

Title 1 School Parent and Family Engagement Policy

Westinghouse Arts Academy Charter School, also referred to as the “school” in this policy, is a public charter school that receives Title 1 funds to support its Title 1 programs. The Title I Parent and Family Engagement section of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), Section 1116(b) requires each Title I school to develop a written parent and family engagement policy that describes the means for carrying out the requirements of Section 1116. The school must ensure that information related to school and parent programs, meetings and other activities are sent to the parents of Title I children in a format and in a language the parents can understand. The policy must be: developed jointly with and agreed upon by parents and family members of Title I children; written in an understandable format and provided in a language parents can understand; distributed to all parents and family members of Title I children; made available to the local community; and updated annually to meet the changing needs of parents, family members and the school. In order to maintain compliance with ESSA and promote best practices within the school, Westinghouse Arts Academy Charter School asserts that it will comply with all previously outlined mandates as well as the following:

Parents and family members will be involved in the planning, review and improvement of the school's Parent and Family Engagement Policy through a variety of methods (ESSA, Section 1116(b)(1)). These methods may include surveys (electronic and paper), focus groups, and meetings. Open communication between the school and families also permits and encourages families to make suggestions at any time. An annual meeting will be held to review the Title 1 Plan, all related policies, and the School, Parent, and Student Compact.

The school's annual meeting will be held at a convenient time so to promote participation. All parents and family members of participating children shall be invited and encouraged to attend. The meeting will be held to inform parents of their schools' participation as a Title I school and to explain the requirements, and the rights for parents to be involved (ESSA, Section 1116(c)(1)).

The school will offer a flexible number of meetings, in the morning and/or the evening (ESSA, Section 1116(c)(2)) so that parents have multiple opportunities to attend.

The school will involve parents, in an organized, ongoing, and timely way, in the planning, review, and improvement of the Title I program, including the planning, review, and improvement of the school's parent and family engagement program (ESSA, Section 1116(c)(3)). This will occur at the annual Title 1 meeting, as well as through intentional family communication throughout the school year, and via an annual program evaluation that includes family involvement.

The school will provide parents of participating children with timely information about the Title I program (ESSA, Section 1116(c)(4)(A)). Electronic and written communication will be used to inform families about the Title 1 program. Title 1 meetings will be announced at least two weeks in advance and will be advertised on the school event calendar.

The school 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 (ESSA,

Section 1116(c)(4)(B)). The school shares this information with families at the curriculum nights which are held at the beginning of each academic semester. These events will be announced at least two weeks in advance and will be advertised on the school event calendar.

The school 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 (ESSA, Section 1116(c)(4)(C)). In accordance with ESSA, which also encourages alignment with other federal, state, and local plans, families will also be included in the comprehensive planning process.

A school-parent compact will be jointly developed with parents and family members and the compact outlines how parents, the entire school staff, and students will share in the responsibility for improved student academic achievement and the means by which the school and the 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 (ESSA, Section (d)(1)). Also addressed will be the importance of communication between teachers and parents on an ongoing basis through, at a minimum, 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. The compact will also ensure regular two-way, meaningful communication between family members and school staff, and, to the extent practicable, in a language that family members can understand (ESSA, Section 1116(d)(2)(A-D)).

The school will provide assistance to parents and family members in understanding the challenging State academic standards, State and local academic assessments, and how to monitor a child's progress and work with teachers to improve the achievement of their children (ESSA, Section 1116(6)(e)(1)). This will occur in a variety of ways, including, but not limited to, Title 1 meetings, curriculum nights, and training on the use of the school's student information system (SIS) and learning management system (LMS) so that parents can access and understand their students' grades and academic achievement.

The school will provide materials and training to help parents to 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 (ESSA, Section 1116(6)(e)(1)). This training may occur at curriculum nights, Title 1 meetings, special education parent training nights, or on an as-needed basis.

The school will educate teachers, specialized instructional support personnel, and other staff, with the assistance of parents, in the value and utility of contributions of parents and family members, and in how to reach out to, communicate with, and work with parents and family members as equal partners, implement and coordinate parent programs, and build ties between parents and family members and the school (ESSA, Section 1116(6)(e)(3)). This training will occur at least twice a year during faculty meetings and/or on inservice days; agendas and

sign-in sheets will be collected to document that such trainings occur.

The school 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 (ESSA, Section 1116(6)(e)(4)). The school is committed to aligning its parent and family engagement strategies with other initiatives, including, but not limited to, the state required comprehensive plan, special education training and support, and school safety planning. The school will also work collaboratively with the Family Teacher Organization (FTO) to support student and family oriented events at the school.

The school will ensure that information related to school and parent programs, meetings, and other activities is sent to the parents and family members of participating children in a format and to the extent practicable, in a language the parents and family members can understand (ESSA, Section 1116(6)(e)(5)). The school will utilize the expertise of its world language teachers when possible and supplement with translation services as needed.

The school, to the extent practicable, will 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) (ESSA, Section 1116(7)(f)). The school will utilize the expertise of its world language teachers when possible and supplement with translation services as needed to support families with limited English proficiency. Meetings will be held in handicapped accessible locations that include adequate parking and restroom facilities. Alternate communication methods will be utilized to support families who have family members that are deaf, blind, or have other medical or disability related needs.