

2019 Advisory Council for Family Engagement Legislative Report February 1, 2018 – December 6, 2018

The reconstituted Council, as of February 2018, has been effective in carrying out its duties as prescribed in NRS 385.620. The Council has met five times in 2018. It is the Council's expectation that Nevada will become a national leader in family engagement initiatives and results.

Pursuant to NRS 385.620, the Advisory Council for Parent Involvement and Family Engagement shall:

1. Review the policy of parental involvement adopted by the State Board and the policy of parental involvement and family engagement adopted by the board of trustees of each school district pursuant to NRS 392.457;

– The Nevada Policy of Parental Involvement and Family Engagement was reviewed and revised during Council meetings in May and July of 2015. The State Board approved the Council's draft on September 3, 2015. In order to fulfill this responsibility, the Council has set to review the Nevada Policy of Parental Involvement and Family Engagement every other legislative year (See Appendix A-NV PIFE Policy). With support from the Office of Parental Involvement and Family Engagement, the Council reviewed policies adopted by the board of trustees of each school district on February 8, 2017. The Office will follow up with school districts to ensure the Council has the most up to date information and will support districts to meet the requirements set forth in NRS 392.457. District policies will be reviewed every two to three years or six months after new policies are published.

2. Review the information relating to communication with and participation, involvement and engagement of parents and families that is included in the annual report of accountability for each school district pursuant to NRS 385A.320 and similar information in the annual report of accountability prepared by the State Public Charter School Authority, the Achievement School District and a college or university within the Nevada System of Higher Education that sponsors a charter school pursuant to subsection 3 of NRS 385A.070;

– The Council will review language in NRS 385.3495 to align it with the Nevada Parental Involvement and Family Engagement Policy. Additionally, the Council will request school district's accountability reports to review parent involvement efforts.

3. Review any effective practices carried out in individual school districts to increase parental involvement and family engagement and determine the feasibility of carrying out those practices on a statewide basis;

The Council has requested a presentation from all school districts to review district wide family engagement efforts as well as individual school efforts. Community organizations that support schools and districts have also presented before the Council. The following presentations have allowed for the Council to gain a sense of best practices in Nevada:

– In April 2018, the Deputy Treasurer of the Nevada State's Treasurer's Office presented to the Council on the Nevada College Kick Start Program, a college savings program. The Council provided feedback on how to best reach and inform parents and families who have limited time to become involved in the education for their children. Council members also helped disseminate information about the College Kick Start Program.

– In August 2018, a representative from Microsoft presented to the Council its family engagement program, a program that brings free tools and resources to schools, teachers, students, and parents. The Council provided feedback on how to best reach and inform parents and families. Council members also helped disseminate information about the program and connected with the representative after to see how they can bring these free tools and resources to their district.

– Chair Jennifer Hoy is a part of a planning committee for the 2019 IEL National Family Engagement and Community Engagement Conference, which will be held in Reno, NV. The conference is a national conference that will highlight effective family engagement practices and programs in Nevada and other states.

– In September 2018, five Council members attended the statewide family engagement Summit at Truckee Meadows Community College in Reno, NV. Council members attended sessions on effective family engagement practices and programs currently in place in Nevada.

The Office will coordinate with school district liaisons that have not presented before the Council in order to hear from all 17 school districts every two years.

4. Review any effective practices carried out in other states to increase parental involvement and family engagement and determine the feasibility of carrying out those practices in this State;

– In July 2018, the Council Vice Chair, Duana Malone, and Council member Malena Raymond attended the 2018 IEL National Family Engagement and Community Engagement Conference in Cleveland, Ohio. Council members were able to visit various school sites in Cleveland to observe the family engagement programs and practices currently in place. Council members also attended numerous sessions on family engagement facilitated by national family engagement experts and family engagement district leaders. This information was then shared at the August 2018 Council meeting and Vice Chair Malone created a website to share all the information that was gathered and learned at the conference.

– Chair Jennifer Hoy is a part of a planning meeting for the 2019 IEL National Family Engagement and Community Engagement Conference, which will be held in Reno, NV. The conference is a national conference that will highlight effective family engagement practices and programs in Nevada and other states.

– The Office of Parental Involvement and Family Engagement shares updates from national webinars, State Education Agency Family Engagement Leaders phone calls, and conferences to inform members about effective practices taking place across the country. The Council will prioritize its spending to ensure multiple Council members are able to attend national family engagement conferences in the future.

5. Identify methods to communicate effectively and provide outreach to parents, legal guardians and families of pupils who have limited time to become involved in the education of their children for various reasons, including, without limitation, work schedules, single parent homes, and other family obligations;

The Council learns about district and school outreach methods from presentations and mandated annual district reports. Members continue to advocate for varied methods of communication and outreach to ensure communication is two-way and authentic. Council members provide a conduit for information from the Council and Office to their various constituencies.

– In February 2018, the Nevada Achievement School District (NV ASD) presented to the Council an update on the current status of the NV ASD and the new parent petition process. The PIFE Office and members of the Council gave input on the parent petition process and how to improve its communication and outreach to parents. In the future, the NV ASD will look to include a member of the Council in the independent review committee that provides recommendations from the NV ASD applicant pool.

– In April 2018, the Deputy Treasurer of the Nevada State’s Treasurer’s Office presented to the Council on the Nevada College Kick Start Program, a college savings program. The Council provided feedback on how to best reach and inform parents and families who have limited time to become involved in the education for their children. Council members also helped disseminate information about the College Kick Start Program.

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6. Identify the manner in which the level of parental involvement and family engagement affects the performance, attendance and discipline of pupils;

– In April and August 2018, the Office of Parental Involvement and Family Engagement shared information on chronic absenteeism in Nevada and its impact on student performance. The Council learned of a task force that was created to look into the data and provide recommendations to schools and districts on how to reduce chronic absenteeism.

7. Identify methods to communicate effectively with and provide outreach to parents, legal guardians and families of pupils who are limited English proficient;

– In April 2018, the Deputy Treasurer of the Nevada State’s Treasurer’s Office presented to the Council on the Nevada College Kick Start Program, a college savings program. The Council provided feedback on how to best reach and inform parents and families who are limited English proficient. Council members also helped disseminate information about the College Kick Start Program.

– In August 2018, a representative from Microsoft presented to the Council its family engagement program, a program that brings free tools and resources to schools, teachers, students, and parents. The Council provided feedback on how to best reach and inform parents and families who are limited English proficient. Council members also helped disseminate information about the program and connected with the representative after to see how they can bring these free tools and resources to their district.

8. Determine the necessity for the appointment of a statewide parental involvement and family engagement coordinator or a parental involvement and family engagement coordinator in each school district, or both;

The Office of Parental Involvement and Family Engagement was created in 2011 and has worked closely with the Council since its inception. The Council will review the Office’s annual report every August to determine the necessity for the Office of Parental Involvement and Family Engagement. The Council’s work would not be possible without the support of the Office of Parental Involvement and Family Engagement. The Council will also determine the necessity for a school district coordinator in upcoming meetings.

9. Work in collaboration with the Office of Parental Involvement and Family Engagement created by NRS 385.630 to carry out the duties prescribed in NRS 385.635;

– In April 2018, the Office of Parental Involvement and Family Engagement gave an overview of the family engagement course requirement for all initial licensees, pursuant to NRS 391.019 and NAC 391.045. The Office sought feedback from the Council on the licensure requirement and its implementation.

– In September 2018, the Office of Parental Involvement and Family Engagement, helped plan and implement a statewide summit on parental involvement and family engagement at Truckee Meadows Community College in Reno, Nevada. Council member Stacie Wilke was a part of the planning committee for the summit.

– In September 2018, the Office of Parental Involvement and Family Engagement presented its annual report to the Council, an office report pursuant to NRS 385.635.

– In October 2018, the Office of Parental Involvement and Family Engagement presented to the Council an initiative the Department has signed onto, a State Consortium and Family Engagement which will lead to the development of a statewide Birth through Grade 12 Family Engagement Framework. The Council provided feedback on the stakeholder process that will need to take place during the framework development.

10. On or before February 1 of each odd-numbered year, submit a report to the Director of the Legislative Counsel Bureau for transmission to the Legislative Commission in even-numbered years, describing the activities of the Advisory Council and any recommendations for legislation.

Legislative Recommendations:

- Updating NRS 385.630 and NRS 385.635
 - The term family engagement is inclusive to all members of the family, including parents. During the 2017 Legislative Session, the Advisory Council changed its name from the Advisory Council for Parental

Involvement and Family Engagement to the Advisory Council for Family Engagement. The office name change will coincide with the reasoning of the Advisory Council name change and language reflected in the national federal law, the Every Student Succeeds Act. Replacing the term “Office of Parental Involvement and Family Engagement” with “Office of Family Engagement” wherever mentioned in NRS.

Conclusion

In partnership with the Office of Parental Involvement and Family Engagement, the Council has developed structures to ensure it continues to meet its duties set forth in NRS 385.620.

APPENDIX

Nevada Policy of Parental Involvement [and Family Engagement] Pursuant to NRS 385.620

The Nevada State Board of Education recognizes that parent involvement and family engagement will lead to successful educational results. The term 'parent' is meant to include any and all care-givers who nurture children on a regular and ongoing basis including, but not limited to, parents, grandparents, foster parents, step-parents, etc.

The Nevada State Board of Education also recognizes the absolute need for the collaboration between students, parents, schools and communities to ensure academic success. Meaningful family engagement is based on the premise that parents, educators, and community members share the responsibility for academic, physical, social, emotional and behavioral development of youth. Parents provide the primary educational environment for their children; therefore, it is the partnership between parents and schools that is the fundamental cornerstone for ensuring a child's success. Effective family engagement systems, policies and practices are mindful of diverse school communities that are rich in language, culture, and school experiences. Schools will respect and honor all cultural backgrounds, primary languages and traditions by collaborating with parents and students to create and develop positive relationships.

In order to enhance parental involvement and promote family engagement six essential standards will be fostered:

Standard 1: Welcoming all families into the school community— Parents and families are active participants in the life of the school, feel welcome, valued, and connected to each other.

- A positive educational environment is established by treating families in respectful and culturally sensitive ways.
- Examples include culturally diverse welcome signs, volunteer opportunities, home visits, student work throughout the school, etc.

Standard 2: Communicating effectively—Parents, families and school staff engage in regular, authentic, two-way, meaningful communication about student learning.

- Families know how to provide input and respond to school communication.
- Written and spoken interaction between families and teachers are respectful. Families receive positive and consistent information as well as recognition for their engagement.

Standard 3: Supporting student well-being and academic success—Parents, families and school staff continuously collaborate to support student learning and healthy development both at home and at school, and have regular opportunities to strengthen their knowledge and skills to do so effectively.

- Teachers use data to show parents and families how their student is doing both individually and compared to grade level standards.
- Families receive information, resources and training from teachers and school staff on how they can support their student's learning at home.

Standard 4: Speaking up for every child—Parents and families are empowered to be advocates for their own and other children, to ensure that students are treated fairly and have access to learning opportunities that will support their success.

- Teachers work with families to take advantage of resources and programs that support student success. (ELL, tutoring, counseling)
- The teachers and school staff empower families and encourage advocacy for students to resolve problems/conflicts.

Standard 5: Sharing power—Parents, families and school staff are equal partners in decisions that affect children and families and together inform, influence, and create policies, practices, and programs.

- The teacher collaborates with families to establish an equal voice and mutual understanding in decisions regarding their student's education.
- Encourage families to become active participants in the school culture at the local and district level. The schools will encourage purposeful engagement in parent advisory groups, school board meetings, school functions, and activities.

Standard 6: Collaborating with community—Parents, families and school staff collaborate with community members to connect students, families, and staff to expanded learning opportunities, community services, and civic participation.

- The teacher and school staff communicates with families about services/resources make referrals to programs and plan activities that expand learning opportunities.
- Schools will develop resources to purposefully include and collaborate with community organizations to participate in classrooms, school events and activities.

*Adopted by Nevada State Board of Education
9/3/2015*