

INDEPENDENCE CHARTER SCHOOL

**TITLE I PARENT AND FAMILY ENGAGEMENT POLICY
2017 - 2018**

Independence Charter School is committed to providing a quality education for every student. Academic success increases significantly when Parents/Guardians are engaged and form strong partnerships with their student's school. Independence Charter School therefore will implement programs, activities, and procedures for the involvement of Parents/Guardians in accordance with Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA). This federal statute defines "parental involvement" as the participation of Parents/Guardians in regular, two-way, and meaningful communication involving student academic learning and other school activities, including ensuring:

- that Parents/Guardians play an integral role in assisting their student's learning;
- that Parents/Guardians are encouraged to be actively involved in their student's education at school;
- that parents are full partners in their student's education and are included, as appropriate, in decision-making and on advisory committees to assist in the education of their student; and
- the carrying out of other activities, such as those described in Section in 1118 of the ESEA.

Independence Charter School adopts this Title I Parent and Family Engagement Policy, which will be distributed to Parents/Guardians at the Annual Title I Parent Meeting, and is intended to be revised and/or refined with input from Parents/Guardians. This policy will be posted on Independence Charter School website for accessibility to Parents/Guardians and members of the community, and will be placed in the Student-Parent/Guardian Handbook.

Communication with Parents/Guardians

Ongoing communication providing information about Independence Charter School's curriculum, state and local assessments, measurement of individual progress, intervention program and how students are selected for intervention services will be conveyed to Parents/Guardians through:

- Back to School Night
- Meetings at various times throughout the school year and at different times of the day
- Parent/Guardian - Teacher Conferences, and availability of additional conferences
- with the Principal and teachers as needed in order to facilitate open communication
- Regular communication by the classroom teacher
- Other contact by email, phone or letter

- Report cards
- Website postings

Parent/Guardian Involvement

Independence Charter School will take the following actions to involve Parent/Guardians in Title I planning, review and improvement of school programs:

- By convening an annual Title I meeting to inform Parents/Guardians of the School's participation in the Title I program, program overview and requirements, and Parents/Guardians' involvement and rights.
- Including Parent/Guardian representatives to serve on a committee to plan, review and update the School's Title I program including development of all School plans such as the Parent Involvement Policy and the School-Parent Compact, which outlines how responsibility for learning will be shared. The Parent Involvement Policy and the School-Parent Compact will be reviewed annually and updated as needed.
- Holding Parent/Guardian Partnership meetings to provide recommendations, materials, and training to help Parents/Guardians work with their student to improve academic achievement, and to help Parents/Guardians better understand the State's academic standards and results of State and Local assessments.
- Providing opportunities throughout the school year in which Parents/Guardians will be encouraged to participate in school events and volunteer in activities.
- Ensuring full opportunities for participation and involvement of all Parents/Guardians, regardless of whether they or their student have disabilities, migratory status, or limited English proficiency, by providing information about Independence Charter School Title I Program and other programs, school meetings and activities to all participating families in an understandable format and language that Parents/Guardians can understand.
- When appropriate and necessary, allowing use of Title I funds to pay reasonable and necessary expenses associated with parental involvement activities including transportation, childcare, or home visits to enable Parents/Guardians to participate in school-related meetings and training sessions.

School-Parent Compact

Incorporated as a component of the Title I Parental Involvement Policy, Independence Charter School distributes to Parents/Guardians of participating students the School-Parent Compact, which will be signed by all parties responsible for academic achievement. Jointly developed with parental input, the School-Parent Compact outlines how Parents/Guardians, the entire school staff, and students will share the responsibility for improved student academic achievement, and describes specific ways that Independence Charter School and families will partner to help students achieve the State's and the School's high academic standards. It addresses not only

items suggested by Parents/Guardians of Title I students, but also the following legally required items:

- Independence Charter School responsibility to provide a high-quality curriculum and instruction in a supportive and effective learning environment that enables students to meet State academic standards;
- The ways that Parents/Guardians will be responsible for supporting their student's learning; and
- The importance of ongoing communication between Parents/Guardians and teachers through, at a minimum, annual parent-teacher conferences; frequent reports on student progress; access to staff for additional conferencing in person, by telephone or email; and opportunities for Parents/Guardians to volunteer and participate in the Student's School.

Parent/Guardian Input

Independence Charter School Title I program welcomes input from Parents/Guardians, and will take the following actions:

- Administer family satisfaction questionnaires every Spring, not only to evaluate the effectiveness of the Title I program, but also to assess levels of parental involvement and barriers, which will serve as a basis for planning and the improvement of the program
- Administer a family needs/interest survey during the school year
- Offer a variety of parental meetings and workshops
- Obtain feedback from Parents/Guardians of workshop content and delivery, with opportunity for Parents/Guardians to suggest workshop topics

Building Capacity Through Parent/Guardian Training and Support

In order to build the capacity of Independence Charter School and Parents/Guardians for strong parental involvement, to support a partnership among the School, Parents/Guardians and the community to improve student academic achievement, Independence Charter School will provide, as appropriate, assistance, training and materials to Parents/Guardians in order to assist in their understanding of:

- Title I program overview, including an explanation of the program requirements and the rights of Parents/Guardians to be involved
- Independence Charter School curriculum
- The School's report card
- State and Local academic assessments used to measure student progress, and expected proficiency levels
- Common Core standards

- How to monitor student progress
- Strategies for helping students learn, especially in literacy and mathematics

In addition to the annual Title I meeting, Parents/Guardians will be invited to attend:

- Back to School Night
- Report card conferences at least twice a year
- Parent/Guardian Partnership meetings and workshops tailored to specific grade levels

Independence Charter School will provide, if requested by Parents/Guardians, additional meetings for the School to receive suggestions from Parents/Guardians, and will respond to these as soon as practically possible.

Independence Charter School will disseminate to Parents/Guardians data regarding their student's achievement, progress reports, and classroom and standardized assessment results, to enable Parents/Guardians of participating students to know of, and to take steps to improve, as needed, individual academic achievement levels and to remain actively engaged in their student's educational progress. Parents/Guardians also will be provided with materials and training to help them to improve their student's academic achievement through use of parental home activities and materials.

Building Capacity Through School Staff

To support a partnership with Parents/Guardians for improving student academic achievement, Independence Charter School will:

- Employ highly qualified teachers who will be provided with professional development, and will continually update resources and maintain an environment that facilitates learning; and
- Provide professional development training to school staff to strengthen parental involvement efforts relating to:
 - The value and utility of contributions of Parents/Guardians
 - How to reach out to, communicate and work with, Parents/Guardians as equal partners
 - Implementing and coordinating parental programs
 - Building ties between Parents/Guardians and Independence Charter School

Community Outreach/Collaboration

The staff and families at Independence Charter School will seek ideas and suggestions from, and will develop appropriate roles for, community-based organizations and/or businesses, and will coordinate parental involvement with such community outreach efforts.

Adoption

This policy was adopted by the Board of Trustees of Independence Charter School on April 11, 2018 and will be in effect for the period of one year.