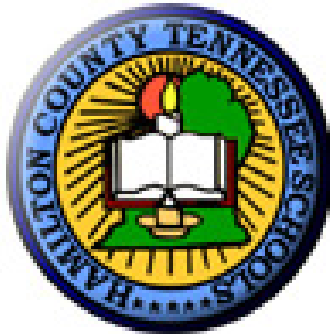


# Family Engagement Plan



**Hamilton County Department of Education**  
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## **Hamilton County Department of Education Family Engagement Plan**

**Studies show that when parents are actively engaged in the school life of a child, that child performs better. Consequently, the Hamilton County Department of Education has adopted the following goals:**

**Goal #1** – Break down all barriers to parent involvement.

- Ensure that parents feel welcome in the schools and at the district level.
- Involve parents in all aspects of decision-making at the school and district level.
- Keep parents informed of their children’s academic achievement.
- Provide notifications in other languages for non-English speaking parents.
- Provide ongoing and updated information on the HCDE website.

**Goal #2** – Involve the community in family engagement.

- Invite agencies to participate in district and school level activities
- Make referrals to parents for family needs
- Include the community in aspects of decision-making at the school and district level

**Goal #3** – Each school will have an active PTA, PTO, parent support group, and/or a family engagement program.

- Title I schools shall develop a family engagement plan.
- Title I schools shall implement, and evaluate their policy and plan to promote family engagement activities with emphasis on student learning.
- All schools are encouraged to develop a family engagement plan

**Goal #4** – Each school shall provide opportunities for parents to volunteer in the schools.

**Goal #5** – Evaluate the effectiveness of the Family Engagement Plan on a regular basis.

- Schools shall report their parent volunteer hours to a central location.
- Monitoring of Family Engagement Plans at the district and school level shall be done annually by the Tennessee Department of Education annually.

**2a.** The Hamilton County Department of Education shall **involve parents** in the joint development of its district-wide engagement plan under section 1112 of the (Elementary and Secondary Education Act) ESEA by using the following strategies.

- The Parent Advisory Committee, consisting of two parents from each school in the district, shall review and provide input on the district's Family Engagement Plan, as well give input to the superintendent.
- Parent Engagement Specialists, who meet monthly, shall review and execute the district's Family Engagement Plan.
- PTA presidents and parent coordinators shall share the information with parents at the school level.

The Hamilton County Department of Education shall require the following actions to **involve parents in the process of school review** and improvement under section 1116 of the ESEA.

- Each school shall be required to include parents on its Tennessee Comprehensive Systemwide Planning Process (TCSPP) committee.
- Parents will be represented on the Family Community Engagement Advisory Council.
- Parents will be represented on the Consolidated Federal Programs Advisory Committee where data are reviewed regularly.
- Parents will be encouraged to give suggestions for improvements at the school and district levels.
- The district shall require that all schools have an annual Open House/Annual Meeting. Title I schools shall inform their parents about Title I support during the Open House/Annual Meeting.

**2b.** The necessary **coordination, technical assistance and other support** to assist Title I schools in the planning and implementation of effective parental involvement activities to improve student academic achievement and school performance will be done as follows:

- All Title I schools shall be required to reserve 1% of its Title I allocation into parental involvement. The funds will be used to provide materials and to carry out family engagement activities at each school.
- The district shall reserve 1% of the Title I budget for parental involvement/family engagement activities.
- Family Resource Centers shall provide training and support to the schools.
- All Title I schools shall be associated with a Family Resource Center to receive support in the areas of parental involvement.
- The Federal Programs technology coordinators shall act as liaisons to the Family Resource Centers and provide technical assistance to the Title I schools in the area of family engagement.

**2c.** The Hamilton County Department of Education shall **build the schools' and parent capacity for strong parent involvement** by

- Providing training for administrators and teachers in parent engagement activities.
- Involving the community in the training of parent coordinators and district personnel.
- Including family engagement strategies in Title I Principals' meetings.
- Encouraging parents and teachers to attend state or local conferences on family engagement.

**2d.** The Hamilton County Department of Education shall **coordinate and integrate parent involvement strategies and programs** with the following agencies in the following ways:

- Pre-Kindergarten Initiative – Title I Schools, Head Start, Chambliss Children's Home, Chattanooga Human Services, Signal Centers, and Chattanooga Human Services (Head Start) shall work together to ensure that the parents of the pre-kindergarten program receive proper training.
- Family Resource Centers (Piney Woods, Westside, and Allen) shall provide hands-on parent involvement training, GED classes, wellness, computer training, as well as other appropriate activities.
- The Hamilton County Council of PTAs shall promote parental involvement throughout the district.
- Parents Are First Teachers Inc. (PAFT) shall work in conjunction with the Family Resource Centers in providing home visits, developmental screenings and referrals.
- Chattanooga State Technical Community College shall provide Families First GED classes for parents.
- Families First Department of Human Services shall provides family counseling and support services.
- Fortwood Mental Health Services shall provide services at the Piney Woods Family Resource Centers to meet the needs on families with mental illnesses.
- Signal Centers will continue to help parents become self-sufficient and assist clients with finding employment and helping them improve job skills and parenting skills.

**2e.** The Hamilton County Department of Education will annually evaluate the Family Engagement Plan at its Consolidated Federal Programs Advisory Committee meeting. At that time, the district will review Family Resource Center usage, parent volunteer hours, and other school-related activities. Parents are to be included on this review.

**2e(i)** The Hamilton County Department of Education shall make a realistic assessment of how services are meeting the needs of parents in the district and **how the district has identified barriers to greater participation by parents in parental involvement activities** (with particular attention to parents who are economically disadvantaged, are disabled, have **limited English proficiency** and have limited literacy or are of any racial or ethnic minority background) by using the following strategies.

- Parents shall be surveyed using the Family Friendly Schools survey (or other appropriate survey) to determine the barriers to greater participation.
- **Barriers to parent involvement** participation will be addressed in district-wide Title I meetings, Family Resource Center staff meetings, PTA meetings and Family Engagement meetings. Samples of barriers cited by parents are as follows:
  1. Lack of time
  2. Lack of communication between the school and parents
  3. Feeling unwelcome in the school setting
  4. Feeling they have nothing to contribute
  5. Lack of child care
  6. Language and cultural differences
  7. Lack of transportation
  8. Scheduling conflicts

To address the perceived barriers

- Title I schools shall use portions of their funds reserved for parental involvement to address the specific needs of their schools.
- Non-English speaking parents shall be provided with district-wide services to assist them using Title III-A funds.
- The Consolidated Federal Programs Advisory Committee shall review survey results on the involvement of parents in the spring of each year and discuss funding to address perceived barriers.

**2e(ii)** The Hamilton County Department of Education will **evaluate the district's findings of** strategies to improve stronger parental involvement in the following manner.

- Title I schools will keep a roster of parent volunteers. These reports will be sent to a central location and will be compiled at the district level. The information will be shared with the Consolidated Federal Programs Advisory Committee where strategies and funding will be developed to address any need.
- The Family Report Card (K-12) –This report is a family evaluation that will assist families with evaluating how strong the family life is. This is a resource for parent to evaluate their families.
- The Family Resource Centers will survey families they serve in the district to plan for the next year's program.

**2e(iii)** The District-wide Family Engagement Advisory Council will evaluate and/or revise the program in the spring of each school year.

**2f.** Hamilton County's Parent Advisory Committee consists of two parents from each school. They meet regularly with the superintendent to discuss district issues – including programs, activities, procedures, and policies. They also strategize on how to work with the community and gain support from government and community agencies.

**2g.** The Hamilton County Parent Advisory Committee will design **improvement strategies such as homework, attendance and discipline.**

- All parents are provided with Hamilton County’s “Code of Acceptable Behavior and Discipline.” This document outlines the discipline policy for the district.
- All students receive a Student Handbook that details the homework and attendance requirements of the district.
- The HCDE website contains the board policy which outlines all policies.
- The Family Resource Centers provides attendance notices on good attendance.
- Parents in Title I “Program Improvement” schools are notified of tutoring opportunities (Supplemental Educational Services.)
- GED classes are available at all Family Resource Centers

Hamilton County Department of Education shall develop **strategies for more effective parent involvement in the district to improve student academic achievement**, through the following activities.

- The district shall provide each school with two days/year for parent teacher conferences. These days will be used to discuss strategies for academic success.
- The district shall require all schools to have (1)“Family Math Night” for the purpose of providing parents strategies to help their children in math, (2)“Family Literacy Night” for the purpose of providing parents with strategies to help their children with reading/language arts, and (3) other Family Nights, as appropriate.
- The district shall require all Title I schools to include parents in the development of (1) parent school compact and (2) a family engagement plan.
- The district shall provide training to parents on (1) the State’s academic content standards, (2) how to monitor their child’s progress, (3) how to work with educators, and (4) how to receive services that are available (Homework Hotline, Lending Libraries, Active Parenting Classes, Family Health Services, Adult High School, Virtual Schools, Family Resource Centers, etc.)
- Family Report Cards shall be sent to schools to disseminate and will be posted on the website.
- Workshops shall be provided on how to use and interpret the Family Report Card.
- Homework Hotline information shall be made available to parents.
- Information on Virtual Schools shall be made available to parents of students who are in need of credit recovery and Gateway tutoring.
- Adult High School will provide non-traditional teaching and a flexible environment to meet the needs of students who are unsuccessful in the traditional setting.
- Workshops conducted by parent coordinators, Family Resource Center Staff and Parent Engagement Specialist will be offered at each school site, family resources centers, Partnership for Families, Children and Adults and at the central office.
- Each school’s handbook will contain a grading scale
- Each school will inform parents about the curriculum being taught during the district-scheduled Parent Conference Days
- Each school will give parents access to all learning materials during the district scheduled Parent Conference Days.
- Each school’s description will be posted on the website

- Each school will have two parents as a member of the superintendent's Parent Advisory Council, where strategies will be shared for family engagement and academic success.
- A copy of the districts' Family Engagement Plan will be made available at each school

**6.** Hamilton County Department of Education has built into its calendar two days for parent-teacher conferences for each school.

**7.** Hamilton County Department of Education has a website with a plethora of information including the following:

- Family Engagement Plan
- School Report Cards/Assessment Data (School Performance)
- Consolidated Federal Programs Application
- Homework Hotline Information
- District Calendar
- Meetings and Upcoming Activities
- Link to Individual School Webpages
- E-mail Address of All Principals

**8.** Hamilton County Department of Education requires that all Title I schools have school level family engagement plans that are developed with the input of parents and reviewed annually. The Title I office and the office of Parent, School, and Community Involvement provides assistance in the development of these plans.

**9.** Hamilton County Department of Education requires that the Title I budget reflects a minimum of 1% of the total budget on parental involvement activities. The Consolidated Federal Programs Advisory Committee determines how the district funds are to be spent.

9. The Hamilton County Department of Education requires that all Title I schools set aside 1% of each Title I budget for parental involvement activities.

The undersigned have reviewed and provided input on Hamilton County's Family Engagement Plan.

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