

# **CHOCTAW COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM**



**2018-2019**

**Parent & Family Engagement Plan**

## Parent and Family Engagement Plan

The Choctaw County School System will utilize a committee of parents to review and revise the district's parental involvement plan and solicit input regarding workshops via parent surveys.

The district will employ a Federal Programs Support Specialist and contract consultant services to provide assistance to schools in planning and implementing effective parental activities by building community bridges within individual attendance zones and the county at large. The district will also operate a parent resource center (Family Literacy Center).

Choctaw County will collaborate and coordinate activities that address common parent and school identified needs and pool resources to provide consultant services, and/or parent-centered material at the school and/or district level with 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers, Office of School Readiness Pre-K programs, and/or the Choctaw County Chamber of Commerce.

At the end of each year, the Federal Programs Director and the Federal Programs Support Specialist will review the number, type, and parent participation rate of parental involvement activities. The Federal Programs Director will conduct a district level parental involvement meeting with the Parent Focus Group that consists of demographic representatives, other program coordinators, and the Federal Programs Support Specialist in which the results of the review will be shared. Open discussion will be held to evaluate the district's parental involvement plan. The district will seek parental insight into the needs of parents and suggestions for overcoming barriers to involvement. The group will also examine and utilize data from the LEA's parent survey in revising the plan. Additional parental input will be solicited from parents who attend annual parent meetings at school sites.

### Assisting Parents with Helping Their Children Academically

The district requires its schools to offer after-school tutoring to assist parents in providing academic help to their children. In addition, schools must offer, at a minimum, parent empowerment sessions in the areas of reading and mathematics that are designed to assist parents in helping their children. The district also provides its parents with electronic access to *School Success Web Content* through its website. The program offers daily educational and parental tips. The district will sponsor at least four family events to address the importance of school and working with educators and/or to build strong school-home ties.

Along with providing family events at the district level, each school will provide opportunities for families to interact with school personnel at school programs designed to showcase student work and talents. Schools may host parent-child events to support school and family ties and transition sessions that assist parents and their children with the process.

## Plan Evaluation

The district will maintain its practice of utilizing a Parent Focus Group to provide insight into parental concerns and to serve as parent partners in schools and communities. The group consist of representatives from each school and is representative of the demographics of the student population. The group meets several times a year and assists in evaluating and developing the district Parent and Family Engagement Plan.

Choctaw County will use evaluation results to measure the effectiveness of previously employed strategies. Successful strategies will remain in operation unless the need no longer exists. Strategies that do not yield the expected outcome(s) will be examined to determine cause. Failure due to implementation design will be addressed in revision of the Parent and Family Engagement Plan.

## Building Capacity through Collaborative Effort

Choctaw County previously formulated a Parent Focus Group to serve as an advisory board for parental partnership efforts. The consistency of the board represents the district and school demographics. Members meet regularly with Federal Programs personnel to provide input into school programs, share parent concerns, receive training on federal requirements and district procedures, as well as assist in the development, implementation, and evaluation of the LEA's Parent and Family Engagement Plan. Members of the group share session information with parents in their respective communities.

The Choctaw County School System will build parents' capacity for strong parental engagement by requiring its schools to offer parent training on required topics during Parent Orientation Day, Title I and/or parent meetings. The district provides parent access to INOW/Chalkable Home Portal where they can electronically monitor their child's progress at will. Additional parent training on portal use is provided upon request. Schools will offer at least one reading/technology literacy, math empowerment session during the school year. Additional school specific parent workshops may also be offered.

The LEA will require its schools to offer parent literature (print and/or electronic) in its parent resource center or website, provide parent resources and access to technologies at its Family Literacy Center, offer technology and data security workshops, and offer "parent helps" from School Success Web Content Service via the district's website.

The district will seek and engage outside experts to conduct workshops on working effectively with parents and require each school to conduct staff training on building working relationships with parents. Opportunities for school personnel to attend conferences and workshops that address parental involvement issues will be provided. The district will train school staff on the Parent and Family Engagement Plan and evaluation. It will require schools to utilize flexible scheduling when offering parent and family engagement sessions. The district and each of its schools will continue to seek parental input by including parents on their planning teams.

### Coordination with Other Federal Programs

The school district will, to the extent feasible and appropriate, coordinate and integrate parental involvement programs and activities with Title I After-School Programs, Head Start, and 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers by collaborating and coordinating activities that address common parent and school identified needs; pooling resources to provide consultant services and/or parent-centered material at the school and/or district level; and conducting on-site parent workshops/training sessions and/or at alternative sites.

### Communication

The district and its schools utilize School Messenger, school websites, social media, and advertisement in the local newspaper to foster uniform communication to parents of important events and meetings, including a description of the meeting content. Schools use direct mail services to provide information to parents via the United States Postal Service. The district and its schools also use take home flyers to notify parents of events. TransAct and/or translator services provide parental information in the primary home language, where feasible and necessary. To increase parental access for special populations, the district's website is compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Choctaw County values its partnership with parents. The district requires each school to maintain a mechanism for receiving parent suggestions either electronically via school websites or physically through suggestion boxes maintained at the school site. Principals ensure review and response to submissions. Parent requests are also received at the Central Office where applicable personnel respond to their needs.

### Removing Barriers

The district and its schools utilize planning committees that include parent members in the development of parent and family engagement plans. Parents provide insight on training needs and parent concerns. Schools work with PTA/PTO Presidents in identifying areas for improved relations.

If necessary, the school district may provide basic literacy training for parents who cannot participate in adult education programs conducted by post-secondary schools due to financial and or/transportation barriers. Funds may be used to compensate teachers for conducting classes.

To help alleviate childcare barriers to parental participation, the district and its schools will utilize Title I funds to offer child care services during select events. School personnel will be compensated for engaging young children while their parents attend the events. Monthly events calendars will be implemented at all schools to help keep parents informed of upcoming activities.

Choctaw County will utilize members of the Parent Focus Group in partnership with the Federal Programs Support Specialist to serve as parent recruiters and trainers in their respective communities. Content from Parents as Partners will be used to help equip members of the group.

Likewise, schools will use this work in training staff to work with parents in a collaborative partnership. Contractual services through outside experts and organizers will provide an additional avenue for supporting parent training.

Choctaw County is committed to supporting all of its parents. School and select district personnel have already established the practice of making home visits where necessary to ensure parent participation. To facilitate feasibility of the practice, personnel will be able to utilize available district vehicles to meet with parents off-site. Where district vehicles are not available, personnel will receive reimbursement at the established rate for use of private vehicles.

District personnel will attend professional learning sessions to identify model approaches for improving parental involvement. It will also collaborate with SDE personnel in identifying models that are applicable to its demographics and investigate the feasibility of participation in the University of Alabama Parent Teacher Leadership Academy. Title I funds may be repurposed, if needed, to implement such programs.

### Community Partnerships

In order to build capacity for Parent and Family Engagement, the district will support partnerships with parents, businesses and the community to strengthen connections. Local businesses may be asked to donate door prizes for parent meetings and/or provide parents with an excused absence for participating in at least one parent-teacher or student showcase session. Business, community organizations and leaders may be called upon to conduct parent empowerment sessions in their field of expertise and/or to assist in facilitating parent events.

This LEA Parent and Family Engagement Policy has been developed jointly with, and agreed on with, parents of children participating in Title I, Part A programs as evidenced by meeting documentation. The school district will distribute this policy to all parents of participating Title I, Part A children on or before September 30, 2018.

Superintendent  
Plan Approval

August 30, 2018  
Approval Date

