



ATLANTA
PUBLIC
SCHOOLS

Making A Difference

**OFFICE OF FEDERAL GRANTS
AND PROGRAM COMPLIANCE**

DISTRICT-WIDE PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT POLICY

2014 - 2015

This District-Wide Parental Involvement Policy has been jointly developed in agreement with parents of children participating in Title I, Part A programs as evidence by attendance sheets and agendas for the Title I Parent Advisory Committee (A-PAC) meetings and input via parent feedback forms from surveys, meetings and workshops.

This policy was adopted by the Atlanta Public School District on 6-30-14 and will be in effect for the 2014-2015 school year.

The District will distribute this policy by (10/1/14) to all parents of participating Title I, Part A children at local school, region and district-level meetings; parent resource centers; and school's front office. It will also be made available via the APS district website and subsequent district meetings and workshops during the school year.

**Revised:
6/30/14**



OFFICE OF FEDERAL GRANTS AND PROGRAM COMPLIANCE
2014-2015 TITLE I DISTRICT-WIDE PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT POLICY

PURPOSE:

This policy is being adopted in order to:

1. Support and secure an effective partnership among parents, legal guardians, schools and the community
2. Provide Atlanta Public Schools (APS) students with a school environment that encourages high student academic achievement, and
3. Comply with the Title I, Part A requirements regarding the establishment of a parental involvement policy according to Section 1118 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). [Section 1118(a)(2), ESEA.]

PART I. DISTRICT EXPECTATIONS

Atlanta Public Schools recognizes the participation of parents and community members in the activities at schools as a key contributor to student success. Consistent with the district's vision statement and Board Policies, BA, KB, KM, IFCD and LB, Atlanta Public Schools recognizes that parent and family participation in every school is vital to student achievement.

Every school must have an approved plan to foster parent and family involvement in the educational program and activities of the school as a whole. These plans affirm Atlanta Public Schools commitment to abide by new federal guidelines relative to the importance of school-based parent and community involvement in local schools consistent with section 1112, 1116 and 1118 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). A district-wide Parent Advisory Committee has been established with parents and school representatives dedicated to formulating and revising the district policy.

Atlanta Public Schools agrees to implement the following statutory requirements:

- A. **Atlanta Public Schools** 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.

- B. Consistent with section 1118, **Atlanta Public Schools** will work with its schools to ensure that the required school-level parental involvement policies meet the requirements of section 1118(b) of the ESEA, and each include, as a component, a school-parent compact consistent with section 1118(d) of the ESEA.
- C. **Atlanta Public Schools** will incorporate this districtwide parental involvement policy into its district education plan developed under section 1112 of the ESEA.
- D. In carrying out the Title I, Part A parental involvement requirements, to the extent practicable, **Atlanta Public Schools** 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.
- E. 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, **Atlanta Public Schools** will submit any parent comments with the plan when the school district submits the plan to the State Department of Education.
- F. **Atlanta Public Schools** 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. Any funds received by the schools must be utilized in a manner that facilitates and maximizes parental involvement at the schools. The use of parental involvement funds shall be in accordance with the Board and ESEA guidelines and regulation.
- G. **Atlanta Public Schools** 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 with 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.*

H. Atlanta Public Schools will inform parents and parental organizations that Title I, Part A operates a district-wide Parents As Partners Academic Center to support parents in the education of their children located at 225 James P. Brawley Drive N.W., Atlanta Georgia 30314. For more information, call: 404-802-3673 or email: parentsaspartners@atlanta.k12.ga.us.

PART II. DESCRIPTION OF HOW THE DISTRICT WILL IMPLEMENT REQUIRED DISTRICTWIDE PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT POLICY COMPONENTS

1. The APS School District will involve parents in the joint development of the plan under Section 1112 and the process and school review under Section 116(Section 118 (a)(2)(A), ESEA).

To ensure compliance The Office of Federal Grants and Program Compliance will:

- Conduct an Annual Title I Summit for the district school administrators, and Title I school contacts.
- Conduct an Annual District planning meeting in the fall and spring of each school year to plan for and make any needed revisions to the current Schoolwide Plan. School administrators, teachers, school staff, community stakeholders and parents will be involved in the development of the TA Plan, SWP, and CLIP.
- Partner along with school administrators, teachers, parent mentors, community stakeholders and parents in order to review and update the Parental Involvement Policy, Parent School Compacts, Targeted Assistance Plans, Schoolwide Plans, and Schoolwide Programs.
- Invite all parents of students who attend Targeted Assistance and Schoolwide schools to participate in the district annual planning meeting in April of each year via informational flyers, newsletters, and websites.
- Host an annual LEA Stakeholders Informational Meeting. School Administrators, teachers, parents, students, parent advisory groups and community stakeholders will be invited to attend and review the LEA Plan, CLIP, Target Assistance Plan, District Parent Policy, School Parent Policy, and Schoolwide Plan.
- Collect and maintain required documentation of meeting agendas, meeting minutes, and meeting sign-in sheets. Documentation will be maintained by the Office of Federal Grants and Programs Compliance.

Atlanta Parent Advisory Committee (A-PAC)

Atlanta Public Schools District-Level Parent Advisory Committee (A-PAC) will meet bi-monthly to jointly develop and review the district's Title I, Part A Parental Involvement Policy. The committee will:

- be chosen from volunteers in each Title I, Part A school attendance area within the Atlanta Public Schools
- include parents, Family Engagement Specialists, Parent Liaisons from each cluster where Title I, Part A schools are located and other district level personnel
- review and provide feedback on the Comprehensive LEA Improvement Plan (CLIP), the Consolidated Application, the Title I, Part A Parent Survey, Workshop Evaluation Response forms and other available data
- discuss the results from the evaluations and feedback at (A-PAC) bi-monthly meetings and shared at the Annual Title I, Part A Parent Involvement meeting
- review data to determine how effective the policy was in increasing parent participation
- assist with the identification of barriers for parents who are economically disadvantaged, disabled, have Limited English Proficiency; and of any racial or ethnic minority

Parent Connection Meeting

All parents of students attending Title I Schools will be invited to attend the Annual Parent Connection Meeting. Information will be shared about the Title I Programs, funds and services. Handouts and information will be provided to assist in providing evaluative feedback and suggestions. Parents will be provided opportunities to make suggestions, recommendations and other feedback regarding each of the following:

- District Parent Involvement Policy
- Comprehensive LEA Improvement Plan (CLIP)
- Use of Title I Parental Involvement Funds
- Flexible Learning Program (FLP)
- School Improvement Grant (SIG)

The District-Wide Parental Involvement Policy will be available on the district's website and at each Title I, Part A school. Suggestions and comments for revising the policy will be gathered during the Annual Title I Review Meetings, Advisory Committee Meetings, and via the district's website during the first semester of each school year, prior to approval by the district. Upon approval, the written policy will be posted for distribution via the APS website, distributed to the local Title I, Part A schools, and the Parent as Partners Academic Center (PAPAC).

2. **Atlanta Public Schools** will take the following actions to involve parents in the process of school review and improvement under section 1116 of the ESEA:

- Invite parents to review and provide input on the school plans
- inform other parents and community members of the progress or lack of progress of the school plans
- convene at least two well-publicized meetings to present to the proposed school plans to the school and its community. These meetings will include the Annual Title I Summit for the district school administrators and Title I school contacts and the Parent Connection Meeting.

These meeting will be held in the fall and spring of each school year to plan for and make any needed revisions to the current School Wide Plan. School Administrators, teachers, parents, students, Parent Advisory Groups and community stakeholders will be invited to attend, and review the development of the CLIP, Target Assistance Plan, District Parent Policy, School Parent Policy, and School Wide Plan

- Collect and maintain required documentation of meeting agendas, meeting minutes, and meeting sign-in sheets

3. **Atlanta Public Schools** 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:

The Office of Federal Grants and Program Compliance will employ staff to provide support to schools. Federal Grant Specialists, Family Engagement Manager and Family Engagement Specialists will provide guidance, coordination, technical assistance and support to all APS Title I, Part A schools. Primary staff roles and responsibilities include:

Federal Grant Specialist (FGS) will provide guidance and support to schools for the development of their school wide plans. FGS will review each schoolwide plan and budget to ensure that all Title I compliance requirements are met. FGS will work collaboratively with

Family Engagement Specialists to provide guidance for completing the parental involvement component (Section 5) for implementation at each Title I School.

The Family Engagement Manager and Specialists (FEM and FES) will provide guidance and support to schools that ensures compliance, coordination and implementation of required programs and services for Title I parental involvement. These staff will provide guidance documents to schools that include implementation timelines, and resources (sample policies, compacts, letters, flyers, agendas, sign-in sheets, and other documents). FEM and FES will also provide and/or sponsor trainings, workshops and resources, best practices and strategies for parental involvement and Title I compliance. FES will provide technical assistance, training and support to each school Parent Liaison on a monthly basis for effective parental involvement strategies and Title I compliance and notebook documentation requirements.

4. **Atlanta Public Schools** will coordinate and integrate parental involvement strategies in Part A with parental involvement strategies under the following other programs: [Evenstart, Headstart, Homeless, Home Instruction Program for Preschool Youngsters and State-run preschool programs], by initiating joint efforts to involve parents in Atlanta Public Schools quest to:
 - limit barriers and implement effective outreach
 - encourage these organizations to provide the District and schools with relevant information regarding their parental involvement efforts
 - coordinate and integrate parental involvement strategies in Title I, Part A Schools
5. **Atlanta Public Schools** 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.

Annual evaluation data will be used to develop strategies to determine the effectiveness of parental involvement. The staff of the Office of Federal Grants and Program Compliance Office of Federal Grants and Program Staff and Local School Council and parents will develop surveys, formulate focus groups and workshop evaluations to collect data about:

- Programs and services
- Processes and procedures

- Program selection and elimination
- Curriculum and resource needs

The district will conduct, with the involvement of parents, an annual evaluation to ascertain the effectiveness and content of the parent involvement policy to determine if the policy:

- Increase the participation of parents
- Give particular attention to the disadvantaged, limited English proficient and individuals with disabilities
- Increase partnerships between parents and children
- Increase student achievement (i.e., use of Parent-School Compacts)
- Build capacity for Parental Involvement
- Increase parental input and involvement in school and district parental involvement decisions

APS Parent Advisory Committee (APAC) will participate in the review and evaluation of district parental involvement programs and services. This process will allow APAC members to assess and determine the need for program changes, selections and elimination. Documents will also be reviewed and revised to ensure best practices are employed for increasing parent partnerships and student achievement.

The Office of Federal Grants and Program Compliance will review data from surveys, program evaluations, and feedback from A-PAC members to:

- identify barriers to greater participation by parents in parental involvement activities.
- provide particular attention to parents who are economically disadvantaged, are homeless, are disabled, have Limited English Proficiency, have limited literacy, or are of any racial or ethnic minority background.
- assess new strategies to improve the district Parental Involvement Policy/Plan.
- revise parent satisfaction surveys conducted by the Office of Federal Grants and Program Compliance during the spring of year.

6. **Atlanta Public Schools** 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. **Atlanta Public Schools** 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 –

Regional parent workshops on topics such as:

- Navigating Through Common Core
- Test Preparation
- Family Literacy Night
- Developing Parent and Community Partnerships
- Fingertip Technology
- Parent Resource Centers

State and National Conferences that may include:

- National Title I Conference
- Georgia Department of Education PIC Trainings
- Georgia Department of Education Family Engagement Conference
- Migrant Education Program Conference
- Homeless Education Program Conference
- Neglected & Delinquent Program Conference

Atlanta Public Schools will employ multiple strategies to monitor the development and implementation of programs to address the six requirements to build parental capacity in all Title I Schools. These strategies will be implemented and managed by parents, district and school staff that include:

- Family Engagement Specialists
- Federal Grant Specialists
- Parent Liaisons
- Title I Contacts
- School Administrators
- Local School Council - Parent Engagement Committee

FES will work with Federal Grants Specialist to review and provide feedback to schools regarding parental involvement requirements in section five (5) of all school wide plans. Guidance will be provided regarding activities and documentation for compliance with Title I requirements (i.e., policy, compacts, parent meetings, building capacity workshops, professional development). FES will provide technical assistance workshops/in-services,

and trainings to meet the six requirements to build capacity for school staff and parents. FES will complete monthly site visits to schools to determine progress and check notebooks and other documentation for Title I requirements.

School Staff (Parent Liaisons, Title I Contacts and school administrators) will work in their local schools to implement and support elements identified in the schoolwide plan. Parent Liaisons will ensure all Title I required activities are completed and secure documentation to meet compliance. Parent Liaisons will also provide documentation to FES and Office of Federal Grants as required for Title I. Required activities include building capacity workshops for staff, parents and provide opportunities for other professional development.

The Local School Council – The Parent Engagement Committee (LSC-PEC) will play a critical role in monitoring programs in schools to meet the six requirements for building capacity. All parental involvement events, programs and activities will be reviewed by this committee. Evaluative feedback will be provided during their meetings and included in reports submitted to the Family Engagement Specialist and Manager. A report with recommendations and suggestions regarding the parental involvement programs addressing needs identified from school data reviewed by the LSC-PEC will be created and submitted to the Family Engagement Specialist.

- B. Atlanta Public Schools** 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 implementing the following:

APS Family Engagement Specialists (FES) will serve as the links between the district, Parent Liaisons schools and parents for parental involvement. FES will be assigned to each APS high school cluster with offices located in the East, West, North and South Regions. FES will provide technical assistance to ensure schools have current information and resources to meet Title I compliance and implement effective parental involvement programs, events, and activities. FES will work individually and collaboratively with Parent Liaisons and other school staff to coordinate, host, and/or sponsor programs, workshops to build capacity for parents.

Parents can participate in workshops to receive information, resources, and skills to better assist their child/children with homework, test preparation, projects and other academic assignments. Family Engagement Specialist will work collaboratively with school staff (Title I Contacts, Parent Liaisons, administrators and parent groups) to provide:

School-based workshops or training that may include:

- How to Develop Parent Involvement Policy and School-Parent Compacts
- Connecting School-Parent Compacts to Student Achievement, Parent Conferences, and Grade-level Performance
- Grade Level Expectations
- How to Succeed in School – Study Habits and Homework
- Identifying a Child’s Learning Style
- Parent-Teacher Conference
- Test Taking: Preparation Tips and Strategy for the Criterion Referenced Competency Test (CRCT); End of Course Test (EOCT), Georgia High School Graduation Test (GHS GT), Georgia Alternate Assessment (GAA) and Georgia Criterion-Referenced Competency Tests-Modified (CRCT-M)

Parent Liaisons will serve as a link between schools and parents. They will work closely with school administrators, staff and Family Engagement Specialist to develop community partnerships that enhance student achievement and ensure federal compliance with the school’s parent involvement policy. They will provide workshops to build capacity for parents and staff plus collaborate with community representatives/agencies for resources to increase student achievement. Parent Liaisons will provide opportunities for parents to volunteer in the school Parent Center and during parental involvement events and activities.

Local School Councils will work to improve student achievement by creating stronger bonds between the school and the surrounding community. Local School Councils will also provide support for teachers and administrators, and encourage parents to be part of a school’s decision-making process. Local school councils will meet at least four times per year, and all meetings will be open to the public.

APS Parent Mentors are trained to advise, educate, and support parents of children with disabilities issues surrounding special education services within APS schools. Parent Mentor will provide support to families of children with disabilities through information and open communication. They will also provide support for parents/guardians with concerns and questions, coordinate workshops for parents and educators, locate special needs information and resources, and offer a parent’s perspective on the special education process.

C. **Atlanta Public Schools** 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:

1. encouraging and supporting parents to more fully participate in the education of their children,

2. working with all state and local agencies
3. encouraging schools to send parents to conferences that emphasize parental involvement
4. providing professional development for the Federal Grant Specialist, School Improvement Specialists and Family Engagement Specialists, School administrators, staff and Parent Liaisons on developing strategies that promote Parental Involvement..
5. conducting and attending conferences that offer tools to parents that will lead to student success.

APS will also provide parents with multiple opportunities for engaging and being involved in meaningful ways in their child's/children's education via district and school level Title I programs, events and activities. Parents can participate in district, regional and school workshops designed to build capacity for helping their child succeed academically. Parents can also serve on various committees and share their suggestions and recommendations for improving programs and services via focus groups, surveys and parent meetings. A list of the required Title I district and school committees and meetings where parents can get involved and share their suggestions and recommendations include:

Parent Committees

- District Parent Advisory Committee
- Local School Council –Parent Engagement Committee
- School Wide Planning committee

Parent Meetings

- District Annual Title I Meeting
- School Annual Title I Meeting
- District Parent Connection Meeting
- Flexible Learning Plan Meeting
- School-Parent Compact Meeting
- Parent Involvement Policy Meeting
- School Budget Meeting

D. Atlanta Public Schools 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:

- Coordinating and integrating workshops to train parents in ways they can contribute to their children's progress and achievement to ensure college to career readiness. Programs will be implemented and coordinated in order to build ties between home and school. Opportunities will be provided for the participation of all parents including parents with disabilities and non-English speaking parents by insuring that these parents are informed and provided interpreters as needed in system wide meetings.
- Establishing and maintaining a collaborative agreement between the Early Learning Department and Title I Parent Involvement. The agreement will employ the Family Engagement Specialist and Parent Liaisons to host and promote regular parent involvement meetings. The Early Learning Specialists will assist by facilitating parent education workshops hosted by them. These workshops provide partnership benefits that:
 - Build capacity for parents
 - Coordinate and integrate parent involvement program with Early Learning Department programs and initiatives i.e. pre-school, Head Start, Parent Education, Community Outreach
 - Promote early literacy enhancement
 - Establish a comprehensive approach to parental involvement throughout the district
 - Support life-long love of reading

E. Atlanta Public Schools 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:

These strategies include:

- Communications about events, meetings and/or training events are posted on the APS website as a running banner with links to meeting/workshop flyers will be provided in English and Spanish versions;
- Meeting and event flyers were disseminated to Family Engagement Specialists in each region for distribution to Parent Liaisons, school staff and community partners.

- School Administrators will send communications (school website, Robo Call, Mass Text, newsletters, facebook, twitter) to parents regarding Title I meetings, workshops, events, and activities.
- Parent Liaisons will post and distribute workshop/meeting flyers throughout the school and provided copies in the school and district parent resource centers.

Additional activities include:

- The FES will provide the Principal, Title I Contact, and Parent Liaison with a copy of the OFGPC Title I Documents, Templates and Samples document, which contains a sample of all Title I Parent Notification letters and the FES will review it during monthly technical assistance.
- School Administrators will complete the parent notification letter and send a copy to the Parent Liaison and Family Engagement Specialist for review prior to distribution.
- The Parent Liaison and Family Engagement Specialist will report to the School Administrators whether the parent notification letter contains all required information.

F. Atlanta Public Schools will provide other reasonable support for parental involvement activities under section 1118 as parents may request.

- To assist parents who are unable to attend conferences at school, APS local schools may arrange for and conduct in-home conferences between teachers or other educators who work directly with participating children and the children's parents.
- Training may also be provided to parents in how to enhance the involvement of other parents.

PART III. DISCRETIONARY DISTRICTWIDE PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT POLICY COMPONENTS

Atlanta Public Schools is committed to establishing partnerships with parents and community members, and encourages their participation in the design, implementation, and evaluation of its Title I, Part A Parent Involvement Policy. Atlanta Public Schools will take the following actions to involve parents in the joint development of its district-wide parental involvement plan under section 1112 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;
- in order to maximize parental involvement and participation in their children's education, arranging school meetings at a variety of times, 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;
- establishing a districtwide parent advisory council 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
- Provide other reasonable support for parental involvement activities under section 1118 as parents may request

PART IV ADOPTION

This District Wide Parental Involvement Policy has been developed jointly with, and agreed on with, parents of children participating in Title I, Part A programs, as evidenced by attendance sheets and agendas for the Title I Parent Advisory Committee (A-PAC) meetings and input via parent feedback forms from surveys, meetings and workshops.

This policy was adopted by the **Atlanta Public Schools** on 6-30-14 and will be in effect for the period of one year (2014-2015 School Year). The school district will distribute this policy to all parents of participating Title I, Part A children on or before **November 1, 2014**.