



Parent and Family Engagement Policy

*Georgia School for the Deaf
School Year 2018-2019
Revision Date 10/01/2018*

Georgia School for the Deaf believes that parents and families are key members of the school community and values their participation in making decisions that will impact their child's education. GSD is a Title I school as part of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). Title I is a federally-funded program designed to support state and local reform efforts tied to the challenging State academic standards to improve teaching and learning for students. Title I programs must be based on effective means of improving student achievement and include strategies to support family engagement. All Title I schools must jointly develop with parents and family members a written parent and family engagement policy.

The Georgia School for the Deaf agrees to implement the following requirements as outlined by Section 1116 of the Every Student Succeeds Act:

- Involve parents, in an organized, ongoing, and timely way, in the planning, review, and improvement of programs under Title I, Part A, including the planning, review, and improvement of the school parent and family engagement policy and the joint development of the schoolwide program plan under Section 1114(b) of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).
- Update the school parent and family engagement policy periodically to meet the changing needs of parents and the school, distribute it to the parents of participating children, and make the parent and family engagement policy available to the local community.
- Provide full opportunities, to the extent practicable, 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 ESSA in an understandable and uniform format, including alternative formats upon request and, to the extent practicable, in a language parents understand.

- If the schoolwide program plan under Section 1114(b) of the ESSA is not satisfactory to the parents of participating children, submit any parent comments on the plan when the school makes the plan available to the local educational agency.
- Be governed by the following statutory definition of parent and family engagement and will carry out programs, activities, and procedures in accordance with this definition:

Parent and Family Engagement means the participation of parents in regular, two-way, and meaningful communication involving student academic learning and other school activities, including ensuring:

- (A) Parents play an integral role in assisting their child's learning
- (B) Parents are encouraged to be actively involved in their child's education at school
- (C) 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) Other activities are carried out, such as those described in Section 1116 of the ESSA

To help improve and increase parent and family involvement, GSD has developed this Parent and Family Engagement Policy.

JOINTLY DEVELOPED

To meet the changing needs of parents and the school, the Georgia School for the Deaf will take the following actions annually to involve parents in an organized, ongoing, and timely manner in the planning, review, and improvement of Title I programs, including opportunities for regular meetings, if requested by parents, to formulate suggestions and to participate, as appropriate, in decisions relating to the education of their child and respond to any such suggestions as soon as practicably possible:

- Opportunities to complete parent surveys
- Planning meetings
- Email and website notifications of how to provide feedback

The Parent and Family Engagement Policy will be made available on the school website, posted to the school Facebook page, and sent home with students annually. If parents submit comments indicating the Parent and Family Engagement Plan is not satisfactory, the comments will be submitted via email or US mail to the Division of State Schools in a timely manner.

ANNUAL TITLE I PARENT MEETING

An annual meeting will take place during summer registration to explain GSD's Title I Program, the nature of the Title I program, parental requirements, the parent and family engagement policy, the schoolwide plan, and the school-parent compact. Additionally, the meeting will provide information about the school curriculum, state and local assessments, and GSD's performance profile showing our school's progress toward meeting the learning goals of Georgia Department of Education. Parents will be notified about this meeting at least two months in advance in a variety of ways (for example, via an announcement in the registration information sent home to parents in the spring of the prior school year, the school website, mailings, the weekly newsletter, and/or Facebook). Parents will have the opportunity to attend this meeting on one of three days at a time of their choosing. Child care for young children may be provided. The meeting will be available in ASL and spoken English with spoken Spanish interpretation upon request.

COMMUNICATIONS

Georgia School for the Deaf will provide parents and families with timely information about the Title I programs via email, letters sent home with students or by US mail, the school website, the school Facebook page, and in person during periodic meetings (including the Annual Title I Parent meeting held on the required registration day, which eliminates additional travel for families). Information may also be provided during annual IEP meetings or online meetings. This policy and select other publications will be provided in English and Spanish. Child care for young children may be provided upon advance request.

SCHOOL-PARENT COMPACT

A School-Parent Compact will be developed jointly by utilizing feedback from GSD faculty and staff, GSD families, GSD students, and community stakeholders, detailing the shared responsibility of parents, students, and schools for improving student achievement. In order to build and develop partnerships that will help children achieve the challenging state academic standards, the school will provide methods that encourage feedback on this document, such as Regional Meetings, surveys, emails, newsletters, and periodic meetings. GSD's School-Parent Compact will be distributed to families in a timely manner and parents, students and school representatives will sign the agreement. The School-Parent Compact shall be delivered to parents via student or US mail, available at the school, and posted on the school website and Facebook.

COORDINATION OF SERVICES

GSD will, to the extent feasible and appropriate, coordinate and integrate parent and family engagement programs and activities with other Federal, State, and local programs, and conduct other activities that encourage and support parents in more fully participating in the education of their children. GSD has established partnerships with the Cave Spring Center (Vocational Rehab) and the Floyd County Schools College and Career Academy to better serve the needs of our students. GSD will work with school-business partners to provide information about opportunities for organizations and businesses to work together with parents. GSD will describe appropriate roles for community-based organizations and businesses in parent involvement activities.

BUILDING CAPACITY OF PARENTS

Georgia School for the Deaf will build the parents' capacity for strong parent and family engagement to ensure effective involvement of parents and to support a partnership among the school and the community to improve student academic achievement. Opportunities will be provided for parents to learn about our programs and to share ideas of how to help their student. GSD will provide assistance and services to all parents of Title I students as appropriate. These services include an understanding of the Georgia Standards of Excellence, state and local academic assessments (including the Georgia Milestones), Title I, Part A requirements, how to support and monitor a child's progress and how to work with teachers to improve student achievement. State assessment results will be sent home with report cards. State and local assessment results will be shared, interpreted, and discussed during IEP meetings. ASL and academic resources will be shared continually via the school website, the weekly newsletter, materials sent home with students, and the GSD Facebook page. Parents

are strongly encouraged to attend periodic Regional Meetings offered across the state and parents are given the opportunity to participate in the Family Engagement Biannual Conference. The school will also hold a Family Learning Week at the beginning of the summer break, which will include an ASL immersion program as well as parent classes. A calendar of opportunities is provided in the Family Handbook that is posted on our school website. When available, GSD will provide housing in our dorms for our parents who wish to participate in on-campus events.

BUILDING CAPACITY OF SCHOOL STAFF

Georgia School for the Deaf will provide training to educate teachers, specialized instructional support personnel, principals and other school leaders, and other staff, with the assistance of parents, in the value and utility of contributions of parents, and in how to reach out to, communicate with, and work with parents as equal partners, implement and coordinate parent programs, and build ties between parents and the school by participating in workshops, webinars, conferences, and other professional learning opportunities. The school's Family Engagement Coordinator will work with school faculty and staff to coach them on ways to facilitate parent involvement. Parents are encouraged to communicate directly with their child's teacher(s) to seek or provide assistance in developing a better relationship and improving engagement. Parents will also have the opportunity to participate in surveys that provide input into how the school staff can better help them support their child's education. .

Georgia School for the Deaf will provide other reasonable support for parent and family engagement activities under Section 1116 as parents may request by keeping the lines of communication open with a variety of options, such as email, phone, and videophone. Spanish copies of documents will be provided in as many cases as possible. The Family Engagement Coordinator will respond to parent requests for family engagement activities and is available to consult with parents and provide support upon request. GSD will strive to provide parents with support for attending conferences and workshops upon request.

YOUR PARTICIPATION

GSD strongly welcomes input and feedback from parents and families on this policy and the school-parent compact. You can be involved in many ways:

- Complete parent surveys (online and paper)
- Attend annual revision meetings and the parent input meeting (summer)
- Attend Regional Meetings (throughout the year)
- Contact GSD's Family Engagement Coordinator, Marie Dickinson, at mdickinson@doe.k12.ga.us
- Visit the GSD website at www.gsdweb.org and complete a feedback form
- Contact the front office at 706-777-2200 (voice) or 678-710-8966 (VP)