



**School, Parent and Family Engagement Policy**  
***Ellijay Elementary School***  
**2023 – 2024**

In support of strengthening student academic achievement, Ellijay Elementary 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).

Ellijay Elementary 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 schoolwide 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 schoolwide 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

**JOINTLY DEVELOPED**

Revision Date: May 15, 2023

Ellijay Elementary 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

The EES Family Engagement Partner, DeAnne Stenberg, reviewed the School Parent and Family Engagement Plan Guidelines provided by the LEA to draft a School Parent and Family Engagement Plan intended to build parents' capacity to be involved. The Parent and Family Engagement Committee, the School Governance Team and parent volunteers reviewed data from the 2023 Parent Survey to update the 2023-2024 plan in a forum to allow all parents to provide input. All parents and stakeholders were invited to the Stakeholder Input meetings on May 26, 2023 in the morning and afternoon to provide their input. Invitation to the meetings was extended through the school Facebook page, school website and text blast. This input coupled with LEA and state guidelines allowed for a coordinated approach to the EES School, Parent and Family Engagement Policy. As may be necessary, this Plan may be altered and changed to meet the ever changing needs of the school and parents. Each year at a minimum the Plan will be revisited and updated.

practicably possible.

### **ANNUAL TITLE I MEETING**

Ellijay Elementary 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 schoolwide plan, and the school-parent compact.

EES will hold an annual Title I meeting for parents. This meeting will be held in the early fall prior to November 1<sup>st</sup>, one evening and again in the morning to best meet parents differing schedule needs. Translators will be available for parents, guardians or students if needed. At this meeting parents and guardians will receive information regarding the implementation and requirements of the School-Wide Title I program specifically at EES. In addition to having the meeting in person, EES will also offer the meeting in a virtual format online.

### **COMMUNICATIONS**

Ellijay Elementary 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. Additionally, meetings and information for parents will be provided virtually online through the school's website and social media outlets.
- 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:

Communication at EES is of particular importance. The EES Parent and Family Engagement Policy will be kept on the school's website at all times for downloading. Paper copies are available for parent pickup located in the school's front office where parents check in/out students each day. Notice of these methods of attaining the Parent and Family Engagement Policy will be given to parents through email, text blasts, the school's Facebook page and the school's website. Also, the school uses these same modes of communication to disseminate information regarding family night events and other important school information to parents and guardians.

## **SCHOOL-PARENT COMPACT**

Ellijay Elementary 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.

In April and May of 2023, the Ellijay Elementary School Parent Survey was completed. This survey informed our School-Parent Compact through suggestions made directly by parents and guardians of our students. All parents, guardians and stakeholders were invited to the May 2023 Stakeholder Input Meetings. At those meetings survey results and compact needs were discussed collaboratively with stakeholders and school personnel for them to develop this year's School-Parent Compact. Additionally, teachers provided suggestions in academic areas for each grade level where they felt it would best benefit students to have more support at home from parents/guardians. Parents, guardians and all stakeholders are invited each month to attend school governance meetings to gather their valuable input. With this input the school can better serve the needs of all parents, guardians and students.

## **RESERVATION OF FUNDS**

Ellijay Elementary 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:

The reservation of funds is discussed each year at the last School Governance Team (SGT) meeting in April 2022 and at the EES Parent Input meetings on May 31, 2022. All parents and stakeholders are invited to all SGT meetings at EES. In the fall prior to November 1<sup>st</sup>, approval is sought from all parents of EES to reserve that 1% of budgeted funds and allow for the district to delegate those monies. The Gilmer County Charter School System uses its 1% to partially fund school family engagement partners and a district level family engagement coordinator.

## **COORDINATION OF SERVICES**

Ellijay Elementary 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:

Ellijay Elementary School has partnered with several local groups to enhance services to students and families. Gilmer Arts has provided performances to all students in the building utilizing our school auditorium. Local counseling agencies offer services to families and students through referrals made by the school. EES maintains a parent resource center containing meaningful parent focused literature as well as a computer capable of printing.

## **BUILDING CAPACITY OF PARENTS**

Ellijay Elementary 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 and assessments in use at the school, the forms of individual student 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
- Ellijay Elementary School is committed to making sure that our parents and families feel supported and when necessary will allow for parents to request meetings upon necessary topics.
- If parents feel this School-Wide plan is not satisfactory they may communicate their concerns to the Gilmer County Schools District office by way of the Ellijay Elementary School's Family Engagement Partners.
- 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
  - How to work with educators to improve the achievement of their child

Ellijay Elementary School provides a myriad of parent involvement opportunities that focus upon capacity building, these include:

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| - District Literacy Event                               | - SGT Meetings          |
| - Title I Informational Night                           | - Open House            |
| - Virtual EIP Informational Meeting with Administration | - Parent Input Meetings |

## **BUILDING CAPACITY OF SCHOOL STAFF**

Ellijay Elementary 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:

Each month at the Ellijay Elementary School, School Governance Team (SGT) meeting parents provide input and direct a portion of the meeting. All stakeholders and parents are invited to attend the SGT meeting each month. This portion of the meeting that is directed by parents typically revolves around an outreach article selected by parents that discusses the value of including parents in their child's education using various methods. This conversation often involves school and home communication, the use and understanding of tests and test scores, school attendance, curriculum and standards and others. EES strives to provide this information in a format, to the extent practicable, in a language that all parents can understand. This article and parent commentary is then shared with the entire school staff via email and whole staff faculty meetings.