

## **School-Level Parent and Family Engagement Policy**

Gettysburg Montessori Charter School (“GMCS”) has developed a policy jointly with and agreed upon by parents and family members of Title I children. The policy is written in an understandable format and provided in a language parents can understand. The policy will be distributed to all parents and family members of Title I children and will be made available to the community. The policy will be updated annually to meet the changing needs of parents, family members, and the school.

GMCS will involve parents and family members in the planning, review, and improvement of the School-Level Parent and Family Engagement Policy.

Parents and family members will be involved in the review and development of the School-Level Parent and Family Engagement Policy at the annual meeting and at workshops and training conducted throughout the school year. Feedback and comments from the parents will be incorporated into the policies. Annual surveys distributed to the parents will be used to measure the effectiveness of the program and to recommend any changes.

GMCS will conduct an annual meeting at a convenient time. GMCS will invite all parents and family members of participating children and encourage all to attend. GMCS will inform parents of GMCS’s participation as a Title I school and will explain the requirements and rights for parents to be involved.

The annual meeting will be hosted at the beginning of the school year so parents and family members can discuss and review this School-Level Parent and Family Engagement Policy and provide feedback and changes. The recommendations of the parents and family members will be incorporated into the policy.

GMCS will offer a flexible number of meetings, in the morning and/or the evening.

Workshops and training sessions will be held at meetings throughout the school year to inform parents about standardized testing, academic standards, and curriculum, strategies to help children with reading and mathematics, and how to monitor their child’s progress.

GMCS will provide parents of participating children with timely information about the Title I program.

Information will be distributed to parents and family members at the annual meeting and the workshops and training throughout the school year. Any new information will be sent to

parents and posted on GMCS's website. The information will be in an understandable format and in a language parents can understand.

GMCS will provide parents of participating children with a description and explanation of the curriculum in use at the school, the forms of academic assessments used to measure student progress, and the achievement levels of the challenging state academic standards.

Workshops and trainings will be conducted throughout the year to explain curriculum, academic standards, standardized testing, and how to monitor their child's progress. GMCS will distribute PDE resources to parents for additional information.

GMCS will provide, if requested by parents, opportunities for regular meetings to formulate suggestions and to participate, as appropriate, in decisions relating to the education of their children, and respond to any such suggestions as soon as practicably possible.

GMCS will facilitate parent-teacher conferences and meetings when requested by the parents.

GMCS will provide materials and training to help parents work with their children to improve their children's achievement, such as literacy training and using technology, including education about the harms of copyright piracy, as appropriate, to foster parent involvement.

GMCS will provide workshops to parents on how to work with their children to improve their children's achievement. Strategies will also be discussed during the annual meeting with parents and during parent-teacher conferences.

GMCS will, to the extent feasible and appropriate, coordinate and integrate parent involvement programs and activities with other federal, state, and local programs, including public preschool programs, and conduct other activities that encourage and support parents and family members in more fully participating in the education of their children.

GMCS will work with local Head Start Programs to involve parents and family members and will hold orientations for new students and families entering the school.

GMCS will, to the extent practicable, provide opportunities for the informed 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).

GMCS will provide information to parents in a format and language that is understandable to them and will receive parent feedback in the annual meeting and annual evaluation

distributed to parents regarding supports which will help parents and family members of migratory children, parents and family members with disabilities, and parents and family members who have limited English proficiency.

GMCS and parents and family members will jointly develop a school-parent compact that outlines how parents, the entire school staff, and students will share in the responsibility for improved student academic achievement and how the school and parents will build and develop partnerships to help children achieve the state's high standards.

The compact shall:

Describe the school's responsibility to provide high-quality curriculum and instruction in a supportive and effective learning environment that enables the children served under this part to meet the challenging state academic standards, and the ways in which each parent will be responsible for supporting their children's learning; volunteering in their child's classroom; and participating, as appropriate, in decisions relating to the education of their children and positive use of extracurricular time

Address the importance of communication between teachers and parents on an ongoing basis through, at a minimum:

Offer parent-teacher conferences in elementary schools, at least annually, during which the compact shall be discussed as the compact relates to the individual child's achievement.

Frequent reports to parents on their children's progress; reasonable access to staff, opportunities to volunteer and participate in their child's class, and observation of classroom activities; and ensuring regular two-way, meaningful communication between family members and school staff, and, to the extent practicable, in a language that family members can understand.

(Revised/Approved September 2021)

## **Parent and Family Engagement Policy for the LEA**

### Part I. General Expectations

Gettysburg Montessori Charter School ("GMCS") agrees to implement the following requirements of the Every Student Succeeds Act ("ESSA"):

- GMCS will put into operation programs, activities, and procedures for the engagement of parents in all its schools with Title I, Part A programs, consistent with

section 1116. Those programs, activities and procedures will be planned and operated with meaningful consultation with parents of participating children.

- In carrying out the Title I, Part A parent and family engagement requirements to the extent practicable, GMCS and its Title I schools will provide full opportunities for the informed participation of parents (including parents with limited English proficiency, limited literacy, disabilities, of migratory children, who are economically disadvantaged, or are of any racial or ethnic minority background), including providing information and school reports required under Section 1111 of the ESSA in an understandable and uniform format including alternative formats upon request and, to the extent practicable, in a language parents understand.
- If GMCS's plan for Title I, Part A, developed under section 1112 of the ESEA, is not satisfactory to the parents of participating children, GMCS will submit any parent comments with the plan when GMCS submits the plan to the Pennsylvania Department of Education.
- GMCS will be governed by the following statutory definition of parent involvement, and expects that its Title I schools will carry out programs, activities, and procedures in accordance with this definition of Section 8101 of the ESSA:

Parental involvement means the participation of parents 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 their 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; and
- D. The carrying out of other activities, such as those described in section 1116 of ESEA.

## Part II. Description of how GMCS will Implement Required LEA-Level Parent and Family Engagement Policy

GMCS will develop the LEA Parent and Family Engagement Policy jointly with parents and family members, incorporate it into the Title I Plan (Consolidated Application), and distribute to parents of participating children in a formation and language that parents can

understand. Such programs, activities, and procedures shall be planned and implemented through meaningful consultation with parents and family members of participating children.

1. GMCS will involve parents and family members in the joint development of the Title I Plan.

a. GMCS will conduct, at least annually, a meeting with parents, family members, and school staff to develop and implement the Title I Plan. The meeting will be advertised and sent to parents of students in Title I A programs and held at a convenient location and time to ensure maximum participation and parental engagement.

2. GMCS will involve parents and family members in the process of school review and improvement.

a. GMCS will conduct meetings with parents, family members, and school staff throughout the school year to gather feedback and recommendations as well as administer an annual survey to parents and family members. GMCS will conduct workshops where parents and family members can make comments and recommendations.

3. GMCS will provide technical assistance and support to schools in planning and implementing effective parent and family engagement activities to improve student academic achievement and school performance.

a. GMCS will provide workshops to parents on:

i. Standardized testing

ii. Academic standards and curriculum

iii. Strategies to help children with reading and mathematics

iv. How to monitor their child's progress

v. Provide resources to parents from the Pennsylvania Department of Education regarding assessments and Title I Part A

4. GMCS will coordinate and integrate parent and family engagement strategies with other federal, state, and local laws and programs.

a. GMCS will coordinate with local Head Start Programs to provide guidance and resources for parents and students transitioning into GMCS.

5. GMCS will conduct, with the meaningful involvement of parents and family members, an annual evaluation of the content and effectiveness of the parent and family

engagement policy in improving the academic quality of all schools, including identifying: barriers to greater participation by parents and family members, 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; and the needs of parents and family members to assist with the learning of their children, including engaging with school personnel and teachers, and strategies to support successful school and family interactions. GMCS will use findings of the annual evaluation to design evidence-based strategies for more effective parent and family involvement, and revise, if necessary, the Parent and Family Engagement Policy.

a. GMCS will distribute a survey to parents annually to determine the effectiveness of the programs and parent and family engagement policies. These surveys will allow parents to provide feedback including recommendations on how to improve programs.

6. GMCS will involve parents and family members in the activities of the school, which may include establishing a parent advisory board composed of a sufficient number and representative group of parents or family members to adequately represent the needs to the population; revising; and reviewing the Parent and Family Engagement Policy.

a. GMCS will create a committee of parents and family members who will provide advice and recommendations on how to improve parental involvement in the program and make changes to the Parent and Family engagement policy. This committee will receive training on how to enhance parental involvement. GMCS teachers, administrators, and other staff will receive guidance on how to coordinate and work with parents and family members as equal partners.

### Part III. Adoption

This GMCS LEA-level Parent and Family Engagement Policy has been developed jointly with, and agreed on with, parents of children participating in the Title I, Part A program. GMCS will distribute this policy to all parents participating in the program. The policy was reviewed and adopted on May 17, 2023, May 15, 2024.

### **Parental Involvement Compact**

The parental involvement compact provides an understanding of the joint responsibility of GMCS and parents/guardians for improving student achievement and school performance. GMCS provides opportunities for parental involvement at the school level.

## Parent/Guardian Involvement

Convening an annual meeting at a convenient time to which all parents/guardians of participating students are invited and encouraged to attend, to inform parents/guardians of their school's participation under Title I and to explain the requirements of Title I, and the right of parents/guardians to be involved.

The CEO/Principal or designee will:

1. Invite all parents/guardians to the annual meeting at school.
2. Explain the rights of parents/guardians to be involved in establishing this compact.
3. Introduce and involve representatives on the charter school level committee.
4. Provide an overview of Title I and give parents/guardians an opportunity to express questions and concerns.
5. Indicate the mechanisms by which the committee work will be communicated.
6. Seek the involvement and input of parents/guardians.
7. Provide childcare so that all parents/guardians who would otherwise be unable to attend may attend.

Offering a flexible number of meetings, such as meetings in the morning and evening, and may provide with funds provided by Title I transportation, childcare, or home visits, as such services relate to parental involvement.

The CEO/Principal or designee will:

1. Provide parents/guardians with opportunities to ask questions and dialogue informally about student academic achievement and school performance.
2. Engage building-based parent organizations to assist with communication and implementation needs.
3. Develop and use outreach programs to involve community groups and organizations.

Involving parents/guardians in an organized, ongoing and timely manner in the planning, review and improvement of programs under Title I, including the planning, review and improvement of the school parental involvement policy and the joint development of the school-wide program plan, except that if a school has in place a process for involving

parents/guardians in the joint planning and design of the school's programs, the school may use that process, if such process includes an adequate representation of parents/guardians of participating students.

The CEO/Principal or designee will:

1. Identify and establish a process by which an adequate representation or parents/guardians of participating students can occur.
2. Establish a schedule for the committee to plan, review and recommend improvements to the charter school parental involvement policy.

The CEO/Principal or designee will:

1. Provide parents/guardians timely information about programs.
2. Communicate updates through use of school newsletters, charter school website, email and telephone contact, and home visits if needed.

The CEO/Principal or designee will provide a description and explanation of the curriculum in use at the school, forms of academic assessment used to measure student progress, and the proficiency levels students are expected to meet.

The CEO/Principal or designee will:

1. Provide parents/guardians, upon request, opportunities for regular meetings to formulate suggestions and to participate, as appropriate, in decisions relating to the education of their students, and to respond to any suggestions as soon as practicably possible.
2. Develop a feedback loop for parents/guardians to ask questions and receive follow-up.

If the school-wide plan is not satisfactory to the parents/guardians of participating students, the CEO/Principal or designee will:

1. Submit any comments when the school makes the plan available to the Board.
2. Provide a process for parents/guardians to express concerns and complaints.



## Shared Responsibilities for High Academic Achievement

The school is responsible for providing a high-quality curriculum and instruction in a supportive and effective learning environment that enables students served under Title I to meet the state's student academic achievement standards.

Each parent/guardian is responsible for supporting their student's learning by:

1. Monitoring attendance, homework, and television viewing.
2. Volunteering in their child's classroom and participating, as appropriate, in decisions relating to their student's education and extracurricular activities.

Communication between teachers and parents/guardians occurs on an ongoing basis through:

1. Parent-teacher conferences in elementary schools, at least annually, during which the compact will be discussed as the compact relates to the individual student's achievements.
2. Frequent reports to parents/guardians on their child's progress.
3. Reasonable access to staff, opportunities to volunteer and participate in their student's class, and observation of classroom activities.

## Building Capacity for Involvement

To ensure effective involvement of parents/guardians and to support a partnership among the schools involved, each school will:

1. Provide assistance to parents/guardians in understanding the state's academic content standards and state student academic achievement standards, state, and local academic assessments, and how to monitor a student's progress and work with educators to improve the achievement of their students.
2. Provide materials and training, such as literacy, technology, etc., to help parents/guardians work with their students to improve their student's achievement.

3. Educate teachers and other staff in the value and utility of contributions of parents/guardians and how to effectively communicate and work with parents/guardians as equal partners.
4. Implement and coordinate parent/guardian programs that will build ties between them and the school.
5. To the extent feasible and appropriate, coordinate and integrate parental involvement programs and activities with other relevant programs and conduct other activities, such as parent/guardian resource centers, which encourage and support parents/guardians in more fully participating in their student's education.
6. Ensure that information is sent to the parents/guardians of participating students in a format and language that they can understand.
7. Involve parents/guardians in the development of training for teachers and other educators to improve the effectiveness of such training.
8. Provide necessary literacy training from funds provided to relevant programs by Title I if the charter school has exhausted all other reasonably available sources of funding for such training.
9. Pay reasonable and necessary expenses associated with local parental involvement activities, including transportation and childcare costs to enable parents/guardians to participate in school-related meetings and training sessions.
10. Train parents/guardians to encourage and enhance the involvement of other parents/guardians.
11. Use outreach programs to involve community groups and organizations.
12. Arrange school meetings at a variety of times or conduct in-home conferences between teachers and other educators and parents/guardians, to maximize parental involvement and participation.
13. Adopt and implement model approaches to improving parental involvement.
14. Establish a charter school-wide parental advisory council to provide advice on all matters related to parental involvement in supported programs.
15. Develop appropriate roles for community-based organizations and businesses in parental involvement activities.
16. Provide other reasonable support for parental involvement activities under this section as parents/guardians may request. In carrying out the parental involvement

requirements of this compact, the school, to the extent practicable, will provide full opportunities for the participation of parents/guardians with limited English proficiency, or disabilities, including providing information and school reports in a format and a language parents/guardians can understand, to the extent practicable.

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