

Components of the Family Engagement Policy

The Center for Law and Education has identified seven components that should comprise the Family Engagement Policy (source: 20 U.S.C. § 6318). A school's Family Engagement Policy should include, at a minimum, the following:

- 1. Statement of Purpose:** This section describes the school's vision for meaningful family engagement, consistent with Title I/NCLB.

- 2. Informing Families about Involvement:** This section describes how families will be informed of their right to be involved under Title I/NCLB. Each school must hold an annual meeting informing families of their right to participate in the school-level planning process, including joint development of the school's Family Engagement Policy and School Improvement Plan. This section should also address what information will be provided to families at the annual meeting and how families and educators will be notified of the meeting.

- 3. Shared Responsibilities for High Student Achievement (School-Family Compact):** As part of its Family Engagement Policy, each school must develop a School-Parent Compact describing how families and educators will share responsibility for high student academic achievement. The Compact describes how the school will be responsible for ensuring that all students receive a high-quality education, and how families will be responsible for supporting their children's learning. This section also addresses improved communication strategies for families and teachers.

- 4. Joint Opportunities for Learning (Capacity Building):** This section describes strategies to build the capacity of both families and educators to participate in joint educational decision-making. This means specifying how families will be provided training and information on topics such as standards, curriculum, instruction, assessments, and student progress, and how teachers will be provided training about ways to work more effectively with families. The sessions for teachers should include participation on the part of families. The meetings for families should likewise include teachers. These meetings must be held at flexible times that are convenient to families.

- 5. Engaging Families in the Development of the School Improvement Plan:** This section describes specific steps to engage families in the joint development of a School Improvement Plan. This section specifies how families, teachers, administrators, and other members of the school community will jointly develop a comprehensive School Improvement Plan that details specific strategies to close the achievement gap and ensure that all students learn to high standards. If requested, families must be given the opportunity for regular meetings to discuss the development of the School Improvement Plan and to provide suggestions.

- 6. Accessibility:** This section describes how both the Family Engagement Policy and School Improvement Plan will be written in a format and language that is understandable to parents. The policy must also ensure that parents with limited English proficiency have the opportunity to participate – e.g., through the translation of the policy into multiple languages.

- 7. Review and Revision:** The policy must be updated periodically to meet the changing needs of families and the school. This section of the policy describes the process for review and revision.