

# **Title I School-Level Parent and Family Engagement Policy California Connections Academy Schools**

Governed by California Online Public Schools  
Operating as:  
California Connections Academy Southern California  
California Connections Academy Central Valley  
California Connections Academy Northern California  
California Connections Academy North Bay  
California Connections Academy Central Coast  
California Connections Academy Monterey Bay  
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## **2.0 With approval from the local governing board, California Connections Academy has jointly developed with, and distributed to, parents and family members of participating children a written parent and family engagement policy, agreed upon by such parents, and updated periodically to meet the changing needs of parents and the school. (EC Section 11503; 20 United States Code [U.S.C.] Section [§] 6318[b][1-4])**

At least one meeting is held annually to discuss the Parent and Family Engagement Policy and School Parent Compact. Further feedback is solicited through multiple avenues, including the "feedback" link on EMS, phone, WebMail, regular school communications, field trips and back to school activities, and other parent-oriented activities. The Board of Directors intends to maintain at least one parent representative among its members. The schools also survey parents each year in order to evaluate the school on a number of criteria, including student progress, teacher support, and the quality of curriculum.

- California Connections Academy Schools make effective use of all available technologies to distribute information to parents.
- In addition, parents are encouraged to set up conferences to discuss their student's performance.
- Regular school communications announce upcoming school events and are available online to all parents.
- Certain critical communications may also be provided in print format. For example, the parent training modules are available in print as well as online, and official communications from the schools about withdrawals are also provided via hard-copy mail.
- The schools also develop and make available, via EMS, a school handbook that details all policies and procedures specific to the schools. Translation of materials or availability of materials in other formats (e.g., for those who have difficulty with their vision) are made available upon request.

## **2.1 Involvement of Parents in the Title I Program**

*The school-level parent and family engagement policy shall describe the means for how California Connections Academy Schools school shall carry out the following requirements: (20 U.S.C. § 6318[b][1])*

- a) The school convenes an annual meeting, at a convenient time, to which all parents of participating children shall be invited to attend and encouraged to attend, to inform parents and family members of their school's participation in the Title I program and to explain the requirements, and the right of the parents to be involved. (20 U.S.C. § 6318[c][1])
  - Hold at least one annual meeting, with the option to participate virtually

- Administer an annual parent satisfaction survey which includes questions about academic interventions.
  - Solicit feedback through multiple avenues, including the "feedback" link in the EMS®, telephone, school communications, and WebMail.
- b) The school offers a flexible number of meetings, such as meetings in the morning or evening, and may provide, with Title I funds, transportation, child care, or home visits, as such services relate to parental involvement. (20 U.S.C. § 6318[c][2])

California Connections Academy School meetings are held virtually. The information regarding the meeting, including the meeting room links, are provided to the families at least one week in advance. The parent meetings are scheduled at select times during the school year and at varied times of day to give the greatest opportunity for our families to attend. All meetings are recorded, and the recording links are sent to all enrolled caretakers along with any follow up information within one business day.

- c) The school involves parents in an organized, ongoing, and timely way, in the planning, review, and improvement of the school's Title I program, including the planning, review, and improvement of the school parent and family engagement policy and the joint development of the schoolwide program plan. (20 U.S.C. § 6318[c][3])

California Connections Academy Schools conduct 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 plan. The evaluation includes identifying barriers to greater participation by parents in parent 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). The schools use the findings of the evaluation about its Parent and Family Engagement Policy and activities to design strategies for more effective parent involvement, and to revise, if necessary (and with the involvement of parents) its parent involvement policies.

Evaluation methods include:

- Hold at least one annual meeting, with the option to participate virtually
- Administer an annual parent satisfaction survey which includes questions about academic interventions.
- Solicit feedback through multiple avenues, including the "feedback" link in the EMS®, telephone, school communications, and WebMail.

- d) The school provides parents of participating children with the following:
- i. Timely information about the Title I program. (20 U.S.C. § 6318[c][4][A])

California Connections Academy schools provide Title I program information to families throughout the school year. This information is provided to participating families in several formats including: WebMail, School Advisory Committee Meetings three times per school year, Parent/Admin Collaboration Meetings three times per school year, and LCAP input form.

- ii. A description and explanation of the curriculum in use at the school, the forms of academic assessment used to measure student progress, and the achievement levels of the challenging state academic standards. (20 U.S.C. § 6318[c][4][B])

Our Board of Directors approves the curriculum, textbook, and instructional material selections annually. The Pearson Virtual Schools branded curriculum, including assessments, is aligned to the California Common Core State Standards, California Content Standards and Next Generation Science Standards, as adopted by the State

Board of Education for English- Language Arts, Mathematics, Health Education, History- Social Science, Physical Education, Science, Visual and Performing Arts, and World Languages. Additional alignments are conducted for “a” to “g” guidelines. The curriculum is updated regularly based on a rigorous analysis of student performance on state standards as measured by state testing results and internal assessments. The high quality proprietary curriculum integrates textbooks, lesson plans, and other content from a variety of leading publishers including Pearson, McGraw-Hill, and Zaner-Bloser, many of which are already on the state’s approved list. In addition to high-quality virtual and print textbook resources, the curriculum features technology-based content from providers such as Grolier Online, BrainPOP, Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, and Discovery Education. Pearson Virtual School’s proprietary and highly effective online animated Teachlets® tutorials, which introduce challenging topics and provide interactive practice, are also included. LiveLesson® sessions, which provide for real-time web conferencing with individual and small groups of students using voice over IP, chat, electronic whiteboard, and shared web surfing, allows teachers and students to interact with one another in real time in a virtual classroom.

iii. 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. (20 U.S.C. § 6318[c][4][C])

California Connections Academy is a fully online school that allows for regular parent, caretaker, family and student interaction. Due to the nature of being online, all stakeholders have multiple opportunities to request and attend regular meetings as they feel appropriate. One such regular meeting is their bi weekly call with their homeroom teacher. Stakeholders can also request more frequent meetings as needed, Additional opportunities include but are not limited to:

- School Advisory Committee Meetings
- Parent/Admin Collaboration Meetings
- English Learner Advisory Committee Meetings
- Progress Monitoring Meetings
- Special Education meetings as appropriate
- Bi weekly phone calls
- LiveClass
- Social and Emotional support sessions

e) If the schoolwide program (SWP) plan is not satisfactory to the parents of participating children, the school submits any parent comments on the plan when the school makes the plan available to the local educational agency (LEA). (20 U.S.C. § 6318[c][5])

If the plan for Title I, Part A, developed under Section 1006 of the ESSA, is not satisfactory to the parents of participating students, the schools will submit any parent comments with the plan when the schools submit the plan to the California Department of Education.

## **2.2 Building Capacity for Involvement**

*To ensure effective involvement of parents and to support a partnership among the school involved, parents, and the community to improve student academic achievement, each school and local educational agency assisted under Title I, Part A shall carry out the following requirements: (20 U.S.C. § 6318[e])*

a) The school provides assistance to parents of children served by the school or LEA, as appropriate, in understanding such topics as the challenging state academic standards, state and local academic assessments, the requirements of Title I, Part A, and how to monitor a child’s progress and work with educators to improve the achievement of their

children. (20 U.S.C. § 6318[e][1])

During the school year, teachers and parents communicate regularly via WebMail, telephone, and LiveLesson™ sessions. Teachers formally conference with parents regularly. In addition, parents are directly involved in checking daily student work for completeness and may view student grades and other progress indicators in real time. Progress reports are provided to parents at least quarterly for every student. Parents receive notifications from the school about student attendance and participation in various aspects of the program.

Parents have the opportunity to be intimately familiar with their students' progress on a day-to-day basis. The schools' unique education management system (EMS) platform ensures that all parents have access to complete data about their children's learning on a 24/7 basis. In the EMS, parents can view in real time whether their student is on track and making adequate progress. Students who are not on track are identified if and when certain thresholds are reached related to completion of lessons, attendance, contact with the teacher, and/or submission of required assessments or portfolio assignments. The schools contact the parent of any student identified as needing support to discuss issues impeding student's progress and to discuss strategies for getting the student back on track. Parents are also provided with frequent reports on their student's progress. For students who are struggling, school staff meet to develop an intervention plan that directly involves the student and parent.

- b) The school provides materials and training to help parents work with their children to improve their children's achievement, as appropriate, to foster parental involvement. (20 U.S.C. § 6318[e][2])

Materials to encourage parent involvement are provided (with no cost to the family) including online training, a handbook, and school communications such as newsletters and message boards. Daily lesson plans are accessible 24/7 and enable parents to review and understand the objectives of each lesson so that they can support their student's learning effectively. The teaching and administrative staff and curriculum and technical support staff are also available via WebMail or telephone to provide required assistance and advising support.

California Connections Academy Schools provide ongoing training and support to help parents carry out their important role while making optimum use of the available technology tools and professional teacher support. The schools' specific training and support efforts include an orientation for parents to familiarize themselves with the features and components of the EMS. The training also includes building an effective understanding of the academic program (content, standards and assessment) as well as real-time tools for monitoring and improving student performance. Additional parent training opportunities are provided throughout the school year. There is an area of the schools' website specifically devoted to parent training and resources.

- c) The school educates teachers, specialized instructional support personnel, principals, and other school leaders, and other 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. (20 U.S.C. § 6318[e][3])

California Connections Academy Schools are committed to providing high-quality and ongoing professional development for both parents and staff to improve instruction and drive toward proficiency on academic standards. California Connections Academy Schools

provide teacher training and professional development programs to equip teachers with the following:

- A working knowledge of the Connections Academy® curriculum.
  - How to communicate and work effectively with parents/families.
  - How to utilize and navigate the tools in the EMS.
  - How to develop personalized learning plans and individualized instructional programs, including communicating with parents regarding instruction.
  - Review of the different forms of assessment and how to utilize test results to guide instruction.
  - Knowledge of school processes and policies.
  - How on-site staff and virtual teachers work collaboratively in the best interest of each student.
- d) The school, to the extent feasible and appropriate, coordinates and integrates parent involvement programs and activities with other federal, state, and local programs, including public preschool programs, and conducts other activities, such as parent resource centers, that encourage and support parents in more fully participating in the education of their children. (20 U.S.C. § 6318[e][4])

California Connections Academy schools offer several online resources for our families to help integrate parent involvement and encourage support and participation in their child's education. Some of these supports are listed below:

- Parent Workshops - focussed on mental health topics to provide education and strategies to support their student's mental health and social emotional wellbeing.
  - Open Office Hours - one on one support with a particular mental health concern in a brief consultation with our licensed clinical social worker.
  - English Learning website- including links to family and student resources and support
  - Field Trip and Events website- including upcoming school events in our school regions.
  - Counselor's Corner website- including links to family and student resources that include academic supports, DEI resources and SEL supports.
  - closed Parent Facebook Page- allowing families to speak with one another, sharing ideas, concerns, and questions.
- e) The school ensures that information related to school and parent programs, meetings, and other activities is sent to parents of participating children in a format and, to the extent practicable, in a language the parents can understand. (20 U.S.C. § 6318[e][5])

As virtual learning schools, California Connections Academy Schools are able to use technology and the working partnership between parents and school staff to facilitate the full participation of parents who might otherwise face barriers to involvement. For example, parents with disabilities who might otherwise find it difficult to participate in their child's brick-and-mortar classroom can readily interact through our online tools and resources. California Connections Academy Schools make every effort to provide information in an understandable language and format so that parents can actively participate in their student's schooling.

- f) The school provides such other reasonable support for parental involvement activities under this section as parents may request. (20 U.S.C. § 6318[e][14])
- Students have the opportunity to participate regularly in both face-to-face and virtual community activities. Face-to-face activities include field trips and community outings, in accordance with federal, state and local health guidelines. Teachers use the telephone quite extensively in communicating with students and parents.

- WebMail is the proprietary private email system included in the EMS. WebMail is a "closed" system. Students, parents, and teachers may only use it to communicate with each other, and are protected from spam, contact from strangers, and other mainstream email issues.
- Other examples of support to be provided for parent involvement activities include, but are not limited to: providing multiple ways to attend meetings (face-to-face, phone, LiveLesson™ sessions, and recordings), a private regional Facebook page for parent interactions, translating materials upon request, and holding one-on-one meetings and so forth.

## 2.3 Accessibility

*In carrying out the parent and family engagement requirements of Title I, Part A, California Connections Academy Schools, to the extent practicable, shall 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), including providing information and school reports required under section 1111 of the ESEA (20 U.S.C. § 6311), as amended by ESSA, in a format and, to the extent practicable, in a language such parents understand. (20 U.S.C. § 6318[f])*

- California Connections Academy Schools make effective use of all available technologies to distribute information to parents.
- In addition, parents are encouraged to set up conferences to discuss their student's performance.
- Regular school communications announce upcoming school events and are available online to all parents.
- Certain critical communications may also be provided in print format. For example, the parent training modules are available in print as well as online, and official communications from the schools about withdrawals are also provided via hard-copy mail.
- The schools also develop and make available, via EMS, a school handbook that details all policies and procedures specific to the schools. Translation of materials or availability of materials in other formats (e.g., for those who have difficulty with their vision) are made available upon request.

## 2.4 School-Parent Compact

*As a component of the school-level parent and family engagement policy, each school served under this part shall jointly develop with parents for all children served under this part a school-parent compact that outlines how parents, the entire school staff, and students will share the responsibility for improved student academic achievement and the means by which the school and parents will build and develop a partnership to help children achieve the state's high standards. The school-parent compact shall carry out the following requirements: (20 U.S.C. § 6318[d])*

- a) 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 Title I, Part A 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. (20 U.S.C. § 6318[d][1])

California Connections Academy Schools has a responsibility to provide high-quality curriculum and instruction to all of its students. The Board of Directors approves the curriculum, textbook, and instructional material selections annually therefore, all students receive online and offline materials needed to complete their course of study. The Pearson Virtual Schools branded curriculum, including assessments, is aligned to the California Common Core State Standards, California Content Standards and Next Generation Science Standards, as adopted by the State Board of Education for English-Language

Arts, Mathematics, Health Education, History-Social Science, Physical Education, Science, Visual and Performing Arts, and World Languages. Additional alignments are conducted for “a” to “g” guidelines.

During the school year, teachers and parents communicate regularly via WebMail, telephone, and Live Class sessions. Teachers formally conference with parents regularly. In addition, parents are directly involved in checking daily student work for completeness and may view student grades and other progress indicators in real time. Progress reports are provided to parents at least quarterly for every student. Parents receive notifications from the school about student attendance and participation in various aspects of the program.

Parents understand that their participation in their child’s education will positively impact his/her achievement and attitude. Therefore, they will do their best to:

- Ensure that their child attends/participates in school regularly.
- Ensure that their child will use positive school behavior.
- Encourage positive use of their child’s additional/non-school time.
- Establish a time and quiet place for their child to complete schoolwork and support effort, completion, and correctness.

- b) Address the importance of communication between teachers and parents on an ongoing basis through, at a minimum, the following: (20 U.S.C. § 6318[d][2])
1. 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. (20 U.S.C. § 6318[d][2][A])

California Connections Academy Schools hold parent-teacher conferences during which the School-Parent Compact is discussed as it relates to the individual child's achievement. If there are performance concerns, or if students are falling behind and in escalation, the student's teacher contacts parents via phone and/or WebMail and includes other teaching or administrative staff as needed. The call focuses on the student's performance and what actions need to occur to get the student back on-track. Teachers may also set up an in-person meeting to discuss any student or parent concerns and to work collaboratively to set goals and identify a timeline for improvement.

2. Frequent reports to parents on their children’s progress. (20 U.S.C. § 6318[d][2][B])

During the school year, teachers and parents communicate regularly via WebMail, telephone, and Live Class sessions. Teachers formally conference with parents regularly. In addition, parents are directly involved in checking daily student work for completeness and may view student grades and other progress indicators in real time. Progress reports are provided to parents at least quarterly for every student. Parents receive notifications from the school about student attendance and participation in various aspects of the program.

3. Reasonable access to staff, opportunities to volunteer and participate in their child’s class, and observation of classroom activities. (20 U.S.C. § 6318[d][2][C])

Parents have multiple opportunities to shape the overall school experience. They can volunteer to chaperone student field trips, assist with student activities, serve on the schools' Board of Directors as well as participate in Title I planning meetings. Parents, Caretakers, and families may volunteer for the school, however, volunteering is not required.

4. 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. (20 U.S.C. § 6318[d][2][D])

We will provide opportunities for regular communication between parents and teachers through:

- Parent-teacher conferences;
- Frequent reports about your child's progress;
- Opportunities to talk to staff, volunteer in class, and observe classroom activities;
- Ensuring regular communication between family members and school staff to the extent possible, in a language that family members can understand.

*\*\*The policy will be updated periodically to meet changing needs of parents and family members and the school. If the school has a process in place for involving parents and family members in planning and designing the school's programs, the school may use that process if it includes adequate representation of parents and family members of children receiving Title I, Part A services.*