

A TRADITION OF EXCELLENCE FOR ALL



LYNCHBURG CITY SCHOOLS

DEARINGTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL FOR INNOVATION

Parent and Family Engagement Policy
2021-2022

PART I GENERAL EXPECTATIONS

Dearington Elementary School for Innovation agrees to implement the following statutory requirements:

- Dearington Elementary will put into operation programs, activities, and procedures for the engagement of parents and families in all Title I, Part A programs, consistent with section 1116 of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). Those programs, activities, and procedures will be planned and operated with meaningful consultation with parents of participating children.
- Dearington Elementary will work with the school division to ensure the required school-level parent and family engagement policy meets the requirements including the school-parent-compact.
- Dearington Elementary will incorporate this school wide parent and family engagement policy into its Title I/School Improvement Plans. Title I schools have a consolidated plan for 2021-2022.
- In carrying out the Title I, Part A parent and family engagement, Dearington Elementary will provide full opportunities for the participation of parents and families with limited English proficiency, parents with disabilities, and parents of migratory children, including providing information and school reports in an understandable and uniform format. This includes alternative formats upon request, and, to the extent practicable; in a language parents understand.
- If Dearington Elementary's plan for Title I, Part A, is not satisfactory to the parents of participating children, Dearington Elementary will submit the plan to the Director of School Improvement and Coordinator of Grant Programs.

- Dearington Elementary will ensure that 100% of Title I, Part A funds reserved for parent and family engagement is spent on capacity building activities for parents and students attending Dearington Elementary.
- Dearington Elementary 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 and family in regular, two-way, and meaningful communication involving student academic learning and other school activities, including ensuring –

(A) that parents play an integral role in assisting the child’s learning;

(B) that parents are encouraged to be actively involved in their child’s education at school;

(C) 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;

(D) the carrying out of other activities, such as those described in section 1118 of the ESEA.

PART II. DESCRIPTION OF HOW DEARINGTON ELEMENTARY WILL IMPLEMENT REQUIRED SCHOOL WIDE PARENT AND FAMILY ENGAGEMENT POLICY COMPONENTS

1. Dearington Elementary will take the following actions to involve parents in the joint development of its school wide parents and family engagement plan:

Dearington Elementary has a Family and Community Engagement Committee that consists of a Title I literacy teacher, classroom teachers, the principal, and parent and community representatives. Parents and community members will be contacted through phone calls, emails, and/op printed letters about meeting dates and times so they have the opportunity to provide their input. These parents will be included in making decisions about the building level parent and family engagement policy as well as other parent matters.

2. Dearington Elementary will take the following actions to involve parents and families in the process of school review and improvement:

Dearington Elementary will have a member of the School Improvement Committee serve on the Family and Community Engagement Committee. The committee will meet at various times of the year to formulate and/pr review the School Improvement Plan. Parents have the opportunity to provide feedback and make suggestions about various programs that DESI offers.

3. Dearington Elementary will provide the following coordination, technical assistance, and other support to assist in planning and implementing effective parent and family engagement activities to improve student academic achievement and school performance:

Conferences (via Zoom), phone calls, emails, text messaging, special events (drive-thru) will be held to help improve parental involvement.

4. Dearington Elementary will coordinate and integrate parent and family engagement strategies in Part A with parent and family engagement strategies under the following other programs: Head Start, Virginia Preschool Initiative, McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, and others as appropriate, by:

Selected Lynchburg City School personnel serve on the Smart Beginnings Coalition and other early childhood education initiatives. Lynchburg City Schools implements the Virginia Preschool Initiative Program and has a Memorandum of Understanding with the local Head Start Program. Lynchburg City Schools employs a full-time Pre-K Coordinator and a full-time Homeless Education Liaison to help meet the needs of all students.

5. Dearington Elementary 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 policy in improving the quality of its Title I, Part A schools. The evaluation will include identifying barriers to greater participation by parents in parental involvement 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). Dearington Elementary 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.

All Dearington Elementary parents and families are asked to complete a survey. The survey is used to plan for the following year's activities.

6. Dearington Elementary will provide opportunities to ensure effective engagement of parents and families and to support a partnership among the school, parents, and the community to improve student academic achievement, through the following activities specifically described below:

A. Dearington Elementary will provide assistance to parents of children served by Dearington Elementary, as appropriate, in understanding topics such as the following, by undertaking the actions described in this paragraph.

- Virginia's academic content standards,
- Virginia's student academic achievement standards,
- State and local academic assessments, including alternative assessments,
- the requirements of Part A,
- how to monitor their child's progress,
- how to work with educators, and
- how to help their children at home

Letters are given to every parent at Dearington Elementary, which addresses the highly qualified status of each employee at the school. Teachers have parent conferences to give information on student progress and address ways to monitor and to help their children at home. Information regarding student work and school events are sent home to parents every week in Tuesday folders.

B. Dearington Elementary will, with the assistance of the school division, provide materials and training to help parents work with their children to improve their children's academic achievement, such as literacy and technology training, as appropriate, to foster parent and family engagement, as described below:

During parent and family engagement activities, information about improving literacy in the home environment is shared with parents.

C. The staff of Dearington Elementary will, with the assistance of the school division, learn how to reach out to, communicate with, and work with parents and families 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, as described below:

Dearington Elementary utilizes a parent survey to gather information about activities held at the school. The results of the survey are shared with the faculty. The data is used to plan future parent and family engagement activities and address strengths and any weaknesses noted on the surveys. DESI parent representatives attend the Superintendent's Parent Advisory Committee to provide suggestions and feedback.

- D. Dearington Elementary will, to the extent feasible and appropriate, coordinate and integrate parent and family engagement programs and activities with Head Start, Virginia Preschool Initiative and other programs, conduct other activities such as school-level parent resource centers, which encourage:

A brochure is provided by Lynchburg City School's personnel providing information about the Virginia Preschool Initiative, Child Find, and Head Start programs for children, ages 3 and 4, living in the city of Lynchburg. Lynchburg City Schools also provide a Homeless Education Liaison who ensures that all students have access to education as well as transportation.

- E. Dearington Elementary will take the following actions to ensure that information related to the school as well as parent programs, meetings, and activities, is sent to the parents and families of participating children in an understandable and uniform format. This includes alternative formats upon request, and, to the extent practicable; in a language the parents can understand:

Dearington Elementary takes pride in reaching out to and notifying all families of upcoming events. The ELL instructors help families who have limited English, newsletters and fliers are sent home, and parents receive automated phone calls about upcoming events. For division level events, the Superintendent Parent Advisory Committee meets to discuss a variety of topics, and Channel 17 WLCS is used to disperse information. Our Communications Coordinator sends out newsletters and automated phone calls to parents informing them of up-coming events and meetings. This information can also be found on the LCS website at www.lcsedu.net/parents.

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

NOTE: The school wide parent and family engagement policy may include additional paragraphs listing and describing other discretionary activities that Dearington Elementary, 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:

- A parent teacher organization meets to discuss school events as part of Title I, Part A programs.
- Lynchburg City Schools website has links for parents on their website: <http://www.lcsedu.net/parents>
- All information on parent and family engagement activities are made available in a format and language that is understandable to parents.
- Elementary holds a "Family Night" in the fall and in the spring co-sponsored by Title I in which families are provided an explanation of DESI being a Title I school and what that actually means to them as DESI families and includes a literacy workshop.
- Parents have the right to request and receive timely information on the professional qualifications of their children's teachers.
- Dearington Elementary kicks off the year with a Back to School Night.
- An overview of the current school program is provided to all parents. Parents are provided with information about the Virginia Standards of Learning, school report cards, and on the Dearington Elementary website: <http://www.lcsedu.net/schools/des/> and Lynchburg City Schools website.
- Teachers, parents and students are encouraged to sign a School, Parent, and Student Compact at the beginning of the school year which explains each partner's responsibilities in helping each student have a successful school year.
- Parents are strongly encouraged to conference and communicate with their child's teacher, visit their child's classroom on a regular basis, attend family nights, attend performances sponsored by the performing arts team, quarterly awards ceremonies, and attend other activities that are offered throughout the school year.
- To encourage parent and family engagement in the completion of daily homework, students are given opportunities to earn incentives through the Accelerated Reader program. Incentives include small prizes, books, certificates and quarterly celebrations.
- Dearington Elementary School's PTO offers many opportunities for parent and family engagement. These include events such as a Trunk or Treat, Pie Night, Movie Night and Field Day. Parents are encouraged to attend and become involved.
- During the fall and spring, a Scholastic Book Fair is held.

This policy was revised on January 12, 2022