

**Jamestown City School District**  
**Title I Parent Engagement Policy**  
**(Revised Spring, 2016)**

**PART I. GENERAL EXPECTATIONS**

The **Jamestown City School District** agrees to implement the following statutory requirements:

- ~ The school district will put into operation programs, activities and procedures for the involvement and engagement of parents/families in all of its schools with Title I, Part A programs, consistent with section 1118 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). Those programs, activities and procedures will be planned and operated in meaningful consultation with parents/families of participating children.
- ~ Consistent with section 1118, the school district will work with its schools to ensure that the required school-level parental/family engagement policies meet the requirements of section 1118(b) of the ESEA, and each include, as a component, a school-parent compact consistent with section 1118(d) of the ESEA.
- ~ The school district will incorporate this district wide parental/family engagement policy into its LEA plan developed under section 1112 of the ESEA.
- ~ In carrying out the Title I, Part A parental/family engagement requirements, to the extent practicable, the school district and its schools will provide full opportunities for the participation of parents with limited English proficiency, parents with disabilities, and parents of migratory children, including providing information and school reports required under section 1111 of the ESEA in an understandable and uniform format and, including alternative formats upon request, and, to the extent practicable, in a language parents understand.
- ~ If the LEA plan for Title I, Part A, developed under section 1112 of the ESEA, is not satisfactory to the parents of participating children, the school district will submit any parent comments with the plan when the school district submits the plan to the State Department of Education.
- ~ The school district will involve the parents of children served in Title I, Part A schools in decisions about how the 1 percent of Title I, Part A funds reserved for parental involvement and engagement are spent, and will ensure that not less than 90 percent of the one percent reserved goes directly to the schools.
- ~ The school district will be governed by the following statutory definition of parental engagement, and expects that its Title I schools will carry out programs, activities and procedures in accordance with this definition:

*Parental engagement means the participation of parents in regular, two-way, and meaningful communication involving student academic learning and other school activities, including ensuring -*

- (A) that parents play an integral role in assisting their child's learning;*
- (B) that parents are encouraged to be actively involved in their child's education at school;*
- (C) that parents are full partners in their child's education and are included, as appropriate, in decision-making and on advisory committees to assist in the education of their child;*
- (D) the carrying out of other activities, such as those described in section 1118 of the ESEA.*

The Jamestown City School District considers parent/family engagement to be a high priority component of school, District and community work, and aims to progress beyond random and/or compliance-driven parent involvement opportunities to student-centered family engagement, which trains our common focus on students' learning and performance needs, and the implications for improvement in student achievement over the long-term. Jamestown Public Schools embraces a shared responsibility, in which schools and other community agencies and organizations are committed to reaching out to communicate, collaborate, and engage families in meaningful ways, and in which families and the community are committed to actively supporting their children's learning and development.

## **PART II. DESCRIPTION OF HOW THE DISTRICT WILL IMPLEMENT REQUIRED DISTRICT WIDE PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT/ENGAGEMENT POLICY COMPONENTS**

The Jamestown City School District Parent, Family and Community Engagement policy prioritizes ways in which stakeholders will work together to advance student achievement, and has been developed in collaboration with dedicated parents and community members. The policy reflects not only federally mandated priorities, but those collective priorities we enfold locally, as a community, and which were identified, drafted and adopted collaboratively to form the Jamestown Public Schools Strategic Plan. The 2014-2019 Strategic Plan is constructed around four overarching goals: Academic Excellence, Whole Child Development, Family & Community Engagement, and Support & Metrics. Our Mission & Vision asserts, *"We are committed to provide our students high-quality, 21<sup>st</sup> Century learning experiences within and beyond our classrooms so that our graduates are prepared to excel in college, career, and life. We see every child learning every day!"* This policy has also been developed in consideration of updates within the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), provided by The National Association for Family, School, and Community Engagement, and with appreciation of and consideration for the U.S. Department of Education publication, "Partners in Education: A Dual Capacity-Building Framework for Family-School Partnerships."

1. The **Jamestown City School District** will take the following actions to involve parents in the joint development of its district wide parental/family engagement plan under section 1112 of the ESEA:

Members of the original Family & Community Engagement Strategic Plan Committee have continued to serve on the Title I planning committee, and have met regularly to craft the District's Family & Community Engagement Plan. Additionally, Jamestown Public Schools families were invited to respond to Harvard University Graduate School of Education parent surveys, as well as the District Communications Survey, administered during spring, 2015, and winter, 2016, respectively. Parent/Family responses were taken into careful consideration by the committee, and have been reflected in the plan.

2. The **Jamestown City School District** will take the following actions to involve parents in the process of school review and improvement under section 1116 of the ESEA/ESSA:

Particular attention will be focused on populating each school's Shared Decision Making (SDM) Team with no fewer than 3 parent representatives. According to the policy set by the Jamestown Public School District's Board of Education, Shared Decision Making Teams must focus on improving student performance and meeting the targets set in the School Improvement/Comprehensive Education Plan in accordance with the District's performance benchmarks. The District has engaged the services of Greg Speranza, of MindStream Consulting, Inc. to provide professional development in building capacity among Shared Decision Making Teams.

3. The **Jamestown City School District** will provide the following necessary coordination, technical assistance, and other support to assist Title I, Part A schools in planning and implementing effective parental/family involvement and engagement activities to improve student academic achievement and school performance:

The Director of Schools, Director of Curriculum, Instruction & Assessment, and the Director of Pupil Services share the responsibilities for the coordination and dedication of financial and other, varied resources to support parent/family engagement planning and implementation throughout the District. Additional Central Administration support staff shall include the Communications Coordinator, the Coordinator of Information Services, and the Coordinator of Extended Learning, Family & Community Engagement. Building administrators, guided by Tenet 6 of the Diagnostic Tool for School and District effectiveness, and, accordingly, by each building's School Comprehensive Education Plan, will, through a variety of actions, intensify their efforts to *"create a culture of partnership where families, community members and school staff work together to share in the responsibility for student academic progress and social emotional growth and well-being."* The District will provide professional development for administrators, staff, PTA, families and community partners to understand and address strategies for increased family engagement. The District will provide professional development for Shared Decision Making Teams and PTAs to increase parent representation and involvement in school improvement efforts. Schools will sponsor regular Parent Information/Family Engagement opportunities for purposeful, strategic and authentic dialogue and data sharing

about school achievement, development and improvement, in order to collectively understand and support academic progress. The District will use a common survey instrument to assess participation and impact of school family engagement events. The District and school staff will regularly communicate with and solicit feedback from families regarding student achievement, needs, issues and concerns using multiple, interactive communication paths, such as Face book, Twitter, Blackboard Connect, web sites/web pages, Parent Portal, and a District mobile application (app) in pertinent languages so that student achievement is increased.

4. The **Jamestown City School District** will coordinate and integrate parental/family engagement strategies in Part A with parental engagement strategies under the following other programs: *Universal Pre-Kindergarten, Parents as Teachers, Head Start, Partners for Children, Jamestown After School, Chautauqua Striders Tutoring & Mentoring, Positive Behavioral Interventions & Supports (PBIS), School Linkages, and After School Amigos*, by:

Convening regular Community Partner meetings between and among schools, the District, and partnering organizations to share best practices, to intentionally collaborate and coordinate family engagement strategies and opportunities for collective impact, to provide materials, resources and supportive services in pertinent languages, to create vehicles to support and sustain families as equal partners in the education of our students, and to build shared capacity to support student learning. Additionally, parents and community partners have been included in relevant, appropriate District staff professional development, such as PBIS, Trauma-Informed Schools, Understanding the Culture of Poverty, Bridges Out of Poverty, Reggie Dabbs, “The Power of Positive Choices,” and will continue to be invited and welcomed at future trainings, such as Harvard Graduate School of Education Karen Mapp’s, “Redesigning Family Engagement,” to be offered during the summer of 2016, and Family and Community Engagement training, to be conducted by Byron Garrett, Chairman of the National Family Engagement Alliance, during the fall of 2016.

5. The **Jamestown City School District** will take the following actions to conduct, with the involvement of parents, an annual evaluation of the content and effectiveness of this parental/family engagement policy in improving the quality of its Title I, Part A schools. The evaluation will include identifying barriers to greater participation by parents in parental involvement and engagement activities (with particular attention to parents who are economically disadvantaged, are disabled, have limited English proficiency, have limited literacy, or are of any racial or ethnic minority background). The school district will use the findings of the evaluation about its parental/family engagement policy and activities to design its strategies for more effective parental engagement, and to revise, if necessary (and with the involvement of parents) its parental engagement policies.

An annual review of the Title I Parent/Family Engagement Plan will be conducted each spring by the appropriate parent groups at each building, and coordinated at the District level, by the Family & Community Engagement Committee, which will serve also as the District Parent Advisory Board, representing families in developing and evaluating the policy. Feedback will be solicited via face-to-face meetings, surveys (available in pertinent languages, and made accessible, both electronically and via hard copy) and, if indicated and appropriate, during regularly occurring community partnering organization home visits and/or by enlisting the help of community partner outreach specialists.

6. The **Jamestown City School District** will build the schools' and parents' capacity for strong parental involvement, in order to ensure effective engagement of parents and to support a partnership among the school involved, parents, and the community to improve student academic achievement, through the following activities specifically described below:

A. The school district will, with the assistance of its Title I, Part A schools, provide assistance to parents of children served by the school district or school, as appropriate, in understanding topics such as the following, by undertaking the actions described in this paragraph –

- ~ the State's academic content standards,
- ~ the State's student academic achievement standards,
- ~ the State and local academic assessments including alternate assessments,
- ~ the requirements of Part A,
- ~ how to monitor their child's progress, and
- ~ how to work with educators:

Jamestown Public Schools will use multiple points of access to ensure a wide range of learning opportunities for families and community members to elevate their understanding of student and school data, and to link and engage families with schools and the community to support student learning. Central Administration personnel are frequently solicited to speak on topics such as Common Core Learning Standards and ELA and Math Assessments during Jamestown City Council PTA meetings. In addition to annual, traditional Open House and Back to School Nights, all schools (often in partnership with Jamestown After School and other community organizations) have increased the quantity and quality of Family Information/Family Engagement events, such as Family Math, Science, and/or Literacy Nights, Using Data to Understand NWEA Assessments Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) and Student Report Cards, How to Support Student Learning at Home, and How to Prevent Summer Learning Loss. Individual student assessment results are

sent to parents, and student progress toward meeting the standards is discussed during conference times, which have been made more flexible to accommodate the schedules of parents and families. It should be noted that students receiving Title I and other remedial services receive additional information in their report cards. \*The Policy Committee cites current research, indicating the exponential benefit of moving beyond the traditional parent-teacher conference, and therefore recommends exploring and piloting the evidence-based **Academic Parent Teacher Teams** model, developed by Maria Paredes. WestEd reports, *“To be truly engaged in their child’s education, parents have to know what’s happening in the classroom and know exactly what they can do at home to support learning. Building on over four decades of research indicating that family engagement is one of the strongest predictors of students’ academic success, APTT takes a more focused and academically oriented approach than most traditional school-family participation events. Over the course of the school year, the APTT model features three 75-minute team conferences that include the teacher and the parents of all the students in the class, along with one 30-minute individual session between the teacher and each student and their parents. APTT gives families concrete information on their children’s academic progress and provides them with skills, strategies and resources to use at home with their children to reinforce targeted grade-level learning goals.”* Jamestown Community Learning Council (a community partnering organization) provides the research-based Parents as Teachers Child Development and Family Support Program, as well as Project EASE (Educational Advocacy and Scholastic Enrichment) at all District elementary schools, which incorporate child development knowledge with family learning packets (that complement classroom learning and are aligned to The Common Core) during monthly home visits conducted by trained Family Educators, and which also invite parents into schools to observe classroom learning and engage in group discussion.

- B. The school district will, with the assistance of its schools, provide materials and training to help parents work with their children to improve their children’s academic achievement, such as literacy training, and using technology, as appropriate, to foster parental engagement, by:

Making materials, training, and support services readily available and accessible to parents through a variety of means, including, but not limited to: translating resource materials, District, school, and classroom information into pertinent languages; by providing interactive take-home activities and materials (such as New York City Department of Education Parent Roadmaps and National PTA Kindergarten – Grade 12 Parent Guides to The Common Core) during Family Information/Engagement events; by creating awareness for and facilitating use of online curriculum support resources (such as module tip sheets and homework helpers found on EngageNY and Eureka

Math websites); by (when practicable and feasible) providing child care for younger siblings during grade-level family information sessions; by collaborating with community partners who provide home visits, acculturation, outreach, tutoring, mentoring, mental/emotional/physical health, life skills, family education and support services, to maximize the access to and effectiveness of the cross-referral systems and supports available throughout the community. The District, in partnership with trusted community organizations, will pilot a research-based Scholastic summer reading intervention program during the summer of 2016, which will incorporate family engagement opportunities, designed to galvanize parents as equal partners in preventing summer learning loss and narrowing achievement gaps.

- C. The school district will, with the assistance of its schools and parents, educate its teachers, pupil services personnel, principals and other staff, (including its front office personnel, who are gatekeepers to a welcoming school environment), in how to reach out to, communicate with, and work with parents as equal partners, in the value and utility of contributions of parents, and in how to implement and coordinate parent programs and build ties between parents and schools, by:

Upholding the ideology found within the Dual Capacity-Building Framework that states, *“Educators must be trained to integrate family engagement into their instructional practice, and must think of families as true partners in the enterprise of teaching and learning – co-producers and co-creators of effective school systems that serve all children;”* by providing professional development for all school staff on how to create and ensure a welcoming school environment, how to actively seek and cultivate trusting and respectful relationships with diverse families and community stakeholders, and how to actively strive for and sustain healthy partnerships with families and community organizations that are linked to student needs. During the 2015-2016 school year, members of the District Leadership Team investigated the imperative within Eric Jensen’s book, Engaging Students With Poverty in Mind, which propelled several schools to facilitate staff book studies, using Jensen’s research to understand that engagement is the key factor in the academic success of economically disadvantaged students. The District and its community partnering organizations will strive to increase the number of bilingual (Spanish-speaking) staff, and will maintain, and/or increase the number of bilingual staff within the recently established Office of Central Registration. The District will provide Karen Mapp’s, “Redesigning Family Engagement” training to staff at all schools, as well as community partners and parents, during the summer of 2016. A subsequent training, conducted by Byron Garrett, Chairman of the National Family Engagement Alliance is slated for fall, 2016.

- D. The school district will, to the extent feasible and appropriate, coordinate and integrate parental involvement programs and activities with *Head Start*, the *Parents As Teachers Program*, *Partners for Children*, *Jamestown After School*, *School Linkages*, *Striders Mentoring*, *Outreach*, and *Tutoring*, *After School Amigos*, and public preschool and other programs, and conduct other activities, such as parent resource centers, that encourage and support parents in more fully participating in the education of their children, by:

fully supporting and funding, to the extent possible, the services (previously described) of Parents as Teachers Family Educators in all District elementary schools; by maintaining ongoing communication, collaboration, and cross-referral systems with community partnering organizations and community-based Universal Pre-Kindergarten provider; by assuring professional development opportunities for same, and by pursuing opportunities with the New York State Family Resource Center Network to establish a local Family Resource Center that is easily accessible, strength-based, family-focused, flexible, culturally sensitive, and supportive of the Jamestown community.

- E. The school district will take the following actions to ensure that information related to the school and parent programs, meetings, and other activities, is sent to the parents of participating children in an understandable and uniform format, including alternative formats upon request, and, to the extent practicable, in a language the parents can understand, by: deploying a variety of strategies that will result in improving communications and deepening engagement for both families and the broader community. Actions will include: surveying stakeholders to assess needs for improved communications (winter, 2015), making all communications accessible and easily understandable through varied sources (District and/or classroom websites, Face Book, Twitter, Blackboard Connect emails, phone calls, District mobile application, Parent Portal, home visits, face-to-face meetings/conferences, letters) and available in pertinent languages; by collaborating with community outreach specialists and Family Educators to convey information and, if indicated, to convey parents, themselves, to school and parent programs, meetings and other family engagement activities.

### **PART III. DISCRETIONARY DISTRICT WIDE PARENT INVOLVEMENT POLICY COMPONENTS**

*Jamestown Public Schools Discretionary District Wide Parent/Family and Community Engagement Components have been incorporated with those statutory requirements described on preceding pages.*



