Concord Lake STEAM Academy recognizes the value of family engagement in a child’s academic success and believes the education of children is an ongoing cooperative partnership between the home and the school. Parents/guardians and other family members are their children’s first teachers; therefore, the continued involvement of parents/guardians and other family members in the educational process is most important in fostering and improving educational achievement. School officials and personnel shall strive to support parents/guardians and other family members and provide them with meaningful opportunities to become involved in the programs offered by the school. The school encourages parents/guardians and other family members to participate in the design and implementation of the programs and activities in order to increase the effectiveness of the school’s Title I program in helping students meet state and local achievement standards.

The following policies and practices shall be carried out to engage with parents/guardians and other family members to become more involved in their child’s academic progress, to build capacity of families to understand the State’s academic objectives and standards, and to support parental and family involvement in the planning and development of the school’s academic and improvement plans pursuant to the Title I parental involvement requirements [ESSA Section 1116 (a)-(e) inclusive].

The policy shall be updated annually to meet the changing needs of parents and the school.
**Definition of Parent/Guardian and Family Engagement**

For the purposes of this policy, the term “parent/guardian and family engagement” means the participation of parents, guardians and other family members in regular, two-way and meaningful communication involving student learning and other school activities, including ensuring the following:

1. that parents/guardians and other family members play an integral role in assisting their child’s learning;
2. that parents/guardians and other family members are encouraged to be actively involved in their child’s education at school;
3. that parents/guardians are full partners in their child’s education and parents/guardians and other family members are included, as appropriate, in decision making and on advisory committees to assist in the education of their child; and
4. that the school utilizes activities to support parent/guardian and family engagement in the school and Title I programs.

**Purpose and operation of Title I Program**

The Title I program is a federally supported program that provides financial assistance to schools with either high numbers or percentages of children from low-income families or lower performing test scores to ensure that all children receive equitable, high-quality, well-rounded education and meet challenging state academic standards. The Title I program provides instructional activities and support services over and above those provided by the regular school program.

Qualified Title I schools operate as school-wide programs or targeted assistance programs based on the federal eligibility criteria. School-wide programs will provide comprehensive support to offer improved opportunities for all students in the school to meet the school’s academic standards. Targeted assistance programs shall provide services to eligible students most in need of assistance in the school, as determined by objective criteria established by the Principal or his/her designee. Eligibility criteria may include, but is not limited to, standardized test scores, teacher input, results of preschool screening, and home-school surveys.

Both school-wide and targeted assistance programs shall be based on effective means of improving student achievement and shall include evidenced-based strategies to support parent/guardian and family engagement.
Annual Meeting and Program Development

Annually, school officials shall invite parents/guardians of students participating in Title I programs to a meeting to explain the following:

- The rights of parents/guardians and other family members to be involved in the planning activities of the school as related to program development, academic achievement, and school performance;

- Discuss the programs and activities to be funded with Title I grant dollars;

- Solicit input on the Title I programs, parental and family engagement activities and this policy;

- Discuss the State’s academic standards, the assessments used for students, how to monitor their child’s progress, and how to improve the academic achievement of their children;

- Provide parents/guardians and other family members a meaningful opportunity annually to evaluate the content and effectiveness of the Title I programs and the parent and family engagement policies and plans. Data collected from these findings will be used to revise Title I programs and parent and family engagement plans.

The school will provide parents of Title I students with timely information about Title I programs through parent newsletters, Back-to-School nights, social media websites, and ongoing parent – staff meetings.

Parent-Student Handbook

Concord Lake STEAM Academy distributes to parents of all students a Parent-Student handbook. The handbook, 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. It describes specific ways the school and families will partner to help children achieve the State’s high academic standards. It addresses the following legally required items, as well as other items suggested by parents of Title I students:

- The school’s responsibility to provide high-quality curriculum and instruction;

- The ways parents will be responsible for supporting their children’s learning;

- The importance of ongoing communication between parents and teachers through, at a minimum, annual parent-teacher conferences; frequent reports on student
progress; access to staff; opportunities for parents to volunteer and participate in their child’s class; and opportunities to observe classroom activities.

The Parent-Student handbook is distributed through parent-teacher conferences or mailed to parents not in attendance. It is also available on the school’s website.

**Parent/Guardian and Family Engagement Efforts**

Concord Lake STEAM Academy believes that the involvement of parents/guardians and family members of students in Title I programs in the design and implementation of the Title I program will increase the effectiveness of the program and contribute significantly to the success of the children. All school personnel shall strive to conduct outreach to parents/guardians and other family members and involve them in activities throughout the school year. The following activities shall be conducted throughout the school year to engage families and assist them in working towards their child’s academic success:

- The school shall jointly develop with parents and staff, a parent and family engagement plan that describes the means by which the school will carry out this school-level policy, share responsibility for students’ academic achievement, build the capacity of school staff and parents/guardians for the involvement and increase accessibility for participation of all Title I parents/guardians and family members, including parents/guardians and family members with limited English proficiency, with disabilities, and who are migratory. The school-level plan must involve parents/guardians in the planning and improvement of Title I activities and must provide for the distribution to parents/guardians of information on expected student proficiency levels and the school’s academic performance;

- Involve parents in the development of the School Improvement Plan as full participating members of the School Improvement Team;

- Provide coordination, technical assistance and other support necessary to assist and build the capacity of the school in planning and implementing effective parent and family engagement activities that are designed to improve student academic achievement and school performance. Such support will come during the plan development stage, school improvement activities, family resource forums, and through parent requests for information and assistance;

- Coordinate and integrate other Federal, State, and local programs into resources for families to improve parental involvement. The coordination efforts shall be through the best avenue possible to reach the maximum number of families. This may include, but is not limited to, an annual resource family night, social media posts, information sent home with students, and ensuring representatives are
available before or after school for parents;

- Conduct an annual evaluation of the content and effectiveness of the school’s parent/guardian and family engagement policies and program in improving the academic quality of the school and assisting students to meet the school’s academic standards. The survey shall be conducted by March 15th of each year to allow for time to analyze and disseminate the results for the following school year. This evaluation shall include components that include, but are not limited, to the following areas:
  
  a. Identify any barriers to parent/guardian and family member participation in school activities;
  b. Identify the needs of parents to assist in their child’s learning;
  c. Identify strategies to support successful school-family interactions

- Provide outreach and assistance to parents/guardians and family members of children participating in Title I programs in understanding the state’s testing standards, the assessments used, Title I requirements and all national, state and local standards and expectations through such efforts as community-based meetings, posting information of the school’s website, sending information home, newsletters, workshops, and newspaper articles;

- With the assistance of parents/guardians, provide annual training to teachers, specialized instructional support personnel, principals and other staff on the value of parents/guardians as partners in the educational process and understand how to work with, communicate with and reach out to parents/guardians as equal partners in education;

- Distribute to parents/guardian’s information on expected student proficiency levels and the school’s academic performance, and provide materials and training to help parents/guardians monitor their child’s progress and work with educators to improve achievement through such methods as literacy training or using technology, which may include education about the harms of copyright piracy;

- Strengthen the partnership with agencies, businesses and programs that operate in the community, especially those with expertise in effectively engaging parents/guardians and other family members in education;

- Provide an opportunity for parents to request additional parental involvement activities through the Principal’s office. Once a request is received, the Principal or his/her designee will reach out to the parent within 3 business days to address the concerns and follow up on any suggested ideas or changes to policy or practice
Accessibility
Concord Lake STEAM Academy provides opportunities for the participation of all Title I parents, including parents with limited English proficiency, parents with disabilities, and parents of migratory students. Information and school reports are provided in a format and language that parents understand.

- The school distributes Information related to school and parent programs, meetings, and other activities to Title I parents in a format and language that all parents can understand. All parents, including parents with limited English proficiency are provided information and school reports in a format and language with translation of parent materials and interpreters for parents at meetings.

- Access to all facilities and parking are provided to parents with disabilities.

Acceptable Documentation of the Annual Title I Parent Meeting Requirements

The following forms of documentation shall be kept on file with the school and the Carolinas Grant Coordinator for compliance purposes with Title I regulations. It is mandatory for each meeting to have an agenda, sign in sheets of attendees, and minutes from the meeting.

- Any copies of the meeting announcements (school newsletters, invitations, letters mailed or sent home with students)
- Dates and times when meetings are held
- Agendas or minutes from the meeting
- Sign in sheets of attendees
- Copy of Power Point presentation (if applicable)
- Photographs taken during the event
- Copy of any handouts provided at meeting
- Other evidence that meeting was held, and parents attended

Notice Requirements

The School shall provide effective notice of the following information as required by law. The notice shall be in an understandable and uniform format and, to the extent practicable, in a language the parents/guardians can understand.

Program for English Language Learners

Each year, the principal or his/her designee shall provide notice of the following to parents/guardians of Limited English Proficient (LEP) children identified for participation in a Title I, Part A-funded language-instruction educational program:
1) the reasons for the child’s identification;
2) the child’s level of English proficiency and how such level was assessed;
3) methods of instruction;
4) how the program will help the child;
5) the exit requirements for the program;
6) if the child has a disability, how the language instruction program meets the objectives of the child’s individualized education plan (IEP);
7) any other information necessary to effectively inform the parent/guardian of the program and the parental rights regarding enrollment, removal and selection of an LEP program; and
8) notice of regular meetings for the purpose of formulating and responding to recommendations from parents/guardians.

School Report Card and School Progress Review

Each year, school officials shall disseminate to all parents/guardians, the school report card containing information about the school, including but not limited to:

1) the following information in both the aggregate and disaggregated by category:
   a) student achievement;
   b) graduation rates;
   c) performance on other measures of school quality and/or student success indicators;
   d) the progress of students toward meeting long-term goals established by the state;
   e) student performance on measures of school climate and safety;
   f) the rate of enrollment in post-secondary education, as available;
   g) the performance of the school on academic assessments as compared to the state as a whole;
   h) the percentage of students who are:
      i) assessed;
      ii) assessed using alternative assessments;
      iii) involved in accelerated coursework programs; and
      iv) English learners achieving proficiency.
   v) the per pupil expenditures of federal, state, and local funds; and
   vi) teacher qualifications.

Teacher Qualifications

At the beginning of each year, school officials shall notify parents/guardians of students who are participating in Title I programs of the right to request certain information on the professional qualifications of the student’s classroom teachers and paraprofessionals providing services to the child.

The principal or his/her designee of a Title I school shall provide timely notice informing
parents/guardians that their child has been assigned to or has been taught for at least four consecutive weeks by a teacher who does not meet applicable state certification or licensure requirements at the grade level or subject area in which the teacher has been assigned.

Parental/Guardian Rights and Opportunities for Involvement

Each year, the principal or his/her designee shall provide notice to parents/guardians of the school’s written parent and family engagement policy, parents’/guardians’ right to be involved in their child’s school and opportunities for parents/guardians and other family members to be involved in the school.

Each year, the principal of his/her designee shall provide notice to parents/guardians of their right to request information regarding student participation in state-required assessments.

Website Distribution of Information

Each year, school officials shall publicize, on the school website the report card described in F.2, above.

Legal References

Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), Public Law 114-95, Section 1116. PARENT AND FAMILY ENGAGEMENT