

## **PARENT AND FAMILY ENGAGEMENT**

The Terrebonne Parish School Board recognizes that parent and family engagement must be a priority of the School Board for children to learn and achieve academic success. Parents and families provide the primary educational environment for children; consequently, parents are vital and necessary partners with the School Board throughout their children's elementary and secondary school careers. The term *parent* shall refer to any caregiver who assumes responsibility for nurturing and caring for children, and includes parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, foster parents, stepparents, and others. The concept of parent and family engagement shall include programs, services, and/or activities on the school site, as well as contributions of parents outside the normal school setting.

It shall be the policy of the School Board and each public school in Terrebonne Parish, in meaningful collaboration with parents, teachers, students, administrators, and other educational resources, to establish, develop, and maintain strategies and programs that are intended to enhance the involvement of parents and other caregivers that reflect the needs of students, parents, and families served by the School Board, in accordance with applicable state and federal laws and regulations. As part of the parent and family engagement program, it shall be the responsibility of every school to create a welcoming environment, conducive to learning and supportive for comprehensive family involvement programs that have been developed jointly with parents/families.

### **DISTRICT LEVEL RESPONSIBILITIES**

At the district level, the School Board shall:

1. Involve parents and family members in the joint development and amendment of the school district's plan, which includes components of the district's parent and family engagement program, to be submitted to the Louisiana Department of Education.
2. Provide coordination of various programs which involve parents, technical assistance, and other support necessary to assist every public school in Terrebonne Parish in planning and implementing effective parent and family involvement activities to improve student academic achievement.
3. Coordinate and integrate parent and family engagement strategies with other relevant programs that promote parent involvement.
4. Conduct, with the meaningful involvement of parents and family members, an annual evaluation of the content and effectiveness of components and strategies of the School Board's parent and family engagement program and assess the

components' and strategies' usefulness. The evaluation shall attempt to identify ways of improving the academic quality of the schools served by the School Board, including identifying barriers to greater participation by parents in educational and parent and family engagement activities; particular attention shall be directed 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 Board and each school shall use findings of such evaluation to design strategies for more effective parental and family involvement, and to revise, if necessary, the parent and family engagement policies and procedures.

5. Distribute to parents and families, in a language the parents can understand, information about the Terrebonne Parish School Board's parent and family engagement program, as well as provide proper notification to parents about specific services or special programs, as required by state or federal law.

### SCHOOL LEVEL RESPONSIBILITIES

As part of the parent and family engagement program, the School Board shall encourage each public school and require those schools receiving federal Title I funds under the jurisdiction of the Terrebonne Parish School Board to:

1. Convene an annual meeting, at a convenient time, to which all parents of participating children shall be invited and encouraged to attend, to inform parents of their school's educational programs and to explain components of the parental involvement program, and the right of the parents to be involved.
2. Offer a flexible number of engagement meetings at convenient times to maximize parental participation, and may provide transportation, child care, appropriate refreshments, and/or home visits, as such services relate to parental involvement.
3. Involve parents in an organized, ongoing, and timely way, in the planning, review, and improvement of parent and family engagement programs, including the planning, development, review, and improvement of the school parent and family engagement policy and the joint development of the school-wide parent and family engagement program plan.
4. Provide parents, especially those of participating children:
  - A. timely information about educational and parent and family programs;
  - B. a description and explanation of the curriculum in use at the school, the forms of academic assessment used to measure student progress, and the achievement levels of state academic standards;

- C. if requested by parents, opportunities for regular meetings to formulate suggestions and to participate, as appropriate, in decisions relating to the education of their children, and respond to any such suggestions as soon as practicably possible; and,
  - D. the School Board's written *Parent and Family Engagement* policy.
5. If the school-wide parent and family engagement program plan is not satisfactory to the parents of participating children, submit any parent comments on the plan when the school makes the plan available to school district level personnel.

### SHARED RESPONSIBILITIES

As part of the parent and family engagement program, to build a capacity for involvement, the School Board *and* each public school under the jurisdiction of the School Board:

1. Shall provide assistance to parents of children served by the school or School Board, as appropriate, in understanding such topics as the state's academic content standards, state and local academic assessments, and how to monitor a child's progress and work with educators to improve the achievement of their children.
2. Shall provide materials and training to help parents to work with their children to improve their children's achievement, such as literacy training and using technology, as appropriate, to foster parental involvement.
3. Shall 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. Shall, to the extent feasible and appropriate, coordinate and integrate parent involvement programs and activities with other outreach educational programs, such as Head Start, and public pre-school 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.
5. Shall ensure that information related to school and parent programs, meetings, and other activities is sent to parents in a format and, to the extent practicable, in a language the parents can understand.
6. May involve parents in the development of training for teachers, principals, and other educators to improve the effectiveness of such training.

7. May provide necessary literacy training from federal and state funds received if the School Board has exhausted all other reasonably available sources of funding for such training.
8. May pay reasonable and necessary expenses associated with parental involvement activities, including transportation, and/or child care costs, to enable parents to participate in school-related meetings and training sessions.
9. May train parents to enhance the involvement of other parents.
10. May arrange school meetings, at a variety of times and places, or conduct in-home conferences between teachers or other educators who work directly with children, with parents who are unable to attend such conferences at school, in order to maximize parental involvement and participation.
11. May adopt and implement model approaches to improving parental involvement.
12. May establish a district-wide parent advisory council to provide advice on all matters related to parental involvement in programs.
13. May develop appropriate roles for community-based organizations and businesses in parental involvement activities.
14. Shall provide such other reasonable support for parental involvement activities as parents may request.
15. Shall provide, to the extent practicable, full opportunities for the participation of parents with limited English proficiency, parents with disabilities, and parents of migratory children, including providing necessary information and school reports required in a format, and to the extent practicable, in a language such parents understand.

#### Statement of Compliance

Each student in grades 4-12 and each parent or guardian of a student in grades 4-12, shall annually sign a *Statement of Compliance*, in accordance with state law. For students, the *Statement of Compliance* shall state that the student agrees to attend school regularly, arrive at school on time, demonstrate significant effort toward completion of homework assignments, and follow school and classroom rules. For parents, the *Statement of Compliance* shall state that the parent or legal guardian agrees to ensure his/her child's daily attendance at school, ensure his/her child's arrival at school on time each day, ensure his/her child completes all assigned homework, and attend all required parent/teacher/principal conferences.

## SCHOOL-PARENT COMPACT

Each school shall jointly develop with parents a school-parent compact that outlines how parents, school staff, and students will share the responsibility for improved student academic achievement and develop a partnership to help children achieve the State's standards. Such compact shall:

1. Describe the school's responsibility to provide high-quality curriculum and instruction in a supportive and effective learning environment that enables the children to meet the State's student academic achievement standards, and the ways in which each parent will be responsible for supporting their children's learning, such as monitoring attendance, homework completion, and television watching; volunteering in their child's classroom; contributing services outside the normal school setting; and participating, as appropriate, in decisions relating to the education of their children, and positive use of extracurricular time.
2. Address the importance of communication between teachers and parents on an ongoing basis through, at a minimum:
  - A. parent-teacher conferences in elementary schools, at least annually, during which the compact shall be discussed as the compact relates to the individual child's achievement;
  - B. frequent reports to parents on their children's progress;
  - C. reasonable access to staff, opportunities to volunteer and participate in their child's class, and scheduled observation of classroom activities; and
  - D. parental activities and/or contributions away from the school site that enhance academic achievement.

## OTHER PROGRAMS

In conjunction with the district services rendered under the School Board's parental involvement program, the School Board shall maintain contact and communication with social service and health agencies, faith-based institutions, and community groups to support key family and community services and issues. In particular, the Terrebonne Parish School Board has a strong relationship with and support from community and/or governmental organizations such as Families in Need of Services (FINS), Partners in Education, and District Parent/Teacher Association (PTA). One of the primary goals of these groups is to support, supplement, and assist in improving involvement of parents of children in the Terrebonne Parish public schools.

New policy: July 2003  
Revised: February 2018

Ref: 20 USC 6312 (*Strengthening and Improvement of Elementary and Secondary Schools*), 20 USC 6318 (*Parent and Family Engagement*); La. Rev. Stat. Ann. §17:235.2; Board minutes, 7-15-03, 3-6-18.