

M.S.A.D. #70 TITLE I PARENT INVOLVEMENT POLICY

This district-level policy has been developed jointly with (or: in cooperation with)¹ the parents/guardians of students participating in the school unit's Title I programs. It provides an understanding of the shared responsibility of the school system and parents/guardians in improving students' academic achievement and school performance. The Superintendent/designee will be responsible for distributing this policy to parents/guardians of students participating in the school unit's Title I programs.

Because parent involvement is so important to a student's success in school, the Board encourages regular participation by parents/guardians in all aspects of the school unit's Title I programs.

M.S.A.D. #70 provides opportunities for parent/guardian involvement that are aligned with the requirements of Title I programs set forth in law as follows.

- A. The school unit involves parents/guardians in the joint development of the school system's plan to help disadvantaged students meet challenging achievement and academic standards and in the process of school review and improvement by:
1. Establishing a district-level Parent Advisory Committee with parent/guardian representatives from each building;
 2. Establishing effective and ongoing two-way communications between the school unit, staff, and parents/guardians;
 3. Developing a school-wide newsletter to communicate with parents/ guardians about the school unit's Title I plan and to seek their input and participation; and
 4. Training staff to work more effectively with families with diverse cultural backgrounds and/or barriers such as illiteracy or limited English proficiency.

¹ 20 U.S.C. 6318(a)(2) requires local education agencies (LEAs) that receive Title I funds to "develop jointly with, agree on with, and distribute to parents of participating children a written parent involvement policy." The policy is to be incorporated into the LEA's Title I plan. The mandated components of the policy are reflected in this document. The means by which these expectations will be met are to be arrived at through a process that features active parental participation. The numbered items suggest some of the ways the school unit can promote parent involvement. Others ways may be arrived at through the participatory process.

- B. The school unit provides the coordination, technical assistance, and other support necessary to assist participating schools in planning and implementing effective parent/guardian involvement activities to improve student academic achievement and school performance by:
1. Providing information to parents/guardians about the system and various instruments that will be developed or used to monitor student progress;
 2. Providing district-level workshops to assist individual schools in planning and implementing improvement activities;
 3. Holding training sessions for Parent Advisory Committee members so that there may be more effective liaisons between parents and schools; and
 4. Seeking input from parents/guardians in developing workshops that will help them become more effective partners with the schools in encouraging academic achievement.
- C. The school unit builds the capacity of schools and parents/guardians for strong parental involvement by:
1. Developing and disseminating information for school-wide meetings to discuss Title I issues, including evaluation of and suggestions for the district-level Title I policy;
 2. Engaging school Parent-Teacher Organizations (PTOs) to seek out and involve parents/guardians through their communications and informational meetings;
 3. Promoting cooperation between the school unit and other agencies or school/community groups to furnish learning opportunities, increase awareness of support services, and disseminate information regarding parenting skills and child/adolescent development; and
 4. Provide ongoing communication about opportunities to serve on the Parental Advisory Committee, volunteer in the schools, and learn how to work more effectively with their children to extend and reinforce learning and foster achievement.
- D. The school unit coordinates and integrates parent/guardian involvement strategies for Title I programs with those of other programs (such as Head Start, Reading First, Early Reading First,

Even Start, Parents as Teachers, Home Instruction Program for Preschool Youngsters, and State-run preschool programs) by:

1. Involving school system and building representatives from other programs to assist in identifying specific population needs; and
2. Sharing data between programs to assist in developing new initiatives to improve student academic achievement and school improvement.

E. The school unit conducts, with the involvement of parents/guardians, an on-going evaluation of the content and effectiveness of the parental involvement policy in improving the academic quality of the schools served under Title I, including identifying barriers to greater participation by parents/guardians in activities authorized by this section (with particular attention to parents/guardians who are economically disadvantaged, disabled, have limited English proficiency, have limited literacy, or are of any racial or ethnic minority background), using the findings of such evaluation to design strategies for more effective parent/guardian involvement, and revising, if necessary, the parent/guardian involvement policies described in this section by:

1. Evaluating the content and effectiveness of the parent/guardian involvement policy through a variety of means such as surveys, workshops, focus groups, and informal meetings involving district and school administrators, teachers, and parents/guardians;
2. Identifying and overcoming barriers to effective evaluation and input, e.g., language support for parents/guardians who do not speak English or have limited English proficiency, scheduling multiple meetings at various times of day or night, meeting in places accessible by public transportation, or providing a means of transportation; and
3. Identifying potential policy changes and program improvements.

F. The school unit involves parents/guardians in the activities of the schools served under Title I by:

1. Keeping parents/guardians informed of the objectives of the school unit's Title I programs;
2. Providing communication and calendar information to alert parents/guardians of meetings or events and encouraging their participation;
3. Providing central coordination for district, school, and PTO meetings and other events to create a calendar to facilitate parent/guardian participation; and
4. Promoting opportunities for parents as volunteers in the classroom and in school programs.

Legal Reference: 20 U.S.C. § 6318

Adopted: April 13, 2009