



**Title I**  
**Parent & Family Engagement Plan**  
**2020/2021**

Worcester County Public School's Board of Education and Title I office plan and support program activities, trainings, communication, and all procedures for involving parents in Title I schools so that the implementation of the Title I program can be effective. Worcester County has adopted a Parent & Family Engagement Plan to support the goal of increasing Parent & Family Engagement and partnerships in the schools. This plan outlines the efforts to engage parents and families and build capacity for both parents and educators alike in forming a strong partnership to promote the educational goals that support high academic expectations.

To support this plan, Worcester County Public Schools' Title I Office will:

1. Engage parents and families in jointly revising the Title I Parent & Family Engagement Plan (annually and with the District Wide Parent Family Engagement Team). The Parent & Family Engagement Plan is a part of Worcester County's ESSA Consolidated Strategic Plan.
  - Invite parents from each Title I school to review, provide feedback and suggestions, and revise the district-wide Parent & Family Engagement Plan
2. Provide coordination and technical assistance to schools in planning and implementing effective parent engagement activities to improve student achievement and school performance.
  - Participate in school level Parent Advisory Committee meetings twice a year. Plans are developed and reviewed at these meetings. Implementation is discussed.
  - Participate in each school's School Improvement Advisory Committee meeting (September).
  - Review plan and discuss evaluation methods of plan with CRTs/Title I Teachers and administrators (August).
  - Hold monthly meetings with Curriculum Resource Teachers (CRTs)/Title I Teachers from each school and school administrators to support their efforts

- in the implementation of parent activities.
  - Visit each school regularly to assure that their school level plans are being implemented and provide technical assistance as requested.
3. Provide assistance to parents in understanding Maryland's academic content and student achievement standards, state and local assessments, Title I requirements, as well as how to monitor a child's progress and to work with educators to improve student achievement.
- Maintain and update the WCPS' website including information on state academic standards, achievement standards, achievement levels of each school, Title I, and state and local assessments.
  - Provide inservice to staff on Maryland's academic content and student achievement standards, state and local assessments, and Title I requirements.
  - Include information about the standards, assessment, and achievement in the county's parent/calendar handbook and each school's parent handbook (September).
  - Invite parents to attend state and local conferences (as appropriate).
  - Post copies of the county Parent & Family Engagement Plan on the district's and each school's web page for parents to view.
  - Insert a copy of the county Parent & Family Engagement Plan in each school's parent handbook.
4. The Title I Office, in coordination with the CRTs/Title I Teachers, will provide materials and training to help parents work with their children to improve achievement.
- Annually conduct parent surveys to help identify and design workshops that encourage and support parent and family engagement.
  - On the school website, provide tips for parents in how to support student learning at home.
  - Conduct training sessions for school staff in supporting parents in helping their child with learning.
  - Offer parent outreach activities at various times that focus on parenting skills in the areas of reading, math, science, and technology. These activities will be conducted by school staff with the support of the Title I office.
5. Educate instructional staff, with parental assistance, in the contribution of parents and how to reach out and communicate with parents as equal partners.
- Each school's Parent Advisory Committee (PAC) will discuss ideas for faculty meetings and trainings that support communication and partnerships between parents and teachers.
  - CRTs/Title I Teachers will meet with school faculty to provide sessions

related to parent and family engagement. Engage parents and families in the development of training for teachers, principals, and other educators to improve the effectiveness of that training.

6. **Coordinate and integrate Parent & Family Engagement programs and activities with other Federal, State, and local programs to support parents to participate in the education of their children.**
  - **The District Title I Office serve on the Early Childhood Advisory Council (ECAC) and meet five times per year with all partners – Head Start, The Worcester County Health Department, Worcester County Library, child care providers, The Infant Toddler Program, Worcester County Adult Education Program, Worcester County Mental Health Program, Lower Shore Resource Center, and the Frog Tree Program Coordinator.**
  - **Meet after each Judy Center meeting with each school’s Title I Teacher to determine-the best way to coordinate efforts to reach all parents for training, literacy, nutrition, child development, and community services.**
7. **Provide written communication to parents, to the extent possible, in a language and format that they can understand. Provide interpreters and translators whenever possible for meetings and written documents.**
8. **Provide funds for reasonable and necessary expenses related to parent and family engagement activities, including transportation and child care, to enable parents to participate in school related meetings and training sessions.**
9. **Arrange-school meetings at a variety of times.-Conduct-telephone conferences between teachers or other educators who work directly with participating children and parents who are unable to attend these conferences at school.**
10. **Utilize each school’s Parent Advisory Committee (PAC) to provide advice on all matters related to parent and family engagement in Title I programs including in the decision regarding how Title I Parent and Family Engagement funds are allotted for parent involvement activities.**

**Worcester County Public Schools recognizes the importance of increasing the engagement of parents in the educational process. The partnership between educators and parents is critical to the success of every student. WCPS’ have included a goal in the Worcester County’s ESSA Consolidated Strategic Plan devoted to increasing parent, family and community engagement. Annually we evaluate our program by conducting two parent surveys with all schools. The first survey in September, is designed to evaluate the effectiveness of our programs including barriers to participation and of parent priorities for the school system. The second survey in May, is centered on communication. Parents are asked to give us feedback about how the teachers, the schools, and the system communicate with parents about their child, assessment, achievement, opportunities, and all areas related to their child. Each**

**school and the Title I office receives survey results to guide decisions for parent and family engagement plans and needed activities.**

## **Worcester County Public Schools Parental & Family Engagement Policy**

### **POL. I-C-4 Parent/Community Involvement**

The Worcester County Board of Education recognizes that a child's education is a responsibility shared by the school, family, and community during the entire period the child participates in school. A mutually supportive relationship among home, school, and community contributes to the development of both the child and the community. Partnerships result in such sharing. To accomplish the mission of the Worcester County schools to successfully educate all students, the community, the schools, the parents and the students must work as cooperating knowledgeable partners.

The Worcester County Board of Education will support schools in their efforts to increase student achievement by helping them interpret the results of all assessments and to develop school improvement plans that incorporate parent/community involvement as a means for improving school performance.

Specifically, the school system will:

- A. Publicize its commitment to parent/community involvement in the schools;
- B. Recognize exemplary programs and practices related to parent and community involvement;
- C. Create an environment that is conducive to learning and supports strong comprehensive family involvement programs;
- D. Seek funding sources for the development, implementation and evaluation of programs;
- E. Disseminate information and research on parent and community involvement;
- F. Inform and involve parents in a variety of types and degrees while recognizing the diverse needs of families in the community;
- G. Provide programs that train parents in parenting skills and in assisting their children academically;
- H. Make parent involvement an integral part of the school improvement process;
- I. Encourage parents to become involved in their children's academic progress;
- J. Assist parents in learning techniques designed to assist their children in learning at home;
- K. Seek partnerships with interested businesses and service organizations.

Schools must develop innovative ways to involve and serve parents and other community members. Educators, parents, students, businesses, and other members of the community must assume joint responsibility for contributing to the fulfillment of the educational aspirations of children and adults. A community's investment in education is an investment in itself.

ADP. 8/02

POL. I-C-4

### **Notice to Parents**

Federal law allows you to ask for certain information about your child's classroom teachers, and requires the school to give this information to you in a timely manner. Specifically, you have the right to ask for the following information:

- \* Whether the Maryland State Department of Education has licensed or qualified the teacher for the grades and subjects he or she teaches.
- \* Whether the Maryland State Department of Education has decided that the teacher can teach in a classroom without being licensed or qualified under state regulations because of special

circumstances.

- \* The teacher's college major; whether the teacher has any advanced degrees and, if so, the subject of degrees.
- \* Whether any teacher's aides or similar paraprofessionals provide services to your child and, if they do, their qualifications.

If you would like to receive this information, please contact Dwayne Abt, Human Resources Department of Worcester County Public Schools at 410-632-5073.

Federal law also requires that each school develop a school improvement plan. Each school also develops a school parent and family engagement policy/plan, the Title I program, and the school compact are shared at a meeting held in September in each Title I school. Additionally, copies of these will be sent to you throughout the school year. After you have looked over these documents, please feel free to contact the school if you want additional information or need some explanation. As a parent you have the right to question the school program by writing a dissenting statement about what you think should be handled differently. Your complaint would then be addressed following the Worcester County Complaint Policy and Procedure. If you have any questions about this policy, please contact Dwayne Abt Supervisor of Human Resources at 410-632-5073.

If you have any questions about any of these documents you can contact the school principals or, Denise Shorts, Chief Academic Officer PreK-8/Title I Coordinator at 410-632-5023.

#### **VII-A-24 Complaint Policy for Grant Funded Programs**

It is the policy of the Worcester County Public Schools that uniform procedures shall be used by the Central Office and local schools for managing complaints in the administration of state and federal programs.

It is also the policy of the Worcester County Public Schools that the complaint procedures shall be implemented whenever a complaint is received alleging that the Worcester County Public Schools or one of its subgrantees has violated a state or federal statute of regulation.

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#### **PRO. VII.13 Complaint Procedure and Management: Grant Funded Programs**

To establish procedures which provide a mechanism for the acceptance, review, investigation, and resolution of written complaints about Federal programs received by the Worcester County School Board. These procedures shall be implemented upon receipt of a written complaint alleging that the school system or school has violated a state or Federal statute or regulation.

##### **A. Filing of Complaint**

1. An organization or an individual may file a complaint with Worcester County Public Schools alleging that Worcester County Public Schools has violated a state or Federal statute or regulation that applies to a program supported by Federal funds. A complaint includes a request for review of a decision of the school system, but does not include a request for a due process hearing.
2. The complaint shall be in writing, addressed to the superintendent, and signed by the individual complainant or by an official of the complaining organization.
3. Each complaint shall contain:
  - a. A statement that the school system has violated a requirement of a Federal or state statute or regulation that apply to a program and
  - b. The facts upon which the statement is based.
4. The complaint may include a request to review a decision of a school, department or subgrantee.
5. Complainants whose allegations fail to meet the requirements will be notified of the additional information required to investigate or resolve this matter.

**B. Receipt of Complaint**

1. Complaints shall be received by the superintendent or designee. The complaint may be assigned to a person not named in the complaint.
2. Within 10 school business days of a receipt of a complaint, the complainant shall be notified in writing of:
  - a. The date of receipt of the complaint; and
  - b. The intent to investigate the complaint; and
  - c. The estimated date the complainant will be notified of the resolution, normally within 60 calendar days from the date of receipt of the complaint; and
  - d. The name and title of the individual investigating the complaint.
3. A school or department named in a complaint shall be provided with a copy of the complaint and letter of acknowledgement.

**C. Investigation of Complaints**

1. The superintendent or designee shall review and investigate the complaint as appropriate. Where necessary, an independent on-site investigation may be conducted.
2. If the superintendent determines that exceptional circumstances warrant an extension of time in excess of 60 days to investigate and resolve the matter, the complainant shall be so informed in writing with inclusion of the extended deadline date. Exceptional circumstances may include, but are not limited to, the complexity of the issues raised or the unavailability of key personnel.
3. Upon completion of the investigation, the superintendent shall review the findings to determine if there has been a violation of the applicable state or Federal statute or regulation and if corrective action is required.

**D. Resolution of Complaint**

1. The parties shall be informed in writing of the resolution of the complaint, including:

- a. If a violation of state or Federal statute or regulation was determined; and
- b. Any action that will be taken, if applicable, in response to the complaint; and
- c. Notice of the right of appeal the decision to the Board of Education.

2. A record of the complaint and supporting documents will be maintained in accordance with state and Federal regulations.

**If you have questions, concerns or comments about the Title I program, or want additional information please contact:**

**Ms. Denise Shorts, Chief Academic Officer for Instruction: PreK-8/ District Title I Coordinator**

**Contact Number: 410-632-5025**

**[DRShorts@worcesterk12.org](mailto:DRShorts@worcesterk12.org)**

**Chris Welch, Buckingham Elementary School Principal**

**Contact Number: 410-632-5305**

**[CJWelch@worcesterk12.org](mailto:CJWelch@worcesterk12.org)**

**Laura Arenella, Buckingham Elementary School, Title I School Specialist**

**Contact Number: 410-632-5317**

**[LArenella@worcesterk12.org](mailto:LArenella@worcesterk12.org)**

**Michael Browne, Pocomoke Elementary School Principal**

**Contact Number: 410-632-5135**

**[MLBrowne@worcesterk12.org](mailto:MLBrowne@worcesterk12.org)**

**Lavonya Dashiell, Pocomoke Elementary School Title I Specialist**

**Contact Number: 410-632-5134**

**[LJdashiell@worcesterk12.org](mailto:LJdashiell@worcesterk12.org)**

**Karen Marx, Snow Hill Elementary School Principal**

**Contact Number: 410-632-5215**

**[KTMarx@worcesterk12.org](mailto:KTMarx@worcesterk12.org)**

**Kristina Belcher, Snow Hill Elementary School Title I Specialist**

**Contact Number: 410-632-5210**

**[KLBelcher@worcesterk12.org](mailto:KLBelcher@worcesterk12.org)**