



Harmony School of Science – Houston (101862)

District Parent and Family Engagement Policy

2020-2021

Harmony Public Schools Mission Statement

“Our mission at Harmony is to prepare each student for higher education by providing a safe, caring, and collaborative atmosphere featuring a quality, student-centered educational program with a strong emphasis on Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics.”

Statement of Purpose

The success of Harmony Public School students based on a program emphasizing academic excellence while motivating student achievement. The Harmony School model is:

- Rigorous (prepares student for college);
- Relevant (reinforces math and science skills); and,
- Relationships (a strong culture of meaningful personal relationships, reinforced by teachers and parents)

Harmony attributes the strong performance of its schools and students to three core principles within the school model:

- A challenging math and science curriculum supported by theory;
- A focus on assessment across the school system; and,
- A culture of constructive competition, discipline and parental engagement.

To this end, we want to establish partnership with parents and with the community. Parents play an extremely important role as the children’s first teachers. Their support for their children and for the school is critical to their children’s success at every step of the way.

In support of strengthening student academic achievement, Harmony School of Science – Houston district receives Title I, Part A funds and develops jointly with, agree on with, and distribute to, parents of participating children a written Parent and Family Engagement policy that contains information required by section 1118(a)(2) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) (district wide Parent and Family Engagement policy). The policy establishes Harmony’s expectations for Parent and Family Engagement and describes how Harmony will implement a number of specific Parent and Family Engagement activities.

PART I. GENERAL EXPECTATIONS

The Harmony School of Science - Houston district agrees to implement the following statutory requirements:

- The school district will put into operation programs, activities and procedures for the involvement of parents in all of its schools with Title I, Part A programs, consistent with section 1118 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). Those programs, activities and procedures will be planned and operated with meaningful consultation with parents of participating children.
- Consistent with section 1118, the school district will work with its schools to ensure that the required school-level Parent and Family Engagement policies meet the requirements of section 1118(b) of the ESEA, and each include, as a component, a school-parent compact consistent with section 1118(d) of the ESEA.
- The school district will incorporate this district wide Parent and Family Engagement policy into its LEA plan developed under section 1112 of the ESEA.
- In carrying out the Title I, Part A Parent and Family Engagement requirements, to the extent practicable, the school district and its schools will provide full opportunities 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 ESEA in an understandable and uniform format and, including alternative formats upon request, and, to the extent practicable, in a language parents understand.
- If the LEA plan for Title I, Part A, developed under section 1112 of the ESEA, is not satisfactory to the parents of participating children, the school district will submit any parent comments with the plan when the school district submits the plan to the State Department of Education.
- The school district will 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, and will ensure that not less than 95 percent of the one percent reserved goes directly to the schools.
- The school district will inform parents and parental organizations of the purpose and existence of the Parental Information in the State.
- The school district will 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—

- *that parents play an integral role in assisting their child’s learning;*
- *that parents are encouraged to be actively involved in their child’s education at school;*
- *that 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;*
- *the carrying out of other activities, such as those described in section 1118 of the ESEA.”*

PART II. DESCRIPTION OF HOW DISTRICT WILL IMPLEMENT REQUIRED DISTRICT PARENT AND FAMILY ENGAGEMENT POLICY COMPONENTS

The district will take the following actions to involve parents in the joint development of its district Parent and Family Engagement plan under section 1112 and the process of school review and improvement under section 1116 of the ESEA:

Actions: Parents and district personnel will meet to develop our district’s Parent and Family Engagement Policy. From each campus parents will be invited to attend the meeting to be part of the process. District convenes a parent meeting once a year, to inform parents of their school’s participation under this part and to explain the requirements of this part, and the right of parents to be involved.

To build the schools’ and parents’ capacity for strong Parent and Family Engagement as described in section 1118 (e), our district with cooperation of the campuses, will provide the following:

Actions: Related information regarding parent programs, meetings, and other activities will be sent to parents in a timely manner. This information can be distributed through weekly newsletters, phone calls, web sites, or through classroom teachers. District will also provide specific training and materials to help parents work with their children to improve achievement. An annual meeting where parents will learn about the requirements of the school’s Title I program will be held. A letter will be sent to each child’s parents and meeting will be announced on each campus website. Parent meeting conferences will be held one time in a year. Meeting times needs to be accommodated to the needs of the parents. Communications with the parents will be in a format and a language that they can understand.

The district will take the following actions to conduct, with the involvement of parents, an annual evaluation of the content and effectiveness of this Parent and Family Engagement (PFE) policy in improving the quality of its Title I, Part A schools. The evaluation will include identifying barriers to greater participation by parents in PFE activities (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 school district will use the findings of the evaluation about its Parent and Family Engagement policy and activities to design strategies for more effective Parent and Family Engagement, and to revise, if necessary (and with the involvement of parents) its Parent and Family Engagement policies.

Actions: Every year district will conduct a Title I Parent and Family Engagement survey in order to evaluate the effectiveness of this Parent and Family Engagement policy. The District will use the findings of the evaluation about its Parent and Family Engagement policy and activities to design strategies for more effective Parent and Family Engagement, and to revise, if necessary (and with the involvement of parents) its Parent and Family Engagement policies.

The district will build the schools’ and parent’s capacity for strong Parent and Family Engagement, in order to ensure effective involvement of parents and to support a partnership among the school involved, parents, and the community to improve student academic achievement, through the following activities specifically described below:

Actions: The school district will, with the assistance of its Title I, Part A schools, provide assistance to parents of children served by the school district or school, as appropriate, in understanding topics such as the following, by undertaking the actions described in this paragraph:

- the State’s academic content standards,
- the State’s student academic achievement standards,
- the State and local academic assessments including alternate assessments,
- the requirements of Part A,
- how to monitor their child’s progress, and
- how to work with educators:
 - Informational brochure is sent with STAAR scores to explain the meaning,
 - monitor a child’s progress by looking at progress reports and report cards,
 - offer information sessions by “parent night” to outline STAAR expectations,
 - post parental informative sources to the school websites, Parent Website or send it home through weekly newsletters.

The district will, with the assistance of its schools and parents, educate its teachers, pupil services personnel, principals and other staff, in how to reach out to, communicate with, and work with parents as equal partners, in the value and utility of contributions of parents, and in how to implement and coordinate parent programs and build ties between parents and schools, by:

Actions: A training will be provided to the teachers, pupil services, principals and other staff about how to reach parents and to make them actively involve of their child academic success. Campuses will be trained about the scope of Title I Parent and Family Engagement Policy and related activities. Staff will be sent to Regional Education Service Centers, when necessary.

The district will provide the following necessary coordination, technical assistance, and other support to assist Title I, Part A schools in planning and implementing effective Parent and Family Engagement activities to improve student academic achievement and school performance:

Actions: District Coordinators and Harmony Central Office staff will provide support and training to the staff to promote the Parent and Family Engagement activities.

The district will take the following actions to ensure that 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:

Actions: Parent and Family Engagement information will be provided throughout the year. Time and date of parent meetings will be posted in web sites and in weekly campus letters (both English and Spanish). Meeting flyers will be available in the school entrance or hanged on the bulletin boards.

PART III. DISCRETIONARY DISTRICT WIDE PARENT AND FAMILY ENGAGEMENT POLICY COMPONENTS

The District Wide Parent and Family Engagement Policy may include additional paragraphs listing and describing other discretionary activities that the school district, in consultation with its parents, chooses to undertake to build parents' capacity for involvement in the school and school system to support their children's academic achievement, such as the following discretionary activities listed under section 1118(e) of the ESEA:

- In order to maximize Parent and Family Engagement and participation in their children's education, arranging school meetings at a variety of times, or conducting in-home conferences between teachers or other educators, who work directly with participating children, with parents who are unable to attend those conferences at school;
- Adopting and implementing model approaches to improving Parent and Family Engagement;
- Establishing a district wide parent advisory council to provide advice on all matters related to Parent and Family Engagement in Title I, Part A programs;
- Developing appropriate roles for community-based organizations and businesses in Parent and Family Engagement activities; and
- Providing other reasonable support for Parent and Family Engagement activities
- Effective Communication in regards to scheduling/communicating events in a timely fashion is imperative. There is a need to inform parents in a timely fashion (preferably 6-9 wks. In advance) so they can plan their work schedules accordingly. Some work places arrange their schedules 6-9 weeks ahead of time and there is little/no room for changing it.
- There is a need to draw in more parent participation for Middle school and High School special events. Student incentives should be considered to promote more parent participation.
- Technology Training that would be beneficial during this time include Zoom sessions on Skyward and Schoology for parents.
- Parents stressed the idea of translating important events, messages, and the school weekly newsletter in the 2nd most popular language at their campus. In addition, school communication in the form of

messages, updates, i.e. should be short, easy to understand, i.e. The best communication style should highlight important program updates.

- Parents are working. Events like Family activities are best scheduled during evening/after school hours. Scheduling events after work, during weekends, i.e. would be beneficial. Virtual home visits have been popular. Parents would love to see virtual home visits that highlight school progress, how students are doing, and also give parents the opportunity to meet their child's teachers.
- Zoom coffee meetings with the Principal would be a great way to keep parents connected to the school.
- There is a need for a strong PTO at each campus. If each campus in the district has a strong PTO, there will be more events and stronger parent involvement in school events/activities.
- Campuses need to use consistent communication tools. It is suggested that picking one or two communication tools that all staff members use would be helpful for parents (ex. Class Dojo, ClassTag, i.e.)
- A semester based event calendar would be helpful. Flyers should be handed out highlighting these events. In addition, a school marquis can be useful in reaching parents that do not have internet access.
- Additional methods to meet parents should be used such as Facebook Live, Zoom, and/or Google hangout

PART V. ADOPTION

This district wide Parent and Family Engagement Policy has been developed jointly with, and agreed on with, parents of children participating in Title I, Part A programs, as evidenced by agenda, sign-in sheet, meeting minutes etc.)

This policy was adopted by Harmony School of Science - Houston on November 2, 2020 and will be in effect for the period of 2020-2021 academic year. The school will distribute this policy to all parents of participating Title I, Part A children on or before November 20, 2020.



(Signature of Authorized Official)

11/10/2020

(Date)