



# Parental Involvement

## under the No Child Left Behind Act

### Overview:

Under the No Child Left Behind Act (the “Act”), a school or school district that uses federal Title I funds for programs to improve the academic performance of children – especially disadvantaged children - must also make a special effort to increase the involvement of the parents of every child that participates in these programs. In particular, parents are encouraged to provide their wisdom, advice, recommendations, and support on all matters – at home *and* in school – that affect the academic success of all children, not just their own. Schools must solicit such parental involvement by implementing certain policies, procedures, activities and programs as set out in the Act.

### School District Parent Involvement Policy:

Recognizing that a child’s academic success is linked to the level of involvement and support a child receives from his or her family, the Act requires that every Title 1 school district have a **written Parent Involvement Policy** (the “District Policy”) explaining how it will help parents to be involved. Representatives of the school district and parents are to write this **District Policy** together, and all parents whose children are participating in Title 1 programs must receive a copy of the **District Policy**.

This **District Policy** must also be included in a broader written plan that Title 1 school districts must file with the State of Vermont outlining the full spectrum of steps they are taking to help low-achieving children meeting challenging academic standards.

Here are some things this **District Policy** must explain:

- The kind of involvement the school wants from parents
- How the school will involve parents in developing its broader written plan for improving academic achievement of all students
- How the school will involve parents in its process for reviewing and improving school programs
- How the school district will support the activities of its participating schools to involve parents
- How the school district will help schools in their efforts to achieve greater parent involvement
- How the school district, working with parents, will identify the barriers to greater parent participation, assess the effectiveness of its District Policy for parent involvement, and use that information to change its strategies or District Policy.
- How parents will be involved in school activities

## Individual School Parental Involvement Policy:

Furthermore, *within* a school district, each *school* that receives Title 1 funds must also have a **Parent Involvement Policy**, written in an understandable format and language parents can understand. Representatives of the individual school and parents must write this **Parent Involvement Policy** together, and all parents whose children are participating in the programs must receive a copy. This **Parent Involvement Policy** must also be shared with the local community and updated as needed to meet the changing needs of parents and schools.

The **Parental Involvement Policy** must describe the methods and activities the school will utilize to carry out its interest to have parents be more involved, such as:

- An annual meeting for all parents of participating children, held in a manner that supports and encourages attendance, which explains the school's participation in the Title 1 program and the right of parents under NCLB to be involved
- Holding other parent and school meetings at flexible times in the morning or evening, or via in-home conferences, with the potential for transportation or child care assistance
- Providing information about school programs, activities and meetings to parents on a timely basis and in understandable format and language
- A parent-involved process for planning, reviewing and improving both the school's academic achievement programs *and* its parent involvement policies
- A parent-involved process for developing a school-wide plan regarding possible upgrades to the entire educational program
- Explaining to parents: (1) the school's curriculum; (2) the assessments it uses to measure student progress; and (3) the student proficiency levels it expects.
- Helping parents to understand: (1) Vermont's "academic content standards"; (2) state and local academic assessments; (3) how to monitor their children's progress; and (4) how to work with educators to improve student achievement
- Providing regular opportunities for parents to meet with school personnel to present suggestions and discuss decisions regarding their children's education
- Offering literacy and other types of training, as well as materials, to give parents helpful skills for supporting their children
- Providing training and education to teachers, principals and staff, and designed with parent input, on:
  - the importance and value of parental contributions
  - how to reach, communicate, and work with parents as equal partners;
  - how to implement parent programs; and
  - how to build ties between parents and the school

## The School-Parent Compact

An important component of the **Parental Involvement Policy** is the joint development of a **School-Parent Compact**, which outlines how parents, students, and school staff will share the responsibility for improved academic achievement. The **School Parent Compact** must also outline *how* the school and parents will develop a partnership to help children achieve the high academic standards established by the State of Vermont.

The **School Parent Compact** must:

- Describe the school's responsibilities around the design and delivery of high-quality curriculum and instruction;
- Describe the parents' responsibility for supporting their child's learning by (1) giving attention to homework, attendance, television watching, and extracurricular activities; and (2) volunteering in the classroom;

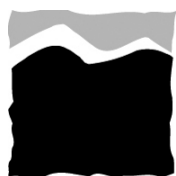
- Address the importance of ongoing communication between teachers and parents through (1) parent-teacher conferences; (2) progress reports; (3) access to staff; and (4) opportunities to volunteer and participate in the classroom.

### **What does this mean for you as a parent?**

If your child attends a school that receives federal funds to improve its academic achievement, then:

- You have the right to participate in developing and assessing your school's parental involvement policies, as well as its broader plans for meeting challenging academic standards;
- You have the right to help review your school's performance and participate in planning for improvements in its programs, practices, policies, and performance
- You have the right to work with your school district to identify barriers to parental involvement, and to participate in developing education and training programs for school personnel designed to build strong ties between parents and your school
- You can expect the school to explain to you vital components of your child's education, such as: the curriculum; testing; academic standards; monitoring the school's progress; and options for school choice and supplemental services
- You can expect the school to provide you with regular opportunities for school meetings at a time and place that are convenient for you
- You can expect the school to keep you informed about matters concerning your child's education in a timely way, and using a form and language that you can understand
- And if you have limited English language skills, a disability, or you move from place to place, you have the right to be given a full opportunity to participate in the programs and activities of your child's school.

## **For more information on this and other educational topics contact PIRC Vermont:**



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**Visit us on the web at**  
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