

St. Mary's County Public Schools
Title I
Parent Involvement Plan
2018-2019

General Expectations of Parent Involvement: The St. Mary's County Public Schools' Title I Parent Involvement Policy provides for compliance with all federal requirements and mandates, as defined in ESSA.

The St. Mary's County Public School's vision graphic includes a circle with students in the center and schools, staff, and stakeholders surrounding them. The intentional placement of our stakeholders alongside our schools and staff demonstrates our acknowledgement that parents are partners in their child's success. We invite schools, families and communities to work collaboratively and to invest in children. Our stakeholders are part of the decision making process on every level and entity that encompasses a child's education. There is an additional circle on the exterior of the graphic noted as sustainability. The school system goal is to make sure that all initiatives and staffing patterns are sustainable and this goal is a continual focus for St. Mary's County Public Schools (SMCPS).

Our commitments to student's folds into Maryland's Protect Our Schools Act are in effect. The new framework will establish elements for both academic indicators and school quality indicators. The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) and the newly passed Protect Our Schools Act in Maryland provide the basis for school accountability to our students and ultimately our parents.

The parents of all Title I students are invited to participate in the quarterly School Improvement Team meetings or a similar meeting at each Title I school site. School Improvement Team meetings provide ongoing opportunities for parents to provide input in the development of the Master Plan, the Title I budget, the school Title I Parent Involvement Plan and the School-Parent Compact, as well as, educational and curricular issues that may impact their students.

Parent advisory panels at Title I schools are part of the establishment on numerous school based meetings and committees. Parental involvement is directly solicited and aids in the school decision making administrators are then responsible for seeing through completion. The parent advisory panel feedback provides diversity and student-centered programs that are inclusive of all.

The dates/times of all meetings are provided on the school website, in school newsletters, flyers, and announced through personal and automatic phone calling system and texting service, as appropriate.

Goal 1: COMMUNICATION - Schools and families will communicate frequently and clearly about academic opportunities, school performance, student progress, and school-family partnerships.

SMCPS activities will include:

- Parental Involvement Plan (PIP) – In collaboration with parents and schools, annually review, revise, and distribute a written Title I Parent Involvement Policy.
- Communication Methods – Parents will be informed of statewide, local, and school events through the SMCPS website, local news media, automated phone calls, text messages, Twitter, and newsletters. Parents will also be notified when appropriate of in home visits by the parent liaison or other district staff. The Parent Liaison office/center at each Title I school provides parent and family resources. The Title I Student, Family, and Staff Engagement Supervisor (SFSES) is also actively engaged in supporting students and families and will communicate critical information directly with parents in family conferences, via home visits, phone calls and through the use of electronic devices. Communications are followed up in writing when necessary.
- School Report Card/Individual Student Report Maryland has adopted Pre-Kindergarten - 12 rigorous academic standards that define what all students should know and be able to do across grade levels and content areas. Standards based grading and reporting will provide more information to parents about their child's progress regarding the Maryland College and Career Ready Standards (MCCRS.) Each parent will be provided with information detailing the academic standards and the achievement level the parent's child is making in each of the state academic assessments required under the law. The Individual Student Report Cards and Interim reports will be distributed to student families eight times during each school year. Parents may also log on to the web based Home Access Center (HAC) from any computer or mobile device, to review student grades and progress at any time. Grades and information posted to HAC will be current and updated regularly by classroom teachers. Computer access for HAC is also made available at school during school events for parents who would like to use it.
- Standards Based Report Cards (SBRC) - The Standards Based Report Card is used for primary students in SMCPS and is directly aligned with Maryland's College and Career Readiness Standards (CCRS). Title I SFSES will assist parent groups and individuals as necessary to explain and understand the performance levels students are working to achieve. A system level work group has work collaboratively with Title I teacher representatives to pursue CCRS based report cards for intermediate students.

School activities will include:

- Annual Meeting – Each Title I school will convene a meeting at the beginning of each school year to inform parents of their school’s participation in the Title I program, a description of the goals and support provided by Title I, a detailed description of the budget and the parent’s role in providing input, and the right of parents to be involved. During this meeting, families will be introduced to the Title I SFSES as well as the parent liaison at the Title I schools.
- Understandable Communication – Information related to school and parent programs should be sent to parents in a format and, to the extent practicable, in a language the parents can understand. Translated documents are available at all St. Mary’s County Schools. In addition, more detailed translation services are being made available as SMCPS is experiencing an increase in Spanish speaking families. In addition to the translated written documents, each Title I school has a person on staff that is proficient in speaking Spanish and can serve as a translator for an immediate need.
- Teacher/Paraprofessional Qualifications – Parents have the right to request information concerning the professional qualifications of their child’s teacher and qualifications of classroom paraeducators. This right is communicated to parents by letter on the first school day of each year. While Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) no longer requires each teacher and paraeducator to maintain certification status, SMCPS intends to continue this expectation for the 2018-2019 school year. Consequently all Title I employees will meet certification requirements. The licensure and credentialing status of school based staff is transparent and routinely shared by school administrators. The letter is also posted on the district and school websites.
- Parent Conference – Each Title I school will offer parents the opportunity to participate in a parent-teacher conference, at least annually, during which the school-parent compact shall be discussed as it relates to the child’s achievement. Parents of Pre-K students have additional time built into the school calendar for multiple parent conferences and parent engagement activities and parent workshops as this is typically the child’s first school experience. In addition, specific information related to state and local assessments, classroom performance, and school behaviors will be discussed throughout the year on an individual basis.
- Communication – Schools will respond promptly and positively to parents’ phone calls, letters, and visits. Schools will demonstrate outreach and transparency by inviting parents in, sharing news, and seeking their input. Schools will respond to parents within 48 hours of any request for information and provide information and a realistic timeline of when the parent can expect information and detailed follow up.

Additional parental/community activities may include:

- Community Organizations – Schools may invite community organizations such as the public library to co-sponsor activities to enhance communication between schools and families. In addition, schools will partner with local social agencies and include them in school events. These agencies include, but are not limited to, the Department of Social Services, FSNE, the Judy Center, Tri-County Youth Services, the Three Oaks Homeless Shelter, the Center for Children, and the Patuxent River Naval Air Station PEP program.
- Business Partners – Schools may involve business partners in supporting and enhancing curriculum through project-based learning and academic challenges involving parents and students.
- Meetings with the Principal and/or Leadership Staff – Schools may hold informal monthly meetings with the principal and administrative team to address questions or concerns, share insights, and solicit input. Members of parent advisory panels and elected members of parent teacher organizations are sought out for their insight and information as programs are initiated or modified.

Goal 2: PARENTING - Schools and communities will work together to support families' parenting skills and activities that prepare young children for school and promote ongoing achievement.

SMCPS activities will include:

- Promoting Family Literacy – Schools will provide, at a minimum, quarterly workshops for parents on literacy training, including book selection and reading with their children at home. Workshops will be alternatively scheduled during the evening and during the school day. Information will be disseminated on Adult Basic Education (ABE), General Educational Development (GED), and English as a Second Language (ESL) classes that are available in the county with contact information for personnel included.
- Providing Family Support – Parenting training, various literacy activities, and infused multicultural activities will be scheduled quarterly by the Parent Liaisons, Title I SFSES or other school based staff. Information will be disseminated on local sources of family support for health, nutrition, counseling, and other services.

School activities may include:

- Parent Workshops – Schools may hold workshops and sponsor speakers that address parenting and child-rearing skills, behavior management, gang and drug awareness, child and adolescent development, and any other topic that parents have expressed an interest in related to parent involvement and fostering academic success with their children. As Title I schools embrace and implement new reading strategies (IRLA - Independent Reading Level Assessment), parents of students at identified grade levels will be included/invited to workshops specifically for parents and guardians.

- Home Visits – Schools may schedule home visits as appropriate and will involve appropriate school staff. The Title I SFSES will regularly conference with and conduct home visits with the ten identified at risk students at each of the five Title I schools.
- Parent Satisfaction Survey – Each Title I school shall conduct, with the involvement of parents, an annual evaluation of the content and effectiveness of the parental involvement program in improving the academic quality of the school, including identifying barriers to greater participation by parents. This survey will be made available in numerous venues for ease of parent completion.

Additional parental/community activities may include:

- Public Library – Parents are encouraged to use the public library to promote early literacy. Further, the public library, as a strong partner with Title I schools, will participate in school based events as well.
- Safety Fair - Local law enforcement agencies may partner with schools to sponsor workshops on school, home, and community safety.
- Cultural Events – Schools may collaborate with local cultural institutions to provide family-friendly guides to local attractions.
- Early Childhood Readiness Opportunities – A focus on providing parents and childcare providers readiness activities support to foster connections with partnering agencies such as the Health Department, Department of Social Services, the Judy Center, Head Start, and The Center for Children; in addition to school based assessment and registration and will be sponsored by St. Mary’s County Early Childhood Access Committee (ECAC).

Goal 3: STUDENT LEARNING - Families will support academic achievement at home by reading with children, helping them with homework, and engaging them in educational activities.

SMCPS activities will include:

- Professional Development – Professional development will be provided to teachers to enhance and support the development of student academic performance using scientifically proven research-based programs. The Independent Reading Learning Assessments (IRLA) training through American Reading Company and the Literacy Lead will be provided at each Title I school.
- Parent Involvement Training for Staff – The Parent Liaison, Title I SFSES, principal, or principal designee at each site, with parental assistance and input, will provide annual training to school staff on the value of contributions of parents and how to reach out to and communicate with parents as equal partners in educating their children. Parents will also be asked to provide input

and in school decision making at the quarterly School Improvement Team meetings, Title I Information meetings, Parent Conference Day, and on the annual Parent Involvement Survey conducted at each school.

- Professional Development for parents - Professional development for parents can be provided based on input and requests from the parental community. School staff, central office staff, or professional consultants may provide the requested training and professional development. There are planned reading trainings using the IRLA Framework this year.
- Student Engagement and Learning - The Title I SFSES works directly with a students at each Title I school. Students are identified through parental referral, administrative recommendation, and/or local agency wrap around services. Students meet individually and in small group with the Title I SFSES to set goals for academic enrichment, the development of social skills, attendance, and career and college readiness standards. Parental support and resources accompany regularly scheduled home visits.

School activities may include:

- School-Parent Compact – Each Title I school shall develop, in collaboration with parents, a school-parent compact that outlines how parents, the school staff, and students will share the responsibility for improved student academic achievement.
- Parent Workshops – Schools may hold workshops for parents on at-home learning strategies. Workshops will be scheduled alternating between evening and day time to allow for maximum participation. Transportation and meals may be provided for parents and children.
- Academic Nights – Schools may sponsor academic nights for students and parents that focus on the school’s curriculum and Title I initiatives.
- Professional Development - Schools may offer professional development for parents throughout the school year both during the day and during the evenings.

Additional parent/community activities may include:

- Daily Reading Time for IRLA Steps – Families will be asked to support the IRLA reading initiative by establishing a daily reading time during which students read for thirty minutes each evening with materials provided by the school. This at home reading will ensure that the students are meeting the required at home reading steps associated with the Action 100 IRLA Framework.
- Reading Day – School may invite parents and community partners to visit classrooms and read to students.

Goal 4: VOLUNTEERISM - Parents and community members will volunteer in support of school improvement and student success.

SMCPS activities will include:

- Volunteer Recognition – SMCPS will sponsor a Board of Education recognition ceremony for parents, community members and business partners who volunteer in our schools.
- Volunteer Support – All parents and community members who volunteer in schools will be required to follow the SMCPS established procedures for school visitors and school volunteers. All parents and community members who provide volunteer support in classrooms will work under the direct supervision of the parent liaison and/or school volunteer coordinator and classroom teacher.

School activities will include:

- Volunteer Log – Each Title I school will maintain a volunteer log that will be updated annually.
- Volunteer Training – Each Title I school will provide training and support to ensure volunteers participate in a meaningful capacity that supports school improvement goals.
- Volunteer Recognition – Each Title I school will sponsor an annual volunteer appreciation event to recognize school volunteers.

Additional parental/community activities may include:

- Mentoring – Schools may partner with community agencies and/or faith based partners to sponsor a mentor program for at-risk students.
- Multicultural Fair – Schools may collaborate with community and parent groups to sponsor a multicultural fair where families share customs, cultural traditions, and foods.

Goal 5: SCHOOL DECISION MAKING - Parents, schools, and community members will collaborate on educational decisions that affect children, families, and school improvement.

SMCPS activities will include:

- Advisory Panels – The Title I SFSES will elicit information and feedback from parents on advisory panels, community advocates, local agencies and families. A weekly report on family and community engagement events is made to the SMCPS Division of Instruction (DOI) members by the Title I SFSES. This models a direct path of communication for parents and constituents of students to have a voice heard by district administrators. The purpose of the advisory panel is to share ideas and concerns that could be incorporated into future policies and guidelines for schools.
- Providing Information – Decisions involving changes in policy and curriculum will be provided in a variety of formats allowing ample time for feedback. Communication Methods – Parents will be informed of statewide, local, and

school events through the SMCPSS website, local news media, school websites, twitter, School Messenger phone system, and newsletters.

- Building Capacity for Involvement – SMCPSS shall provide assistance to parents in understanding such topics as the PARCC assessment, the Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (KRA), the Early Learning Assessment (ELA), nationally normed standardized tests, the state’s academic content standards, student academic achievement standards, the College and Career Readiness Standard curriculum, and Title I requirements for compliance. This information will be provided to all parents at the back-to-school Title I Information Meeting. This information can also be shared throughout the school year as necessary and if new families arrive and become a part of the school community.

School activities may include:

- School Improvement Team – Parents will be invited to participate in the regularly scheduled school improvement team meetings, including the Title I school budget development and approval.
- School Information Sessions including budget information - Parents will be invited to participate in numerous, ongoing meeting opportunities to learn more about Title I and to provide input into school based decision making and budgetary decisions related to Title I.
- Information Sessions related to curriculum – Schools may provide information sessions on various areas of the curriculum (e.g., new math or reading series program, standards based report cards) at times and places accessible to family and community members.
- School Newsletter and Minutes – Schools may highlight specific educational issues being addressed by the School Improvement Team. This information will be posted on the school’s website.
- Classroom Visits – Schools may encourage parents and community members to visit classrooms following the established protocol for visitors.

Additional parental/community activities may include:

- Speakers – Schools may invite school board members and central office professional staff to address parents and teachers.
- Advocacy – Schools may provide a table or bulletin board to increase community awareness of upcoming events that may impact educational decisions.
- Partners - Schools may invite community partners in to answer questions and inform the community about resources and services available to them.
- Consultants - Schools may invite educational experts to provide parent trainings and demonstrations for them.

Goal 6: COMMUNITY COLLABORATION - St. Mary's County Public School System, including all Title I schools, will strive to collaborate effectively with The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) and local community organizations, agencies, and businesses to promote the academic achievement of all students and the success of all schools.

SMCPS activities will include:

- ESSA Compliance – SMCPS will facilitate dissemination of information and compliance with all requirements of the new ESSA law at annual Title I Information Meetings, at school based meetings, and on the SMCPS Title I system and school websites.
- Periodic meetings with local agencies and community advocates to which all parents are informed of their occurrence and welcome to attend.
- Monthly meetings of the Early Childhood Access Committee (ECAC) team sponsored by the Local Management Board which are published in local newspapers, radio, and school flyers.
- Community Resources – SMCPS will disseminate information about community resources (e.g., health and welfare agencies, libraries, cultural events) to allow for easy access to information and services.

School activities may include:

- Information Nights – Schools may hold information nights for community leaders, businesses, and organizations to describe the school's strengths and needs as a basis for potential partnering. Meetings and information nights will be planned and enhanced as a result of parent input and requests.
- Recognition – Schools may recognize publicly and/or privately the support of community/business partners.

Additional parental/community activities may include:

- Career Fair – Schools may collaborate with community partners to sponsor career fairs.
- Service Projects – Schools may partner with community agencies to identify student service learning projects.
- Neighborhood Visits - Schools may walk or take bus rides into the neighborhoods of our students to meet and greet the family.