



Windber Area Elementary School

Parent & Family Engagement Policy

Date reviewed: 7/9/26

The Title I Parent and Family Engagement section of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), Section 1116(b), requires each Title I school to develop a written parent and family engagement policy that describes the means for carrying out the requirements of Section 1116. The school must ensure that information related to school and parent programs, meetings, and other activities are sent to the parents of Title I children in a format and in a language the parents can understand.

Purpose

Windber Area Elementary knows that meaningful parent and family engagement contributes to achieving state academic standards by students participating in Title I programs. The Board views the education of students as a cooperative effort among the school, parents and family members, and community.

Definition

Parent and Family (Family Member) - these terms are used interchangeably and shall include caregivers, a legal guardian or other person standing in loco parentis such as a grandparent or stepparent with whom the child lives, a person who is legally responsible for the child's welfare, or a legally appointed Education Decision Maker of a child participating in a Title I program.

Parent Involvement

To involve parents and family members in the development of the Parent and Family Engagement Policy, Windber Area Elementary School will take the following approaches:

1. Parent Surveys and Feedback Forms: Schools distribute surveys to gather input from parents on key aspects of the policy, allowing them to voice concerns, share ideas, and suggest improvements.
2. Parent-Teacher Committees: Schools form committees or advisory councils that include parents and family members. These groups collaborate with school staff to shape and review the policy.
3. Open Forums or Town Hall Meetings: Schools may organize meetings where parents can attend, discuss the policy, ask questions, and provide input.

4. Workshops and Focus Groups: Schools sometimes hold workshops or focus groups, where parents can engage in discussions with teachers and administrators about the policy's goals and implementation.
5. Regular Communication: Schools can maintain consistent communication with families through newsletters, emails, and social media, informing them about policy updates and inviting feedback.
6. School-Parent Compacts: These are agreements between the school, parents, and students, outlining responsibilities. Input from families is often sought to create a balanced and effective compact.

By using these strategies, Windber Area Elementary will aim to ensure that the Parent and Family Engagement Policy reflects the needs and expectations of the school community.

Parent Meetings and Events

To meet with parents and family members annually, schools can implement a variety of strategies, ensuring that families are well-informed and engaged throughout the school year. Some common approaches include:

1. Annual Parent-Teacher Conferences: Schools can hold scheduled conferences where parents meet with teachers to discuss their child's progress, school initiatives, and how families can support their child's learning.
2. Annual Title I Meeting: For schools receiving Title I funding, an annual meeting is required to inform parents about the program, their rights, the school's curriculum, assessments, and how Title I resources are being used to support student achievement.
3. Back-to-School Nights/Open Houses: At the beginning of the school year, schools often host these events, giving parents a chance to meet teachers, staff, and administrators, and learn about academic programs and school policies.
4. Annual Family Engagement Events: Schools may organize workshops, family nights, or seminars focused on supporting learning at home, parenting skills, or understanding school policies and academic standards.
5. Parent Involvement in School Councils or Committees: Schools can invite parents to participate in advisory councils, such as school governance boards or parent-teacher organizations, to provide ongoing feedback and updates on school policies, programs, and family engagement efforts.
6. Online Meetings and Webinars: With the increased use of technology, schools can hold virtual meetings or webinars to ensure accessibility for parents who may not be able to attend in person.

By combining these methods, schools can ensure consistent and meaningful engagement with parents and family members, while accommodating diverse schedules and needs. These meetings are offered with a flexible number of meeting times.

Review & Improvement

To involve parents and family members in the review and improvement of the Parent and Family Engagement Program, schools can employ the following strategies:

1. **Parent Advisory Committees:** Schools often establish advisory committees made up of parents, family members, teachers, and administrators to regularly review the effectiveness of the engagement program. This group helps provide suggestions for improvement based on feedback and school data.
2. **Surveys and Feedback Forms:** Schools can send out surveys or feedback forms to parents, asking them to evaluate the current family engagement activities, identify strengths and weaknesses, and offer suggestions for enhancement.
3. **Focus Groups and Listening Sessions:** Organizing focus groups or listening sessions with parents can allow for in-depth discussions on their experiences with the current engagement program and what changes they would like to see.
4. **Public Forums or Town Hall Meetings:** Schools can host open forums where parents and family members are invited to share their thoughts, ask questions, and suggest ways to improve the program. These meetings encourage broad participation and transparency.
5. **Regular Progress Updates:** Schools should keep parents informed about the results of the family engagement efforts through newsletters, emails, or meetings, encouraging ongoing dialogue and feedback throughout the year.
6. **Collaborative School-Parent Teams:** Involving parents in existing school improvement teams ensures that family perspectives are considered when evaluating and refining engagement strategies. These teams can help monitor progress and implement changes based on parent input.
7. **Review of Annual Title I Parent and Family Engagement Evaluation:** For schools receiving Title I funds, the annual evaluation of the Parent and Family Engagement Program includes gathering input from parents about how the school can improve communication, support learning at home, and strengthen family-school partnerships.

By implementing these strategies, schools can foster an ongoing partnership with parents, ensuring that their input directly contributes to the review and continuous improvement of the family engagement program.

School-wide Plan Collaboration

If applicable, the school will involve parents and family members in developing and discussing the Schoolwide Program Plan by holding meetings to gather their input and feedback. These meetings will include discussions on the goals, strategies, and implementation of the plan, ensuring that parents have a meaningful role in shaping the program to meet the needs of all students.

Parent Assistance and Trainings

The Windber Area Elementary School will assist parents and family members by offering workshops and resources to help them understand academic standards, assessments, and how to track their child's progress. Training sessions and materials will be provided to educate parents on these topics. Additionally, the school will involve parents in staff training, using their insights to enhance teachers' skills in collaborating with families as equal partners. Training materials will be available through workshops, online resources, and written guides to support ongoing parent engagement and understanding.

Head Start and Early Childhood Programs

The school will coordinate with federal, State, and local programs, including public preschool programs, by collaborating on shared goals and resources to support family engagement. This includes aligning parent involvement activities, sharing information and resources between programs, and hosting joint events to enhance continuity in education. By working together with these programs, the school will create a cohesive support network that encourages and facilitates active parent participation in their children's education from an early age.

English Language Learners

The school will include parents and family members of English Learners by providing translation and interpretation services for meetings and communications, offering bilingual parent liaisons, and hosting workshops in their native language. Flexible meeting times, culturally responsive events, and digital communication tools that support multiple languages will help ensure full participation. Additionally, the school will involve EL parents in decision-making processes and offer parent education programs to help them engage more effectively in their child's education.

Windber Area School District Windber Area Elementary School

SCHOOL-PARENT COMPACT 2025 – 2026

The Windber Area School District, and the parents of the students participating in activities, services, and programs funded by Title - I, Part A, agree that this compact outlines how the parents, the entire school staff, and the students will share the responsibility for improved student academic achievement and the means by which the school and parents will build and develop a partnership that will help children achieve the State's high standards.

This school-parent compact is in effect during the school year 2025 - 2026.

The Windber Area Elementary School will:

1. Provide high-quality curriculum and instruction in a supportive and effective learning environment that enables the participating children to meet the State's student academic achievement standards as follows:
 - a. The Windber Area Elementary School will participate in the "School Wide" Title - I program.
 - b. Students will be assisted by Title - I Reading Resource Teachers in Grades Kindergarten/4 – Fifth Grade.
2. Hold parent-teacher conferences (at least annually in elementary school) during which this compact will be discussed as it relates to the individual child's achievement.

Conferences will be held, as follows:

- a. Parents are welcome to request a parent/teacher conference at any time with their child's teacher.
 - b. Teachers are welcome to request a parent/teacher conference at any time with their student's parent(s) and also request the Reading Resource Teacher to participate in this conference.
 - c. Teachers are available via telephone and/or email should parents/guardians have any questions.
3. Provide parents with frequent reports on their child's(ren)'s progress.

Specifically, the school will provide reports as follows:

- a. Provide the parents/guardians a summary of all assessments that are conducted in regard to their child.
 - b. Reports will be sent home after data is gathered.
 - c. Parents and/or teachers may request conferences.

4. Provide parents with reasonable access to staff.

Specifically, staff will be available for consultation with parents as follows:

- a. Parents are welcome to request a parent/teacher conference at any time with their child's teacher.
 - b. Teachers are welcome to request a parent/teacher conference at any time with their student's parent(s) and also request the Reading Resource Teacher to participate in this conference.
 - c. Teachers are available via telephone and/or e-mail should parents/guardians have any questions.
5. Provide parents opportunities to volunteer and participate in their child's class, and to observe classroom activities, as follows:
 - a. Parents are welcome to visit the school anytime by scheduling an appointment.
 - b. Parents may volunteer by working with the Windber Area Elementary School Parent Teacher Organization (PTO).
 - c. Parents are invited to the Elementary School in the Fall and again, in the Spring to listen to guest speakers and the Reading Resource Teachers will provide helpful "tips" on how parents/guardians may help their child(ren) with their reading (Family Reading Nights).

Parent Responsibilities

We, as parents, will support our children's learning in the following ways:

- Monitoring attendance and making sure that their child(ren) are in school.
- Make sure that homework is completed.
- Monitoring the amount of television their child(ren) watches.
- Volunteering in my child's school.
- Participating, as appropriate, in decisions relating to my child's(ren)'s education.
- Promoting positive use of my child's extracurricular time.
- Staying informed about my child's education and communicating with the school by promptly reading all notices from the school or, the school district either received by my child or by mail and responding, as appropriate.
- Serving, to the extent possible, on policy advisory groups, such as being the Title I, Part A parent representative on the school's Title I Policy Advisory Committee, and/or, the District-wide Policy Advisory Council.

Student Responsibilities

We, as students, will share the responsibility to improve our academic achievement and achieve the State's high standards. Specifically, we will:

- Make sure I attend school and not be late.
- Do my homework every day and ask for help when I need to.
- Read at least 30 minutes every day outside of school time.
- Give to my parents or the adult who are responsible for my welfare all notices and information received by me from my school.