



Parent Engagement Liaison (PEL) Handbook

2026 – 2027





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SECTION 1

Program Overview

Department of Family & Community Engagement — Vision

To bring families and schools together as co-creators, ensuring the success of all students.

Department of Family & Community Engagement — Mission

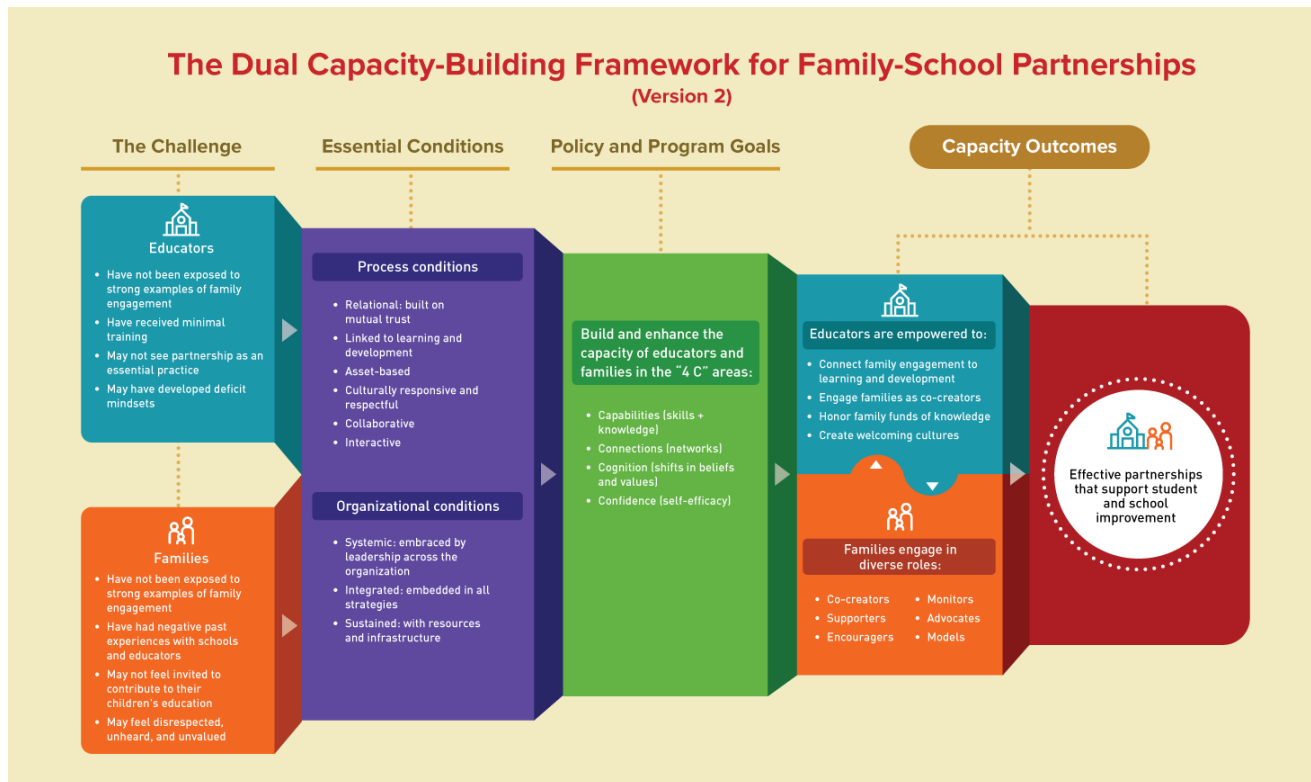
In order to fulfill the district's mission, the Department of Family and Community Engagement will provide support and resources to engage families in partnership with schools, District, and the community.

BPS Family & Community Engagement — Definition

Active voice, involvement, and presence of parents, families, and community members working with all in school, home and/or community to ensure ongoing learning, wellness, and development.

The Dual Capacity-Building Framework for Family-School Partnerships

Family engagement is a critical component to student success. The Buffalo Public Schools utilize the Dual Capacity-Building Framework for Family-School Partnerships developed by Dr. Karen Mapp. This family engagement framework provides opportunities for inter-departmental collaboration to build trust; ensuring families and community members are co-creators during school-based and District-level planning.





SECTION 2

BPS Parent Engagement Liaison Program

The Buffalo Public Schools' Parent Engagement Liaison (PEL) Program provides opportunities to utilize the unique assets of parent leaders. The PEL program seeks to enhance the engagement of parents and caregivers to support the success of children. Each school-based PEL provides direct support to families and works in partnership with schools as well as the Department of Family and Community Engagement (FACE).

Parent Engagement Liaisons (PELs) are selected by schools through an interview process and are required to clear a fingerprint/background check along with completing additional onboarding payroll documents. Schools may opt to select more than one PEL and share allocated hours to support the needs of the school.

PELs are employees of a third-party vendor but report directly to a designated school administrator. The FACE Department works closely with PELs by providing orientation, professional development, and ongoing training and support.

Reporting

- Onboarding and payroll conducted by third party vendor
- Daily sign-in and sign-out at designated school's main office
- Clock in/Clock out using link provided by third party vendor
- Outreach log completed using GroupTrail link provided
- Weekly or bi-weekly check-in meetings with designated school administrator. These meetings are required to receive outreach assignments. This will also be a time for administrators to approve any flyers you'd like to share.

Supervision

- Designated school administrator
- Department of Family and Community Engagement supervisors
- Employer — third party vendor who also handles payroll

Key Competencies

- Ability to develop relationships with parents, students, staff, and community members
- Must be able to communicate clearly and concisely both verbally and written
- Maintain confidentiality, follow privacy guidelines
- Respectful listener and solution-oriented
- Self-starter and innovative
- Self-advocate
- Inclusive and non-judgmental
- High capacity to prioritize and complete tasks in a timely manner



- Open-mindedness
- Team player

Qualifications

- Non-Buffalo Public School employee
- Parent/caregiver of a child enrolled in the school. Should no parent or caregiver of the school express interest then the school can canvass community members who work closely with the school.
- High school graduate or successful GED Completion
- Bilingual preference, if needed
- Computer experience required (i.e. phone applications, emails, flyer creation, payroll submission, online meetings, and training).

Supporting Parents, Caregivers, and Families

- Welcome families at the start of the year and provide families with Parent Engagement Liaison (PEL) contact information
- Share school vision and goals with families and community
- Utilize an asset-based approach to engage parents in their child's schooling
- Create and maintain a welcoming, safe, and supportive Parent Room environment
- Share Parent Room resources with parents and caregivers
- Share BPS Family Resource Center, Community Schools, Adult Education, as well as other offerings and meeting details with parents, caregivers, staff, and students
- Promote parent leadership by recruiting and encouraging active participation in meetings, including School Based Management Team (SBMT), school and district committees, and parent groups
- Encourage Parent Portal registration and usage
- Collaborate with Community School Navigator and BPS Community Resource Leader in the Family Resource Center to provide resources to families
- Connect parents and families to community and district resources
- Conduct parent and family outreach with an emphasis to support those experiencing extraordinary needs (e.g. families of parents or children who recently returned home from incarceration)
- Conduct parent and family outreach to support school goals (i.e. phone, email, text message, in-person, etc.)
- Participate in and/or coordinate parent workshops and meetings
- Upon the request of a parent, serve as a support during meeting

Supporting School Administrators and Staff

- Work under the leadership of building principal or designee to support school goals and needs
- Work with parents and the school community to establish and maintain a school-based parent group such as Parent Teacher Association (PTA), Parent Teacher Organization (PTO), Parent Teacher Student Association (PTSA), etc.



- Participate in School Based Management Team meetings (SBMT) by sharing parent voice
- Share parent engagement policies to enhance awareness
- Support the planning of school activities to achieve school goals
- Work with school leaders to establish partnerships to support school goals
- Support trusting relationships between school and home
- **ALWAYS** maintain confidentiality – do not share sensitive information in public spaces inside or outside of the school. Bring concerns to the building administrator and FACE Department designee if needed.
- Attend at least one Saturday Academy or Family Resource Center offering each month. Share highlights with families and encourage participation
- Recruit school families to participate in school-based activities and meetings
- Recruit school families to participate in at least one Saturday Academy and Family Resource Center offerings each month (this is part of your regular outreach tracked in GroupTrail)
- Conduct check-in with new families each month

Supporting District

The following meetings/trainings are provided for all Parent Engagement Liaisons:

- PEL Orientation and Onboarding facilitated by FACE & third-party vendor
- **FACE monthly training** — Dates: 2nd Wednesday of each month (adjustments made for holidays and state testing); in-person training: 9/9, 10/14, 11/4, 12/9, 1/13, 2/10, 3/3, 4/7, 5/5, 6/9. Virtual check-ins will occur the following Thursday.
- Location: Southside Elementary School
- Attend additional District stakeholder meetings such as DCIP and policy feedback meetings.
- Additional meeting information will be shared via BPSPEL@buffaloschools.org

Encourage parent participation in the following meetings and personally attend **at least one** each month:

- Buffalo Community Parent Teacher Association (BCPTA)
- Buffalo Parent Teacher Organization (BPTO)
- Buffalo Community Health Worker Parent & Student Association (CHWPSA)
- District Parent Coordinating Council (DPCC)
- Multilingual Education Advisory Committee (MEAC)
- Most Valuable Parents (MVP)
- Special Education Parent Advisory Committee (SEPAC)
- If you attend one of the Board Recognized Parent Group meetings, you are expected to share the information learned with your school's SBMT and school-based parent groups.
- Office of Culturally Linguistically Responsive Initiatives' Disproportionality Trainings
- Quarterly Family and Community Engagement (Priority 5) District Comprehensive Improvement Plan Meetings



SECTION 3

Onboarding & Employment

On-Boarding Details

Parent Engagement Liaisons are employees of a third-party vendor. The organization collaborates with the Department of Family and Community Engagement to conduct training and provide PELs with all required documentation that must be electronically submitted to complete the on-boarding process.

Please note: fingerprinting is a requirement and will be paid for by the third-party vendor. Do NOT pay for fingerprinting on your own — wait until you have the payment coupon code from Tryfacta. If you are a returning PEL, repeated fingerprinting will not be required.

Important: If a PEL candidate does not complete the onboarding tasks within 2 weeks (including fingerprinting), they will be removed from the application process. If the building administrator still wants to have the PEL join their team, the application process can be attempted one additional time.

Third Party Vendor

Once onboarding is completed, the third-party vendor will provide the following:

- Start date to work at a school
- Photo Identification — a photo badge is provided to wear at school as approved personnel.
- Letter of Work Acknowledgement (upon request)
- Support on how to submit work hours
- Confirmation on hours worked and payroll information as necessary

Family and Community Engagement (FACE)

The Family and Community Engagement team will support PELs by:

- Completing PEL Handbook Acknowledgement (located on the back page)
- Downloading the REMIND app to receive FACE announcements
- Completing the Vendor AUP link where you receive your BPS email address as a way to communicate with schools and families

Once on-boarding is completed, a FACE Supervisor will send a congratulatory email connecting the PEL and school administrator. This email will contain the following:

- Invitation for a first meeting with a FACE team member, PEL, and a school administrator to meet in-person at the school
- Daily work routine checklist
- PEL Handbook
- Third party vendor contact information with payroll approval information



- Option for enrolling a PEL into the Mentor Program. If a new PEL is onboarded, FACE will automatically assign a Mentor for the first month.
- Family Resource Center Zone that this school is located
- Request to share the school's SBMT schedule with the PEL

School Administration

Supervisors will request a meeting with the principal or designated school level administrator to:

- Determine reporting structure
- Establish a schedule
- Determine principal's vision and expectation
- Share his/her ideas
- Identify administrator and preferred mode of communication (e.g., virtual meeting, email, face-to-face, notes, telephone, etc.)

Reporting During a 5-Day School Week

- PELs that do not submit work hours for **one week** in a month will be provided with a **REMINDER**.
- PELs that do not submit work hours for **two weeks** in a month will be provided with **SUPPORT**.
- PELs that do not submit work hours for a **full month**, without proper medical or leave of absence documentation, will receive a **dismissal letter** via email from Tryfacta.
- Holiday/school breaks and shortened weeks do not apply. As a reminder, hours will not be approved if submitted during holidays, school breaks, and Sundays.
- Written notification is required to be sent to a FACE Supervisor and school administrator if a PEL is out for any extended period of time. **School administrator needs to be notified first.** School administrators reserve the right to find a new PEL in such cases.

Professional Conduct

- **Model professionalism and respect:** Communicate clearly, listen actively, and treat all colleagues with courtesy and empathy, even in challenging situations. Maintain a calm, solution-focused attitude at all times.
- **Collaborate with an asset-based mindset:** Work as a team player by being supportive, open to feedback, and willing to share ideas and resources. Celebrate others' successes and contribute to a welcoming, inclusive school culture.
- **Practice integrity and reliability:** Follow through on commitments, maintain confidentiality when needed, and demonstrate consistency in your actions. Show accountability while promoting a safe and trusting work environment.

Reporting During Professional Development

- Two monthly meetings are provided to build capacity and share BPS and community resources, one in person and one virtual the following evening. These meetings are critical as you will receive district updates and training essential to your position as a PEL. **The expectation is that PELs will attend either the in person and/or the virtual each month.**



- During the first meeting, a binder will be presented to each PEL. Each PEL will be expected to build their binder where they will share resources at their school during their SBMT meetings and other appropriate times when families are present.
- PELs will bring their binder to each PEL meeting to add more resources.
- Attendance is highly prioritized, and frequent absences (2 or more) may be cause for dismissal.
- **Monthly PEL meetings take priority over school events.** The expectation is that these dates are shared with the school administrator during the first PEL/school admin meeting of the year.
- Please note to attend the PEL meeting (dates below) will occur on Wednesday, from 10:00 – 12:30pm at Southside Elementary at 430 Southside Parkway: Sept. 9, Oct. 14, Nov. 4, Dec. 9, Jan. 13, Feb. 10, March 3, April 7, May 5, June 9
- A follow-up evening PEL Professional Development will be provided virtually on TEAMS on Thursday evenings from 5:30 – 6:30pm, immediately following the daytime PEL PD that month: Sept. 10, Oct. 15, Nov. 5, Dec. 10, Jan. 14, Feb. 11, March 4, April 8, May 6, June 10

Payroll

- PELs are compensated \$16.00/hour
- Up to 40 hours per month
- Payroll and outreach tasks will be recorded based on links provided by third-party vendor
- Please thoroughly review the payroll process and training materials provided by third-party vendor
- Electronically submit timesheets as indicated by third-party vendor
- Please note: Payroll will be delayed when not submitted on time.
- GroupTrail entries must reflect days actually worked, or payroll will not be approved.



SECTION 4

Daily Operations

Daily Work Routine

- Upon arrival at the school, sign in at the main office and clock in with JobDiva.
- Inform the family engagement administrator that you are in the building to support family engagement (text, phone call, clerk on walkie-talkie). This process should be established and formalized with your building administrator so they should already be expecting you.
- Check your email for updates and information from BPSPEL@buffaloschools.org.
- Support the school's family engagement efforts by referring to “Supporting Parents, Caregivers, and Families” in this handbook — this is also the plan established with the building administrator during regular check-ins.
- Complete the GroupTrail Google Form.
- Inform the family engagement administrator that you are leaving for the day and sign out of the main office.
- Clock out of JobDiva.

During the workday, a PEL may have questions or concerns:

- For building level questions, please email the designated family engagement administrator. These communication procedures should be established during your first meeting with the administrator.
- For payroll questions, please contact the third-party vendor, Tryfacta, Inc. at buffaloschools@tryfacta.com / 408-419-9200, or Yamina Rais at yamina.rais@tryfacta.com / 732-812-8031, and include a FACE Supervisor in the correspondence.
- To reach the FACE Department, please email BPSPEL@buffaloschools.org or call Kate Burke at 716-816-4008 (office). Please leave a message if needed.

Mentor Program

A designated family engagement administrator may request their PEL to be a part of the Mentor Program.

- The PEL and designated family engagement administrator will schedule a time to meet with a FACE Supervisor and a mentor to share family engagement efforts.
- Mentor PELs are selected & trained by the FACE Supervisor.
- **First month:** the PEL visits the Mentor's school to shadow a “typical” day, and the Mentor visits the PEL's school to offer suggestions and support. The Mentor PEL is compensated for the hours they provide support — this does not impact the new PEL's hours; they still get their full 40 hours for that first month and moving forward.
- At the end of the month, the PEL and Mentor schedule a time to meet with a FACE Supervisor and school administrator to share family engagement efforts.



Parent Contact Information

Once a PEL has received guidance on what information and resources to share with families from their designated family engagement administrator, they may ask their school's clerk to print a contact list of parent names and phone numbers **only**. PELs may not receive student information such as names or 900 numbers.

Confidentiality

When communicating with families, a PEL may be exposed to private information.

- Please keep this information confidential and report any important needs directly to the designated family engagement administrator or other appointed school employee.
- Do not include names of students in any email correspondence.

Social Media & Public Relations

- A PEL is a representative of the school and BPS, despite being an employee of Tryfacta, Inc. If a PEL uses social media, they must be aware that anything posted may be seen by anyone in the District and/or city of Buffalo.
- Remember to stay positive and use asset-based language in comments and posts.
- Posts about sensitive information or specific antagonistic experiences as a PEL may affect the school, its members, the District, and possibly the PEL's job.
- Please review the Buffalo Public Schools Social Media Guidelines for further guidance.

Community Resource Leader Support

Community Resource Leaders (CRLs) are designated as support for identified local schools based on Zones in a Family Resource Center (FRC). Use the FRC zone map to see what FRC Zone your school is in. Please feel free to reach out to the CRL for the following:

- FREE Family Resource Center programs available for families, students and community members.
- Community resources and information that can be shared between PELs and CRLs.
- Invite CRLs to share information with families at your school or at school meetings with approval from designated family engagement administrator. The FACE CRL, Kate Roberts, is another resource for sharing information and obtaining resources for your Parent Room.



SECTION 5

Dispute Resolution, Dismissal & Transition

Dispute Resolution Process

In Plain Terms: If something doesn't feel right, start by talking it through with the person involved. If that doesn't resolve it, your school administrator, then FACE, and finally Tryfacta (your employer) are each ready to step in, in that order. You will not lose your role for raising a genuine concern.

Purpose: give PELs a clear, fair, and timely way to resolve concerns — with a school administrator, a parent, another PEL, FACE, or the third-party vendor.

Step 1 — Direct Conversation (within 3 school days)

The PEL first raises the concern directly with the other party, in a respectful, solution-focused manner, consistent with the Professional Conduct expectations in this handbook.

Step 2 — School Administrator (within 5 school days)

If unresolved, the PEL brings the concern to their designated school administrator. Concerns about the administrator go directly to Step 3. The administrator documents the concern and responds in writing within 5 school days.

Step 3 — FACE Supervisor (within 10 school days)

If still unresolved, the FACE Supervisor convenes a meeting with the PEL and administrator to mediate and document next steps.

Step 4 — Third-Party Vendor / Tryfacta

Disputes specific to pay, hours, or employment status are escalated directly to Tryfacta (buffaloschools@tryfacta.com), with the FACE Supervisor copied.

Throughout

- All parties maintain confidentiality.
- Concerns and resolutions are documented in writing.
- No PEL will face retaliation for raising a good-faith concern.

Two-Way: When an Administrator or FACE Has a Concern About a PEL

This process works in both directions. If a school administrator, district administrator, or FACE has a concern about a PEL:

- The administrator (or FACE Supervisor) first raises the concern directly with the PEL, in the same respectful, solution-focused manner described above.
- If the concern is about performance or attendance, it moves into the Support Plan process (see Dismissal Process & Support Plan, Track A).
- If the concern involves a possible policy violation, the administrator documents it and notifies the FACE Supervisor, who reviews it with the PEL before any recommendation is made to Tryfacta.



- The PEL is always informed of the concern and given a chance to respond before a final decision is made.

Dismissal Process & Support Plan

Two tracks apply, depending on the nature of the issue. In both, FACE and the school administrator are responsible for documenting concerns and making a recommendation; Tryfacta, as the PEL's employer of record, reviews that documentation and makes the final decision.

Track A — Performance or Attendance Concerns (Support Plan applies)

- **1. Coaching Conversation (immediate)** — School administrator meets with the PEL, documents the concern, and sets clear, specific improvement goals.
- **2. Written Support Plan (within 5 school days)** — FACE Supervisor and administrator jointly create a written plan with goals, a resource (e.g., pairing with a Mentor PEL), and a 30-day timeline.
- **3. 15-Day Check-In** — Progress is reviewed and the plan is adjusted if needed.
- **4. 30-Day Final Review** — If goals are met, the plan closes. If not, the administrator and FACE Supervisor document the outcome and refer the matter to Tryfacta, which makes the final employment decision.

Note: this track runs alongside — not instead of — the existing hours-reporting escalation (Reminder → Support → Dismissal Letter) already in this handbook.

Track B — Immediate Dismissal (no Support Plan)

Some violations bypass the Support Plan and go straight to Tryfacta for immediate action:

- Breach of confidentiality (student names, private family information)
- Failure to clear or maintain fingerprint/background clearance
- Falsifying hours, timesheets, or records
- Harassment, discrimination, or safety violations

Repeated, unexplained absences from required PEL Professional Development are handled through the Support Plan (Track A) and the attendance policy under Reporting During Professional Development, not immediate dismissal.

Even on this track, the PEL is not simply notified after the fact:

- Before any decision is finalized, the PEL is given the concern in writing and an opportunity to respond and share additional context.
- A FACE Supervisor or school administrator speaks with the PEL directly about the concern — the email from Tryfacta formalizes the decision for recordkeeping, but a conversation always happens first.

In All Cases

- Tryfacta, as the employer of record, issues the final dismissal decision and notice via email.
- The FACE Supervisor and school administrator are kept informed throughout.
- PELs are not employees of Buffalo Public Schools; this process governs the PEL role only and does not create an employment contract.



Transition Plan

This transition plan applies whenever a PEL role ends, under either track described above.

Your Standing as a Parent Never Changes

Ending a PEL role does not affect your rights or standing as a parent/caregiver at your child's school. You remain welcome to attend school events, use the Parent Portal, and take part in parent groups (PTA/PTO, SBMT, and others) just like any other family.

Transition Meeting

If the individual is still a parent/caregiver at the building, the school administrator holds a transition meeting with them before the role formally ends (or, for Track B, within 3 school days). This meeting covers the transition steps below and reaffirms their continued standing and involvement as a parent at the school.

Transition Steps

- Return PEL photo ID badge and any BPS-issued materials to the school administrator.
- Submit a final timesheet to Tryfacta for hours already worked.
- Hand off the PEL binder, outreach lists, and any in-progress work to the school administrator or FACE Supervisor.
- PEL email access, JobDiva clock-in/out, and GroupTrail access are closed.

Staying Connected

The school administrator shares how to stay involved through the Parent Portal, parent groups, and school events. FACE remains available for any questions.

Track A: Because this track follows a documented 30-day process, the transition meeting happens as part of the final review, giving the family advance notice.

Track B: Because this happens without notice, the school administrator schedules the transition meeting within 3 school days to ensure a respectful transition and confirm continued access to parent resources.

End of Employment: Additional Information

- Upon violation of any of the sections outlined in this PEL handbook, Tryfacta, Inc. reserves the right to end employment for the PEL.
- An end-of-employment letter will be sent via email to the PEL from Tryfacta, Inc.

As a reminder, PELs are not employees of Buffalo Public Schools.



APPENDIX

Board Recognized Parent Groups



Buffalo Parent Teacher Organization (BPTO) — To facilitate student success within the Buffalo Public School District, voices of all members of the community must be engaged through ongoing relationships. The BPTO initiates, supports, advocates for, and recognizes positive projects, programs, and accomplishments of students, their families, and schools — fostering relationships among parents, families, administrators, all school staff, and community members.



Buffalo Community Health Worker Parent & Student Association (CHWPSA) — Supports a “Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child” approach to education, with a focus on parent and family leadership and engagement. Monitors the Wellness Policy, Code of Conduct, and Parent, Family and Community Involvement Policy; provides training on health, wellness, and safety; and builds collaborative relationships among parents, students, school and District staff, and community partners.



District Parent Coordinating Council (DPCC) — Ensures a partnership with Buffalo Public Schools in accordance with NYSED CR 100.11 and ESSA Section 1116(a)(1); monitors and reports on the Board's Parent Involvement Policy; and builds capacity for parent involvement to improve student achievement. Voting members are a parent representative and alternate elected from each school's parent committee.



Most Valuable Parents (MVP) — A parent group dedicated to pooling resources, lifting voices, and volunteering services to enhance the quality of life in our community.



Multilingual Education Advisory Committee (MEAC) — Built on two principles — **Communication**: two-way communication so teachers, schools, and the central office reach parents/guardians in a language they understand, and parents/guardians can respond in their native language; and **Equity**: equal access to programs and services for English learners and their parents/guardians.



Special Education Parent Advisory Committee (SEPAC) — Dedicated to supporting families, coordinating services, and offering input to BPS Special Education and the Board of Education. All meetings are open to parents of children receiving special education services in the District.



APPENDIX

Family Resource Center Locations

Zone	Location	Address	Phone
North	Bennett HS Main Campus, Room #107	2885 Main Street, Buffalo, NY 14214	(716) 816-4011
West	Lafayette Community HS, Room #110	370 Lafayette Avenue, Buffalo, NY 14213	(716) 816-4349
East	East Community HS, Room #103	820 Northampton Street, Buffalo, NY 14211	(716) 816-7047
South	South Park Community HS, Room #G13	150 Southside Parkway, Buffalo, NY 14220	(716) 816-3214

APPENDIX

Buffalo Public Schools Board of Education

Dr. Kathy Evans-Brown	Honorable Board President and East District Board Member
Ms. Janita Everhart	Honorable Vice President of Executive Affairs and Board Member at Large
Ms. Adrianna K. Zullich	Honorable Vice President of Student Achievement and Board Member at Large
Mr. Stephon Wright	Honorable Ferry District Board Member
Mr. Roscoe Henderson	Honorable North District Board Member
Ms. Talia Rodriguez	Honorable West District Board Member
Mr. Erik T. Bohen	Honorable Park District Board Member
Mr. Lewis D. Hawkins	Honorable Central District Board Member
Mr. Lawrence Scott	Honorable Board Member at Large
Mr. Emon Khan	Honorable Student Board Member
Dr. Ebony E. Prophet-Bullock	Esteemed Interim Superintendent of Schools

**FINAL STEP****PEL Handbook Acknowledgment**

I _____, have received, read, understood, and agree to comply with the 2026-2027 Parent Engagement Liaison Handbook for Buffalo Public Schools, and understand all the information presented. I have been given an opportunity to ask any questions I may have and have received satisfactory answers to all of my questions. I understand that I am not an employee of Buffalo Public Schools, however I receive training, guidance, support, and oversight by the building-based administrator (designated family engagement administrator) along with the BPS Department of Family and Community Engagement. I understand that once I complete all onboarding documents and successfully am cleared through fingerprinting and/or a background check, that I am an employee of Tryfacta, Inc.

I understand that this Parent Engagement Liaison Handbook in no way establishes or implies an employee contract. If I have any questions about the content or interpretation of this handbook, I will contact the BPS Department of Family & Community Engagement. If I have questions about payroll, tax information, employment verification letters, etc., I will contact Tryfacta, Inc.

I agree to comply with, and enforce, ALL the expectations and procedures set forth in the Parent Engagement Liaison Handbook.

Employee's Signature:

Print Employee Name:

Date:

Witnessed:
