

Title I, Part A LEA-Level Parent and Family Engagement Policy

Purpose:

Title I is the largest federal aid program for public schools and the program provides additional funds for assisting students in meeting the Arizona Content Area Standards. Title I provides supplemental funds that support a variety of school-based activities and programs. Because CASA Academy receives Title 1 funds, the school must have a parent and family engagement policy that describes how the school and parents will work together to improve students' academic achievement. This Parent and Family Engagement Policy describes the means for carrying out designated Title I, Part A, parent and family engagement requirements pursuant to the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) Section 1116(a).

Policy Details

It is the policy of CASA Academy that parents and family members of participating children have the opportunity to be jointly involved in the development of the school's Integrated Action Plan and in the school's review process for the purpose of school improvement. Recognizing that parental involvement is the key to academic achievement, CASA seeks to involve parents in an effective home-school partnership that will provide the best possible education for students.

1. This jointly developed and agreed upon written policy is distributed to all parents and family members at the time of registration. In school-wide buildings, this includes all parents. Additional copies are available, year-round, in the main office.
2. CASA leaders provide all staff with technical assistance and support in planning and implementing effective parent and family engagement activities to improve student academic achievement and school performance. The school will, as needed, partner with community groups as a means to engage families more creatively and successfully.
3. CASA works cooperatively with other Federal, state, and local programs; e.g., the Title I program will work with, as appropriate, local preschools, local library programs, and special education programs (IDEA). The school's homeless education program coordinates with the ADE and local programs to support students that are food insecure, especially over the school breaks.
4. The school conducts an annual evaluation of the content and effectiveness of the Parent and Family Engagement Policy. The evaluation includes parents in a meaningful manner. Namely, CASA uses surveys and an open-door policy to obtain feedback for this evaluation. Parents and families have a voice. The evaluation is used to identify the needs of parents and families to better support and assist their children in learning. The evaluations target family engagement perceptions, satisfaction, and ability to assist learning.
5. CASA uses the findings for the annual evaluation to design evidenced-based strategies for more effective parent and family engagement.
6. CASA also involves parents and family members in activities of the school. There is an established parent advisory committee comprised of a sufficient number and representative group of parents or family members to adequately represent the needs to the population. CASA also has a Parent and Family Engagement Policy. In addition, CASA provides opportunities for parents to participate in decision-making roles (as appropriate), volunteer opportunities, and parent-teacher conferences. Parent-teacher meetings are scheduled at any time, as requested by parents.

7. At least one annual meeting will be held to inform parents and family members of the school's participation in the Title I program and to explain the requirements of the program and their right to be involved. Notification will be sent home with students, posted at school, and placed in the school's newsletter or Facebook page.
8. Parent and family meetings, including parent conferences, will be held at different times during the day and Title I funds may be used to pay reasonable and necessary expenses associated with parent and family engagement activities, including transportation, childcare, or home visit expenses to enable parents to participate in school-related meetings and training sessions.
9. CASA will involve parents in the planning, review, and improvement of the school's Title I program through participation in stakeholder groups and in-person meetings where parents give input and feedback. In a schoolwide program plan, parents are asked to be involved in the joint development of the building's schoolwide plan through in-person meetings/feedback and surveys. Additional ways in which families are involved are:

CASA Academy is an academically challenging, disciplined, and joyful elementary school in which all members of the school community – board members, leaders, teachers, staff members, families and scholars – understand and are driven by our mission. We believe in the importance of working together to make a positive impact in the academic growth, character growth, and development of every scholar. Although the responsibility of making decisions of school policy belongs to the Governing Board and CEO, families are involved on an individual level and through organized parent groups. We recognize that an effective partnership between school and home sets each scholar up for success by garnering family support of our school and reinforcement in the home for the school's activities and expectations.

Teacher Contact with Families: Families will be contacted by their scholar's teacher on a bi-weekly basis. This contact will take place either in-person, via email, on the phone or via note. If a teacher leaves a voicemail or email for a parent, it is the parent's responsibility to contact the teacher within 24 hours.

Visitors: CASA Academy will spend its first two months establishing procedures and creating a positive school climate for its scholars. For this reason, visitors will not be allowed on campus until October 1st. After October 1st, CASA Academy is happy to have visitors. Anyone, including family members who wish to visit the school, must first call the office to set up an appointment. Our office staff will make every attempt to arrange a school visit within 48 hours of the request. If you wish to visit your child's classroom, you must call your child's teacher to arrange a visit at least 48 hours in advance.

Visiting Classes: Our school has an open door policy that allows family members to observe class any time **after** October 1st. During the beginning of school, it is critical for scholars to transition into their new setting, and the presence of family members in the classroom can slow this process. When observing in the classroom, families are asked not to disrupt the education of their scholar or of other scholars or to attempt to conduct individual conversations with the teacher during instructional time. Family members who are disruptive to the educational process will be asked to leave. Visitors need to sign in at the office before visiting a classroom and wear a visitor badge while in the school. All visits to classrooms must be arranged with the scholar's teacher at least 48 hours in advance.

Meet the Teacher Event: New families at CASA Academy are asked to bring their scholar(s) to the school before the start of school to meet with their scholar's teacher. This event will give scholars and their parents a chance to meet their teacher before the first day of school and will also allow teachers to learn a little bit about the scholar's educational history and personality. It is critical that all parents and scholars attend this initial teacher event.

Volunteers: CASA Academy will spend its first two months establishing procedures and creating a positive school climate for its scholars. For this reason, volunteers will not be allowed on campus until October 1st. After October 1st, CASA Academy is happy to have volunteers. Anyone, including family members who wish to visit the school, must first call the office to set up an appointment. Our office staff will make every attempt to arrange a school visit within 48 hours of the request. If you wish to volunteer in your child's classroom, you must call your child's teacher to arrange a visit at least 48 hours in advance.

Volunteers often inadvertently have access to sensitive information. Any information about scholars or their grades, discipline, or any personally identifiable information about School employees, including address, salary, Social Security number, or telephone number, etc. is to remain confidential. If a volunteer has a concern involving something that is witnessed or overheard it should be discussed with the CEO immediately. If a volunteer disregards this policy, the privilege of volunteering may be revoked. All volunteers must be in the presence of a CASA staff member while volunteering.

Any visitors, including parents and guardians, who do not report to the office or who are found on campus without authorization will be asked to leave immediately. Visitors should wear visitor badges at all times to indicate that they have checked-in at the main office.

On field trips, only the biological parent of a scholar or volunteers who hold a Fingerprint Clearance Card may supervise students without a CASA staff member being present.

10. Parents and family members of participating children are given assistance in understanding the Title I program, with timely information about the Title I program. Through annual meetings and parent-teacher conferences, the school provides parents and family members of participating children with a description and explanation of the curriculum in use at the school, the forms of academic assessment used to measure student progress, and the proficiency levels students are expected to meet. This information is available during the annual parent meeting, through individual reports given to parents at conference time, and through report cards.
11. If requested by parents, the school will provide 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.
12. A jointly developed school/parent compact outlines how parents and family members, the entire school staff, and students all share responsibility for improved student achievement. The compact also describes the means by which the school and parents will build and develop a partnership to help children achieve high standards. It is distributed in the parent handbook, at enrollment, and is reviewed during parent/teacher conferences.

13. Parents will be notified of this policy in an understandable and uniform format and, to the extent practicable, provided in a language the parents can understand. The policy will be free of educational jargon.
14. 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) by providing information and school reports required under Section 1111 in a format and language the parties can understand. (ESSA Section 11116(f))

This Policy was adopted by CASA Academy, on **August 15, 2019** and will remain in effect unless revised and voted on by CASA Academy's Governing Board. CASA will distribute this Policy to all parents and families of students participating in the Title I, Part A program.

School-Parent Compact

School year: _____

This Compact, which has been jointly developed with parents, outlines how parents, the entire school staff, and students will share the responsibility for improved student academic achievement in CASA Academy which is funded, in part, by Title I, Part A of the Elementary and Secondary School Act (ESEA). This Compact ensures mutual understanding of the school's responsibilities and the ways parents and family members will be responsible for supporting their children's learning.

School responsibilities:

School staff are expected to support their students, parents, and families in the following ways:

- Provide high-quality curriculum and instruction in a supportive and effective learning environment that enables the participating children to meet the State's student academic achievement standards
- Hold parent-teacher conferences (at least annually in elementary schools) during which this compact will be discussed as it relates to the individual child's achievement
- Provide parents with frequent reports on their children's progress
- Provide parents reasonable access to staff
- Provide parents opportunities to volunteer and participate in their child's class, and to observe classroom activities

Parent Responsibilities

Parents are expected to support their children's learning in the following ways:

- Monitoring attendance
- Making sure that homework is completed
- Participating, as appropriate, in decisions relating to their child's education
- Staying informed about their child's education and communicating with the school by promptly reading all notices from the school either received by their child or by mail and responding, as appropriate
- Serving, to the extent possible, on school-based parent groups and/or advisory groups

Student Responsibilities

- Complete their daily homework assignments
- Read for 20 minutes per day
- Follow school's safe and orderly environment standards

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Scholar Name: _____

Parent Name: _____

Parent Signature: _____

Date: _____

CASA McKinney-Vento Policy

Children and youth who have lost their housing live in a variety of places, including motels, shelters, shared residences, transitional housing programs, cars, campgrounds, and other places. This policy addresses the ways in which CASA Academy will ensure that all children and youth receive a free appropriate public education and are given meaningful opportunities to succeed in our school. This school will also follow the requirements of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act. Under federal law, children and youth who are considered homeless must have access to appropriate public education, including preschool, and be given a full opportunity to meet state and local academic achievement standards. They must be included in state- and district-wide assessments and accountability systems. CASA will ensure that children and youth identified as homeless are free from discrimination, segregation, and harassment. Information regarding this policy will be distributed to all students and parents upon enrollment and is also available, as needed, throughout the school year.

Identification

In collaboration with school personnel and community organizations, the CASA Academy Homeless Liaison will identify children and youth experiencing homelessness. The liaison will train school personnel on possible indicators of homelessness, sensitivity in identifying families and youth as experiencing homelessness, and procedures for forwarding information indicating homelessness to the liaison. The liaison will also instruct school registrars and secretaries to inquire about possible homelessness upon the enrollment and withdrawal of every student, and to forward information indicating homelessness to the liaison. Community partners in identification may include: family and youth shelters, soup kitchens, motels, campgrounds, drop-in centers, welfare departments and other social service agencies, street outreach teams, faith-based organizations, truancy and attendance officers, local homeless coalitions and legal services. The liaison will keep data on the number of children and youth experiencing homelessness in the school(s), where they are living, their academic achievement (including performance on state- and district-wide assessments), and the reasons for any enrollment delays, interruptions in their education or school transfers.

School Selection

Each child and youth experiencing homelessness has the right to remain at his or her school of origin. Maintaining a student in his or her school of origin is important for both the student and the school. Therefore, in selecting a school, children and youth experiencing homelessness shall remain at their schools of origin to the extent feasible, unless that is against the parent's or youth's wishes. Students may remain at their schools of origin the entire time they are experiencing homelessness, and until the end of any academic year in which they become permanently housed. The same applies if a child or youth loses his or her housing between academic years. Feasibility shall be a child-centered determination, based on the needs and interests of the particular student and the parent's or youth's wishes. Potential feasibility considerations include: safety of the student, continuity of instruction, time remaining in the academic year, school placement of siblings, etc. Services that are required to be provided, including transportation to and from the school of origin and services under federal and other programs, shall not be considered in determining feasibility.

Enrollment

The school selected for enrollment must immediately enroll any child or youth experiencing homelessness. Enrollment may not be denied or delayed due to the lack of any document normally required for enrollment, including proof of residency, transcripts/school records, unpaid school fees, any factor related to the students living situation, etc. The enrolling school must contact the student's previous school to obtain school records. Initial placement of students whose records are not immediately available can be made based on the student's age and information gathered from the student, parent and previous schools or teachers. Unaccompanied youth must also be immediately enrolled in school. They may either enroll themselves or be enrolled by a parent, non-parent caretaker, older sibling or liaison.

Transportation

Without appropriate transportation, a student may not be able to continue attending his or her school of origin. To avoid such forced school transfers, at a parent's request, transportation shall be provided to and from the school of origin for a child or youth experiencing homelessness. Transportation shall be provided for the entire time the child or youth has a right to attend that school, as defined above, including during the pendency of disputes. The Homeless Liaison shall request transportation to and from the school of origin for unaccompanied youth. The length of the commute will only be considered in determining the feasibility of placement in the school of origin based on potential harm to the student, as discussed above. Parents and unaccompanied youth must be informed of this right to transportation before they select a school for attendance. Schools and the liaison shall use an approved transportation form to process transportation requests. Requests shall be processed and transportation arranged without delay. If the student experiencing homelessness is living and attending school elsewhere, that school shall arrange transportation. It is this school's policy that inter-LEA disputes shall not result in a student experiencing homelessness missing school. If such a dispute arises, CASA will arrange transportation and immediately bring the matter to the attention of the ADE State Coordinator for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth. In addition to receiving transportation to and from the school of origin upon request, children and youth experiencing homelessness shall also be provided with other transportation services comparable to those offered to non-homeless students.

Transportation Plan for students in Foster Care

If transportation to school of origin is required in order to maintain school stability for students in foster care, CASA Academy staff in collaboration with the local child welfare agency (CWA), will ensure that said transportation will be provided for the duration of the child(ren)'s time in foster care. The school's transportation procedures ensure that children in foster care needing transportation to their schools of origin will promptly receive that transportation in a cost-effective manner, and, if there are additional costs incurred in providing transportation to the school of origin, CASA will provide such transportation.

Services

Children and youth experiencing homelessness shall be provided services comparable to services offered to other students in the school selected, including: transportation, Title I services, school nutrition programs, before- and after-school programs, and other education services for which the student meets eligibility criteria, including special education and related services and programs for English language learners.

Because children and youth experiencing homelessness often suffer from disabilities at a disproportionate rate, evaluations of children and youth experiencing homelessness suspected of having

a disability shall be given priority and coordinated with students' prior and subsequent schools as necessary, to ensure timely completion of a full evaluation. When necessary, the school shall expeditiously designate a surrogate parent for unaccompanied youth suspected of having a disability. If a student has an Individualized Education Program (IEP), the enrolling school shall immediately implement it. Any necessary IEP meetings or re-evaluations shall then be conducted expeditiously. If complete records are not available, IEP teams must use good judgment in choosing the best course of action, balancing procedural requirements and the provision of services. In all cases, the goal will be to avoid any disruption in appropriate services. Our school will follow state procedures to ensure that youth experiencing homelessness and youth who are out of school are identified and accorded equal access to appropriate secondary education and support services. School personnel shall refer children and youth experiencing homelessness to appropriate health care services, including dental and mental health services. The liaison will assist the school in making such referrals, as necessary. School personnel must also inform parents of all educational and related opportunities available to their children and provide parents with meaningful opportunities to participate in their children's education. All parent information required by any provision of this policy must be provided in a form, manner and language understandable to each parent.

Disputes

If a dispute arises over any issue covered in this policy, the child or youth experiencing homelessness shall be immediately admitted to the school in which enrollment is sought, pending final resolution of the dispute. The student shall also have the rights of a student experiencing homelessness to all appropriate educational services, transportation, free meals and Title I services while the dispute is pending. The school where the dispute arises shall provide the parent or unaccompanied youth with a written explanation of its decision and the right to appeal and shall immediately refer the parent or youth to the liaison. The liaison shall ensure the student is enrolled in the school of his or her choice and receiving other services to which he or she is entitled and shall resolve the dispute as expeditiously as possible. The parent or unaccompanied youth shall be given every opportunity to participate meaningfully in the resolution of the dispute. The liaison shall keep records of all disputes in order to determine whether particular issues or schools are repeatedly delaying or denying the enrollment of children and youth experiencing homelessness. The parent, unaccompanied youth or school may appeal the liaison's decision as provided in the state's dispute resolution process.

Free meals

To help ensure that children and youth experiencing homelessness are available for learning, the U.S. Department of Agriculture has determined that all children and youth experiencing homelessness are automatically eligible for free meals. On the day a child or youth experiencing homelessness enrolls in school, the enrolling school must submit the student's name to the nutrition office for immediate processing.

Title I

Children and youth experiencing homelessness are automatically eligible for Title I services, regardless of what school they attend. CASA Academy shall reserve such funds as are necessary to provide services for youth experiencing homelessness so they are comparable to those provided to Title I students. The amount reserved shall be determined by a formula based upon the per-pupil Title I expenditure and developed jointly by the liaison and the Title I director. Reserved funds will be used to provide educationally related support services to children and youth experiencing homelessness, both in school and outside of school, and to remove barriers that prevent regular attendance. CASA Academy's Title I plan will be coordinated with our McKinney-Vento services, through collaboration between the Title I

director and the liaison. Children and youth experiencing homelessness shall be assessed, reported on and included in accountability systems, as required by federal law and U.S. Department of Education regulations and guidance.

Training

The liaison will conduct training and sensitivity/awareness activities for all LEA and school staff at least once each year. The trainings will be designed to increase staff awareness of homelessness, facilitate immediate enrollment, ensure compliance with this policy, and increase sensitivity to children and youth experiencing homelessness. The liaison shall also obtain from every school the name and contact information of a building liaison. Building liaisons will lead and coordinate their schools' compliance with this policy and will receive training from the lead Homeless Liaison annually.

Coordination

The liaison shall coordinate with and seek support from the State Coordinator for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth, public and private service providers in the community, housing and placement agencies, the pupil transportation department, liaisons in neighboring schools and other organizations and agencies. Coordination will include conducting outreach and training to those agencies and participating in the local continuum of care, homeless coalition, homeless steering committee, and other relevant groups. Both public and private agencies will be encouraged to support the liaison and our schools in implementing this policy.

References: Adapted from sample local policy developed by the National Law Center on Homelessness & Poverty The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, 42 U.S.C. §§11431 – 11436. Title I, Part A of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, 20 U.S.C. §§6311 – 6315. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, 20 U.S.C. §§1400 et seq. April 6, 2002 Policy of the Child Nutrition Division of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. June 5, 1992 Policy of the Administration for Children and Families of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

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