org.



Title I Compliance

To further illustrate the importance of family engagement in our schools, Title I law has included regulations that ensure the inclusion of our parents and community in decision-making and opportunities for participation. The following page provides the compliance timeline that schools must complete as a recipient of Title I funds. These compliance pieces break down the necessary components of family engagement that are taking place in our Title I schools each year.



Parent and Family Engagement Compliance Timeline for Title I Administrators

Task	Due Date
Ongoing throughout the year	
Hold at least three Title I parent engagement events	By end of school year
Description of curriculum, assessments and proficiency levels to parents	At Minimum - During Annual Meeting, PT Conferences
Parent input on funding and planning	At Minimum - Prior to Title I Plan Approval (Fall) During Title I Plan Revision (Spring)
September	
Distribute Parent Right to Know Letter (notify parents of their right to know teacher and paraprofessional qualifications)	September 11, 2021
October	
Updated Title I plan is accessible to the community. A hard copy is in the front office and parents know how to access on the school website.	October 9, 2021
Hold Annual Title I meeting (no later than this date)	October 23, 2021
November	
Parent and Family Engagement Policy revised with families, distributed, and in use.	November 6, 2021
Parent-School Compact revised with families, distributed, and in place.	November 6, 2021

We prepare all students for success