

AMITE COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT



School-Parent Compact Guide



Amite County School District

www.amite.k12.ms.us

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Introduction

The school-parent compact is a written agreement between teachers and parents. It is a document that clarifies what families and schools can do to help children reach high academic standards. Every school receiving Title I funds must develop a compact. The compact serves as a clear reminder of everybody's responsibility to take action at school and at home so that children can learn what is required of them. It is a written commitment indicating how all members of a school community -- parents, teachers, principals, students, and concerned community members -- agree to share responsibility for student learning.

The purpose of this agreement is to help parents and teachers come to a consensus on the responsibilities of the individuals influencing student's achievement. However, the underlying assumption is that a student's academic success will improve when the home and school work together. Overall, if the compact is taken seriously and implemented effectively it will assure that there will be support for the academic success of the student by enhancing effective communications between school and the home.

To ensure that the compact is understood by all parties involved, many parents and teachers will need new skills to bridge language, cultural, economic, and social barriers and to build trust relationships between home and school. Parents and teachers need to communicate in a language they both understand in order that compacts reflect the needs and culture of the home as well as those of the student. In addition, meetings should be scheduled at times and places sensitive to work requirements.

If written effectively and with the input of all concerned parties, the compact can serve as a valuable tool to effectively and meaningfully engage the school and the home in supporting the academic development and needs of the students. The process involved in the development of the compact is its real strength. When parents and school officials sit down and discuss issues related to student success, parents are given a sense of voice and time to think about their responsibilities, schools are given a strong starting point at developing and sustaining momentum around communicating with families and developing relationships.

Did You Know.....

- ◆ The compact must outline how parents, the entire school staff, and students will share the responsibility for improved student academic achievement.
- ◆ All parents of Title I students are required to participate in the development and design of the compact.
- ◆ Compacts are developed to reflect the needs and culture of the home of the students.
- ◆ That the compact is part of the school's written parental involvement policy developed by the school and parents.
- ◆ The compact should/must be evaluated regularly for effectiveness

According to the Law

The School-Parent Compact

What are the requirements for a School-Parent Compact?

- ◆ Each school served under Title I shall jointly develop with parents for all children served under this part a school-parent agreement.
- ◆ Each school-parent agreement must outline how parents, the entire school staff, and students will share the responsibility for improved student academic achievement.
- ◆ Each compact must outline the means by which the school and parents will build and develop a partnership to help children achieve the State's high standards.

What Must a School-Parent Compact Include?

- ◆ To describe the school's responsibility to provide high-quality curriculum and instruction in a supportive and effective learning environment, that enables children to meet State academic achievement standards,
- ◆ To describe the ways in which each parent will be responsible for supporting their children's learning. (For example, monitoring attendance, homework completion, television watching, volunteering in their child's classroom, and participating in decisions relating to the education of their children and positive use of extracurricular time.
- ◆ To address the importance of communication between teachers and parents on a continuous basis, including at least annually during parent-teacher conferences in elementary schools, and through frequent reports home to parents on their children's process.
 - To provide a means to discuss an individual child's achievement
 - To foster reasonable access to staff and opportunities to volunteer and participate in their child's class, and observe classroom activities.

Tip Sheet

Linking a School-Family Compact to Learning

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What's a Compact?

In a compact, families and school staff agree how to work together. Every Title I school must develop a school-family compact, according to the No Child Left Behind law (Section 1118). Teachers and parents like compacts because they make it clear who should do what to encourage students. Students like being treated as a responsible person. The compact should describe:

- ◆ What parents, school staff, and students will do to improve student progress.
- ◆ How the school and families will build a partnership to help children learn.
- ◆ How the school and families will communicate regularly with each other.

How is a Compact Linked to Learning?

Here are some suggestions:

- ◆ Check your school's test data. Look for areas where students' scores are low, and for gaps between different groups of students.
- ◆ Set two or three goals for improvement. If reading scores are low, adopt a goal of moving all students out of the bottom quartile ("below basic"), and moving more students into proficient.
- ◆ Ask parents, students, and school staff what THEY should do to meet the goals. Then ask each group to list what it wants the OTHERS to do.
- ◆ Focus on issues raised in the discussions, such as homework, communications, and rules of behavior. For each one, list what parents, teachers and students can do.
- ◆ Draw up a first draft, then ask for comments. Revise it based on how parents, teachers and students react.

Action Opportunities for Parent Leaders

- ◆ Provide training and in-service assistance to help parents understand the following components:
 - School culture and structure
 - Parental rights and responsibilities under NCLB
 - NCLB and its complex testing, assessment, standards, and accountability framework
 - How to analyze school report card data and how those data relate to student achievement
 - How to conduct a meaningful compact meeting with the teacher (identify the purpose of the meeting, decide what questions to ask, find out what parental assistance is available)
- ◆ Identify model compacts that can serve as guides for teachers and parents. Develop videos and other tools that demonstrate what meaningful compact relationships and meetings entail.
- ◆ Work with parents to evaluate compact commitments and determine how successful each party has been in holding up its end of the agreement. Hold periodic meetings to evaluate the compact process, answer questions and provide assistance, and identify schools and parents in need of additional help.
- ◆ Work with the district to develop LEA and SEA complaint procedures if the compact process does not proceed as designed, or if parents are not getting the assistance they need to fulfill their responsibilities.
- ◆ Work with parents to develop an understanding of how the compact can be used as an advocacy tool to hold the district accountable for its compact commitments.
- ◆ Parents and parent leaders need to know more than whether or not a compact is in place. They must know more than whether or not it is working. They must know what is and is not working. Ask everyone involved in the development of the compact questions like, “Has the fulfillment of compact commitments helped to improve student learning? Why or why not?”
- ◆ Ensure that the compact is linked to learning and addresses testing scores and academic proficiency.
- ◆ Think about how you can support your child's education, as the compact also outlines the role of parents. However, parents and families have certain privacy rights with respect to their home life which should not be violated. The compact should specifically state that families' rights of privacy will not be violated. Moreover, schools and parents must work to ensure that this privacy is honored.
- ◆ Encourage parents in your community to volunteer in their children's schools in order that they may obtain access to school staff and have the ability/chance/option to observe classroom activities.
- ◆ Ensure that the compact is distributed in the community. Encourage schools to include the compact in the school newsletter, send it home with students, ask them to create a Web site with the school compact, send out a mailing to the community. Find out how you can get the compact printed in the local newspaper

AMITE COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT
Title I Compact
School Improvement

It is the mission of Amite County Elementary School to provide a safe and secure school environment where all of our students will have the opportunity to become confident, self-directed and lifelong learners. We, the students, parents, and school community, pledge to unite in our mission to allow the opportunity for academic success and personal growth.

As a parent/ guardian I, _____, pledge to:

- Provide an academic environment at home that fosters learning;
- Provide a quiet time at home designated for reading and studying;
- Support the efforts of the school by attending school functions and volunteering to engage in other school activities;
- Promote effective communication with my child's teacher;
- Talk with my child everyday about his/her school activities; and
- Always believe that my child will be successful with my guidance and support.

As a teacher I, _____, pledge to:

- Provide an academic environment that is conducive for learning;
- Respect and value the unique characteristics and qualities of all students;
- Always assist and support students in their effort to learn;
- Promote effective and continuous communication with parents;
- Promote parent involvement in school functions;
- Demonstrate a professional demeanor that allows me to be a positive role model for our students;
- Perform professional duties as required and on voluntary basis as deemed necessary; and
- Maintain high expectations for our students and provide an accurate assessment of students' academic progress.

As a student I, _____, pledge to:

- Believe that I can learn and be the best person that I can be;
- Show respect for myself, my peers, and my school staff;
- Obey all school rules and always show good behavior;
- Attempt to do my best in all of my classes;
- Bring the necessary school supplies to school and complete all assignments.

As a member of the administrative team, I pledge to uphold the contents of this compact to ensure that each student is provided the opportunity for academic success.

Principal

Scotty H. Whittington, Superintendent

School-Parent Compact Checklist

A compact is a written commitment that indicates how all members of a school, parents, students and even the community will agree to share in the responsibility of learning for an individual child. This checklist was created to help parent and community leaders assess their school's commitment and compliance with the law as it relates to compacts.

Yes **No**

- | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Does your school have a parent-school compact? |
| | | Does your schools' parent-school compact: |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Describe the school's responsibility to provide high-quality curriculum and instruction in a supportive and effective learning environment, |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Describe the ways in which each parent will be responsible for supporting their children's learning, |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Address the importance of communication between teachers and parents on a continuous basis through, |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Involve parent-teacher conferences in elementary schools, at least annually, |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Provide for frequent reports to parents on their children's progress, |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Describe access to staff, |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Describe opportunities to volunteer and participate in their child's class. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Is the compact easy to understand and provided in various languages so that parents and teachers can read and understand it? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Were parents involved in the development of the parent-school compact? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Are parents and teachers involved in the development of the programs and activities implemented for students being served under a compact? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Are parents aware of the process used to develop and evaluate the parent-school compact? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Does your school district have a written plan that defines the parent-school compact? |