



September 2017

## **District Parent/Guardian Involvement Guidelines**

Family engagement plays a key role in helping students succeed in school and in developing a sense of pride in the school community. Salem Public Schools (SPS) is committed to helping schools, staff, families, students, and the community to establish active partnerships that strengthen student learning and improve schools.

All SPS schools aim to build the capacity of families and school staff, organize School Councils, plan activities to engage families in their children's learning, and support parents and school staff in their efforts to better communicate and work together to increase student learning, especially families of English language learners and families who have children in special education programs.

### **Here are some examples of how schools engage families in student learning:**

- Individual parent-teacher conferences with a focus on sharing and explaining student progress (at least two per year)
- Workshops on the subjects your child will learn, tips and strategies to help your child at home, and a guide to help your child prepare for tests
- Special events, such as Math and Literacy Nights
- School Parent Council
- Opportunities to volunteer in classrooms

### **Every Salem Public School is expected to:**

- Set aside space and resources for parent meetings
- Schedule time each week for teachers to contact or meet with parents
- Leverage your Family Engagement Facilitator to support parent and family involvement
- Respond promptly to questions and requests from parents
- Communicate regularly with parents in the language spoken in the home
- Provide opportunities for two-way communication so that families are able to give input and feedback
- Share and explain student data in a family friendly format
- Inform parents in a family-friendly format of strategies to improve student achievement at school and at home
- Provide parents with a description of the main topics to be covered in each course.

## **Family Engagement and Federal Requirements**

- Under the federal law, all schools that qualify for federal Title I funding must have a written Parent Engagement Policy, developed with and approved by parents. This policy should spell out how parents will be involved as partners in their children's education. In addition, every Title I school must develop a Home-School Compact, which is an agreement that defines the responsibilities that administrators, students, teachers, and parents will undertake to improve student achievement. After the Compact is approved by the School Site Council, copies should be sent to all parents for signature.

### **The School Parent Council:**

- All SPS schools must have a School Council (SC). The SC brings parents in the school community together to support the school and advocate for quality education. The SC must elect an Executive Committee in the fall and take steps to ensure that it is active and diverse, representing all families within the school. The SC also reviews the school's School Improvement Plan, recommends programs, sponsors events, solves problems, and raises funds for special school activities.

### **The Salem Public Schools' Parent Information Center offers many services for families.**

You can:

- Get advice about SPS policies and services
- Find out about bus transportation
- Register students for school
- Apply for transfers to other schools
- Fill out a change-of-address form if you move
- Obtain information about schools, summer programs, and health and human services resources available to Salem families
- Learn how you can become engaged with your child's school and support their learning at home