

## ***Board File: KBB***

### **PARENT AND FAMILY ENGAGEMENT POLICY**

Douglas County School District (DCSD) Board of Education (the “Board”) recognizes the importance, shared responsibility, and partnership between family, schools, and community. Parental involvement in the education of students (including guardians and other members of the student’s family involved in the student’s education) contributes greatly to achievement and to the positive school environment and experience. The purpose of this policy is to connect and engage those who support our students during their educational journey with DCSD,

The Board recognizes the Colorado Department of Education’s (CDE) three (3) factors influencing effective partnering: experiences, beliefs, and practices. DCSD supports the National Standards for Family-School Partnership and State Advisory Council for Parent Involvement in Education’s (SACPIE) adopted standards. The practice of these six standards provides a foundation of beliefs and a platform for engagement. These relationships connect and engage parents fostering an effective partnership between family, school, and community. We acknowledge school accountability committees (SAC), governing boards, parent-teacher groups, and other school or district-based committees (hereafter referred to as “school partners”) as being a place where parents, school staff, and community members can meet and share collectively and collaboratively within their individual schools. Our district accountability committee (DAC) serves to bridge the gap between SACs and the district.

#### **National Standards for Family-School Partnerships:**

- **WELCOMING ALL FAMILIES INTO THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY**

The school treats families as valued partners in their child’s education and facilitates a sense of belonging in the school community.

- **COMMUNICATING EFFECTIVELY**

The school supports staff to engage in proactive, timely, and two-way communication so that all families can easily understand and contribute to their child’s educational experience.

- **SUPPORTING STUDENT SUCCESS**

The school builds the capacity of families and educators to continuously collaborate to support students’ academic, social, and emotional learning.

- **SPEAKING UP FOR EVERY CHILD**

The school affirms family and student expertise and advocacy so that all students are treated fairly and have access to relationships and opportunities that will support their success.

- **SHARING POWER**

The school partners with families in decisions that affect children and families and together—and as a team, inform, influence, and create policies, practices, and programs.

- **COLLABORATING WITH THE COMMUNITY**

The school collaborates with community organizations and members to connect students, families, and staff to expanded learning opportunities, community services, and civic participation.

### **Parental Rights and Expectations:**

The Board and the District support the right of parents/guardians to raise their children as they see fit.

DCSD supports open communication and disclosure of information concerning their children's health, identity, and education as not only fundamental to parents' (and grandparents' and guardians', as appropriate) ability to make appropriate decisions regarding their children, but essential to building trust between schools and families.

Parental decisions that will be respected by the District include, but are not limited to:

1. Opt Out / Opt in Decisions

- Parents may opt their children from some instruction, materials, or activities via the following actions (policies):
  - Contact the teacher directly to discuss the resource and possible alternative activities (Policy [IJC](#) – Instructional Resources)
  - File a formal exemption from required instruction (Policies [IMBB](#) and [IMBB-R](#) – Exemptions from Required Instruction)
  - Submit a public complaint about learning resources (Policies [KEC](#) and [KEC-R](#) – Public Complaints About Learning Resources)
- Although the District supports parental opt out decisions, DCSD encourages participation in standardized testing to better identify areas of growth, achievement, or concern for individual students; to assist in directing support or intervention at the earliest possible time; and to facilitate benchmarking performance relative to other local and national school districts.
- Procedures to opt into the use of selected curriculum, resources, and/or activities will be determined by the Superintendent.

2. Family and Student Values and Beliefs

- DCSD students and staff will not be compelled to share personal information or make statements, about themselves or regarding others, that assert or conflict with their deeply held personal beliefs or circumstances. At the same time, educators/staff will continue to ensure that all students and staff are treated with respect, compassion, and dignity.

3. Consent for Mental Wellness Counseling

- Educational counseling provided by school mental health providers will be initiated in collaboration with parents who have given informed consent and written permission. (per Policies [JLDA](#) and [JLDA-R](#))
- The Board of Education supports the current practice of transparency and collaboration by school counselors and mental health staff to include parental consent except when rendering student emotional or behavioral support for an immediate need (e.g. a crisis or trauma affecting multiple students at a school, or in the case of an emergency affecting an individual student).

DCSD encourages all staff in working with families and the community to keep all partners informed and promote transparency and trust. The District supports professional development opportunities for staff members to enhance, embrace, and implement effective family, school, and community partnership strategies. The Board is recognized as setting an expectation of positive climate and culture conducive for its partners in learning.

The Board directs the Superintendent (or designee) to identify resources within district committees and the community who shall serve to support the functions of this policy outlined and work in conjunction with the identified district employee(s). The representatives working on the development, implementation, and evaluation of the standards shall report at the discretion of the Board.

In an effort to implement all or a portion of the parent involvement policy, the district may solicit and accept public or private gifts, grants, or donations to contribute to the success of the development, implementation, and regular evaluation of parental engagement.

In the event parents, families, or students require further support, advocacy, or to redress other grievances, it may be helpful to reference Policy [KE](#) – Public Concerns and Complaints.

Adopted: August 21, 2018

Revised: TBD

**Legal References Cited:**

CRS 22-32-142 (1)-(3) Parent Engagement

CRS 22-7-302 (5) Definitions: National Standards for Family School Partnership

CRS 22-7-304 Colorado SACPIE

CRS 2207-101-107 Educational Accountability Act of 1971

National Standards for Family School Partnership & SAC

**Cross Refs.:**

IJC, Instructional Resources

IMBB, Exemptions from Required Instruction

JLDA, Student Mental Health Wellness Services in the School Setting

KE, Public Concerns and Complaints

KEC, Public Complaints About Learning Resources