

2112 - PARENT INVOLVEMENT IN THE SCHOOL PROGRAM

The Board of Education recognizes and values parents and families as children's first teachers and decision-makers in education. The Board believes that student learning is more likely to occur when there is an effective partnership between the school and the student's parents and family. Such a partnership between the home and school and greater involvement of parents in the education of their children generally result in higher academic achievement, improved student behavior, and reduced absenteeism.

The term "families" is used in order to include children's primary caregivers, who are not their biological parents, such as foster caregivers, grandparents, and other family members.

Through this policy, the Board directs the establishment of a Parental Involvement Plan by which a school-partnership can be established and provided to the parent of each child in the District. The plan must encompass parent participation, through meetings and other forms of communication. The Parental Involvement Plan shall reflect the Board's commitment to the following:

A. Relationships with Families

1. cultivating school environments that are welcoming, supportive, and student-centered;
2. providing professional development for school staff that helps build partnerships between families and schools;^{1,2}
3. providing family activities that relate to various cultures, languages, practices, and customs, and bridge economic and cultural barriers;^{1,2}
4. providing coordination, technical support and other support to assist schools in planning and implementing family involvement activities.²

B. Effective Communication

1. providing information to families to support the proper health, safety, and well-being of their children;
2. providing information to families about school policies, procedures, programs, and activities;^{1,2}
3. promoting regular and open communication between school personnel and students' family members
4. communicating with families in a format and language that is understandable, to the extent practicable^{1,2}

5. providing information and involving families in monitoring student progress²
6. providing families with timely and meaningful information regarding Michigan's academic standards, State and local assessments, and pertinent legal provisions;^{1,2}
7. preparing families to be involved in meaningful discussions and meetings with school staff^{1,2}

C. Volunteer Opportunities

1. providing volunteer opportunities for families to support their children's school activities²
2. supporting other needs, such as transportation and child care, to enable families to participate in school-sponsored family involvement events.²

D. Learning at Home

1. offering training and resources to help families learn strategies and skills to support at-home learning and success in school^{1,2}
2. working with families to establish learning goals and help their children accomplish these goals;
3. helping families to provide a school and home environment that encourages learning and extends learning at home²

E. Involving Families in Decision Making and Advocacy

1. involving families as partners in the process of school review and continuous improvement planning;²
2. involving families in the development of its District-wide parent involvement policy and plan, and distributing the policy and plan to families.^{1,2}

F. Collaborating with the Community

1. building constructive partnerships and connecting families with community-based programs and other community resources^{1,2}
2. coordinating and integrating family involvement programs and activities with District initiatives and community-based programs that encourage and support families' participation in their children's education, growth, and development^{1,2}

Implementation

The Superintendent will provide for a comprehensive plan to engage parents, families, and community members in a partnership in support of each student's academic achievement, the District's continuous improvement, and individual school improvement plans. The plan will be distributed to all parents and students through publication in the Student Handbook or other suitable means. The plan will provide for annual evaluation, with the involvement of parents and families, of the plan's effectiveness and identification of barriers to participation by parents and families. Evaluation findings will be used in the annual review of the Parent and Family Involvement policy and to improve the effectiveness of the District plan.

¹Indicates IDEA 2004 Section 650 & 644 parent involvement requirements

²Indicates Title I Section 1118 parent involvement requirements