

## McKeesport Area School District **TITLE I PARENT and FAMILY ENGAGEMENT POLICY**

MASD strives to involve parents, guardians and all other family and friends in all aspects of our students' education. We recognize and acknowledge the importance of parents, friends and family in the learning and education of each child. Teaching and learning takes place during all times of a child's life and together we can help all children to achieve and reach their highest potential. PARENTS AS PARTNERS: MASD places an emphasis upon the role of parents as equal partners. Therefore, we try to reach all parents and have as a staff meaningful involvement with our students' families.

**The McKeesport Area School District involves parents in the joint development of the Title I Plan (Title I Application).** The McKeesport Area School District's staff and building level parent teams have worked together to develop the Title I Parent and Family Engagement Policy. We will work together throughout the year and meet annually in the spring to review and update the policy. Parents and families are invited to a district wide Title I spring meeting to update the District Parent and Family Engagement Policy. Parents are also encouraged to fill out a "Parent Survey" at each Parent Involvement Event, as well as, the one that is sent home with their child sometime throughout the year. A group of individuals (district employees and parents) collect this data and decisions regarding Title I, II and IV are made based on parent input. Once the policy is updated, it is posted on the district website, as well as in various other locations. This policy works in conjunction with board approved policy #908 (Relations with Parents/Guardians) and #918 (Title I Parent Involvement).

**MASD will involve parents in the activities of the Title I schools in a variety of ways.** Each school also holds a spring Title I meeting to review and update their schools' Title I Parent and Family Engagement Policy. Once approved, the policy is posted on the district website, placed into the student handbook and sent home on the first day of school with all students. The building level policies are reviewed at the fall annual Title I meeting in each school.

All schools receiving Title I funds will develop a School-Parental Compact outlining the manner in which parents/guardians, school staff and students share responsibility for student success in meeting academic standards. The compact will describe the school's responsibility to provide high-quality curriculum and instruction in a supportive and effective learning environment. The compact will offer suggestions as to ways the parents, guardians and family members can support their child's learning. The compact also addresses the importance of parent-teacher communication on an ongoing basis. Parents can request and receive timely information regarding the professional qualifications of their child's classroom teacher.

During each school year the schools will hold numerous parent and family involvement activities to engage the families in their child's learning. Activities will include opportunities to look at and make suggestions regarding the School-Parent Compact, the school's Parent and Family Engagement Policy and the school-wide plans for the school-wide schools. Other parent involvement activities may include programs to allow parents to better understand the curriculum and types of assessments used, strategies to help students increase their Reading and Math skills and other topics that are identified through parent feedback. Parent and family engagement programs are assessed for effectiveness via surveys and after event meetings. Changes will be made as necessary.

**McKeesport Area School District provides the coordination, technical assistance, and other support necessary to assist and build the capacity of all participating schools within the LEA in planning and implementing effective parent involvement and described in Section 1116 parent and family involvement activities to improve student academic achievement and school performance.** The Director of Federal Programs and the Elementary Literacy Coaches will coordinate technical assistance and any other support necessary for the schools to build capacity to support and implement an effective Parent and Family Engagement Policy. Schools will provide parents and families with activities that are fun and informative; the schools will focus the activities on student achievement and success.

**MASD uses the findings of the evaluations and surveys that are completed throughout the year to design evidence-based strategies for more effective parental involvement, and how to revise, if necessary, the parent and family engagement policies.** The LEA will continuously research best practices to engage parents and families. Staff are trained on effective ways to work with parents. We look for ways to increase participation by making our families feel comfortable in the schools; we look at ways to educate our staff about teachers' misperception about parents' abilities; and through this education, we hope to eliminate tension in relationships between parent and teachers. All literature disseminated to schools for parents will be in an easy to read format. All media outlets including social media will be used to inform parents of important events. Schools will also use the School Messenger automated phone system to share information.

Each school, as well as at the district level, will provide parents with frequent reports on their children's progress. The district will send home progress reports every 4 ½ weeks, report cards every 9 weeks and informal progress reports as necessary. The school district will have one parent visitation day during the school year, but parent visitation can take place anytime throughout the year. All parents are able to check their child's progress via the online parent portal.

Parents may make suggestions regarding ways they feel their child can be assisted by contacting the school principal, the classroom teacher, the Title I teacher, the Literacy Coaches or the Director of Federal Programs.

**MASD coordinates and integrates parent and family engagement strategies under Title I, Part A with parent and family engagement strategies, with other relevant Federal, State, and local laws and programs.** MASD staff strives to have all parents involved in all activities and makes every attempt to eliminate barriers to allow for full participation by students and their families. Families may need special accommodations to attend an event, and if this is required, they should contact the Director of Federal Programs. The schools, using Title I funds, as well as other district partnerships such as the 21<sup>st</sup> Century afterschool programs, the Pre-K Counts program, Head Start programs and other community and district programs hope to facilitate the best parent and family engagement events. MASD will continue to develop and promote the relationships we have with First Steps, Head Start, Pre-K Counts, Alliance Christian Child Care, Brightside and all other community partners that work with our children.

**McKeesport Area School District conducts with parents an annual evaluation of the content and effectiveness of the parent and family engagement policy in improving the academic quality of all school served under Title I, Part A.** During this evaluation, which usually occurs in the spring we look at the following items:

- barriers to greater participation in activities
- the needs of parents and family members to assist with the learning of their children, including engaging with school personnel and teachers
- strategies to support successful school and family interactions

Throughout the year, the Title I Parent and Family Engagement Policy and all of the programs in each of the buildings, as well as at the district level, are continually evaluated and annually reviewed for content and effectiveness. MASD always strives to increase parent and family involvement and help to eliminate barriers for parents to be involved with their child's education. MASD will use the results of the evaluation to design strategies for improvement and to revise parental and family engagement policies.

McKeesport Area School District is a community working together to provide an excellent education for all students.

#### Contact Information:

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**McKeesport Area School District has a written Parent and Family Engagement policy. The policy was reviewed and updated on July 21, 2020.**