

International Charter Academy of Georgia

Parent and Family Engagement Policy

2020-2021
Revised November 18, 2020
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What is Family Engagement?

Family Engagement means the participation of parents and family members 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.
- (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 1116 of the ESSA.



About the Parent and Family Engagement Policy

In support of strengthening student academic achievement, the International Charter Academy of Georgia (ICAG) has developed this parent and family engagement policy that establishes the district's expectations and objectives for meaningful family engagement and guides the strategies and resources that strengthen school and parent partnerships in the district's Title I schools. This plan will describe ICAG's commitment to engage families in the education of their children and to build the capacity in its Title I schools to implement family engagement strategies and activities designed to achieve the district and student academic achievement goals.

When schools, families, and communities work together to support learning, children tend to do better in school, stay in school longer and enjoy school more. Title I, Part A provides for substantive family engagement at every

level of the program, such as in the development and implementation of the school plan, and in carrying out school improvement provisions. Section 1116 of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) contains the primary Title I, Part A requirements for schools and school systems to involve parents and family members in their children's education. Consistent with Section 1116, the ICAG will ensure that the required school-level parent and family engagement policies meet the requirements of Section 1116(b) and each include, as a component, a school-parent compact consistent with Section 1116(d) of the ESSA.

Jointly Developed

In general, parents will have the opportunity to work jointly with the school during the monthly Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) meetings and PTO Academic Committee. Additionally, parents will be able to complete mid and end of the year surveys to provide feedback on either the revision of the family engagement plan, use of Title I A funds or Streamlined Consolidated LEA Improvement Plan (SCLIP).

Upon final revision, the district parent and family engagement policy will be incorporated into the CLIP each year prior to submitting it to the state. Parents are welcome to submit comments and feedback regarding the policy at any time by submitting written comments via email to the school. All feedback received by June 30, 2021 will be included with the policy for the following school year.

The district's plan to distribute this policy is to post it on district and school websites and in parent resource centers, disseminate it during the annual Title I school meetings in the fall, and email the link to all parents in a format and language they can understand.

Strengthening Our School

This year, the Student Support Team and PTO will provide assistance and support to ensure family engagement requirements are being satisfied and that family engagement strategies and activities are being implemented. If the school receives Title I funding, the SST and PTO will suggest resources that will improve and strengthen family engagement. In addition to frequent communication and the involvement of the PTO, the school principal and SST will attend continuous training to review family engage updates.

Additionally, the school leader will review parent and family engagement requirements and plan opportunities for family engagement activities including cultural literacy throughout the school year.

Reservation of Funds

The ICAG will reserve 1 percent from the total amount of Title I funds it receives to carry out the parent and family engagement requirements listed in this policy and as described in Section 1116 of the ESSA. Furthermore, the ICAG will distribute 90 percent of the amount reserved to support their local-level family engagement programs and activities. Leadership will provide clear guidance and communication to assist in developing an adequate family engagement budget designed to address the needs assessment and parent recommendations. If the school is labeled Title I, it will host an annual School Improvement Forum in May for parents to provide suggestions how these family engagement funds will be used in the upcoming year at the school-level. Survey and minutes from these meetings will be reviewed by the administrative team to determine areas of need for the upcoming school year and consider changes to the family engagement budget.

Opportunities for Meaningful Parent Consultation

Input and suggestions from parents and family members are an essential component of the school improvement plans that will be developed each year. All parents of students eligible to receive Title I services are invited to attend the meeting opportunities described in this section to share their ideas and suggestions to help the school and individual students reach academic achievement goals.

School Improvement Forum ~ March 9, 2020.

During this week, ICAG will host a forum for parents and family members to participate in roundtable discussions to review the schoolwide plan, the school's parent and family engagement policies as well as provide input on the family engagement budget and topics for school staff training. ICAG will notify parents via email and Parent Bulletin about the date and time of the forum. Information regarding the School Improvement Forum will also be made available on the school websites.

Input on the use of the Title I fund to support family engagement programs may also be provided through surveys. Surveys will contain questions related to the family engagement budget and school staff training for parents to provide their comments.

Unable to attend these meetings? Please email your comments to the principal or front office. Please inquire at the front office or with the principal to review the meeting documents and minutes as well as leave your input.

Building Capacity

The ICAG will build school and parent capacity for strong family engagement. This capacity will ensure effective engagement of parents and family members in supporting partnerships among key stakeholders with the overall goal of improving student academic achievement. To build this capacity, the ICAG, if deemed to be a Title I school, will implement schoolwide activities and programs such as Parent-Teacher Teams (PTT). PTT will be an evidence-based family engagement model that builds partnerships with parents. Families will be able to work with teachers to set student academic goals to be addressed through at-home learning activities and strategies. If deemed targeted Title I, ICAG will work with families to determine the best use of these funds.

Of Parents - The ICAG will work to provide assistance to parents in understanding state and school academic information connected to student learning and progress. The school will also provide parents with information regarding the Title I program and PTT. Classes for parents to gain knowledge about the challenging state academic standards, local academic assessments, as well as the required assessments for Georgia students, including alternative forms of assessment, will also be provided. The dates and locations for these classes and PTT meetings will be posted on the district website and shared through the weekly parent newsletter.

In addition, the ICAG will coordinate a page on the school website and google docs that will contain resources and materials, including parent guides, study guides, practice assessments, and PTT activities to help parents work with their children at home. Copies of these materials will be made available at the school for those families who may have limited Internet access, including copies in Japanese.

The Parent Teacher Organization is comprised of parent representatives. This organization's purpose is to provide advice on all matters related to family engagement in Title I, Part A programs as well as other school initiatives. Community leaders and business partners will be invited to serve on this council. The district will also encourage collaboration and participation with community partners by utilizing video conferencing technology and recordings to accommodate the schedules of these valuable partners.

The ICAG will coordinate and integrate the school's family engagement programs with local preschool programs. The school will invite faculty and staff from this program to attend planning meetings focused on family engagement activities. Throughout, the school year, ICAG will host open houses/information sessions so parents may tour the school and receive information to help prepare them and their children for kindergarten.

Of School Staff - The ICAG will conduct trainings throughout the school year for school staff members to learn and discuss strategies to increase family engagement, improve school-family communication, and build ties with parents and the community. The ICAG ESOL teachers and principal will conduct a PTT training for the entire staff. This training a focus on creating welcoming environments and improving two-way communication with families.

To ensure that information related to school, parent programs, PTT meetings, and activities are available to all parents, each Title I school is required to send home and post online information for parents and family members in an understandable language and uniform format. At the beginning of the year, school staff will be trained on parent notifications and resources to be sent home in parents' native language, where applicable, and providing interpreters at parent events and PTT meetings. Information posted on the school website will be translated to the extent practicable. The school will also utilize school phone call systems, district and school websites, local news media, and other school message systems to post information for parents.

Parent and Family Engagement Evaluation

Each year, the ICAG will conduct an evaluation of the content and effectiveness of this parent and family engagement policy and the family engagement activities to improve the academic quality of the Title I school through bi-annual parent survey and PTO board and the School Improvement Forum.

Beginning in December 2019, each Title I school will send home a survey and email a link to the survey for parents to provide valuable feedback regarding the parent and family engagement activities and programs. These surveys will also be posted on the district and

school websites for parents to complete. In addition to the bi-annual survey, each Title I school will also use the School Improvement Forum to facilitate group discussions to discuss individual and schoolwide needs and to design strategies for more effective family engagement, to remove possible barriers to parent participation, and to revise its parent and family engagement policies.

Accessibility

In carrying out the parent and family engagement requirements established by Section 1116 of the ESSA, the ESOL teacher and SST will communicate and collaborate with the principal to ensure full opportunities for participation of parents with limited English proficiency, parents with disabilities, and parents of migratory children including providing information and school reports in a language parents can understand.

Mark Your Calendars

For Parents

Bi-Annual Parent Survey

December 2019 and May 2020

School Improvement Forum

March 9

For Schools

Welcoming Schools Training
County Board Office

Principal and FEC Meetings
First Wednesday of every month

Adoption

This schoolwide parent and family engagement policy was developed and revised by the new principal during the third year of existence. Each year, it will be revised jointly and agreed upon with parents and family members of children participating in Title I, Part A programs as evidenced by the collaboration of parents, the school, and district personnel at the annual State of the District meeting.

This policy was adopted by the International Charter Academy of Georgia in November 2020 and will be in effect for the remainder of the 2020/2021 school year. The school will distribute this policy in multiple ways to all parents of participating Title I, Part A children during the fall semester.