

Sumter County Schools
Title I, NCLB
Parent Involvement Policy

The Sumter County Board of Education affirms and assures the rights of parents and teachers of children being served in activities funded by Title I, No Child Left Behind (NCLB) opportunities to participate in the design and implementation of these activities. All parents and teachers of eligible Title I children will be invited to an Annual Public Meeting held during the spring of each year. The annual public meeting will provide an opportunity to those parents and teachers to have input into the design and implementation of the Title I Project and provide parents an opportunity to establish mechanisms for maintaining on-going communications among parents, teachers, and agency officials. Additional activities held periodically during the school year may include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Notify each child's parent of the results of the annual school review of adequate yearly progress (AYP) for parental input opportunities on the school improvement plan.
2. Notify parents that a school has been identified for school improvement, corrective action, or restructuring. The notification must include the following elements:
 - An explanation of what identification means, and how the school compares to other Sumter County schools;
 - The reason for the identification;
 - What the school is doing to address the problem of low achievement;
 - What the Sumter County Board of Education and Georgia State Department of Education is doing to help the school address the problem of low achievement;
 - How parents can become involved in addressing the school's academic problems; and
 - The parents' options regarding their right to seek a transfer of their children or to seek supplemental services.
3. Reporting the child's progress to the parents.
4. Providing information concerning the Title I Program.
5. Parent-Teacher conferences at PTO meetings and open house held at schools.
6. Parent questionnaire for providing input in future program development.
7. Dissemination of evaluation results and school report card.
8. A school-parent compact.
9. Opportunities for parent literacy training.
10. Provide home activities to reinforce learning.
11. Notice must be "in an understandable and uniform format and, to the extent practicable, in a language the parents can understand".
12. Provide parents information on the professional qualification of their child's teacher at the beginning of each school year.
13. Receive timely notice if their child is taught by a teacher who is not highly qualified for four or more consecutive weeks.
14. Collect all non-satisfactory parents' comments regarding school plans.

Parents and teachers shall annually assess the effectiveness of the parent involvement program and determine what action needs to be taken, if any, to build the capacity of parents to help their children achieve to high standards.

The Sumter County Board of Education and all schools shall—

- provide assistance to parents of participating Title I children in understanding such topics as the state’s academic content and achievement standards, the assessments being used, the requirements of Title I, Part A, and how to monitor their children’s progress and work with educators to improve their achievement.
- provide materials and training to help parents to work with their children to improve achievement.
- educate stakeholders on how to reach out to, communicate with, and work with parents as equal partners, implement and coordinate parent programs and build ties between parents and the school.
- “to the extent feasible and appropriate,” coordinate and integrate parental involvement programs with Head Start, Even Start, and other preschool 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.
- ensure that information related to school and parent programs, meetings and other activities is sent to the parents of participating children in a format, and to the extent practicable, in a language the parents can understand.
- provide such other reasonable support for parental involvement activities as parents may request.

The Sumter County Board of Education and all schools may—

- provide necessary literacy training for parents with Part A funds if the LEA has exhausted all other reasonably available sources of funding.
- pay reasonable and necessary expenses associated with parental involvement activities, including transportation and childcare costs, to enable parents to participate in school-related meetings and training sessions.
- train parents to enhance the involvement of other parents.
- arrange school meetings at a variety of times, or conduct in-home conferences between parents who are unable to attend the school meetings and the teachers and other educators who work with their children.
- adopt and implement model approaches to improving parental involvement.
- establish a district-wide parent advisory council to provide advice on all matters related to parental involvement in funded programs.
- develop appropriate roles for community-based organizations and businesses in parent involvement activities.

Parent Involvement Plan Details

Sumter County Title I will invite parents to an annual public meeting held during each school year to participate in the design of the Local Educational Agency (LEA) plan. An annual written survey will be conducted to involve parents in the process of design, review, and improvement of the Title I program. Each local school will provide opportunities for parental input as it reviews the parent involvement plan. Parent compacts are part of the Parent Involvement Plan.

The Title I school staff and Pre-K Resource Coordinators will offer assistance in planning and implementing effective parent involvement programs. Title I will collaborate with other programs such as Early Intervention Program (EIP), counselors, Parent Teacher Associations/Organizations (PTA/PTO's), Lottery Pre-K Program, Neglected & Delinquent (N & D) institutions, Head Start, Homeless, Drug Free Schools, Adult Education, Even Start/Family Literacy, to integrate parent involvement strategies and programs.

The parent involvement policy will be reviewed annually by parents and staff. Schools will analyze the effectiveness of the policy in increasing participation of parents through numbers of conferences and attendance at parent functions, participation in home-school instruction activities, and increased student achievement.

If barriers to participate are identified, strategies will be enlisted to break down the barriers. As a result of staff and parent suggestions, new strategies or policies will be revised as needed to provide greater participation of parents who are economically disadvantaged, disabled, have limited English proficiency, have limited literacy or any racial or ethnic minority.

Parents will be involved in the planning, review and improvement of the Title I Program, join planning and design of programs in such ways as:

- Surveys
- Conferences
- Home Visits
- Annual Meeting
- PTO Meetings
- Parent Compacts
- School Councils

Information and assistance concerning Title I will be addressed through items such as: parent letters, conferences, phone calls, parent visitation, websites, and open house.

Sharing student performance and assessment through:

- School Report Cards
- Student Report Cards
- Progress Reports
- Computer Profiles
- Test Results Reports/Conferences
- News Media
- Websites

Reviewing school curriculum through:

- PTO Meetings
- Explanation of Testing & Results
- Study Groups
- News Media
- Websites

Promoting two-way communication through:

- Orientation Meeting
- Conferences
- Phone Calls
- Questionnaires
- Newsletters
- Parent Visitation
- Parent Compacts
- Websites

(If parents have unsatisfactory comments regarding a Title I plan, it will be attached to the plan.)

Having parents help their children through:

- Take-Home Packs
- Reading Calendars
- Parent Flyers
- Incentive Reading Programs
- Video Check-Out
- Home Visits
- Summer Packets/Clubs
- I Care Activities
- Workshops

Providing parents with materials and training to help them work with their children and to coordinate literacy training through opportunities such as:

- Parent Resource Center
- Evening Computer Lab
- Parent Workshop Sessions
- Take-Home Materials (books, tapes, videos, computer software, etc.)
- Parent Flyers
- Family Reading Nights
- Family Math Nights
- Family Science Nights

Teachers will be educated in the value and utility of contributions of parents and how to reach and communicate effectively by: creating a school vision for parent involvement by having, Even Start, Headstart, Title I, Counselors, Social Workers and Pre-K Resource Coordinators coordinate their parent involvement efforts to have the greatest impact on the community and school.

Sumter County will coordinate and integrate parent involvement programs, activities, and strategies with other programs to the extent feasible through:

Strategies listed in above item
Supporting the Visions for Sumter Collaborative
Having schools invite families and preschool children into the school to visit, have lunch, and participate in planned activities.
Shadowing—having parents come into the school and attend class with their child.

Sumter County will develop appropriate roles for community-based organizations and businesses in parent involvement activities. Information on child rearing issues and helping parents get involved in the education of their children will be provided through opportunities such as:

Family Focus
First Steps
Mental Health Facilities
Parent Resource Centers
Local Hospitals
Health Department
Even Start Activities
Visions for Sumter
Sumter County Extension Office
Sumter County DFCS

To the extent possible, we will provide information to Limited English Proficient (LEP) parents in a language the parents understand and provide opportunities for these parents to participate by:

Offering an opt-out provision not later than 30 days after school starts
Providing an interpreter for meetings
Providing a resource person to contact parents
Providing written communication in the language parents can understand.

Sumter County will reserve not less than 1% of system allocation to carry out parent involvement activities. The system shall provide assistance to participating parents in such areas as understanding the:

- a. National Education Goals;
- b. State's content standards and student performance standards;
- c. School Improvement process, if applicable;
- d. Components of a schoolwide program, if applicable;
- e. Components of a targeted assistance school program, if applicable;
- f. State and local assessments;
- g. Requirements of Title I parent involvement;
- h. Ways parents can monitor their children's progress and work with educators to improve the performance of their children;
- i. Ways parents can participate in decisions relating to the education of the children.

Sumter County Schools shall provide materials and training in the areas of:

- a. Literacy training to help parents work with their children to improve their children's achievement
- b. Technology training to help parents work with their children to improve their children's achievement.

Sumter County Schools shall educate teachers, pupil service personnel, principals, and other staff, with the assistance of parents, in the value and utility of contributions of parents, and in how to reach out to, communicate with, and work with parents as equal partners, implement and coordinate parent programs, and build ties between home and school.

Sumter County Schools shall coordinate and integrate parent involvement programs and activities with Head Start, Even Start, EIP, Lottery Pre-K Program, and/or other programs, as available to the extent feasible and appropriate.

Sumter County Schools shall develop appropriate roles for community-based organizations and businesses in parent involvement activities, including providing information about opportunities for organizations and businesses to work with parents and schools and encouraging the information of partnerships between elementary, middle, and secondary schools, and local businesses that include a role for parents.

Sumter County Schools shall provide Title I parents resources and opportunities to learn about child development and child rearing that are designed to help parents become full partners in the education of their children as appropriate and feasible.

Sumter County Schools shall ensure, to the extent possible, that information related to schools and Title I parent programs, Title I meetings, and other related activities is sent to the homes of Title I participating children in the language used in such homes.

Sumter County Schools shall annually evaluate the effectiveness in increasing parent participation and identifying barriers to parent participation, such as low income, disabilities, limited literacy, and limited English proficiency or other racial or ethnic considerations.

Sumter County Schools shall use the findings of the annual evaluation to design strategies for school improvement or to redesign this policy.

Sumter County Schools shall involve parents of participating students in the decisions regarding how funds for parent involvement are allocated.

Sumter County Schools shall provide full opportunities for the participation of limited English proficiency parents and parents with disabilities including providing information and school profiles in a language and form such that parents understand.

Sumter County Schools shall collect all non-satisfactory parents' comments regarding its Title I plan and attach such comments to the plan when submitted to the State Education Agency.