

Tips- for Developing the Title I District Parent and Family Engagement Policy/Plan

Establish an action team to develop the district plan consisting of staff and parent/families and community members. Ideally, each Title I school should have an action team and information from the team would be included in the district policy development.

The action team should discuss the mission statement and the goals of the district. For example, if the district has a goal of improving attendance, they should discuss what the school and families can do to meet that goal. An objective can be written to address the goal. When developing the district policy it is critical to consider what the district and schools are already doing to support families and discuss what is working, what may need to be changed, and how to move forward with the activities and programs that are already in place to support the learning of students. Discuss the ways in which families can be involved. Strategies and actions items can be created as a result of the discussion about the district's goals, input from families such as surveys or action team members should be included when developing the policy. The representatives that should be included are community members, parents, students if age appropriate, and school board members. Research shows that 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. Leadership is key. When a superintendent demonstrates a serious consistent commitment to parent and community engagement, everyone in the district gets the message.

ESSA Section 1116 requires components be included and addressed in the Title I District Parent and Family Engagement Policy. You may select from some of the suggestions/tips below when visiting with staff and parent/families to develop the district policy. The list below includes suggestions for you to consider. The title headers in **bold** must be addressed in each district's policy.

Each header in bold with a check mark must be addressed in the development of the district policy. Examples of how to address the required component are listed below each heading:

- ✓ **Involve Parents in jointly developing the district parent and family engagement policy**
 - This will be accomplished through an annual meeting to create, review, and revise the policy and explain their right to be involved.
 - Parents are welcome and invited to submit comments to the Parent and Family Engagement Policy at any time, they may contact their principal.
 - The school will develop a district school parent and family advisory board and the members will broadly represent the school district and community.
 - The district will support each Title I school to put into place meetings, programs, activities, to involve and engage parent and family members in the learning and development of their children.
 - Parent representatives will be invited on an annual basis to participate in the district's development of the district plan a meeting will be held to inform and engage families and provide families and opportunity to be included.
 - The district has an advisory council consisting of school administration, teachers, school board members, and parents. The council will help ensure that the goals and objectives of the Title I program are being met. The council and parents will be consulted on how best to strengthen and improve the program and improve school parent communication.

- Survey families and use the information gleaned from the surveys to develop strategies and objectives.
- ✓ ***NEW under ESSA Establish Objectives for meaningful parent and family engagement**
- Training will be provided for staff and parents to implement effective engagement, to increase communication and develop relationships between home and school --explain what this will look like.
 - Barriers to engagement will be identified and solutions to the barriers will be addressed, information will be gleaned from conversations and surveys.
 - Communication between home and school will be a priority at each school. Schools will develop communication tools to enhance the communication between home and school.
 - The school district will support and educate staff in how to reach out to families and educate staff on the importance and value of parent and family engagement.
 - Create an objective to increase attendance.
 - Create a Family Friendly Environment and invite families into the school provide “walk-throughs” of the school maybe have students guide the tours.
 - If Reading is a top priority create objectives to support your reading goals.
- ✓ **Provide the coordination technical assistance and support necessary to assist Title I schools in planning and implementing effective parental involvement activities to support academic achievement and school performance**
- This could be met through an objective and or strategy.
 - School leadership is encouraged to work with their staff to develop strategies to engage families in the learning of their children both at school events and through developing an understanding for families of what families can do at home to support their children.
 - Provide information to families on standards and assessments.
- ✓ **Build the schools and parents capacity for strong parental involvement develop strategies to support successful school and family interactions**
- Support schools financially as they work to develop strategies for school to home interactions.
 - Designate an individual that as a key contact for parent and family engagement at each school.
 - Ask families, students, and staff what’s important to them. Brainstorm proposed ideas
 - What are missed opportunities for sharing learning that is happening at the schools? Tail gates? Music Concerts? Sporting event rosters?
 - Each year a district-wide Title I advisory meeting will be held for parents to participate in discussion related to district and building level goals.
 - Telephone calls at the school level will be made to a representative number of families to gather input.
 - Develop monthly family contact logs for teachers with families contact information and preferred way to be reached.
 - Help teachers/staff and families develop strong partnerships and enhance communication between parents/families and school staff for example-at the school level encourage school staff to reach out to families set a goal for a number of positive communications per week for staff between school and home.

- Work with teachers to develop learning “kits” that families can take home.
 - Provide school leadership and teachers with research articles and handouts for families.
 - Provide information on barriers example- cultural differences, arrange for translation services and interpretation services for families at conferences and for notes home.
 - Provide a home school liaison.
 - Create a fb page or utilize other means of communication to ensure that families are receiving information about school.
 - Use schools to connect students and families to community resources.
- ✓ **Coordinate and integrate parent and family involvement strategies under Title I with parent and family engagement strategies to the extent feasible and appropriate with other relevant federal programs**
- Consult with local Head Starts to ensure a smooth transition between preschool and school and a smooth transfer of records.
 - Develop times and methods for the Head Start and the Kindergarten staff at school to communicate and share.
- ✓ **Conduct with involvement of parents and family members an annual evaluation of the district policy**
- Annually parents and staff will be involved in a meeting/discussion to review the districts parental involvement policy as well as the building level policies and parent and teacher compacts. Input will be used to revise the policy if necessary . School leadership will ensure the documents are reviewed and updated each year.
- ✓ **Involve parents in the activities served under the Title I Program**
- Support school staff in the ongoing process of involving and encouraging parents as partners in their child’s education.
 - Inform families of school goals.
 - Create a safe and welcoming environment where families feel welcome at school
 - Involve parents as partners in decision making.

The above list includes suggestions and is not an inclusive list but rather some suggestions to consider when developing the Title I District Parent and Family Engagement Policy.

Just a reminder when developing the Local Education Plan (LEA) that is uploaded to the Consolidated Application the strategies that are listed on the LEA Plan should be the same strategies that are incorporated in the Title I District Parent and Family Engagement plan.

Question #7 on the Lea Plan reads-*Describe the strategies that will be used to implement effective parent and family enqagement under Section 1116.*

For questions call the South Dakota Department of Education Title I Office 605.773.6400.