



## Meaningful Consultation with Our Stakeholders



### Sample Discussion Questions to Generate Conversations Among Stakeholders

*Remember to collect and maintain responses and meeting documentation as part of your Title I, Part A federal compliance records of family engagement.*

The following question bank has been developed for use by Georgia’s Local Education Agencies (LEAs) and schools as they conduct meaningful consultation opportunities with their stakeholders. These questions may be used to prompt positive interaction and yield relevant application to the development of family engagement programs, activities, and procedures. These questions may be used to further the dialogue and begin the collaborative journey to revising Title I, Part A Parent and Family Engagement Plans/Policies and school-parent compacts, as well as developing plans for building school staff capacity and family engagement budgets.

Not all questions will be essential to your agenda, so feel free to use only the questions that meet your time constraints and meeting objectives. In designing these questions, the goal was to keep the scope broad enough to elicit thoughtful responses, spark additional conversations, and encourage deeper thinking than one-word answers. The questions may be adapted to include a specific focus area for input and/or used to evaluate the content and effectiveness of the overall parent and family engagement program.

#### Examples of Spontaneous Follow-up Prompts

|  |                                      |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| Please say more about that -               | What is it about -                   |
| Can you give me more details -             | What has been your experience with - |
| Does anyone else share this same opinion - | What are your thoughts -             |
| What caused you to -                       | How did you -                        |
| How can we -                               | What did you like/dislike about -    |

#### BUILDING SCHOOL STAFF CAPACITY

##### Questions for Parents and Other Stakeholders:

- What topics do you think teachers and administrators need to discuss or learn more about to support your child and your family?

- What training topics or programs related to engaging parents in their child's academics would you like for the school to provide its teachers and other staff?
- How can we improve training that we offer teachers and other staff to help them to work more effectively with parents, families, and the community? What training topics would you recommend for us to present to the staff?
- How should the school encourage parents to participate in the training of teachers and other school staff as co-presenters or partners in developing the content?
- How can the school improve training for teachers in building relationships with parents to work more effectively with their child's/children's at-home learning?
- How can we improve on a family-friendly environment that is reflective of the cultures and languages of the community?
- In what ways do you feel we can reach out to specific parent subgroups, such as fathers and grandparents?

**Yes or No Questions to Quickly Gauge the School's Progress:**

- Do you feel welcome at our school?
- Do you feel our school values your suggestions for your child's learning?
- Does the school staff work with families to identify and address barriers to involvement such as differences of income, education, language, and culture?
- Does the school offer a variety of ways to communicate with you on an ongoing basis?

**SCHOOL-PARENT COMPACTS**

**Questions for Parents and Other Stakeholders:**

- In which way do you prefer to monitor your child's learning?
- What types of academic-related activities do you think might engage you and other parents?
- How relevant is a parent-teacher conference to you and your child? What would you like to discuss during parent-teacher conferences?
- What are some of the most successful strategies for engaging families in support of their child's academic success? What might this look like for older students?

**Questions for Students:**

- What can you do this year to make sure you learn what you need to know?
- Name something you like learning about.
- What do you need to practice more?
- Where do you need the most help? Name something that might be harder for you to learn.
- How can your teacher help you?

- How can your family help you?

**Questions for Administrators and Teachers:**

- Based on input from our stakeholders, what is the school improvement goal that we want to focus on first?
- What are we already doing to engage families and the community in reaching the school improvement goal?
- In looking at the ways we involve families and the community regarding this improvement goal, what is one specific initiative we can focus on first?
- What are the activities that fall under that initiative and what action steps are needed to get those activities underway?
- What are some time-specific, measurable short- and long-term outcomes that we can use to track the success of our overall initiative and its corresponding activities? Are we planning to track our work in a way that corresponds to a big-picture outcome of student achievement? How can we involve the community?
- In what ways can we involve families and community members in measuring the links between their efforts and student academic achievement? For example, have we asked for input from parents and others about which school improvement goal they value most and what types of family and community engagement initiatives might be most effective in working toward that goal?
- Are we considering outcomes that measure both effort and effect?
- What benchmark data do we need to measure our outcome objectives?
- How often will we reflect on progress, analyze data, and adjust our efforts?
- How often and in what ways will we share our progress both in terms of successes and challenges with staff, families, and our community?

**Yes or No Questions to Quickly Gauge the School’s Progress:**

- Does our school provide you with enough materials to help you work with your child so that he or she can do better in school?
- Do parents and teachers communicate about student progress?
- Do parents learn what exemplary work looks like for their child’s age and grade?

**PARENT AND FAMILY ENGAGEMENT FUND (Title I, Part A’s 1% Set-Aside)**

**Questions for Parents and Other Stakeholders:**

- The school system receives federal funds to help the school engage parents in their child’s academic success. What should we spend it on to help parents help their child in school? Is there anything that we should not spend it on?

### **Questions for Students:**

- We get money from the state to help you and your family members communicate with your teacher and others at the school. This money is also used to help families understand how to help their child be more successful in school. In your opinion, what should this money be spent on? Is there anything that we should not spend it on?

## **PARENT AND FAMILY ENGAGEMENT POLICY/PLAN**

### **Questions for Parents and Other Stakeholders:**

- How can we better help parents understand the school system's organization, goals, and needs?
- Please name some opportunities for families to develop relationships and communicate with teachers and other staff. How can we improve this process?
- How can we improve learning opportunities offered to parents that are designed to help them work with students at home and be active partners in the school during the decision-making process?
- How can we help you understand and prepare your child for testing?
- How can the school provide parents a variety of meaningful trainings, workshops, or events on the topic of special education law?
- What type of special education trainings or workshops are you aware of that have been previously offered?
- What resources might be needed to achieve involving more parents in the education process?

### *Coordination of Services Related to Transitions*

- What are some ways of engaging families in their child's transition from preschool to elementary school, from elementary to middle school, from middle to high school, and from high school to college or career?
- What have been some of the most effective methods of engaging families in assisting students in successfully planning for life after high school?
- What types of transition-related activities take into account parent/family education and socio-economic status?
- How do you think we are doing to ease these transitions throughout a child's school career? Are there any transitions we aren't addressing adequately enough? Are we providing ample time and resources in this area?
- What partnerships should we pursue to provide students with diverse knowledge of post-graduation options, including the workforce, military, and technical training or certification programs?

### *Coordination of Services Related to Community Resources*

- Which community resources can we link families to that provide early intervention / at risk / wrap around services for children?
- What type of community resources are you aware of that can help you and your child??
- What types of community resources have been the most useful?
- What type of community resources would you like to be connected with?
- What links to community resources has the school forged?
- In what ways has support from community partners been organized?

### **Questions for Older Students:**

- What do you think a family-school relationship looks like or includes?
- Explain how your parents are involved with the school. Do they attend parent-teacher conferences, check your grades online, interact through social media, come to various school activities / family engagement events?
- If you could change our school, what would you change?
- What community organizations and businesses do you feel the school can partner with to help increase your learning and growth?

### **Yes or No Questions to Quickly Gauge the School's Progress:**

- Does our school provide you with enough opportunities to learn about state and local assessments?
- Do you think we have a sufficient number of ways for parents and family members to volunteer and participate in children's education, even for parents who may be working two jobs, who don't speak English, or have a car? What would you recommend?
- Are events open to the whole family and offered at convenient times and places? Do you have a recommendation for a non-school meeting location?
- Does the school or parent group survey families at least once a year to find out what's on their minds?
- Are the principal and other school administrators easily accessible to any parent?
- Does the school and parent group make it easy for parents and families to build connections and communicate with each other?
- Is the school website useful and easily accessible to families?
- Are language interpreters regularly available for meetings and events? Are there translations of district and school documents that all parents can understand?
- Does the school use assessment and test results to inform parents which student skills need strengthening? Tests such as ACCESS Language Proficiency, Georgia Milestones, alternate

assessments for students with significant cognitive disabilities, and other state and local classroom assessments, as appropriate?

- Do parents know what school staff do and whom to contact for information?
- Do parents know how to formally submit a comment or concern?
- Are parents offered opportunities to learn how to make the best choices for their children's education?
- Are families with children in special education aware of their rights and responsibilities in advocating for their children? Have parents and families been part of that process?

### **Questions for Administrators and Teachers:**

- How will we communicate to staff, students, parents, and the community how our survey results and input meetings impacted our decisions throughout the school year and in making plans for next year?
- What are we not doing to engage families and the community that we might want to consider?
- How are we providing our staff with resources and training to effectively work with families whose backgrounds may be quite different from that of our staff?
- In what ways do we help parents of English Learners understand the identification process, the instruction and monitoring provided, and how they can help at home?
- What resources do we or can we provide that will help parents work effectively with their child and school staff when a child has special needs?
- Are there any other suggestions or advice that we haven't discussed yet that we need to consider before finalizing our parent and family engagement plans?
- How will you personally contact parents who don't initially respond?

### **SUMMARY QUESTIONS**

- Based on our evaluation findings and discussion today, what changes do we want to make to our school Parent and Family Engagement Plan for next year?
- Based on our evaluation findings and discussion today, what changes do we want to make to our School-Parent Compact for next year?
- Based on our evaluation findings and discussion today, how do we want to spend our Title I Parent and Family Engagement funds for next year?
- Based on our evaluation findings and discussion today, in what topics do you think the school should train its teachers and other staff for next year to communicate with and work with its parents as equal partners?
- What questions are we not asking about family engagement?