

Table of Contents

District Parent and Family Engagement Plan	1
Table of Contents	2
How to Use This Guide and Suggested Template	3
General Guidance	4
1: Jointly Developed Expectations and Objectives	5
What are the Federal and State Requirements?	5
Required Components	8
2: Building Staff Capacity through Training and Technical Assistance	9
What are the Federal and State Requirements?	9
Required Components	11
3: Building Parent Capacity	12
What are the Federal and State Requirements?	12
What are the Federal Discretionary Activities?	12
Required Components	14
4: Reservation and Evaluation	15
What are the Federal and State Requirements?	15
Required Components	17
5: Coordination	18
What are the Federal and State Requirements?	18
Required Components	18
Review	19

How to Use This Guide and Suggested Template

As the Arkansas Department of Education (ADE) seeks to support districts in planning efforts for engaging families and community, this document serves as a tool for considering each of the components required by State and Federal regulations. The way in which each district responds to each section and its components is to be determined by the committee members and leadership team. Submitting the district plan in Indistar is required, and it is recommended that the school submit the plan in Indistar. Once the school plan is entered in Indistar, it must be reviewed and approved by the district annually. Once the district plan is entered in Indistar, it will be reviewed and returned with comments provided by ADE. The district plan must be posted to the district website by August 1.

This District Parent and Family Engagement Plan document contains a number of shaded boxes designed to be used as a template, along with guidance text explaining legal requirements.

A cover page and five separate sections make up the template boxes, each of which corresponds to a section within the Indistar platform. In each shaded box, districts will find a heading, a direction, and a space in which to record your response.

Federal and State regulations are outlined within the guidance text in each section. While the checklist serves as a tool to ensure requirements are met, it is important to review the law to understand the intention. The checklist within the corresponding School Parent and Family Engagement Plan template and guide is encouraged for your required review and approval of each school plan submitted in Indistar.

After final revision, ensure that the plan is in a language and format parents can understand. Innovative formats are encouraged for sharing the plan sections with stakeholders, and this document is intended to serve as a springboard for creativity. Follow guidance regarding distribution of the plan to families and community.

Key to citations within guidance:

Grey Citation: Elementary and Secondary Education Act, as amended by Every Student Succeeds Act, 20 U.S.C. § 6318

Example: "Section 1116(e)(1)"

Burgundy Citation: Ark. Code Ann. § 6-15-1701 et seq.

Example: "6-15-1704(a)(3)(B)"

Blue Citation: Arkansas Department of Education Rules Governing Parental Involvement Plans and Family and Community Engagement

Example: "Rules Section 4.03"

General Guidance

The Arkansas General Assembly recognizes that:

- A child's education is a responsibility shared by the school and family during the entire time the child spends in school;
- To support the goal of the schools to educate all students effectively, the schools and parents must work as knowledgeable partners;
- Although parents are diverse in culture, language, and needs, they are an integral component of a school's ability to provide for the educational success of their children;
- Engaging parents is essential to improve student achievement; and
- Schools should foster and support active parental involvement.

Ark. Code Ann. § 6-15-1701(a)(1-5)

Each public school district and each public school within its boundaries, in collaboration with parents, shall establish a parental involvement plan, including programs and practices that enhance parental involvement and reflect the specific needs of students and their families.

Ark. Code Ann. § 6-15-1702(a)

Each public school district shall have a written plan for parent, family, and community engagement, including the scheduling of a least two (2) parent-teacher conferences each year, in accordance with the laws of the State of Arkansas and the rules of the Department. By August 1, the plan shall be posted on the district website under State - Required Information.

*Standards for Accreditation of Arkansas Public Schools and School Districts
July 2018 Standard 5-A.1 (D/C)*

A local educational agency [district] may receive funds under Title I, Part A of the Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015 only if such agency conducts outreach to all parents and family members and implements programs, activities, and procedures for the involvement of parents and family members in programs assisted under Part A consistent with Section 1116. Such programs, activities, and procedures shall be planned and implemented with meaningful consultation with parents of participating children.

Section 1116(a)(1)

Support the development, implementation, and regular evaluation of the program to involve parents in the decisions and practices of the school district, using, to the degree possible, the components listed in this section.

Ark. Code Ann. § 6-15-1702(b)(9)

Annually by August 1, every school district shall review and update the school district's parental involvement plan and:

- File a copy of the plan with the Department of Education [Indistar];
- Place a copy of the plan on the school district's website.

Ark. Code Ann. § 6-15-1704(a)(1-2); Act 757 of 2019; Rules Section 4.03

1: Jointly Developed Expectations and Objectives

(Describe/List the District expectations and objectives for parent and family engagement. Describe/List how parents will be involved in the development of the district parent and family engagement policy. Describe/List how parents will be involved in the development and review of the School Improvement/Title I Schoolwide/Title I Targeted Assistance Plan and, if applicable, the Comprehensive Support and Improvement and the Targeted Support and Improvement plans. Describe/List how the District will submit to the State comments from parents who deem the LEA Plan unsatisfactory.)

What are the Federal and State Requirements?

- Each local educational agency [district] that receives funds under this part shall develop jointly with, agree on with, and distribute to, parents and family members of participating children a written parent and family engagement policy. The policy shall
 - be incorporated into the local educational agency's [district] plan developed under section 1112,
 - establish the agency's expectations and objectives for meaningful parent and family involvement, and
 - describe how the agency will involve parents and family members in jointly developing the local educational agency [district] plan under section 1112, and the development of support and improvement plans under paragraphs (1) and (2) of section 1111(d).

Section 1116(a)(2)

- Each public school district and each public school within its boundaries, in collaboration with parents, shall establish a parental involvement plan, including programs and practices that enhance parental involvement and reflect the specific needs of students and their families.

Ark. Code Ann. § 6-15-1702(a)

- Each public school district, in collaboration with parents, shall establish a parental involvement plan that establishes the district’s expectations for parental involvement, and that includes programs and practices that enhance parental involvement and reflect the specific needs of students and their families.
 - Collaboration with parents may be accomplished through the coalition of parents and representatives of agencies, institutions, businesses and industries.
 - Annually by August 1, the public school district’s parent involvement plan shall be:
 - Developed, or reviewed and updated by the public school district;
 - Posted to the website of the public school district; and
 - Filed with the Department’s electronic filing process [Indistar].
 - Provided in a parent-friendly **summary/explanation** as a supplement to the student handbook.
 - The parent shall sign a form acknowledging receipt of the summary and return the signed form to the school where the student is enrolled.

Ark. Code Ann. § 6-15-1704(a); Rules Section 3.02

- Parents and family members of children receiving services under this part shall be involved in the decisions regarding how funds reserved under subparagraph (A) are allotted for parental involvement activities.

Section 1116(a)(3)(B)

- Involve parents in the activities of the schools served under this part, which may include establishing a parent advisory board comprised of a sufficient number and representative group of parents or family members served by the local educational agency [district] to adequately represent the needs of the population served by such agency for the purposes of developing, revising, and reviewing the parent and family engagement policy.

Section 1116(a)(2)(F)

- Conduct, with the meaningful involvement of parents and family members, an annual evaluation of the content and effectiveness of the parent and family engagement policy in improving the academic quality of all schools served under this Title I, Part A.

Section 1116(a)(2)(D)

- Support the development, implementation, and regular evaluation of the program to involve parents in the decisions and practices of the school district, using, to the degree possible the components listed in this section.

Ark. Code Ann. § 6-15-1702(b)(9)

- If the plan under section 1112 is not satisfactory to the parents of participating children, the local educational agency [district] shall submit any parent comments with such plan when such local educational agency [district] submits the plan to the State.

Section 1116(b)(4)

- Annually by August 1, every school district shall review and update the school district's parental involvement plan and:
 - File a copy of the plan with the Department of Education [Indistar];
 - Place a copy of the plan on the school district's website.

Ark. Code Ann. § 6-15-1704(a)(1-2); Act 757 of 2019; Rules Section 4.03

Does the District Parent and Family Engagement Plan describe how the district will accomplish each of the required components?

Required Components

- Involve parents in the development of the district parent and family engagement plan, the schoolwide program plan, and support and improvement plans
- Establish expectations and objectives for meaningful involvement, reflecting the specific needs of students and families
- Make the district parent and family engagement plan available to the families and the local community
 - ✓ File with the Department of Education by August 1 [Indistar]
 - ✓ Place a copy on the district website by August 1
 - ✓ Place a parent-friendly summary/explanation of the parent and family engagement plan online and as a supplement to the student handbook
 - Obtain signatures from each parent acknowledging receipt of the [district's] parent and family engagement plan summary
- Involve parents and families in the decisions regarding how funds reserved for parent and family engagement are allotted for activities (*see also section 4*)
- Involve parents and families meaningfully in the evaluation, and update, at least annually, of the district parent and family engagement plan (*see also section 4*)
- Ensure adequate representation of parents and families of participating children in the process
- Incorporate the parent and family engagement plan into the schoolwide plan
- Submit to the State the comments from parents who deem the schoolwideLEA plan unsatisfactory
- (*May accomplish collaboration through the coalition of parents and community representatives*)

2: Building Staff Capacity through Training and Technical Assistance

(Describe/List how the district will provide support and technical assistance to all its Title I schools in planning and implementing effective parent and family engagement practices, inclusive of school parent and family engagement policies/plans, school-parent compacts, and all Title I parent and family engagement requirements. Describe/List activities such as workshops, conferences, trainings, webinars, and online resources that will be used with school staff to build their capacity to work with parents as equal partners. Include information about how the district and/or schools will provide information related to school and parent programs, meetings, and other activities to parents in a format, to the extent practicable, and in a language that parents can understand.)

What are the Federal and State Requirements?

- Provide the coordination, technical assistance, and other support necessary to assist and build the capacity of all participating schools within the local educational agency [district] in planning and implementing effective parent and family involvement activities to improve student academic achievement and school performance, which may include meaningful consultation with employers, business leaders, and philanthropic organizations, or individuals with expertise in effectively engaging parents and family members in education.

Section 1116(a)(2)(B)

- 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.

Section 1116(e)(3)

- May involve parents in the development of training for teachers, principals, and other educators to improve the effectiveness of such training.

Section 1116(e)(6)

- May arrange school meetings at a variety of times, or conduct in-home conferences between teachers or other educators, who work directly with participating children, with parents who are unable to attend such conferences at school, in order to maximize parental involvement and participation.

Section 1116(e)(10)

- The State Board of Education's Standards for Accreditation of Arkansas Public Schools and School Districts shall require the following professional development hours according to the professional development schedule under Ark. Code Ann. § 6-17-709

- Two (2) hours as part of the minimum number of hours required for teachers, designed to enhance understanding of effective parental involvement strategies
- Two (2) hours as part of the minimum number of hours required for administrators, designed to enhance understanding of:
 - Effective parent involvement strategies; and
 - The importance of administrative leadership in setting expectations and creating a climate conducive to parental participation

Ark. Code Ann. § 6-15-1703(a); Ark. Code Ann. § 6-17-709

*Standards for Accreditation of Arkansas Public Schools and School Districts
July 2018 Standard 4-G.1 Professional Development (D-S/C)*

- A school district shall provide training at least annually for volunteers who assist in an instructional program for parents.

Ark. Code Ann. § 6-15-1703(b)

- Place a parent-friendly summary of the [district] plan as a supplement to the student handbook.

Ark. Code Ann. § 6-15-1704(a)(3)(A); Act 757

- The parent shall sign a form acknowledging receipt of the [district] summary and return the signed form to the school where the student is enrolled.

Ark. Code Ann. § 6-15-1704(a)(3)(B)

- Ensure that information related to school and parent programs, meetings, and other activities is sent to the parents of participating children in a format and, to the extent practicable, in a language the parents can understand.

Section 1116(e)(5)

Does the District Parent and Family Engagement Plan describe how the district will accomplish each of the required components?

Required Components

- Ensure professional development requirements are met for teachers and administrators
- Provide coordination, technical assistance, and other support to schools in
 - ✓ jointly-developing school parent and family engagement plans
 - ✓ implementing effective parent and family involvement activities
 - ✓ jointly-developing school-parent compacts
- Train teachers, specialized instructional support personnel, principals, and other school leaders, and other staff, with the assistance of parents, in:
 - Educate staff in
 - ✓ the value and utility of contributions of parents
 - ✓ how to reach out to, communicate with, and work with parents as equal partners
 - ✓ how to implement and coordinate parent programs
 - ✓ how to build ties between parents and the school
- *(May include meaningful consultation with families and/or community)*
- Require minimum professional development hours for teachers and administrators
- Provide training at least annually for volunteers
- Place a parent-friendly summary of the (district) parent and Family engagement plan as a supplement to the student handbook
 - ✓ Obtain signatures from each parent acknowledging receipt of the (district's) parent and family engagement plan
- Ensure information is sent in a language and format parents and families can understand

3: Building Parent Capacity

(Describe/List activities, such as workshops, conferences, classes, online resources, and any equipment or other materials that may be necessary to support parents in helping their student's academic success. If applicable, describe how each discretionary item your district and parents chose will be implemented.)

What are the Federal and State Requirements?

- To ensure effective involvement of parents and to support a partnership among the school involved, parents, and the community to improve student academic achievement, each school and local educational agency [district] assisted under this part.
 - shall provide assistance to parents of children served by the school or local educational agency [district], as appropriate, in understanding such topics as the challenging State academic standards, State and local academic assessments, the requirements of this part, and how to monitor a child's progress and work with educators to improve the achievement of their children
Section 1116(e)(1)
 - shall provide materials and training to help parents to work with their children to improve their children's achievement, such as literacy training and using technology (including education about the harms of copyright piracy), as appropriate, to foster parental involvement
Section 1116(e)(2)
 - shall provide such other reasonable support for parental involvement activities under this section as parents may request
Section 1116(e)(14)

What are the Federal Discretionary Activities?

The LEA parent and family engagement policy may include additional paragraphs listing and describing other discretionary activities that the school district, in meaningful consultation with its parents, chooses to undertake to build parents' capacity for engagement in the school and school district to support their children's academic achievement, such as the following discretionary activities listed under Section 1116(e) of the ESSA:

- *may provide necessary literacy training from funds received under this part if the local educational agency [district] has exhausted all other reasonably available sources of funding for such training*
Section 1116(e)(7)
- *may pay reasonable and necessary expenses associated with local parental involvement activities, including transportation and child care costs, to enable parents to participate in school-related meetings and training sessions*
Section 1116(e)(8)
- *may train parents to enhance the involvement of other parents*
Section 1116(e)(9)
- *may adopt and implement model approaches to improving parental involvement*
Section 1116(e)(11)
- *may establish a districtwide parent advisory council to provide advice on all matters related to parental involvement in programs supported under this section*
Section 1116(e)(12)
- *may develop appropriate roles for community-based organizations and businesses in parent involvement activities*
Section 1116(e)(13)

Does the District Parent and Family Engagement Plan describe how the district will accomplish each of the required components?

Required Components

- Provide assistance to parents, as appropriate, in understanding
 - ✓ the challenging State academic standards,
 - ✓ State and local academic assessments,
 - ✓ the requirements of Title I, Part A, and
 - ✓ how to monitor a child's progress and work with educators to improve the achievement of their children
- Provide materials and training to help parents to work with their children to improve their children's achievement,
 - ✓ such as literacy training and using technology (including education about the harms of copyright piracy), as appropriate, to foster parental involvement
- Provide such other reasonable support for parental involvement activities under this section as parents may request
- Describe how each discretionary item your district and parents chose will be implemented

4: Reservation and Evaluation

(Describe/List how the district will share with parents and family members the budget for parent and family engagement activities and programs and how parents and family members will be involved in providing input into how the funds are used. If the district does not receive a Title I, Part A allocation greater than \$500,000, then the district is not required to include a description of its Reservation of Funds. If a reservation is required, then a minimum of 90% of that 1% must go to the schools, with priority given to high-need schools. Describe/List actions for how the annual evaluation will be conducted, identifying who will be responsible for conducting it, and explaining what role parents and family members will play.)

What are the Federal and State Requirements?

- Each local educational agency [district] shall reserve at least 1 percent of its allocation under subpart 2 to assist schools to carry out the activities described in Section 1116,
 - This shall not apply if 1 percent of such agency’s allocation under subpart 2 for the fiscal year for which the determination is made is \$5,000 or less. Local educational agencies are not limited from reserving more than 1 percent of its allocation under subpart 2 to assist schools to carry out activities described in this section.

Section 1116(a)(3)(A)

- Parents and family members of children receiving services under this part shall be involved in the decisions regarding how funds reserved under subparagraph (A) are allotted for parental involvement activities.

Section 1116(a)(3)(B)

- Not less than 90 percent of the funds reserved under subparagraph (A) shall be distributed to schools served under this part, with priority given to high-need schools.

Section 1116(a)(3)(C)

- Funds reserved shall be used to carry out activities and strategies consistent with the local educational agency’s [district] parent and family engagement policy, including not less than 1 of the following
 - Supporting schools and nonprofit organizations in providing professional development, which may be provided jointly to teachers, principals, other school leaders, specialized support personnel, paraprofessionals, early childhood educators, and parents and family members
 - Supporting programs that reach parents and family members at home, in the community, and at school
 - Disseminating information on best practices focused on parent and family engagement, especially best practices for increasing the engagement of economically disadvantaged parents and family members
 - Collaborating, or providing subgrants to schools to enable schools to collaborate, with community-based or other organizations or employers with a record of success in improving and increasing parent and family engagement
 - Any other activities which are consistent with the parent and family engagement policy.

Section 1116(a)(3)(D)(i-v)

- Conduct, with the meaningful involvement of parents and family members, an annual evaluation of the content and effectiveness of the parent and family engagement policy in improving the academic quality of all schools served under this part, including identifying
 - barriers to greater participation by parents (with particular attention to parents who are economically disadvantaged, are disabled, have limited English proficiency, have limited literacy, or are of any racial or ethnic minority background)
 - the needs of parents and family members to assist with the learning of their children, including engaging with school personnel and teachers
 - strategies to support successful school and family interactions.

Section 1116(a)(3)(D)(i-iii)

- Use the findings of the evaluation to design evidence-based strategies for more effective parental involvement, and to revise, if necessary, the parent and family engagement policies.

Section 1116(a)(2)(E)

- Every public school district shall annually review and approve the parental involvement plan for each public school under the district’s authority.

Rules Section 4.03

- Annually by August 1, every school district shall review and update the school district's parental involvement plan and:
 - File a copy of the plan with the Department of Education [Indistar];
 - Place a copy of the plan on the school district's website.

Ark. Code Ann. § 6-15-1704(a)(1-2); Act 757 of 2019

Does the District Parent and Family Engagement Plan describe how the district will accomplish each of the required components?

Required Components

- Reserve at least 1 percent of district allocation under Title I, Part A
 - ✓ *Does not apply if the district receives an allocation less than \$500,000*
 - ✓ *Ensure a minimum of 90% of that 1% goes to schools, with priority given to high-need schools*
- Ensure parents and families are involved in the decisions regarding how funds reserved for parent and family engagement are allotted for parental involvement activities
- Ensure the funded activities and strategies are consistent with the district parent and family engagement policy
- Conduct an annual evaluation identifying
 - ✓ barriers
 - ✓ needs
 - ✓ strategies
- Use the findings from the evaluation to design evidence-based strategies for more effective parental involvement
- Review and approve the plan for each school
- Review and update the district plan annually by August 1 (*see Section 1*)

5: Coordination

(Describe/List how the district will coordinate with other organizations, businesses, and community partners to provide additional supports and resources to families such as public preschool programs or organizations to help students transition to elementary, middle, high, and postsecondary schools or careers.)

What are the Federal and State Requirements?

- To the extent feasible and appropriate, coordinate and integrate parent involvement 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.

Section 1116(e)(4)

- Each public school district and each public school within its boundaries, in collaboration with parents, shall establish a parental involvement plan, including programs and practices that enhance parental involvement and reflect the specific needs of students and their families.

Ark. Code Ann. § 6-15-1702(a)

Does the District Parent and Family Engagement Plan describe how the district will accomplish each of the required components?

Required Components

- Coordinate and integrate programs and activities with other Federal, State, and local programs
- Conduct other activities, such as parent resource centers, that encourage and support parents

Review

- Every public school district shall annually review and approve the parental involvement plan for each public school under the district's authority.
Ark. Code Ann. § 6-15-1704(a)(1-2); Act 757 of 2019; Rules Section 4.03
- The State educational agency shall review the local educational agency's [district] parent and family engagement policies and practices to determine if the policies and practices meet the requirements of this section.
Section 1116(h)
- The department shall:
 - Review each plan;
 - Determine whether the plan is in compliance with provisions of this subchapter; and
 - Indicate on the school's performance report under Ark. Code Ann. § 6-15-1402 whether or not the school district is in compliance with this subchapter.
Ark. Code Ann. § 6-15-1704(b)(1)(A)(i-iii); Ark. Code Ann. § 6-15-1402
- Periodically on a rotating schedule, the department shall monitor each school district's plan to:
 - Evaluate whether the school district is implementing its plan and the implementation's effectiveness; and
 - Assess the areas in which a school district needs to revise its plan or its implementation of the plan.
Ark. Code Ann. § 6-15-1704(b)(1)(B)(i-ii)
- The department shall place priority for monitoring under subdivision (b)(1)(B) of this section on school districts that have been identified as being in:
 - Level 4 -- Directed support; or
 - Level 5 -- Intensive support.
Ark. Code Ann. § 6-15-1704(b)(1)(C)(i-ii)
- By January 1 of each year, the department shall provide any recommendations in writing to a school district:
 - Concerning areas of noncompliance with Ark. Code Ann. § 6-15-1701 -- 6-15-1703; or
 - As a result of the department's monitoring under subdivision (b)(1)(B) of this section.
Ark. Code Ann. § 6-15-1701 et seq.
- The department shall allow the school district an opportunity to implement the department's recommendations.
Ark. Code Ann. § 6-15-1704(b)(3)