

INSTRUCTION

Parent and Family Engagement

The Board believes that engaging parents/families in the education process is essential to improved academic success for students. The Board recognizes that a student's education is a responsibility shared by the District, parents, families and other members of the community during the entire time a student attends school. The Board believes that the District must create an environment that is conducive to learning and that strong, comprehensive parent/family involvement is an important component. Parent/family involvement in education requires a cooperative effort with roles for the Office of Public Instruction (OPI), the District, parents/families and the community.

Parent/Family Involvement Goals and Plan

The Board recognizes the importance of eliminating barriers that impede parent/family involvement, thereby facilitating an environment that encourages collaboration with parents, families and other members of the community. Therefore, the District will develop and implement a plan to facilitate parent/family involvement that shall include the following seven (7) goals:

1. Encourage parents and families to actively participate in the life of their children's school and feel welcomed, valued, and connected to each other, to school staff, and to what students are learning and doing in class;
2. Encourage families and school staff to engage in regular, two-way meaningful communication about student learning;
3. Encourage families and school staff to continuously collaborate to support student learning and healthy development both at home and at school and have regular opportunities to strengthen their knowledge and skills to do so effectively;
4. Empower parents to be advocates for their own and other children, to ensure that students are treated equitably and have access to learning opportunities that will support their success;
5. Encourage families and school staff to be partners in decisions that affect children and families and together inform, influence, and create policies, practices, and programs;
6. Encourage families and school staff to collaborate with members of the community to connect students, families, and staff to expand learning opportunities, community services, and civic participation; and
7. Encourage families and school staff collaborate with members of the community to connect students, families, and staff to post-secondary education opportunities, including workforce training, apprenticeship opportunities, career pathways, and degree programs, and encourage students to explore college and career planning tools (including Free Application for Federal Student Aid completion) and incentives provided by post-secondary institutions.

The Board of Trustees, in consultation with parents, teachers, administrators, and students has adopted this District-plan for meeting these parent/family involvement goals is to:

1. Provide activities that will educate parents/families regarding the intellectual and developmental needs of their children at all age levels. This will include promoting cooperation between the District and other agencies or school/community groups (such as parent-teacher groups, Head Start, etc.) to furnish learning opportunities and disseminate information regarding parenting skills and child/adolescent development.
2. Implement strategies to involve parents/families in the educational process and laws regarding parent/family rights, including:
 - Keeping parents/families informed of opportunities for involvement and encouraging participation in various District programs.
 - Providing access to Board policies, handbooks, Board and committee agendas, District grievance procedure, and contact information for administrators and Trustees on the District website.
 - Providing access to educational resources and the course of study for parents/families to use together with their children.
 - Keeping parents/families informed of the objectives of District educational and activity programs, of their child's participation and progress within these programs, and methods to opt out of educational and instruction programs consistent with parent/family rights.
 - Promoting parents/families and teacher cooperation in homework, attendance, and discipline.
 - Providing information about the nature and purpose of student clubs and groups meeting at the school and right of parents to consent to such participation or withdraw their child from a club or group.
 - Providing an explanation of rights regarding student name and pronoun use consistent with the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act.
3. Enable families to participate in the education of their children through a variety of roles. For example, parents/family members should be given opportunities to provide input into District policies and volunteer time within the classrooms and school programs.
4. Provide professional development opportunities for teachers and staff to enhance their understanding of effective parent/family involvement strategies.
5. Perform regular evaluations of parent/family involvement at each school and at the District level.
6. Provide access, upon request, to any instructional material used as part of the educational curriculum.
7. If practical, provide information in a language understandable to parents.
8. Provide annual notification of educational opportunities of the District.

Cross References:

Board Policy 1700 Uniform Complaint Procedure
Board Policy 2120 Curriculum Development and Assessment
Board Policy 2132 Student and Family Privacy Rights
Board Policy 2140 Guidance and Counseling
Board Policy 2161 Special Education
Board Policy 2162 Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 ("Section 504")
Board Policy 2168 Distance, Online, and Technology-Delivered Learning

Board Policy 2170 Montana Digital Academy
Board Policy 2422 Proficiency
Board Policy 2423 Personalized Learning Opportunities
Board Policy 3110 Entrance, Placement, and Transfer
Board Policy 3120 Compulsory Attendance
Board Policy 3141 Discretionary Nonresident Student Attendance Policy
Board Policy 3150 Part-Time Attendance
Board Policy 3600 Student Records
Board Policy 4700 Family Engagement

Legal Reference:

20 U.S.C. § 1401 <i>et seq.</i>	Individuals with Disabilities Education Act
29 U.S.C. § 794	Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act
§ 20-3-324, MCA	Powers and Duties
§ 20-5-101, MCA	Admittance of child to school
§ 20-5-112, MCA	Participation in extracurricular activities
§ 20-7-117, MCA	Kindergarten and preschool programs
§ 20-7-118, MCA	Offsite Provision Of Educational Services
§ 20-7-411, MCA	Obligation to Establish Special Education Program
§ 20-7-1601, MCA	Forms of personalized learning
§ 20-7-1506, MCA	Incentives for creation of advanced opportunity programs
§ 20-7-1510, MCA	Credit for participating in work-based learning partnerships
§ 20-9-706, MCA	Running start program
§ 20-7-1201, MCA <i>et seq.</i>	Montana Digital Academy
§ 20-5-301, MCA <i>et. seq.</i>	Attendance Outside School District
§ 20-7-301, MCA <i>et. seq.</i>	Vocational and Technical Education
§ 20-3-301, MCA <i>et. seq.</i>	Board of Trustees
§ 40-6-701, MCA	Fundamental Rights of Parents
10.55.601, ARM <i>et seq.</i>	Accreditation
House Bill 676	Increase parental involvement in education
10.55.722, ARM	Family and Community Engagement

Policy History:

First Reading approved by Board on March 13, 2018 and posted for public comment
Adopted on: April 24, 2018
Approved First Reading: September 12, 2023
Adopted on: October 24, 2023