

Title I Parent Involvement Guidelines

Recognizing that the role parents take in their child's education has a significant impact on their academic achievement, Title I, section 1118 of the Improving America's Schools Act (IASA), requires schools to strengthen the role of parents in their child's education by building their capacity to participate in the education of their child both at home and at school. The law also requires that schools develop a policy for how they will build capacity and increase parent family engagement. (In Yakima, this policy is to be written into the program planning section of the school's site plan.) Lastly, the law requires a written compact between the school and parents which describes the responsibilities that each have for helping students improve their academic achievement. The details of these three requirements are described below:

1. Building Capacity for Involvement

Building the capacity of parents to become more involved at the school allows them to become full partners in the education of their child. Title I law requires the following capacity-building activities for schools:

- 1.1 All information, relating to school programs, meetings, and other activities, must be sent to parents in the language that is used in the home.
- 1.2 School-wide activities should be provided where students, parents, and staff can interact positively with the diverse ethnic and cultural groups represented at the school.
- 1.3 Training should be provided for parents on:
 - 1.3.1 how to help their child at home, and how to participate in decisions relating to the education of their child;
 - 1.3.2 how to connect with the resources available to them at the school, in the community, and through parent resource centers;
 - 1.3.3 state and district standards and assessments;
 - 1.3.4 Title I law; the requirements and how the Title I program at the school will help their child;
 - 1.3.5 parents role on councils and site teams; and
 - 1.3.6 National Education Goals.
- 1.4 The law also requires that teachers receive training with the assistance of parents, in:
 - 1.4.1 how to reach out, communicate, and work with parents as equal partners;
 - 1.4.2 how to have effective parent involvement programs;
 - 1.4.3 how to build ties between the home and school;
 - 1.4.4 how to build and develop partnerships between the elementary, middle and high schools and local business, including partnerships with a role for parents; and
 - 1.4.5 how can schools coordinate all parent involvement activities from other programs such as Head Start, Even Start, Home Based Instruction programs for preschool Youngsters, Parents As Teachers, public preschools, and any other parent involvement programs at the school.

2. Title I Parent Involvement Policy

Each school must develop a parent involvement policy to address how parents of Title I students will be involved at the site.

- 2.1 A school's parent involvement policy should include:
 - 2.1.1 how the school will give parents opportunities to ask questions and participate in decisions relating to the education of their children. The law recommends offering meetings on a regular schedule, such as once a month, but at flexible times, with some morning and some afternoon or evening to give parents multiple opportunities to be involved;
 - 2.1.2 when the school will hold its annual Title I meeting for parents to inform them of the Title I program, its requirements, and their right to be involved in their child's education;
 - 2.1.3 how the school will involve parents in an organized, ongoing, and timely way in planning, reviewing, and improving programs at their school;
 - 2.1.4 how the school will provide school performance profiles that show that the school is making progress toward meeting the state district performance standards; and
 - 2.1.5 how the school will provide parents with individual student results, including interpretation of those results.

3. Home-School Compact

Each school must develop jointly with parents a home-school compact which will describe the shared responsibilities that the school, parents and students have to help students reach high standards. (In Yakima, the compact must also include district requirements for improving reading and students' responsibilities for their own learning. The compact is to be signed by administrator, teacher, parent, and student. It needs to be sent home no later than November 15 for signature. A copy is kept on file at the school.)

- 3.1 School responsibilities to be included in the compact are to:
 - 3.1.1 provide high quality curriculum and instruction in a supportive and effective learning environment;
 - 3.1.2 provide ongoing communication with parents through parent-teacher conferences (at least twice annually in elementary schools);
 - 3.1.3 provide frequent reports to parents on their child's progress; and
 - 3.1.4 provide reasonable access to staff and observation of classroom activities, and opportunities for parents to volunteer and participate in their child's class.
- 3.2 Parent responsibilities to be included in the compact are to:
 - 3.2.1 support her/his child's learning, by monitoring their child's attendance at school, television viewing, and homework completion;
 - 3.2.2 volunteering at school; and
 - 3.2.3 attending parent-teacher conferences.
- 3.3 In addition to the requirements outlined above, Title I law highly recommends the

following ways to increase parent involvement at the school:

- 3.3.1 use Title I funds to provide transportation and childcare at meetings;
- 3.3.2 make home-school visits, such as parent-teacher conferences for parents who are unable to attend conferences at school;
- 3.3.3 provide necessary literacy training for parents;
- 3.3.4 involve parents in the development of training for teachers, principals, and other educators; and
- 3.3.5 adopt model approaches to improving parent involvement.

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