

Thomaston-Upson County Schools Parent and Family Engagement Policy



2023-2024
Revised June 14, 2023
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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 Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).



Parent and Family Engagement Coordinator
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About the Parent and Family Engagement Policy

In support of strengthening student academic achievement, the Thomaston-Upson County Schools (TUCS) 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 TUCS'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. The priority focus is on Literacy at all grade levels.

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 district/school plan, and in carrying out the district and school improvement provisions. Section 1116 of 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. The TUCS will work with its Title I schools to ensure that the required parent and family engagement policies meet the requirements of federal law and each include, as a component, a school-parent compact.

Jointly Developed

All parents are invited to be part of the collaboration

During the annual District Parent Advisory meeting in April 2023, all parents were invited to participate and provide suggestions and ideas to improve this district parent and family engagement policy and the school-parent compacts for the 2023-2024 school year. The district sent an email to parents informing them about this meeting, posted an announcement on the schools' FaceBook pages, put an ad in the newspaper, and each school sent a message out through ClassTag and Remind.

Upon final revision, the district parent and family engagement policy was incorporated into the Streamlined Consolidated LEA Improvement Plan (S-CLIP) which was submitted to the state. Parents are welcome to submit comments and feedback regarding the policy or compact at any time on the school district website by clicking on Federal Programs and clicking the input section or by submitting written comments to your child's school. All feedback received by May 2023 was considered for revisions to this policy and the compacts.

The district's plan to distribute this policy and school compacts is to post them on district and school websites, place in the parent resource center, disseminate them during the annual Title I school meetings in the fall, and email the links to all parents in a format and language they can understand through ClassTag and Remind.

Communications

TUCS will communicate with all families and the community on a regular basis regarding school wide events and activities, through phone and text messages, emails, social media, school newsletters, and flyers. Residential facilities in our school attendance area are included in the parental involvement correspondence and activities. The district and school will share information in English and other languages to the extent possible through written communications, meetings, conferences, and family engagement events in order for families to understand the school's academic standards and assessments as well as ways parents can monitor their child's progress.

Strengthening Our School

This year, the district family engagement coordinator (FEC) will provide technical assistance and support to all Title I schools to ensure family engagement requirements are being satisfied and that family engagement strategies and activities are being implemented. Title I schools will receive notifications and resources from the district and the FEC to help them improve and strengthen family engagement. In addition to frequent communication and school visits, the district and the FEC will hold monthly meetings and trainings with its Title I schools' principals to review family engagement plans and activities.

Additionally, in the fall, the principals and FEC will meet individually to review parent and family engagement requirements and plan opportunities for family engagement activities and meetings for the remainder of the school year.

Reservation of Funds

The TUCS will reserve 1 percent from the total amount of Title I funds it receives in 2023-2024 to carry out the parent and family engagement requirements listed in this policy and as described in federal law. Furthermore, the TUCS will distribute 90 percent of the amount reserved to Title I schools to support their local-level family engagement programs and activities. The district will provide clear guidance and communication to assist each Title I school in developing an adequate family engagement budget that addresses their needs assessment and parent recommendations. Parents have the opportunity to give input into how this money is used through the annual surveys given and questionnaires answered and recorded at parent input meetings in the spring. At the annual Title I Meeting each school will share the budget and how it is used with the parents and families. Principals at each school have to sign off as to what the budget supports.

Parent Resource Center

The Parent Resource Center is located at Upson-Lee Primary School. Come check out books, resources and activities to use at home with your child. Computers are available for parents to explore the Parent Portal and educational resources. Call for an appointment. Monday – Friday, 7:30-3:30. 706-646-9405.

Opportunities for Meaningful Parent Consultation

Input and suggestions from parents, family members, and community partners are an essential component of the district and school improvement plans that are developed each year. All parents of students eligible to receive Title I services are invited to attend meetings, fill out surveys, join school advisory councils, and other opportunities to share their ideas and suggestions to help the district, schools, and students to reach our student academic achievement goals.

District Parent Advisory Council ~ Fall and Spring

All parents are welcome to hear the latest updates from the Thomaston-Upson County Schools as well as review and provide input into the district parent and family engagement policy, the Consolidated LEA Improvement Plan for the 2023-2024 school year, and the Parent Involvement budget. Notifications about these opportunities will be posted on the school and district websites and shared through school messaging systems, newsletters, and social media postings.

Input Meetings ~ Fall and Spring

During these meetings, parents have the opportunity to make comments and suggestions on any to the schools' programs and policies. They can participate in 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. Each Title I school will send invitations home as well as email and text parents to notify them about the date and time of the meeting. Information regarding these meetings will also be made available on the school websites.

Input on the use of Title I funds to support family engagement programs may also be provided through the annual district survey. The survey 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 visit

http://www.upson.k12.ga.us/federal_programs to review the district policy and school compacts and leave your input.



Scan the code with your smartphone or tablet to access family engagement information from the TUCS website.



Annual Title I Meeting~ August-October 2023

At the beginning of the school year, all Title I schools will host a meeting to inform all parents of the Title I requirements and the school's participation in and parent's rights under Title I.

School Council/Partners in Education

Parents and community stakeholders are part of this supportive group. This council is presented the District Parent and Family Engagement Policy and the School-Parent Compact for input and review.

School/District Improvement Planning Retreats

Parents are invited to attend these retreats where they can review and give input on the District and Schools Improvement Plans, Parent and Family Engagement Policy and the School-Parent Compacts.

School-Parent Compacts

As part of this plan, all Title I schools, along with our families will jointly develop school-parent compacts in order to build and develop a partnership to help our students the challenging state academic standards. These compacts serve as agreements that parents, teachers, and students will work together to make sure all students reach grade level standards by following and accomplishing goals set forth by parents, teachers, and students. The compacts will be revised annually, distributed to all families, reviewed at parent/teacher conferences.

Building Capacity

The TUCS will build partnerships between its Title I Schools, families, and community with the goal of developing mutual support for student achievement. To develop capacity for this support, the TUCS will implement a variety of family and community engagement activities and programs.

Of Parents - The TUCS will provide families with information about the overall Title I program and its requirements. The district works with its Title I schools to help families understand academic expectations for student learning and progress. Specific information related to the State's challenging academic standards, and local and state assessments—including alternative assessments, will also be provided. The district offers assistance to parents in understanding use of its online student information system and other digital resources, including the harms of copyright piracy, through its technology specialists. Notifications about these opportunities will be posted on the district website and shared through school messaging systems, newsletters, and social media postings.

In addition, the district and school websites contain resources and materials such as parent guides, study guides, practice assessments, and materials for at-home learning. Hard copies of these materials are also available at all Title I schools, including copies in Spanish.

The TUCS Parent Advisory Council, made up of parent representatives from each Title I school, advises the district and schools on all matters related to family engagement. Community leaders and business partners are also invited to serve on the council. The participation of all our partners is encouraged through video conferencing and recording options to accommodate varying schedules.



The TUCS will coordinate and integrate the district's family engagement programs under this part with parent and family engagement strategies, to the extent feasible and appropriate, with other relevant Federal, State, and local laws and programs such as, the local preschool program and other federal and state funded preschool programs in the district. In the spring, schools will host Kindergarten Ready days, Middle and High School Transition Nights, and College and Career Fair so parents may receive information to help prepare them and their children for the next life stage.

Of School Staff - The TUCS will conduct four trainings during the school year for principals, teachers, specialized instructional support, and other staff to learn and discuss strategies to increase family engagement, improve school-family communication, and build ties with parents and the community. The Parent and Family Engagement Coordinator will visit the schools to review and discuss parent involvement requirements and initiatives and give other needed technical assistance. A training for appropriate school staff and faculty that will focus on creating welcoming environments will be given at the beginning of school.

To ensure that information related to district, school, parent programs, meetings, and activities is 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. The district will post a monthly schedule for family engagement opportunities. At the beginning of the year, school staff will be trained on parent notifications and resources to be sent home in parents' preferred language, where applicable, and providing interpreters at parent events. Information posted on the district website will be translated to the extent practicable. The district will also utilize school phone call systems, district and school websites, local news media, and social media to post information for parents.

Parent and Family Engagement Evaluation

Each year, the TUCS 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 schools. This will be done through an annual parent survey and the School Improvement Meeting.

Beginning in March, 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 annual survey, parents are invited to the district meeting and the school input opportunities to discuss the needs of parents of children eligible to receive Title I services to design strategies for more effective family engagement.

The TUCS will use the findings from the school meetings and the survey results to design strategies to improve 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 district family engagement coordinator will communicate and collaborate with the ELL teacher, the Federal Programs Director, and Student Services Director 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. TUCS is committed to helping our parents and families attend the family activities listed in this policy. Please contact Michele Daniel, Family Engagement Coordinator if you have transportation or childcare needs. mdaniel@upson.k12.ga.us or 706-646-9405.

Adoption

This district-wide parent and family engagement policy has been developed 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, school, and district personnel at the annual District Stakeholder Meeting.

This policy was adopted by the Thomaston-Upson County School District on June 14, 2023 and will be in effect for the 2023-2024 academic school year. The school district will distribute this policy in multiple ways to all parents of participating Title I, Part A children prior to November 1, 2023.

Mark Your Calendars

**Please check with your child's school for specific dates and times.*

For Parents

Parent Survey
Fall/Spring

Annual Title I Meeting
August - October 2023

Open House (each school)
August 2023

Parent-Teacher Conferences
Twice yearly

Curriculum/Family Nights
Dates and Times to come

School Input Meeting
March - May 2024

District Stakeholder Meetings
Fall/Spring

For Schools

Welcoming Schools Training
1st semester

Principal and FEC Meetings
Second Tuesday of every month



***Excellence in Education...Every
Individual, Every Day***