

Toronto District School Board

Policy (number)

Title: **PARENT AND CAREGIVER ENGAGEMENT POLICY (PACEP)**

Adopted: November 25, 1998

Effectuated: November 25, 1998

Revised: January 26, 2005, July 13, 2005, February 3, 2010]

Reviewed: [date when the policy was reviewed]

Authorization: [position/level that has authority to approve the policy or changes hereto]

1. RATIONALE

Regardless of family income or background, students whose parents and caregivers are involved in their schooling are more likely to have higher grades and test scores, attend school regularly, have better social skills, show improved behavior, and adapt well to school. The more comprehensive and well-planned the partnership shared responsibilities, and communication between the school, Board, and home, the higher the student achievement.

2. OBJECTIVE

To establish a framework for shared responsibilities of parents, caregivers, the Board, and the trustees for the implementation of effective strategies to increase and improve effective parent and caregiver engagement in the Board.

3. DEFINITIONS

Capabilities: what a person has the ability or knowledge to do.

Co-construct: a collaborative process in which learners learn from one another to further expand their knowledge based on one another's ideas and contributions.

Colonialism: is a practice of domination, which involves the subjugation of one people to another. Settler colonialism — such as in the case of Canada — is the unique process where the colonizing population does not leave the territory, asserts ongoing sovereignty to the land, actively seeks to assimilate the Indigenous populations and extinguish their Cultures, traditions, and ties to the land.

Critical actors: describes how oppressed or marginalized people learn to critically analyze their social conditions and act to change them.

Oppression: prolonged, systemic, abuse of power or control by one group of people (the Dominant Group) at the expense of others (the oppressed) and maintains a cultural imbalance of Power that socially supports the mistreatment and exploitation of all groups of 'less powerful' individuals. This results in unjust advantages, status, and benefits for one group over the other and is maintained by social beliefs, economic and institutional structures, and subtle and overt cultural practices.

Parent and Caregiver- refer to parents, caregivers, guardians, and family.

Relational: people connections that engage others from a place of worthiness that cultivates courage, compassion, and connection.

TDSB: the Toronto District School Board, which is also referred to as the "Board".

Whiteness-White identity has become the ideal and is viewed as the norm, whereby other identities such as Black, Indigenous Asian, etc. are viewed as multicultural subcultures within a society. It's a critical step in creating anti-racist schools/classrooms.

4. RESPONSIBILITY

The Director of Education holds primary responsibility for the implementation of this Policy. Within the Director's Office, the responsibility for the implementation, and day-to-day management of the Policy is assigned to the Central Coordinator Parent and Community Engagement Office.

5. APPLICATION AND SCOPE

This Policy applies to all parents and caregivers, employees of the TDSB, including supervisors, business unit leads, senior and executive managers, and trustees.

6. POLICY

The Board will ensure that parent/caregiver engagement is integrated into all programs, sustained with resources and infrastructure. It will be intentional, relational, linked to achievement and well-being, build staff, parent, and caregiver capabilities and confidence (self-efficacy).

Parent and caregiver engagement practices will work to disrupt and dismantle systems of whiteness and oppression and center around the cultural knowledge

and practices of parents/caregivers, particularly Black, Indigenous, racialized people, people with disabilities, women, 2-Spirit, Lesbian, Gay, Bi-Sexual, Trans,

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Queer and (2SLGBTQ2S*) and other equity deserving parents and caregivers as per the TDSB Equity Policy (P037). All parents and guardians will be positioned as critical actors in student achievement and well-being.

Indigenous Peoples are self-determining nations with distinct and inherent rights and laws. These inherent rights and laws govern the relationship between Indigenous people and institutions. Guided by the *Truth and Reconciliation Commission*, the Board will work to dismantle TDSB's colonial structures, practices, and impacts of colonization by actively engaging in alliance with Indigenous Elders, students, parents/caregivers, and community in developing a governance model that honors Indigenous knowledge, sovereignty, and self determination.

6.1 The Board will ensure that parent, and caregiver engagement is a partnership that is equitable and relational in which goals that support student achievement, well-being, healthy development at home, school, and in the community are co constructed and parents/caregivers have active participation in decision-making or an ability to influence decisions related to their child (ren).

6.2 School leadership will facilitate equitable collaboration between parents' caregivers and the school that:

6.2.01 establishes clear engagement goals and nurtures a model of school engagement that validates and values parents/caregivers' knowledge, skills, and contributions,

6.2.02 ensures the engagement of parents/caregivers, newcomers, and other equity deserving parents/caregivers into the school and the School Improvement Process,

6.2.03 establish clear engagement goals and create spaces for staff and parent/caregiver dialogue that upholds principles of equity, as per the Equity Policy (P037).

6.3 The Board will ensure TDSB staff, parents/caregivers, and students, as appropriate, collaborate with local school community partners to assist in reaching school improvement goals. This will connect students, parents/caregivers, and staff to expanded learning opportunities, community services, and civic participation.

6.4 The Board will support community outreach programs and organize parent/caregiver forums at school, ward, and regional levels that experience significant challenges in promoting and sustaining parent/caregiver involvement in their children's education. This will also be done to promote parent consultation and input on matters related to policy, program, or operations of the TDSB school system.

6.5 The Board will acknowledge and honour the rights of equity-seeking parents/caregivers, particularly Black, Indigenous, racialized people, people

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with disabilities, women, 2-Spirit, Lesbian, Gay, Bi-Sexual, Trans, Queer (2SLGBTQ2S), to be active advocates and agents for their child(ren). The Board will ensure this by providing safe, nurturing, learning environments that are free of harassment and discrimination and provide opportunities to acquire information, build capacity for leadership, foster critical conscious engagement and advocacy for parents/caregivers to support their children's education at home and school, per the Equity Policy (P037) and the Human Rights Policy (P031).

6.6 The Board will ensure that parents/caregivers and TDSB staff are provided with anti-oppression engagement training opportunities. This training will aim to strengthen the knowledge and skills of parents/caregivers and TDSB staff to build trusting relationships and work as equitable partners in co-constructing student learning, achievement, and well-being.

6.7 The Board will provide an effective and operational communication system(s) and multilingual service and enable effective, frequent, and two-way communication between TDSB staff, parents/caregivers, and Trustees.

6.8 In accordance with O. Regulation 612/00 of the Education Act, the Board will ensure that every TDSB school establishes a school council that will advise the school and the Board. The Board will develop School Council procedures that outline the operations of School Councils.

6.9 The Board will ensure that working relationships be supported with Community Liaison Groups who wish to work with the TDSB to address educational issues of concern, and who are formed in accordance with criteria established for these groups.

6.10 The Board will develop parent/caregiver engagement standards that address the engagement of parents/caregivers in the School Improvement Process, co-constructing learning, well-being, and achievement goals, and the operation of School Councils.

6.11 The Board is committed to the safe and effective involvement of volunteers under the direction and supervision of the TDSB. Parents/caregivers and school community members and organizations may be recruited, screened, and assigned volunteer roles for an array of initiatives including the school's extra-curricular activities to meet the needs of the school as determined by staff and students. Within a school, volunteers are assigned at the discretion of the Principal and/or designated staff.

6.12 The Board will track, monitor, and evaluate the ways in which TDSB

schools are engaging with parents/guardians and the school community, and provide relevant updates to the Board of Trustees on a bi-annual basis.

7. SPECIFIC DIRECTIVES

“The Director of Education is authorized to issue operational procedures to implement this policy.”

8. EVALUATION

This Policy will be reviewed at a minimum every four (4) years after the effective date.

9. APPENDICES

Not applicable.

10. REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

Legislation

- O. Regulation. 612/00, School Councils and Parent Involvement Committees (PICS)
- O. Regulation. 613/00, Operations of Schools-General
 - Parents in Partnership: A Parent Engagement Policy for Ontario Schools

Policies

- P023 Parent and Community Involvement
- P037 Equity
- PO52 Selection, Promotion, and Placement of School Principals and Vice principals
- PO31 Human Rights Policy

Procedures

- PR503 Translation and Interpretation
- PR505-Parent Concern Protocol
- PR 515 Workplace Harassment Prevention and Human Rights •
- PR558-Parent and Community Involvement Policy
- PR705 - Selection, Promotion and Placement Process for School Principals and Vice-principals
- PR726 Reporting and Responding to Racism and Hate Incidents Involving and Impacting Students in Schools