

The Griffin-Spalding County School System
2013-2014 Districtwide Parental Involvement Policy
Revision Date: 5/21/2013

In support of strengthening student academic achievement, the Griffin-Spalding County School System (GSCS) shall 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 of 1965 (ESEA) (districtwide parental involvement policy). The policy establishes GSCS's expectations for parental involvement and describes how it will implement a number of specific parental involvement activities, and it is incorporated into the GSCS plan submitted to the State educational agency (SEA).

GENERAL EXPECTATIONS

The Griffin-Spalding County School System 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 of 1965 (ESEA). These programs, activities and procedures will be planned and operated with meaningful consultation with parents of participating children.
- The school district will incorporate this districtwide parental involvement policy into its Local Education Agency (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
 - *that parents play an integral role in assisting their child's learning;*
 - *that parents are encouraged to be actively involved in their child's education at school;*
 - *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;*
 - *the carrying out of other activities, such as those described in section 1118 of the ESEA.*
- The school district will inform parents and parental organizations of the purpose and existence of the Parental Information and Resource Center (PIRC), as well as the PIRC in each Title I school.

**DESCRIPTION OF HOW DISTRICT WILL IMPLEMENT REQUIRED
DISTRICTWIDE PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT POLICY COMPONENTS**

1. The Griffin-Spalding County School System will take the following actions to involve parents in the joint development of its districtwide parental involvement plan under section 1112 of the ESEA:
 - Provide multiple opportunities on varying days and times at the beginning of each school year for all parents and community members to review/revise the district parental involvement plan.
 - Seek input on the parental involvement plan from members of the Superintendent's Advisory Council during one of their monthly meetings.
 - Notify parents and the public of all meetings to review and revise the district parental involvement plan in multiple ways including: school system website, flyers, ParentLink, social media, newsletters, and/or press releases.
2. The Griffin-Spalding County School System will take the following actions to involve parents in the process of school review and improvement under section 1116 of the ESEA:
 - Each Title I school will invite all parents to provide input on the Schoolwide/School Improvement Plan annually. Invitations may be in the form of flyers, letters sent home, newsletters, ParentLink, school website, or social media.
 - Provide multiple opportunities on varying days and times, open to all parents, for the purpose of reviewing the Comprehensive LEA Improvement Plan.
 - Notify parents and the public of all meetings to review the Comprehensive LEA Improvement Plan in multiple ways including: school system website, flyers, ParentLink, social media, newsletters, and/or press releases.

3. The Griffin-Spalding County School System 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:
 - Hold monthly technical assistance meetings for school-level Parent Liaisons, offered at varying dates and times.
 - Provide templates, samples, and other documents for schools to use in carrying out Title I Parent Involvement activities.
 - Facilitate and present on special topics at Title I schools per request from the school.

4. The Griffin-Spalding County School System will coordinate and integrate parental involvement strategies in Title I, Part A with parental involvement strategies under the following other programs, such as Head Start and State-operated preschool programs, by:
 - Coordinate with program directors to host Pre-Kindergarten information session for the parents of all incoming Pre-Kindergarten students.
 - Provide programs and information to parents regarding preparing students for academic success.

5. The Griffin-Spalding County School System 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.
 - The district Parent and Community Engagement Coordinator will be responsible for the evaluation of the parental involvement policy. This evaluation will take place in the Fall and Spring of each school year via survey.
 - The survey will be made available to all parents of Title I students via electronic and paper copies. The survey will be translated into Spanish and provided to limited-English proficient parents. Parents will be informed of the survey via a cover letter and paper copy sent home with students, at school events including Open House, on the school system website, school and district parent newsletters, paper copies in the district office, and the district Facebook page.
 - Parent input from the Fall Survey will be used to plan for the newly-started school year. Parent input from the Spring Survey will be used to determine if parents needs based on the Fall Survey were met. Fall and Spring survey responses will be compared and contrasted, determining strengths and weaknesses in the program.
 - Parents will be made aware of the results of the survey via the district parent newsletter and school system website.

6. The Griffin-Spalding County School System will build the schools' and parents' 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 I, 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:

Title I schools will be provided with materials related to the listed topics to host parent workshops. All Title I schools will hold an Annual Title I meeting open to all parents and stakeholders for the purpose of reviewing the requirements of Title I, Part A. Student agendas will contain the current school year's Title I Information sheet, which all parents will be able to access. Parents will be informed of the school district's student information system, Infinite Campus, where they can create an account and monitor their students' grades, assignments, and absences. All parents will be provided with the opportunity to partake in parent-teacher conferences.
 - 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:
 - Host a minimum of four Parent University events throughout the school year on varying topics
 - Provide schools with necessary materials to host parent workshops on enhancing parent involvement, literacy, technology, child development, understanding assessments, preparing for standardized tests, and other topics as requested by parents of schools.
 - Maintain a district Parent Informational Resource Center containing a variety of materials in multiple languages for parents to utilize.
 - 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:
 - Provide schools with materials to conduct staff trainings; each school will hold four staff trainings per year.

- Incorporate parents as co-presenters in staff trainings.
 - Educate administrators and staff members on the most recent and relevant information regarding parental involvement in education including the benefits of parent engagement, Parent-Teacher Conferences, communication, and involving parents in homework.
 - Provide assistance regarding parent involvement to new teachers via New Teacher Orientation.
- D. The school district will, to the extent feasible and appropriate, coordinate and integrate parental involvement programs and activities with Head Start, 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:
- Coordinate with program directors to host a Pre-Kindergarten informational session for incoming parents.
 - Coordinate with the ESOL director to host events for parents of ESOL students.
 - Have important parent correspondence translated into Spanish. Documents which are not translated will contain a statement in Spanish indicating who to contact for translation assistance.
 - Maintain a district Parent Informational Resource Center (PIRC) , housed in the Parent Services Center. The PIRC will contain a variety of materials for parents to utilize and check-out including books, DVDs, CDs, computers, pamphlets, and others. Many materials will be available in Spanish.
 - Parents who do not have access to a computer or the internet will be able to use the designated computers in the PIRC.
 - A translator will be able to facilitate Spanish-speaking parents
- 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:
- All correspondence to parents will be sent on GSCS letterhead or will have the GSCS logo visible.
 - The language will be kept simple, free of jargon, euphemisms, and slang. All acronyms and abbreviations will be defined.
 - Some documents will contain a statement in Spanish informing the parent that the document is important, should be translated, and who to call for assistance. Important documents will be translated into Spanish and provided to the necessary parents.
 - All documents will contain contact information for parents who have questions or need further assistance.
- F. The School District shall implement the following practices to meet the federal requirements under Title I, to provide for the representation of Spalding County students residing in neglected and delinquent institutions:
- Parent involvement is recognized to be critical to the success of all students, including those students residing in neglected and delinquent facilities in Spalding County. In the absence of as parent or guardian, the representative of the neglected and delinquent facility should act in place of the parent in regards to parental involvement activities. The involvement of the representative should be geared to increase student attendance, student achievement and decrease delinquent behavior. If the representative of the facility is unable to act, instructional staff may act in the place of the facility representative.
 - The Griffin-Spalding County School System (GSCS) will collaborate with neglected and delinquent facility representatives for program ideas as well as invite them to participate in offered parent trainings and meetings regarding parent involvement. Various activities offered at the schools will be geared to assist the students after their release from the facility.
 - GSCS will regularly communicate with neglected and delinquent institutions within their district. GSCS will provide appropriate school representatives, including the School Parent Involvement Coordinator, Title I Director and the Director of Student Services, information on students residing in these facilities to promote enhanced communication and assistance. GSCS will provide the neglected and delinquent institutions with contact information for GSCS officials that may assist them throughout the year.

DISCRETIONARY DISTRICTWIDE PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT POLICY COMPONENTS

The Griffin-Spalding County School System may also provide additional services in order 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;
- arranging school meetings at a variety of times in order to maximize parental involvement and participation in their children's education, 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;
- maintaining a districtwide Superintendent's Advisory Council with parent members 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.