

PASS 3: Strategies that Enrich and Expand Student Learning

PASS is an Opportunity to Boost Student Performance and Exceed Title I Family Engagement Requirements

The PASS model refers to the term "parent" as any adult who plays an important role in a child's family life.

Generally, parents want to be actively engaged in the formal education of their children, but some schools do not have a program to offer that type of engagement in student learning. Unfortunately, parents nor educators might not know where to start, when to find the time, or how to go about developing positive partnerships for student learning. The PASS model was developed to inspire and prepare the way for those important partnerships.

A parent's role in the education of their child is so powerful and important that it has been part of the nation's education law since 1965. Over the years, as the law has been refined and reauthorized, it continues to include more specific information and a definition of parent involvement.

<http://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/esea02/pg2.html#sec1118>

Home/school partnerships and parent involvement provisions in the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA)

"ESEA," otherwise known as the No Child Left Behind Act, defines, expands, and formalizes a role of home/school learning partnerships and parent involvement to benefit student achievement.

In the 2001 reauthorization of ESEA parental involvement is defined as the participation of parents in regular, two-way, and meaningful communication involving student academic learning and other school activities, including assurances that:

- (A) parents play an integral role in assisting their child's learning;
- (B) parents are encouraged to be actively involved in their child's education at school;
- (C) 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; and
- (D) other activities are carried out, such as those described in section 1118 of the ESEA.

According to ESEA, all school districts with schools receiving federal Title I funds must be governed by the above statutory definition and parent involvement provisions within the law. In addition, it is expected that all Title I schools will carry out programs, activities, and procedures in accordance with ESEA.

In combination with the definition above, Title I requirements assure that:

- Districts and schools will provide parents with information in a language they understand;
- Parents' participation on decision-making committees will be expanded;
- Educators will have access to training on how to work with parents effectively;
- States will evaluate school-level parent involvement practices to ensure they are effective; and
- Technical assistance will be provided to schools having difficulty implementing parent involvement activities that increase student achievement.

All schools - including those that do not receive federal Title I funds - are strongly encouraged to review, adapt, and adopt Title I parent engagement practices as part of the local policy governance.

Suggestions for All Schools

All parent-led organizations and Boards of Education - including those in schools that do not receive federal Title I funds - are strongly encouraged to discuss the adaption and adoption of Title I parent engagement practices for all educators and parents as part of the local policy governance.

Parent-led organization such as the PTA or PTO can support a school's Title I Program

- Focus parent organization goals and activities on student learning and the academic achievements of all students in the school.
- Help the district and school build home/school partnerships focused on student learning with all parents and engage them in understanding and supporting the curriculum, academic assessments, and parental monitoring and support of their child's progress.
- Contact the district's parent engagement or federal grants coordinator in the central office. Explain that as a Title I district/school you understand that parents must play a role on committees, the development of specific parent involvement documents and policies, and development of the District's Title I Plan. Offer assistance and representation.
- Participate in the development, update, distribution and implementation of the school's required parent involvement policy. Request that parent involvement documents and policies be placed on the district and school webpages; distribute the policy at meetings; and reprint the policy in newsletters. (Sample documents can be found at: <http://www.state.nj.us/education/title1/program/parent/>.)
- Encourage all Title I parents to attend the school's annual Title I parent meeting. This meeting is where the school is required to inform parents of their child's participation and requirements under the Title I portion of the law. The school is also required to inform participating parents of their rights and the various opportunities for involvement and engagement in student learning. Summarize the opportunities and post them on the PTA/PTO webpage and reprint them in the PTA/PTO newsletter.
- The district must send several required letters to Title I parents. Offer to help write/develop, convert to "family-friendly language," or translate the required letters into other languages. Send information in newsletters, post on websites and make it available at activities and meetings.

The New Jersey Department of Education Office of Supplemental Educational Programs offers specific policy, procedure, and practice requirements for parent engagement in districts and schools receiving federal Title I funds.
<http://www.state.nj.us/education/title1/program/parent/>

Required Policies and Practices for Districts/Schools Receiving Title I Funds Model Considerations for All New Jersey Schools

14 Required Activities: Building Capacity for Parental Involvement in Schools Receiving Title I Funds

Building Capacity - To ensure effective involvement of parents and to support a partnership among the school parents, and community for the purpose of improving student academic achievement, each school *and* local educational agency assisted under this part —

- (1) shall **provide assistance** to parents of children served by the school or local educational agency, as appropriate, in understanding such topics as the State's academic content standards and State student academic achievement standards, State and local academic assessments, the requirements of this part, and how to monitor a child's progress and work with educators to improve the achievement of their children;
- (2) shall provide **materials** and **training** to help parents to work with their children to improve achievement, such as literacy training and using technology, as appropriate, to foster parental involvement;
- (3) shall **educate** teachers, pupil services 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 parents and the school;
- (4) shall, to the extent feasible and appropriate, **coordinate** and **integrate parent involvement programs and activities** with Head Start, Reading First, Early Reading First, Even Start, the 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;
- (5) shall **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;
- (6) may **involve parents** in the development of training for teachers, principals, and other educators to improve the effectiveness of such training;
- (7) may **provide** necessary **literacy training** from funds received under this part if the local educational agency has exhausted all other reasonably available sources of funding for such training;
- (8) may **pay reasonable** and necessary **expenses** associated with local parental involvement activities, including transportation and child care costs, to enable parents to participate in school-related meetings and training sessions;
- (9) may **train parents** to enhance the involvement of other parents;
- (10) may **arrange school meetings** at a variety of times, or conduct in-home conferences between teachers or other educators, who work directly with participating children, with parents who are unable to attend such conferences at school, in order to maximize parental involvement and participation;
- (11) may **adopt and implement model approaches** to improving parental involvement;
- (12) may establish a district wide **parent advisory council** to provide advice on all matters related to parental involvement in programs supported under this section;
- (13) may **develop appropriate roles** for community-based organizations and businesses in parent involvement activities; and
- (14) shall **provide** such other **reasonable support** for parental involvement activities under this section as parents may request.