Parental Involvement Policy (Title 1)

Voices College-Bound Language Academies (“Voices” or “the charter school”) understands that education is a collaborative effort involving the school and the families, working together to achieve high student performance. The Governing Board recognizes that parents are their children’s first and most influential teachers and that sustained parent involvement in the education of their children contributes greatly to student achievement and a positive school environment. The Principal or designee shall work with staff and parents to develop meaningful opportunities at all grade-levels for parents to be involved in network and school activities; advisory, decision-making and advocacy roles; and activities to support learning at home. Parents shall be notified of their rights to be informed about and to participate in their children’s education and of the opportunities available to do so.

Title I Parental Involvement Policy

Voices has developed this written Title I Parental Involvement Policy with input from Title I parents. With the guidance and support of school staff, parents had the opportunity to give direct input to develop strategies to increase parental involvement and to determine how they would like their engagement to be organized and improved. Part of this input lead to the creation and development of the Voices Parent Advisory Committee (VPAC). This policy is the result of the combination of that input, Voices school-wide parent involvement surveys, and needs assessments developed and implemented by other advisory committees. Voices has distributed the policy to parents of Title I students. This policy is distributed in Voices annual family notice. The policy describes the means for carrying out the following Title I parental involvement requirements [20 USC 6318 Section 1118(a)-(f) inclusive].

Involvement of Parents in the Title I Program

To involve parents in the Title I program at Voices, the following practices have been established:

The charter school convenes an annual meeting to inform parents of Title I students about Title I requirements and about the right of parents to be involved in the Title I program.

- Voices convenes an annual meeting to inform parents about Title I requirements and the rights of parents to be involved. Additionally, Voices engages and consults parents and parent advisory committees on the schoolwide components of the Title I program.
- Initial meetings focus on needs assessments and strategies to increase parental involvement. As the year progresses, Voices guides the support of the VPAC and the ELAC to cover the rest of the components and meet Title I requirements.
- Given the relationship between certain topics, Voices and its parent advisory committees may address Title I requirements while also addressing Title III requirements.

The charter school offers a flexible number of meetings for Title I parents, such as meetings in the morning or evening.
At Voices, parents have the opportunity to participate on a variety of meetings, both formal and informal such as:

- General school meetings or other parent advisory group meeting. In collaboration with advisory groups such as the ELAC or VPAC, Voices offers a number of meetings aiming to inform, engage, and consult parents on different topics.
- Community Gatherings. These meetings were designed by VPAC to strengthen parent-parent and school-parent relationships; and they highlight the importance of parental engagement in student academic achievement. Community Gatherings are held once a month, on an agreed time and day convenient to most parents.
- Coffee with the Principal. The Voices principal schedules coffee sessions, in the mornings and afternoons, open to all parents. These meetings may cover any pressing matters, as well as Title I, ELAC, and LCAP components.
- Workshops and classes are scheduled according the availability of most of the parents interested and the availability of the individual/organization facilitating.

The charter school involves parents of Title I students in an organized, ongoing, and timely way, in the planning, review, and improvement of the school’s Title I programs and the Title I parental involvement policy.

- Voices develops an event calendar where opportunities for parental involvement are laid out.
- Voices follows an additional timeline for parental consultation on school needs and improvement. For example, parents are informed about and consulted on the LCAP goals, the actions the school will take, and the expected outcomes, in meetings spread out in the school year.

The charter school provides parents of Title I students, through its annual family notice, with timely information about Title I programs.

- Voices communicates through its Family Handbook about Title I programs such as the National School Lunch Program.
- Additionally, Voices follows a process to ensure parents participation and ensure that all those eligible for the program are serviced. This process involves layers of written communication and phone calls, and the tracking of application form submissions.

The charter school provides parents of Title I students, through its annual family notice, with an explanation of the curriculum used at the school, the assessments used to measure student progress, and the proficiency levels students are expected to meet.

Family Handbook, parent grade-specific and whole-school workshops, ELAC and VPAC meetings. If requested by parents of Title I students, the charter school provides opportunities for regular meetings that allow the parents to participate in decisions relating to the education of their children.
Voices welcomes and encourages all parental involvement in the education of their children. As a best practice, Voices schedules two parent-teacher conferences a year.

In preparation for parent-teacher conferences, the school or teacher may also provide tools and educate parents about the process, give examples of meaningful questions to ask, and strongly recommend 100 percent participation.

If requested by parents, any additional meetings are scheduled at their earliest convenience and according to availability of the teacher or staff member. Parents are also given the option to communicate with teachers via email at any time.

School-Parent Compact

Voices distributes to parents of Title I students a school-parent compact. The compact, which has been jointly developed with parents, outlines how parents, the entire charter school staff, and students will share the responsibility for improved student academic achievement. It describes specific ways the school and families will partner to help children achieve the State’s high academic standards. It addresses the following legally required items, as well as other items suggested by parents of Title I students:

- The charter school’s responsibility to provide high-quality curriculum and instruction;
- The ways parents will be responsible for supporting their children’s learning; and
- The importance of ongoing communication between parents and teachers through, at a minimum, annual parent-teacher conferences; frequent reports on student progress; access to staff; opportunities for parents to volunteer and participate in their child’s class; and opportunities to observe classroom activities.

ELAC and whole-school meetings were held to gather parent input and review the compact. The policy and compact are shared annually at similar meetings and included in the Family Handbook.

Building Capacity for Involvement

Voices engages Title I parents in meaningful interactions with the charter school. It supports a partnership among staff, parents, and the community to improve student academic achievement. To help reach these goals, the school has established the following practices:

- The charter school provides Title I parents with assistance in understanding the State’s academic content standards, assessments, and how to monitor and improve the achievement of their children.
- Voices offers general meetings to inform parents about changes in State academic content standards and to explain in more detail what the new standards are and how they are taught.
Voices offers the opportunity of a hands-on workshop on the CAASPP where parents are able to take a practice test.

Voices also takes time to explain parents what the State assessment results represent, how to look at the data, and what steps to follow to support their children after that. This can occur in a combination of meetings and communiques.

The charter school provides Title I parents with materials and training to help them work with their children to improve their children's achievement.

Voices offers a variety of opportunities to support parents understand the importance of their role in improving their children’s academic achievement, and to support parents gain tools that help them feel confident in their abilities to do so. These opportunities include, but are not limited to:

- Meetings/discussions about:
  - The positive effects of student regular attendance
  - The Voices EL program
  - Voices Dual-Immersion Program
  - The reclassification process, and English language placement.
  - The positive effects of parental engagement in the classroom and school
  - School assessments and homework
  - Parenting skills classes
  - College readiness workshops
  - Classroom and School-wide parent book clubs
  - Voices’ methods of communication

With the assistance of Title I parents, the charter school educates staff members about the value of parent contributions, and in how to work with parents as equal partners.

Voices builds in opportunities for parents to share their experiences with teachers and staff members during specific times of the school year. The goals are to educate staff in the value of parental involvement, and to have guided discussions on its positive effects in student academic achievement. The sessions are staggered throughout the year; the first one usually occurring during the summer portion of professional development for teachers and staff.

The charter school coordinates and integrates the Title I parental involvement program with other programs, and conducts other activities, such as parent resource centers, to encourage and support parents in more fully participating in the education of their children.

Parent Liaison and Dean of Culture serve as a direct link between the school and parents.
• The charter school distributes information related to charter school and parent programs, meetings, and other activities to Title I parents in a format and language that the parents understand.

• Voices communicates all information related to parent programs, meetings, events, and other activities, in both English and Spanish, and through different mediums (flyers, voice messages, text messages, social media, bulletin board)

• The charter school provides support for parental involvement activities requested by Title I parents.

• Voices understands the role of parents in the student achievement of academic success. For this reason, Voices works collaboratively with parents, supports, guides, and gives feedback, on ideas or activities requested. While there is no formal review process for parental involvement activities requested by parents, every request is given consideration and, if necessary, evaluated for alignment with identified school/parent needs.

• Voices also connects parents with staff or advisory committees, offers technical and logistical support, and helps with ways to disseminate information.

Accessibility

Voices provides opportunities for the participation of all Title I parents, including parents with limited English proficiency, parents with disabilities, and parents of migratory students. Information and school reports are provided in a format and language that parents understand.

Based on the demographic information of our student population, all information and reports are provided in English and Spanish. Also, Voices actively attempts to identify parents or families that may benefit from additional support. The majority of the Voices staff are bilingual and thus capable to answer parent questions and/or directing them to the Parent Liaison or Dean of Culture for more specific support.

Program Evaluation

The Principal or designee shall regularly evaluate and report to the Board on the effectiveness of the charter school’s parent involvement efforts, including, but not limited to, input from parents and school staff on the adequacy of parent involvement opportunities and barriers that may inhibit parent participation.

Each year the Principal or designee shall identify specific objectives of the charter school’s parent involvement program. The Principal or designee shall ensure that parents are consulted and participate in the planning, design, implementation, and evaluation of the parent involvement program.

Family Participation
Student

The Board of Voices College-Bound Language Academies strongly believes that family involvement is key to student success.

No family participation plan or policy shall require mandatory service from parents, and under no circumstances shall any student suffer any adverse consequences, including without limitation, denial of admission or readmission based upon a parent’s level of service to or other contribution to the school.

We recognize that each parent is able to participate at a different level due to such circumstances as family, work, health, and cultural practices. The family participation that Voices values above all else is parental concern as manifested at home through love, nurturing, and good parenting in support of the school’s efforts to educate the student.

Voices identifies two levels of family participation.

Level I. Formal Participation:
- Commitment and willingness to fulfill the parent compact;
- Commitment and willingness to adhere to and support all Voices policies; and
- Commitment and willingness to engage in two-way communication between the school and home regarding the education and well-being of the student.

Level II. Informal Participation:
- Tutoring;
- Volunteering in the Homework Center;
- Volunteering in the classroom;
- Participating in parental support classes;
- Participating in English Learner classes;
- Attending parent information workshops;
- Volunteering to serve as Governing Council Representative;
- Participating in the School-Parent Collaborative (“SSC”);
- Participating on the ELAC committee;
- Volunteering for Eighth-Grade Exit Interview Teams;
- Volunteering for the Program Quality Review Team; and
- Various other committees and opportunities.

Voices will make every attempt to accommodate parents to allow them to participate at their desired capacity at the school according to their schedules and interests. Voices will perform and annual survey as to what topics are of interest to families and to the best of our ability we will design and plan workshops to meet those interests. Voices will add programs and opportunities as needs are assessed.

All family notices will be placed on the community bulletin board in the front office of the school and hard copies will be sent home with students in both English and Spanish.
Voices College-Bound Language Academies Parent Compact

The role of a parent is an integral part of a child’s school life and education. We as educators must develop each child to the optimum of his or her potential. Your support and encouragement will help your child achieve success at Voices College-Bound Language Academy.

This compact, which has been jointly developed with parents, outlines how parents, the entire charter school staff, and students will share the responsibility for improved student academic achievement. It describes specific ways the school and families will partner to help children achieve the State’s high academic standards.

All parents must carefully read and sign the following agreement.

Whereas, I understand that my child will spend the most important years of his/her life in school, the charter school has a responsibility to provide high-quality curriculum and instruction, and I want to help Voices College-Bound Language Academies give my child the best possible education and get ready for college,

Therefore, I promise and agree, to the extent possible:

1. To see that my child comes to school every day, on time, and prepared for the day’s work.
2. To call the school in advance and notify the school as soon possible if my child will be absent.
3. To see to it that my child comes to school dressed appropriately in their school uniform.
4. To make sure that my child has ample quiet time and a quiet place to complete homework and projects and to study each evening with the TV, radio, etc. turned off.
5. To speak with my child every day about what was done at school and to help/find assistance for my child with my child’s homework assignments when necessary.
6. To ensure that my child reads every night in addition to his/her homework.
7. To expect my child to be given regular homework assignments.
8. To urge my child to respect himself/herself as well as others.
9. To speak to my child in a positive manner about school and to follow through on all items that pertain to the well-being of my child.
10. To communicate regularly with my child’s teacher(s) to get information we need to support the learning process and behavior.
11. To read and reply to all letters, messages, notes, and telephone calls from the school.

12. To attend annual parent-teacher conferences, other functions, and appointments that relate to my child’s education.

13. To see to it that my child does not bring inappropriate items that can distract from learning, such as toys and electronic games, to school.

14. To be familiar with the practices and principles of the school’s character curriculum and the Student Code of Conduct, which we will reinforce with our child.

15. To always act in professional manner when speaking with someone at Voices College-Bound Language Academy.

16. To attend school-wide activities each year.

17. To allow my child to attend Voices College-Bound Language Academy field trips.

18. To arrange for our child to attend summer school as required.

19. To do everything possible to keep my child at Voices College-Bound Language Academy for the long term (K-8).

Further, we understand the charter school:

1. Will provide frequent reports on student progress;

2. Will provide to reasonable access the staff to discuss student progress;

3. Will provide opportunities for parents to volunteer and participate in their child’s class; and

4. Will provide opportunities for parents to observe classroom activities.

I understand that the family has a significant impact on the behavior of our child.

Child’s Name ________________________________

Class ________________________________

Parent’s Signature ________________________________ Date ________________________________