Policy 2158: Parent and Family Engagement and Educational Involvement

Status: ADOPTED

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Parent/Family Engagement and Involvement in Education Policy

The Board of Trustees believes that engaging parents/families in the education process is essential to improved academic success for students. The Board recognizes that a student's education is a responsibility shared by the district, parents, families and other members of the community during the entire time a student attends school. The Board believes that the district must create an environment that is conducive to learning and that strong, comprehensive parent/family involvement is an important component. Parent/Family involvement in education requires a cooperative effort with roles for the Office of Public Instruction (OPI), the district, parents/families and the community.

This policy shall be made available to all interested individuals upon request and posted on the District's website.

Parent/Family Involvement Goals and Plan

The Board of Trustees recognizes the importance of eliminating barriers that impede parent/family involvement, thereby facilitating an environment that encourages collaboration with parents, families and other members of the community. Therefore, the district will develop and implement a plan to facilitate parent/family involvement that shall include the following six (6) goals:

1. Promote families to actively participate in the life of the school and feel welcomed, valued, and connected to each other, to school staff, and to what students are learning and doing in class;

2. Promote families and school staff to engage in regular, two-way meaningful communication about student learning;

3. Promote families and school staff to continuously collaborate to support student learning and healthy development both at home and at school and have regular opportunities to strengthen their knowledge and skills to do so effectively;

4. Empower parents to be advocates for their own and other children, to ensure that students are treated equitably and have access to learning opportunities that will support their success;

5. Encourage families and school staff to be partners in decisions that affect children and families and together inform, influence, and create policies, practices, and programs; and

6. Encourage families and school staff to collaborate with members of the community to connect students, families, and staff to expand learning opportunities, community services, and civic participation.

The Board of Trustees, in consultation with parents, teachers administrators, and students has adopted this District plan for meeting these parent/family involvement goals:

1. Provide activities that will educate parents/families regarding the intellectual and developmental needs of their children at all age levels. This will include promoting cooperation between the district and other agencies or school/community groups to furnish learning opportunities and disseminate information regarding parenting skills and child/adolescent development.

2. Implement strategies to involve parents/families in the educational process and laws regarding parent/family rights, including:

- Keeping parents/families informed of opportunities for involvement and encouraging participation in various District programs.

- Providing access to all District policies, District handbooks, Board and Committee meeting agendas, the District grievance procedure and contact methods for District administrators and Trustees on the District's website.

- Providing access to educational resources a course of study for parents/families to use together with their children.

- Keeping parents/families informed of the objectives of district educational and activity programs, their child's participation and progress within these programs, and methods to opt out of such programs and instruction consistent with parent/family rights.

- Promoting parents/families and teacher cooperation in homework, attendance, and discipline.

- Providing information about the nature and purpose of student clubs and groups meeting at the school in accordance with Policy 3233 and 3550 and methods to consent to participation or opt out of participation consistent with parent/family rights.

- Providing explanation of rights regarding student name and pronoun use consistent with Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act and Policy 3600.

3. Enable families to participate in the education of their children through a variety of roles. For example, parents/family members should be given opportunities to provide input into district policies and volunteer time within the classrooms and school programs.

4. Provide professional development opportunities for teachers and staff to enhance their understanding of effective parent/family involvement strategies.

5. Perform regular evaluations of parent/family involvement at each school and at the district level.

6. Provide access, upon request, to any instructional material used as part of the educational curriculum.

7. If practical, provide information in a language understandable to parents.

8. Provide annual notification of educational opportunities of the District consistent with Montana law in the form of the student handbook, the District policy manual as posted on the District website, or other accessible format on topics which include:

- The District's options for delivery of personalized instruction to students consistent with Policies 1015FE and 2050, the legislature's findings at Section 20-7-1601, MCA. and Article X, Section 1 of the Montana Constitution.

- Evaluation, identification, and services provided to students with disabilities consistent with Section 20-7-411, MCA, Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, and Policies 2161 and 2162.
- Admission of students to kindergarten consistent with Sections 20-5-101 and 20-7-117, MCA, and Policy 3110.
- Proficiency based learning and other forms of personalized learning including course equivalency waiver consistent with Section 20-3-324, MCA and Policies 1005FE, 1015FE, 2050, 2410, and 3121.
- Participation in extracurricular activities, including participation by nonpublic and home school students consistent with Section 20-5-112, MCA, and Policy 3150.
- Access to remote instruction, including through the Montana Digital Academy pursuant to Title 20, chapter 7, part 12, non-District sources, and through other school districts as provided in Section 20-7-118, MCA, and Policies 2050, 2168, 2170, and 2167;
- Out-of-district attendance consistent with Title 20, chapter 5, part 3 MCA and Policies 3110, 3121, and 3141.
- early literacy targeted interventions in accordance with Title 20, MCA and Policy 1010FE.
- Part-time enrollment of a student who is otherwise enrolled at a nonpublic or home school consistent with Section 20-5-101, MCA and Policy 3150.
- Availability of funding to support student access to advanced opportunities, if applicable to a district consistent with Section 20-7-1506, MCA and Policy 1015FE;
- Career and technical education pursuant to Title 20, chapter 7, part 3, including the attainment of industry-recognized credentials and work-based learning, consistent with Section 20-7-1510, MCA, and Policies 2050, 2410, and 2600.
- Early college, dual enrollment, and running start opportunities, consistent with Section 20-9-706, MCA, and District Policy 2168 and 2410.
- Other opportunities for school-age children through Montana public schools which parents/families and students may rely upon as specified in Policy 2140 which:
    - supprt the development of a child's full educational potential;
    - assist in reducing the csts of postsecondary education and workforce preparation; and
    - fster life success.