

POLICY

BALTIMORE CITY BOARD OF SCHOOL COMMISSIONERS

FAMILY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

I. Purpose

This policy establishes the framework and responsibilities for the implementation of strategies to increase family and community engagement throughout Baltimore City Public Schools (“City Schools”). The Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners (“Board”) supports the development of a goal-oriented, comprehensive program of family and community engagement that supports the academic achievement of all students and that meets local, state, and federal mandates.

II. Definitions

- A. *City Schools* – Includes all departments and components of City Schools that have a role in accomplishing the goals of this policy.
- B. *Parents* or *families* – These terms are used interchangeably and include caregivers who are responsible for a child in City Schools.

III. Policy Standards

- A. The Board believes that family and community engagement is an important component for student success. The engagement of parents, families, and community members in the education of our children creates a positive bond between the home and the school.
- B. The Board recognizes that strong, continuing family and community engagement, in all aspects of school programs and activities, provides support for measurable improvement in student achievement.
- C. An effective, school-family community collaboration assures parents, families, and community members the opportunity to effectively work together and participate in making decisions at all levels in support of improved academic performance for all students. The Board is committed to building engagement capacity in communication, parenting across the grades, volunteering, at-home learning, decision making, collaborating with the community, and advocacy. The Board’s goal, through this Family and Community Engagement policy, is to create a collaborative environment in which the parents, the families, and the communities of our students are invited and encouraged to be involved stakeholders in the school community.

- D. To provide a more responsive and inviting school climate and increase the level of family and community engagement, City Schools will continue to develop and implement system-wide and school-based strategies and programs, based on the National Standards for School-Parent Partnerships and other research-based programs.
- E. The Board will regularly consult and meet quarterly with the Parent and Community Advisory Board (“PCAB”). Per state law, PCAB will meet quarterly with the Chief Executive Officer and may meet more frequently by mutual agreement.
- F. Schools will use a uniform school climate survey to gauge the level of school support for parent and family involvement as well as other aspects of the school. City Schools will provide a uniform climate survey for all schools.

IV. Implementation Strategies

- A. City Schools will regularly provide opportunities for parents, families, and community members to participate in the dialogue and decision-making related to district-wide and school-based issues.
- B. City Schools will provide coordination, support and training for the engagement of all parents, families, and community members. This policy also supports the fulfillment of federal and state parent involvement mandates, including Title I.
- C. Each Baltimore City public school will ensure that a family and community engagement program is implemented and will involve parents in jointly developing school-level parent involvement plans.
- D. Each Baltimore City public school shall establish a recognized, organized parent group if one does not currently exist.
- E. Each Baltimore City public school shall have an active School Family Council (“Council”), previously known as the “School Improvement Team”.
- F. Each Baltimore City public school annually shall hold at least one public meeting to which all parents shall be invited at a time convenient for family and community members.
- G. Each Baltimore City public school shall develop a Home-School Parent Compact, similar to the compact mandated by Title I, to identify the responsibilities of school staff, parents, families, and students to ensure the academic achievement of all students.
- H. Every City Schools program effort that requires parental input is to be formally presented to PCAB, as an agenda item, at a publicly scheduled PCAB meeting.

- I. City Schools will implement and make available a complaint/concern process for all families and members of the public.
- J. City Schools will provide a comprehensive and coordinated program of training, peer-to-peer sessions, technical assistance and other supports to build the capacity of parents, community partners and school staff in planning and implementing effective parent involvement activities to improve student and school performance.
- K. City Schools and each school will offer training and materials to help parents/families monitor and support the academic achievement of their children. Materials and information sent home to parents shall be in clear and understandable format and language.
- L. City Schools will develop and use effective communication methods to ensure that all families, regardless of income, ethnic background, or language, whose children attend Baltimore City public schools, share and receive school-to-home and home-to-school communications about district, school and classroom programs, and student progress. Information on school and parent programs will be provided in a format and language that parents can understand.
- M. City Schools will coordinate parent involvement strategies with other programs, such as Head Start, that involve parents in participating in the education of their children. City Schools will support schools in developing partnerships with community-based organizations that promote parent involvement.
- N. Special City Schools programs that students may attend for a portion of the year should establish tailored efforts to engage families and the community to improve student and program performance.

V. Compliance

- A. For this Policy KCA, the Board retains its authority to approve the CEO's administrative regulations. Therefore, if and when the CEO proposes changes to the administrative regulations (KCA-RA), the CEO must first consult with appropriate stakeholders, including PCAB. The CEO shall then submit the final proposed changes to the Board at a public Board business meeting for its review and approval before such changes are implemented.
- B. The Board requires that the CEO annually assess the implementation of this policy. City Schools will develop, with the input of parents/families and community members, an annual assessment tool at both the school level and the system level to measure the effectiveness of this policy and the degree to which annual goals have been met.
- C. The CEO shall report to the Board annually on the implementation of this policy. City Schools will make the CEO's report available to the principal, Councils, and

organized parent groups in each school. City Schools will use public forums, focus groups, surveys and other methods to involve parents in the periodic review and proposed amendment as necessary of this policy.

VI. Legal and Policy References

A. Legal Authority

§ 4-303, MD. CODE ANN., EDUC.

§ 4-308, MD. CODE ANN., EDUC.

B. Policy References

Related Board Policies: BEE, BGC

Replaces Board Rules 603, 604, 605, 606

C. Administrative Regulation References

KCA-RA