

Title I Parent Involvement Handbook

2017-2018

Under ESSA, Title I is the largest federal program supporting elementary and secondary education in our country. One of the major goals of the Title I program is to improve academic achievement in areas of high poverty. The schools with the highest numbers of students on free or reduced breakfast and lunch are selected by school officials to participate in the Title I program.

This program provides financial assistance to five schools in Cheatham County - Ashland City Elementary, East Cheatham Elementary, West Cheatham Elementary, Cheatham Middle School and Cheatham County Central High School. The purpose of this handbook is to:

1. Clearly establish policies and procedures that Title I schools must follow.
2. Make families aware of their rights and responsibilities when their child attends a Title I school.

It is also designed to be a resource guide to answer frequently asked questions and concerns about Title I.

Funding

Title I, Part A is intended to help ensure that all children have the opportunity to obtain a high-quality education and reach proficiency on challenging state academic standards and assessments. As the largest federal program supporting public education, Title I targets resources to the districts and schools where the needs are the greatest. The funding is divided among the schools according to the ratio of students receiving free or reduced breakfasts or lunches. The school with the highest percentage of students on the free lunch program receives the largest amount of Title I funds per pupil.

Title I flexible funding provides:

- Additional staff
- Professional Development
- Extended time programs
- Parent involvement programs
- Other strategies for student achievement in high poverty schools

The program:

- Focuses on school-wide reform.
- Helps ensure student access to research-based instructional strategies.
- Helps ensure challenging academic content.
- Provides a mechanism for holding states, school districts, and schools accountable for improving the academic achievement of all students and turning around low performing schools.

In general, school-wide programs:

- Plan for comprehensive, long-term improvement.
- Serve all students with highly qualified teachers and paraprofessionals.
- Provide continuous learning for staff, parents, and the community.
- Use research-based practices to develop and implement enriched instruction to all students.
- Use inclusive approaches to strengthen the school's organizational structure.
- Consolidate resources to achieve program goals; and
- Engage in continuous self-assessment and improvement.

Family and Community Involvement

Parental Involvement has been a centerpiece of Title I and No Child Left Behind. The term parental involvement means "the participation of parents in a regular, two-way, and meaningful communication involving student academic learning and other school activities".

There are specific guidelines and policies that school districts and Title I schools must follow:

- The district and school must develop separate parent involvement plans that are reviewed and improved annually. The plans must be developed jointly with parents, agreed upon with parents, and distributed to parents.
- The school must develop, with parents, a parent-school compact.
- The district must educate staff and parents in the value of parent involvement, communication with parents, and building ties between parents and the school.
- The district must coordinate and integrate Title I parent Involvement with other programs such as Head Start, Title III language programs, state run preschools, home instruction programs for pre-school youngsters and others.
- The district and school must conduct an annual evaluation and assessment of the content and effectiveness of parent involvement programs.
- The district and school must inform parents and community of students' and schools' progress and assessment results.
- The district and school must keep parents informed of programs, meetings and activities in a language the parents understand.
- Parents have the right to request information, at any time, about the qualifications of the teachers and paraprofessionals that instruct their child.
- The school must notify the parent if their child is taught for four or more consecutive weeks by a teacher who is not "highly qualified."
- Parents must be notified of the right to request their child's name or address not be released to military recruiters.

- The district and schools work to ensure the academic success of all students. Efforts are made to coordinate and integrate Title I services with other services for identified ELL and migrant students, children with disabilities, and homeless children.

Tennessee Parent Involvement Standards

Beginning with the 2010-2011 school year, the following Tennessee Parent Involvement Standards were adopted by the State Board of Education:

Standard I: Welcoming All Families

Families are active participants in the life of the school and feel, welcomed, valued, and connected to each other, to school staff, and to what students are learning and doing in class and school.

Standard II: Communicating

Families and school staff engage in regular, meaningful communication about students.

Standard III: Supporting Student Success

Families and school staff continuously work together to support students' learning and healthy development both at home and at school, and have regular opportunities to strengthen their knowledge and skills to do so effectively.

Standard IV: Speaking Up for Every Child

Families are informed and enabled to be advocates for their own and other children, to ensure that students are treated fairly and have access to learning opportunities that will support their success.

Standard V: Sharing Power

Families and school staff are equal partners with equal representation in decisions that affect students and families and together inform, influence, and create policies, practices, and programs.

Standard VI: Collaborating with Community

Families and school staff work together with community members to connect students, families, and staff to expanded learning opportunities, community services, and civic participation.

Parents in each Cheatham County School will have the opportunity to evaluate their child's school parent involvement performance by participating in a state-wide survey. This can be completed on-line, at the school or district website or on paper. This survey is usually available in April. Check with your local school for information regarding this survey. The results of this survey are a part of each school's report card for the year.

Parent - School Compact

Each Title I school must develop jointly, with parents, a parent-school compact as part of its written parent involvement policy. A parent-school compact is a written agreement between the school and parents. The compact should identify the activities that students will undertake to share the responsibility for improved student academic achievement. In addition, the parent-school compact outlines the activities that parents and school staff will undertake to build and develop a partnership to help the children achieve to the state's high academic standards.

Parent Meetings

Each school served under Title I must convene an annual meeting, at a time convenient for parents, to inform them of their school's participation in Title I. Schools must also offer a flexible number of additional parent meetings to inform parents of changes in curriculum, information about testing, and give parents tips and ideas they can use at home to help improve student progress. These meetings should be planned at a time most convenient for parent participation. An annual needs assessment and evaluation will help with planning meetings that best meet the needs of parents and students.

Information on Student Progress

Each year a school that receives Title I funds must provide parents with information concerning results of testing including the results made by their child as well as that of their child's school. A website will be provided to compare results of the state's assessments in at least reading/language arts, math, science and social studies for all Tennessee State Public Schools.

Information about AYP

Each year notice must be given to parents regarding the school's and district's AYP (Annual Yearly Progress) status. AYP is how the state assessment measures student performance in terms of the percentage of students who are at or above state defined academic standards in reading and math.

Other Information:

The following websites provide additional information regarding Title I, Part A

Federal Programs - www.ed.gov

State Department of Education - www.state.tn.us/education

Cheatham County Board of Education - www.cheathamcountyschools.net