

The Texas Education Agency (TEA) believes that meaningful partnerships between schools, families, and communities are the foundation of effective schools and critical to a child’s educational well-being. It is further grounded in the belief that parents, families, educators, and community members work together as full partners, hold themselves mutually accountable, and have the knowledge, skills, and confidence to succeed in achievement for all students.

Objective

This document was developed to align with the expectations of the State Board of Education (SBOE) vision and meet the requirements in the Every Student Succeeds Act as they relate to parent and family engagement in Texas. The document sets parameters for the implementation of parent and family engagement activities led by the Title I, Part A Parent and Family Engagement Statewide Initiative and aligns to the SBOE vision statements for Family Engagement and Empowerment noted in the SBOE’s Long-Range Plan for Public Education. This plan also provides a framework that informs parent and family engagement activities across the state as advised by the Texas Council on Parent and Family Engagement. The Title I, Part A Parent and Family Engagement Statewide Initiative developed the plan in consultation with the Texas Council on Parent and Family Engagement and the Title I Committee of Practitioners.

State Family Engagement Definition

Families, community members, and educators work together in an equal and respectful partnership to create and provide effective, systemwide support for student learning and development from early childhood into college, a career, or the military.

State Parent and Family Engagement Vision

To promote student success, Local Education Agencies (LEAs), with assistance from the TEA and Education Service Centers (ESCs), will align mission, goals and values and utilize available resources to engage, empower, and support families of all backgrounds as they learn to navigate the educational system. A positive school culture requires proactive and responsive student support services and involved families and community.

State Board of Education Vision

TEA has aligned to these vision statements for Family Engagement and Empowerment from the State Board of Education Long-Range Plan for Public Education.

- Texas will have an education system and culture of trust that welcomes and values every family as an active partner by building relationships.
- All cultures that interplay with the education system will be valued and welcomed into the process for student success.
- All available forms of communication will be fully utilized to engage, empower, and connect with all stakeholders.
- TEA and school districts will have systems and resources in place to engage, empower, and support families as they navigate through the complex educational process.

Guiding Principles

When families engage in their students’ learning, learning improves. TEA is committed to coordinating efforts among schools, parents, and community leaders and will support LEAs in:

- Building the capacity of parents, families, communities, and educators;
- Maintaining regular two-way communication between home and school;
- Developing relationships with parents and families as partners in planning and decision-making;
- Creating systemic processes for needs assessment, program development, and continuous improvement;
- Overcoming cultural and linguistic barriers;
- Ensuring a parent and family engagement (PFE) program that is student-outcome oriented.

TEA Strategic Priorities

TEA's approach to planning and implementing the *Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)* was strengthened by purposefully connecting it to the agency's strategic planning initiative and aligning work to TEA's four strategic priorities.

- **Recruit, support, and retain teachers and principals.** Supportive and positive relationships between teachers and families characterized by respect, trust, consideration, understanding, equality, and shared responsibility create a strong foundation for collaborative teacher-family partnerships. These positive partnerships can aid in recruiting and retaining quality staff which can improve students' academic outcomes.
- **Build a foundation for reading and math.** Children show notable improvements in learning and school readiness when families are engaged and involved in goal-oriented curriculum and evidence-based programs focused on math and reading.
- **Connect high school to career and college.** College, Career, and Military Readiness (CCMR) programs and career pathways are designed to help students build a strong foundation of knowledge and cognitive/intellectual skills needed for college, the workforce, and the military. Students benefit when families and educators partner to provide support and guidance in these essential programs.
- **Improve low-performing schools.** TEA's Effective School Framework approach strategically incorporates family engagement as an essential action needed to improve schools and expand great choices for students and families. School improvement approaches that implement high-quality family engagement practices in tandem with high-quality instruction have noted sustained gains in student learning.

Stakeholder Roles

TEA is committed to increasing student achievement through collaboration with key stakeholders to support PFE. The following roles are played by each stakeholder.

- **TEA** will collaborate and coordinate efforts among schools, parents, and community leaders to strengthen Texas PFE. TEA will provide leadership, appropriate funding, professional development, training tools and resources for sustained support for all federal PFE programs across the state.
- **Texas Council on Parent and Family Engagement** will provide input and advice to state and local policy makers, guidance on content for initiative training and professional development, and will be a parent voice to identify and affirm best practices.
- **Statewide initiatives** will collaborate and coordinate with TEA and the Texas Council to identify and publicize best practices; design statewide training and professional development; develop statewide guidance and resources for ESCs, LEAs, and campuses; and will provide virtual meetings and trainings throughout the year to assist parent and family engagement programs.
- **ESCs** will conduct initiative-designed trainings and professional development for LEAs, provide ongoing support and technical assistance to LEAs in implementing parent and family engagement, and disseminate statewide guidance and resources on parent and family engagement to LEAs, including innovative ideas to support rural and small schools.
- **LEAs** will create a positive school climate for PFE including meaningful involvement of parents and family members in fulfilling the requirements of ESSA Section 1116, which includes but is not limited to:
 - Building the capacity of parents, families, communities, and educators to work collaboratively by fostering reciprocal relationships through dialogue and shared responsibility in planning and decision-making and policy development.
 - Communicating with families on a regular basis about their child's performance, including their child's college, career, or military preparation.
 - Advocating for students and families by encouraging and supporting the creation of processes that allow parents and families to ask questions, resolve problems, and receive information and resources suitable to their needs to support their students.