

Parent and Family Engagement Written Policy (Sec. 1116 (2))

Sec. 1116(a)(2)(A))

A. Describe how the Local Education will involve parents and family members in jointly developing the local educational agency plan under section 1112, and the development of support and improvement plans under paragraphs (1) and (2) of section 1111(d).

The Marion County School System agrees to implement the following statutory requirements:

Marion County Schools will put into operation programs, activities and procedures for the involvement of parents in all of its schools 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, Marion County Schools will work with its schools to ensure that the required school-level parental involvement 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.

Marion County Schools will incorporate this LEA parental involvement plan into its LEA plan developed under section 1112 of the ESEA.

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

If the LEA plan for Title I, Part A, developed under section 1112 of the ESEA, is not satisfactory to the parents of participating children, the Marion County Schools will submit any parent comments with the plan when the school district submits the plan to the State Department of Education.

Marion County Schools will involve the parents of children served in Title I, Part A schools in decisions about how the 1 percent of Title I, Part A funds reserved for parental involvement is spent, and will ensure that not less than 90 percent of the one percent reserved goes directly to the schools.

Marion County Schools will be governed by the following statutory definition of parental involvement, and expects that its Title I schools will carry out programs, activities and procedures in accordance with this definition:

Parental involvement means the participation of parents 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 at school;

(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 1118 of the ESEA.

Marion County Schools will take the following actions to involve parents in the joint development of its LEA parent engagement plan under section 1112 of the ESEA:

- * Get input from parent leaders to discuss the plan and get their input and suggestions.

- * At the Annual Meeting of Title I Parents, parents will be given a copy of the LEA plan and informed of their right to suggest changes or offer ideas for the plan. Parents are allowed to make comments if they disagree with any aspect of the plan.

- * The Annual Meeting PowerPoint presentation will be used at each school.

- * The LEA plan will be put on the MCBE website as well as each Title I schools' website. Parents will be informed through social media that the LEA plan and their school's plan can be found on both websites. Parents will be informed that they can be involved in the development of the plan by offering suggestions for revision to their parent leader or to the LEA.

2. Marion County Schools will take the following actions to involve parents in the process of school review and improvement under section 1116 of the ESEA:

- * Each year a Title I School Planning Committee, made up of Title I teachers, regular classroom teachers, counselors, administrators, parent involvement personnel, and parents is formed at each school. After a study of the data and surveys completed by parents, teachers and administrators, the committee members have the opportunity to ask questions, make suggestions for improvements, and make recommendations as to the type of Title I program to be implemented for the coming year. They will discuss how the Title I program at their school will be designed, operated, and evaluated, and they will offer suggestions for any improvements in the Parent Involvement Plan and other topics covered during the meeting. Parents are provided the opportunity and encouraged to participate in these decisions.

Sec. 1116(a)(2)(B))

B. Describe how the Local Education Agency will provide the coordination, technical assistance, and other support necessary to assist and build the capacity of all participating schools within the local educational agency in planning and implementing effective parent and family involvement activities to improve student academic achievement and school performance, which may include meaningful consultation with employers, business leaders, and philanthropic organizations, or individuals with expertise in effectively engaging parents and family members in education.

- * The Parent/Community Liaison will facilitate the distribution of a survey in the Spring to all Title I parents to ask for an evaluation of the program offered and to determine barriers to parental involvement.

- * Title I principals will meet with the Parent/Community Liaison, Federal Programs Coordinator, EL teacher, and parents to plan ways to reach parents.

*Title I schools will hold meetings with teachers, parents, and community stakeholders to develop annual continuous improvement plans that have parental involvement components.

Sec. 1116(a)(2)(C))

C. Describe how the Local Education Agency will coordinate and integrate parent and family engagement strategies 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.

Marion County Schools will coordinate and integrate parent and family engagement strategies with the following other programs: Pre-school, Head Start, and Principal Collaboration. In efforts to reach all parents, attention is paid to strategically include and invite parents who may be economically disadvantaged or have limited English proficiency. Various social media platforms, which are also shown as a live feed on our websites, are used to communicate system and local school events. Quarterly newsletters and school published handouts are also used to inform parents. Some examples of opportunities of participation include Title I parent meetings, System Federal Programs Advisory meetings, EL Plan meetings, system budget hearings, local parent teacher organizations, local annual continuous improvement planning, open houses, parents and grandparents days, reading to students on designated days, and theater performances. Title I parent surveys are conducted annually to seek input.

Sec. 1116(a)(2)(D))

D. Describe how the Local Education Agency will conduct, with the meaningful involvement of parents and family members, an annual evaluation of the content and effectiveness of the parent and family engagement policy in improving the academic quality of all schools served under this part, including identifying:

(i) barriers to greater participation by parents in activities authorized by this section (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)

Marion County Schools will take the following actions to conduct, with the involvement of parents, an annual evaluation of the content and effectiveness of this parental involvement plan in improving the quality of its Title I, Part A schools. The evaluation will include identifying barriers to greater participation by parents in parental involvement 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 involvement plan and activities to design strategies for more effective parental involvement, and to revise, if necessary (and with the involvement of parents) its parental involvement policies.

Schools will construct a survey, based on the SDE template, to gain information from parents concerning the program offered for the current school year. The survey will be provided through Cognia using an electronic link. The link will be sent to parents using a variety of ways including letters home with students and on social media sites. Computers are made available at each school and the surveys are promoted at all school activities in the spring. Information from these surveys are compiled

electronically. The results are available to the principals to share with their school's Title I planning team. The results will also be shared with the parent leaders and they will use this information for planning for the next school year. This information will be shared at the Annual Meeting of Parents.

(ii) the needs of parents and family members to assist with the learning of their children, including engaging with school personnel and teachers

Marion County will help meet the needs of parents and family member to assist the learning of their children in a variety of ways.

Parents are encouraged to engage with school personnel and teachers during open house events and our fall parent conference week. We decided that a fall conference day did not meet the needs of our parents. The teacher/parent conference day was still set aside, but the remainder of that school week was used to reach out to parents who did not attend the traditional conference day. Phone calls, emails, and after school visits were used to inform students of progress and resources available to assist in the learning of their child at home. Open house is held at the beginning of each school year for parents to meet with administrators and teachers. This time is used to provide parents with information about computer based programs that students can use at home for intervention. These intervention programs have instruction components that parents can help their children with. We have an online library program with high interest ability level books that students can use at school and home. Parents are encouraged to read with their children using this resource.

Parents are provided information on how to monitor attendance and grades through a parent portal. These can be monitored daily. This will give parents up-to-date information on student progress.

Newsletters and social media are used to provide parenting tips to help students academically. Also, they provide lists of resources for parents. The ALSDE resources are also shared through these communication tools.

(iii) strategies to support successful school and family interactions

Evaluations help identify appropriate strategies to support successful school and family interactions. Marion County focuses on the culture of each of its community based schools and emphasizes the importance of school/family interactions. Principals lead each local school faculty and staff on ways their school can serve as the hub of the community. Formal and informal family interactions are necessary to the academic and social/emotional success of our students. Communication is a key tool in making sure every parent has the opportunity for these interactions. Many of our school ACIPs mention that student engagement in extracurricular, art, theater, and club activities is the key to attendance and academic success. These, in turn, are building blocks to parental involvement that builds ties to parents and schools.

Sec. 1116(a)(2)(E))

E. Describe how the Local Education Agency will use the findings of such evaluation described in the section above (Sec. 1116(2)(D)) to design evidence-based strategies for more effective parental involvement, and to revise, if necessary the parent and family engagement policies described in this section.

Marion County will use the findings of the evaluation described in this section to determine the effectiveness of the parental involvement program to determine whether there has been increased participation and whether there are barriers to greater participation with a focus on parents who are disabled, have limited English proficiency, limited literacy, or are of any racial or ethnic minority. Findings will be utilized to design strategies for school improvement and, if necessary, revise the parental involvement policies/procedures.

Sec. 1116(a)(2)(F))

F. Describe how the Local Education Agency will involve parents in the activities of the schools served under this part, which may include establishing a parent advisory board comprised of a sufficient number and representative group of parents or family members served by the local educational agency to adequately represent the needs of the population served by such agency for the purposes of developing, revising, and reviewing the parent and family engagement policy.

The Annual Title I Parent Meeting is open to all parents. Two meetings are scheduled and held at each school to maximize parental participation. The ALSDE PowerPoint template is used and includes multiple slides on the rights of parents for budgets and activities. Many schools use a combination of in-person and virtual participation options. The Parent/Community Liaison participates in these meetings.

At the system level, the Federal Programs Advisory Committee is a cross-section of community stakeholders, administrators, a board of education member, parents, and teachers. Parent representatives are selected by each local school principal. Parents of English Language learners from across the system are selected by the EL teacher.

At the school level, the Title I Parent meetings are open to all parents. They are advertised on social media and school produced paper invitations.

In order to build capacity for Parent and Family Engagement, the Local Education Agency will ensure effective involvement of parents and will support a partnership among the schools involved, the parents, and the community to improve student academic achievement, the LEA shall:

G. Describe how it will provide assistance to parents of children served by the school or local educational agency, as appropriate, in understanding such topics as the challenging State academic standards, State and local academic assessments, the requirements of this part, and how to monitor a child's progress and work with educators to improve the achievement of their children.

Marion County provides multiple opportunities for parents to better understand the standards, assessments, partnerships, and monitoring of student progress.

www.mcbe.net is our website link. It was revamped two years ago and has an accompanying app to make it user friendly and more accessible. The "For Families" section has a variety of links including: Board Policies and Procedures, Business and Finance, Forms, Child Nutrition (including menus), Curriculum and Testing, Handbooks and Calendars, Parent and Community Engagement, Staff and Personnel, Student Health, and Technology.

Newsletters are sent to Title I parents quarterly. These contain pertinent information such as upcoming system holidays and dates to remember, assessment dates, assessment tips, instructions on how to monitor PowerSchool grades and attendance, and reading and math tips and resources. Newsletters are also available digitally through our social media sites.

Social media sites include Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. These are used to post good things happening in our schools, school announcements, upcoming dates to remember, and our newsletters. The Parent/Community Liaison is in charge of the system pages and each school has their own pages. These are linked to our website and app for increased options for viewing.

H. Describe how it will 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 (including education about the harms of copyright piracy), as appropriate, to foster parental involvement.

The school district will, with the assistance of its schools, 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 involvement.

Parents are able to view student assignments and grades through our student information system. 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. Translation services, such as MasterWord may be used at meetings and on as needed basis may be used to translate invitations to parent meetings.

I. Describe how it will educate teachers, specialized instructional support personnel, principals, and other school leaders, 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.

Marion County Schools, with the assistance of its schools and parents, educates its teachers, pupil 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 school with help from the parent/community liaison. Partnerships between Title I schools and community-based agencies and organizations are developed to strengthen the parenting component of the Title I program. Parents are encouraged to attend the parent/teacher conferences as well as to schedule parent/teacher conferences at other times throughout the year, as needed. Conferences can also be scheduled with a guidance counselor. Parents are encouraged to get to know their child's teacher and to communicate with him or her throughout the year. Additionally, Marion County Schools will use the school website www.mcbe.net and the Marion County Schools App as a sustained means of communication along with newsletters and social media to keep parents informed of school news and updates.

J. Describe how it will to the extent feasible and appropriate, coordinate and integrate parent involvement programs and activities with other Federal, State, and local programs, including public preschool 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.

The school district will, to the extent feasible and appropriate, coordinate and integrate parental involvement programs and activities with Head Start, Reading First, Early Reading First, Even Start, Home Instruction Programs for Preschool Youngsters, the Parents as Teachers Program, and public preschool 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, by:

- * Appropriate newsletters will be sent home with all preschool students as well as regular elementary students.

- * Pre-K parents will be notified of all social media opportunities.

K. Describe how it will ensure that information related to school and parent programs, meetings, and other activities is sent to the parents of participating children in a format and, to the extent practicable, in a language the parents can understand.

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:

- * The Title I Program ensures that all parents of Title I students receive information and school reports. The EL teacher is fluent in Spanish and we use Google Translate for all languages. TRANSACT is used to obtain forms in all languages.

- *The Parent/Community Liaison and ESL teachers will provide resources to EL parents. Parents will be shown how to help their child at home and have parenting resources available in their language. The Hispanic parent leader will be on hand to translate as needed.

L. Describe how it will ensure provide such other reasonable support for parental involvement activities under this section as parents may request.

The Parent/Community Liaison coordinates activities on a system level that include parents and outside agencies. Parents are invited to be involved at the school level during special activities, for field trips, and events. Marion County is made up of schools in five communities. These small community schools are the hub of the community and community activities. They are intertwined and work together. Parents are welcome to visit with school administrators and make appointments with teachers to express requests for activities.

M. Describe how the LEA may involve parents in the development of training for teachers, principals, and other educators to improve the effectiveness of such training.

Stakeholder meetings involving parents include EL Planning meetings, Federal Program Advisory Committee meetings, Title I Parent meetings, and Annual Continuous Improvement Plan meetings involve parents. In each, discussion is encouraged on areas of improvement. Suggestions are discussed and implemented as appropriate. As an example, during our EL Planning meeting some of the discussion centered on more parent, community stakeholder, and teacher training. Also, during the Federal Programs Advisory meeting, which involves parents, professional development funds and trainings are discussed. Each of the meetings listed encourages parental input on a variety of topics including training.

N. Describe how the LEA may provide necessary literacy training from funds received under this part if the local educational agency has exhausted all other reasonably available sources of funding for such training.

Literacy training funding may include Title I or Title II funds that will be supplemental to LEA funding sources.

O. Describe how the LEA may pay reasonable and necessary expenses associated with local parental involvement activities, including transportation and child care costs, to enable parents to participate in school-related meetings and training sessions.

Marion County Schools chooses to offer the following discretionary activities in an effort to build capacity in parents to be involved in the education of their child. These activities are listed under section 1118(e) of the ESEA:

- involving parents in the development of training for teachers, principals, and other educators to improve the effectiveness of that training;
- paying reasonable and necessary expenses associated with parental involvement activities, including transportation and child care costs, to enable parents to participate in school-related meetings and training sessions;
- training parents to enhance the involvement of other parents;
- in order to maximize parental involvement and participation in their children's education, arranging school meetings at a variety of times;
- establishing an LEA parent advisory council to provide advice on all matters related to parental involvement in Title I, Part A programs;
- providing other reasonable support for parental involvement activities under section 1118 as parents may request.]

P. Describe how the LEA may train parents to enhance the involvement of other parents.

Parent leaders are identified at the Annual Title I Parent meetings.

Q. Describe how the LEA may arrange school meetings at a variety of times, or conduct in-home conferences between teachers or other educators, who work directly with participating children, with parents who are unable to attend such conferences at school, in order to maximize parental involvement and participation.

During the 2022/2023 school year, Marion County Schools used a variety of methods to conduct parent meetings. Individual calls to parents, virtual meetings, texts, and in-person meetings were used for two way communication. Non-traditional and creative methods were brought on by social distancing guidelines and safety protocols, but were found as being effective ways of conferencing with parents. This year, we plan to continue some of these new practices and plan to set aside a week for contacting parents and not limit it to one parent teacher conference day. This will provide even more flexibility.

R. Describe how the LEA may adopt and implement model approaches to improving parental involvement.

Our approach will continue to be centered around the parent survey used as the needs assessment and using that data to create and implement a continuous improvement plan.

S. Describe how the LEA may establish a districtwide parent advisory council to provide advice on all matters related to parental involvement in programs supported under this section.

As stated before, we utilize parents in all of our districtwide advisory committees. This provides feedback from a variety of parent groups.

These include:

Budget Hearings

EL Planning Meetings

Title I Parent Meetings

Federal Programs Advisory Meetings

Continuous Improvement Presentations at the MCBE Board Meetings

T. Describe how the LEA may develop appropriate roles for community-based organizations and businesses in parent involvement activities.

The Parent Community Liaison works with community based organizations and businesses. This would be an avenue to develop appropriate roles for these groups for parent involvement opportunities.

Sec. 1116(f)

U. Describe how the Local Education Agency will provide opportunities for the informed participation of parents and family members (including parents and family members who have limited English proficiency, parents and family members with disabilities, and parents and family members of migratory children), including providing information and school reports required under section 1111 in a format and, to the extent practicable, in a language such parents understand.

The findings of the annual parent survey and annual Title I Parent meetings will be used as needs assessments to design continuous improvement plans that will be reviewed throughout the year. If the benchmark goals of the plan are not being met, the action plans or the goal itself will be revised to be more effective.

This LEA Parent and Family Engagement Policy has been developed jointly with, and agreed on with, parents of children participating in Title I, Part A programs as evidenced by

Annual Title I Parent Meeting sign-in sheets are evidence. These meetings follow the ALSDE PowerPoint template that includes discussion of the LEA Parent and Family Engagement Policy