

# **POLICY**

**Leap Academy University Charter School,  
Inc.**

**Board of Education**

Section: Program

2415.04. TITLE I – DISTRICT-WIDE PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT (M)

Date Created: February 2013

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**M**

## **GENERAL EXPECTATIONS**

The school will put into operation programs, activities, and procedures for the engagement of parents 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 will work with its schools to ensure that the required school-level parental engagement 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 will incorporate this District-Wide Parental Engagement Policy into its school district's plan developed under Section 1112 of the ESEA.

In carrying out the Title I, Part A parental engagement 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, including alternative formats upon request, and to the extent practicable, in a language parents understand.

If the school district's 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 New Jersey Department of Education.

In the event the school district is required to reserve and spend at least one percent of the district's Title I, Part A allocation, the school district will involve the parents of children served in Title I, Part A schools in decisions about how these funds will be spent and will ensure that not less than ninety-five percent of the one percent reserved goes directly to the schools.

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

Parental engagement means the participation of parents in regular, two-way, and meaningful communication involving student academic learning and other school activities, including ensuring-

1. That parents play an integral role in assisting their child's learning;
2. That parents are encouraged to be actively involved in their child's education at school;
3. 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; and
4. The carrying out of other activities, such as those described in Section 1118 of the ESEA.

In the event the State of New Jersey or the New Jersey Department of Education has a Parental Information and Resource Center, the school district will inform parents and parental organizations of its purpose and existence.

#### **DESCRIPTION OF HOW THE SCHOOL DISTRICT WILL IMPLEMENT REQUIRED DISTRICT-WIDE PARENTAL ENGAGEMENT POLICY COMPONENTS**

Below is a description of how the district will implement or accomplish each of the following components outlined below (Section 1118(a)(2), ESEA):

1. The district will take the following actions to engage parents in the joint development of its district-wide parental engagement plan under Section 1112 of the ESEA:
  - a. A School-wide Title I Committee will include parents and will meet regularly regarding plan development and implementation.
  - b. The Parents Council of the School will be included in all deliberations and will provide input.
  - c. The Parent and Community Affairs Committee of the Board of Trustees will also review and provide feedback on areas related to the development and implementation of the plan. The Parent Affairs Committee of the Board is composed of parent trustees of the Board.
2. The district will take the following actions to involve parents in the process of school review and improvement under Section 1116 of the ESEA:

- a. The Parents Council of the School will be included in all deliberations and will provide input.
  - c. The Parent and Community Affairs Committee of the Board of Trustees will review and provide feedback on areas related to the development and implementation of the plan. The Parent Affairs Committee of the Board is composed of parent trustees of the Board.
  - d. Annual Parent Surveys will be used to seek broad based feedback.
  - e. Regular meetings with parent groups representing all grade levels will allow for additional opportunities to provide feedback and input.
3. The district will provide the following necessary coordination, technical assistance, and other support to assist Title I, Part A schools in planning and implementing effective parental engagement activities to improve student academic achievement and school performance:
- a. Working with principals and instructional leaders, a schedule of programs, webinars and meetings will be developed and released featuring sessions related to the academic programs of the schools and providing guidance on how can parents become educational partners.
  - b. Parent-Teacher Conferences will be structured in ways that provide parents with insights on the curriculum and the academic program and teachers will delve deeper on areas of content.
  - c. The Family Support Center will reach out to families, particularly families of children that are struggling academically to provide support and information to ensure that their children are supported.
  - d. The school will widely share curricular unit overviews, lesson topics and testing schedules with parents to ensure that parents can weave academic content in their family's routine at home.
  - e. The school will launch programming that focuses on positive literary experiences at home and school.
4. The school district will coordinate and integrate parental engagement strategies in Part A with parental engagement strategies for all school programs by:
- a. Ensuring that a parent engagement component is included in all program planning and grant development.
  - b. Constantly seeking input for parents.

c. Identifying strategies for increasing parent volunteerism and for offering parents employment opportunities on new and existing programs.

5. The school district will take the following actions to conduct, with the engagement of parents, an annual evaluation of the content and effectiveness of this Parental Engagement Policy in improving the quality of its Title I, Part A schools. The evaluation will include identifying barriers to greater participation by parents in parental engagement 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 school district will use the findings of the evaluation about its Parental Engagement Policy and activities to design strategies for more effective parental engagement, and to revise, if necessary (and with the engagement of parents) its parental engagement policies.

a. Parents will participate in school-wide surveys that provide opportunities for them to provide feedback and recommendations.

b. Parents will participate in focus groups as needed to seek input and feedback.

c. Evaluation of programs will be transparent and results published in website.

d. The school's annual report will be shared in the school's website.

The school district will build the school's and parent's capacity for strong parental engagement, in order to ensure effective engagement of parents and to support a partnership among the school involved, parents, and the community to improve student academic achievement, through the following activities specifically described below:

1. The school district will, with the assistance of its Title I, Part A schools, provide assistance to parents of children served by the school district or school, as appropriate, in understanding topics such as the following, by undertaking the actions described below:

- New Jersey's academic content standards;

- New Jersey's student academic achievement standards;

- The New Jersey and local academic assessments including alternate assessments;

- The requirements of Part A;

- How to monitor their child's progress; and

- How to work with educators.

## Special Activities

- a. Parents Academy for School Reform offering families intensive training on family dynamics and the role of parents in schools
  - b. Parent Engagement Workshop Series offered during the year
  - d. Parent Advocacy Seminars and Institutes sponsored by LEAP and the NJ Charter School Association
  - e. Training to become Parents Ambassadors of the School
2. The school will 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 parental engagement, by:
- a. Providing in person and virtual seminars.
  - b. Sharing printed information with parents.
  - c. Providing access and guidance to parents to learning platforms.
  - d. Providing parents with opportunities for technology training.
  - e. Provide special opportunities for ESL families to engage and support academic learning.
3. The school will educate its teachers, student services personnel, Principals, and other staff in how to reach out to, communicate with, and work with parents as equal partners in the value and utility of contributions of parents, and in how to implement and coordinate parent programs and build ties between parents and schools, by:
- a. Embedding seminars about how to best engage parents in the school professional development institute.
  - b. Embed content about parental engagement in New Teacher Orientations.
  - c. Leverage opportunities for parents and teachers to collaborate in the classroom and in school-wide events.
4. The school will, to the extent feasible and appropriate, coordinate and integrate parental engagement programs and activities with all school programs and projects, and provide a portfolio of activities annually through the school's Family Support Center.

5. 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:
  - a. Printed material that is sent home and posted in buildings.
  - b. School Messengers
  - c. School Website
  - d. Social Media

### **DISCRETIONARY DISTRICT-WIDE PARENTAL ENGAGEMENT POLICY ACTIVITIES**

The additional information outlined below lists and describes discretionary activities the school district, in consultation with its parents, may undertake to build parents' capacity for engagement in the school and school system to support their children's academic achievement:

- Involving 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;
- In order to maximize parental engagement 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 parents who are unable to attend those conferences at school;
- Adopting and implementing model approaches to improving parental engagement;
- Establishing a district-wide parent advisory council to provide advice on all matters related to parental engagement in Title I, Part A programs;

- Developing appropriate roles for community-based organizations and businesses, including faith-based organizations, in parental engagement activities; and
- Providing other reasonable support for parental engagement activities under Section 1118 as parents may request.

## ADOPTION

This District-Wide Parental Engagement Policy has been developed jointly, and agreed on with parents of children participating in Title I, Part A programs. This Policy will be distributed to all parents of participating Title I, Part A children in an understandable and uniform format and, to the extent practicable, in a language the parents understand, at the beginning of each school year or when the child is determined eligible and begins participating in Title I, Part A programs.

Adopted: 19 February 2013  
Revised February 18, 2021