

WALDEN AND FAMILY ENGAGEMENT POLICY

Purpose

In support of strengthening student academic achievement, Walden School of Liberal Arts ("Walden") receives Title I, Part A funds and must jointly develop with, agree on with, and distribute to parents and family members of participating children a written parent and family engagement policy that contains information required by Section 1116 of the Every Student Succeeds Act (the "ESSA"). This policy establishes Walden's expectations and objectives for meaningful parent and family involvement, describes how Walden will implement a number of specific parent and family engagement activities, and is incorporated into Walden's plan submitted to the state pursuant to Section 1112 of the ESSA. The purpose of an effective parent and family engagement policy is to improve all students' academic achievement.

Policy

Walden agrees to implement the following requirements as outlined by Section 1116 of the ESSA:

- Involve parents, in an organized, ongoing, and timely way, in the planning, review, and improvement of programs under Title I, Part A, including the planning, review, and improvement of this policy and the joint development of the targeted assistance or schoolwide program plan.
- Using the findings of the annual evaluation, update this policy periodically to meet the changing needs of parents and Walden, distribute it to the parents and family members of participating children, and make this policy available to the local community.
- Provide full opportunities, to the extent practicable, for the participation of parents and family members with limited English proficiency, parents and family members with disabilities, and parents and family members of migratory children, including providing information and school reports required under Section 1111 of the ESSA in an understandable and uniform format and, to the extent practicable, in a language parents understand.

- Provides the support necessary to plan and implement effective parent and family engagement activities that improve student academic achievement and school performance.
- Be governed by the following statutory definition of parent and family engagement and will carry out programs, activities, and procedures in accordance with this definition: Parent and family engagement means the participation of parents in regular, two-way, and meaningful communication involving student academic learning and other school activities, including ensuring:
 - That parents play an integral role in assisting their child's learning;
 - That parents are encouraged to be actively involved in their child's education at school;
 - That parents are full partners in their child's education and are included, as appropriate, in decision-making and on advisory committees (if any) to assist in the education of their child; and
 - The carrying out of other activities, such as those described in Section 1116 of the ESSA.

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, persons needing accommodations for this meeting should call Tiffany Strong at (801) 655-5889 to make appropriate arrangements.

Required Policy Components

Below is a description of how Walden will implement or accomplish each of the following components required by Section 1116 of the ESSA:

Joint Development of Policies, Plans, Compact, and Programs. Walden will take the following actions to involve parents and family members in an organized, ongoing, and timely manner in the planning, review, and improvement of Title I policies, plans, compact, and programs:

- ✓ Distribute a copy of this policy and the parent-student-school compact to parents and family members at the beginning of each school year through appropriate channels, such as through the registration packet and/or the Walden [website](#).

✓ Notify parents and family members of an annual meeting where parents and family members will be informed about Walden's participation in and the requirements of Title I programs.

✓ Hold other parent and family meetings at flexible times during the school year to provide parents and family members with ongoing information, training, and materials to help them work with their children in the areas such as literacy, numeracy, and technology.

✓ Hold parent-teacher-student conferences twice annually, where student achievement, behavior, and/or the parent-student-school compact will be reviewed and discussed.

✓ State websites will provide parents with information related to expected student proficiency levels.

✓ Walden website will provide parents with a description and explanation of Walden's mission, calendar information, policies, and opportunities for school and parent interaction.

✓ Conduct an annual review and evaluation of this policy, the parent-student-school compact, and targeted assistance or schoolwide program plan. As part of the annual review and evaluation, Walden will consider, and implement if appropriate, any suggestions or feedback provided by parents and family members on how Walden can improve this policy and the associated compact and plan. Suggestions or feedback may be provided to Walden in the form of results from Walden's needs assessment and evaluation given to parents, comments made by parents and family members in meetings at Walden and during parent-teacher conferences, or through other means. The annual review and evaluation of this policy will also include identifying such things as barriers to parent engagement (especially engagement of parents who are economically disadvantaged, disabled, have limited English proficiency, have limited literacy, or are of any racial or ethnic minority background); needs

of parents and family members to enable them to assist with the learning of their children; and strategies to support successful school and family interactions.

Communications. Walden will take the following actions to provide parents and family members timely information about the Title I programs in which Walden participates:

- ✓ Distribute a copy of the updated version of this policy and the parent-student-school compact to parents and family members at the beginning of each school year through appropriate channels, such as through the registration packet and/or the Walden Title I page on the school website.
- ✓ Provide information related to the Title I programs, meetings, and other activities to the parents of participating children in an understandable and uniform format and, to the extent practicable, in a language that the parents can understand.

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Parent-Student-School Compact. Walden's parent-student-school compact outlines how parents, the entire School staff, and students will share the responsibility for improved student academic achievement and the means by which Walden and parents will build and develop a partnership to help children achieve the state's high standards. Walden will review the parent-student-school compact with parents of participating children by doing the following:

- ✓ Distributing a copy of the updated version of the parent-student-school compact to parents and family members at the beginning of each school year through appropriate channels, such as the registration packet and/or the Walden website.
- ✓ Obtaining all parties' signatures (electronic or written) on each parent-student-school compact on an annual basis.

- ✓ Encouraging parents to review the parent-student-school compact with their children on a regular basis.
- ✓ Considering, and implementing, if appropriate, any suggestions or feedback provided by parents and family members on how Walden can improve its parent-student-school compact.

Reservation of Funds. Walden currently does not receive Title I allocations of \$500,000 or more. In the event Walden's Title I allocations reach or exceed \$500,000 in the future, Walden will follow the requirements in Section 1116(a)(3) of the ESSA.

Coordination of Services. Walden will, to the extent feasible and appropriate, coordinate and integrate parent and family engagement programs and activities with other federal, state, and local programs, including public preschool programs, and conduct other activities, such as parent resource centers, that encourage and support parents in more fully participating in the education of their children.

Building the Capacity of Parents. Walden will build the parents' capacity for strong parent and family engagement to ensure effective involvement of parents and to support a partnership among Walden and the community to improve student academic achievement through the following:

- ✓ Provide high quality, engaging curriculum and instruction in a supportive and effective learning environment that enables students to meet the state's academic standards.
- ✓ Support tutoring and provide parent volunteer opportunities.
- ✓ Providing opportunities at least once a year for discussion with parents about Walden's curriculum and achievement levels of the state academic standards.
- ✓ Engaging parents with materials and training to help parents to work with their child to improve their child's achievement, such as literacy training and using technology (including education about the harms of copyright piracy), as appropriate, to foster parent and family engagement.

- ✓ Giving parents information at parent-teacher conferences about their student's state core testing and other appropriate curriculum based assessments.
- ✓ Providing progress reports to parents to communicate their student's academic performance throughout Walden year.
- ✓ Facilitating communication between parents and School personnel.
- ✓ Scheduling School meetings, as well as parent-teacher conferences, in a way that will maximize parent and family member involvement and participation.
- ✓ Gathering, on an annual basis, input from parents through a variety of methods. For example, parent surveys, needs assessments, conversation, parent-teacher conferences, and School activities.
- ✓ Providing assistance to parents, as appropriate, in understanding topics such as the following:
 - o The challenging state's academic standards;
 - o The state and local academic assessments, including alternate assessments;
 - o The requirements of Title I, Part A;
 - o How to monitor their child's progress; and
 - o How to work with educators to improve the achievement of their child.

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Building the Capacity of School Staff. Walden will, with the assistance of parents, provide training to educate teachers, specialized instructional support personnel, principals/directors and other Walden leaders, and other staff on the value and utility of contributions of parents; how to reach out to, communicate with, and work with parents as equal partners; how to implement and coordinate parent programs; and how to build ties between parents and Walden. Walden will accomplish this in the following ways:

- Walden's administration will gather feedback about parent perception of parental/family involvement using survey data and meeting with our parent school improvement committee. In this meeting (which may be conducted in person or online), parents will be invited to share feedback on Walden's current opportunities for family involvement and will be asked to contribute to the development of new programs and policies.
- Walden's executive director will provide professional development to help teachers, support personnel and school administration to understand the value and utility of parental/family contributions and to know how best to reach out, communicate and work with parents as equal partners. Using research-based data on parental involvement, we will also create an online parental involvement resource to share with parents, faculty, staff and administration. All of Walden's training and meetings may be conducted in-person or through the utilization of online print and video resources. Walden may also provide other support for parent and family engagement activities under Section 1116 as parents may reasonably request.
- At least one parent (currently three) will serve on the Walden Board of Trustees. Board members will work collaboratively on an ongoing basis to develop strategies for building staff, teachers and administrator capacity to more fully engage with parents and families.
- Walden administrators and a sub-committee of parents will meet at least once annually to discuss concerns around parental/family involvement. Together they will review and critique Walden's current family involvement programs and practices and will envision additional ways to inspire more collaborative involvement in the future.

Review

Walden will annually review and evaluate this policy, the parent-student-school compact, and the targeted assistance or schoolwide program plan to determine their effectiveness in improving the academic quality of Walden and academic achievement of its students. Results of the annual review and evaluation will be used to design strategies for more effective parent and family engagement.

Parent-Student-School Compact

Walden believes that families, students, and school staff should work in partnership to help each student reach their potential. As partners we agree to the following:

Student Responsibilities:

- Be an Inquirer: I will nurture curiosity, develop skills for inquiry and research, and learn independently and with others.
- Be a Communicator: I will learn to express myself confidently and creatively in more than one language and in many ways. I will collaborate effectively and listen carefully to the perspectives of others.
- Be Principled: I will act with integrity and honesty, with a strong sense of fairness and justice, and with the respect for the rights and dignity of people everywhere. I will take responsibility for my actions and their consequences.
- Be Caring: I will show empathy, compassion and respect for others. I will have a commitment to service and strive to make a positive difference in the lives of others and in the world around me. Through my actions and choices, I will help to create a school environment of tolerance and peace.
- Strive for Balance: I will strive for balance in my life—physical, intellectual, and emotional. I will recognize the interdependence we share with others and with the world in which we live.
- Be Reflective: I will thoughtfully consider the world and my own ideas and experiences and work to understand my own strengths and weaknesses in order to support learning.
- I will attend school regularly and on time.

- I will complete school assignments and projects on time and to the best of my ability.

Student Signature _____

Parent Responsibilities—I want my child to learn and achieve, therefore I will:

- Make certain my child attends school regularly and on time.
- Provide support for my child as they engage in authentic research and project work.
- Maintain an open dialogue with my child's teacher(s) and Walden staff and work together to provide the best possible education for my child.
- Support the school by volunteering my time in the classroom, as a field trip driver and through involvement with the PCC (Parent Community Council) as my schedule permits.
- Attend parent meetings, including PTSC, and parent education nights and when necessary ask for further explanation of school curriculum, policies and programs.
- Support school curriculum by providing a home environment where children can learn and develop their creativity and individuality.
- Work as a partner with the school. When I see room for improvement, provide feedback and support in a positive and encouraging manner.

Parent/Family Signature _____

Teacher Responsibilities—I want my students to learn and achieve, therefore I will:

- Treat each student with respect and dignity.
- Support, mentor, and tutor individual students and respond to parent questions.
- Provide high quality, engaging curriculum and instruction in a supportive and effective learning environment that enables students to meet the state's challenging academic standards.

Engage in regular two-way, meaningful communication with parents/family members including a minimum of one PTSC per year.

- Provide a classroom environment where students are allowed to make meaningful choices.
- Strive to create a school and classroom environment where peace and tolerance are paramount.
- Provide students with opportunities for authentic research and project work.
- Communicate with parents about their child's academic, social, and emotional progress on a regular basis.
- Provide academic rigor.
- Give parents the opportunity to volunteer in a meaningful way.
- Encourage students to explore their creativity and foster their own individuality.

Teacher Signature _____

Administration Responsibilities:

- Direct and standardize high quality, engaging curriculum and instruction in a supportive and effective learning environment that enables students to meet the state's challenging academic standards.
- Provide progress reports at least once a semester.
- Engage in regular two-way, meaningful communication with parents/family members including providing for a minimum of one PTSC per year.
- Support mentoring and tutoring and provide parent volunteer opportunities.
- Enforce school-wide behavior expectations.

Administrator Signature _____

We make a commitment to work together to carry out this agreement.

Signed on this _____ day of _____, 20_____

Please turn in the form with your signature and your parent or guardian signatures.
Teachers and administrators will sign upon receipt.

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