

# FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



Dr. Eric J. Smith  
Commissioner of Education



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## Technical Assistance Paper

### School Parental Involvement Policy Guidance

#### Summary:

The purpose of this technical assistance paper (TAP) is to provide school district personnel with information essential to the implementation of No Child Left Behind parental involvement policy requirements.

**Contact:** Mary Jo Butler, [maryjo.butler@fldoe.org](mailto:maryjo.butler@fldoe.org); Jessica Taylor, [jessica.taylor@fldoe.org](mailto:jessica.taylor@fldoe.org)  
(850) 245-0479

#### Status:

- New Technical Assistance Paper
- Revises and replaces existing Technical Assistance

#### Authority:

20 U.S.C.A. Section 6318; United States Department of Education  
Title I Parental Involvement Non-Regulatory Guidance, United States Department of Education; 20  
U.S. C.A. Section 7801; 20 U.S.C.A. 6311(b)(8)(c)

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## **A. School Parental Involvement Policy Requirements**

### **A-1. What is parental involvement under No Child Left Behind?**

Parental involvement has always been a centerpiece of Title I. However, for the first time in the history of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA), parental involvement has a specific statutory definition. The statute defines parental involvement as the participation of parents in regular, two-way, and meaningful communication involving student academic learning and other school activities, including ensuring that:

- parents play an integral role in assisting their child's learning
- parents are encouraged to be actively involved in their child's education at school
- parents 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
- other activities are carried out, such as those described in section 1118 of the ESEA (Parental Involvement)

### **A-2. What written parental involvement policies must Title I, Part A schools develop?**

No Child Left Behind (NCLB) requires that each school must develop, jointly with parents of children participating in Title I, Part A services, a written school parental involvement policy that describes how the school will carry out the parental involvement requirements in section 1118(c) – (f), including the development of a school-parent compact. See Appendix A for a sample school parental involvement policy template. See Appendix B for a checklist of school parental involvement policy requirements which may be used to ensure school parental involvement policies contain all required components.

### **A-3. What is a "school-parent" compact?**

The school-parent compact is a component of the written parental involvement policy. A school-parent compact is a written agreement between the school and the parents of children participating in Title I, Part A programs that identifies the activities that the parents, the entire school staff, and the students will undertake to share the responsibility for improved student academic achievement. In addition, the school-parent compact outlines the activities that the parents, school staff, and students will undertake to build and develop a partnership to help the children achieve high academic standards. See Appendix A for a template of a school-parent compact included in the school parental involvement policy template.

### **A-4. How should a school describe the means for carrying out the requirements of the parental involvement policy?**

The school policy should clearly describe what each activity will be, who will be doing each activity, when each activity will take place, how the activity will be carried out, and how success of each activity will be measured. The policy should be concise and parent-friendly. There is no required format for a district's policy or for the descriptions of each item required to be contained in the policy. This information may be incorporated in the policy as narrative or through a chart like the one below.

Activity/Task (What will be done )	Staff Responsible (Who will be doing it)	Timeline (When it will be done)	Steps (How it will be done)	Accountability/Evaluations (How success will be measured)

#### **A-5. Are schools required to use a particular template to develop their policy?**

No, schools are not required to use any one particular template in creating their parental involvement policy. However, the school parental involvement policy must incorporate the information required by section 1118(b) to be compliant with Title I, Part A requirements.

#### **A-6. Can the district use an existing school parental involvement policy or district parental involvement policy?**

If the school already has a parental involvement policy that applies to all parents, the school may amend that existing policy, if necessary, to meet the requirements of section 1118(b). It is important to remember that parents must be involved in the process of creating a school parental involvement policy, and parents must be a part of any decision to revise an existing policy.

#### **A-7. Do school parental involvement policies need to be approved by the school board?**

No, school parental involvement policies do not need to be approved by the school board. Local Education Agencies (LEA) should not allow the term “policy” to become a hindrance in adopting a school parental involvement policy. Schools may refer to the school parental involvement policy as a “plan” rather than a “policy.”

#### **A-8. How often must school parental involvement policies be updated?**

Schools must update these policies and school-parent compacts periodically to meet the changing needs of parents and the school. Schools should evaluate the content and effectiveness of the school’s parental involvement activities on an annual basis. The LEA must provide specific technical assistance that includes help with analyzing data from assessments and other examples of student work, identifying and addressing problems in instruction, and implementing the parental involvement requirements in section 1118 and the professional development requirements in section 1119.

The Florida Evaluation Working Group created a toolkit designed to assist schools and districts in conducting evaluations of parental involvement policies. The Parental Involvement Toolkit may be accessed at the following Web site: <http://www.nclbeval.org>.

### **B. Parental Involvement in Policy Development and Activities**

#### **B-1. What notification and dissemination requirements apply for school parental involvement policies?**

Each school served under Title I, Part A must notify parents of its written parental involvement policy. This notification must be in an understandable and uniform format, including alternative formats upon request, and, to the extent practicable, provide the notice and the policy in a language the parents can understand. The entire parental involvement policy must be directly disseminated to parents by means such as mail, e-mail, or backpack. A school may wish to disseminate the policy through a school booklet, such as in the school code handbook. In addition to direct dissemination, the school may also wish to include the parental involvement policy on the school’s Web site. Each school also must make its written parental involvement policy available to the local community.

## **B-2. What meetings must schools hold to inform parents about Title I, Part A programs and parental involvement?**

Each school served under Title I, Part A must convene an annual meeting to inform parents of their school's participation in Title I, Part A programs, and to explain the Title I, Part A requirements and the right of parents to be involved in those programs. This meeting must be at a time convenient for parents. In order to keep parents informed, schools should invite all parents of children participating in Title I, Part A programs and encourage them to attend. Schools must offer a flexible number of additional parental involvement meetings, such as in the morning or evening so that as many parents as possible are able to attend.

## **B-3. How can LEAs and schools ensure that parents are involved in the development of the school's parental involvement policy?**

In developing school-level parental involvement policies, the school should contact parents and ask for their collaboration in developing or revising the school's policy. Schools may wish to create a committee, task force, parent council, or parental involvement team. Many schools have a team like this already in place. The LEA should assist schools in reaching out to parents for their collaboration. The LEA is responsible for ensuring each Title I school has a parental involvement policy that was jointly developed with parents. LEAs may wish to annually collect these policies and meeting announcements, agendas, sign-in sheets, and minutes for the purpose of documentation. See Appendix B for a checklist of school parental involvement policy requirements to assist the LEA in ensuring school policies contain all required components.

## **B-4. How can schools and LEAs enhance parental involvement and participation in school meetings, conferences, and activities?**

LEAs and school staff should be educated on the value of parental involvement and how to establish and support family involvement. Schools may receive training on best practices for parental involvement from Florida's Parental Information and Resource Centers (PIRCs).

Additionally, schools may increase parent participation by paying reasonable and necessary expenses associated with local parental involvement activities, including transportation and childcare costs, to enable parents to participate in school-related meetings and training sessions. Schools and LEAs should arrange school meetings at a variety of times. For parents who are unable to attend conferences at school, schools may arrange for and conduct in-home conferences between teachers or other educators who work directly with participating children and the children's parents. Schools also may provide training to parents in how to enhance the involvement of other parents.

## **B-5. What are Parental Information and Resource Centers?**

Parental Information and Resource Centers (PIRC) were established by the United States Department of Education (US ED) in 1995 to provide parents, schools, and organizations with training, information, and technical assistance to understand how children develop and what they need to succeed in school. LEAs or Title I schools must inform parents and parental organizations of the existence and purpose of the state's PIRCs.

Florida has two PIRCs. For more information regarding the PIRC of Family Network on Disabilities of Florida (FND) please visit their Web site at: [www.fndfl.org/projects/pirc/index.asp](http://www.fndfl.org/projects/pirc/index.asp).

For more information regarding the PIRC at University of South Florida (USF), please visit their Web site at: <http://www.floridapirc.usf.edu>.

A sample letter to inform parents of PIRCs as required by NCLB, Section 1118 may be found at: [http://www.floridapirc.usf.edu/pdfs/NCLB\\_PIRC\\_Parent\\_Notify.pdf](http://www.floridapirc.usf.edu/pdfs/NCLB_PIRC_Parent_Notify.pdf).

**B-6. What additional resources are available to assist in the implementation of the parental involvement requirements under NCLB?**

There are several resources available to assist LEAs and schools in implementing the parental involvement requirements of NCLB. The US ED has published non-regulatory guidance regarding Title I, Part A: Parental Involvement. The non-regulatory guidance may be accessed at the following Web site: <http://www.ed.gov/programs/titleiparta/parentinvguid.doc>.

Additionally, the Florida Department of Education has developed a Web site related to Title I Parental Involvement. There are a number of resources and templates available on this Web site, which may be located at: <http://www.fldoe.org/flbpos/pi.asp>.

## Appendix A.

SAMPLE

### School Parental Involvement Policy/Plan

School Year

#### General Expectations

Name of School agrees to:

- Be governed by the following statutory definition of parental involvement, and will carry out programs, activities, and procedures in accordance with this definition:

*Parental involvement means the participation of parents in regular, two-way, and meaningful communication involving student academic learning and other school activities, including ensuring—*

*(A) that parents play an integral role in assisting their child's learning*

*(B) that parents are encouraged to be actively involved in their children's education at school*

*(C) that parents are full partners in their children's education and are included, as appropriate, in decision-making and on advisory committees to assist in the education of their children*

*(D) the carrying out of other activities, such as those described in section 1118 of the ESEA*

- Involve the parents of children served in Title I, Part A in decisions about how Title I, Part A funds reserved for parental involvement are spent.
- Jointly develop/revise with parents the school parental involvement policy and distribute it to parents of participating children and make available the parental involvement plan to the local community
- Jointly conduct, with the involvement of parents, an annual evaluation of the content and effectiveness of the school's parental involvement policy
- Use the findings of the parental involvement policy evaluation to design strategies for more effective parental involvement, and to revise, if necessary, the school's parental involvement policy
- Inform parents and parental organizations of the purpose and existence of the Parental Information and Resource Centers (PIRC) in Florida, i.e., PIRC of Family Network on Disabilities in Florida (FND) and PIRC at University of South Florida (USF)
- If the plan for Title I, Part A, developed under section 1112, is not satisfactory to the parents of participating children, the school will submit parent comments with the plan when the school submits the plan to the local educational agency
- Provide to each parent an individual student report about the performance of their child on the State assessment in at least mathematics, language arts, and reading

- Provide each parent timely notice when their child has been assigned or has been taught for four (4) or more consecutive weeks by a teacher who is not highly qualified within the meaning of the term in section 200.56 of the Title I Final Regulations (67 Fed. Reg. 71710, December 2, 2002)
- Provide each parent timely notice information regarding the professional qualifications of the student's classroom teachers and paraprofessionals, as described in section 1111(h)(6)(A)

**Policy Involvement 1118 (c)**

**Name of School** will take the following actions to:

1. Convene an annual meeting at a time convenient for parents of participating children:
  - All parents shall be invited and encouraged to attend
  - The school will provide information and explain the requirements of Title I and the rights of parents

(List activities: What will be done, who will be doing it, when it will be done, how it will be done, and how success will be measured.)

2. Offer a flexible number of meetings and may provide with Title I funds, transportation, child care, or home visits, as such services related to parental involvement:

(List activities: What will be done, who will be doing it, when it will be done, how it will be done, and how success will be measured.)

3. Involve parents in an organized, ongoing, and timely manner, in the planning, review, and improvement of Title I programs. This should include the planning, review, and improvement of the school parental involvement policy, as well as the joint development of the school-wide program plan under section 1114 (b)(2):

(List activities: What will be done, who will be doing it, when it will be done, how it will be done, and how success will be measured.)

4. Provide parents of participating children:
  - Timely information about the Title I programs
  - Description and explanation of the curriculum at the school, the forms of academic assessment used to measure student progress, and the proficiency levels students are expected to meet
  - Opportunities for regular meetings to formulate suggestions and to participate, as appropriate, in decisions relating to the education of their children

(List activities: What will be done, who will be doing it, when it will be done, how it will be done, and how success will be measured.)

Note: If the school-wide program plan under section 1114 (b)(2) is not satisfactory to the parents of participating children, the school will also submit the parents' comments on the plan that will be available to the local education agency.

## **Compact: Shared Responsibilities for High Student Academic Achievement 1118(d)**

As a component of the school-level parental involvement policy/plan, each school shall jointly develop, with parents for all children served under this part, a school-parent compact that outlines how parents, the entire school staff, and students will share the responsibility for improved student academic achievement. The school-parent compact may be a separate document, but must still be developed in collaboration with parents.

**Name of School** will:

1. Provide high-quality curriculum and instruction in a supportive and effective learning environment that enables the participating children to meet Florida's student academic achievement standards as follows:

(Describe how the school will provide high-quality curriculum and instruction, and do so in a supportive and effective learning environment).

2. Hold parent-teacher conferences during which this compact will be discussed as it relates to the individual child's academic achievement. Conferences will be held (at least annually):

(Describe when, where, and how staff will be available for consultation with parents.)

3. Provide parents with frequent reports on their children's progress. Specifically, the school will provide reports as follows:

(Describe when and how the school will provide reports to parents.)

4. Provide parents reasonable access to staff. Specifically, staff will be available for consultation with parents as follows:

(Describe when, where, and how staff will be available for consultation with parents.)

5. Provide parents opportunities to volunteer in their children's school and to participate in their children's class and observe classroom activities, as follows:

(Describe when and how parents may volunteer, participate, and observe classroom activities.)

**Parents** will support our children's learning in the following ways:

1. Describe the ways in which parents will support their children's learning, such as:

- Monitoring attendance
- Making sure that homework is completed
- Monitoring amount of television children watches
- Participating, as appropriate, in decisions relating to my children's education
- Promoting positive use of children's extracurricular time
- Staying informed about children's education and communicating with the school by promptly reading all notices from the school or the school district, either received by children or by mail, and responding as appropriate
- Serving, to the extent possible, on policy advisory groups, such as; serving as the Title I, Part A parent representative on the school's School Improvement Team, the Title I Policy Advisory Committee, the District Wide Policy Advisory Council, the State Committee of

Practitioners, the School Support Team or other school advisory or policy groups

**(Optional) Students** will share the responsibility to improve our academic achievement and achieve Florida's high standards in the following ways:

1. Describe the ways in which students will support their academic achievement, such as:
  - Do my homework every day and ask for help when I need to
  - Read at least 30 minutes every day outside of school time
  - Give to my parents or the adult who is responsible for my welfare all notices and information received by me from my school every day

### **Building Capacity for Involvement 1118(e)**

**Name of School** will take the following actions to:

1. Provide assistance to parents in understanding such topics as:
  - Florida's academic content standards
  - Florida's student academic achievement standards
  - Florida's and local academic assessments including alternate assessments
  - The requirements of Title I, Part A
  - How to monitor their children's progress
  - How to work with educators to improve the achievement of their children

(List activities, such as workshops, conferences, classes, both in-state and out-of-state, include any equipment or other materials that may be necessary to ensure success.)

2. Foster parental involvement by providing materials and training, such as literacy training and using technology, as appropriate, to help parents work with their children to improve their children's academic achievement.

(List activities: What will be done, who will be doing it, when it will be done how it will be done, and how success will be measured.)

3. Educate teachers, student services personnel, principals, and other staff on the value and utility of contributions of parents, and in how to reach out to and communicate and work with parents as equal partners. Actions should include how to implement and coordinate parent programs and build ties between parents and schools:

(List activities: What will be done, who will be doing it, when it will be done, how it will be done, and how success will be measured.)

4. Coordinate and integrate parental involvement programs and activities that teach parents how to help their children at home (to the extent feasible and appropriate). Possible programs include Head Start, Reading First, Early Reading First, Even Start, Home Instruction Programs for Preschool Youngsters, the Parents as Teachers Program, public preschool, and other programs. The schools program must help teachers, principals, and other staff work well with parents. The school will also develop other activities, such as parent resource centers, that encourage and support parents in more fully participating in the education of their children:

(List activities: What will be done, who will be doing it, when it will be done, how it will be done, and how success will be measured.)

5. Provide reasonable support for parental involvement activities as parents may request.

(List actions: What will be done, who will be doing it, when it will be done, how it will be done, and how success will be measured.)

**(Optional)** The School Parental Involvement Policy/Plan may include additional paragraphs listing and describing other discretionary activities that the school, in consultation with its parents, chooses to undertake to build parents' capacity for involvement in the school and school system to support their children's academic achievement. The policy may include the discretionary activities as listed under section 1118(e) of the ESEA:

- Involve parents in the development of training to improve the effectiveness of that training for teachers, principals, and other educators
- Provide necessary literacy training for parents from Title I, Part A funds, if the school district has exhausted all other reasonably available sources of funding for that training
- Pay reasonable and necessary expenses associated with parental involvement activities, including transportation and child care costs, to enable parents to participate in school-related meetings and training sessions
- Train parents to enhance the involvement of other parents
- Arrange school meetings at a variety of times or conduct in-home conferences between teachers or other educators who work directly with participating children
- Arrange meetings with parents who are unable to attend conferences at school to maximize parental involvement and participation in their children's education
- Adopt and implement model approaches to improving parental involvement
- Establish a school parent advisory council to provide advice on all matters related to parental involvement in Title I, Part A programs
- Develop appropriate roles for community-based organizations and businesses, including faith-based organizations, in parental involvement activities

### **ACCESSIBILITY 1118(f)**

In carrying out the parental involvement requirements of this part, districts and schools, to the extent practical, shall provide full opportunities for the participation of parents with children with limited English proficiency, parents with children with disabilities, and parents of migratory children, including information and school reports in a format and to the extent practical, in a language such parents can understand.

(List actions: What will be done, who will be doing it, when it will be done, how it will be done, and how success will be measured.)

### **ADOPTION**

This Name of School Parental Involvement Policy/Plan has been developed/revised jointly with, and agreed on with, parents of children participating in Title I program, as evidence by meeting minutes.

The Parental Involvement Policy/Plan was developed/revised by Name of School on mm/dd/yy

and will be in effect for the period of the school year.

The school will distribute this Parental Involvement Policy/Plan to all parents of participating Title I children and make it available to the community on or before mm/dd/yy.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature of Title I Authorized Representative)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Date)

These parents were involved with the development of this document:  
(List parents)

## Appendix B. School Parental Involvement Policy/Plan • Checklist of Required Components

School District Name: \_\_\_\_\_ School Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

REQUIRED COMPONENTS	YES	NO
<b>REQUIRED COMPONENTS</b>		
<b>The Policy must be:</b>		
Developed jointly with and agreed on by parents of children participating in Title I programs		
Written in an understandable format and provided in a language parents can understand		
Directly distributed to all parents of children participating in Title I programs		
Made available to the local community and updated periodically to meet the changing needs of parents and the school		
<b>Policy Involvement</b>		
<b>The Policy describes how the school will:</b>		
Convene an annual meeting at a time convenient for parents of participating children		
Offer a flexible number of meetings and may provide with Title I funds, transportation, child care, or home visits, as such services related to parental involvement		
Involve parents in an organized, ongoing, and timely manner, in the planning, review, and improvement of Title I programs. This should include the planning, review, and improvement of the school parental involvement policy, as well as the joint development of the school-wide program plan under section 1114 (b)(2)		
Provide parents of participating children timely information about the Title I programs		
Provide parents of participating children description and explanation of the curriculum at the school, the forms of academic assessment used to measure student progress, and the proficiency levels students are expected to meet		
Provide parents of participating children opportunities for regular meetings to formulate suggestions and to participate, as appropriate, in decisions relating to the education of their children		
If the school-wide program plan under section 1114 (b)(2) is not satisfactory to the parents of participating children, the school will submit the parents' comments on the plan that will be available to the local education agency		
<b>Compact: Shared Responsibilities for High Student Academic Achievement</b>		
<b>The Compact describes how the school will:</b>		
Provide high-quality curriculum and instruction in a supportive and effective learning environment that enables the participating children to meet Florida's student academic achievement standards		
Hold parent-teacher conferences during which this compact will be discussed as it relates to the individual child's academic achievement		
Provide parents with frequent reports on their children's progress		
Provide parents reasonable access to staff		
Provide parents opportunities to volunteer and participate in their children's class and to observe classroom activities		
<b>The Compact describes how the parents will support children's learning</b>		
<b>Building Capacity for Involvement</b>		
<b>The Policy describes how the school will:</b>		
Provide assistance to parents in understanding such topics as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Florida's academic content standards</li> <li>• Florida's student academic achievement standards</li> <li>• Florida's and local academic assessments including alternate assessments</li> <li>• The requirements of Title I, Part A</li> <li>• How to monitor their children's progress</li> <li>• How to work with educators to improve the achievement of their children</li> </ul>		
Foster parental involvement by providing materials and training, such as literacy training and using technology, as appropriate, to help parents work with their children to improve their children's academic achievement		
Educate teachers, student services personnel, principals, and other staff on the value and utility of contributions of parents, and in how to reach out to and communicate and work with parents as equal partners		
Coordinate and integrate parental involvement programs and activities that teach parents how to help their children at home		
<b>Accessibility</b>		
<b>The Policy describes how the school will:</b>		
Ensure that information related to the school and parent-programs, meetings, and other activities is sent to parents of participating children in an understandable and uniform format, including alternative formats upon request, and, to the extent practicable, in a language the parents can understand		

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