

Strategies to Increase Parental Involvement

Parent Involvement Plan

Parent and Family Engagement

1. Describe how the school will convene an annual meeting to inform parents of the school's participation in Title I and explain Title I requirements, including the 1% set-aside, and the right of parents involved. (Sec. 1116(c)(1))

At the beginning of the school year, Cottondale Elementary will hold its annual meeting for all parents of participating children. Parents will be notified of the meeting through; notices sent home by students, school intercom announcements, our school's marquee, postings in our main foyer, placement on our school website and facebook page, announcements in other languages when we have families where English is not their primary language, and a phone call by the School Messenger System.

2. Describe: 1) How there will be a flexible number and format of parent meetings offered, such as meetings in the morning or evening, and may provide, with funds provided under this part, transportation, child care, or home visits, as such services relate to parental involvement; 2) How parents will be involved in the planning, review and improvement of the Title I Program (Note: State the school's process for how all Title I parents have the opportunity for involvement in decision-making.); and 3) How funds allocated for parent involvement are being used in the school. (Sec. 1116(c)(2)(3))

The leadership and staff of Cottondale Elementary have a strong belief in the importance of parental involvement. In the spring of 2019, the Leadership Team met to review and update the Parent Involvement Plan. During this meeting, the team reviewed the parent survey results. For the 2018-19 school year, we had 191 parents to complete the survey. From the results, 113 parents preferred to have evening meetings, 39 preferred morning meetings, and 22 preferred mid-day meetings. Additionally 22 parents requested child-care be available. Based on these results, the team agrees that evening meetings will reach more parents. Also based on the survey results, 114 parents stated that they knew what it meant to be a Title 1 School and what their rights are. Based on these results, the team agrees that a one-page flyer about the Title 1 program and rights would be helpful to send home with all students. Additional workshops to be offered throughout the year include understanding test scores, the K-2 report card, understanding your child's grade level curriculum, and parent resources for how to help your children at home. Conferences with teachers are encouraged and may be set up by appointment during teacher's planning times and before or after school. Cottondale Elementary believes in involving parents in all aspects of its Title I programs. We have a parent representative on our school-wide advisory committee who is an active participant in the development of the plan.

In 2018, Cottondale Elementary also chose parents and teachers from Cottondale Elementary to participate in the Parent Teacher Leadership Academy, which utilizes research-based practices to provide professional development to parent and teacher leaders who use their knowledge to support students' achievement through strong family-school partnerships. The PTLA team will continue in the 2019 school year. The funds allocated for parental involvement are spent on various methods of parent notification, such as mail outs and school displays.

3. Describe how the school provides parents of participating children timely information in a uniform format and, to the extent practicable in a language they can understand, about programs under Title I, a description and explanation of the curriculum in use, forms of academic assessments, and achievement expectations used, and, if requested by parents, opportunities for regular meetings to formulate suggestions and participate as appropriate in decisions related to the education of their children. (Sec. 1116(c)(4)(A)(B)(C))

Cottdonale Elementary will hold an annual meeting with parents at the beginning of the school year, where information will be presented about its Title I program. Additional meetings and parent conferences will be held to inform parents of their child's grade level curriculum and forms of academic assessments used to measure student progress. Parents will be notified of meetings through; notices sent home by students, school intercom announcements, our school's marquee, postings in our main foyer, placement on our school website and facebook page, announcements in other languages when we have families where English is not their primary language, and a phone call by the School Messenger System. They will also learn how to schedule parent-teacher conferences and how they can participate in decisions related to the education of their child. Teachers will present information contained in the Tuscaloosa County School System Student/Parent Information Guide, as well as our school's information guide, which includes more detailed information on these topics. Teachers will provide additional information on the subjects they teach and how students are individually assessed.

4. Describe how parents, the school staff, and students share responsibility for improved student academic achievement for participating students (How the School-Parent Compact is jointly developed with Title I parents; how it is used, reviewed, and updated). (Sec.1116(d))

Cottdonale Elementary School revises its school-parent compact in May of each year in consultation with our school wide advisory committee and any parental comments received by teachers throughout the year. All parents will be given a copy of the new compact through open house enrollment packets and sent home with students during the beginning of the school year. The compact is written in both English and Spanish. A copy will be available on the school website and new students will be given one at the time of enrollment. The compact will be explained to the parents, and they will be asked to sign the compact signifying their commitment to working in partnership with the school and their child in ensuring that their child is successful in school. The compacts will be discussed with teachers at faculty meetings. Each teacher will be given the responsibility to explain the compact with their students and obtain the students' signatures. The teachers will sign the compacts and house them in his/her classroom for use during parent-teacher and /or student-teacher conferences.

5. Describe procedures to allow parents to submit comments of dissatisfaction with the Continuous Improvement Plan. (Sec. 1116(c)(5))

In May of each year, Cottdonale Elementary Title I Advisory Committee meets to review, evaluate, and revise our Parent Involvement Plan. There are parents on the Committee who represent all the parents of the school. During the review process, all parents are notified of the review through notices sent home with students and publicized on the school website. The notices make parents aware that the plan is under review, that a copy of the plan is available for review in the school office, library, or by visiting the school website, and that parents have the right to give input regarding the revision of the plan. The notice also states that after the plan is finalized and approved, if a parent finds the plan to be

unsatisfactory, they have the right to submit their concerns in writing to the school, and the school will submit their concerns to the central office at the same time that the Title I plan is submitted.

6a. Describe how the school will build capacity for parental involvement including how parents will be encouraged to become equal partners in the education of their children? (See ESSA Sec. 1116, requirements for building capacity and parental and family engagement).

To ensure effective involvement of parents and to support a partnership among the school, parents, and the community to improve student academic achievement, our school:

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, as appropriate, to foster parental involvement. (Describe)

Cottdale Elementary provides training to parents at meetings and conferences. Sessions offered cover topics such as interpreting test scores, working with their children on reading fluency and comprehension, and technology websites available to families at home. Parents and teachers also participate in PTLA to learn a variety of ways to assist the parent-teacher relationships.

6b. Describe how the school will build capacity for parental involvement including how parents will be encouraged to become equal partners in the education of their children? (See ESSA Sec. 1116, requirements for building capacity in parental involvement.)

To ensure effective involvement of parents and to support a partnership among the school, parents, and the community to improve student academic achievement, our school:

Shall educate teachers, office personnel, and other school 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. (Describe)

Cottdale teachers participate annually in meetings aimed at furthering their understanding and valuing of parent's contributions and establishing positive relationships with families. The purpose of these meetings are to give teachers and families opportunities to work together in groups to strengthen the bond between the teacher and family and to assist families in helping their children. Parents and teachers also participate in PTLA which helps build the parent-teacher relationship.

6c. Describe how the school will build capacity for parental involvement including how parents will be encouraged to become equal partners in the education of their children? (See ESSA Sec 1116, requirements for building capacity in parental involvement.)

To ensure effective involvement of parents and to support a partnership among the school, parents, and the community to improve student academic achievement, our school:

Shall to the extent feasible and appropriate, coordinate and integrate parent involvement programs and activities with other federal 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.(Describe)

Posted on a bulletin board at the main entrance of the school are resources for parental support. If a parent needs assistance the office, counselor, and administration are always available to offer support. Cottondale Elementary has also entered a partnership with Indian Rivers to offer the Journey Program. The Journey program provides mental health counseling for students during their school day. This helps ensure that students are seen on a regular basis without having the parents transport them to receive services.

Cottondale Elementary also has two OSR prek classrooms. These classrooms offer parents opportunities to volunteer throughout the school year, attend parent teacher conferences, and the teachers host multiple sessions for parents on how to be involved in your child's education at home and school.

6d. Describe how the school will build capacity for parental involvement including how parents will be encouraged to become equal partners in the education of their children? (See ESSA Sec. 1116, requirements for building capacity in parental involvement.)

To ensure effective involvement of parents and to support a partnership among the school, parents, and the community to improve student academic achievement, our school:

Shall 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. (Describe)

Support for parents in languages other than English will be provided by the compilation and translation of key school informational documents; providing translators to assist with registration, enrollment, and parent conferences; and working with the ESL department at the Tuscaloosa County Board in arranging for tutors as needed for students.

6e. Describe how the school will build capacity for parental involvement including how parents will be encouraged to become equal partners in the education of their children? (See ESSA Sec. 1116, requirements for building capacity in parental involvement.)

To ensure effective involvement of parents and to support a partnership among the school, parents, and the community to improve student academic achievement, our school:

Shall provide such other reasonable support for parental involvement activities as parents may request. (Describe)

Additional parental support requests may be made at any time throughout the year by contacting the school principal, assistant principal, counselor, or afterschool program director. The school's leadership team will review requests and create a plan formulated to address needs.

7. Describe how the school will ensure the provision for participation of parents and family members (including parents and family members who have limited English proficiency, parents and family members with disabilities, and parents and family members of migratory children), including

providing information and school reports required under section 1111 in a format and, to the extent practicable, in a language such parents understand. (See ESSA Sec. 1117(f))

Cottondale Elementary School provides opportunities for the participation of parents with limited English proficiency and parents with disabilities. The central office ESL department has staff members available to assist in verbal communications with students and parents with limited English proficiency. Individual academic assessments, and the interpretation of those results, will be interpreted for parents in a language they can understand through the assistance of our ESL specialists and translators available through the Tuscaloosa County Board of Education. At this time Cottondale does not have any migrant students. Every effort is made to accommodate parents with disabilities. The Tuscaloosa County School System policy for homebound is followed as needs exist for homebound services. Parents requiring such assistance should contact the counselor, nurse, or administration for referral forms and assistance with the application process. Homebound services are provided through the central office of the Tuscaloosa County School System.