



Resource 5

What *NCLB* Says About Your School District’s Parental Involvement Policy*

The *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB)* became law in 2002 with the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). *NCLB* requires all school districts that receive Title I funds to have a written Title I parental involvement policy developed with and approved by parents of participating Title I children. This policy must be evaluated each year. It must explain how the district will involve parents in developing its Title I plan and how parents will be informed about ways they can be included in decision making for the program.

What can I do?

Call your school superintendent’s office to get a copy of your district’s Title I parental involvement policy. Find out:

- *How parents were involved in developing, approving and reviewing the policy.* *NCLB* says the policy must be developed jointly with parents, agreed on with parents and if possible, be distributed to parents in a language that they can understand.

(Parents must also be involved in an annual review of the policy to determine how effective the school has been in increasing the participation of parents. Results are used to identify and plan strategies to correct barriers to parental participation and to build capacity for parental involvement.)

- *If the policy explains how parents, including those with limited English proficiency, will be involved in school review and improvement.* *NCLB* says that districts must state how parents will be involved in addressing academic issues for schools “in need of improvement.”
- *How the district will help Title I schools engage parents in activities to improve student achievement.* *NCLB* says that districts will look at how schools are involving parents and will provide technical assistance to schools “in need of improvement” in carrying out parental involvement activities and plans.
- *What does the policy require schools to do?* The law says that schools in need of improvement must have school improvement plans that include ways to effectively involve parents in the school. (In New Mexico, the *Educational Plan for Student Success* is the school improvement plan.)
- *If the policy applies only to Title I schools or to all schools in the district.* The law says that the policy has to apply to Title I schools, but some districts may choose to apply it to all schools.



Get the facts about your district's parental involvement policy.

- Find out how the district connects with the parental involvement plans with other programs for young children, such as *Head Start, Parents as Teachers and Even Start*. The law says that districts must coordinate and integrate Title I parental involvement strategies with other programs for young children in the district.
- Find out if the district parental involvement policy clearly explains how the district will work with schools to:
 - Explain state standards and annual test results to parents.
 - Let parents know how they can be involved in the school.
 - Help parents work together with teachers to make sure students are making progress.
 - Provide materials, information and other resources to help parents with home learning activities.
 - Find out the best way to reach out to all parents so they can be involved as equal partners.

Remember . . .

Parental involvement has always been an integral part of Title I. Under the law, one of the purposes of Title I is to ensure that Title I Parental Involvement funds are used to promote parental involvement. Parents should take full advantage of the opportunities for involvement that the law provides.

The law requires Title I schools to ensure that each parental involvement policy be written with parents, school staff and school district personnel. This requirement enables parents to sit at the table with school administrators and other educators and write a parental involvement policy. This policy should address how the school, in partnership with parents, will promote the social, emotional and academic growth of children. Parents are now required to be a part of the discussion about how schools will help all children meet the state's academic content standards.

The school and district parental involvement policy may be one and the same, or the school may develop it's own policy.

* For more information and current revisions of the *No Child Left Behind Act* go to the US Department of Education's *NCLB* web site page at <http://www.ed.gov/nclb/landing.jhtml>

Adapted from : Parents Reaching Out , www.parentsreachingout.org