

SCHOOL AND FAMILY PARTNERSHIP POLICY

The Portland Board of Public Education honors the diversity of families and recognizes the important role parents, guardians and families play in the education of their children.

The Board encourages partnerships between the district administration, schools and families in order to share the responsibility of educating our students. The Board believes that our students will thrive if we welcome, inform, engage and empower families to support their children in school and build strong school communities.

Finally, the Board directs school and district representatives to use the following **policy values**¹ as guides in their work and to engage families in ways that:

1. Value and encourage face-to-face relationships.
2. Create safe spaces where everyone is welcome and valued as an expert in their role.
3. Encourage families, schools and communities to work together to improve student success.
4. Enable a range of voices to be heard by decision-makers.
5. Are accessible to parent and community leaders from diverse backgrounds.
6. Devote sufficient resources to parent engagement and community outreach.

In order to promote school and family partnerships, the Board will:

- Use the policy values above to inform other Board policies and the work of the Board.
- Ensure that financial and personnel resources are devoted to these efforts through the budgeting process.
- Encourage broad family involvement that is representative of our community and culturally responsive.
- Inform the community about family partnership initiatives and progress in the Board Chair's annual State of the Schools address.

In order to promote school and family partnerships, the District will:

- Provide training to school and parent groups on best practices in school and family partnerships.
- Communicate to families the learning expectations at all grade levels.

¹ These value statements are adapted from the Parent & Family Engagement Manifesto developed by Portland Empowered, an independent community group that advocates for family involvement in Portland Public Schools. In August 2016, the Portland Board of Public Education established a Parent Partnership Policy Ad Hoc Committee to revise the parent partnership policy last approved in 2005 and directed the

Committee to “consult the Portland Empowered Parent Manifesto as a guide, and prioritize integrating the Parent Manifesto elements into the revised policy”. This policy reflects the family input behind the Manifesto and incorporates the components of the Manifesto recommended by the Ad Hoc Committee.

- Support, through outreach and interpretation services, face-to-face communication between families and teachers at least twice a year for all families, on an as-needed basis for students experiencing challenges, and as requested by parents.
- Establish a Family Partnership Advisory Committee that is representative of the community to provide input on key district initiatives and oversee implementation of the School and Family Partnership Policy.
- Devote financial and personnel resources to the implementation of this policy.
- Adopt clear goals of increased family engagement with measurable indicators of progress.

In order to promote school and family partnerships, Schools will:

- Support a culture of partnership by creating a welcoming environment for all families.
- Establish a regular forum for parents to discuss school success plans and their experiences with the school.
- Create opportunities for two-way communication between schools and all families.
- Include in the school’s annual success plan a measurable school and family partnership goal aligned with at least one of the enumerated policy values.
- Inform families of the learning expectations for all grade levels.
- Let families know how they can become involved with the school.
- Use family involvement strategies that are culturally responsive and representative of the Portland community.

In order to promote school and family partnerships, Schools receiving Title I funds will:

- Develop and distribute to families of participating children a school-level family partnership handbook that is aligned with this policy and with the requirements of federal law.

To support their children’s learning, Families can:

- Talk about the importance of school.
- Volunteer at their child’s school, join a parent organization, or serve on a committee, when possible.
- Attend school programs and conferences designed to inform families about what and how students are learning.
- Inform school staff about children’s strengths and challenges, and keep staff informed of changes that might affect learning or behavior.
- Notify the schools and the district of changes in contact information.

- Ask and advocate for what is needed to support student learning.

Support and Accountability

A district-wide Family Partnership Advisory Committee, appointed by the Superintendent or a designee, with representatives that could include parents/guardians, a Board member, multilingual/multicultural representatives and families, school and district staff, community partners, students and alumni will be established to support, monitor and report on the implementation of the School and Family Partnership Policy.

The district will conduct, with advice from this committee, an annual review and evaluation of the implementation of the policy and any accompanying regulations (e.g. using the district parent survey).

Adoption of Regulations

The Superintendent has overall responsibility for implementing this policy and accompanying regulations, with support from the Family Partnership Advisory Committee and designee, if assigned.

Development of the initial policy regulations, and any substantial revisions of regulations, requires broad and inclusive family, school and community input. The Superintendent or a designee may develop administrative regulations as necessary for effective and timely implementation of this policy and its accompanying regulations.

Regulations must be consistent in every respect with the Board's policies and procedures.

This policy does not affect or alter the authority of the Board, the Superintendent and administration to act in accordance with law and other applicable policies.

Cross Reference: Parent & Family Engagement Manifesto

Adopted: March 7, 2017