

School Parent and Family Engagement Policy
Thomas County Middle School
School Year 2023-2024
Revision Date 6/26/2023

In support of strengthening student academic achievement, **Thomas County Middle School** receives Title I, Part A funds and therefore 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(b) and (c) of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). The policy establishes the school's expectations for parent and family engagement and describes how the school will implement a number of specific parent and family engagement activities, and it is incorporated into the school's plan submitted to the local educational agency (LEA).

The **Thomas County Middle School** agrees to implement the following requirements as outlined by Section 1116:

- 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 the school parent and family engagement policy and the joint development of the school wide program plan under Section 1114(b) of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).
- Update the school parent and family engagement policy periodically to meet the changing needs of parents and the school, distribute it to the parents of participating children, and make the parent and family engagement policy available to the local community.
- Provide full opportunities, to the extent practicable, for the participation of parents with limited English proficiency, parents with disabilities, and parents of migratory children, including providing information and school reports required under Section 1111 of the ESSA in an understandable and uniform format, including alternative formats upon request and, to the extent practicable, in a language parents understand.
- If the school wide program plan under Section 1114(b) of the ESSA is not satisfactory to the parents of participating children, submit any parent comments on the plan when the school makes the plan available to the local educational agency.
- 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:

- (A) Parents play an integral role in assisting their child's learning
- (B) Parents are encouraged to be actively involved in their child's education at school
- (C) 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) Other activities are carried out, such as those described in Section 1116 of the ESSA.

DESCRIPTION OF HOW THE SCHOOL WILL IMPLEMENT REQUIRED SCHOOL PARENT AND FAMILY ENGAGEMENT POLICY COMPONENTS

JOINTLY DEVELOPED

Thomas County Middle School will take the following actions to involve parents in an organized, ongoing, and timely manner in the planning, review, and improvement of Title I programs, including opportunities for regular meetings, if requested by parents, to formulate suggestions and to participate, as appropriate, in decisions relating to the education of their child and respond to any such suggestions as soon as practicably possible.

- *A school-based Parent Advisory Council meets regularly with the principal and district leaders to provide input and suggestions on improvement plans.*
- *Parent surveys are conducted several times each school year to allow all parents to provide input and feedback. Parents and community stakeholders are involved in the annual comprehensive needs assessment that takes place during the spring of each school year.*
- *Each spring and summer, parents are invited to participate in meetings to plan, review and improve programs included in the School Improvement Plan, Family Engagement Plan, and to jointly develop a School-Parent Compact. Parents may request additional meetings by contacting the school principal or the school parent involvement coordinator. The parent involvement coordinator will update, at least annually, the School Family Engagement Plan based on parent and faculty input to meet the changing needs of parents and the school.*
- *Electronic copies of the Family Engagement Plan and Parent Compact are posted on school and district webpages on the first day of school. An electronic copy of the School Improvement Plan is distributed each year by September 1. Each of the three plans is posted on the school and district website by September 1 of each school year. Parents can request printed copies be sent home by responding to the school generated flyer, or by emailing the parent involvement coordinator.*
- *If the school wide program under section 1114(b) is not satisfactory to the parents of participating children, the principal will submit any parent comments to the Assistant Superintendent for Federal Programs.*

ANNUAL TITLE I MEETING

Thomas County Middle School will take the following actions to conduct an annual meeting, at a convenient time, and encourage and invite all parents of participating children to attend to inform them about the school's Title I program, the nature of the Title I program, the parents' requirements, the school parent and family engagement policy, the school wide plan, and the school-parent compact.

- *A school-specific annual Title I meeting will be held within the first month of school to inform parents of the requirements of Title I and the school's participation. Parents will be informed of their rights under Title I. The Title I meeting presentation will be posted on the Parent Involvement webpage.*
- *For the 2023-2024 school year, the Annual Title I meeting will be conducted in August and posted on the school webpage. An announcement will be sent home.*

COMMUNICATIONS

Thomas County Middle School will take the following actions to provide parents of participating children the following:

- Timely information about the Title I programs.
Flexible number of meetings, such as meetings in the morning or evening, and may provide with Title I funds, transportation, child care or home visits, as such services relate to parent and family engagement.
- Information related to the school and parent programs, meetings, and other activities, is sent to the parents of participating children in an understandable and uniform format, including alternative formats upon request and, to the extent practicable, in a language the parents can understand:
 - *Electronic copies of the Family Engagement Plan and Parent Compact are posted on school and district webpages on the first day of school. An electronic copy of the School Improvement Plan is distributed each year by September 1. Each of the three plans is posted on the school and district website by September 1 of each school year. Parents can request printed copies be sent home by responding to the school generated flyer, or by emailing the parent involvement coordinator.*
 - *Meetings will be offered at various times, such as morning and afternoon sessions whenever practical. Meetings will be provided in formats aligned to meet needs of our parents. Home visits often provide a chance to review meeting details, develop parent capacity, and get feedback. Parents may request alternative meeting formats by contacting the school parent involvement coordinator directly.*
 - *School-based parent involvement coordinators are able to provide assistance with transportation or child care if such issues present a barrier to participation in school Events. These services may be scheduled by contacting the parent involvement coordinator directly.*

SCHOOL-PARENT COMPACT

Thomas County Middle School will take the following actions to jointly develop with parents of participating children a school-parent compact that outlines how parents, the entire school staff, and 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 to help children achieve the state's high standards.

- *Parent surveys are conducted several times each school year to allow all parents a chance to provide input and feedback on programs implemented under school wide Title I plans, Family Engagement Plans, and or School-Parent Compacts.*
- *Each spring and summer, parents are invited to participate in meetings to plan, review and improve programs included in the School Improvement Plan, Family Engagement Plan, and jointly develop a School-Parent Compact. Parents may request additional meetings by contacting the school parent involvement coordinator.*
- *The Parent Compact is specifically linked to school and district improvement goals and contains specific information on the shared responsibility of parents, teachers, and students to develop grade appropriate skills and master the challenging state academic standards. The Parent Compact includes ways parents can support their children academically.*

RESERVATION OF FUNDS

If applicable, **Thomas County Middle School** will take the following actions to involve the parents of children served in Title I, Part A schools in decisions about how the 1 percent of Title I, Part A funds reserved for parent and family engagement is spent by:

- *Parent surveys are conducted several times each school year to allow all parents to provide input and feedback on how the district will spend the required 1% set aside for parent and family engagement. For the 2023-2024 school year, parent input directed the district to continue to provide a parent involvement coordinator for each Title I school. The value of this service exceeds the required 1% set-aside, and therefore satisfies this requirement. Parents who wish to suggest additional activities are offered the chance to provide input via surveys and meeting attendance throughout the school year.*

COORDINATION OF SERVICES

Thomas County Middle School 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 by:

- *District and school-based parent involvement coordinators implement plans to coordinate services and meeting times among schools and programs available in Thomas County. Each year area daycares, including Head Start and faith-based organizations are invited to tour Hand-In-Hand Primary in the spring enrollment season.*
- *TCMS/TCUE will coordinate and integrate Parent and Family Engagement strategies in Title I Part A with Parent and Family Engagement strategies under other programs. Parent and Family Engagement activities at the system level are coordinated with the Early Intervention Program (EIP), Migrant Program, and English to Speakers of Other Languages Program (ESOL), Special Education, and our Preschool Program. In addition, Parent and Family Engagement activities are coordinated with community wide programs such as Family Connections, Head Start, Thomasville Community Resource Center, Business Education Exchange Partnerships (B.E.E.), and Hands On Thomas County*
- *School and district facilities are used by community groups allowing the community to become familiar with the structure and programs provided by the Thomas County School District.*
- *The district coordinates open house and orientation activities to provide support to students and families as they transition between elementary, middle, high schools and on to post-secondary education. The district coordinates services to ensure students and families benefit from early childhood programs, college and career readiness programs, and parent resources available in the community.*

BUILDING CAPACITY OF PARENTS

Thomas County Middle School will build the parents' capacity for strong parent and family engagement to ensure effective involvement of parents and to support a partnership among the school and the community to improve student academic achievement through the following:

- Providing parents with a description and explanation of the curriculum in use at the school, the forms of academic assessments used to measure student progress, and the achievement levels of the challenging state academic standards; and
- 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;

- Providing assistance to parents of participating children, as appropriate, in understanding topics such as the following:
 - The challenging State’s academic standards
 - The State and local academic assessments including alternate assessments
 - The requirements of Title I, Part A
 - How to monitor their child’s progress, and
 - How to work with educators to improve the achievement of their child.
- *Each school conducts an annual Title I meeting that reviews the details of the Title I program and provides families with information and resources to learn more about the state’s academic standards.*
- *Parent involvement coordinators at each school conduct family engagement workshops to present materials and strategies parents and family members can use to support their child’s academic achievements, such as literacy training and using technology (including the harms of copyright piracy) to foster parent and family engagement. Additional topics will include information about academic assessments, curriculum requirements, and strategies to support their children academically. Title I schools will plan parent workshops based on survey results and parent requests as time and expertise allow.*
- *Each school hosts curriculum nights and or family workshops at which the curriculum in use is explained, and forms of academic assessments and achievement expectations are presented.*
- *Elementary schools host parent teacher conferences to share individual student academic assessment results and provide interpretation as needed.*

BUILDING CAPACITY OF SCHOOL STAFF

Thomas County Middle School will provide training to educate teachers, specialized instructional support personnel, principals, and other school leaders, and other staff, with the assistance of parents, in the value and utility of contributions of parents, and in how to reach out to, communicate with, and work with parents as equal partners, implement and coordinate parent programs, and build ties between parents and the school by:

- *The Thomas County School System will, with the assistance of its parents, provide staff development concerning, the value of parental contributions, how to effectively engage parents, how to build ties between home and school, and communicating in language parents can understand.*
- *Parent coordinators will get parent assistance in designing and implementing staff development with teachers and administrators.*
- *System federal programs staff and school level parent involvement coordinators provide professional learning opportunities and printed material throughout the school year for Administrators, faculty, and staff to develop an understanding of the value of parental involvement. Parent involvement coordinators maintain a page on the school website to share information about outreach methods that are effective in establishing partnerships between families and schools. Certified and classified school personnel are encouraged to include parents as equal partners in the education process. Learning opportunities are not limited to local events but may include participation in regional, state, or national conferences.*
- *Parent coordinators will encourage school staff to respond to parent requests for parent and family engagement activities.*
- *Parent coordinators will provide training on how to communicate in formats, to the extent practicable, in a language that parents can understand.*

Thomas County Middle School will provide other reasonable support for parent and family engagement activities under Section 1116 as parents may request by: (Parent requests reported at System PAC in March, 2023)

- *Continuing special themed events such as Bingo for Books, and school book fairs;*
- *Making technology resources available for parent use via parent resource rooms;*
- *Providing parent workshops on use of technology resources to support student achievement and monitoring student performance workshops on internet use and online student safety;*
- *Continuing online family workshops on ways to provide academic support, share academic resources, and online resources;*
- *Scheduling alternative sessions to give multiple options for parents to attend;*
- *Offering translation services at family workshops;*
- *Communicating goals to all stakeholders and continue to get input; and*
- *Including curriculum-related updates in parent meetings.*

STANDARDS AND ACTIVITIES for 2023-2024

Standard I: Parenting: Helping all families establish home environments to support children as students.

Activity/Strategy	Timeline	Completion Evidence	Person(s) Responsible
Host workshops—parent orientation, school introduction, volunteer orientation	Ongoing	Sign-in sheets, agenda, handouts, minutes	Parent Involvement Coordinator, Principal, Asst. Supt for Federal Programs
Parent Resource Room	Ongoing	Check-out list	Parent Involvement Coordinator
Home Visits	As needed	Monthly tally sheet, home visit forms	Parent Involvement Coordinator

Standard II: COMMUNICATION: Design effective forms of school-to-home and home-to-school communications about school programs and children's progress.

Activity/Strategy	Timeline	Completion Evidence	Person(s) Responsible
Make Parent and Family Engagement Policy available	Fall	Updated website	Parent Involvement Coordinator
Workshop announcements, advertise restaurant nights	As needed	Flyer, school newsletter, website announcements	Parent Involvement Coordinator
TCMS teacher websites and Facebook page are updated regularly	Ongoing	Updated websites	Parent Involvement Coordinator, Media Specialist

Remind, emails, academic progress reports	Ongoing	Printed progress reports, electronic communication	Parent Involvement Coordinator, teachers
Parent phone calls each day to all absent students	Ongoing	Contact logs, parent surveys	Parent Involvement Coordinator, Attendance Clerk
Conduct parent surveys to evaluate quality of workshops and other programming	Ongoing	Survey feedback, parent participation rates	Parent Involvement Coordinator
Annual Title I meeting	Fall	Sign-in sheets, agendas, minutes, handouts, video posted to website	Parent Involvement Coordinator

Standard III: VOLUNTEERING: Recruit and organize parent help and support group.

Activity/Strategy	Timeline	Completion Evidence	Person(s) Responsible
Volunteer Orientation	Fall	Sign-in sheet	Parent Involvement Coordinator, Asst. Supt. for Federal Programs
Classroom parents, Media center volunteers	Ongoing	Sign-in sheets, volunteer hours, monthly contact log	Parent Involvement Coordinator
Volunteers for workshops, fundraisers, school events	Ongoing	Sign-in sheets, volunteer hours	Parent Involvement Coordinator

Standard IV: LEARNING AT HOME: Provide information and ideas to families about how to help students at home with homework and other curriculum-related activities, conferences, and planning.

Activity/Strategy	Timeline	Completion Evidence	Person(s) Responsible
Parent Resource Room	Ongoing	Check-out list	Parent Involvement Coordinator
Inform parents (Flyers, newsletters, workshops, school and system websites) of ways to help with assignments and information about healthy snacks and exercise at home	Ongoing	Flyers, newsletters, updated websites	Parent Involvement Coordinator, Principal, Nutrition Director
Academic workshops (reading and math)	Fall and Spring	Workshop materials, sign-in sheets	Parent Involvement Coordinator

nights) to inform parents of GSE and internet sites that support student achievement			
Family nights	Ongoing	Sign-in sheets, event evaluations/surveys	Parent Involvement Coordinator

Standard V: DECISION MAKING: Include parents in school decisions, developing parent leaders and representatives.

Activity/Strategy	Timeline	Completion Evidence	Person(s) Responsible
Annual plan revision meetings	Spring	Agenda, sign in sheets, revised Compact, revised SIP, revised Family Engagement Plan	Parent Involvement Coordinator
School Council meetings	Two in the Fall Two in the Spring	Sign-in sheet, minutes	Principal, Staff, Parents
Parent Advisory Council (PAC) system and school level meetings	Fall and Spring	Meeting minutes, sign in sheets	Parent Involvement Coordinator, Principal, Asst. Supt. for Federal Programs
Conduct parent surveys to evaluate quality of workshops and other programming; gather input for plan revision	Spring	Agenda, sign in sheets, minutes, surveys	Parent Involvement Coordinator

Standard VI: COLLABORATING WITH COMMUNITY: Identify and integrate resources and services from the community to strengthen school programs, family practices, and student learning development.

Activity/Strategy	Timeline	Completion Evidence	Person(s) Responsible
Salvation Army Can Food Drive	November-December	Event and article publication	Parent Involvement Coordinator
BEE Partners and volunteer appreciation luncheon	March-April	Sign-in sheets	Parent Involvement Coordinator
Veterans Day	November 10, 2023	Sign-in sheets	Parent Involvement Coordinator
Hand-On-Thomas County volunteer events	Ongoing	Schedule of volunteer sites	Parent Involvement Coordinator

Box Tops 4 Education, Community Coffee, Publix Partners	Ongoing	Secure funds from stakeholders to support parent involvement	Parent Involvement Coordinator
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Standard I: PARENTING: Helping all families establish home environments to support children as students.

1. Parent resource room materials	3. Home visits, as needed
2. School programs and policies workshop	4. Parent orientation school introduction, reading, math, testing, project preparation and resources workshop(s)

Standard II: COMMUNICATION: Design effective forms of school-to-home and home-to-school communications about school programs and children's progress.

1. Annual Title I meeting	5. Information in class newsletters
2. Advertise workshops and restaurant nights	6. Updated teacher and Parent Involvement websites
3. Remind, email, and academic progress reports	7. Parent phone calls to absent students
4. Parent conferences, as needed	8. Conduct parent surveys to evaluate quality of workshops and other programming

Standard III: VOLUNTEERING: Recruit and organize parent help and support group.

1. Volunteer orientation	3. Classroom parents, media center volunteers
2. Volunteers to assist with workshops, fundraisers, school events	

Standard IV: LEARNING AT HOME: Provide information and ideas to families about how to help students at home with homework and other curriculum-related activities, conferences, and planning.

1. Parent resource room	4. Flyers and newsletters
2. School and system websites, Facebook	5. Academic workshops
3. Parent Involvement website, newsletter	6. Family nights and school visitation days

Standard V: DECISION MAKING: Include parents in school decisions, developing parent leaders and representatives.

1. School and System level Parent Advisory Council (PAC) meetings	3. Annual plan revision meetings
2. Parent conferences (MTSS)	4. School Council Meetings

Standard VI: COLLABORATING WITH COMMUNITY: Identify and integrate resources and services from the community to strengthen school programs, family practices, and student learning development.

1. Family Connections	5. BEE Partners and volunteer appreciation
2. Hands on Thomas County volunteer events	6. Salvation Army Can Food Drive
3. Veterans Day	7. Literacy for Thomas County
4. Business sponsored reward programs: Box Tops 4 Education, Community Coffee, Publix Partners	