

# Family and Community Engagement Plan



## Family and Community Engagement Plan 2022-2023

While your student may receive instruction during the school day, we know that a child's first and most important teachers are parents and family members. We know you play an integral role in the education of your child, and we want to encourage and support you to be actively involved in your child's school. We need your input, your suggestions, and your perspective to make decisions about your child's school experience. Additionally, our district receives Title I, Part A funds. Title I, Part A supplemental funds are used to enhance the educational program to meet the needs of each and every child. We use these funds to hire additional teachers in our Title I schools, to purchase technology and resources, and to train school personnel who serve as ambassadors for families and the school community.

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### Let's Partner Together

Our goals, as we partner with you are to:

- o establish expectations for meaningful and effective family engagement

- strengthen the academic achievement of our students by engaging and supporting our families in the education of their children

## Meaningful and Effective Family Engagement

We are committed to providing opportunities for meaningful and effective family engagement where parents, families, and school personnel participate in two-way, meaningful communication for the common goal of the student.

Parents and families of **all** students are invited to attend meetings to share ideas and suggestions regarding the district's strategic priorities and initiatives and local school improvement plans.



## Engage With Us

Please look for the following opportunities to engage with us:

**Monthly Board Meetings** - School Board Business Meetings are typically held on the third Thursday of every month at 7:00 p.m. Board meetings provide stakeholders with the opportunity to learn about the district's mission, vision, priorities, initiatives, and budget. The agenda is prepared in advance of each session.

- All meetings are open to the public and the press. The Board reserves the right to meet, adjourn, or recess a meeting at any time to discuss such matters as may be properly considered in the executive session.
- The meeting schedule is posted on the district website on the **GCPS Board Meetings page**.

- Board meetings provide the opportunity to share your ideas and concerns. Individuals wishing to appear on the “Public Comment on Agenda Items” section or “Public Comment on School Policy or Operations” section of the board meeting shall notify the Superintendent’s Office in writing by completing the **Electronic Request Form** on the district website by 7 p.m. on the Wednesday immediately prior to the Board meeting. If an individual wishes to address the Board and needs interpretation services, they are asked to sign up by Monday the week of the Board meeting so that their request can be accommodated.

**Local School Councils** - The primary goals of local school councils are:

1. to strengthen partnerships between the school and community;
2. to improve academic achievement;
3. to provide support for teachers and administrators, and
4. to bring parents into the decision-making process.

Please check with your local school for opportunities to become involved in your local school council.

**Federal Programs Family-School Partnership Advisory Council** - All parents are invited to participate in this council which meets several times each year to:

1. establish how the district should use funds set aside for family engagement activities
2. gather input on the District Improvement Plan
3. develop the GCPS Family and Community Engagement Plan
4. to learn about district and community resources to support student social, emotional, academic, and cognitive performance

Please contact your local school for information, upcoming dates, times, and meeting locations.

Local School Planning Meetings - Before the beginning of each new school year, Title I schools host meetings for all family and community members to provide input on Title I programs for both the district and the local school. Families and other interested community members jointly develop the following documents during this meeting:

- Local School Plan for Improvement (LSPI) Goals
- Title I Budget
- The Plan & The Promise (Please be sure you and your child have reviewed this document together.)

We encourage all families to participate in the planning meetings at your local schools. We promise to remove as many barriers as possible. In order to maximize the participation of all families in our planning meetings, we will offer the following whenever possible:

- Childcare
- Interpreters when requested before the meeting
- Translations of documents
- Transportation
- Communications in a variety of family-friendly language and formats
- Varied meeting formats (times, dates, and locations)

We encourage parents to attend district-level and school-level meetings to provide input on improvement strategies for schools that have been identified as Comprehensive Support & Improvement and Targeted Support & Improvement.



## Working Together to Strengthen the Academic Achievement of our Students



Our goal is to grow partnerships and collaboration among other federal programs, Title I schools, families, and the community to improve the academic achievement of students. The

Office of Federal Programs will provide ongoing support, guidance, technical assistance, and monitoring to ensure that our Title I schools are working with families as equal partners in their children's education. To assist parents and families in supporting their children's learning, we will provide:

- A Parent Instructional Coordinator or a Parent Outreach Liaison to assist families and a Family Engagement Center at each Title I school with resources that can be used at home
- information about the curriculum, assessments, interpreting assessment results, promotion and graduation requirements, and progress monitoring
- opportunities to learn about district and community resources to support student social, emotional, academic, and cognitive performance
- opportunities to learn about academic strategies, activities, technology (including education about the harms of copyright piracy), and resources aligned to school goals to support parents in assisting their children at home
- assistance to families in transitioning from one school level to the next, as well as transitioning students to college and careers
- community partnership with Gwinnett Technical College for adult English as a Second Language and General Education Diploma classes
- community partnership with the Gwinnett County Public Library
- opportunities for shared decision-making at all schools
- ongoing training to build the capacity of faculty and staff based on suggestions and input from the community, families, and other stakeholders on topics such as:
  - a. working with parents as equal partners, building relationships, and effectively communicating with families
  - b. the value and contributions of parents
  - c. implementing the family engagement program at each school

Several schools in the district implement Academic Parent-Teacher Teams (APTT), an evidenced based family engagement model that builds partnerships between families and teachers. Families set student academic goals and learn activities/strategies to reinforce skills

at home with their children. To ensure the stability and growth of this model, a core group of school leaders, called the Family Engagement Leadership Team, coordinates training for the entire school staff.

**Play 2 Learn** is a weekly Pre-K program offered in all Title I elementary schools in the district to promote school readiness for our future students. In this program, parents attend classes weekly with their child (ages birth to pre-kindergarten) to learn how to help their child reach age-appropriate skills through play.

**AKS at Home** is an opportunity for families of students in Kindergarten through 5th grade to participate in quarterly live virtual instructional sessions to learn how to support their children in learning foundational math and literacy skills. An archive of Tip Sheets and recorded online sessions are made available for parents to review on the district website following each series.

Operation Graduation is designed to create an awareness for families to learn about college, career, and/or postsecondary options.

## Evaluation of the Family Engagement Plan and Programs

To determine the effectiveness of the Family and Community Engagement Plan and Title I programs, we encourage all of our families to complete surveys throughout the school year.

Survey input and feedback helps us understand:

1. the needs of the school community,
2. how we can improve our partnership with families,
3. and how we can remove barriers that may prevent you from participating in the school process.

Evidenced-based strategies for effective family engagement are utilized in planning and implementing programs. Input is used to plan, implement, and if needed, to revise the family engagement policies based on the needs of our families.

During the annual needs assessment process, we review the data from the survey, and other input we have received from families and community members throughout the year. This information is used to update and revise our Family and Community Engagement Plan.

We encourage you to ask questions, provide suggestions, and share your concerns. Each of the local schools has pledged to work with our communities to grow partnerships. If you have a concern that is not addressed at the local school, you may file a complaint [using the complaint procedures outlined online.](#)

## Reservation of Funds

Title I funds are available to engage our families. We reserve at least one percent of the district's total allocation to fund family and community engagement programs. No less than 90% of these reserved funds are used directly by schools to promote family and community engagement activities. The use of these funds is based on suggestions gathered at our input meetings from families and community members. Currently, we use these funds to help offset the cost of ensuring that each Title I school has a Family Engagement Center and a staff member who is trained to support parents and families.



Thank you for partnering with us to improve student achievement. Remember, your participation is vital. We will continue to provide information in a format and language that all

of our families can understand to the extent practicable. We encourage all of our stakeholders to be involved and engaged with our schools.

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*The Gwinnett County Public Schools' Family and Community Engagement Plan was reviewed and revised with the input of GCPS staff, families, and community members. This plan was adopted July 1, 2022 and will be in effect for a period of one year. This plan was disseminated to all families through the Handbook Information for Students and Families, which is made available to families through MyPaymentsPlus, via the Parent Portal, and to the community in the Family Engagement Centers and on both the school and district websites. All families have the opportunity to review this plan before October 28, 2022. New students will receive this plan upon enrollment.*

