

Louisiana's Parental Involvement Resource Guide to Success

Fall 2006

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STATE OF LOUISIANA
Louisiana Department of Education
Parent Involvement Guide to Success
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Introduction

The 2006-2007 school year is an exciting time for Louisiana. This ***Guide to Success*** is designed as a resource document to assist districts, schools, teachers, parents, and the community, in complying with the regulations prescribed in the ***No Child Left Behind Act of 2001***. Districts and schools will be able to create meaningful partnerships and relationships with communities and businesses in an effort to increase parental involvement in their respective districts. The guide is intended to include parents of all students (i.e., HIPPY, Even Start, Regular Ed, Special Ed, Migrant, and Title I.). By providing a more inclusive parent program, emphasis will be put on involvement; educators will be trained to work with parents, and parents will be prepared to assist their children; thus attaining the ultimate goal of increased student achievement.

This guide will be updated periodically to provide the most current information.

How to Use This Guide

This guide serves as an informational resource for stakeholders involved in Family Involvement for Louisiana’s K-12 schools.

BESE (Board of Elementary and Secondary Education) Members

BESE members may use this guide as a resource to keep them informed regarding the laws governing Parental Involvement in the different educational programs listed and the state’s responsibilities for these programs.

Local School Board

Local school board members may use this guide as a resource to keep them informed about the laws governing Parental Involvement and district responsibilities.

District Staff and Personnel

District staff and personnel may use this guide as a resource to direct them to information about appropriate laws and policies, sample documents to assist in being compliant, websites, and suggestions to assist schools in promoting effective parental involvement activities.

School Staff and Personnel

This guide will provide to school personnel mandates of the law, suggestions for effective parental involvement, websites, tools and tips to assist parents in working with their children, and guidance on being compliant with the mandates of NCLB.

Parents

Parents may use this guide for direction to websites and suggested activities that would enable them to work with their children at home and have a working relationship with school personnel in communication and decision-making skills.

Part I

Strategies for Strong Family Involvement

Part I

Strategies for Strong Family Involvement

This section of the *Guide to Success* gives general information about parental involvement by:

- **Using the National Network of Partnership Schools' six types of involvement along with suggested activities for successful family involvement**
- **Directing stakeholders to websites which deal with family involvement**
- **Helping district and school personnel choose resources and activities structured to their individual needs**

Parental Involvement Activities for Success

The National Network of Partnership Schools of Johns Hopkins University advocates six keys to successful types of parental involvement and partnerships. The following information lists activities that districts may use to implement each type of involvement.

Parenting

Assist families in learning parenting and child development skills, setting home conditions conducive to learning and assist schools in understanding families by providing professional development for faculty and staff.

Suggested Activities

Surveys

Survey parents about their needs, talents, and children's goals, strengths and weaknesses.

Attendance Pep Rally

Conduct a Pep Rally to let parents know about the importance of attendance.

Parent Centers

Set up parent centers with materials that parents can use to assist them in parenting and helping their children with skills. Provide toys, books, computers, games, and other materials that parents can check out for their children to use.

Parent Workshops

Conduct parent trainings to assist parents in learning about child mental, physical and social well-being. Conduct trainings to assist parents in learning skills in math, language arts, etc., and to enable parents to assist their children with homework.

Parent Observations

Provide opportunities to observe parents as they interact with their children. Provide appropriate feedback and suggestions.

Support Home Learning

Provide suggestions that parents can use at home such as setting the home conditions for learning, and setting bedtime hours and routines so that children will come to school better prepared for the school day.

Health Fair

Provide a day when parents and children can come for a one-stop health day to check eyes, ears, blood sugar, blood pressure, etc.

Staff Workshops

Conduct workshops to provide information to staff on how to work with parents of low income and poverty, etc.

Communicating

Conduct effective communication through the use of multi-media between the home and school and school and home.

Suggested Activities

Newsletter

Send a monthly informative newsletter home to parents informing them of school activities, important dates, and student success.

School Handbook

Communicate school policies (discipline, parent involvement, attendance/tardy, etc.).

Parent-Teacher Conferences

Schedule regular conferences to communicate student progress, failure, behavior and other needed information.

Phone Communication

Call each parent at the beginning of the school year to introduce yourself. Call parents as needed throughout the year. Consider using an automated phone message system to parents. (See page 9 for further information).

Meetings

Schedule and conduct regular parent meetings to keep parents informed.

E-Mail

Send e-mail to parents in reference to student progress and school activities.

Home-School Folders

Send home bi-weekly folders of student papers, progress and notices. Require parents to sign each week as documentation that it has been received.

Planners

Send home daily student planners to organize homework and home school communication. Have a designated place for teacher and parent comments and/or signatures.

Verbal Translators

If needed, provide a person to verbally translate to families.

Written Communication

Provide written correspondence in a language that parents can understand (Spanish, Korean, etc.)

Sample Automated Call Systems

Approximate Cost	Benefits
<p>\$1.75 per student per year, plus a one-time set-up fee of \$100.00 per school</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No costly equipment, software or additional • Phone lines needed • Parents/Faculty contacted within minutes with one simple phone call • 150,00 messages delivered per message • User friendly-very little set-up time or training is needed. • Activation from any touch tone telephone or website
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fixed per-student fee for unlimited use • Designed exclusively for the Education and Higher Education markets • Tracks message delivery with comprehensive reports • Easily integrates with most Student Information Systems • Millions of messages sent monthly • No additional hardware, software or phone lines
<p>Bronze option—.05 cents per phone number called/with 30 seconds recording time Silver Option—.07 cents per phone number called/with 45 seconds recording time Gold Option—.10cents per phone number called/with 60 seconds recording time</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unlimited callouts allowed • Automatic redial of busies and unanswered calls (13 additional times-only charged for 1 dt attempt) • No sign-up fee • No software or equipment to download or purchase • Delivers message to a live person or answering machine • Real-time call history available
<p>Unlimited Calling Plans-all staff messages are free Urgent only (emergency announcements only) \$2.25 per* student, per year Urgent Plus-(emergency and non-emergency announcements) \$4.50 per student, per year*</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • *No equipment or software to buy • No setup or training cost • No long-term contract • No other fees or charges • A web-based telephone and messaging service that enables schools to... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Make one phone call - Record a voice message - Immediately sent it to school parents and staff - Up to 4 phone numbers and 4 e-mail addresses Per house hold - Used for immediate Crisis Response - Response to weather conditions - General reminder

Volunteering – **Organize, improve recruitment, and provide volunteer opportunities for parents and community members at the school or other locations to support students and school programs.**

Suggested Activities

At Home

Prepare homework packets to send back to school; call other parents to inform them of school activities; prepare art work for teacher's classrooms; assist teacher by grading homework

In the Classroom

Read to students; share information for career day; assist the teacher by working with a group of students; monitor students in the play area; monitor students in the restroom; monitor students at lunch; assist students with art activities, computers, crafts and other activities.

At School

Chauffer and chaperone events; coordinate fundraisers; help run papers for teachers; answer the phone; assist in the Parent Center; Monitor street crossing, during arrival and dismissal; communicate with other parents; set up the volunteer committee, survey parents for assistance at school; assist with family nights and after school programs; etc.

Learning at Home

Involve families with their children in learning activities at home, including homework and other skill building activities designed to improve student achievement.

Suggested Activities

Assist Parents with Homework

Set up a homework hotline where parents can obtain information about the assignments that have been given.

E-Mail Activities or Website

Set up a classroom and/or school website with information on the curriculum and course of study for the week. Post this information a week in advance. Parents will be informed ahead of time about the areas of study for the class.

Website Learning

Send home a list of educational child friendly websites which includes games and activities that children can do at home during the school year.

Calendar of Activities

Provide a weekly or monthly calendar of activities that parents can assist children in doing at home.

Home Visit Activities

Encourage parents to participate in Home Instruction for Parents of Pre-School Youngsters (HIPPY) and Even Start Family Literacy program. Teachers can visit each child's home with positive information in the beginning of the school year to prepare students and their families for the class.

Workshops

Provide workshops for parents on the following issues: Setting up the Home Learning Environment; Creating a Routine to Improve Home Work; How to be Consistent and Firm with Routines; etc.

Parent Notes

Send home parent notes with suggestions on how to help children with certain skills and how to make the learning meaningful.

Summer and After School Work Packets

Send summer and after school work packets; and modules for internet and public library use so that the learning process continues when students are away from school.

Weekly/Monthly Newsletter

Send home weekly or monthly newsletters which include sample activities that parents can assist children with at home.

Decision - Making

Include families as participants in school decisions through School Improvement Teams, District Advisory Councils, PTA/PTO, Booster Clubs, committees and other parent organizations.

Suggested Activities

Board Member Representative

Include parents as a member of the school board to represent the various school organizations.

State/District Level Committee

Develop district and state level committees that families can be involved in.

Election Notices

Provide notices to parents about upcoming elections that are school-related.

School Level Committees

Involve parents and families on School Improvement Teams, and PTO's. Solicit Band Boosters, Football Boosters, Alumni Associations and other school level organizations to be active in the decision making process at the school by attending and participating in meetings which deal with the academic focus of the school.

Fund-Raising Opportunities

Allow families and parents to make decisions about fund-raising opportunities and grant-writing.

Parental Involvement Plan

Involve parents in writing the Parental Involvement Plan for the school and district.

Collaborating with the Community

Coordinate resources and services for families, students and the school with area businesses, agencies, and other community groups.

Suggested Activities

Community Adopters

Parents communicate with businesses in the community and encourage businesses to adopt a school.

Alumni Support

Encourage participation and the formulation of an alumni support group to assist with fund raising, campus beautification, and tutoring, mentoring and other activities.

Community Clean-Up Day

Parents and community members participate in a one-day clean-up of the community surrounding the school.

Health Fair Day

Sponsor a Health Fair Day at the school so that families can have a one-stop shop for blood sugar screening, high blood pressure screenings, eye and ear checks, etc.

Business Communication Day

Sponsor a Business Communication Day where banks and financial institutions come to teach families about a saving plan, retirement, and how to use money successfully.

Suggested Parental Involvement Websites

The National Network of Partnership Schools

<http://www.csos.jhu.edu/p2000/>

Family Friendly Schools

<http://www.familyfriendlyschools.com/>

Parent- Teacher Conferences

<http://www.teachersandfamilies.com/open/parent/parent-tchr1.cfm>

Parental Involvement Made Easy

http://www.education-world.com/a_curr/curr030.shtml

Harvard Family Research Project

<http://www.gse.harvard.edu/hfrp/projects/fine/resources/guide/guide.html>

Helping Children Succeed In School

<http://www.urbanext.uiuc.edu/succeed/03-stress.html>

Northwest Regional Education Laboratory (NWREL)

<http://www.nwrel.org/scpd/sirs/3/cu6.html>

National Center for Learning Disabilities (Parent Guide)

<http://www.nclid.org/content/view/900/456084/>

Project Apple Seed

<http://www.projectappleseed.org/aboutappleseed.html>

Getting Parents Involved

<http://www.gettingparentsinvolved.com/>

School Family Nights

<http://www.ptotoday.com/sfn/?gclid=CMb1gIyOt4UCFUmCLAodUEaDFQ>

Parent Involvement in Schools

<http://childparenting.about.com/cs/parentinvolvement/a/parentschool.htm>

Parent/Family Involvement

<http://www.sdcoe.k12.ca.us/lret/family/welcome.asp>

Reading Approaches for Parents

<http://www.silverinkpublishing.com/>

Parenting from a Distance

<http://www.janwalker-writer.com/>

Part II

What the Research Says

Part II

What the Research Says

This section provides a synopsis of literature indicating the importance of parent involvement in increasing student achievement. The following pages provide evidence of studies that have taken place which corroborates that parental involvement is essential to improved student achievement.

(The following document was published by the North West Research Laboratory in May of 1989.)

INTRODUCTION

"It is no wonder that parent involvement with the schools has become a major educational issue in the 1980s. This is an era of increasing concern about the quality of education in this country. States are taking a greater role in monitoring and maintaining academic standards. Communities are ever more watchful of the expense of public education. Local schools are concerned about continuing to provide high-quality teaching and other services with dwindling resources. And parents want assurance that their children will receive adequate preparation to lead rewarding adult lives.

Is parent involvement a valuable, if largely untapped, resource for schools struggling to provide state-of-the-art instruction with diminishing funds--a way to instill pride and interest in schooling, increase student achievement, and enhance a sense of community and commitment? Or is it one more responsibility to add to overburdened teachers and administrators--or even a threat to the autonomy and professionalism of the schools?

This review of the literature on parent involvement examines these issues, focusing, in particular on the following five areas:

Does parent involvement have positive effects on student achievement? If so, what type of involvement works best?

What are the effects of parent involvement on other student outcomes, such as attitude, self-concept, classroom behavior, and attendance?

Is parent involvement useful beyond the preschool and early elementary grades--in middle school and high school? If so, what form should it take?

What is known about the uses of parent involvement in predominantly minority and/or lower income communities?

What, if any, effects on children's schooling can be attributed to parent involvement in the governance of schools?

DEFINITION OF PARENT INVOLVEMENT

The term "parent involvement" is used broadly in this report. It includes several different forms of participation in education and with the schools. Parents can support their children's schooling by attending school functions and responding to school obligations (parent-teacher conferences, for example). They can become more involved in helping their children improve their schoolwork--providing encouragement, arranging for appropriate study time and space, modeling desired behavior (such as reading for pleasure), monitoring homework, and actively tutoring their children at home.

Outside the home, parents can serve as advocates for the school. They can volunteer to help out with school activities or work in the classroom. Or they can take an active role in the governance and decision making necessary for planning, developing, and providing an education for the community's children.

THE PARENT INVOLVEMENT LITERATURE

There are literally hundreds of books, journal articles, and stand-alone reports on the subject of parents' involvement in their children's education. These writings include research reports, expert opinions, theory papers, program descriptions, and guidelines for setting up programs. A great many of these reports are informative and useful, and, because parent involvement has become a "hot topic" in the past few years, there is considerable current information.

The present report synthesizes information from forty-one documents on different aspects of parent involvement. Because several of these are review/summaries of still other documents, many additional writings are represented.

Documents were selected to reflect research on the effects of parent involvement on student achievement and other student outcomes. Twenty-five of the supporting documents are research studies, eight are reviews, and eight are program descriptions and research-based guidelines for setting up programs. All age/grade levels are represented in the research, as are specific student populations, such as the disadvantaged, special education, and limited English proficient students.

The kinds of parent involvement investigated include telephone and written home-school communications, attending school functions, parents serving as classroom volunteers, parent-teacher conferences, homework assistance/tutoring, home educational enrichment, and parent involvement in decision making and other aspects of school governance. The researchers focused on a variety of student outcome areas, including general achievement; achievement in reading, math, or other specific curricular areas; IQ scores; and an array of attitudinal and behavioral outcomes.

EFFECTS OF PARENT INVOLVEMENT ON STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

The research overwhelmingly demonstrates that parent involvement in children's learning is positively related to achievement. Further, the research shows that the more intensively parents are involved in their children's learning; the more beneficial are the achievement effects. This holds true for all types of parent involvement in children's learning and for all types and ages of students.

Looking more closely at the research, there are strong indications that the most effective forms of parent involvement are those which engage parents in working directly with their children on learning activities in the home. Programs which involve parents in reading with their children, supporting their work on homework assignments, or tutoring them using materials and instructions provided by teachers, show particularly impressive results.

Along similar lines, researchers have found that the more active forms of parent involvement produce greater achievement benefits than the more passive ones. That is, if parents receive

phone calls, read and sign written communications from the school, and perhaps attends and listens during parent teacher conferences, greater achievement benefits accrue than would be the case with no parent involvement at all. However, considerably greater achievement benefits are noted when parent involvement is active--when parents work with their children at home, certainly, but also when they attend and actively support school activities and when they help out in classrooms or on field trips, and so on.

The research also shows that the earlier in a child's educational process parent involvement begin, the more powerful the effects will be. Educators frequently point out the critical role of the home and family environment in determining children's school success, and it appears that the earlier this influence is "harnessed," the greater the likelihood of higher student achievement. Early childhood education programs with strong parent involvement components have amply demonstrated the effectiveness of this approach.

What about orientation and training for parents who wish to become more involved in their children's learning? Those research studies which have compared parent involvement programs that include orientation/training components with those that do not indicate that providing orientation and training enhances the effectiveness of parent involvement. Research in this area indicates that parents generally want and need direction to participate with maximum effectiveness. Orientation/training takes many forms, from providing written directions with a send-home instructional packet; to providing "make-and-take" workshops where parents construct, see demonstrations of, and practice using instructional games; to programs in which parents receive extensive training and ongoing supervision by school personnel.

A word of caution about training activities for parents: While research indicates that orientation/training activities are beneficial, those researchers who have looked at the extent of training have found that a little is better than a lot. That is, programs with extensive parent training components do not produce higher student achievement than those with only basic training, and they sometimes experience considerable attrition--presumably because their time and effort requirements overtax the willingness of parents to stay involved.

Researchers have also found that the schools with the most successful parent involvement programs are those which offer a variety of ways parents can participate. Recognizing that parents differ greatly in their willingness, ability, and available time for involvement in school activities, these schools provide a continuum of options for parent participation.

THE EFFECTS OF PARENT INVOLVEMENT ON STUDENT ATTITUDE AND BEHAVIOR

Sixteen of the documents on which this report is based address the relationship between parent involvement and achievement and then also look at the effects of parent involvement on student outcomes other than achievement. These include attitude toward school or toward particular subject areas, self-concept, classroom behavior, time spent on homework, expectations for one's future, absenteeism, motivation, and retention.

While not as extensively researched as the parent involvement-student achievement relationship, the relationship between parent involvement and these affective outcomes appears to be both strong and positive. All the research studies which address these areas found that parent involvement has positive effects on student attitudes and social behavior.

As might be expected, the pattern of parent involvement shown to confer the most positive effects on students' achievement is also the most beneficial with respect to these other student outcomes. In general, active parent involvement is more beneficial than passive involvement, but passive forms of involvement are better than no involvement at all. As for which specific kinds of involvement in children's learning have the greatest affective benefits, no clear answer emerges from the research. Whereas direct parent involvement in instruction seems to be the single most powerful approach for fostering achievement benefits, all of the active forms of parent involvement seem more or less equally effective in bringing about improvements in students' attitudes and behavior.

Although the main focus of this report is the effects of parent involvement on student outcomes, it is certainly worth noting that research reveals many benefits for school systems and for parents themselves when parents become involved in their children's learning. School personnel benefit from the improved rapport that generally accompanies increased parent involvement. This rapport is often expressed in parents' increased willingness to support schools with their labor and resources during fundraising activities or special projects. And certainly, the many ways in which parent involvement benefits students' achievement, attitudes, and behavior have a positive impact on school staff.

The research also reveals that improved parent attitudes toward the school and improved parent self concepts characteristically result when parents become involved in their children's learning. Parents often begin their participation doubting that their involvement can make much difference, and they are generally very gratified to discover what an important contribution they are able to make. In this connection, it is important for school people and parents to be aware that parent involvement supports students' learning, behavior, and attitudes regardless of factors such as parents' income, educational level, and whether or not parents are employed. That is, the involvement of parents who are well-educated, well-to-do, or have larger amounts of time to be involved has not been shown to be more beneficial than the involvement of less-advantaged parents. All parent involvement works and works well.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT AT THE MIDDLE SCHOOL AND SECONDARY SCHOOL LEVELS

There is a much higher incidence of parent involvement at the preschool level and in the primary grades than at the middle school or secondary level, and, consequently, the majority of research on parent involvement has been conducted with young children and their families. Indeed, just a few years ago, research on parent involvement in the education of older students was too limited to permit drawing any conclusions about its effectiveness.

In recent years, however, more research has been conducted with middle school and secondary students and their families. This research shows that parent involvement remains very beneficial in promoting positive achievement and affective outcomes with these older students.

Researchers have identified various differences in the incidence and types of parent involvement as students move through the upper elementary and secondary grades. They point out that parents generally become less involved as their children grow older for many reasons: schools are bigger and farther from home, the curriculum is more sophisticated, each student has several teachers, parents of older students are more likely to be employed, and students are beginning to establish some sense of separation and independence from their parents. For these reasons, the kinds of parent involvement engaged in by parents of younger children are no longer relevant or useful.

The research on the effectiveness of parent involvement with older students, therefore, often focuses on different forms of participation--e.g., parents monitoring homework, helping students make postsecondary plans and select courses which support these plans, parent-school agreements on rewards for achievement and behavioral improvements--as well as some of the "standby" functions, such as regular home-school communication about students' progress and parent attendance at school-sponsored activities.

Clearly, parent involvement is effective in fostering achievement and affective gains at all levels, and schools are encouraged to engage and maintain this involvement throughout the middle school and secondary years.

THE ROLE OF PARENT INVOLVEMENT WITH DISADVANTAGED STUDENTS

Thus far, this report has focused on the effects of parent involvement on achievement and other outcomes for students in general. But what about specific populations of students, particularly those whose socioeconomic status puts them at an educational disadvantage as compared with their more fortunate peers?

The nature of the parent involvement research base makes this question easier to address than it might be if it were necessary to mount all-new research efforts with disadvantaged populations. As it is, much of the general parent involvement research has been conducted with low-income, often black or Hispanic families. Sometimes this has occurred because both the parent involvement activities and the evaluations of them have been mandated as part of government-funded programs for disadvantaged children. In other cases, educators sensed the potential of parent involvement programs in poor neighborhoods, set these up, and then compared outcomes with those from other schools which are demographically similar.

The first thing researchers discovered is that minority or low-income parents are often underrepresented among the ranks of parents involved with the schools. There are numerous reasons for this: lack of time or energy (due to long hours of heavy physical labor, for example), embarrassment or shyness about one's own educational level or linguistic abilities, lack of understanding or information about the structure of the school and accepted communication

channels, perceived lack of welcome by teachers and administrators, and teachers and administrators' assumptions of parents' disinterest or inability to help with children's schooling.

Perhaps one of the most important findings of the research, however, is that parents of disadvantaged and minority children can and do make a positive contribution to their children's achievement in school if they receive adequate training and encouragement in the types of parent involvement that can make a difference. Even more significant, the research dispels a popular myth by revealing, as noted above, that parents can make a difference regardless of their own levels of education. Indeed, disadvantaged children have the most to gain from parent involvement programs.

Because of the special problems and the potential associated with minority and disadvantaged parent involvement, care must be taken to emphasize the concept of parents as partners of the school. Too often, because of the discontinuities between teachers/administrators and the communities in which their schools are located, school personnel tend to view the parents and surrounding community as needing to change and having little to offer. This "deficit model," as it has been called, is clearly detrimental to the development of positive attitudes about education and good working relationships between the community and the school. The guidelines offered at the end of this report can help schools and communities break down some of these barriers and move toward genuine working partnerships.

It is worth mentioning, in passing, that parent involvement benefits members of other special student populations as well. While the investigation leading to this report did not involve an in-depth analysis of evidence regarding these populations, the research reviewed does indicate that special education, gifted, limited English proficient, and other student groups also experience achievement and affective benefits when their parents are involved in their learning.

THE EFFECTS OF PARENT INVOLVEMENT IN SCHOOL GOVERNANCE

Turning from the matter of parent involvement in children's learning, what about the outcomes produced by parent involvement in school governance? The term "governance" here includes any activity which provides parents the opportunity to take part in decision making about school programs. This may include being a school board member, a participant on a parent advisory committee or a local school improvement council, or an active member of the PTA. Areas in which parents may be helping to make program decisions include goal setting, development and implementation of program activities, assessment, personnel decisions, and funding allocations.

This area of parent involvement is one of the most controversial. Surveys show that most parents would like to play a more active role in this type of involvement, whereas most school administrators and teachers exhibit great reluctance to encourage parents to become partners in governance.

The literature reviewed for this report indicates that although administrators agree that parents should be involved with the schools in a variety of ways and that school personnel should spend time encouraging and training parents to become involved, they disapprove of parent involvement in administrative areas such as teacher and principal selection and evaluation, and

are less enthusiastic than parents regarding the utility of parent participation in other activities, such as the selection of texts and other teaching materials or setting priorities for the school budget. They also tend to feel that parents do not have enough training to make school decisions, although surveys of parents indicate that the majority of them feel they are capable of making sound decisions.

In this review, no examples were found of programs in which parent participation in decision-making roles could be directly linked to improved student achievement. The relationship between parent participation in decision making and student achievement is not nearly as extensively researched as the effects of parent involvement in students' learning. Indeed, writers on the topic indicate that it is more difficult to assess the effects of parent involvement in decision making precisely because the connection to student outcomes is more indirect.

Of the half-dozen documents which do address the connection between parent involvement in decision making and student achievement, none were able to offer evidence of a causal relationship, though some writers seem to believe that such a relationship exists.

The lack of evidence linking parent involvement in governance and student achievement should not be taken to mean that parents should not be included in some aspects of school decision making, however. Researchers and others have identified benefits other than student achievement which have been found to emerge from involving parents in governance. These include:

The elimination of mistaken assumptions parents and school people may hold about one another's motives, attitudes, intentions and abilities

The growth of parents' ability to serve as resources for the academic, social and psychological development of their children--with the potential for much longer-term influence (because of continued interaction with their children over time)

The increase of parents' own skills and confidence, sometimes furthering their own educations and upgrading their jobs, thus providing improved role models for their children

The increase in parents serving as advocates for the schools throughout the community

Research indicates that the kinds of parent involvement referenced earlier in this report--attending parent teacher conferences and school functions, volunteering in classrooms, tutoring children at home, etc.--provide the best training ground to help prepare parents for roles in school decision making. These activities enable parents to understand something of the school's structure and its instructional programs and provide basic experience in working with school personnel. These experiences can expand parents' knowledge and increase their credibility with school staff as they move into decision-making roles.

ENGAGING MEANINGFUL PARENT INVOLVEMENT IN THE SCHOOLS

Investigators have identified lack of planning and lack of mutual understanding as the two greatest barriers to effective parent involvement. School staff wishing to institute effective programs will need to be both open-minded and well-organized in their approach to engaging parent participation.

Research has established that the most successful parent participation efforts are those which offer parents a variety of roles in the context of a well organized and long-lasting program. Parents will need to be able to choose from a range of activities which accommodate different schedules, preferences, and capabilities. As part of the planning process, teachers and administrators will need to assess their own readiness for involving parents and determine how they wish to engage and utilize them.

Other guidelines include:

Communicate to parents that their involvement and support makes a great deal of difference in their children's school performance, and that they need not be highly educated or have large amounts of free time for their involvement to be beneficial. Make this point repeatedly.

Encourage parent involvement from the time children first enter school (or preschool, if they attend).

Teach parents that activities such as modeling reading behavior and reading to their children increase children's interest in learning.

Develop parent involvement programs that include a focus on parent involvement in instruction--conducting learning activities with children in the home, assisting with homework, and monitoring and encouraging the learning activities of older students.

Provide orientation and training for parents, but remember that intensive, long-lasting training is neither necessary nor feasible.

Make a special effort to engage the involvement of parents of disadvantaged students, who stand to benefit the most from parent participation in their learning, but whose parents are often initially reluctant to become involved.

Continue to emphasize that parents are partners of the school and that their involvement is needed and valued." (Northwest Educational Laboratory, May 1989)

Part III

Legal

Requirements

Part III

Legal Requirements

Part II addresses the parent requirements that are outlined in the various Titles of the *No Child Left Behind Act*. These requirements are emphasized to give the stakeholder a guide to the actual mandates of NCLB that are directly focused on Parental Involvement. Included in the section is also a snapshot guide of state, district, and school responsibilities for parental involvement.

Key Title I, Part A Parental Notice Requirements

Key Title I, Part A Parental Notice Requirements*	When	By whom		
		SEAs	LEAs	Schools
<p>Annual report cards (SEAs and LEAs disseminate to parents, schools, and the public, an annual report card with aggregate information, including student achievement (disaggregated by category), graduation rates, performance of LEAs, teacher qualifications, and other required information). <i>[Section 1111(h)(1) and (2), ESEA.]</i> Guidance, B-5 (SEA) and C-7 (LEA).</p>	Annually	✓	✓	
<p>Individual student assessment reports (SEAs, in consultation with LEAs, provide to parents, teachers, and principals of students in <u>all</u> schools individual student interpretive, descriptive, and diagnostic reports, which allow specific academic needs to be understood and addressed, and include information on the student's achievement on academic assessments aligned with State academic achievement standards). <i>[Section 1111(b)(3)(C)(xii), ESEA.]</i></p>	As soon as practicable after the assessment is given	✓		
<p>Progress review (SEAs disseminate to parents, LEAs, teachers and other staff, students, and the community the results of the SEA's yearly progress review of each LEA (including progress in carrying out parental involvement responsibilities); LEAs disseminate to parents, teachers, principals, schools, and the community the results of the LEA's yearly progress review of each school). <i>[Section 1116(a)(1)(C), (c)(1)(B) and (c)(6), ESEA.]</i> Guidance, B-7 (SEA) and C-20 (LEA)</p>	Annually	✓	✓	
<p>LEAs identified for improvement (SEAs notify parents of children enrolled in schools in the LEA that the LEA has been identified for improvement and other information). <i>[Section 1116(c)(1) and (6), ESEA.]</i> Guidance, B-8.</p>	Promptly upon identification	✓		

Key Title I, Part A Parental Notice Requirements*	When	By whom		
		SEAs	LEAs	Schools
LEAs identified for corrective action (SEAs disseminate to parents and public information on corrective actions taken by SEA). [Section 1116(c)(10)(E), ESEA.] Guidance, B-9.		✓		
Schools identified for school improvement, corrective action, or restructuring (LEAs provide to parents of each student an explanation of what the identification means, how the schools compare to others, reasons for the identification, the LEA's and school's response, how parents can become involved, any corrective action taken, the parental choice and supplemental services options as applicable, restructuring, and other information). [Section 1116(b)(6), 7(E), and 8(C), ESEA, and 34 CFR 200.37(5).] Guidance, C-21, C-22, and C-23.	Promptly following identification		✓	
Schools identified for corrective action – supplemental services notice (LEAs serving schools that fail to make adequate yearly progress (AYP) by the end of the first full school year after being identified for improvement provide notice to parents of the availability of supplemental services, the identity of the providers, a description of the services, and other information). [Section 1116(e)(2), ESEA.]	Annually (at a minimum)		✓	
Schools identified for restructuring (LEAs serving schools that fail to make AYP after 1 full school year of corrective action provide prompt notice to teachers and parents and provide opportunity to comment and participate in preparing a restructuring plan). [Section 1116(b)(8)(C), ESEA.] Guidance, C-27.	Promptly after school misses AYP following 1 full school year of being in corrective action		✓	
Written parental involvement policies (LEAs notify parents of Title I, Part A children of district-level written parental involvement policy; schools notify parents	Determined by LEA		✓ (LEA policy)	✓ (school policy)

Key Title I, Part A Parental Notice Requirements*	When	By whom		
		SEAs	LEAs	Schools
and community of school's written parental involvement policy). [Section 1118(a)(2) and (b)(1), ESEA.] Guidance, C-3 and C-4 (LEA), and D-1 (school).				
Written SEA complaint procedures (LEAs disseminate free of charge to parents of students, and to appropriate private school officials or representatives, adequate information about the SEA's written complaint procedures for resolving issues of violation(s) of a Federal statute or regulation that applies to Title I, Part A programs). [34 CFR Section 200.11(d).]	Determined by SEA		✓	
Parents' right to know – teacher and paraprofessional qualifications (LEAs inform parents of Title I, Part A students that parents may request, and the LEA then will provide, certain information on the professional qualifications of the student's classroom teachers and paraprofessionals providing services to the child). [Section 1111(h)(6)(A), ESEA.] Guidance, C-6.	Annually, at beginning of school year		✓	
Parents' right to know – student achievement (schools provide to each individual parent information on the level of achievement of the parent's child in each of the State academic assessments). [Section 1111(h)(6)(B)(i), ESEA.] Guidance, D-10. NOTE: This requirement may be covered by the SEA's individual student assessment report indicated above.	Determined by LEA.			✓
Parents' right to know - non-highly qualified teachers (schools provide to each individual parent timely notice that the parent's child has been assigned, or taught for 4 or more consecutive weeks by, a teacher who is not highly qualified). [Section 1111(h)(6)(B)(ii), ESEA.] Guidance, D-3.	Timely			✓
Title I, Part A meeting (schools invite parents to an informational meeting to				

Key Title I, Part A Parental Notice Requirements*	When	By whom		
		SEAs	LEAs	Schools
inform them about the school's participation in Title I, Part A programs and explain the requirements and their right to be involved). [Section 1118(c)(1) and (2), ESEA.] Guidance, D-5.	Annual			✓
Title I, Part A information (schools provide to parents of participating children specific information about Title I, Part A programs, and opportunity to request regular meetings). [Section 1118(c)(4), ESEA.] Guidance, D-6.	Timely			✓
Limited English proficient students - general (LEAs implement effective outreach to inform parents of limited English proficient children of how those parents can be involved in their children's education and active participants in helping their children attain English proficiency, high achievement levels in core academic subjects, and meet State standards, including notice of opportunities for and holding regular meetings). [Section 1112(g)(4), ESEA] Guidance, C-9.	Regular (meetings)		✓	
Limited English proficient students - language instruction educational programs (LEAs inform parents of limited English proficient children identified for participation or participating in a Title I, Part A-funded language instruction educational program under Title III of the ESEA, of: reasons for the identification, level of English proficiency, methods of instruction, how the program will help the child, and other information; LEAs inform parents of a child with a disability how the language instruction educational program meets the objectives of the child's individualized educational program (IEP)). [Section 1112(g)(1)(A) and (3), ESEA.] Guidance, C-9 and C-10.	Annually, not later than 30 days after the beginning of school year for children ID'd before beginning of year; otherwise within first 2 weeks of child being placed in language instruction program.		✓	

Key Title I, Part A Parental Notice Requirements*	When	By whom		
		SEAs	LEAs	Schools
<p>Limited English proficient students - insufficient language instruction educational programs (eligible entity using Title I, Part A funds for a language instruction educational program under Title III of the ESEA provides separate notice to parents of a child identified for participation in, or participating in, the program to inform them that the program has not made progress on the annual measurable achievement objectives). <i>[Section 1112(g)(1)(B), ESEA.]</i></p>	Not later than 30 days after the failure occurs		✓ (or other eligible entity)	
<p>Students with the most significant cognitive disabilities (a State that measures the achievement of students with the most significant cognitive disabilities based on alternate achievement standards must ensure that parents are informed that their child’s achievement will be based on these alternate standards. The SEA must also ensure that parents are informed of the actual achievement levels of these students, particularly in the case of an LEA that exceeds the 1% cap on counting proficient scores for AYP). <i>[Section 1111(b)(3), ESEA, and 34 CFR Section 200.6(a)(2)(iii)(A)(2), 200.13(c)(4)(v)]</i></p>	Determined by SEA	✓		

***This table includes key Title I, Part A statutory and regulatory requirements for notice or information given or disseminated to parents of students participating in Title I, Part A programs. It is not intended to be an exhaustive list, and does not include consultation, collaboration, technical assistance, training, or other types of requirements. Except where otherwise indicated, the terms “LEAs” and “schools” refer to local educational agencies (LEAs) and schools with programs funded under Title I, Part A of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). (Ed.Gov – Parental Involvement Guidance)**

Title I, Part A – Miscellaneous Notice (March 2005)

“A little recognized amendment to Section 445 of the general Education Provisions Act establishes yet another parental notification requirement. LEAs receiving funds under any ED program must develop a policy, in consultation with parents, regarding parental notice of and access to surveys requesting certain types of personal information about students, as well as notice and right to refuse certain physical examinations. The amendment also establishes the right of parents to see instructional materials used to teach their children. This policy must be distributed to all parents in the LEA at the start of each school year.”

(Brustein and Manasevit, March 2005, p. 190).

Website Access for Legislation on Parental Involvement

Title I Part A – Parental Involvement

Parental Involvement Guidance

<http://www.ed.gov/programs/titleiparta/parentinvguid.doc>

IDEA – Special Education

Parents' Rights and Informational Resources

<http://www.louisianaschools.net/ide/eia/1030.html>

Education Rights of Exceptional Children

<http://www.louisianaschools.net/ide/uploads/7840.pdf>

Parent Notification Letters

<http://www.louisianaschools.net/ide/uploads/8773.doc>

Migrant Education Program

Migrant Education Guidance

<http://www.ed.gov/programs/mep/legislation.html>

Even Start Family Literacy

<http://www.louisianaschools.net/ide/family/2287>

Part IV

Program

Descriptions

Part IV

Program Descriptions

This section gives a general description of the majority of programs administered by the Louisiana Department of Education that must include Parental Involvement as a part of its program. The following pages will serve as a guide for stakeholders and school personnel to use when implementing the programs.

Title I Part A, Parental Involvement

Title I Part A is a funding source for school districts that is based on the free and reduced lunch count for the district. Districts submit an application to the state to receive these funds. The *No Child left Behind Act of 2001* mandates that all districts receiving funds under this source provide certain information and notifications to parents.

Districts receiving Title 1, Part A allocations of greater than \$500,000 must reserve at least 1 percent for parental involvement, including promoting family literacy and parenting skills. After allocating an equitable amount of funds for parents of private school students, the LEA must distribute at least 95 percent to its public schools, leaving the balance of the reserved funds for parental involvement activities at the district level.

(See the chart under Legal Requirements for further information).

Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters (HIPPY)

The Home Instruction Program for Preschool Youngsters (HIPPY) is a home-based, early intervention/school readiness program that helps educationally disadvantaged parents provide educational enrichment for their preschool children. The two basic tenets of HIPPY are that all children can learn and that all parents want what is best for their children. HIPPY USA is the national network for 150 local HIPPY programs operating in 24 states and Washington, D.C.; it served over 16,000 children in program year 2004-05. Across the country, HIPPY is funded locally with Title I, Head Start, Parent Information and Resource Centers (PIRC) grants or State-generated funds.

Basically, the HIPPY program is about parents and children spending fifteen minutes a day at the kitchen table with a storybook, a puzzle or a learning game, and it is about children who enter kindergarten ready to succeed. The scope and sequence of the curriculum extend for three years, ages three through five; 30 weeks of activity have been designed for each year.

Building on the basic bond between parents and children, the HIPPY program also strengthens the ties of families with their schools and communities. HIPPY parents learn how to work together and how to interact with schools around the common cause of healthy, happy children.

While HIPPY is primarily a school readiness and parent involvement program, local HIPPY programs have been recognized for their efforts in strengthening the bond between parent and child (helping with child abuse prevention and school drop-out prevention), its efforts to train community members in important job skills (job training or welfare-to-work), as well as connections to other, larger initiatives. Below are some examples of how HIPPY fits into several national agenda items:

1. AS A SCHOOL READINESS PROGRAM, HIPPY provides the child with numerous opportunities for practicing skills that improve their cognitive, language, physical and social/emotional development.
2. AS A PARENT INVOLVEMENT PROGRAM, HIPPY helps parents to become more confident in their ability to educate their children.
3. AS A FAMILY LITERACY PROGRAM, HIPPY increases the literacy materials and activities in the home, increases parent-child interaction, and enhances the teaching and communication skills of the parent.
4. AS A BILINGUAL EDUCATION PROGRAM, HIPPY provides curriculum and story books in both English and Spanish and recruits home visitors from within the community to deliver the program to mono-lingual parents.

5. AS A DROPOUT PREVENTION PROGRAM, HIPPY builds on and further develops the bond between parent and child, thereby fostering ongoing communication and a steady closeness in the relationship.
6. AS A CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION PROGRAM, HIPPY employs the same family-strengthening principles that support it as drop-out prevention program.
7. AS A CRIME PREVENTION PROGRAM, HIPPY is considered to be a family-based early intervention program that provides clear evidence of successful federally funded crime prevention, according to a 1997 Congressional report, "Preventing Crime: What Works? What Doesn't?" State legislators in Louisiana and Colorado have funded HIPPY programs with state crime prevention dollars.
8. AS A JOB TRAINING PROGRAM, HIPPY is often the first job for many home visitors. During their time with HIPPY, home visitors gain expertise in early childhood education as well as learn a variety of skills, including time management, organization, administration, computer skills, and filing.

Even Start Family Literacy

Participation in Even Start Family Literacy helps break the cycle of poverty and illiteracy by improving educational opportunities for low-income families through an integrated approach for early childhood education, adult literacy or adult basic education, parenting education, and parent and child interactive literacy activities. Even Start is a partnership between a local school system and high-quality community resource providers, such as non-profit community-based organizations, public agencies, institutions of higher education, or public or private non-profit organizations. The overall goal of Even Start is to promote the academic achievement of children and adults and to assist them in achieving challenging State content and student performance standards. A unified family literacy program includes the essential services listed below:

Adult literacy, basic skills, and life skills instruction	Raising the educational levels of parents helps them gain the motivation, skills, and knowledge needed to become employed or to pursue further education or training.
Early childhood education	Increasing the developmental skills of preschool children better prepares them for academic and social success in school.
Parent education and support	Providing parents with an opportunity to share their concerns with a trained instructor and/or their peers helps them learn new parenting strategies and provides support in their efforts to deal more effectively with day-to-day challenges.
Regular opportunities for parent and child interactive literacy activities	Providing role models and situations for positive parent-child interaction empowers parents in their roles as the primary teachers of their own children. It also strengthens the learning relationship between parent and child and enables parents to feel more comfortable in their child's school setting.
Component integration	Fostering teamwork and open communication allows the separate components to form a comprehensive, family-focused service approach to intergenerational education.

Local Even Start Family Literacy programs recruit adults with children who are sixteen years or older and in need of literacy services. Specific at-risk categories

are used to determine the family's eligibility and "at-risk" status. Priority enrollment is given to those in greatest need. Parents who have previously dropped out of school or who lack literacy skills and/or teen parents currently enrolled in the school system are provided literacy education as well as training to improve their parenting skills. If they are eligible to enter Adult Education classes, they are administered a placement test to determine their literacy functioning level and placed in the appropriate instructional environment. Young children from birth to eight years of age are provided quality early childhood programs and opportunities for meaningful involvement in literacy activities with their parents in an intergenerational setting. Eleven grantees were awarded funds for the 2005-06 program year. Two of these programs are consortia, including several local school districts in one consolidated Even Start program.

Funding Source – Federal, Title I, Part B, Subpart C

Louisiana Migrant Education Program

Program Description and History:

Migrant children are children who move with their families in pursuit of short-duration agricultural or fishing work. They are children and youth ages 3 through 21, inclusive, who have moved across school district lines within the past three years, either with a parent or guardian seeking temporary or seasonal employment in an agricultural or fishing activity, or on their own in pursuit of such work. Agricultural activity includes not only the cultivation and harvesting of crops, but also food processing, dairy, poultry or livestock work; the cultivation and harvesting of trees; and work on fish farms, so long as the work is temporary or seasonal.

The Louisiana Migrant Education Program was established to help migrant children succeed in school no matter when or where they are enrolled. The State is divided into 11 Local Operating Agencies (LOAs) serving parishes in their region. Each LOA has a Director, recruiters, advocates, and a data specialist. The recruiters identify and verify eligibility of the students and/or families to receive services that range from academic to social services provided within the communities. The advocates are responsible for conducting home visits and matching students with service providers.

The purpose of the program is to design programs to help migratory children to overcome educational disruption, cultural language barriers, social isolation and other factors that inhibit the ability of such children to do well in school.

Budget History:

The migrant education program is 100% federally funded through NCLB Title I, Part C.

Key Components of the Program:

LOA submits an application for approval in May and all funds must be used for Migrant Students.

Administrative:

- The acquisition of appropriate school supplies and health services for migrant students;
- Frequent home visits to migrant families to ensure that students have been properly identified and enrolled in schools;
- Frequent contact with school personnel to stay abreast of social and academic progress, emerging needs, and other concerns.

Educational:

- After-school tutoring and summer remediation programs;
- LEAP and Graduate Exit Exam instruction;
- Computer instruction along with LEAP remediation programs with the use of take-home computers.

Impact:

- To help migrant children succeed in school regardless of when or where they are enrolled.
- To help migrant students achieve the same standards as all other students, specifically, the passing rate of migrant students on the 4th and 8th grade LEAP tests and the Graduate Exit Exam.
- To help migrant students gain promotion to the next grade at the same rates as all other students.
- To help migrant students graduate each year at the same rate as all other students.
- To ensure that migrant children ages 3-5 shall receive preschool (i.e., pre-kindergarten) educational opportunities at the same rate as all other students.

Special Education and Parent Involvement

Introduction and Purpose

“Both federal and state lawmakers governing programs for special education students recognize the important role parents play in their children’s education. The success of any student’s program depends on the participation and commitment of all persons responsible for the student. A strong partnership between the school and the parents is essential.

To be an effective advocate for your child, you must:

Be fully informed about the programs available in or through your local educational agency (LEA);

Be knowledgeable of your child’s rights;

Participate in IEP team meetings; and

Ask questions and voice concerns when you are unsure of the appropriateness of your child’s program.

As partners in your child’s education, both you and the LEA personnel involved in your child’s educational program have a responsibility to consider the child’s needs and to provide an appropriate educational program to meet those needs. If you disagree with what is being proposed, actions—such as presenting your questions and concerns to your local director/supervisor of special education; filing a complaint with the Louisiana Department of Education, Division of Educational Improvement and Assistance; requesting mediation conferences, or requesting a due process hearing—can be initiated to resolve a dispute.

Parents are encouraged to be involved in every aspect of their child’s educational program. You are your child’s best advocate.” (Louisiana Department of Education Website, 2006)

Below are informational resources about your rights and processes developed to protect you and your child’s rights:

- [Parent’s Rights Handbook](#) PDF
- [Parent’s Rights Handbook \(Spanish version\)](#) PDF
- [Parent’s Rights Handbook \(Vietnamese version\)](#) PDF

Information Resources

- [Families Helping Families](#)
- [Louisiana Disability Information Resource](#)
- [The Center for the Study and Advancement of Disability Policy](#)

Part V
Sample Policy
Templates
and
Compliance
Documents

Part V

Sample Policy Templates

This section includes sample documents that may be used to comply with notification requirements referenced in the NCLB Title 1 Non-Regulatory Guidance - April 2004.

The documents on the following pages were copied directly from the guidance.

District Parental Involvement Policy

Each district must have on file a District Parental Involvement Plan. **Template 1.A** has the information necessary to be compliant. Districts may use the template and modify for local needs.

1. **A** - District Parental Involvement Policy template

School Parental Involvement Policy and Compact

Each school must have on file a School Parental Involvement Plan and Parent/School/Teacher Compacts. **Template's 2.A** and **2.B** has the information necessary to be compliant. Again, the sample templates may be used as a guide to prepare and/or edit for use in local districts.

2. **A** - School Parental Involvement Policy Guidelines
2. **B** - Parent/School/Teacher Compact template

1. A - District Wide Parental Involvement Policy

SAMPLE TEMPLATE

NOTE: In support of strengthening student academic achievement, each local educational agency (LEA or school district) that receives Title I, Part A funds must develop jointly with, agree on with, and distribute to, parents of participating children a written parental involvement policy that contains information required by section 1118(a)(2) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) (district wide parental involvement policy). The policy establishes the LEA's expectations for parental involvement and describes how the LEA will implement a number of specific parental involvement activities, and is incorporated into the LEA's plan submitted to the State educational agency (SEA).

School districts, in consultation with parents, may use the sample template below as a framework for the information to be included in their parental involvement policy. School districts are not required to follow this sample template or framework, but if they establish the district's expectations for parental involvement and include all of the components listed under "Description of How District Will Implement Required District-wide Parental Involvement Policy Components" below, they will have incorporated the information that section 1118(a)(2) requires be in the district wide parental involvement policy. School districts, in consultation with parents, are encouraged to include other relevant and agreed upon activities and actions as well that will support effective parental involvement and strengthen student academic achievement.

* * * * *

PART I. GENERAL EXPECTATIONS (Sample Template)

[NOTE: Each district in its District-wide Parental Involvement Policy must establish the district's expectations for parental involvement. [Section 1118(a)(2), ESEA.] There is no required format for those written expectations; however, this is a sample of what might be included.]

The name of 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). Those 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.
- [For States where a Parental Information and Resource Center is established] the school district will inform parents and parental organizations of the purpose and existence of the Parental Information and Resource Center in the State.

PART II. DESCRIPTION OF HOW DISTRICT WILL IMPLEMENT REQUIRED DISTRICT WIDE PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT POLICY COMPONENTS (Sample Template)

[NOTE: The District wide Parental Involvement Policy must include a description of how the district will implement or accomplish each of the following components. [Section 1118(a)(2), ESEA.]

This is a “sample template” as there is no required format for these descriptions. However, regardless of the format the district chooses to use, a description of each of the following components below must be included in order to satisfy statutory requirements.]

1. The _____ *name of 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:

(List actions.)

2. The _____ *name of school district* _____ will take the following actions to involve parents in the process of school review and improvement under section 1116 of the ESEA:

(List actions.)

3. The _____ *name of 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:

(List activities.)

4. The _____ *name of school district* _____ will coordinate and integrate parental involvement strategies in Part A with parental involvement strategies under the following other programs: [Insert programs, such as: Head Start, Reading First, Early Reading First, Even Start, Parents As Teachers, Home Instruction Program for Preschool Youngsters, and State-operated preschool programs], by:

(List activities.)

5. The _____ *name of 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.

(List actions, such as describing how the evaluation will be conducted, identifying who will be responsible for conducting it, and explaining what role parents will play)

1. The _____ *name of school district* _____ will build the schools' and parent's 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 1, 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, by undertaking the actions described in this paragraph

- the State's academic content standards,
- the State's student academic achievement standards,
- the State and local academic assessments including alternate assessments,
- the requirements of Part A,
- how to monitor their child's progress, and
- how to work with educators:

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

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:

(List activities.)

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:

(List activities.)

- 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:

(List activities.)

- 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:

(List actions.)

PART III. DISCRETIONARY DISTRICT WIDE PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT POLICY COMPONENTS (Sample Template)

NOTE: The District wide Parental Involvement Policy may include additional paragraphs listing and describing other discretionary activities that the school district, 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, such as the following discretionary activities listed under section 1118(e) of the ESEA:

- 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.]

* * * * *

PART IV. ADOPTION (Sample Template)

This District wide Parental Involvement Policy has been developed **jointly with, and agreed on with, parents of children participating in Title I, Part A programs**, as evidenced by _____.

This policy was adopted by the _____ *name of school district* _____ on mm/dd/yy and will be in effect for the period of _____. The school district will distribute this policy to all parents of participating Title I, Part A children on or before _____.

(Signature of Authorized Official)

(Date)

*This sample template of a District Wide Parental Involvement Policy is not an official U.S. Department of Education document. It is provided only as an example.

2. A - School Parental Involvement Policy Guidelines

In accordance with the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, each Title I school must develop and distribute its own written parental involvement policy. Schools may use the district parental involvement template as a guide to develop the individual school policy.

“This policy must specify that the school will:

- Convene an annual meeting to explain the Title I program to parents and inform them of their right to be involved in the program;
- Offer a flexible number of meetings, and may use title I funds to pay related expenses, such as child care, transportation or home visits
- Involve parents, “in an organized, ongoing and timely way” in planning, review and improvement of Title I programs;
- Provide timely information about its Title I programs to parents, describe the curricula, the student assessments and proficiency levels students are expected to meet, provide opportunities for regular meetings where parents can provide input, and respond promptly to parent suggestions; and
- Provide parents with an opportunity to submit dissenting views to the LEA if a school's schoolwide program plan is not acceptable to them.”
(Brustein and Manasevit, March 2005).

2. B - School-Parent Compact

SAMPLE TEMPLATE

“NOTE: Each school receiving funds under Title I, Part A of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) must develop a written school-parent compact jointly with parents for all children participating in Title I, Part A activities, services, and programs. That compact is part of the school’s written parental involvement policy developed by the school and parents under section 1118(b) of the ESEA. The compact must outline how parents, the entire school staff, and students will share the responsibility for improved student academic achievement and the means by which the school and parents will build and develop a partnership to help children achieve the State’s high standards.

Schools and parents may use the sample template below as a framework for the information to be included in their school-parent compact. Schools and parents are not required to follow this sample template or framework, but if they include all of the bolded items listed under “Required School-Parent Compact Provisions” below, they will have incorporated all of the information required by section 1118(d) to be in the school-parent compact. Schools and parents, in consultation with students, are encouraged to include other relevant and agreed upon activities and actions as well that will support effective parental involvement and strengthen student academic achievement.” (**United States Department of Education NCLB Parental Involvement Non- Regulatory Guidance, April 2004**).

SCHOOL-PARENT COMPACT

SAMPLE TEMPLATE

The _____ name of school _____, and the parents of the students participating in activities, services, and programs funded by Title I, Part A of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) (participating children), agree that this compact outlines how the parents, the entire school staff, and the students will share the responsibility for improved student academic achievement and the means by which the school and parents will build and develop a partnership that will help children achieve the State's high standards.

This school-parent compact is in effect during school year _____.

REQUIRED SCHOOL-PARENT COMPACT PROVISIONS

(provisions bolded in this section are required to be in the Title I, Part A school-parent compact)

School Responsibilities

The _____ 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 the State'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 (at least annually in elementary schools) during which this compact will be discussed as it relates to the individual child's achievement.** Specifically, those conferences will be held:

[Describe when the parent-teacher conferences will be held.]

- 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 and participate in their child's class, and to observe classroom activities, as follows:

[Describe when and how parents may volunteer, participate, and observe classroom activities.]

Parent Responsibilities

We, as parents, will support our children's learning in the following ways:

[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 their children watch.
- Volunteering in my child's classroom.
- Participating, as appropriate, in decisions relating to my children's education.
- Promoting positive use of my child's extracurricular time.
- Staying informed about my child's education and communicating with the school by promptly reading all notices from the school or the school district either received by my child or by mail and responding, as appropriate.
- Serving, to the extent possible, on policy advisory groups, such as being 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's Committee of Practitioners, the School Support Team or other school advisory or policy groups.

OPTIONAL ADDITIONAL PROVISIONS

Student Responsibilities (revise as appropriate to grade level)

We, as students, will share the responsibility to improve our academic achievement and achieve the State's high standards. Specifically, we will:

[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.]

Additional Required School Responsibilities (requirements that schools must follow, but optional as to being included in the school-parent compact)

The _____ name of school _____ will:

1. Involve parents in the planning, review, and improvement of the school's parental involvement policy, in an organized, ongoing, and timely way.
2. Involve parents in the joint development of any school-wide program plan, in an organized, ongoing, and timely way.
3. Hold an annual meeting to inform parents of the 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 Title I, Part A programs. The school will convene the meeting at a convenient time to parents, and will 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. The school will invite to this meeting all parents of children participating in Title I, Part A programs (participating students), and will encourage them to attend.
4. Provide information to parents of participating students in an understandable and uniform format, including alternative formats upon the request of parents with disabilities, and, to the extent practicable, in a language that parents can understand.
5. Provide to parents of participating children information in a timely manner about Title I, Part A programs that includes a description and explanation of the school's curriculum, the forms of academic assessment used to measure children's progress, and the proficiency levels students are expected to meet.
6. On the request of parents, provide opportunities for regular meetings for parents to formulate suggestions, and to participate, as appropriate, in decisions about the education of their children. The school will respond to any such suggestions as soon as practicably possible.
7. Provide to each parent an individual student report about the performance of their child on the State assessment in at least math, language arts and reading.

8. 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).

Optional School Responsibilities

To help build and develop a partnership with parents to help their children achieve the State’s high academic standards, the _____ name of school _____ will:

1. Recommend to the local educational agency (LEA), the names of parents of participating children of Title I, Part A programs who are interested in serving on the State’s Committee of Practitioners and School Support Teams.
2. Notify parents of the school’s participation in Early Reading First, Reading First and Even Start Family Literacy Programs operating within the school, the district and the contact information.
3. Work with the LEA in addressing problems, if any, in implementing parental involvement activities in section 1118 of Title I, Part A.
4. Work with the LEA to ensure that a copy of the SEA’s written complaint procedures for resolving any issue of violation(s) of a Federal statute or regulation of Title I, Part A programs is provided to parents of students and to appropriate private school officials or representatives.

School	Parent(s)	Student
Date	Date	Date

(PLEASE NOTE THAT SIGNATURES ARE NOT REQUIRED)

***This sample template of a School-Parent Compact is not an official U.S. Department of Education document. It is provided only as an example.**

SAMPLE COMPLIANCE

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT DOCUMENTATION

This section includes sample documents that may be used to comply with Parental Involvement requirements referenced in the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001.

Sample Compliance Documents

Exhibits **3.A – 3.F** are examples of how to document the requirements below. Districts and schools may use these examples and modify them as needed for their local schools.

Each district/school must keep on file evidence that the following requirements have been carried out:

- 3. A** - Distribution of District and School Parental Involvement Policies
- 3. B** - Informing Parents about Title I, Its requirements and Parent's Rights
- 3. C** - Involving parents in Decisions
- 3. D** - Training for Parents
- 3. E** - Training for Faculty and Staff
- 3. F** - HQ Notification to Parents

Again, the sample compliance documents may be used as a guide for districts and schools to use to become compliant and modified to fit the needs of the district/school.

Exhibit 3.A – Distribution of
Parental Involvement Policy
§1118

ABC SCHOOL

**123 Teacher Lane
Student, LA 70777
555-123-4567**

August 21, 2006

Dear Parents:

Our first week of school is off to a great start! Students are settled in and ready to work. Teachers and staff are looking forward to meeting you and involving you in the many activities, adventures, and learning experiences that have been planned for your children. Please find enclosed two documents, the District Parental Involvement Plan and the School's Parental Involvement Plan. Please take time to read and review both of these documents. Information is included in both plans for how the district and school plan to work with parents. Please sign and return the form below to indicate that you have received these documents.

Thank you,

Ms. Pencil, Principal
ABC School

I have received copies of the District's and School's Parental Involvement Policies for School Year 2005-2006.

Parent's Signature _____ Date _____

(First Page of Handbook)



2005-2006 Handbook

Dear Parents:

Our district is mandated by the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001* to distribute the documents listed below to each parent.

***Please read each of the documents listed below and sign and return the form below to indicate that you have received these documents.**

- **District Parental Involvement Policy**
- **School's Parental Involvement Policy**
- **Parent's Right to Know**
- **Parent/School/Teacher Compact**

I have read and received the documents listed above.

Parent's Name Printed: _____

Parent's Signature: _____

Date _____

(At a School Meeting)



**123 Teacher Lane
Student, LA 70777
555-123-4567**

I have received a copy of the school's and district's Parental Involvement Policy.

Parent's Name Printed

Signature

Exhibit 3.B – Informing Parents about
Title 1, Requirements, Rights, etc.
§1118 © (1) and (2)

Wilford Day School

647 Chalk Lane
Student, LA 70777
555-123-4567

Open House – 2005-2006

August 26, 2005

AGENDA

Welcome.....Ms. Marker R. Pencil, Principal
Pledge.....Ms. Paper's 4th Grade Class
Meditation..... Angel Tablet
What is Title I?.....Mr. Ball Point Pen, Counselor
Title I Requirements.....Mr. John Eraser, Asst. Principal
Parent's Rights.....Ms. Hole Puncher
Introduction of Staff.....Ms. Marker R. Pencil, Principal
Visits to Classrooms..... Mr. John Eraser, Asst. Principal

Wilford Day School

647 Chalk Lane
Student, LA 70777
555-123-4567
Open House – 2005-2006
August 26, 2005

Sign-In Sheet

NAME

NAME

Exhibit 3.C – Involving Parents
in Decision-Making
§1118 (a) (3) (A-C), ESEA and
§1116

Sunshine High School

2305 West Ruler Road
Student, LA 70777
555-123-4567

School Improvement Meeting Agenda August 20, 2005

Welcome.....Principal
Recognition of New Members.....President
Old Business..... Vice President

New Business..... President
Floor Open for Comments..... President

School/Title I Budget.....Principal
Review of School Improvement Plan Activities
Floor Open for Comments..... President

Planning for Fall Activities

- Fall Carnival
- Parent Night
- Family Math/Science Night
- Book Fair
- Christmas Program

Floor Open for Comments..... President
Adjournment of Meeting

(Involving Parents in Decision-Making)

Sunshine High School

2305 West Ruler Road

Student, LA 70777

555-123-4567

School Improvement Meeting

August 20, 2005

Sign-In Sheet

NAME

NAME

Sunshine High School

**2305 West Ruler Road
Student, LA 70777
555-123-4567
School Improvement Meeting-Minutes
August 20, 2005**

Minutes should include:

- **Time meeting was called**
- **Summary of Presentations**
- **Summary of Comments**
- **Summary of Decisions**
- **List of Persons attending**

Sunshine High School

**2305 West Ruler Road
Student, LA 70777
555-123-4567**

Parent Teacher Association - Call Meeting
August 7, 2005

Agenda

Playground Equipment Fundraiser.....President

Monthly Appreciation Activities.....Vice President

Sunshine High School

2305 West Ruler Road

Student, LA 70777

555-123-4567

Parent Teacher Association - Call Meeting

August 7, 2005

Sign-In

NAME

NAME

Sunshine High School

**2305 West Ruler Road
Student, LA 70777
555-123-4567**

**Parent Teacher Association - Call Meeting (Minutes)
August 7, 2005
5:30pm**

Minutes should include:

- **Time meeting was called**
- **Summary of Presentations**
- **Summary of Comments**
- **Summary of Decisions**
- **List of Persons attending**

Exhibit 3.D – Training for
Parents
§1118

Rainbow Middle School

**1706 Crossing Guard Lane
Student, LA 70777
555-123-4567**

Attention All Parents!!!

A workshop is being offered to all parents who would like to assist their children with Math skills at home.

Who: All ABC District Parents and Students

When: Wednesday, October 4, 2005

Where: ABC District Technology Center
6400 Crayon Place
Paper, LA 70052

Time/s: 8:30 a.m. and 6:30 p.m.

Presenter: Ms. Numbers
President of the Math for All Company

RSVP: By – Friday, September 29, 2006
ABC District Technology Center, Director
Ms. Computer – 225-123-4567

Rainbow Middle School

**1706 Crossing Guard Lane
Student, LA 70777
555-123-4567**

Math Parent Training
October 4, 2005
8:30 a.m.

Sign-In

NAME

NAME

Rainbow Middle School

**1706 Crossing Guard Lane
Student, LA 70777
555-123-4567**

Math Parent Training
October 4, 2005
6:30 p.m.

Sign-In

NAME

NAME

Rainbow Middle School

**1706 Crossing Guard Lane
Student, LA 70777
555-123-4567**

Math Parent Training
October 4, 2006
8:30 a.m. and 6:30 p.m.

Agenda

Parent Sign-In and Arrival

Introduction of Speaker.....Ms. Pencil

Speaker..... Ms. Numbers
Math for All

Interactive Activities.....Parents & Students

Question and Answer Period

Remarks.....Principal

Exhibit 3.E – Training for
Faculty and Staff
§1118

JST Primary School

**1212 East Protractor Road
Student, LA 70777
555-123-4567**

What: Faculty & Staff Training

When: Wednesday, September 6, 2005

**Where: ABC District Office
1212 Compass Lane
Paper, LA 70051**

**Presenter: Ruby Payne
*Working with Parents of Students in
Poverty***

**Remarks: Title I Director/Parental Involvement
Coordinator**

JST Primary School

1212 East Protractor Road
Student, LA 70777
555-123-4567

Math Parent Training
September 5, 2005
4:30-6:00 p.m.

Agenda

Working with Parents of Student in Poverty

Faculty/Staff Sign-In and Arrival

Introduction of Speaker.....Ms. Pencil

Speaker..... Ms. Ruby Payne

Interactive Activities.....Faculty/Staff

Question and Answer Period

Remarks.....Principal

Evaluations

Exhibit 3.F – HQ Notification
to Parents
[§1111(h) (6) (B) (ii), ESEA]

Wilson Middle School

**9600 Reading Drive
Student, LA 70777
555-123-4567**

September 29, 2005

Dear Parents:

The *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001* requires that all teachers meet the definition of Highly Qualified, as defined in the law. Your child's teacher, **Ms. Janie Mills**, does not meet the definition of Highly Qualified as defined in the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001*. However, she is an Elementary Certified teacher in the State of Louisiana, and is working toward becoming Highly Qualified. Ms. Mills needs one more class to be Highly Qualified in 6th grade Math. The district is supporting Ms. Mills in her efforts to become Highly Qualified. If you have any questions regarding this matter, please contact me using the contact information above.

Sincerely,

Ms. Sadie Pencil, Principal
ABC School

Wilson Middle School

9600 Reading Drive
Student, LA 70777
555-123-4567

SAMPLE PARENT LETTER

Dear Parents:

Your child's teacher, Mr. _____, does not meet the definition of Highly Qualified as defined in the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001*. However, Mr. _____ is a Louisiana certified teacher in secondary Mathematics and is in need of _____ Continuing Learning Units (CLUs) to meet the requirements of Highly Qualified in the area of Science. The district supports Mr. _____'s efforts and is working with him to obtain the necessary professional development activities needed to assist him in becoming Highly Qualified. If you have questions or concerns in regard to this matter, please contact me using the contact information above.

Sincerely,

Principal

Part VI
Tips for
Parents, Family
Members, and
Caretakers

Part VI

Tips for Parents, Family Members, and Caretakers

The section of the Parent Guide is set aside to give parents, family members and caretakers tips on being successful in parenting school aged children. Many of these tips may be found on the World Wide Web. The websites have been provided.

Tips For Helping Kids and Teens With Homework and Study Habits

Certain key practices will make life easier for everyone in the family when it comes to study time and study organization. However, some of them may require an adjustment for other members of the family. For lots of helpful internet tools for research and mastering subjects visit our [Homework Help Center](#).

Turn off the TV set. Make a house rule, depending on the location of the set, that when it is study time, it is "no TV" time. A television set that is on will draw youngsters like bees to honey.

What about the radio? Should it be on or off? Contrary to what many specialists say, some youngsters do seem to function all right with the radio turned on to a favorite music station. (Depending on the layout of your house or apartment, maybe an investment in earphones would be worthy of consideration.)

Certain rules should be set about the family phone during study hours. The more people in the household, the more restrictions on long and unnecessary phone calls are needed. A timer, placed next to the phone, can help to control the length of calls so that the telephone will be available if it becomes necessary to call a schoolmate to confirm an assignment or discuss particularly difficult homework.

Designate specific areas for homework and studying. Possibilities include the child's room or the kitchen or dining room table. Eliminate as much distraction as possible.

Since many young people will study in their own rooms, function becomes more important than beauty. Most desks for young people really don't have sufficient space to spread out materials. A table that allows for all necessary supplies such as pencils, pens, paper, books, and other essentials works extremely well.

Consider placing a bulletin board in your child's room. Your local hardware store sells wallboard that might not look too pretty and isn't framed, but a 4 x 3' section is inexpensive and perfect on which to post pertinent school items. You might want to paint or cover it with burlap to improve its appearance or let your child take on this project.

Encourage the use of a small book or pad for writing down assignments so that there is no confusion about when certain assignments must be turned in to the teacher.

Keeping general supplies on hand is important. Check with your child about his needs. In fact, make it his responsibility to be well supplied with paper, pencils, note pads, notebook paper, et cetera.

Regularity is a key factor in academic success. Try to organize the household so that supper is served at a standard time, and once it and family discussions are over, it's time to crack the books. If the student doesn't have other commitments and gets home reasonably early from school, some homework can be done before supper.

Consider you child's developmental level when setting the amount of time for homework. While high school students can focus for over an hour, first-graders are unlikely to last more than 15 minutes on a single task. Allow your child to take breaks, perhaps as a reward for finishing a section of the work.

Organize study and homework projects. Get a large calendar, one that allows space for jotting down things in the daily boxes. Rip it apart so that you (and the child) can sequentially mount the school months for the current semester. For example, you can tear off September, October, November, December, and January and mount them from left to right across one wall. Have the child use a bold color writing instrument (felt tip pen) to mark exam dates in one color, reports that are coming due in a different color, et cetera. This will serve as a reminder so that things aren't set aside until the last dangerous moment.

Teach your child that studying is more than just doing homework assignments. One of the most misunderstood aspects of schoolwork is the difference between studying and doing homework assignments. Encourage your child to do things like:

- take notes as he's reading a chapter
- learn to skim material
- learn to study tables and charts
- learn to summarize what he has read in his own words
- learn to make his own flashcards for quick review of dates, formulas, spelling words, et cetera

Note-taking is a critical skill and should be developed. Many students don't know how to take notes in those classes that require them. Some feel they have to write down every word the teacher says. Others have wisely realized the value of an outline form of note-taking. Well prepared teachers present their material in a format that lends itself to outline form note taking..

Should notes ever be rewritten? In some cases, they should be, particularly if a lot of material was covered, and the youngster had to write quickly but lacks speed and organization. Rewriting notes takes time, but it can be an

excellent review of the subject matter. However, rewriting notes isn't worth the time unless they are used for review and recall of important information.

A home dictionary is essential, but if it is kept on a shelf to gather dust, it won't do anyone any good. Keep it in an accessible place and let your child see you refer to it from time to time. If the family dictionary is kept in the living room and the child studies in his room, get him an inexpensive dictionary for his exclusive use.

Good dictionary, encyclopedia and organizational skills depend on the ability to alphabetize. See if your child's teacher practices alphabetizing in class. Try alphabetizing spelling words, family members' names or a few favorite toys at home as a way of practicing.

Help your child to feel confident for tests. Taking tests can be a traumatic experience for some students. Explain to your child that burning the midnight oil (cramming) the night before a test is not productive. Better to get a good night's sleep. Students also need reminding that when taking a test, they should thoroughly and carefully read the directions before they haphazardly start to mark their test papers. They should be advised to skip over questions for which they don't know the answers. They can always return to those if there's time. Good advice for any student before taking a test: take a deep breath, relax, and dive in. Always bring an extra pencil just in case.

During a homework session, watch for signs of frustration. No learning can take place and little can be accomplished if the child is angry or upset over an assignment that is too long or too difficult. At such times the parent may have to step in and simply halt the homework for that night, offering to write a note to the teacher explaining the situation and perhaps requesting a conference to discuss the quality and length of homework assignments.

Should parents help with homework? Yes-if it is clearly productive to do so, such as calling out spelling words or checking a math problem that won't prove. No-if it is something the child can clearly handle himself and learn from the process. And help and support should always be calmly and cheerfully given. Grudging help is worse than no help at all!

Read directions, or check over math problems after your child has completed the work. Remember to make positive comments - you don't want your child to associate homework with fights at home.

Model research skills by involving your child in planning a family trip. Help your child locate your destination on a map or atlas. Use traditional encyclopedia or a CD-ROM to find information about the place you will visit; try the Internet or books in the library.

How best to handle report cards? To save shocks and upsets, gently discuss from time to time "how things are going at school- with your child. Something casual, such as "How did the math test go?" "How did you do on the history report?" "How's your science project coming along? Need any help?" are questions that aren't "third degree" but indicate interest. Find out if it is a policy at your child's school to send out "warning notices" when work isn't going well. Generally, such notices require the parent's signature to verify that the parent has, indeed, been alerted. This is the time to contact the teacher of the course, along with your child, to learn what the difficulty may be. If such notices aren't sent, then grades on projects and reports and from tests may be the sole source of information short of what your child wishes to share. Be tuned in to statements such as "He's an awful teacher," "She goes too fast," etc. This may be the child's way of indicating frustration in understanding content or lack of study time with the subject. However, be cautious in contacting teachers without your child's approval or interest. It may disrupt good feelings between you and make you seem to be interfering and spying.

Parent Tips and Checklist

Educators recognize that a child's first teachers - his/her parents or guardians - play a crucial role in learning. Here are some ways you can support your child's success in school.

- Provide your child with basic needs (proper diet, clothing, school supplies).
- Provide a study environment conducive to learning at home.
- Contact your child's teacher(s) and visit your child's school and classroom.
- Meet and talk with other parents and school staff.
- Learn about your school's curriculum and support services.
- Reinforce learning at home, in the community and on vacations
- Notice when your child completes homework and provide encouragement (For example, you can say, "I really like the way you're getting your homework done. That's what I expect from you.").
- Recognize progress. Praise steps taken and efforts made.
- Help your child stay calm and confident on test days, and send him/her to school well rested and having had breakfast (or your child can have breakfast at school).
- Encourage your child to talk to teachers if he/she does not understand an assignment.
- Read and talk about information sent home from school.
- Talk about school every day. When your child knows that you think school is important, he or she will take it more seriously.
- Discuss with your child how learning in school helps in everyday life.
- Teach your child to set goals.
- Be a good example yourself that learning is a lifelong process.
- Have a dictionary available for your child to look up new or unfamiliar words.

The Parent-School Relationship

When school personnel and parents communicate, they establish a stronger learning environment for the student both at home and at school. Schools contact parents for many reasons, including when their child is experiencing academic or behavioral difficulties, when the teacher wishes to discuss future plans for the child, or when the school is looking for parents to serve as volunteers.

Each parent and teacher has the same goal--to help children love learning and be successful. The following are some tips to help parents when communicating with school.

- Recognize the teacher as an important partner in your child's education and future.
- Make an appointment to visit the school and your child's teacher.

- Be realistic in your expectations. First, talk to the teacher when there is a problem. Consult with the school principals or his/her designee, if a second opinion is needed.
- Let your child's teacher know that you like to spend time in your child's classroom to share your special skills and interests.
- Be active in your child's school. Let your child's principal and teacher know that you want to be actively involved.

Parent Checklist

As a parent, you have some responsibilities to help your child be successful in school. Here is a suggested checklist:

- 1. I have met and talked with my child's teacher, guidance counselor and principal.
- 2. I have a general understanding of what my child is expected to learn for the school year.
- 3. I have established a regular bedtime and homework time for my child.
- 4. I expect my child to take challenging courses, including mathematics, reading and writing.
- 5. I make sure my child has a good breakfast each morning, either at school or at home.
- 6. I talk to my child about the importance of doing his/her best.
- 7. I expect my child to study at least one hour each day.
- 8. I provide a quiet place for my child to study and do homework.
- 9. My child and I read together at least once a week.
- 10. I try to nurture my child's abilities.
- 11. I encourage my child not to fall behind in class work.
- 12. I try to find ways to praise my child's behavior daily.
- 13. When my child has a problem in school, we try to tackle it together.
- 14. I talk with my child about the progress he/she is making in each class.
- 15. When my child has not been successful, I make a special effort to boost his/her self-esteem.
- 16. I make every effort to be actively involved in my child's education and school.