



## COMMUNITY RELATIONS: Community Involvement

### Parent and Family Involvement

#### I. Purpose

- A. Baltimore County Public Schools (BCPS) endorses meaningful partnerships among schools, parents, family caregivers, and the community. Comprehensive programs of parent, family, and community involvement require schools to promote and support student learning, parenting, communicating, shared school decision-making, volunteering, advocacy, collaborating with the community, and building partnerships at all grade levels in a variety of roles.
- B. BCPS will implement the parent involvement rule to establish a strong and effective system of parent involvement within the BCPS schools, including Title I schools, and to establish standards and criteria that meet both federal and state laws.

#### II. Definitions

- A. *Family* – Means a child’s primary care-giving unit.
- B. *Parent* – For the purpose of this policy, parent means: the biological parent, legal guardian or custodian, foster parent, or person acting in the absence of the parent or guardian.
- C. *Parental Involvement* – Means the participation of parents in regular, two-way, and meaningful communication involving student academic progress and other school activities, including ensuring:
  - 1. That parents play an integral role in assisting their child’s learning;
  - 2. That parents are encouraged to be actively involved at school in their child’s education;
  - 3. That parents are full partners in their child’s education and are included, as appropriate, in decision-making and on advisory committees to assist in the education of their child.
- D. *Partnership* – Means an association of two or more parties taking part in some activity in common with one another or others, working toward the same goals.

III. Guidelines

- A. The Superintendent will designate appropriate staff to ensure the following practices are implemented to support parent, family, and community involvement:
  - 1. Communicating
    - a. Publicize the school’s commitment to parent, family, and community involvement.
    - b. Promote clear, two-way communication between school and home concerning school programs and student progress.
    - c. Provide processes for addressing the concerns of parents, families, and community members and disseminate this information using a variety of means; such as, but not limited to, newsletters, school-parent orientation programs, and school system Web sites.
  - 2. Parenting
    - a. Help parents and families reinforce the skills taught at school and foster conditions that support student learning.
  - 3. Student Learning
    - a. Provide opportunities for parents, families, and community members to develop and refine the knowledge and skills needed to support student academic achievement, including activities and resources that connect to what students are learning in the classroom.
  - 4. Volunteering
    - a. Recruit, encourage, and recognize parents, families, and community members as volunteers.
    - b. Promote effective use of volunteers.
  - 5. School Decision-Making and Advocacy
    - a. Make parent and family involvement an integral component of the school improvement process.
    - b. Support parents and families as decision-makers and promote and include their leadership in advisory and advocacy roles by:
      - (1) Inviting and supporting parent and family participation in committees; such as, but not limited to, school improvement teams, citizens advisory committees, area education advisory committees, action teams, and character education committees.
      - (2) Communicating regularly, including providing timely notice of meeting times, locations, and agendas.

6. Collaborating with the Community
  - a. Work proactively and cooperatively with community agencies that provide assistance to students as well as to parents and families.
  - b. Seek partnerships with businesses and community organizations to promote student success.
7. Building Partnerships
  - a. Provide an open, safe, inviting, and welcoming environment where parents, family, and community involvement is valued, respected.
  - b. Encourage the use of professional development opportunities and resources to support effective parents, family, and community involvement through available school and community resources.

#### IV. Compliance

- A. All school-based and central office staff shall comply with the *Parent, and Family Involvement* Policy, its implementing rule and procedures, as well as performance goals 6 and 7 of the BCPS Master Plan, by implementing the strategies, activities, and measures regarding parent and family involvement in the educational process.
- B. Schools shall seek involvement from all parents, regardless of their educational attainment, race/ethnicity, gender, socio-economic status, primary language, marital status, sexual orientation, or disability.
- C. The Department of Professional Development and the Office of Title I will annually convene a group of parents and community stakeholders to review school system's *Parent and Family Involvement* policy, rule, and administrative procedures. This group shall include a representation of parents from Title I schools.

Legal References: 20 U.S.C. §6301, *et seq.*, *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001*, as amended by Section 1118(a)(2) of the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA)*  
*Annotated Code of Maryland*, Education Article §4-112, *Advisory Committees*

Related Policies: Board of Education Policy 1100, *Communication with the Public*

Board of Education Policy 1200, *Community Involvement*  
Board of Education Policy 1210, *Parent-Teacher (Student)*  
*Associations*  
Board of Education Policy 1220, *Citizens Advisory Committee*  
Board of Education Policy 1230, *Area Education Advisory Councils*  
*(AEAC)*  
Board of Education Policy 1240, *Visitors to Schools*  
Board of Education Policy 1260, *School Volunteers*  
Board of Education Policy 4000, *Precepts, Beliefs, and Values of*  
*The Baltimore County Public Schools*

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