

# Parent Involvement and Family Engagement Policy



Nevada State Board of Education Meeting  
September 3, 2015

# Why Parent Involvement/Family Engagement?

“...it is imperative that schools [districts/states] adopt a strong, reliable, and systemic means of communication and collaboration with families that **make expectations clear and roles explicitly defined**”

*(Henderson & Mapp, 2002; Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1997; Jeynes, 2010)*

“Various ways are provided that will assist in building capacity for parents, families, and communities to fulfill the vision of the Secretary that **every parent be a partner in learning and share in the responsibility of their child’s education.**”

*(U.S. Department of Education’s Parent and Family Engagement)*

<http://www.ed.gov/parent-and-family-engagement>

## Parental Involvement and Family Engagement Advisory Council and NDE Office

- **Advisory Council** on Parental Involvement and Family Engagement established in 2007
  - ✓ Senate Bill 143
- **Office** of Parental Involvement and Family Engagement established in March 2012
  - ✓ Assembly Bill 224
  - ✓ Nevada is one of the few states with a non-Title I family engagement consultant

[http://www.doe.nv.gov/Family\\_Engagement/](http://www.doe.nv.gov/Family_Engagement/)

# Nevada Revised Statutes

- **NRS 392.457(2)a-f**
  - ✓ Incorporates the National PTA six standards into law concerning involvement and engagement of parents/families in education
- **NRS 385.600, 385.610, 385.620**
  - ✓ Establishes the Advisory Council on Parental Involvement and Family Engagement, membership, and duties
- **NRS 385.630, 385.635**
  - ✓ Establishes the NDE Office of Parental Involvement and Family Engagement and its duties
- **NRS 385.685 (AB224)**
  - ✓ School Boards may establish parent advisory councils

# Statutory Duties of the Council

## Pursuant to NRS 385.620 The Advisory Council shall:

- ✓ **Review the policy of parental involvement adopted by the State Board and the policy of parental involvement adopted by the board of trustees of each school district;**
- ✓ Review the information relating to communication with and participation of parents that is included in the annual report of accountability for each school district; *(Districts no longer submit this report. Each school submits a School Performance Plan directly to the Department of Education)*
- ✓ Review any effective practices carried out in individual school districts to increase parental involvement and determine the feasibility of carrying out those practices on a statewide basis;
- ✓ Review any effective practices carried out in other states to increase parental involvement and determine the feasibility of carrying out those practices in this State;
- ✓ Identify the manner in which the level of parental involvement and family engagement affects the performance, attendance, and discipline of pupils;
- ✓ Identify methods to communicate effectively with and provide outreach to parents, legal guardians, and families of pupils who are limited English proficient;
- ✓ 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;
- ✓ 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](#);
- ✓ On or before July 1 of each year, submit a report to the Legislative Committee on Education describing the activities of the Advisory Council and any recommendations for legislation; and
- ✓ 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 next regular session of the Legislature describing the activities of the Advisory Council and any recommendations for legislation.

# Family Engagement/Parental Involvement

- NRS originally used the term “parent involvement,” but expanded it to “parental involvement and family engagement.”
  - ✓ The change reflects a shift in focus about a higher level of partnering with parents to improve student achievement;
  - AND
  - ✓ an acknowledgement that some students live with grandparents, foster parents, aunts, siblings, etc.—not just two parents.
- Current national trend is moving to “family engagement.”

# Policy Revision/Drafting Process

## The Advisory Council:

- ✓ Reviewed existing Nevada policy (12/2001)
- ✓ Comprehensive study of other state policies
- ✓ Reviewed existing Nevada district policies
- ✓ Engaged in lengthy analysis and discussion to prepare draft for State Board approval

# PARENT INVOLVEMENT POLICY

(Pursuant to NRS 392.457)

Parent Involvement: Empowering parents to participate in their children's education.

The Nevada State Board of Education recognizes that parental involvement is the key to academic achievement. The term *parent* refers to any caregiver who assumes responsibility for nurturing and caring for children, including parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, foster parents, stepparents, etc. Studies demonstrate that when parents are involved in their children's education, the attitudes, behaviors, and achievement of students are positively enhanced.

Parents and families provide the primary educational environment for children; consequently, parents are vital and necessary partners with the educational communities throughout their children's school career. Although parents come to the schools with diverse cultural backgrounds, primary languages, and needs, universally all parents want what is best for their children. School districts and schools, in collaboration with parents, teachers, students and administrators, must establish and develop efforts that enhance parental involvement and reflect the needs of students, parents, and families in the communities which they serve.

In order to enhance parental involvement, six essential elements should be promoted:

1. Communication between home and school is regular, two-way, and meaningful: Effective communication requires school-initiated contact with the parent and parent-initiated contact with the school where both parties provide vital information about a child's strengths, challenges, and accomplishments. To effectively communicate, both parties must be aware of issues such as cultural diversity and language differences and appropriate steps must be taken to allow clear communication for all participants.
2. Responsible parenting is promoted and supported: The family plays a primary role in a child's education, and schools must respect and honor traditions and activities unique to a community's cultural practices and beliefs. Parents are linked to programs and resources within the community that provide support services to families.
3. Parents play an integral role in assisting student learning: Educators recognize and acknowledge parents' roles as the integral and primary facilitator of their children's education. Research demonstrates that student achievement increases when parents are actively involved in the learning process.

4. Schools are open and inviting to parents and families and are actively seeking parental support and assistance for school programs: Parents are welcome in the school, and their support and assistance are sought. Capitalizing on the expertise and skills of the parents strengthens the family, school and community partnership.
5. Parents are full partners in the decisions that affect children and families: Parents and educators have a joint responsibility to make informed decisions related to all aspects of the education provided to Nevada's youth. The role of parents in shared decision making should be continually evaluated, refined, and expanded.
6. Community resources are made available to strengthen school programs, family practices, and student learning: Schools and parents will cultivate relationships with additional members of the community in order to promote and effectively increase educational opportunities for children. Together, parents, educators and community members will join efforts toward identifying and promoting community resources and innovative programs for strengthening schools, families, and student learning.

Providing all Nevada's children with equal access to quality education is a primary goal. It is vital that all partners (parents, educators, communities, etc.) have the opportunity to provide input and offer resources to meet this goal. These partnerships are mutually beneficial. Developing cooperative efforts and linking access to resources will ensure improved academic achievement for all students, as well as quality schools.

Nevada Advisory Council on Parental Involvement and Family Engagement  
Recommendations to the Nevada State Board of Education  
7/9/2015

**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.