

Ms. Christi Fraga, Board Member

SUBJECT: PARENTAL NOTIFICATION TO PARENTS REGARDING ACADEMIC PROGRESS

COMMITTEE: ACADEMICS, INNOVATION, EVALUATION & TECHNOLOGY

LINK TO STRATEGIC BLUEPRINT: RIGOROUS, RELEVANT AND INNOVATIVE ACADEMICS

The Miami-Dade County Public Schools recognizes that communication between the school and the parent is essential and that parental notification of student academic progress is a requirement as indicated in *Florida Statutes § 1008.25*, which states in part, the parent of any student who exhibits a substantial deficiency in reading, as described in the statute, must be notified in writing, of the deficiency. When parents are engaged with their children's education, everyone benefits. Engaged parents report better attitudes about their child's education; their children experience better academic, behavioral, social outcomes; and schools receive better ratings on measures of climate and culture. Many factors can influence engagement, but clear and consistent communication between schools and parents about academic progress is an important tool for building trust between parents and schools and serves to enhance family engagement.

School Board Policy 2110, *Philosophy and Goals*, provides that the focus of the District is on the student, and that "The primary responsibility of the District is to provide an instructional program in which students will be given the opportunity to master the fundamental skills of reading, writing, listening, speaking, handwriting, spelling, and mathematics." This policy goes on to state that "The District is responsible for providing educational leadership in the community and shall be held accountable for progress toward attainment of the adopted educational goals."

Similarly, School Board Policy 2111, *Parental Involvement – A Home-School – District Partnership*, affirms that strong, continuing family and community involvement in all aspects of school programs and activities provides support for measurable improvement in student achievement. It further asserts, that communication between parents and the school shall be encouraged at all grade levels, including regular parent/teacher communication, and providing parents with meaningful scope of student work. Reasonable efforts will be made to communicate with parents in their primary language.

In the Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) Implementation Guide 2020-2021, Section XI, *Communicating with Parents*, lists eight (8) ways in which parents "should" be included as partners in the MTSS framework. It does not however, clearly indicate that these strategies are mandated, by using language such as, "must", "shall", or "will".

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The Student Progression Plan delineates the process by which schools provide written notification to parents regarding their student's academic progress as follows; **Written Notification to Parents:** The parent or adult student must be notified in writing at any time during a grading period when it is apparent that the student may fail or is doing unsatisfactory work in any course or grade assignment. However, it does not stipulate what other type of notice should be provided to parents when students require their placement in an intervention program. Parents should also be notified in writing when a student is receiving instruction in an accelerated class or grade placement to include courses taken with Florida Virtual School and/or other district-approved online courses. A copy of this notification should be placed in the cumulative record folder. An acknowledgment of the receipt of such notification should be obtained.

In addition, under Section 11. *Teacher-Parent Communication*, of the United Teachers of Dade (UTD) Contract, it states that: Teacher-parent conferences contribute greatly to improving the public school's relationship with the community which each school serves. The Board and the Union agree that improving the public school's relationship with the community and the public in general serves the best interests of students and citizens. Effective teacher-parent communication aids in contributing to and maintaining the public's commitment to public education. The Board and the Union agree to explore new methods of communications technology to enhance teacher-parent communication. Additionally, the parties agree to develop a teacher-parent communication program at schools representing each instructional level (i.e., elementary, K-8 centers, middle, senior) whose focus shall be the development of innovative techniques for enhanced teacher-parent communication. Further, the UTD contract states; Teacher-parent conferences shall occur when students begin to display a consistent pattern of disruption, or when students demonstrate unacceptable academic achievement through failure to exert sufficient effort. Teachers will log teacher-parent conferences in their official gradebooks and specify whether such contacts were in person, by telephone, or through written communication.

The language in the UTD contract is prescriptive and detailed in that schools must/shall/will initiate and document teacher-parent communication through a variety of modalities. However, the language in other District documents, pertaining to parent communication, lends itself to interpretation as to how parents should be notified with respect to student's academic progress.

This agenda item seeks the Board's approval to direct the Superintendent to present a report at the March 10, 2021 Academics, Innovation, Evaluation and Technology Committee meeting, describing current established policies and procedures required by schools, with respect to providing parental notification to parents on their student's academic progress, not only written notification and verification of receipt by parents, but those policies, procedures, directives, established practices that require schools to provide parental notification of academic progress to parents using a multitude of strategies, i.e. parent conferences, telephone conferences, remote conferences, etc.; and how schools are expected to document such notifications.

This item has been reviewed and approved by the School Board Attorney's office as to form and legal sufficiency.

**ACTION PROPOSED BY
MS. CHRISTI FRAGA:**

That The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, direct the Superintendent to:

1. review existing procedures, practices, and policies that require parental notification, regarding a student's academic progress to ensure that uniform policies and practices are in place specifying how parental notification, with regard to a student's academic progress is to take place and identifying how such notification is to be documented in order to adequately verify that parents are receiving the information about their student's academic progress in multiple modalities (either through verbal, written, parent-teacher conferences, etc.); and
2. present a report at the March 10, 2021 Academics, Innovation, Evaluation and Technology Committee meeting describing current established policies and procedures required by schools, with respect to providing parental notification to parents on their student's academic progress, not only written notification and verification of receipt by parents, but those policies, procedures, directives and established practices that require schools to provide parental notification of academic progress to parents using a multitude of strategies, i.e. parent conferences, telephone conferences, remote conferences, etc., and how schools are expected to document such notifications.
3. if necessary, initiate rulemaking to amend relevant School Board Policies to ensure a uniform process for the timely, prescriptive, verifiable notification to parents concerning their student's academic progress as indicated in this item.

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