

**The Accelerated schools
Parent and Family Engagement Policy
Revised October 2020**

Parent Vision - The Accelerated Schools seeks to create a partnership with our community so that families can successfully understand and connect to our schools and the world around them. Those connections will empower our community to engage in their child's educational process, to see how our educational program meets the demands of the 21st century, and how critical their role is in preparing our students for college which is key to the regeneration of our communities.

The Accelerated Schools Title I Parent and Family Engagement Policy was developed jointly with and approved by parents of Title I students at all three schools and adopted by the TAS Governing Board on December 6, 2016. It is annually reviewed by Title I parents and distributed.

Adherence to the provisions in this policy will strengthen the capacity of parents and educators to engage as equal partners to support children's learning and achievement; will ensure full compliance with federal, state and The Accelerated Schools guidelines and mandates regarding parental involvement; and will guide school efforts to implement quality parent engagement plans.

At the beginning of the school year, before the end of November, all principals must distribute the one-page description of The Accelerated Schools Title I Parent and Family Engagement Policy to all parents of Title I students as well as address the contents of the policy with parents of Title I students at the annual Title I parent meeting. In addition, principals are directed to share this policy with the School Site Council (SSC), all other mandated advisory committees, and with teachers and support staff.

This policy and School Goals for Parent Engagement must guide the development of the School Title I Parent and Family Engagement Policy and plan of action for parent engagement. Principals of Title I schools must ensure that their School Title I Parent Involvement Policy is jointly developed with and approved by parents of Title I students.

The school policy must indicate when and how the school:

- 1) involves parents in the development of the Title I Parent and Family Engagement Policy.
- 2) involves staff and parents as partners in creating the School-Parent Compact.
- 3) provides parents opportunities to strengthen their capacity to support their children's learning and achievement.
- 4) ensures accessibility and opportunities for parents with limited English proficiency, with disabilities, or parents of migrant students.

The School's Title I Parent and Family Engagement Policy must be reviewed annually and revised as needed to reflect major changes, such as changes in demographics, curriculum and testing programs, the availability of parent center facilities and programs, and/or other major changes impacting the school.

The policy must be adopted by parents for inclusion in the Single Plan for Student Achievement (SPSA) and must meet all Title I mandates for parental involvement.

The Accelerated Schools Title I Parent and Family Engagement Policy

I. INTRODUCTION

The Accelerated Schools are committed to engaging parents in their child's education. Over 30 years of research confirms the important role of parent involvement in student achievement. Parents are their child's first and life-long teachers and can influence their child's educational outcomes in powerful and long-lasting ways. The core belief that parents are our partners is the foundation for The Accelerated Schools' overarching policy on parent engagement and is reinforced through its Title I Parent Involvement Policy.

II. THE ACCELERATED SCHOOLS' POLICY ON PARENT ENGAGEMENT

The California Department of Education requires that every Local Education Agency establish parent involvement policies for all schools, both non-Title I and Title I (EC Section 11504 and EC Section 11502). The *Parents as Equal Partners in the Education of their Children* (PAEP) policy created a taskforce to further explore and define a framework for parent engagement tools and programs. The PAEP Taskforce, with the participation of over 100 stakeholders, including parents from Title I schools, developed a common definition of parent engagement:

“Meaningful parental engagement is when schools see parents/guardians as equal partners in promoting student achievement and recognize parents' talents and skills as resources to promote children's educational development.” --*Parents as Equal Partners* Taskforce

This definition of parent engagement fully embraces and supports all Title I mandates regarding parent involvement and reaffirms that effective parent engagement occurs at the school-level. The PAEP policy is in alignment with the California Framework for Parent Engagement (2012) as well as with the Title I Parent Involvement Policy herein.

III. THE ACCELERATED SCHOOLS' TITLE I PARENT and FAMILY ENGAGEMENT POLICY

A. Parent Involvement in the Policy Development Process

Pursuant to Title I, Part A, Section 1118(a) of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, The Accelerated Schools Title I Parent and Family Engagement Policy was developed in collaboration with and approved by parents of Title I students.

Parents participate in the policy development and approval process through meetings that take place at the school site. The meetings yield important feedback on ways schools can improve parent involvement practices and identified how the schools can strengthen both school and parent capacity to foster trusting relationships that result in positive outcomes for students.

The following overarching recommendations were expressed by parents:

- Parents want help in strengthening their knowledge, understanding and navigation of the educational system and how they can better support their children's achievement and performance at school and at home.
- Parents recognize the key role that administrators and teachers play in ensuring effective parent engagement and recommend staff training to ensure successful implementation and accountability for parent engagement plans.
- Parents want school staff to be respectful, create a welcoming environment and value and acknowledge their contributions to their child's learning by inviting them into schools as visitors, volunteers, and equal partners in supporting their child's academic achievement.

- Parents want to receive information from schools on a timely, ongoing basis. They particularly want information impacting their child’s learning, including the school’s Title I program, expectations for English Learners (ELs) and students with special needs, volunteer opportunities, workshops/trainings and community resources available to their families.
- Parents want accessible parent centers or areas that have well-equipped facilities and quality staff support that is welcoming of all parents, including working parents, disabled parents and newly-arrived immigrant parents; and that provide them with learning opportunities to assist them in supporting classroom and home learning (math, reading, homework, etc.).
- Parents want improved communication with schools. They seek timely information from schools that is clear and comprehensible, in the language that they understand and delivered in a variety of ways using both technology (phone, text, email, websites) and traditional modes of communication (letter, phone calls, etc.).

These recommendations above are integrated throughout this Title I Parent and Family Engagement Policy and reinforce The Accelerated Schools’ core belief that parents are our equal partners in ensuring the success of all students.

B. Title I Parent and Family Engagement Policy Requirements

Title I, Part A, Section 1118(a), requires that The Accelerated Schools Title I Parent and Family Engagement Policy address six key mandates that describe the programs, trainings and practices The Accelerated Schools will provide to ensure meaningful parent involvement at all Title I schools.

Mandate 1: Involve parents in the joint development of its plan [The Accelerated Schools Program Improvement Plan] and the process of school review and improvement.

The Accelerated Schools will involve parents in the joint development of The Accelerated Schools’ Program Improvement Plan by:

- Utilizing the SSC and ELAC Committee’s as vehicles for parent participation in the annual development and review of The Accelerated Schools Program Improvement Plan.
- The Accelerated Schools will issue the following directives, tools and trainings to ensure schools have the necessary information they need to effectively involve parents in the process of school review and improvement:
 - Provide schools with operating guidelines and federal requirements for School Site Councils and other school advisory committees.
 - Provide schools with direction and guidance on school-level parent involvement mandates, including the involvement of parents in the decision-making process for the allocation of parent engagement funds, as required by Title I.
 - Assist schools and parents in identifying allowable school expenditures to support/bolster parent involvement in the school review and improvement process.
 - Assist parents in understanding the academic performance of their child’s school and increases their ability to participate fully in the school improvement process.

- Provide school staff with tools and training to support meaningful and balanced parent participation on the School Site Council.

Mandate 2: Provide the coordination, technical assistance, and other support necessary to assist participating schools in planning and implementing effective parent involvement activities to improve student academic achievement and school performance.

To meet this mandate, The Accelerated Schools will provide technical assistance/training to school staff in the following areas:

- School Goals for Parent Engagement: Describe The Accelerated Schools vision and establishes The Accelerated Schools expectations for parent engagement at every school.
- School-based teams (SSC and ELAC), comprised of parents, teachers, principals/administrators, other staff, and students that lead the school's effort in creating school-wide parent engagement plans, including the development of School-Parent Compacts, the school's Title I Parent and Family Engagement Policy, Single Plan for Student Achievement, and other parent involvement activities linked to learning.
- Targeted support provided to schools undergoing periodic state and/or federal review of their parent engagement planning process.
- Training and tools provided to school staff to increase their capacity to engage, support and provide necessary information to parents of students with documented achievement gaps, ELs and students with special needs.

Mandate 3: Build the schools' and parents' capacity for strong parental involvement.

The Accelerated Schools will make available the following training, tools and programs:

- Parent Workshops: A collection of workshops/trainings that comprise the essential knowledge and skills all parents must have in order to support their child's learning from Pre-Kindergarten to grade 12. Possible training areas include:
 - Early education/preparing for school
 - Master Plan for ELs
 - Literacy/math home-based support
 - Common Core State Standards
 - A-G college preparatory requirements
 - Student Academic Performance Data
 - Transition to middle and high school
 - Parents as advocates and leaders
 - Special Education programs
 - Creating learning environments at home
 - Supporting good attendance habits (includes promoting literacy, regulating TV time, supporting homework completion)
- Trainings that provides school staff, including but not limited to principals, teachers, front office staff, parent center staff and others, with knowledge and understanding that fosters meaningful and sustainable parent involvement. Key areas include:
 - o Parent involvement research and best practices
 - o Creating welcoming environments
 - o Engaging and expanding meaningful school volunteer programs

- o Informing parents of their rights and responsibilities and categorical/special programs such as Title I, EL and Special Education
- o Establishing effective advisory committees and councils at schools
- o Addressing parent concerns
- o Engaging parents to support homework completion, good attendance habits, and creating learning environments at home that reinforce classroom learning
- o Engaging and effectively communicating with parents, including working parents, disabled parents, newly arrived parents and non-English speaking parents

Mandate 4: Coordinate and integrate the parental involvement strategies described in this policy with parental involvement strategies under other programs, including the various 0-5 federal programs that prepare children for school and parents for their role in supporting their children's learning.

To address this mandate, The Accelerated Schools will coordinate and integrate its parent engagement programs and trainings with those of other programs, including:

- Multilingual Academic Support Unit (LACOE): Coordination is centered on informing parents of EL students of The Accelerated Schools Master Plan for English Learners. Parents provide input on this plan.
- Special Education Department Support: This integration ensures the coordination of parent engagement strategies, programs, and goals among parents of Title I, EL and students with special needs.
- Technology Department: Coordination is centered on the technology department to develop, promote and train schools on web-based tools for parents that help support student achievement. Examples include PowerSchool, access to The Accelerated Schools' website, Free and Reduced Lunch applications, and school volunteer programs.
- Student Information Systems Department: Coordination is centered on ensuring the inclusion of parents in the development of and participation in key school performance indicators.
- Federal and State Education Programs: Coordination is centered on ensuring that federal and state parental involvement requirements, including the School-Parent Compact, School Parent and Family Engagement Policy, and the Single Plan for Student Achievement, are met by all schools.

Mandate 5a: Conduct, with the involvement of parents, an annual evaluation of the content and effectiveness of the parental involvement policy in improving the academic quality of The Accelerated Schools.

Mandate 5b: Use the findings of such evaluation to design evidence-based strategies for more effective parental involvement.

Title I schools, including identifying barriers to greater parent participation 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), and use the findings of such evaluation to design strategies for more effective parental involvement and to revise, if necessary, the parental involvement policies described in this section.

To address this mandate, The Accelerated Schools will:

- Utilize parent involvement groups and the SSC and ELAC Committee's to examine the effectiveness of the parent engagement strategies and programs described in this policy on student achievement at Title I schools.
- Provide training and coaching to the SSC and ELAC committees to identify specific policy issues to be studied, design effective evaluation processes and utilize various data collection tools including surveys, site observations, interviews, etc.
- Use the findings and recommendations from surveys and committees to design evidence-based strategies and to determine any necessary revisions of the policy annually.
- Consult with Title I parent and family engagement policy participants in determining how parent engagement funds are allotted to support the parent engagement programs, practices, and strategies contained in the policy.
- Promote the completion and results of the annual Parent Involvement Survey to capture parent feedback on school-level parent engagement experiences, programs and practices.

Mandate 6: Involve parents in the activities of Title I schools.

To address this mandate, The Accelerated Schools will:

- Ensure effective parent involvement at schools by growing schools' capacity to do the following:
 - Communicate effectively with parents
 - Create welcoming, respectful environments for all parents
 - Provide learning opportunities for parents that grow their ability to support classroom learning, particularly in math and reading, homework completion and attendance
- Ensure parents are knowledgeable about the following:
 - Parents' Bill of Rights and Responsibilities
 - Student and school performance data
 - School policies including the visitation policy, attendance policy and homework policy

IV. CONCLUSION

The Accelerated Schools have demonstrated its commitment to parent and family engagement at the school and central levels through its policy for parent involvement, the School Goals for Parent Engagement in the LCAP and SPSA, the Parent Compact, and various surveys. The programs and practices described in this policy provide further affirmation of this commitment, and adherence to it will build school and parent capacity in fostering meaningful school-home partnerships to bolster student achievement.

Parents' Rights and Responsibilities To Ensure Your Child's Success

Parents as Equal Partners in the Education of Their Children, a resolution adopted by the Board of Education in December 2010, embraces family strengths and assets as essential to the academic success of students, and recognizes parents as the first and most important lifelong teachers of their children. To that end, families and schools accept responsibility for student success and commit to a partnership that:

- *Maintains high expectations for student achievement*
- *Ensures all children are college and career ready*
- *Promotes productive conversation and collaboration*
- *Reflects mutual respect and support for each other*

Parents Have the Right to:

- *A free, quality education that honors their child's learning and achievement*
- *An education that prepares their child for college and 21st century careers*
- *A welcoming environment that values family assets and contributions to learning*
- *Know the school's expectations, educational programs, policies and procedures*
- *Translation services in order to communicate effectively with school staff*
- *Their school's Report Card to assess the quality of their child's school*
- *Know their child's progress and performance and how to access support when needed.*
- *Visit their child's classroom and develop partnerships with teachers and staff*
- *Learning opportunities so they can support education at home and at school*
- *File a formal complaint when necessary, without fear of reprisal*

Parents Have the Responsibility to:

- *Promote literacy, high achievement, and a love of learning at home*
- *Ensure their child attends school every day, on time, and is ready to learn*
- *Monitor and guide their child's academic progress to ensure success*
- *Seek tutoring and other learning supports for their child when needed*
- *Explore all campus options and school choices available to their child*
- *Confer with teachers and other school staff about their child's education*
- *Participate in school meetings and activities to be informed about the school*
- *Express their level of satisfaction*
- *Provide pertinent information about their child as requested by the school*
- *Advocate for their child's education and for the school's well-being*