



TITLE I PARENT INVOLVEMENT POLICY

2015-2016

What is Parental Involvement?

Parental involvement means the participation of parents in regular, two-way, and meaningful communication involving student academic learning and other school activities, to include ensuring that:

(A) Parents play an integral role in assisting their child's learning.

(B) Parents are encouraged to be actively involved in their child's education at school.

(C) 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.

(D) Other activities, such as those described in Section 1118 of the ESEA are implemented.

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During the District Title I Parent Meetings in September and April, all parents were invited to participate and provide suggestions and ideas to improve the parental involvement policy for the 2015-2016 school year. The district mailed invitations to the meeting to all middle and high school parents. For elementary school parents, a flyer was sent home in weekly communication folders with all students. The District Title I Parent Meetings were also advertised on all of the local school websites as well as on the district website. Each school advertised the meeting in at least two other formats such as on school marquees or through schoolwide phone messaging systems. All parents of students attending Title I schools, including parents of homeless, migrant, neglected and delinquent children and parents whose children are served by Title I and attending private schools, are given the opportunity to provide input and to participate in the joint development of the LEA parent involvement policy at the district level by attending the District Title I Parent Meetings. During these meetings, the parents also reviewed, discussed and gave input on the Comprehensive LEA Improvement Plan (CLIP). The District Title I Parent Meeting is held in both the morning and evening during the months of September and April and is open to all parents of students participating in a Title I Program.

Parent input from the local school Title I Planning Meetings, the District Title I Parent Meetings, and the Title I Annual Parent Survey was used to revise the district parent involvement policy. Upon final revision, the district parent involvement policy was incorporated into the CLIP which was submitted to the state. Parents may submit comments and feedback regarding the policy at any time by submitting written comments to their child's school or through the district website. All feedback received was considered when revising the policy for this school year.

The district parent involvement policy is posted on the district and school websites, reviewed during the annual Title I school meetings, distributed to all parents through the Title I Parent Handbook, and made available in the school's parent resource centers.

Opportunities for parents to express concerns, ask questions or voice complaints are outlined in the LEA Complaint Procedures, located in the Title I Parent Handbook.

About the Parental Involvement Policy

In support of strengthening student academic achievement, Gwinnett County Public Schools (GCPS) has developed this parental involvement policy that establishes the district's expectations for parental involvement and guides the strategies and resources that strengthen school and parent partnerships in the district's Title I schools. This plan will describe GCPS's commitment to engage families in the education of their children and to build the capacity in its Title I schools to implement family engagement strategies and activities designed to reach the district's goals for increased student academic achievement.

When schools, families, and communities work together to support learning, children tend to do better in school, stay in school longer and enjoy school more. Title I, Part A provides for substantive parental involvement at every level of the program, such as in the development and implementation of the district and school plan, and in carrying out the district and school improvement provisions. Section 1118 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA) contains the primary Title I, Part A requirements for schools and school systems to involve parents in their children's education. Consistent with Section 1118, the district will work with its Title I schools to ensure that the required school-level parental involvement policies meet the requirements of Section 1118 (b) and each include, as a component, a school-parent compact consistent with Section 1118 (d) of the ESEA.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PARENTAL INPUT

Input and suggestions from parents are an essential component of the district and school improvement plans that are developed each year. All parents of students eligible to receive Title I services are invited to attend meeting opportunities described in this section to share their ideas and suggestions to help the district, schools, and students reach our student academic achievement goals.

District Title I Parent Meetings

September 22, 2015 & April 12, 2016
9:00-10:30 & 6:00-7:30

During these months, the district will host four meetings for parents to hear the latest Title I updates as well as review and provide input into the district parental involvement policy, Title I budget and the Comprehensive LEA Improvement Plan (CLIP) for the upcoming school year. Notices regarding these meetings will be mailed in advance to all parents of students in middle and high school and will be sent home with students in elementary school. Each school will also notify parents of the meetings in an additional format as well as on the school's website. The district will also communicate information regarding these meetings on the school district's website.

Local School Title I Meetings

Check your school calendar for dates and times

At least one meeting will be held between the months of May and August. During this time, each school will host a meeting for all parents to participate in the review of the schoolwide plan, the schools' parental involvement policy, the school-parent compact, the Title I budget, and parental involvement programs. Each school will advertise the meeting or meetings in at least two ways in an effort to notify parents and encourage participation. Information regarding the Title I Planning Meetings will also be made available on the school websites.

Parental input on the use of Title I funds to support parental involvement programs may also be provided through the annual district Title I survey. The survey will contain questions related to the parental involvement budget and the effectiveness of the parental involvement programs and include a section for parents to provide comments.

Reservation of Funds

To fund the parent involvement programs at the district and school level, the Title I Office sets aside not less than one percent (1%) of the district allocation for parent involvement. One hundred percent of this 1% is used exclusively to support parent involvement activities. The LEA ensures that this set-aside is used for parental involvement by requiring Title I schools to employ at least a half-time Parent Instructional Coordinator (PIC). The set-aside is used to pay a portion of the salary and benefits for the PIC.

In addition to the 1% set-aside, Title I schools within the LEA use Title I funds allocated to them to a) operate and maintain Title I Parent Centers, b) print parent involvement documents, c) purchase supplies and materials for parent activities, and d) conduct parent workshops and schoolwide events.

The district will provide clear guidance and communication to assist each Title I school in developing an adequate parental involvement budget that addresses their needs assessment and parent recommendations.

The district will host two District Title I Parent Meetings in April for parents to provide suggestions as to how these parental involvement funds will be used in the upcoming year. Comment cards and minutes from these meetings will be reviewed by the district to determine areas of need for the upcoming school year and consider changes to the parental involvement budget.

EDUCATOR

BUILDING CAPACITY

PARENT

TO STRENGTHEN OUR SCHOOLS

Gwinnett County Public Schools will build the schools' and parents' capacity for strong parental involvement in order to ensure effective involvement of parents and to support a partnership among the Title I school, parents, and the community to improve academic achievement through districtwide activities.

GCPS supports parents in meeting their basic obligation as their child's first teacher. This is accomplished in part through Parent Centers at each Title I school, facilitated by a Parent Instructional Coordinator (PIC), where materials for check-out are available to parents. The PIC, a certified teacher, will facilitate activities for parents to become engaged in the learning process and help bridge home and school learning. Title I schools provide parents many opportunities to attend academic content workshops and schoolwide events to learn to use technology, along with other strategies to support their child's learning at home. Parent/family meeting and workshop days, times and locations vary to accommodate parents' schedules and maximize parent participation. Childcare and interpreters are provided for these events when feasible. Each Title I school will share dates and times for these opportunities by sending home invitations, posting on the website and by other means that works best for the local school. Title I schools make their local school Family Engagement Calendar of Events available in various formats and languages.

GCPS will work with district Title I staff and the Title I schools to provide assistance to parents in understanding state and district performance standards and assessments. Parents will have ongoing opportunities to learn how to monitor their child's academic progress as well as how to work with educators. Parents are informed at the Annual Parent Meeting of the guidelines, purpose, goals and resources of the Title I programs.

GCPS and local Title I schools invite and encourage all parents of children participating in Title I programs to attend local school and district level Title I meetings to receive important information and offer feedback.

Annually, parents are notified of the academic status of Title I schools. Parents of students attending Title I schools identified as Priority and Focus receive, twice annually, a written notification regarding the school's status and are advised of their parent rights under ESEA. These parents have the right to provide input regarding the development of the school's Flexible Learning Program (FLP). Additionally, each school's parents, administration and faculty, and other school district personnel assist the school in defining and attaining academic goals. Information about Flexible Learning Programs is made available on each Priority and Focus School's website and the GCPS website. Information is also available at each school's Parent Center.

The State PAC representative from Gwinnett County and at least one Title I Office employee will attend the Georgia Family Engagement Conference in February 2016.

The district Title I Staff and Parent Instructional Coordinator (PIC) will provide assistance and support to all Title I schools to ensure parental involvement requirements are being satisfied and that effective parent engagement strategies and activities are being implemented. The local schools fund a full or half-time PIC to help build the capacity of parents to provide academic support to their children. Title I schools will receive notifications and resources from the district to help them improve and strengthen family engagement. Title I Program Specialists assist the Parent Instructional Coordinators at each Title I school to ensure effective planning and implementation of the parent involvement program. In addition to frequent communication and school visits, the district will provide each PIC with monthly professional development on research-based parent involvement strategies to help parents support their children's academic success. Quarterly meetings will be held with the Assistant Principal Contacts for Title I (APTI) in each of the Title I schools to review family engagement plans and activities. Additionally, the district will host a series of meetings in the summer months and one meeting in February for principals to review their Title I program and parental involvement activities at each Title I school.

Gwinnett County Public Schools will coordinate and integrate the district's parental involvement programs with the Head Start program and Georgia PreK in addition to other state funded preschool programs in the district to support school readiness and successful kindergarten transition. The LEA heavily promotes and advertises kindergarten registration in local newspapers and media platforms. The district provides all necessary paperwork for registration in a downloadable format on the District website.

Local Title I schools coordinate with community child development centers to inform parents of the kindergarten registration process and to assist in the transition from preschool to kindergarten. All Title I schools offer a kindergarten transition meeting where they provide parents with the necessary information needed to prepare their children for the entry to elementary school. These meetings are led by the Parent Instructional Coordinator and the kindergarten team of teachers and offer parents strategies to help their children learn necessary skills to begin kindergarten in the fall. Many Title I schools offer Kinder-Camps over the summer to promote kindergarten readiness by giving students a chance to meet the kindergarten teachers and experience a few days of kindergarten activities prior to the start of the school year. During Kinder-Camp, local schools offer a parent workshop to teach parents skills and strategies to help their rising kindergartener for their first year of school.

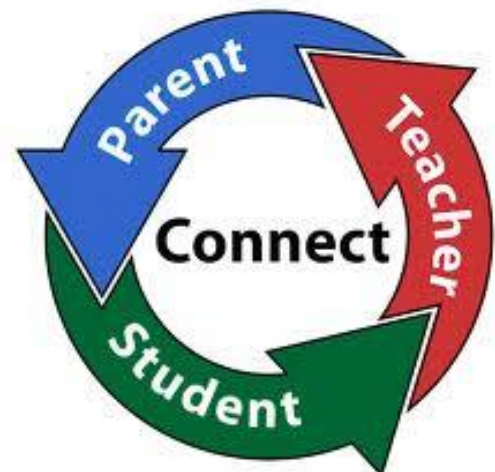
Local Title I schools invite parents who have a child enrolling into kindergarten in the fall to participate in Title I Planning Meetings. To ensure that information related to district, school, and parent programs, meetings and activities is available to all parents in an understandable and uniform format, Title I schools will send home pertinent information regarding important dates and events. All parent communications are provided in an easy-to-understand language. Translations and interpreters for Spanish, Vietnamese, Korean, and Bosnian are available through the GCPS Title III Office, local school personnel, or other contracted individuals. Translations for other languages may be provided upon request, and to the extent practicable. GCPS maintains continuous communication with parents through multiple media sources, including GCPS and local school websites, local media, community and business partners, parent-teacher conferences, parent workshops, parent

centers, newsletters, emails, signs and posters, telephone, and automated calling systems.

Throughout the school year, the district will conduct training related to increasing parent engagement, improving school-family communication, creating a welcoming environment, and building ties with parents in the community. Local schools identify staff and parental needs through formal and informal needs assessments. Schools provide training to all school faculty and staff on effective parent communication strategies. Title I schools will consider parents' input in planning the training for effective communication practices. The district will provide opportunities for visits to each Title I school to review and discuss parental involvement initiatives and to support frequent two-way communication between the parents and school. The district offers monthly opportunities for Parent Instructional Coordinators to meet with District Title I Coordinators and Program Specialists to participate in professional development. Parent Instructional Coordinators are encouraged to network with each other to share best practices.

District and school staff will participate in professional development for promoting family engagement and building parent capacity. Members of a team will receive training for the implementation of Academic Parent Teacher Teams (APTT), a research-based model approach for improving parental involvement.

The LEA will provide opportunities for parents to request additional support and offer input by utilizing a Title I Parent Survey which is offered electronically and via paper/pen each spring. Data collected from the Title I annual survey is analyzed to identify parents' needs.



Parental Involvement Evaluation

In order to measure the effectiveness of the GCPS Title I parental involvement policy and activities, an annual districtwide parent survey is administered each spring. All parents are provided access to the survey through electronic and paper copies and results are posted on district and school websites. Survey results are used to identify and remove any barriers and to increase opportunities for parent participation. Additionally, the results and conclusions from the Local School Plan for Improvement/Schoolwide Plan are shared with parents as an opportunity to provide feedback on its effectiveness.

Using the findings from these measures, the district determines which research-based strategies to implement for more effective parental involvement. This data is also used to determine the need to amend the parent involvement policy.

Each school will submit to the district Title I office any parent comments if the schoolwide plan under section (1114)(b)(2) is not satisfactory to parents of participating children. Once the complaint is received by Gwinnett County Public Schools, it will be copied and forwarded to the appropriate Federal Program Director/Coordinator. Schools and the LEA will utilize the data from the feedback forms and meeting/workshop evaluations provided to parents at each Title I meeting and event and those collected by school personnel at the conclusion of each activity.



This LEA Title I Parent Involvement Policy was reviewed and revised with the input of GCPS staff, parents, and community members. This policy was adopted by the Gwinnett County Public School District on July 1, 2015 and will be in effect for the period of one year.

The school district will distribute this policy to all parents of participating Title I, Part A children on or before October 23, 2015. It will also be available to the community through the Parent Centers and on the GCPS website.