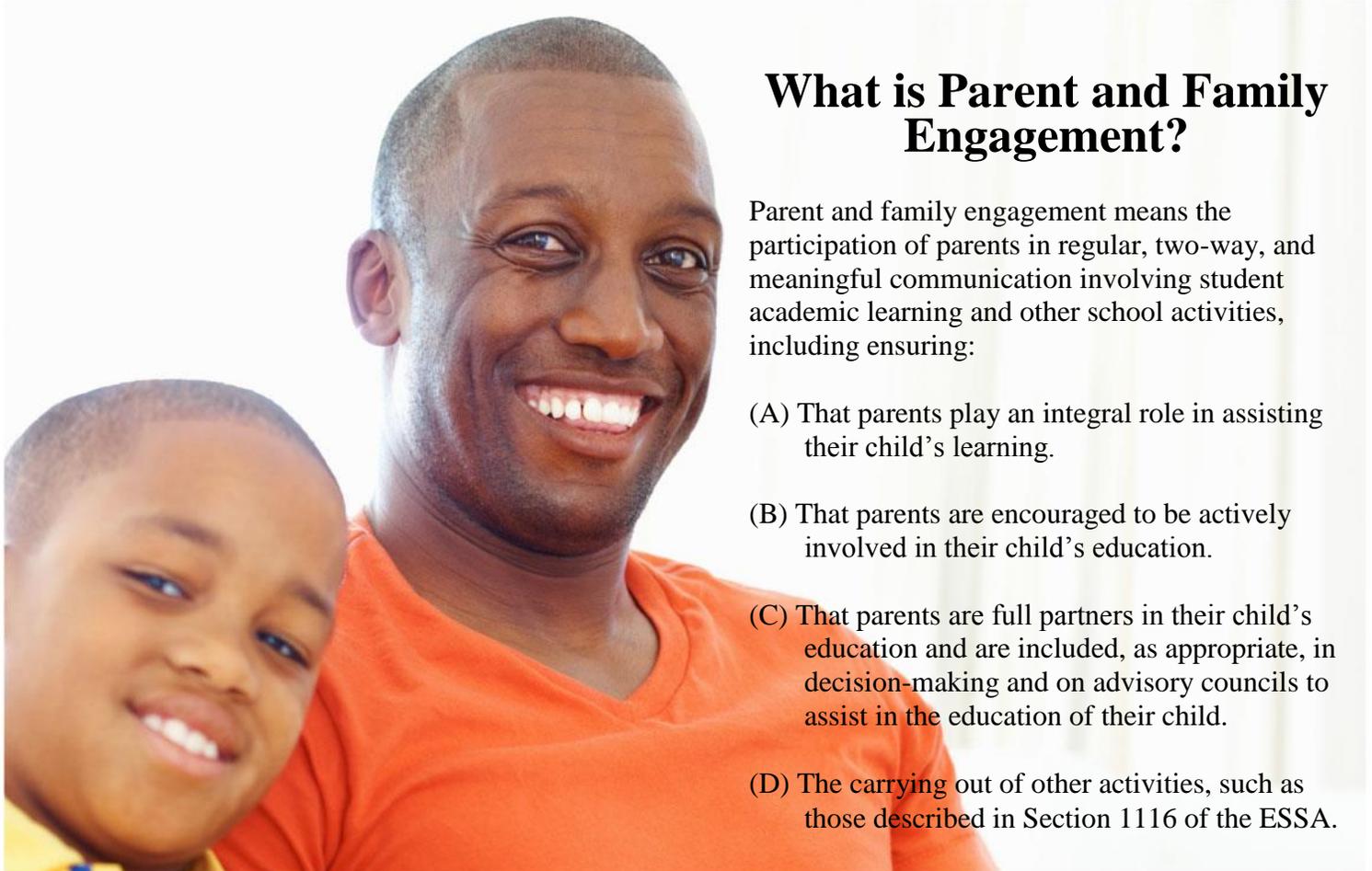


# Graduation Achievement Charter High School

## Parent and Family Engagement Policy

2017–2018  
Revised August 16, 2017  
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### What is Parent and Family Engagement?

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) That parents play an integral role in assisting their child’s learning.
- (B) That parents are encouraged to be actively involved in their child’s education.
- (C) That parents are full partners in their child’s education and are included, as appropriate, in decision-making and on advisory councils to assist in the education of their child.
- (D) The carrying out of other activities, such as those described in Section 1116 of the ESSA.

### About the Parent and Family Engagement Policy

In support of strengthening student academic achievement, Graduation Achievement Charter High School (GACHS) has developed this **Parent and Family Engagement Policy** that establishes the district’s expectations for parent and family engagement and guides the strategies and resources that strengthen school and parent/family partnerships within our Title I school. This plan will describe GACHS’s commitment to engage families in the education of their children and to build the capacity to implement family engagement strategies and activities designed to achieve the district and student academic achievement goals.

When schools, families, and communities work together to support learning, children tend to do better in school, stay in school longer and enjoy

school more. Title I, Part A provides for substantive parent and family engagement at every level of the program, such as in the development and implementation of the district/school plan, and in carrying out the district/school improvement provisions. Section 1116 of the Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015 (ESSA) contains the primary Title I, Part A requirements for schools and school systems to involve parents in their children’s education. Consistent with Section 1116, GACHS will work to ensure that the required Parent and Family Engagement Policy meet the requirements of Section 1116(b) and each include, as a component, a school-parent compact consistent with Section 1116(d) of ESSA.

## Jointly Developed

During a series of four Needs Assessment Parent Input meetings that occurred May 2017, all parents had an opportunity to participate and suggest changes to improve this GACHS Parent and Family Engagement Policy for the 2017-2018 school year. Invitation occurred via combination of email notification, school website posting, student flyers, and the GACHS Parent Support Facebook page. During these meetings, the Comprehensive LEA Improvement Plan (CLIP) was also discussed. Parents are strongly encouraged to participate in the GACHS Parent Advisory Council for ongoing feedback of the policy and overall school improvement.

Upon final revision, the district Parent and Family Engagement Policy was incorporated into the CLIP which will be submitted to the state. Parents are welcome to submit comments and feedback regarding the policy at any time via email or Google form. Feedback received was included with the policy for this school year.

The district Parent and Family Engagement Policy was posted on the school website, distributed via email before the annual Title I school meeting, and made available in the schools' virtual parent resource center.

## Strengthening Our School

This year, the district parent and family engagement coordinator (PFEC) will provide assistance and support to all center directors and the virtual manager to ensure parent and family engagement requirements are being satisfied and that parent engagement strategies and activities are being implemented. The PFEC will distribute notifications and resources to help the school improve and strengthen family engagement. In addition to frequent communication and center visits to review family engagement plans and activities, the PFEC will conduct staff-wide professional learning throughout the school year.

## Reservation of Funds

GACHS will reserve one percent from the total amount of Title I funds it receives in FY18 to carry out the parent and family engagement requirements listed in this policy and as described in Section 1116 of the ESSA. Furthermore, GACHS will distribute 90 percent of the amount reserved to support their parent and family engagement programs and activities. The GACHS PFEC will provide clear guidance and communication to assist in developing an adequate parent and family engagement budget that addresses the school's needs assessment and parent recommendations.

GACHS will host an annual Needs Assessment Parent Input Meetings May 2018 for parents to provide suggestions on how these parent and family engagement funds will be used in the upcoming year. Print and electronic comment forms and minutes from the meetings will be reviewed by the district to determine areas of need for the upcoming school year and necessary changes to the parent and family engagement budget.



## Building Capacity

GACHS will build the school's and parents' capacity for strong parent and family engagement, to ensure effective engagement of parents and family members, and to support a partnership among our Title I school, parents, families, and the community to improve student academic achievement through the following districtwide activities and programs.

***Of Parents-*** GACHS has established a Parent Advisory Council to provide advice on all matters related to parent and family engagement in Title I, Part A programs. Community leaders and business partners may be included on this council. The district will also encourage collaboration and participation with community partners by posting recordings of council and other district meetings on the website and increase participation by utilizing GoToMeeting video conferencing technology to accommodate the schedules of our valuable partners.

The GACHS PFEC, Program Coordinators will provide parents with timely information related to the school and parent programs, meetings, and other activities. The information will be sent in a language parents can understand. GACHS will work to aid parents in understanding state and district academic information connected to their student's learning and progress, as well as information regarding the Title I program. GACHS will provide workshops for parents to gain knowledge about the state-adopted standards and the achievement standards, as well as the required assessments for Georgia students. Parents will receive instruction on how to access the parent portal within the academic platform to monitor student progress. The dates and locations for these workshops will be posted on the school website and GACHS Parent Support Facebook page, sent via email, student flyers, and shared through the school newsletter.

GACHS will also offer on the school website links to resources and materials, including parent guides, study guides, and practice assessments, to help parents work with their children at home. Copies of these materials will be made available at the school upon request for those families who may have limited internet access, including copies in Spanish. To assist parents with understanding the online student information system and other digital educational resources, the GACHS technology specialists or another qualified staff member will collaborate with Program Coordinators to host workshops for parents.

To ensure that information related to school, and parent programs, meetings, and activities is available to all parents in an understandable and uniform format, GACHS will send home a districtwide calendar of events with information for parents at the beginning of the year. Parent notifications and resources will be sent home in our parents' native language, where applicable, and interpreters can be made available at parent events and meetings. Information posted on the school website will be translated to the extent practicable. GACHS will also utilize robocall, the school website, local news media, and/or other school message systems to post information for parents.

GACHS will coordinate and integrate the district's family engagement program and strategies, to the extent feasible, with IDEA, FEV Tutor, Title X, Part C McKinney-Vento Education for Homeless Children and Youth, and testing programs such as ACT, SAT, and ASVAB. Program representatives will be invited onsite to participate in lunch and learn and parent workshops. GACHS will also provide a virtual parent resource center to offer parents and families a plethora of information, including recorded webinars and community resources.

***Of School Staff*** - GACHS will conduct trainings during the school year for Program Coordinators, other faculty and staff to learn and discuss strategies to increase parent engagement, improve school-family communication, and build ties with parents and the community. The district PFEC will also provide opportunities to review and discuss parent and family engagement requirements and initiatives. GACHS will host professional learning for appropriate school staff and faculty that will focus on creating welcoming environments and improving two-way communication with families.

## Opportunities for Parent and Family Engagement

GACHS prides itself on the many opportunities available for parental involvement and to learn about the school and its programming. Visit [GradGeorgia.Com](http://GradGeorgia.Com) and the virtual GACHS Parent Resource Center for all event details.

### **Blended Model Engagement Events:**

- **Title I Annual Meeting:** Parents will receive information on the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), Title I program requirements, the GACHS Schoolwide Plan, notification of right to request the professional qualifications of their student's teachers and paraprofessionals, the virtual Parent Resource Center, ESOL, Foster Care, and McKinney-Vento. The Parent and Family Engagement Policy, School-Parent Compact, and the parent's responsibility for supporting their children's learning will also be shared. The meeting invitations will be emailed and posted throughout various school communication systems. The schedule of dates will be continuously updated throughout the year. These sessions will take place through GoToMeeting, a web-based meeting tool. We encourage all Title I parents to attend and ask questions. We will also record these sessions for your convenience.
- **Virtual Workshops & Meetings:** Plans for the year include live, online information sessions that cover important Title I updates, as well as academic resource tools that parents can use in the home with their students. The GACHS Parent and Family Engagement Coordinator, teachers and administrators will be leading various parent workshops throughout the school year.
- **On Location Workshops & Meetings:** These workshops and meetings run concurrently with virtual workshops, but located at the Graduation Achievement Centers (GAC). The meetings will be flexible and offered morning and evening.
- **Parent-Teacher Conferences:** The conferences will provide parents with information about the academic assessments to be used and the proficiency levels of their children. Parents are encouraged to make appointments to talk with their children's teachers anytime they believe conferences are needed. Teachers are encouraged to contact parents whenever they believe conferences will benefit students. Parents can email the PFEC or their child's counselor to request a meeting.

**Pre-recorded Information Sessions:** Please visit the virtual Parent Resource Center at GradGeorgia.Com – “Federal Programs” tab.

- **Title I Curriculum Night/Open House:** An explanation and description of GACHS curriculum, school mission statement, important dates, and academic assessments to be administered will be detailed. Other school/classroom policies and proficiency levels that students are expected to achieve will be explained.

**Unable to attend these meetings? Please visit the virtual GACHS Parent Resource Center at [www.gradgeorgia.com](http://www.gradgeorgia.com) to review the meeting documents and recordings.**

## *Communication Systems*

GACHS uses the following communication methods to provide timely information about Title I programs and the academic progress of their children. Information about school and parent programs, meetings, and other activities will be sent to parents in a practical format.

- **GACHS Website- Gradgeorgia.com:** Information about GACHS will be addressed and updated on the school’s website. Assessment dates, meetings, school activities, parental involvement meetings, and any programs or issues that parents need to be aware of will be addressed on the website.
- **GACHS virtual Parent Resource Center- <http://gradgeorgia.com/divisions/parental-resource-center/> :** Visit this page frequently for monthly parent meeting updates, recordings, and other important information from the GACHS Parent and Family Engagement Program.
- **GACHS Email Group (Class Messenger):** Parents are consistently informed of important information, relevant dates, activities, and events through school-wide e-mails and the GACHS website.
- **GACHS Parent Support Facebook Page- <https://www.facebook.com/groups/ProvostParentSupport/> :** Important information and updates for GACHS parents, as well as opportunities to interface with the GACHS Superintendent, occur on the school’s parent Facebook page.
- **GACHS Newsletter:** This is a monthly school publication to keep you informed at-a-glance about the latest school news.

# Parent and Family Engagement Evaluation

Each year, GACHS will conduct an evaluation of the content and effectiveness of this Parent & Family Engagement Policy and the parent and family engagement activities to improve the academic quality of our Title I school through an annual parent survey and Parent Input Meetings.

GACHS will use the Parent Input meeting to facilitate group discussions with parents about strategies for more effective parent and family engagement, the identification and removal of possible barriers to parent participation, and revision of the Parent and Family Engagement Policy.

Beginning in April, GACHS will send home a survey for parents to provide valuable feedback regarding the parent and family engagement activities and programs. These surveys will also be posted on the school website for parents to complete. In addition to the annual survey,

## Accessibility

In carrying out the parent and family engagement requirements established by Section 1116 of ESSA, the district parent and family engagement coordinator will communicate and collaborate with other programs to ensure full opportunities for participation of parents with limited English proficiency, parents with disabilities, and parents of migratory children including providing information and school reports in a language parents can understand.

## Mark Your Calendars

### *For Parents*

Annual Parent Survey  
April 2-30, 2018

School Improvement Forum  
May 7-11, 2018 –  
Each GACHS center

## Adoption

This districtwide Parent and Family Engagement Policy has been developed jointly and agreed upon with parents of children participating in Title I, Part A programs as evidenced by the collaboration of parents, school, and district personnel at the Parent Policy and Compact Adoption meetings.

This policy was adopted by the Graduation Achievement Charter High School on August 22, 2017 and will be in effect for the 2017-2018 academic school year. The school district will distribute this policy to all parents of participating Title I, Part A children on or before August 31, 2017.

