

Ephrata Area School District
Title One District-wide Parental Involvement Policy
2009-2010



PART I. GENERAL EXPECTATIONS

The Ephrata Area School District agrees to implement the following statutory requirements:

- The school district will put into operation programs, activities and procedures for the involvement of parents in all of its schools with Title I, Part A programs, consistent with section 1118 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). These programs, activities and procedures will be planned and operated with meaningful consultation with parents of participating children.
- Consistent with section 1118, the school district will work with its schools to ensure that the required school-level parental involvement policies meet the requirements of section 1118(b) of the ESEA, and each include, as a component, a school-parent compact consistent with section 1118(d) of the ESEA.
- The school district will incorporate this district wide parental involvement policy into its LEA plan developed under section 1112 of the ESEA.
- In carrying out the Title I, Part A parental involvement requirements, to the extent practicable, the school district and its schools will provide full opportunities for the participation of parents with limited English proficiency, parents with disabilities, and parents of migratory children, including providing information and school reports required under section 1111 of the ESEA in an understandable and uniform format and, including alternative formats upon request, and, to the extent practicable, in a language parents understand.
- If the LEA plan for Title I, Part A, developed under section 1112 of the ESEA, is not satisfactory to the parents of participating children, the school district will submit any parent comments with the plan when the school district submits the plan to the State Department of Education.
- The school district will involve the parents of children served in Title I, Part A schools in decisions about how the 1 percent of Title I, Part A funds reserved for parental involvement is spent, and will ensure that not less than 95 percent of the one percent reserved goes directly to the schools.
- The school district will be governed by the following statutory definition of parental involvement, and expects that its Title I schools 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 child's education at school;*
- (C) that 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) the carrying out of other activities, such as those described in section 1118 of the ESEA.*

PART II. DESCRIPTION OF HOW DISTRICT WILL IMPLEMENT REQUIRED DISTRICT WIDE PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT POLICY COMPONENTS

1. The Ephrata Area School District will take the following actions to involve parents in the joint development of its district wide parental involvement plan under section 1112 of the ESEA:
 - Establish a district-wide parental advisory group comprised of parents with children who are served by the Title One program and conduct regular meetings of this advisory group;
 - Develop and implement procedures for the parent advisory group.
 - Annually review and revise district wide parent involvement policy and procedures at advisory meetings;
 - Annually review the Title One Parent Involvement Policy at each Title one School;
 - Conduct an annual parent needs assessment and analyze results with parent advisory committee to determine future trainings for parents;
 - Assist parents through training, materials, and resources in order to provide parents with enhanced ability to help students learn in the home setting;
 - Provide for the dissemination of information to parents through parental information packets, building newsletters, district and school websites and informational meetings.
2. The Ephrata Area School District will take the following actions to involve parents in the process of school review and improvement under section 1116 of the ESEA:
 - Assist Title One schools in identifying clear and measurable goals for parent involvement;
 - Actively support and promote efforts that increase the level and quality of parent involvement;
 - Provide parents and staff information, materials and training on effective parent involvement and practices;
 - Research and model effective parent involvement activities and practices;
 - Provide resource materials for parent meetings, workshops and take home learning activities;
 - Assist Title One schools with training and ideas on reaching hard to reach parents;

- Collaborate with IU 13 to provide activities that build capacity for parents to assist with their child's learning and participation in the school process through parent conferences and workshops.
3. The Ephrata Area School District will provide the following necessary coordination, technical assistance, and other support to assist Title I, Part A schools in planning and implementing effective parental involvement activities to improve student academic achievement and school performance:
- To promote an inviting atmosphere for parents to feel accepted and to share in the responsibility for their child's academic progress;
 - To strengthen the effectiveness of parents' ability to work with their children at home by providing training and support;
 - To provide school performance profiles that clearly show parents the school's progress toward meeting state standards;
 - To provide a description and explanation of the curriculum, assessment and expected proficiency requirements.
4. The Ephrata Area School District will coordinate and integrate parental involvement strategies in Part A with parental involvement strategies under the following other programs such as Head Start Early Intervention Programs, Homes of Hope, United Way: Success by 6, and Dental Net, Ephrata Area Social Services, Habitat for Humanity, Community Action program, Love, Inc.
- Enhancing efforts to meet the total needs of families and schools by coordinating services and strategies with existing community agencies, programs and businesses;
 - Coordinating services with the school counselor/home and school visitors, social services and community agencies to address key family issues;
 - Recognizing the diversity of family structures, circumstances and responsibilities, including differences that might hinder parent participation;
 - Informing parents through school newsletters and district website about these parent outreach programs and home and school visitor services.
5. The Ephrata Area School District will take the following actions to conduct, with the involvement of parents, an annual evaluation of the content and effectiveness of this parental involvement policy in improving the quality of its Title I, Part A schools. The evaluation will include identifying barriers to greater participation by parents in parental involvement activities (with particular attention to parents who are economically disadvantaged, are disabled, have limited English proficiency, have limited literacy, or are of any racial or ethnic minority background). The school district will use the findings of the evaluation about its parental involvement policy and activities to design strategies for more effective parental involvement, and to revise, if necessary (and with the involvement of parents) its parental involvement policies.

- Each Title one School will administer a Parent Needs Assessment, analyze the responses, review parent training evaluations, taking into consideration; awareness of availability of materials, resources, training and what parents learned and gained. Parental surveys include information regarding information, effective communication, academic weaknesses and strengths, participation and workshops.
6. The Ephrata Area School District 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 school involved, parents, and the community to improve student academic achievement, through the following activities specifically described below:
- A. The school district will, with the assistance of its Title I, Part A schools, provide assistance to parents of children served by the school district or school, as appropriate, in understanding topics such as the following the State's academic content standards, the State's student academic achievement standards, the State and local academic assessments including alternate assessments, and how to monitor their child's progress by conducting open house events, parent teacher conferences, assessment information nights, distributing school and classroom newsletters and holding parent liaison activities.
 - B. The school district will, with the assistance of its schools, provide materials and training to help parents work with their children to improve their children's academic achievement, such as literacy training, and using technology, as appropriate, to foster parental involvement, by providing school and classroom newsletters, conducting parent curriculum sessions and pre-school educational sessions.
 - C. The school district will, with the assistance of its schools and parents, educate its teachers, pupil services personnel, principals and other staff, in how to reach out to, communicate with, and work with parents as equal partners, in the value and utility of contributions of parents, and in how to implement and coordinate parent programs and build ties between parents and schools, by providing professional development in the areas of effective communication, conferencing skills, and utilizing parent volunteers in the classroom.
 - D. The school district will, to the extent feasible and appropriate, coordinate and integrate parental involvement programs and activities with Head Start, Reading First, Early Reading First, Even Start, Home Instruction Programs for Preschool Youngsters, the Parents as Teachers Program, and public preschool and other programs, and conduct other activities, such as parent resource centers, that encourage and support parents in more fully participating in the education of their children, by meeting regularly with pre-school personnel to provide information about kindergarten curriculum changes and the kindergarten screening process. Kindergarten transition activities will be held monthly to provide opportunities for parents to help their child get ready for school.

E. The school district will take the following actions to ensure that information related to the school and parent- programs, meetings, and other activities, is sent to the 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 through the use of school calendars, newsletters, phone calls, school websites, letters to parents, conferences, alert now correspondence and surveys.

PART III. DISCRETIONARY DISTRICTWIDE PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT POLICY COMPONENTS

- Involving parents in the development of training for teachers, principals, and other educators to improve the effectiveness of that training;
- Providing 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;
- Paying 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;
- Training parents to enhance the involvement of other parents;
- In order to maximize parental involvement and participation in their children's education, arranging school meetings at a variety of times, or conducting in-home conferences between teachers or other educators, who work directly with participating children, with parents who are unable to attend those conferences at school;
- Adopting and implementing model approaches to improving parental involvement;
- Establishing a district wide parent advisory council to provide advice on all matters related to parental involvement in Title I, Part A programs;
- Developing appropriate roles for community-based organizations and businesses, including faith-based organizations, in parental involvement activities; and
- Providing other reasonable support for parental involvement activities under section 1118 as parents may request.