

Spartanburg School District Seven
PARENT INVOLVEMENT POLICY

Spartanburg School District Seven encourages, supports, and values the participation and involvement of parents and families in the educational experiences of their children. The District recognizes each parent as their child's first teacher and acknowledges the powerful influence of parents on their child's life. The District is committed to developing family-friendly schools, offices, and programs that welcome and serve parents and families in positive and supportive environments.

The District acknowledges that students learn best when families and schools work together and develop relationships of shared responsibility and mutual support. The District recognizes that families are diverse in culture, language, and needs. It is the goal of District and school administrators, teachers, and staff to meaningfully collaborate with all parents in meeting the needs of individual students. The District believes that parent and family involvement must be pursued and supported by homes, schools, colleges, communities, businesses, faith congregations, organizations, and government entities by working together in a collaborative effort.

To reach this goal for all students in our schools, Spartanburg School District Seven adheres to the mandates of Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) which requires the following:

The district parent and family engagement policy must describe how the district will:

- Involve parents in the joint development of the district plan;
- Provide the support necessary to assist schools in implementing effective family engagement activities;
- Conduct an annual evaluation of the effectiveness of the policy in improving the academic quality of Title I schools, including identifying barriers to greater participation by families, and use the findings to design strategies to support successful school and family interactions and revise engagement policies, and;
- Involve families in school activities, which may include establishing an advisory board to develop, revise and review the engagement policy.

The school parents and family engagement policy must describe how the school will:

- Convene an annual meeting, at a convenient time to which all parents of low-income students are invited and encouraged to attend, to inform parents that their school receives Title I funds, that these funds come with requirements, and that parents have a right to be involved;
- Offer a flexible number of engagement meetings at convenient times for families;
- Provide parents and families with:
 - Information about Title-I funded programs;
 - An explanation of the curriculum and achievement levels the school uses; and
 - If requested, opportunities for regular meetings to participate in decisions relating to the education of their student.

The Coordinator of Federal Programs will:

- Meet with parents and parent involvement facilitator during school events
- Involve parents of students attending District Seven schools in the decisions regarding how funds are spent for parent involvement activities.
- Parents will be surveyed as to how they believe that the money should be best spent
- Coordinate and integrate parent involvement strategies with other state and federal programs.
- Provide coordination, technical assistance, and other support necessary to assist schools in planning and implementing effective parent involvement activities.
- The Director of Student Services will develop workshops for the entire district
- Workshops will be based on individual school needs as well as district needs
- Require that each school develop jointly with parents a school-parent compact that outlines how parents, school staff, and students will share the responsibility for improved student achievement and how the school and parents will develop a partnership to help children achieve the State's high standards. Each school's parent compact will be reviewed annually and revised as needed. The compact will be used in student conferences and parent conferences.
- Conduct, with the involvement of parents, an annual evaluation of the content and effectiveness of the parent involvement. This evaluation shall include identifying barriers to greater participation by parents who are disabled, economically disadvantaged, have limited literacy, have limited English proficiency, or are of any racial or ethnic background. The findings of this evaluation will be used to design more effective parent involvement strategies and to revise the parent involvement policy if necessary.
- Surveys will be used to evaluate the effectiveness of the parent involvement program
- Involve parents with joint development of the LEA plan and in the process of school review and improvement.
- The Coordinator of Federal Programs and building principals will invite parents to assist in developing the plan. The parent involvement facilitators will ask parents for input on all key issues regarding their particular school.

To ensure effective involvement of parents, and to support a partnership among the parents, community, and school to improve student achievement, Spartanburg School District Seven will:

- Assist parents in understanding South Carolina's academic and achievement standards by disseminating pamphlets and hand-outs, conducting parent-teacher conferences and parent workshops, and holding Open Houses.
- Schools will hold informational meetings to explain testing results.
- Priority School will inform parents at the Open House regarding the school's status
- Hand-outs and pamphlets will be prepared to help parents understand each school's strengths and weaknesses
- Teachers will take advantage of parent-teacher conferences to discuss answer questions concerning student achievement
- Communicate and monitor a child's progress by various methods: progress reports, report cards, IEP meetings, parent-teacher conferences, dissemination of and explanation of assessment information, and academic plans.
 - Progress reports are sent home every 3 weeks
 - Report cards are sent home every 9 weeks

- There is a district-wide parent-teacher conference set for each semester
- Schools have morning and evening times available for parents
- Educate teachers and other staff members, with the assistance of parents, in reaching out to and communicating with, and working with parents through the various parent groups (PTA, SIC, etc.), conferences, workshops, and staff development.
- Schools will partner with community agencies to assist parents with self-sufficiency.
- Send information related to school and parent programs, meetings, and other activities to the parents in a format and language they can understand through newsletters, parent and school improvement council meetings, school calendar, and parent/student handbook.