PARENT AND FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

The Board of Education believes that positive parent and family engagement is essential to student achievement and, thus, encourages such involvement in school educational planning and operations. Parent and family engagement may take place either in the classroom or during extra-curricular activities. However, the Board also encourages parent and family engagement at home (e.g., planned home reading time, informal learning activities and/or homework “contracts” between parents, family members and children). The Board directs the Superintendent of Schools or designee to develop a home-school communications program in an effort to encourage all forms of parent and family engagement.

District Level Parent and Family Engagement Policy
Consistent with the parent and family engagement goals of Title I, Part A of the federal No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB) and its reauthorization in the Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015 (ESSA), the Board will develop and implement programs, activities and procedures that encourage and support the participation of parents and family members of students eligible for Title I services in all aspects of their child’s education. The Board will also ensure that all of its schools receiving Title I, Part A funds develop and implement school level parent and family engagement procedures as required by federal law.

Parent and family engagement programs, activities and procedures at the District and school levels will provide opportunities for the informed participation of parents and family members (including those with limited English proficiency or disabilities), and parents and family members of migratory children.

In addition, parents and family members of students eligible for Title I services will be provided an opportunity to participate in the development of the District’s Title I Plan and to submit comments regarding any aspect of the plan that is not satisfactory to them. Their comments will be forwarded with the plan to the New York State Education Department. The District will undertake actions to ensure parent and family member involvement in the development of the Title I Plan, such as holding meetings at flexible times and accessible places.

Parents and family members will also have the opportunity to participate in the process for developing either a comprehensive or targeted “support and improvement plan” if the school their child attends is identified by the State as needing this plan.

The term “parent” refers to a natural parent, legal guardian or other person standing in loco parentis (such as a grandparent or stepparent with whom the child lives, or a person who is legally responsible for the child's welfare).

Development of School Level Parent and Family Engagement Approaches
In an effort to encourage parent and family engagement, the Board directs the Superintendent of Schools or designee to assist schools in planning and implementing effective parent and family engagement programs and activities that improve student achievement and school performance. As appropriate to meet local needs, the Superintendent or designee will hold meetings at flexible times and in accessible locations. This may include consultation with

Adopted: November 24, 2015
Revised: July 2, 2018
employers, business leaders and philanthropic organizations, or individuals with expertise in effectively engaging parents and family members in education.

The Superintendent or designee shall develop a program that includes the six types of parent involvement outlined by the National Network of Partnership Schools and endorsed by the National PTA:

1. **Parenting:** Help families establish home environments to support children as students.
2. **Communicating:** Design effective forms of school-to-home and home-to-school communications about school programs and children’s progress.
3. **Volunteering:** Recruit and organize parent and family help and support.
4. **Learning at Home:** Provide information and ideas to families about how to help students at home with homework and other curriculum-related activities, decisions and planning.
5. **Decision-Making:** Include parents in school decisions, develop parent leaders and representatives.
6. **Collaborating with Community:** Identify and integrate resources and services from the community to strengthen school programs, family practices and student learning and development.

**Communication to Parents**

The Superintendent is authorized and encouraged to develop parent-friendly materials to communicate this policy to District parents and members of the community in an effort to promote and sustain parent and family engagement.

The goal of these and all communications to parents is to ensure that information related to school and parent-related programs, meetings and other activities is sent to the parents of students, including those participating in Title I programs, in an understandable and uniform format, including alternative formats, upon request, and to the extent practicable, in a language the parents can understand.

The District-Wide Parent and Family Engagement Policy will be made available to all families in digital form or written form in each school's main office as well as on the District website and printed in the Community Calendar sent to homes at the beginning of the school.

**Coordination of Parent and Family Engagement Strategies**

1. **Community Agencies and Programs**

The District will coordinate and integrate strategies adopted to comply with parent and family engagement requirements of federal law and with parent involvement strategies adopted in connection with existing community partners such as the Center for Youth Development Liberty Partnerships Program, Head Start of Eastern Orange County, 21st Century programs, Boys and Girls Clubs of Newburgh, Cornell Cooperative Extension of Orange County, Literacy Orange of New York, Best Resource Center, Inc., etc. The District shall demonstrate its compliance with this project by participating both in resource and information sharing as well as in joint initiatives.
2. District Staff Resources

The Board recognizes the need to dedicate staff resources to the coordination of the District's parent and family engagement efforts including providing for the creation of and funding for a liaison to parents.

**Parent Representation**

1. Building Planning Teams

Every school in the District is required to have a Building Planning Team. A minimum of two (2) parent representatives shall serve on the Building Planning Team for each school. Parent representatives shall be responsible for communicating with their constituencies and for representing parent opinion on the teams.

2. Parent Teacher Organizations

Schools will support parent-teacher organizations. Principals will work collaboratively with the parent-teacher organizations of their school to develop and sustain parent involvement in their school.

This policy in no way eliminates or diminishes an individual parent's right to make his or her feelings known at any level in the District on any topic of concern, nor does it prevent the District from involving individual parents in other appropriate situations.

**Annual Evaluation**

The Board, along with its Superintendent of Schools and other appropriate staff will conduct, with the meaningful involvement of parents, an annual evaluation of the content and effectiveness of this policy. This annual evaluation will include the identification of barriers to greater participation by parents and the revision of parent and family engagement policies necessary for more effective involvement.

**School-Level Parent and Family Engagement Policies**

The Superintendent of Schools will ensure that all District schools are provided with technical assistance and support to assist them in planning and implementing effective parent and family engagement policies identifying programs and activities that improve student achievement and school performance.

**Evaluation**

All school-level policies will be evaluated at least every three years and, if warranted, revised. Building administrators will include all necessary constituents of the school community.
(e.g., administrators, Title I parents, teachers, CSEA) in the evaluation and revision of the school-level parent involvement policy.

**Building Capacity for Parent Involvement**

1. The District and its schools will endeavor to build the capacity of parents and school professionals/staff for strong parent involvement to support the academic achievement of all students through The provision of activities at the District-level, such as workshops, classes, and materials whose goal is to assist parents in understanding such topics as the state’s academic content, state and local academic assessments, Title I requirements, how to monitor their child’s progress and how to work with educators to improve the achievement of their child.

2. The provision of materials and training at the School level to help parents work to improve their child’s academic achievement, such as literacy training and using technology (including education about the harms of copyright piracy).

3. The development of opportunities for teachers, specialized instructional support personnel, principals and other school leaders, and other staff, with the assistance of parents, in understanding the value and utility of a parent's contributions and how to:
   - Reach out to, communicate with, and work with parents as equal partners
   - Implement and coordinate parent programs and activities; and
   - Build ties between parents and the schools.

**Title I Complaints and Appeals**

The District recognizes that any public or nonpublic school parent/guardian, teacher or agency may file a complaint regarding Title I program services. The District shall ensure all complaints are addressed in accordance with the following procedures.

1. All complaints shall be in writing, signed and submitted to the Superintendent or designee, including the name and/or school, specification of issue or concern, supporting evidence of complaint and the desired corrective action.

2. An investigation shall be conducted by the Assistant Superintendent for Instruction or designee, with the relevant parties to determine a fair and appropriate course of action.

3. A written response to the complaint shall be made and sent to the complainant within thirty (30) business days.

4. If the complaint is not resolved to the satisfaction of the complainant within thirty (30) business days, the complainant has the right to send the complaint to the New York State Education Department, Office of Title I School and Community Services, Room 365 EBA, 89 Washington Avenue, Albany, NY 12234 within twenty (20) business days of the District’s response to the original complaint.

5. If any party is dissatisfied with the State Education Department’s complaint resolution, they may file an appeal directly with the United States Department of Education’s Compensatory Education Program Office, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW, Room W 230, FOB #6, Washington, DC 20202-6132.
6. Any appeal must contain a copy of the original signed complaint, a copy of the District’s response to the original complaint or a statement that the District failed to respond within thirty (30) business days.

7. All complaints and related documents or reports involved in the process will be maintained by the District’s Human Resources Department for at least five (5) years. Records will be made available in accordance with the New York State Freedom of Information Law.

Ref: 20 USC §6318(a) (2), No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 as reauthorized by 20 USC §6318(a) (2); §7801(38); Every Student Succeeds Act (§1116 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act) Section 9304(a) (3)(c) of Elementary and Secondary Education Act
8 NYCRR §§100.2(ee), 100.3(b)(3); 100.4(f); 100.5(d)(4); 149.3(16)
U.S. Department of Education, Parental Involvement, Title I, Part A, Non-Regulatory Guidance, April 23, 2004