

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

The Board of Education believes that positive parental involvement is essential to student achievement, and thus encourages such involvement in school educational planning and operations. Parental involvement may take place either in the classroom or during extra-curricular activities. However, the Board also encourages parental involvement at home (e.g., planned home reading time, informal learning activities, and/or homework "contracts" between parents and children). Furthermore, the planning committee for this policy developed the following core beliefs about the importance of Parental Involvement:

- Communications should begin with a foundation of mutual respect;
- Parental Involvement is critical factor for student achievement;
- Communications between parents and teachers throughout the k-12 continuum should be facilitated in every aspect;
- Conferences between parents and teachers are essential for all students;
- Parental involvement is critical to the School District's success;
- Parental involvement at home is critical;
- Parents are encouraged to read to their children on a regular basis at an early age, and to help their children develop good homework and study habits;
- Parents should be notified in a timely and efficient manner as practicable when school events and/or times are changed;
- Parents and teachers need to work in a collaborative fashion with mutual respect and support; the relationship between parents and staff should be cordial and non-judgmental;
- A mutual understanding of the challenges that parents and teachers experience is critical in developing a positive and effective working relationship.

The Shared Decision Making Committee will be used to enhance communications between parents and the schools. Each Shared Decision Committee will develop and/or maintain a current "parent handbook." The handbook will be placed on the district's website and hardcopies will be available upon request. Correspondence from each Building Principal will indicate the presence of the plan on the website along with a statement that hard copies are available upon request.

Each Shared Decision Making Committee also will create and /or maintain a current tri-fold or "flyer" about parent involvement for that level of education along with a detailed list of points/recommendations and information about curriculum and who to call when questions arise. The tri-fold or flyer will be placed on the district's website and hardcopies will be available upon request. Correspondence from each Building Principal will indicate the presence of the plan on the website along with a statement that hard copies are available upon request.

Title I Parental Involvement

Consistent with the parent involvement goals of Title I, Part A of the federal No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB), the Board of Education will develop and implement programs, activities and procedures that encourage and support the participation of parents of students eligible for Title I services in all aspects of their child's education.

For purposes of this policy, parental involvement refers to the participation of parents in regular, two-way, and meaningful communication involving student academic learning and other school activities. At a minimum, parental involvement programs, activities and procedures at both the district and individual school level must ensure that parent:

- Play an integral role in assisting their child's learning;
- Are encouraged to be actively involved in their child's education at school; and,
- Are full partners in their child's education and are included, as appropriate, in decision-making and on advisory committees to assist in the education of their child.
- Review of the plan to expend Title 1 Part-A monies in Title 1 buildings each year at a building's Shared Decision Making Committee meeting.

The term parents refers to a natural parent, legal guardian or other person standing in *loco parentis* (such as a grandparent or stepparent with whom the child lives, or a person who is legally responsible for the child's welfare).

District and school level Title I parental involvement programs, activities and procedures will provide full opportunities for the participation of parents with limited English proficiency, parents with disabilities, and parents of migratory children.

As further required by the NCLB, parents of students eligible for Title I services will be provided an opportunity to participate in the development of the district's Title I plan, and to submit comments regarding any aspect of the plan that is not satisfactory to them. Their comments will be forwarded with the plan to the State Education Department.

Parents also will participate in the process for developing a school improvement plan when the school their child attends fails to make adequate yearly progress for two consecutive years and is identified as a school in need of improvement.

Parent Participation In Development Of District Wide Parental Involvement Plan

The Board, along with its superintendent of schools and other appropriate district staff will undertake the following actions to ensure parent involvement in the development of the district wide parental involvement plan:

- Yearly review of the district's Title 1-A plan at pre-planned and advertised Shared Decision Making Committee meetings for all Title 1 buildings.

Review Of District Wide Parental Involvement Plan

The Board, along with its Superintendent of Schools and other appropriate staff, in conjunction with the Shared Decision Making Committees, with the involvement of parents, will conduct an annual evaluation of the content and effectiveness of the parental involvement plan in improving the academic quality of the district and the Title I schools, including the identification of barriers to greater participation by parents in activities under this policy, and the revision of parent involvement policies necessary for more effective involvement.

Development Of School Level Parental Involvement

The superintendent of schools will ensure that all district schools receiving federal financial assistance under Title I, Part A are provided technical assistance and all other support necessary to assist them in planning and implementing effective parental involvement communications and activities as deemed appropriate that improve student achievement and school performance.

Building Capacity For Parental Involvement

To build parent capacity for strong parental involvement to improve their child's academic achievement, the district and its Title I, Part A schools will, at a minimum:

1. Assist parents in understanding such topics as the state's academic content and student achievement standards, state and local academic assessments, Title I requirements, how to monitor their child's progress and how to work with educators to improve the achievement of their child.

To achieve this objective, the district and its Title I schools will:

- Provide parents with information about summer reading programs offered by the public libraries;
- As practicable, offer a summer reading program (invitations program) for students not meeting specific criteria;
- As practicable, offer ELA and Math information nights to assist parents to better understand the learning standards and the way in which they are assessed;
- Hold regularly scheduled Shared Decision Making Committee meetings to allow for parental involvement.

2. Educate its teachers, principals, and other staff in understanding the value and utility of a parent's contributions and on how to:

- Reach out to, communicate with, and work with parents as equal partners;
- Implement and coordinate parent programs as practicable; and
- Build ties between parents and the schools.

To achieve this objective, the district and its Title I schools will: Ensure that information related to school and parent-related programs, meetings and other activities is sent to the parents of children participating in Title I programs in an understandable and uniform format, including alternative formats, upon request, and to the extent practicable, in a language the parents can understand.

Coordination Of Parental Involvement Strategies

The district will coordinate and integrate strategies adopted to comply with the NCLB Title I, Part A if at any time any of these programs become operational in the district (Head Start, Reading First, Early Reading First, Even Start, Parents as Teachers, Home Instruction Program for Preschool Youngsters, and State-operated preschool programs.)

Ref: §1118 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act
8 NYCRR §§100.3(b)(3); 100.4(f); 100.5(d)(4); 149.3(16)
U.S. Department of Education, Parental Involvement, Title I, Part A, *Non-Regulatory Guidance*, April 23, 2004

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