

Toolkit for Schools

Involving Parents in No Child Left Behind



Families • Schools • Communities

Learning Together

Elizabeth Burmaster, State Superintendent
Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction

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Involving Parents in *No Child Left Behind*



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Madison, Wisconsin

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Foreword

The Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) was first enacted in 1965. This act's fundamental principle of providing educational opportunities to our most disadvantaged youth has remained strong. The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB), a major reform of the ESEA, was passed by Congress and signed into law on January 8, 2002. NCLB redefines the federal role in K-12 education and will help close the achievement gap between disadvantaged and minority students and their peers.

The Federal No Child Left Behind Act is very complex and has many requirements with which state and local school districts must comply. Our New Wisconsin Promise provides a framework for implementing NCLB by focusing on closing the achievement gap, providing quality teachers and administrators, improving reading, investing in early learning, increasing parent and community involvement and providing career and technical education to help students become active citizens.

This *Learning Together* booklet, the **Toolkit for Schools: Involving Parents in No Child Left Behind**, is a blueprint for action. The booklet attempts to examine the major areas in which the NCLB requires schools to involve and inform parents. It provides overviews of the NCLB Act, explains NCLB requirements, offers action steps for parent notification and involvement, and suggests strategies for communities to unite in improving the education of all children.

The ideas in this packet are good for all schools, not just those with Title I programs or the neediest children. Supporting the academic achievement of students in every Wisconsin public school must be our state's top priority and requires that we all be part of the solution.

Elizabeth Burmaster
State Superintendent

How to Use this Document

The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, signed into law by Congress on January 8, 2002, makes many important changes in the educational opportunities public schools offer to disadvantaged youth and others. Among the changes is a firm commitment to the idea that parents play a pivotal role in their children's learning success. Consequently, the NCLB requires schools to inform parents of and involve them in their children's education in many new and thorough ways.

The NCLB requires schools receiving Title I funds and other federal funds

- to involve parents in school decisions and in school improvement;
- to inform parents about the qualifications of those who teach their children, about how well their child is doing, and if their child's school is safe and is meeting annual achievement goals.

Parents in schools that, according to NCLB requirements, need to improve have options for improving their children's education and for getting involved, themselves.

Informing parents about what is in the law can be combined with schools' ongoing efforts to effectively involve parents in children's learning. This *Learning Together* packet attempts to give schools ideas for accomplishing both.

Section 1 offers an overview of the NCLB and articles to help parents and educators understand how the law impacts schools and children's learning.

Section 2 explains the requirements for parental notification and involvement under NCLB. **Section 2A** describes NCLB **parent notification** requirements; **Section 2B** describes NCLB **parent involvement** requirements. Both Sections 2A and 2B offer ideas, strategies, and sample materials schools can use to carry out the requirements in ways that families will understand and find useful.

Section 3 provides strategies for families, schools, and communities to work together to improve education for all children

This document is intended to be a useful resource for district and building-level teams of teachers, parents, administrators, and community members to review as they consider ways to carry out NCLB directives, school improvement goals, and partnership-strengthening practices that help every child learn.

As with all information in the *Learning Together* series, the most effective activities and goals will be those that respond directly to the unique characteristics and needs of your school's children and families.



Section 1

Section 1: Understanding No Child Left Behind

What major changes does NCLB require of Wisconsin schools and districts?
How does NCLB require schools to keep parents informed and involved? How
can educators help parents and community members make sense of NCLB
and its impact on children's learning?

The No Child Left Behind Act is a vast and complex law that spans 45 federally-funded education programs under 10 titles. The articles in Section 1 attempt to provide "the big picture" for NCLB to those whose children and students must learn by it.

No Child Left Behind: An Overview for Parents

The Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) was first enacted by the federal government in 1965 to ensure educational opportunities for our nation's most disadvantaged youth. The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB), a major reform of the ESEA, was passed by Congress and signed into law on January 8, 2002. The Act encompasses 45 education programs across ten areas, referred to as titles, totaling \$22 billion nationally in 2003-04. Nearly \$279 million in 16 different programs was allocated to Wisconsin in 2003-04.

How is NCLB funding awarded to schools?

Wisconsin's 426 school districts access NCLB funding primarily through formula-driven entitlements and, to a lesser degree, through state competitive grants and directly from the U.S. Education Department (USED). Formula-driven entitlements are allocated to school districts based on pupil population and poverty rates. The more students a district has and the higher rate of poverty, the more funds a district receives. School districts submit an application indicating how they will comply with NCLB requirements for programs involving:

- disadvantaged children
- migrant children
- neglected and delinquent youth
- teacher and principal training and recruiting
- education technology
- children with limited English proficiency
- safe and drug-free schools and communities
- innovative programs, or promising, new school improvement programs, including charter and magnet schools.

The largest entitlement program is Title I, Part A, representing \$151 million out of Wisconsin's \$278 million total, and has the most significant requirements that will impact all school districts.

State competitive grants are awarded to a limited number of districts based on the strengths of submitted applications. School districts compete for these funds against other school districts in the state. School districts can also access competitive funds directly from USED in several different NCLB programs. School districts compete for national competitive funds against other school districts in the nation.

New NCLB requirements for states

The NCLB imposes several major new requirements on states that will have an impact on school districts and school buildings. These state requirements include:

- **Test students statewide in reading and math** in grades 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, and once in high school by 2005-06. The state must test students in science at least once in grades 3-5, 6-9, and in grades 10-12.
- **Set up a statewide accountability system** that ensures all students will be proficient or better in math and reading by 2013-14. This statewide accountability system will establish annual gains in reading and math test scores, or benchmarks, all schools must reach each year. This statewide accountability system also requires all schools and districts to test at least 95% of students annually and meet established benchmarks for attendance (elementary and middle school) and graduation rates (high schools and districts). Meeting these accountability standards is also referred to as making adequate yearly progress (AYP).
- **Measure and report on the progress of all students** and subgroups of students by race/ethnicity, children with disabilities, economically disadvantaged, and limited English proficient.
- **Name schools and districts identified for improvement.** Schools and/or districts identified for improvement are those that have not made adequate yearly progress (AYP) toward reaching state-set benchmarks in reading and math for two years in a row for all students or any subgroup of students.
- **Require all teachers of "core academic subjects" to be highly qualified.** Core academic subjects under NCLB are English, reading or language arts, math, science, foreign, language, civics and government, economics, arts, history, and geography. Highly qualified teachers are those who hold Wisconsin teaching licenses for the subjects that they teach.
- **Develop and disseminate a state report card** with specific reporting requirements, including the progress of all students and subgroups of students by race/ethnicity, children with disabilities, economically disadvantaged, and limited English proficient on state assessments in reading and math.



No Child Left Behind: An Overview for Parents (continued)

New NCLB requirements for school districts

School districts and school buildings receiving Title I funds must meet additional new NCLB requirements. Title I funding is independently awarded at two levels - district and school. Nearly all of Wisconsin's 426 school districts and about half of its 2,181 school buildings receive Title I funds.

NCLB can impose sanctions on SIFI schools with increasing levels of accountability the longer a school stays in improvement status. Sanctions range from offering intra-district public school choice, offering supplemental services, implementing corrective actions, and reconstitution.

NCLB calls for Title I schools and districts to

- **Notify parents about many issues**, including parents' rights to receive information about their child's teacher, identification status of the schools, and parent options when a school is identified for improvement.
- **Ensure that all teachers are highly qualified** in core academic subjects in 2005-06 if they have been hired after January 8, 2002, and teach in programs supported with Title I funds.
- **Ensure that Title I paraprofessionals meet stricter requirements** if they have been hired after January 8, 2002, and all current Title I paraprofessionals meet those requirements by 2005-06.
- **Develop and disseminate school district and school building report cards** with specific reporting requirements, including the progress of all students and subgroups of students by race/ethnicity, children with disabilities, economically disadvantaged, and limited English proficient on state assessments in reading and math.

NCLB requirements for reporting student data

The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction is developing an individual student record system to meet new NCLB reporting requirements. The new state system,

expected to go into effect in fall 2004, will eliminate the need for districts to develop costly systems at the local level.

Other NCLB requirements for all schools

The following are some examples of additional requirements under NCLB that affect all school programs under ESEA:

- **Participation of Private Schools:** requires districts under specific titles to consult with and provide services and/or benefits to private school children, their teachers, and other education staff.
- **Unsafe School Option:** requires the state to develop a policy that allows students attending a persistently dangerous school, as determined by the state, to transfer to a safe public school within the district. This option also extends to victims of a violent criminal offense in school.
- **Military Access:** requires school districts receiving ESEA funds to provide military recruiters and institutions of higher education the names, addresses, and telephone listings of high school students and also provide military recruiters the same access to high school students as is provided to institutions of higher education and prospective employers.
- **School Prayer:** all school districts receiving funds must certify to the state that they do not have any policies that prevent or deny participation in constitutionally protected school prayer. All school districts have certified at this time.

How to keep informed

The DPI has developed a series of bulletins on key provisions in NCLB. These bulletins and other information about how Wisconsin is implementing the NCLB Act, including links to federal documents, can be found on DPI's NCLB Web page at www.dpi.state.wi.us/dpi/esea/index.html.

What is the NCLB?

and Ten Other Things Parents Should Know About the No Child Left Behind Act

Although the new law offers a wealth of information and options for parents, few parents know about the law or how it impacts their child's education. Following are commonly-asked questions parents ask about the NCLB, highlighting major changes in the law that affect Wisconsin parents. For more information about NCLB, visit the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction website at www.dpi.state.wi.us/dpi/esea/index.html.

1. What is NCLB?

The federal No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB), a major reform of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), was passed by Congress and signed into law by the president on January 8, 2002. ESEA traditionally covered supplemental aid for poor and disadvantaged children in K-12 education, but evolved over the years to address other education reform priorities for all children.

NCLB redefines the federal role in K-12 education and seeks to help close the achievement gap between disadvantaged and minority students and their peers. The Act, encompassing 45 programs totaling an annual federal investment of \$19 billion in 2003-04, also requires schools and districts to involve parents in new ways in the hard work of school improvement. Wisconsin's total funding for 2003-04 under the NCLB Act is approximately \$278 million in 16 different programs.

2. How does the NCLB affect my child's education?

NCLB requires all states to develop and administer annual tests in reading and math for all students in grades 3-8 and at least once in these subjects in grades 9-12. These tests must align with each state's current academic content standards.

Test scores are assigned to one of four levels that describe how well students performed on the state tests: advanced, proficient, basic, and minimal performance (www.dpi.state.wi.us/oea/profdesc.html). The overall goal of the NCLB is to have all children score proficient or advanced on statewide tests in reading and math by 2014. Between now and 2014, schools must take a specific series of steps to move toward that goal. The law requires schools to work hard in four areas:

- helping students meet challenging academic standards in reading, math, science, and testing students in those areas.
- making Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) by annually demonstrating that all students are meeting state goals for reading and math.
- collecting and reporting student achievement data.
- ensuring that all teachers are highly qualified.

3. What is AYP or Adequate Yearly Progress?

Schools must show that they make continual progress toward the goal of having all children proficient in math and reading by 2014. Wisconsin has devised a series of indicators or benchmarks that show if schools are making the required progress each year. Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) is the annual accounting of indicators taken from student test results which schools, districts, and the state must meet under NCLB. These indicators require schools and districts to:

- test 95% of enrolled students in grades 4, 8, and 10 in reading and math. In 2005-06, this requirement changes to include 95% of enrolled students in grades 3 through 8 and once in high school.
- meet state goals for student attendance in school and for high school graduation.
- meet annual achievement goals set by the state in math and reading.

In addition, schools must break down or disaggregate the achievement scores and test participation percentages by race, economic status, students with disabilities, and limited English proficient students. All of the disaggregated subgroups must meet the annual accountability indicators. A subgroup is defined as a group of at least 40 students, except for subgroups of students with disabilities which must have at least 50 students. Failure to meet an annual indicator for two or more years in a row results in a school or district being identified for improvement.

4. How will I know how well my child is doing on state tests?

Schools must send parents information about their child's level of achievement on state tests. Parents currently



What is the NCLB? (continued)

receive their child's statewide test results on two state tests:

- the Wisconsin Reading Comprehension Test in grade 3, and
- the Wisconsin Knowledge and Concepts Examinations (WKCE) in grades 4, 8, and 10.

The WKCE not only assess student performance in reading and math, as required by NCLB, but they also assess student performance in language arts, science, and social studies, as required by Wisconsin state law. Beginning in 2005-06, to comply with NCLB requirements, Wisconsin will assess reading and mathematics performance annually in grades 3 through 8 and 10. A Student/Parent Pre-Test Guide for the WKCE is available on-line at www.dpi.state.wi.us/dpi/oea/kce_publin.html.

5. How can I find out how my child's school is doing?

All school districts are required to send parents an annual school performance report. The report contains information on student performance and on the learning opportunities schools offer to students. A listing of all information included in the School Performance Report is available at www.dpi.state.wi.us/spr/about.html.

Parents can also access information about how their child's school is doing through the Wisconsin Information Network for Successful Schools (WINSS). Detailed student performance information by school and district is featured on the WINSS website at <http://data.dpi.state.wi.us/data/selschool.asp>.

In addition, each school district receiving Title I funds must give out a report card to parents and the public that includes information at the district and school levels on student achievement on state tests, graduation rates, and teacher qualifications. Student achievement on state tests must be indicated by race, ethnicity, gender, disability status, migrant status, English proficiency, and status as economically disadvantaged.

District report cards must be disseminated to all parents of students attending district schools in an understandable format and language. Districts must also make the report cards widely available to the public via the Internet, media, and public agencies.

6. What happens if my child's school does not make AYP?

Schools that do not make Adequate Yearly Progress for two or more consecutive years are identified for improvement. Once identified, a school needs to meet AYP for two consecutive years to have its "in need of improvement" designation removed.

Although all districts and schools are subject to testing and accountability requirements, only districts and schools receiving federal Title I funds are subject to federal sanctions for not making adequate yearly progress for two or more years in a row.

The following levels of federal sanctions for schools are cumulative. That is, schools who continue to be identified for improvement each year must add each additional level's sanctions to the sanctions it already has.

Level 1 (after 2 consecutive years): Schools must adopt two-year improvement plans, invest in professional development for teachers, and give parents the option to transfer their children to a higher-performing public or charter school in the district, with the district paying for transportation. Priority for transfers will go to the lowest-achieving, low-income students.

Level 2 (after 3 consecutive years): Schools continue improvement efforts and give students from low-income families the option of obtaining supplemental educational services (i.e. tutoring) from private providers.

Level 3 (after 4 consecutive years): Schools continue previous improvement activities and also are subject to "corrective action." Corrective action must involve one or more of the following: implementing a new curriculum, replacing school staff, appointing an outside expert as advisor, extending the school day or year, or restructuring the school.

Level 4 (after 5 consecutive years): Schools must plan for restructuring, which may involve replacing staff, contracting with a private firm to manage the school, or turning school operations over to the state education agency.

Level 5 (after 6 consecutive years): Schools must implement their restructuring plan.

7. What can I do if my child is in a school identified for improvement?

First, get a clear understanding of why your school is in improvement status. Title I schools in improvement status must notify parents that their child's school is identified for improvement and state the reasons why. Ask your school principal to explain it to you. Second, get involved in school improvement efforts. Most schools offer a variety of opportunities for parent involvement. Finally, parents in schools that receive Title I funds will be notified of additional options available to them (please see the sanctions listed above under Question 6).

8. How does NCLB ensure quality teaching in my child's school?

In every school, all teachers of core academic subjects—English, language arts, mathematics, science, foreign languages, civics and government, economics, arts, history, and geography—must be “highly qualified” by 2005-06. Between now and then, every newly hired teacher must be highly qualified.

Currently licensed teachers in Wisconsin are “highly qualified” if they hold at least a bachelor degree, are fully licensed or certified by the state in the subjects they teach, and can demonstrate competence in the subjects they teach.

Title I schools must notify parents annually that they can request information about the qualifications of their children's teachers. Parents in these schools must also be notified if their child is taught for more than 4 consecutive weeks by a teacher who is not “highly qualified.”

Paraprofessionals, or teacher assistants with instructional duties, newly hired after January 2002 must have two years of college or an associate degree, or they must demonstrate knowledge of and the ability to assist with reading, writing, and mathematics through a formal state or local assessment. Currently employed paraprofessionals have until 2006 to meet these requirements.

9. How does the NCLB help keep schools safe?

The NCLB provides schools with funds to improve school safety. In addition, Wisconsin is required to develop a state

policy that identifies persistently dangerous schools. NCLB requires schools to notify parents if they have been so identified.

10. How can I be involved in my child's school?

Ask your principal how you can become involved. All Title I schools consult with parents about the program and how parents will be involved. School districts must have a written parent involvement policy that describes how it will help Title I schools plan and implement effective parent involvement activities. Districts receiving more than \$500,000 in Title I funds must use at least one percent of those funds for parent involvement activities. They may also establish parent advisory councils.

Title I schools must conduct an annual meeting for Title I parents and inform parents about Title I programs, the school curriculum, and student achievement data.

11. What other information does NCLB require schools to give parents about their child's education?

NCLB requires schools to inform parents about their right to

- Request that their child's name, address, and telephone number be withheld from recruiters for the military and for institutions of higher education.
- Inspect student surveys and to opt their child out of those surveys if the surveys collect, disclose, or use personal information about students in any of eight categories related to the behavior, attitudes, or beliefs of students or their families.

Schools must also involve parents in establishing policies that notify parents of the right to inspect student surveys at the beginning of each school year.

School districts using Title III funds must also conduct effective outreach to parents of limited English proficient children, informing parents how they can be involved in their children's education, and regularly meeting with parents to respond to parent recommendations for improving their child's education.



Glossary of Terms

Some maintain that the No Child Left Behind Act uses a language of its own. This glossary attempts to decipher some of the more frequently-used terms and acronyms in the NCLB.

Assessment — Another word for “test.” Under No Child Left Behind, student tests are aligned with academic standards. Beginning in the 2002-03 school year, schools must administer tests in each of three grade spans: grades 3-5, grades 6-9, and grades 10-12 in all schools. Beginning in the 2005-06 school year, tests must be administered every year in grades 3 through 8 in math and reading. Beginning in the 2007-08 school year, science achievement must also be tested.

Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) — Schools must show that they make progress each year toward the goal of having all children proficient in math and reading by 2014. Wisconsin has devised a series of indicators or benchmarks that show if schools are making the required progress each year. Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) is the annual accounting of indicators, taken from student test results which schools, districts, and the state must meet under NCLB. These indicators require schools to:

- test 95% of enrolled students in grades 4, 8, 10 in reading and math. In 2005-06, this requirement changes to include 95% of enrolled students in grades 3 through 8 and once in high school.
- meet state goals for student attendance in school and for high school graduation.
- meet annual achievement goals set by the state in math and reading.

In addition, schools must break down, or disaggregate, the achievement scores and test participation percentages by race, economic status, students with disabilities and limited English proficient students. All of the disaggregated subgroups must meet the annual accountability indicators. A subgroup is defined as a group of at least 40 students, except for subgroups of students with disabilities, which must have at least 50 students. Failure to meet an annual indicator for two or more years in a row results in a school or district being identified for improvement.

Capacity-building — the effort of an organization or entity — in this case, schools — to strengthen its human resources’ ability to achieve targeted goals, that is to plan, make policy, and do the work needed to meet goals. In NCLB, schools receiving Title I funds are expected to build their capacity for parent involvement, that is, to strengthen parent and staff resources to more meaningfully involve parents in supporting children’s learning.

Community based organization (CBO) — a public or private nonprofit group, including a church or religious entity, that represents a community or a significant segment of a community and is engaged in meeting human, educational, environmental, or public safety community needs. The NCLB Act allows community-based organizations and schools receiving Title IV funds to operate a 21st Century Community Learning Center if parents are meaningfully involved in developing and administering the center.

Disaggregated data — “disaggregate” means to separate a whole into its parts. In education, this term means that test results are sorted into groups of students who are economically disadvantaged, from racial and ethnic minority groups, have disabilities, or have limited English fluency. This practice allows parents and teachers to see more than just the average score for their child’s school. Instead, parents and teachers can see how each student group is performing.

Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) — the principal federal law affecting K-12 education. The *No Child Left Behind* Act is the most recent reauthorization of the ESEA, or the version that has most recently received legislative approval.

Emergency license — a one-year license requested from the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction by a school district for a teacher who is already licensed in another area, but needs the emergency license to work outside his or her area of licensure. Such a license is issued after the district indicates the position was posted and it was unable to hire a fully licensed teacher for this assignment, thus has an emergency need.

New federal rules state that a “highly qualified” teacher will be in every classroom by the end of the 2005-06 school year. Highly qualified means the teacher shall be fully licensed both at the level and for the subject he/she is teaching. A major objective of *No Child Left Behind* is to ensure high-quality teachers for all students, regardless of race, ethnicity or income, because a well-prepared teacher is vitally important to a child’s education. In fact, research demonstrates the clear correlation between student academic achievement and teacher quality. Parents should never hesitate to inquire within their school and district about the qualifications of teachers instructing their children.

Individualized Education Program (IEP) — the most important legal document written for children with disabilities. The program is developed through discussion by parents and school staff at a team meeting to help meet the child’s unique needs. The IEP ensures that a child with a disability receives a free appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment.

Innovative Programs – Innovative Programs are a specific part of federal Title V programs. Title V provides for increased public school choice opportunities and includes education block grants, charter schools, magnet schools, and the fund for the improvement of education.

Innovative Programs in Title V support local education reform efforts to implement promising, new educational reform programs and school improvement programs using scientifically-based research. Innovative Programs strive to meet the educational needs of all students, including at-risk youth, and to improve school, student, and teacher performance. Under NCLB, school districts receiving Title V Innovative Program funds must involve parents in deciding how funds are spent and in planning and carrying out innovative assistance programs.

Limited English Proficiency — refers to individuals whose dominant language is not English and who have difficulty speaking, reading, writing, or understanding the English language. Schools receiving Title III funds for limited English proficient students must comply with specific parent notification and involvement requirements in NCLB.

NCLB — an acronym for “No Child Left Behind,” the name of the federal law passed in 2001.

Paraprofessional — an individual with instructional duties that may include:

- providing one-on-one tutoring for students if tutoring is provided at a time when the student did not have access to a teacher;
- assisting with classroom management;
- providing assistance in a computer lab;
- conducting parental involvement activities;
- providing support in library or media centers;
- acting as a translator; or
- providing instructional services to a student.

In Wisconsin, teacher assistants perform most of these duties. Individuals who work solely in non-instructional roles, such as food service, cafeteria or playground supervision, personal care services, and non-instructional computer assistants, are not considered to be paraprofessionals for Title I purposes.

The NCLB requires paraprofessionals in schools funded by Title I federal programs to meet higher standards. Paraprofessionals in schools funded by Title I federal programs will have to meet higher standards which include completion of two years of study at an institution of higher education; an associate (or higher) degree; or meeting a rigorous standard of quality and ability to demonstrate, through a formal assessment, knowledge of and ability to assist in reading, writing, and mathematics instruction. Newly employed paraprofessionals in Title I-funded programs must meet these criteria prior to employment. Paraprofessionals currently employed in Title I funded programs have until January 8, 2006, to complete the requirements. This requirement does not apply to paraprofessionals who do not work in Title I schools or those who work in targeted assistance schools but are not paid from Title I funds.

Parent advisory council — a group of parents, ideally trained to represent other parents, organized by Title I schools to give the parent perspective, comments, and ideas for school parent involvement programs. They also may work with community-based organizations and businesses to develop parent involvement activities.



Glossary of Terms (continued)

School improvement plan — the plan that schools identified for improvement (SIFI) are required to write for district approval. The plan should contain specific objectives, strategies, policies, practices, and professional development components that address problems which caused the school to be identified for improvement. The plan must also describe how the school will provide written notice to parents and include strategies to promote effective parent involvement.

Supplemental education services — tutoring and other supplemental academic enrichment services that are provided outside of the regular school day. NCLB-required supplemental educational services must be of high quality and research-based. They must also be specifically designed to increase the academic achievement of eligible children and help children attain proficiency in meeting the state's academic achievement standards.

21st Century Community Learning Center — an entity that helps students meet state and local academic achievement standards in core academic subjects, such as reading and mathematics. A center may provide students with opportunities for academic enrichment activities and a broad array of other activities (such as drug and violence prevention, counseling, art, music, recreation, technology, and character education programs). Such centers operate during non-school hours or periods when school is not in session, such as before and after school or during summer recess. Centers can be located in schools or in other buildings in a community. Programs offered by a center reinforce and complement the regular academic school programs of students served. A center may also offer students' families opportunities for literacy and related educational development.

Title I — The first section of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, Title I refers to programs aimed at improving education opportunities for the most disadvantaged

children. Title I, Part A provides federal dollars to help supplement educational opportunities for children who live in high poverty areas who are most at risk of failing to meet the state's challenging content and performance standards. There are two types of programs: Targeted Assistance and Schoolwide.

A Targeted Assistance program is one in which individual students are targeted to receive Title I services, based on academic need. Services may be delivered in a number of ways such as in-class instruction, pull out instruction, extended day, week or year programming. The Title I teacher(s) are responsible for providing extra services to the identified children, coordinating with other school personnel involved with the children and involving parents in the planning, implementation and evaluation of the Title I program.

A Title I school is eligible to become a schoolwide program when the poverty level, (determined by free and reduced lunch counts, AFDC, census or Medicaid) is at or above 40%. A schoolwide program is designed with the knowledge that there is a link between poverty and low achievement; therefore, when there are large numbers of disadvantaged students, interventions will be more successful when they are implemented "schoolwide." A schoolwide program has more flexibility in the use of Title I funds and in the delivery of services. Staff paid with Title I funds are free to work with all students in the building, for there are no students identified as "Title I." The school works together to develop its curriculum and instruction to raise the achievement of all students.

WINSS — an acronym for Wisconsin's Information Network for Successful Schools, available at the DPI website: <http://www.dpi.state.wi.us/sig/index.html>. Information about standards and assessment, data analysis, school improvement, and best practices is available on-line to help educators, parents, and community members learn about Wisconsin students and schools.

Wisconsin's Individual Student Enrollment System

Answers to Parents' Questions about New NCLB Data Collection Requirements

1. What is Wisconsin's Individual Student Enrollment System?

Wisconsin's Individual Student Enrollment System (ISES) is an electronic data collection system that will be used to follow the movements and progress of student groups as measured by such indicators as attendance, graduation, acquisition of English proficiency, and achievement on statewide tests. This system will be implemented in the fall of 2004.

2. Why is the Individual Student Enrollment System required?

Wisconsin devised ISES to meet federal data collection requirements and to continue annually receiving about \$250 million of federal funds for schools. The federal No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act requires extensive new data collection and reporting for schools, districts, and the state. The NCLB calls for every student to be proficient in reading and math by the year 2014 and to meet other educational goals, including regular attendance, high school graduation, and proficiency in English. To determine if educational goals are met, the NCLB requires each school, district, and state to document the progress of all students. In addition, the progress of many specified student groups must be summarized and reviewed, including the progress of economically disadvantaged students, students with disabilities, students of color, and English language learners. There is no feasible alternative to this new system. In addition to meeting the new reporting requirements, this system will allow educators to (1) better account for students who move or are highly mobile, (2) more readily exchange student records among school districts, and (3) respond more quickly to student needs.

3. How will the Individual Student Enrollment System work? What student data will be collected?

All school districts will be expected to participate in the Individual Student Enrollment System that will begin in 2004. Developing the system will require that every public school student in the state be assigned a unique student number, called the Wisconsin Student

Number (WSN), by July 2004. The DPI will assign each student a WSN which, for data collection purposes, will be the student's sole identifier throughout his or her PK-12 experience. Parents cannot opt their child out of being assigned a number in the system. In addition to the name of each student enrolled, public school districts will also supply the DPI with other data such as the student's gender, race, and birthdate. This information will prevent data collectors from confusing students with identical names, similarly-spelled names, or aliases, for example, multiple David Smiths. The additional data will ensure that WSNs are unique and that existing WSNs are retained when students move between schools.

4. Will student privacy be protected? How?

Protecting student privacy is the highest priority of the Individual Student Enrollment System. Wisconsin residents have historically regarded the privacy of student records as extremely important. That priority will be preserved by the Individual Student Enrollment System. Under the new system, student records are expected to be as secure as or more secure than most districts now keep them.

Student information is also protected by strict state and federal student privacy laws. Confidential data about individual students will not be accessible to the public. The public will not have access to the DPI confidential data base. Only data about student groups will be publicly reported. Measures that will be used to protect privacy rights include:

- **encryption**, or the conversion of a set of characters or numbers to a different set of characters or numbers through use of encryption software. For example, the name "Jane" might be converted to "k/+RQ[O." Countless software variations are possible.
- **firewalls**, or hardware and software that control access to secure networks. DPI will store student data in a secure location within a secure network.
- **authentication**, a process that verifies through a trusted third party source that a person is who they say they are.



Wisconsin's Individual Student Enrollment System (continued)

- **logins and passwords**, or unique identification codes assigned to authorized school personnel. School boards will authorize staff access to student data on a need-to-know-basis as the work of the staff member requires. For example, if an authorized school staff member enters her login and password and her identification is verified, she can view certain student data not accessible to other staff or to the general public. If any other person tries to view the data, physical and network security measures, such as firewalls and the scrambling of data through encryption, will bar access and keep data private.

5. How will the use of Wisconsin Student Numbers help protect privacy?

Districts will use Wisconsin student numbers (WSNs) instead of names to submit data about student educational progress, such as attendance, grade level placement, dropout, graduation credentials, or acquisition of English proficiency. This will protect student privacy and facilitate reporting.

In addition, WSNs will be encrypted before storage at DPI to provide an extra measure of privacy. Student progress data, always confidential, will be attached to encrypted WSNs rather than to student names, and will then be stored in a secure location on the network. Confidential data will be accessible only to legally authorized persons with legitimate educational interests.

6. Will personal student contact information or social security numbers be used by the new system?

No personal contact information, such as addresses or phone numbers, or social security numbers will be collected or used by the WSN locator system. Following student progress over time can be done efficiently if WSNs are used; this is critical not only for NCLB reporting purposes but also to prevent students from “falling through the cracks.”

Since students are not expected to know their WSNs, new schools or districts must have a way to efficiently locate these numbers in the system. Contact information is not needed to locate existing WSNs and these data are

not in the system. Identifying information that will be used by the WSN locator system is now available in schools and is generally not considered an invasion of privacy. Information that will be collected, including student names, gender, race/ethnicity, birthdate, and one or more parent names, was carefully selected for its usefulness in locating existing WSNs of students moving between schools.

7. Who will have access to the Wisconsin Student Numbers?

Only authorized district and school personnel will have access to student numbers with student names and other identifying information attached, for the purpose of registering students.

8. When will the new system begin operating?

The system will begin operating in the fall of 2004. Districts will submit to DPI selected data for each student, including entry/exit status (transferred, graduated, or dropped out) and student status as a member of one or more NCLB-identified student group(s) including gender, race, disability status, economic status, English language proficiency, and migrant status. Data collected will be limited to that which is required to comply with federal law and will be far less than what is currently collected about students by your school.

9. Is this system in use anywhere else?

All Midwestern states and many Wisconsin schools have already adopted this type of system or are moving to implement similar systems. Student numbers and progress data are consistently included as components of these systems. Eventually, to comply with NCLB requirements, every state and many more schools are likely to implement a similar system.

10. Where can I get more information?

More information about Wisconsin Student Numbers and the Individual Student Enrollment system is available at www.dpi.state.wi.us/dpi/dltcl/lbstat/eseadata.html. To learn more about protecting the privacy of student records locally, contact your school or district.

Sponsoring a School-Parent Forum

Tips for Success

The NCLB presents a host of complex issues on student learning that schools and parents need to explore, discuss, and act upon together. Many schools and districts have found a school-sponsored parent forum to be an effective way to address education-related questions large or small. The benefits of well-attended, participatory parent forums are many and extend to schools *and* parents.

Although the NCLB requires schools receiving Title I funds to conduct an annual meeting for Title I parents, a parent forum can help any school improve communications, decision making, and relationships with parents – also important goals of the NCLB. You can also incorporate the Title I annual meeting into the parent forum.

By making the effort to call together the parents of the children they serve, listen to parents' comments and ideas, and incorporate parents' suggestions into school plans or programs, schools are sending parents the message that they are important and are partners in student learning.

The word, "forum," connotes open discussion. No matter what school-related issue will be addressed, by sponsoring a forum, educators show that they are willing to listen to all views and to make decisions or take actions based on views expressed or consensus reached. If your school cannot make this commitment, it should not plan to have a forum. For example, if an issue has already been decided and the primary intent of the gathering is to present information, then it is a *meeting* or a *question-and-answer session*, not a forum.

Here are some questions that the sponsoring group should answer in organizing a forum:

What is the purpose of the forum, i.e., what do we want to accomplish?

- The goals of the forum must be clearly stated in all communications. For example, is this a listening session, or do sponsors hope to have an "action plan" laid out by the close of the forum?
- Does the forum help the school meet Title I or other requirements of NCLB?

What are some examples of issues discussed at school parent forums in Wisconsin?

- What is our school doing well and how can we improve?

- How should the district spend funds?
- How do district budget cuts/revenue caps affect our children and schools?
- What is the No Child Left Behind Act and how does it improve student learning?
- What is the Wisconsin Student Assessment System?
- How do the Wisconsin Academic Standards affect my child's learning?
- How can our school better communicate with parents?
- Is our community and school district meeting the needs of families with young children?
- What kinds of programs should our school offer for students, families, and the community?
- How can we help all students read well or become proficient in math?
- What do you need to feel confident in your role as a parent, and how can the school support you?
- How can we support teens in the community?
- How can we build positive relationships among youth and adults in our community?
- How can all segments of our community work together for children?
- How can we help students become better citizens?

Who is sponsoring the forum?

- Is it the Title I program, school board, school administration, School Partnership Action Team, PTA or PTO, or a combination of all?
- Does everyone have ownership and interest in the issue to be discussed?

What are the costs and how will they be paid for?

- Be sure to consider the cost of printing and mailing out notices and/or results, printing materials to be distributed at the forum, refreshments planned for the forum, or speaker/facilitator costs.

When and where will it be held?

- Is the location accessible to everyone?
- Can it accommodate a large group or a breakdown of the large group into smaller discussion tables?



School-Parent Forum (continued)

- Who is communicating the needs for room set-up to appropriate parties?

How can we make sure everyone knows about the forum and feels welcome to attend?

- Is the forum being publicized in places throughout the community where families gather: churches, fast food restaurants, grocery stores, the family resource center?
- Are parent leaders from all ethnic groups inviting participants?

How can we insure that all families and their viewpoints are represented at the forum?

- Does everyone feel welcome to attend and to participate in the forum?
- What language or culture barriers do we need to consider?

Do we want to use a facilitated process to come to a consensus on an issue, vote on the issue, or develop several recommendations about the issue?

- At some point, be sure each person feels welcome to state their viewpoint. For example, a consensus-building process may start with small group discussions which invite comment from each person.
- Some forums begin by reviewing a few principles emphasizing respectful listening and speaking objectively.
- Will the large group take a vote on the issue, or will small, table-sized groups have the opportunity to discuss the issue, make recommendations, then vote at large on those recommendations?

How can we consider the views of parents not able to attend the forum?

- Will we consider staging forums at different times or in different places so more parents are able to attend?
- Will the proceedings and results of the forum be published in the local newspaper? In the school district newsletter?

- Will parents not able to attend be invited to express their views via phone or e-mail? How will such comments be considered?

How will we communicate the results of the forum?

- Will results be printed or presented in languages other than English for non-English speakers?
- Will the forum be broadcast over the local cable channel?
- Will results be reported in the local newspaper and at the next school board meeting?

What are the next steps? What group or individual will be responsible for carrying out or considering the results or recommendations of the forum?

- Next steps need to be clearly communicated during and following the forum.
- The school or other sponsoring body needs to be accountable for following up and reporting on the progress of forum recommendations or participants may feel disappointed. Assign one person, if possible, to follow through with recommendations.

What other individuals, or decision-making groups or bodies in the school or community need to know about the forum, be involved in setting it up, or know about the results of the forum?

- Will the local media be invited to attend or to help sponsor the forum?
- Will community leaders or representatives be invited to help plan the forum? To contribute to forum expenses?
- How will the local PTA be involved?
- What community resources can we use to conduct the forum or pursue next steps?

Talking Tips

For Discussing the NCLB with Parents

Talking about the requirements and impact of the No Child Left Behind Act with parents and community members can be a daunting task for anyone. It helps to be prepared for the inevitable questions from parents, staff, media and community members. Following are some general guidelines for framing discussion of the NCLB in clear and understandable terms with parents and the public.

What do parents think about NCLB?

Recent polls show that:

- Most parents don't understand what NCLB is or how it affects their schools.
- In general, parents rate their schools highly and support high academic expectations for all students.
- Parents support testing if test results are used to improve instruction. They don't want testing to be used to punish schools nor to narrow the curriculum.
- Parents are especially concerned about discipline, class size, and teacher quality and favor efforts to address these issues.

When communicating with parents and the community about NCLB, put NCLB in the context of current efforts

How has your school or district made progress toward meeting state and local school improvement goals related to student achievement? Are your staff members highly qualified? Is your school a safe place where children feel connected and cared for? Use your building's initiatives and successes to connect parents to the goals of NCLB.

Discuss two or three related topics parents in your school are interested in

Don't feel obligated to cover every aspect of the NCLB. The details of the entire law are beyond the interest of most parents. Stick to what parents in your community are most interested in and areas that your school has actively addressed. Make clear that your commitment to children is front and center.

Strive to be jargon-free

Parents will be hearing and reading about "Adequate Yearly Progress" for some time to come. Do explain what AYP is and how it relates to test scores and the NCLB. Conversely, be careful not to overwhelm non-educators

with the acronyms and "educationese" associated with NCLB. For example, some sources suggest substituting the phrase, "different groups of students," for "disaggregated data."

Commend schools for their progress

What is your school doing right? Where are students succeeding? Where has progress been made? It's important to celebrate successes even as improvement is still happening. Be sure to publicly recognize at meetings and through the media

- staff who receive awards or recognition for their work
- students and classrooms showing outstanding accomplishment in a variety of areas
- parents or volunteers who have made special contributions to the school
- community organizations or businesses who have been exemplary partners.

Explain what you have done, what you are doing, and what you plan to do to improve student achievement

In Wisconsin, schools that fail to make AYP for two consecutive years become "Schools Identified for Improvement," or "SIFI" (pronounced SIGH-fig) schools. Point out that all schools — even those at the top — need to work on improving. Explain exactly why your school has been identified for improvement, what it is doing to address concerns, and how parents will be kept up-to-date.

Communicate in many ways

NCLB requires schools to communicate with parents on several specific topics and occasions. As a general rule, the more communication, the better. Use all available avenues — school newsletters, the Internet, local media, and school forums or community discussions — to disseminate your school's improvement plans. How can your school parent group help? Feature NCLB-related information on your school's website. Devote regular space in your school newsletter to discuss NCLB-related developments.

For more information, review the ESEA Information Update Bulletins on parent notification and involvement requirements on the DPI website: www.dpi.state.wi.us/dpi/esea/index.html.



Talking Tips (continued)

Be prepared for the “tough” questions

Think ahead how to discuss difficult or sensitive issues to avoid blaming staff, students, or parents. Be open about any lack of resources, but reassure the community that staff will continue to do their best with what is available. Here’s a short list of questions school administrators have confronted. Feel free to add your own!

- Why is this school identified for improvement?
- Why are some groups of students doing worse than others?
- How do student test scores in this school compare to those statewide?
- What are you doing to improve these results?
- What are you telling parents?
- What can parents do if their children are in schools identified for improvement?

- Given budget constraints, what will be done to help schools that need it most? What are the trade-offs?

Offer specific ways for parents and the community to help

Invite everyone to become part of the solution in do-able ways. How can community members, businesses, and groups contribute to student math achievement as volunteers, mentors, and partners? How can parents support student reading at home? How can students be involved in taking responsibility for their behavior and improving the learning environment?

Adapted from Framing the Discussion and Tips for Community Outreach, available on the website of the Learning First Alliance at www.learningfirst.org.



Section 2

Parent Notification and Involvement Requirements

Section 2 contains:

A Summary Table of Key Parent Notification and Involvement Requirements

Section 2A: NCLB Parent Notification Requirements

Section 2B: NCLB Parent Involvement Requirements

NCLB Title Programs of Key Parent Notification Requirements

Use this table for easy reference in planning district or school efforts to meet NCLB parent notification requirements.

Topic	Parents Must Be Informed	Parents Must Be Involved in Creating	Who must comply	When	Done? By whom? How? Date
Title I Teacher Information	<p>At District Level</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If teacher is qualified • If teacher has emergency license • Teacher's college degree(s), and field of discipline • Qualifications of any paraprofessionals <p>At School Level</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If child is taught 20 consecutive days by teacher not highly qualified 		Districts and Schools receiving Title I funds	Annually at start of school year	
Title I District Report Cards	<p>At School and District Levels</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student achievement at each proficiency level on state tests • Disaggregated student achievement by subgroup • Subgroup comparisons of student achievement to state objectives • Students not tested, by subgroup • Most recent two-year trend for student achievement by test and grade • AYP of students compared to state averages and standards • High school graduation rates by subgroup • Schools identified for improvement • Qualifications of teachers • Percentage of teachers with emergency licenses • Percentage of classes not taught by highly qualified teachers 		Districts receiving Title I funds must widely inform parents and the public via media, Internet, and public agencies	Annually	

Please note that the No Child Left Behind Act requires schools and districts to present all information for parents in an understandable language and format. The school or district must respond to parent requests in a timely manner or within a reasonable amount of time.

Topic	Parents Must Be Informed	Parents Must Be Involved in Creating	Who must comply	When	Done? By whom? How? Date
Title I Annual Yearly Progress of Schools	For Schools Identified for Improvement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What identification means • Reason for the identification • Academic achievement of school compared to others in district and state • What school is doing to improve • How district and state are helping school • How parents can be involved • Parents' options to transfer child or to receive supplemental services 		Schools receiving Title I funds that fail to meet AYP two years in a row	Schools must promptly notify parents	
Title I Student Transfer Options	For Schools Identified for Improvement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The option to transfer child to another school • Which schools child may transfer to • Academic achievement of those schools • How free transportation to the transfer school will be provided 		Schools receiving Title I funds which have not met AYP for two years in a row	Before start of the next school year after school fails to meet AYP	
Title I Supplemental Education Services	For Schools Identified for Improvement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The availability of services • A list of state-approved service providers in district or nearby • Services, qualifications, and effectiveness of each provider • How parents can get help from the school in selecting a provider • Fair procedures if providers' openings are filled 		Schools receiving Title I funds which have not met AYP three years in a row	Before end of 1 st year school is placed in improvement status and annually	

Topic	Parents Must Be Informed	Parents Must Be Involved in Creating	Who must comply	When	Done? By whom? How? Date
Title III Limited English Proficient Students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reasons for the LEP identification and placement • Child’s level of English proficiency • How child was assessed and how level was determined • Method of instruction to be used in LEP program • Methods of instruction used in other programs and how they differ • How program will meet child’s needs • How program will help child learn English • How program will help child meet age-appropriate academic standards for grade promotion and graduation • Specific exit requirements of program, including expected transition into regular classroom • For secondary school students: expected graduation • For child with disability: how program meets IEP objectives • Their right to remove child immediately from LEP program or decline enrolling child • Other available programs or methods • How school will help parents choose another program 	<p>Outreach efforts will describe how parents of LEP students</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will be involved in child’s education • Will be active participants in helping child to learn English, achieve at levels, and meet academic and achievement standards to which all children are held <p>Districts will hold regular meeting for parents of LEP students to offer input</p> <p>Districts will help parents choose programs and methods of instruction</p>	Districts receiving Title III funds	<p>No more than 30 days after start of school year</p> <p>Districts must also notify parents if program is failing to help child, no later than 30 days after failure</p>	
Title IV, A Safe and Drug-Free School Activities	<p>The contents of violence and drug-abuse prevention programs and activities. School must withdraw student from the program or activity upon parent’s written request.</p> <p>Schools must also promote parent involvement in these activities.</p>	Drug abuse and violence-prevention programs and activities through “meaningful and ongoing” consultation with parents.	Schools receiving Title IV, Part A Safe and Drug-Free School funds		

Topic	Parents Must Be Informed	Parents Must Be Involved in Creating	Who must comply	When	Done? By whom? How? Date
Title IV, B 21 st Century Community Learning Centers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Services available for students and families in the CCLC • Results of evaluations of the CCLC 	In developing and operating the CCLC, i.e., on site or advisory councils	School districts or Community Based Organizations using Title IV funds for a CCLC		
Title VI, B Rural Education Initiative		Note: Districts receiving these funds may use them for parent involvement activities			
Title X, C Homeless Children (and unaccompanied youth)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The local liaison for homeless children • Child's right to immediately attend school • Educational opportunities available to homeless students • Enrollment and transportation rights • Written explanation of why child is placed other than in school of origin or school parent requested, with right to appeal • Meaningful opportunities for parent to participate in child's education 		All school districts whether or not they receive Title X funds	At the time child seeks enrollment in school and twice annually while the child is enrolled	
Military Recruiters	Parent's/high school student's right to request that student's name, address and phone not be released to military recruiters or higher education institutions		Schools and districts receiving funds under any NCLB Title		
Student Surveys	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School policy regarding student surveys • Parents' right to inspect certain surveys before the survey is given and parents' right to opt child out • Dates when surveys will be given 	Policies addressing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The right of parents to inspect student surveys • Student privacy protection in surveys 	Schools and districts receiving funds under any NCLB Title	Annually at start of school year and when changes are made	



Section 2A

NCLB Parent Notification Requirements Overview

The recently reauthorized Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), also known as the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, requires schools to provide many different kinds of information and notices to parents about their children's school, academic progress, teachers, and more. Schools must make reasonable efforts to present the information in an understandable format and in a language parents can understand.

This section describes the major parent notification requirements found in NCLB in the titles listed below and provides suggestions, ideas, and samples for effectively meeting the notification requirements.

Title I — Improving the Academic Achievement of the Disadvantaged

- Teacher Information
- Individual Student Achievement Reports
- District Report Cards
- Schools Identified for Improvement
- Supplemental Educational Services
- Option to Transfer Child to Another Public School

Title III — English Language Acquisition, Language Enhancement, and Academic Achievement

- Limited English Proficient Students

Title IX — General Provisions

- Military Recruiters
- FERPA Model Notice for Directory Information
- Student Surveys
- Sample Parental Permission Forms for Student Surveys
 - Passive Parental Permission Form
 - Active Parental Permission Form

Title X, Part C — Homeless Education

- Homeless Children

Title I—Improving the Academic Achievement of the Disadvantaged

Teacher Information

At the beginning of each school year, school districts receiving Title I funds must notify all parents of children attending Title I schools that federal law gives parents the right to request information about the qualifications of their child's teachers and paraprofessionals. The district must respond in a timely manner to the request.

Parents have the Right to Request Information on

- Whether the teacher has met state qualifications and has a license for the grade level and subject(s) he or she teaches;
- Whether the teacher has an emergency or provisional license;
- What degrees the teacher holds and the field of discipline of his or her certification or degree; and
- The qualifications of any paraprofessionals serving their child.
- In addition, Title I schools must notify parents in a timely manner
 - Of their child's level of achievement on state assessments;
 - When their child has been taught for 20 consecutive days by a teacher who does not meet the requirements of being highly qualified.

Challenges and Questions to Expect

Challenge 1: Need to explain federal and state requirements for teachers to become highly qualified.

Questions to Expect

- Is my child's teacher highly qualified?
- How many teachers in this district/this school are qualified?
- What is the district doing to help all teachers become qualified?

Challenge 2: May need to explain teacher shortages and why temporary teachers are needed.

Questions to Expect

- What is the district's plan to attract qualified teachers to my child's school?
- What impact does it have on my child's learning or classroom if her/his teacher is not highly qualified?
- What do paraprofessionals do? How are they different from teachers?
- How is the district working with nearby colleges or

universities to ensure that new and practicing teachers are highly qualified?

Challenge 3: Need to hear staff and parent ideas for notifying parents and providing them with NCLB-required information about teacher qualifications.

Questions to Expect

- How is the district providing parents with clear and uniform information, including parents who don't speak English, those with limited literacy skills, and those who may be difficult to reach?
- What can parents do to help inform other parents about these issues?
- How can parents help ensure that highly qualified teachers are in each classroom in this school/district?

Ideas and Activities to Meet NCLB Requirements Regarding...

Parents' Right to Request Teacher Information

- Work with PTA/PTO or other school parent group to establish a plan for notifying and informing parents.
- Send notice home with students or mail to parents.
- Place notice in local newspaper at start of school year or as needed during school year.
- Place notice on school website.
- Place notice in grocery stores and other places in the community where parents gather.

Notifying Parents about Teacher Qualifications

- Hold a parent forum or series of public forums on this topic for families and the community.
- Display teaching certificates and diplomas near all teachers' classroom doors or place a notation of these in the school office.
- Place teacher qualifications on the school website.
- Place teacher photos, certifications, and continuing education in student handbook.

For More Information

The sample letter to parents that follows is also available on-line at www.dpi.state.wi.us/dpi/esea/doc/sample-teacherinfo.doc. Teacher license information can be accessed from the DPI website at www.dpi.state.wi.us/dlsis/tel/lisearch.html.



Regarding Right to Receive Teacher Information

Sample Letter to Parents

Dear Parent:

Federal law requires that we share with you the qualifications of teachers in this school (*or insert school name*). There are questions you may ask, including:

- Is my child's teacher licensed to teach the grades or subjects assigned?
- Has the state waived any requirements for my child's teacher?
- What was the college major of my child's teacher?
- What degrees does my child's teacher hold?
- Are there instructional aides working with my child? If so, what are their qualifications?

Let me say that all teachers have at least a bachelor's degree in all Wisconsin (*or your district*) schools, and (*number or percent*) have advanced degrees. In addition all (*or a percent*) of the teachers in this school (*or school's name*) are fully licensed for their assignment. If you want to see the state qualification for your child's teacher you may ask us or find it on the DPI website at www.dpi.state.wi.us/dpi/dlsis/tel/lisearch.html.

In addition, we have (*number*) instructional aides, and they all (*or a percent*) are considered qualified for this work. If you would like more information about this school (*or school's name*), please feel free to call me at (*telephone #*).

Sincerely,

(Principal's or designee's signature)

Title I—Improving the Academic Achievement of the Disadvantaged

Individual Student Achievement Reports

Title I schools must notify parents in a timely manner of their child's level of achievement on state assessments.

Challenges and Questions to Expect

Challenge 1

Need to help parents understand the state academic standards, state and federal testing requirements, and test scores at their child's school and district.

Questions to Expect

- What can I do at home to help my child succeed in school?
- How are state academic standards, the curriculum in my child's classroom, and my child's scores on state tests connected?
- What options or interventions does the school offer if my child is not doing well?
- What is my child's teacher doing to recognize my child's learning strengths and help him tackle learning challenges?

Challenge 2

Need to communicate complex information in an understandable way to all parents.

Questions to Expect

- How is the district communicating this information to parents who do not speak or read English well?
- How does the district know if parents do not understand this information? Where can parents go for help?
- How are parent groups involved in developing and disseminating information?

Ideas and Activities for Schools

Ask school and parent leaders to work together to develop clear, parent-friendly information about student test scores that is consistent from school to school.

Devote parent-teacher-student conferences to explaining individual student test scores. Together, write a plan or commit to action steps that will help students continue good work or improve scores.

Serve coffee, snacks, or breakfast at individual meetings with parents to distribute and discuss their child's test scores.

Send home student achievement information with final report cards.

Send home printed reports on individual student achievement with student or by mail.

Ask parents to return a postcard or tear-off to indicate that they received a report. Leave space on the returned item for parents to jot down questions, concerns, and ideas.

Host parent meetings to talk about student test scores, answer questions, and create a sense of community about the need to help students maintain or improve test scores.

Conduct meetings with parents by neighborhood, language spoken, or by grade or proficiency level to answer questions and take action.

Schedule home visits by school staff to explain complex information to parents who may be hard to reach or who speak a language other than English.

For More Information

More information about WKCE proficiency levels is available on-line at www.dpi.state.wi.us/dpi/oea/pdf/profnewq&a.pdf. Information about student performance by school and district is available on-line at <http://data.dpi.state.wi.us/data/selschool.asp>.



Title I—Improving the Academic Achievement of the Disadvantaged

District Report Cards

Each school district receiving Title I funds must disseminate a report card to parents and the public that includes the following at the district and school levels:

- Aggregated student achievement at each proficiency level on state tests including comparisons to state averages;
- Disaggregated student achievement at each proficiency level on state tests by race, ethnicity, gender, disability status, migrant status, English proficiency, and status as economically disadvantaged. The local data must also show a comparison to state averages;
- Comparisons of student achievement by subgroup to the state's annual measurable objectives for each group on each test;
- The percentage of students not tested disaggregated by the above subgroups;
- The most recent two-year trend in student achievement in each tested subject area and grade level;
- Attendance rates for elementary and middle school students by subgroup and a comparison to state averages;
- Graduation rates for high school students by subgroup and compared to state averages;
- The names, number, and percentage of schools identified for improvement (SIFI) and how long the schools have been identified for improvement;
- The professional qualifications of teachers (aggregated and disaggregated comparing high-poverty to low-poverty schools);
- The percentage of teachers teaching with emergency or provisional licenses (aggregated and disaggregated comparing high-poverty and low-poverty schools);
- The percentage of classes not being taught by highly-qualified teachers (aggregated and disaggregated comparing high-poverty to low-poverty schools).

The district's report cards must be made widely available to the public and disseminated to all parents of students attending its schools and to all schools in the school district. The report card must be in a format and, to the extent practicable, in a language parents can understand. District report cards may not reveal personally identifiable confidential information about any individual student.

Challenges and Questions to Expect

Challenge 1

Need to help families and community members understand the No Child Left Behind Act and sections concerning children and parents.

Questions to Expect

- How does NCLB benefit children and parents? What are the major changes?
- What is district doing to comply with NCLB requirements?
- How will NCLB improve children's learning?
- What practices, programs, or policies will change in my child's school as a result of NCLB?

Challenge 2

Need to help parents and staff interpret disaggregated data and understand what data represents.

Questions to Expect

- How will I know if my child's school is a good place to learn?
- In what areas does my child's school need to improve?
- How will the district help children who do not perform well on state tests?
- What children are not tested? How do scores of new students compare to scores of long-time students?
- What is Wisconsin doing to ensure that all children attend good schools?

Challenge 3

Need to make sure that schools make data available in a consistent form understandable to parents and community members. Districts may want to release data for all schools at the same time.

Questions to Expect

- Where can I learn more about how test scores at my child's school compare to other schools in this district and in the state?
- I don't have a computer at home. How can I find out what data are available for our school and district?

Challenge 4

Need to hear from and respond to parents' questions about district report cards and parents' ideas for improving annual reports.

Questions to Expect

- With whom can I talk if I have questions about or ideas to improve the content or format of the district report card? How and when can I contact them?
- What is the school doing to involve parents in improving student learning?
- How can I get involved in improving student learning at my child's school?

Ideas and Activities for Districts to Meet NCLB Requirements for District Report Cards

Convene a focus group of parents, teachers, and other staff to suggest ways to make written district report card information understandable for all parents, to plan for its uniform release and distribution at each school, and to invite questions and comments from parents.

Hold a meeting at each school or a series of meetings in the community to discuss student achievement data, answer parents' questions, and explore ways that schools can work with parents to improve student performance.

Distribute district and state report cards at the same time annually to local media. Use local media to showcase the performance of each school in the district or to showcase the performance of the district compared to the state.

Work with the PTA/PTO or parent group to create and distribute information to parents and to discuss the information with parents.

Include positive information about the school and district, including progress in family-community partnerships.

For More Information

More information about WKCE proficiency levels is available on-line at www.dpi.state.wi.us/dpi/oea/pdf/profnewq&a.pdf. Information about student performance by school and district is available on WINSS (Wisconsin Information Network for Successful Schools) at <http://data.dpi.state.wi.us/data/selschool.asp>.



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School Performance Data Available On-line at WINSS

Sample Statement to Parents

The No Child Left Behind Act requires school districts receiving Title I funds to publicly disseminate district and school performance data. Much of the required information is available on the DPI Wisconsin Information Network for Successful Schools (WINSS) website. Districts have the option of including the URL for the WINSS website on preexisting School Performance Reports, newsletters, and/or other documents distributed to all parents with information about how to access WINSS for parents without home web access (local public library, school, etc.) and what Report Card data are included on WINSS.

The following is a sample of the type of statement needed on these local documents.

These data and more detailed district and school information about test results, graduation, attendance, other academic indicators, teacher quality, and much more can be found on the DPI Wisconsin Information Network for Successful Schools (WINSS) website. To find test results for *[Add District Name Here]*, copy and paste the following URL into your browser: *[Insert URL here. You can get that URL for your district by copying the URL that appears when you are looking at your district test results on WINSS.]* To find other data on WINSS, click on the Data Analysis logo on the upper right side of the page. If you do not have home Web access, visit *[Add Name of Public Library]* or *[Add Name of School where a computer might be set up for this purpose with hours of access]*. For further information or assistance, contact *[Name of District Report Card Person]*. For tips on how to use the Data Analysis Section of WINSS go to http://www.dpi.state.wi.us/sig/usetips_data.html.

Title I—Improving the Academic Achievement of the Disadvantaged

Schools Identified for Improvement

NCLB requires all students to become proficient in reading and math by 2013-14. The state must set proficiency benchmarks each year — referred to as Adequate Yearly Progress or AYP — that all schools must reach.

Schools that fail to meet AYP for **two** years in a row are identified for improvement. Schools identified for improvement which receive Title I funds must promptly notify parents of each child enrolled in the school that the school has been identified for improvement.

The notice to parents must include

- an explanation of what the identification means;
- the reason for the identification;
- how the school compares in terms of academic achievement with other schools in the district and in the state;
- what the school is doing to address low achievement;
- what the district and state will do to help the school;
- how parents can become involved in helping the school improve academically;
- an explanation of parents' options to transfer their child to another public school or to receive supplemental educational services for the child.

Challenges and Questions to Expect

Challenge 1

Need to explain clearly to parents what it means for a school to fail to make AYP and to be identified for improvement, corrective action, or restructuring.

Questions to Expect

- What are school's strengths and its areas needing improvement?
- Why is school weak in these areas?
- What are parents' options for their children's education (i.e., supplemental services, school transfer, etc.)?

Challenge 2

Coordinate dissemination of information to all parents.

Questions to Expect

- Who will send this notice: school or district?
- When is state expected to release information?
- How does this school compare to other schools in district? In state?
- How will school know if parents receive and understand the information?
- How is school communicating this to parents who do not understand English or are hard to reach?

Challenge 3

To promptly decide what actions school will take to improve and inform parents of plan.

Questions to Expect

- Were parents involved in planning for school improvement?
- How will we know if students make progress?
- What specific steps will teachers, administrators, other school staff take to help students improve?
- What can parents do at home and at school to help children achieve?

Ideas and Activities for Notifying Parents that School is in Improvement

- Mail notice home or send home with students.
- Make annual reports on the school's status in the school and district newsletter and local newspaper.
- Have district leaders issue reports on all schools at the same time as a district-wide activity.
- Provide information in oral form on school phone system for parents who do not read English well.
- Plan to discuss the notice and related issues and plans on local radio or cable TV shows.
- Promptly schedule a parent forum, with translators present, to explain designation, parent options, and a plan for improvement to parents. Leave plenty of time for questions and suggestions. Publish a summary of the forum in the district or school newsletter.
- Include a reply postcard with notice sent home to learn if notice was received and if parents have questions. If reply postcard is not returned, follow up with a phone call.
- With notice, include information on how the school will work with families and community partners to improve student academic achievement.
- Survey parents on their ideas for identifying children's learning needs, ways to continue learning at home, and how more two-way communication between home and school could enhance children's learning.
- Post school plans and parent ideas in school newsletter and on school website.

For more information

A Power Point overview of Wisconsin's Adequate Yearly Progress Model can be accessed from the DPI NCLB webpage at www.dpi.state.wi.us/dpi/esea/index.html.



Title I—Improving the Academic Achievement of the Disadvantaged

Supplemental Educational Services

Schools identified for improvement for three years in a row are annually required to notify parents of eligible students, in a language and format that parents can understand, of the supplemental educational services available. Schools must also furnish parents with a state-approved list of service providers.

Notice to Parents

The Notice to Parents must contain information about

- the availability of the supplemental educational services, no later than the end of the first full year after their child's school has been identified for improvement;
- a list of state-approved supplemental service providers in the school district or those reasonably available in nearby districts;
- a brief description of the services, qualifications, and demonstrated effectiveness of each provider;
- how parents can request and get help from the school in choosing a provider;
- fair and equitable procedures to be used if approved providers are oversubscribed and can take no additional students.

The school must protect the identities of students eligible for or receiving supplemental services.

Challenges and Questions to Expect

Challenge 1

Need to provide parents with information about

- why the school must provide supplemental services;
- the supplemental service providers in or near the district and their qualifications;
- how parents can receive help in choosing a provider.

Questions to Expect

- What are my options for choosing times, providers, and transportation for my child's supplemental services?
- What qualifications do supplemental service providers have?
- How will I know if the provider is really helping my child?
- What options does my child have if she is making little or no progress with her current provider?
- What subjects will my child study with his provider?
- What do I do if my child qualifies for supplemental services, but space with all available providers is filled?

- What summer learning opportunities are available for my child?
- How will she be transported?
- Will supplemental services be provided if my child's school is no longer designated as in need of improvement?

Challenge 2

Need to designate school staff and source(s) of written information for staff to address parents' questions and concerns.

Questions to Expect

- Who can I talk to about choosing a provider, and how can I reach him/her?
- Who can help parents who do not speak or read English well?
- Can I meet with a school staff member or supplemental services provider to find out if my child is improving?
- How often will the provider communicate with me about my child's learning? With my child's teacher?

Ideas and Activities to Meet NCLB Requirements

- Distribute lists of qualified providers to parents at meetings, or post on school websites and bulletin boards.
- Send or mail to students' homes lists of qualified providers.
- Have counselors or advisors available to phone parents or to meet one-on-one with parents to discuss what services may be best for their children.
- Distribute information about summer learning opportunities long before summer to allow families time to plan.
- Hold "Extra Services Night" to allow parents the chance to meet and ask questions of service providers.
- In large districts, establish supplemental service centers at schools or other strategic locations in the district to serve groups of schools.
- Plan to report to parents the success rate of students assisted by each service provider, and satisfaction reports from parents who selected various services.

For More Information

See ESEA Information Update, Bulletin No. 02.07 at www.dpi.state.wi.us/dpi/esea/bul_0207.html and the list of state-approved supplemental service providers at www.dpi.state.wi.us/dpi/esea/providers.html.

Title I—Improving the Academic Achievement of the Disadvantaged

Option to Transfer Child to Another Public School

Schools that do not show adequate yearly progress for **two** consecutive years must offer parents the option of transferring their child to another public school. Schools that do not show adequate yearly progress for **three** consecutive years, in addition to school choice, must also offer parents supplemental education services for their children.

Notice about the right to transfer their child to another public school not identified for improvement within the district must be given to parents before the start of the next school year after the school has failed to meet AYP. Although all children must be given the option to transfer, priority will go to the lowest-achieving students from low-income families. Parents must be given a choice of more than one school, if available, and be notified of:

- the option to transfer to another public school;
- what schools the child may transfer to;
- the academic achievement of the schools to which the child may transfer; and
- how free transportation will be provided as long as the child's original school remains in improvement, corrective action, or restructuring status.

The notice to parents must be in a format and language that parents can understand. Schools in improvement status must also involve parents in developing a plan to improve the academic achievement of students.

Challenges and Questions to Expect

Challenge 1

The district needs to

- clearly explain all options to parents, including how the child's present school plans to improve;
- inform parents about the status of child's school, if possible, in the spring or before the end of the school year;
- inform parents as early as possible if their child will be transferred and to where, and how the child will be transported.

Questions to Expect from Parents

- If my child chooses to stay at his present school, how can I be confident he is receiving a quality education?
- How can I expect my child's learning to improve if I choose to transfer her to another school?
- How is the district planning to keep parents informed

during the summer of answers to these questions and of last-minute changes?

- How long does the option to transfer last? If my child's school is no longer in improvement status, will my child be returned to her original school?
- How many other parents of children eligible to transfer are doing so?
- When will we find out if my child is able to transfer? Who decides which school my child will attend? Can we change our mind about the decision to seek a transfer?
- How can parents help our school improve?

Challenge 2

District needs to inform staff of these plans and regulations and where to refer questions that they cannot answer.

Questions to Expect from Staff

- What sources of information are available to answer parents' questions?
- In what specific areas (subjects/grade levels) does our school need to improve?
- In what specific areas (subjects/grade levels) does our school excel?
- What can I tell parents and community members about our school's efforts to improve?
- What summer and before or after-school learning opportunities are available to students? How are families informed of these?
- How can parents and community members get involved in helping our school improve?

Ideas and Activities to Meet NCLB Requirements

Send fliers or letters to students' homes, promptly followed by meetings with parents about options and procedures for choosing new schools.

Conduct the choice program as a district-wide activity, releasing choice news and other information from all schools simultaneously.

Provide one-on-one meetings for parents with counselors or advisors to guide parents who want help in deciding whether to choose a new school and which school to choose.



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Option to Transfer Child (continued)

Show graphs of test scores and trends over time for all district schools that may be selected, so parents can decide if their child's current school is moving ahead or if changing schools is the best option.

Create a brochure for every school in the district to explain its programs, test scores, and future goals.

Conduct a "town hall" or community meetings in various locations during the day and evening to explain school test scores and options to parents. Present parents with information about how each school plans to improve its programs and to involve families and the community in the process.

Hold a "fair" for families to learn about programs in the schools they may choose for their children.

Videotape meetings so parents who could not attend can learn about the information presented.

Create a parent visitation schedule to help parents decide about school choice and learning options for their child.

For More Information

An ESEA Information Update, Bulletin No. 02.07, on supplemental education services and public school choice is available on-line at www.dpi.state.wi.us/dpi/esea/bul_0207.html.

Title III—English Language Acquisition, Language Enhancement, and Academic Achievement

Limited English Proficient Students

Title III funds sent to eligible school districts must be used to provide language instruction education to students with limited English proficiency (LEP). Schools and school districts receiving Title III funds must notify parents of children identified for participation in an LEP program no more than 30 days after the start of the school year. For a child identified as in need of an LEP program after the start of the school year, parents must be notified within two weeks of placement in a program.

Districts and schools using Title III funds must notify parents of the following:

- The reasons for identifying the child as Limited English Proficient and for placing the child in a language instruction educational program for LEP students.
- The child’s level of English proficiency, including how the level was assessed and the status of the child’s academic achievement.
- The instructional methods to be used in the program in which the child is participating or might be assigned to, and a description of all language programs that differ in content, use of English, and a native language.
- How the program will meet the educational strengths and needs of the child.
- How the program will help the child learn English and meet age-appropriate academic achievement standards.
- Specific exit requirements of the program, including when the transition will take place. Secondary schools also inform parents of the child’s expected date of graduation.
- For children with a disability, how the program will meet the objectives of an individualized education program (IEP).

The notification must include written guidance that explains the following:

- The parent’s right to have his or her child removed, immediately upon request, from the language instructional program.
- The other possible programs or methods of instruction available, and the parent’s option to decline enrolling his or her child.
- How parents will receive assistance in selecting another program or method, if one is offered by the district.

School districts are also required to notify parents of LEP children participating in a Title III program if the program is failing to help the child make progress on annual measurable achievement objectives. This notice must be provided no later than 30 days after the failure occurs and, as with all notices, must be in an understandable and uniform format and, to the extent practicable, in a language parents can understand.

A child may not be admitted to, or excluded from, any federally assisted education program on the basis of a surname or language minority status.

Challenges and Questions to Expect

Challenge 1

Need to explain how the LEP program chosen will help child learn to speak English and support child’s individual academic achievement goals and needs.

Questions to Expect

- What will my child learn in this program?
- How does this program use my child’s learning strengths and strengthen areas she needs to improve in?
- How long is my child expected to be in this program? What level of achievement must she have to leave the program?
- How will my child be tested?
- Who can I contact, and how, if my child is having difficulty in this program?

Challenge 2

Need to explain all parent options: other LEP programs, parent’s right to withdraw child, and how school will help parent choose another program, if desired.

Questions to Expect

- Will my child receive English language instruction even if I choose to place him in a regular classroom?
- If I choose to withdraw my child from this program, what are my child’s options?
- How can I support my child’s learning in this program?
- How can school ensure that parents have access to and understand information about their child’s learning, rights, and program options?



Limited English Proficient Students (continued)

Ideas and Activities

- Work with school and community-based family literacy and parent outreach programs including churches, community centers, Head Start centers, social services, and preventive health services, to notify parents and distribute information.
- Consider establishing a school parent group for non-English-speaking parents to discuss information.
- Make home visits to parents of LEP students to offer one-on-one conversations.

- Organize school and community suppers and dialogues to bring together parents of various language and ethnic groups to discuss important education issues.
- Make sure translators are available to assist non-English-speaking parents at school meetings.

For More Information

A sample Notice to Parents of Limited English Proficient children is available on the DPI website at www.dpi.state.wi.us/dpi/esea/doc/sample-lep.doc.

Title IX—General Provisions

Military Recruiters

Schools and school districts receiving funds under any NCLB Title program must, upon request, provide student directory data (names, addresses, and telephone numbers) to military recruiters and institutions of higher education. School districts must notify parents of their right to request that this information be withheld from disclosure, and districts must comply with such requests.

Student Recruiting Information

Districts shall provide, upon a request by military recruiters or an institution of higher education, access to high school student names, addresses, and telephone listings, referred to as directory data under s. 118.125, Wis. Stat. A high school student or the parent of the student may request that this information not be released without written parental consent. Districts are required to notify parents of this option and shall comply with any request.

In essence, if a military recruiter asks for the names, addresses, and telephone listing of high school students,

that information must be provided by the school officials except in the following circumstances:

- The school is a private school and maintains a religious objection to service in the armed forces that is verifiable through information or materials of the school.
- The school has afforded parents the opportunity to opt out of providing this information to third parties, and the parents opted out.

Access to Students

Districts shall provide military recruiters the same access to high school students as is provided generally to post-secondary educational institutions or to prospective employers of those students.

Following are questions and answers developed by the U.S. Department of Education concerning this provision and a Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) Model Notice for Directory Information for parents.

October 9, 2002

Access to High School Students and Information on Students by Military Recruiters

What are the recent changes made by Congress concerning military recruitment of high school students?

Congress has passed two major pieces of legislation that generally require local educational agencies (LEAs) receiving assistance under the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965* to give military recruiters the same access to secondary school students as they provide to post-secondary institutions or to prospective employers (If the LEA receives funds under the ESEA, all the secondary schools in that LEA are subject to the requirements in these laws.). LEAs are also generally required to provide students' names, addresses, and telephone listings to military recruiters, when requested.

Where are these statutory requirements found?

These requirements are contained in § 9528 of the ESEA (20 U.S.C. § 7908), as amended by the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001* (P.L. No. 107-110), the education bill Congress recently passed.

These requirements are also contained in 10 U.S.C. § 503, as amended by § 544 of the *National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2002* (P.L. No. 107-107), the legislation that provides funding for the nation's armed forces in fiscal year 2002.



What is the effective date for these military recruiter access requirements?

While there are differences in the effective date provisions for 10 U.S.C. § 503 and § 9528 of the ESEA, both provisions apply to all LEAs receiving ESEA funds by not later than July 1, 2002.

What are the requirements of § 9528 of the ESEA?

Each LEA that receives funds under the ESEA must comply with a request by a military recruiter or an institution of higher education for secondary students' names, addresses, and telephone numbers, unless a parent has "opted out" of providing such information. (See below for additional information.)

Section 9528 also requires LEAs that receive funds under the ESEA to provide military recruiters the same access to secondary school students as they generally provide to postsecondary institutions or prospective employers. For example, if the school has a policy of allowing postsecondary institutions or prospective employers to come on school property to provide information to students about educational or professional opportunities, it must afford the same access to military recruiters.

Under § 9528 of the ESEA, what notification must LEAs provide to parents before disclosing names, addresses, and telephone numbers of secondary students to military recruiters and officials of institutions of higher education?

Under FERPA, an LEA must provide notice to parents of the types of student information that it releases publicly. This type of student information, commonly referred to as "directory information," includes such items as names, addresses, and telephone numbers and is information generally not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if disclosed. The notice must include an explanation of a parent's right to request that the information not be disclosed without prior written consent. Additionally, § 9528 requires that parents be notified that the school routinely discloses names, addresses, and telephone numbers to military recruiters upon request, subject to a parent's request not to disclose such information without written consent. A single notice provided through a mailing, student handbook, or other method that is reasonably calculated to inform parents of the above information is sufficient to satisfy the parental notification requirements of both FERPA and § 9528. The notification must advise the parent of how to opt out of the public, nonconsensual disclosure of directory information and the method and timeline within which to do so.

If an LEA has not provided notice relating to "directory information," may it release a student's name, address, and telephone number when requested by a military recruiter?

As noted above, an LEA may provide a single notice regarding both directory information and information disclosed to military recruiters. If an LEA does not disclose "directory information" under FERPA, then it must still provide military recruiters access to secondary students' names, addresses, and telephone listings. In addition, the LEA must notify parents that they may opt out of this disclosure. In other words, an LEA that does not disclose "directory information" must nonetheless provide a notice that it discloses information to military recruiters. The notice must be reasonably calculated to inform parents.

If a parent opts out of the public, nonconsensual disclosure of directory information (or any subset of such information), must the three data elements be released to military recruiters upon their request?

If a parent opts out of providing directory information to third parties, the opt-out relating to name, address, or telephone number applies to requests from military recruiters as well. For example, if the opt-out states that telephone numbers will not be disclosed to the public, schools may not disclose telephone numbers to military recruiters.

If the school does not list one or more of the three data elements (e.g., telephone number) among its directory information, may it release that information to military recruiters?

If a school does not designate one or more of the three items as “directory information” under FERPA, it still must provide all three items to military recruiters upon request. Also, in that case, the school would have to send a separate notice to parents about the missing “directory information” item(s), noting an opportunity to opt out of disclosure of the information to military recruiters. An easier method, of course, would be for the school to designate all three items — name, address, and telephone listing — as “directory information.”

How are the requirements under § 9528 of the ESEA enforced?

Schools that do not comply with § 9528 of the ESEA could jeopardize their receipt of ESEA funds.

How does § 544 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2002 amend the former requirements under 10 U.S.C. § 503?

Section 544 of the *National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2002* revises Title 10, Section 503(c) in several important ways. First, the recruiting provisions now apply only to LEAs (including private secondary schools) that receive funds under the ESEA. Second, these provisions now require access by military recruiters to students, under certain conditions, and to secondary school students’ names, addresses, and telephone listings. Third, as discussed earlier, they require LEAs to notify parents of their right to opt out of the disclosure of their children’s names, addresses, and telephone numbers and to comply with any such requests from the parents or the students.

How are these requirements under 10 U.S.C. § 503 enforced?

In addition to the potential for loss of funds under ESEA noted above for failure to comply with § 9528 of the ESEA, an LEA that denies a military recruiter access to the requested information on students after July 1, 2002, will be subject to specific interventions under 10 U.S.C. § 503.

In this regard, the law requires that a senior military officer (e.g., Colonel or Navy Captain) visit the LEA within 120 days. If the access problem is not resolved with the LEA, the Department of Defense must notify the State Governor within 60 days. Problems still unresolved after one year are reported to Congress if the Secretary of Defense determines that the LEA denies recruiting access to at least two of the armed forces (Army, Navy, Marine Corps, etc.). The expectation is that public officials will work with the LEA to resolve the problem.

Additionally, the Department of Defense has developed a national high school database to document recruiter access. Presently, 95 percent of the nation’s 22,000 secondary schools provide a degree of access to military recruiters that is consistent with current law.

Are private schools subject to the military recruiter requirements?

Private secondary schools that receive funds under the ESEA are subject to 10 U.S.C. § 503. However, private schools that maintain a religious objection to service in the Armed Forces that is verifiable through the corporate or other organizational documents or materials of that school are not required to comply with this law.

Where can I get more information on the requirements of 10 U.S.C. § 503?

The Office of the Secretary of Defense may be contacted for copies of the statute, or questions relating to it. Please contact the Accession Policy Directorate as follows:

Director, Accession Policy
4000 Defense Pentagon
Washington, DC 20301-4000
Telephone: (703) 695-5529



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Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction • Elizabeth Burmaster, State Superintendent • 125 South Webster Street • P.O. Box 7841 • Madison, WI 53707-7841 • 800-441-4563

Where can I get more information on the requirements of § 9528 of the ESEA?

The Family Policy Compliance Office (FPCO) in the Department of Education administers FERPA as well as § 9528 of the ESEA, as amended by the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001*. School officials with questions on this guidance, or FERPA, may contact the FPCO at FERPA@ED.Gov or write to the FPCO as follows:

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20202-4605
Telephone: (202) 260-3887
Fax: (202) 260-9001
www.ed.gov/offices/OM/fpc

A model “directory information” notification for use by LEAs incorporating the changes under § 9528 of the ESEA and 10 U.S.C. § 503 is attached. The model notification may also be obtained on the FPCO’s website.

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

Model Notice for Directory Information

The *Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act* (FERPA), a Federal law, requires that [School District], with certain exceptions, obtain your written consent prior to the disclosure of personally identifiable information from your child's education records. However, [School District] may disclose appropriately designated "directory information" without written consent, unless you have advised the District to the contrary in accordance with District procedures. The primary purpose of directory information is to allow the [School District] to include this type of information from your child's education records in certain school publications. Examples include:

- A playbill, showing your student's role in a drama production;
- The annual yearbook;
- Honor roll or other recognition lists;
- Graduation programs; and
- Sports activity sheets, such as for wrestling, showing weight and height of team members.

Directory information, which is information that is generally not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if released, can also be disclosed to outside organizations without a parent's prior written consent. Outside organizations include, but are not limited to, companies that manufacture class rings or publish yearbooks. In addition, two federal laws require local educational agencies (LEAs) receiving assistance under the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965* (ESEA) to provide military recruiters, upon request, with three directory information categories (names, addresses and telephone listings) unless parents

have advised the LEA that they do not want their student's information disclosed without their prior written consent. (These laws are: Section 9528 of the ESEA (20 U.S.C. 7908), as amended by the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001* (P.L. 107-110), the education bill, and 10 U.S.C. 503, as amended by section 544, the *National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2002* (P.L. 107-107), the legislation that provides funding for the Nation's armed forces.)

If you do not want [School District] to disclose directory information from your child's education records without your prior written consent, you must notify the District in writing by [insert date]. [School District] has designated the following information as directory information: [**Note: an LEA may, but does not have to, include all the information listed below.**]

- Student's name
- Address
- Telephone listing
- Electronic mail address
- Photograph
- Participation in officially recognized activities and sports
- Weight and height of members of athletic teams
- Degrees, honors, and awards received
- Date and place of birth
- Major field of study
- The most recent educational agency or institution
- Dates of attendance
- Grade level attended.



Title IX—General Provisions

Student Surveys

School districts receiving funds under any U.S. Department of Education program must notify parents of their right to inspect certain student surveys and to opt their children out of those surveys and other activities that collect, disclose, or use personal information from students, including materials designed to sell or market student information to others. The types of surveys include those created by third parties (outside of the school district) and their subject matter is specified below. Parents must be notified of their rights before the survey is distributed to students.

Schools must involve parents in establishing policies that annually notify parents of this right at the beginning of each school year and when substantive changes are made to related school policies. The notice to parents must state the specific or approximate dates during the school year when activities are scheduled.

If a survey asks students for information in any of the following eight categories, schools must give parents the right to inspect the survey:

- Political affiliations or beliefs of students or their family.
- Mental and psychological problems of students or their family.
- Sex behavior or attitudes.
- Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior.
- Critical appraisals of individuals with whom students have close family relationships.
- Legally recognized privileged or analogous relationships, such as those with lawyers, physicians, and ministers.
- Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of students or their parents.
- Income (other than that required by law to determine eligibility for program participation or financial assistance).

School districts must provide the survey to parents within a reasonable amount of time after the request and before surveys are distributed to students. Districts must also involve parents in developing and adopting policies that establish the right of parents, upon request, to inspect student surveys and opt their children out.

Challenges and Questions to Expect

Challenge 1

Need to notify parents of their rights concerning release of student information.

Questions to Expect

- Who does school give information about students to?
- How and who do I contact to request that the school withhold information about my child?
- Can I request that the school withhold information about my child to military recruiters, but not to institutions of higher education (or vice versa)?

Challenge 2

Need to notify parents of their rights to inspect student surveys.

Questions to Expect

- In what student surveys will my child be asked to participate?
- What is done with the information collected from student surveys? Are survey answers treated anonymously?
- What are parents required to do to exempt their child from taking a survey?
- Can I discover from how my daughter/son answers the survey, if my child needs attention or help?

Ideas and Activities to Meet NCLB Requirements

Distribute policy information to parents in school handbook at start of school year. Highlight information that is new or changed from the previous year.

Enlist participation from the school's parent group in developing fair, understandable policies on student surveys and access to student information.

Feature policy updates on the district/school website.

Send home with students or distribute at school parent meetings a packet of written information about the policies and parents' rights, a sample student survey, and a list of organizations who have requested student information in the past.

For More Information

ESEA information update on student surveys is available on the DPI website at www.dpi.state.wi.us/dpi/esea/bul_0214.html.

Sample Parental Permission Forms for Student Surveys

Passive Parental Permission Form

Our school is taking part in the 2003 Youth Risk Behavior Survey sponsored by [name of state or local agency]. The research survey will ask about the health behaviors of 9th through 12th grade students. The survey will ask about nutrition, physical activity, injuries, tobacco, alcohol, and other drug use. It also will ask about sexual behaviors that cause AIDS, other sexually transmitted diseases, and pregnancy.

Students will be asked to fill out a questionnaire that takes about 45 minutes to complete.

Doing this paper and pencil survey will cause little or no risk to your child. The only potential risk is that some students might find certain questions to be sensitive. The survey has been designed to protect your child's privacy. Students will not put their names on the survey. Also, no school or student will ever be mentioned by name in a report of the results. Your child will get no benefit right away from taking part in the survey. However, the results of this survey will help children in the future. We would like all selected students to take part in the survey, **but the survey is voluntary**. No action will be taken against the school, you, or your child, if your child does not take part. Students can skip any question that they do not wish to answer. In addition, students may stop participating in the survey at any point without penalty.

Please read the section below. If you do **not** want your child to take part in the survey, check the box and return the form to the school no later than [date]. Please see the other side of this form for more facts about the survey. If your child's teacher or principal cannot answer your questions about the survey, call [name of state or local agency contact] at [phone number]. Thank you.

Child's name: _____ Grade: _____

My child may **not** take part in this survey.

Parent's signature: _____ Date: _____

Phone number: _____



Sample Parental Permission Forms for Student Surveys

Active Parental Permission Form

Our school is taking part in the 2003 Youth Risk Behavior Survey sponsored by *[name of state or local agency]*. The research survey will ask about the health behaviors of 9th through 12th grade students. The survey will ask about nutrition, physical activity, injuries, tobacco, alcohol, and other drug use. It also will ask about sexual behaviors that cause AIDS, other sexually transmitted diseases, and pregnancy.

Students will be asked to fill out a questionnaire that takes about 45 minutes to complete.

Doing this paper and pencil survey will cause little or no risk to your child. The only potential risk is that some students might find certain questions to be sensitive. The survey has been designed to protect your child's privacy. Students will not put their names on the survey. Also, no school or student will ever be mentioned by name in a report of the results. Your child will get no benefit right away from taking part in the survey. However, the results of this survey will help children in the future. We would like all selected students to take part in the survey, **but the survey is voluntary**. No action will be taken against the school, you, or your child, if your child does not take part. Students can skip any question that they do not wish to answer. In addition, students may stop participating in the survey at any point without penalty.

Please read the section below and check one box. Return the form to the school in three days. Please see the other side of this form for more facts about the survey. If your child's teacher or principal cannot answer your questions about the survey, call *[name of state or local agency contact]* at *[phone number]*. Thank you.

Child's name: _____ Grade: _____

I have read this form and know what the survey is about.

Check one:

My child may take part in this survey.

My child may **not** take part in this survey.

Parent's signature: _____ Date: _____

Phone number: _____

Title X, Part C—Homeless Education

Homeless Children

All Wisconsin school districts have new responsibilities in Title X of the NCLB Act, whether or not the district receives funds under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act. Districts must ensure that homeless children have access to the same educational opportunities as non-homeless children, including opportunities to meet the same challenging state academic standards.

School districts must disseminate notice of homeless children’s education rights in schools; family, domestic abuse, and runaway shelters; soup kitchens; and wherever services to homeless children and families are offered.

Schools are required to notify parents of homeless children (and unaccompanied youth) of the following rights:

- The availability of a local district staff person as a liaison for homeless children.
- Immediate enrollment and school participation, even if educational and medical records and proof of residency are not available.
- The availability of educational opportunities and related opportunities for homeless students (preschool to age 21), including unaccompanied youth.
- Enrollment and transportation rights, including transportation to the school of origin. “School of origin” is defined as the school the child attended when permanently housed or when last enrolled.
- Written explanation of why a homeless child is placed other than in a school of origin or school requested by the parent, with the right to appeal within the local dispute resolution process.
- Meaningful opportunities for parents to participate in the education of their children.

Challenges and Questions to Expect

Challenge 1: Need to work with community agencies to identify homeless children and families, evaluate their needs, and coordinate services.

Questions to Expect

- Where in our community can homeless youth and families be reached?
- What causes homelessness in our community? What barriers in our school and community do homeless youth and families experience?

- What services are presently provided to homeless families and youth? Where are the gaps in service?
- How can our school work with community groups and agencies to ensure that the child’s basic needs and learning needs are met?
- How can our school help equip homeless parents with the job-related skills and resources they need?

Challenge 2

Need to ensure that parents and unaccompanied homeless youth understand their rights regarding school enrollment, attendance, and transportation.

Questions to Expect

- Whom can I contact with questions or concerns about my child’s school or learning?
- Can I choose which school my child will attend? What can I do if I disagree with the district’s placement of my child in a school?
- How will my child get to and from school each day? How long will these services last?

Challenge 3

Need to include homeless parents as full participants in the parent involvement activities required by NCLB.

Questions to Expect

- How can we ensure that homeless parents have access to and understand the information about their child’s learning, rights, and parent involvement?
- How can I help my child be a successful learner in and outside of school?
- How can school help parents of homeless children feel welcome, needed, and appreciated as partners in their children’s learning?

Ideas and Activities

- Recruit and train school and community volunteers to act as intermediaries and advocates for homeless youth and parents.
- Work with homeless families and community groups to identify gathering places and resources for the homeless.
- Identify places where homeless children can go to study and receive academic help or other resources outside of school hours, including 21st Century Community Learning Centers.



Homeless Children (continued)

- Ask the Partnership Action Team or other parent-teacher school committee to address questions about how homeless youth and families are welcomed, involved, and connected to their children's learning. How can the school help homeless youth and families meet basic needs for food, clothing, shelter, employment, and dignity?
- Provide inservice training for staff and parents on educating and reaching out to the homeless. Provide school secretaries and receptionists with information about how families can contact the district homeless liaison.

- Feature Family Learning Nights and offer other programs that allow parents and children to learn together.

For More Information

Visit the DPI Education of Homeless Children and Youth web pages at www.dpi.state.wi.us/homeless/ehcynew.html. A DPI ESEA Information Update on NCLB provisions in Title X for education of homeless children and youth is available online at www.dpi.state.wi.us/dpi/esea/bul_0306.html.

Section 2B

NCLB Parent Involvement Requirements

Overview

The recently reauthorized Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), also known as the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, requires schools to involve parents in school programs and in the education of their children. The major NCLB parent involvement requirements for schools and districts are addressed in this section by Title as follows:

Title I—Improving the Academic Achievement of the Disadvantaged

- Parent Involvement Policy for Schools and Districts

Title II — Part D

- Enhancing Education through Technology

Title III — Limited English Proficient

- Language Instruction for LEP and Immigrant Students

Title IV—21st Century Schools

- Part A: Safe and Drug-Free School Activities
- Part B: Community Learning Centers

Title V — Part A

- Promoting Informed Parental Choice and Innovative Programs



Title I—Improving the Academic Achievement of the Disadvantaged

Parent Involvement Policy for Schools and Districts

NCLB Requirements for the District Parent Involvement Policy

Every district and every school using Title I funds must develop, jointly with parents of children participating in Title I programs, a written parent involvement policy. Parents must agree to the policy, and the district must distribute the policy to parents and the community. Schools or districts may amend current parent involvement policies that involve all parents to meet the following new requirements.

The parent involvement policy must detail ways the district will:

- Involve parents in developing district school improvement plans.
- Offer technical assistance and coordination to help schools plan parent involvement activities to improve student and school academic performance.
- Build school and parent capacities for strong parent involvement.
- Coordinate and integrate parent involvement strategies with other programs, such as Head Start, Reading First, Early Reading First, Even Start, Parents as Teachers, Home Instruction Program for Preschool Youngsters, and limited English proficiency programs.
- Annually evaluate with parents the effectiveness of the policy in academically improving district schools. The evaluation must include identification of barriers to parent involvement, especially barriers to parents who are economically disadvantaged, disabled, have Limited English Proficiency, have limited literacy, or belong to a racial or ethnic minority. Districts must revise the policy if necessary.

Districts may establish parent advisory councils to provide advice on parent involvement programs. They also may work with community-based organizations and businesses to develop parent involvement activities.

Districts receiving more than \$500,000 in Title I funds must use at least one percent of those funds for parent involvement activities. Parents of children served by Title I should help decide how funds are spent.

School Obligations

Each school using Title I funds must write a parent involvement policy jointly developed with, agreed to by, and distributed to Title I parents. The policy must be made available to the community and updated periodically.

The school also must:

- Conduct an annual meeting for Title I parents to inform them about the policy, their rights under Title I, and how they can be involved in the planning, review, and improvement of Title I programs in the school, including development of this policy;
- Provide parents with timely information about Title I school programs, school curriculum, assessments used by the school to measure student achievement, and proficiency levels students are expected to meet;
- Respond quickly to parent requests for opportunities to meet regularly and participate in decisions about the education of their children;
- If parents are dissatisfied with the school's Title I program plans, include parent comments in the report to the school district.

The School-Parent Compact

The school-parent involvement policy must describe how the school will develop jointly with parents a school-parent compact for all children served by Title I. The compact must outline how students, parents, and staff will share responsibility for improved student achievement and how parents and the school will build and develop partnerships to achieve state expectations for student achievement. The compact must describe:

- The school's responsibility to provide high-quality curriculum and instruction in a supportive learning environment;
- Parents' responsibility for supporting children's learning, such as monitoring attendance, homework completion, and television watching; volunteering at school; participating in decisions about their children's education, and positive use of time outside of school;

- The importance of ongoing parent-teacher communication, including elementary schools' plans to offer at least one annual parent-teacher conference to discuss the parent-teacher compact and all schools' plans to report children's progress frequently to parents and communicate how parents can contact staff, volunteer in their children's classrooms, and observe classroom activities.

School and District Responsibilities for Building Capacity for Parent Involvement

As part of efforts to improve student achievement, each school and district receiving Title I funds will implement the following practices to build school capacity for parent involvement:

- Help parents understand state and local assessment of their children's progress and how to monitor progress and work with educators.
- Provide parents with materials and training to improve their children's achievement, such as literacy training and use of technology.
- Educate teachers, administrators, and other school staff about the value of and methods of reaching out to parents as equal partners.
- Integrate parent involvement efforts with other school and community programs, including Head Start, Reading First, Early Reading First, Even Start, Home Instruction Programs for Preschool Youngsters, and Parents as Teachers Programs.
- Ensure that information about school and parent programs is in a format and language parents can understand.

The following practices may be implemented at school and district discretion:

- Involve parents in developing training for teachers, principals, and other educators.
- Use Title I funds to provide literacy training if all other funding is exhausted.
- Use Title I funds to pay expenses associated with parent involvement, including transportation, child care, and training fees.
- Train parents to help involve other parents.
- Arrange parent-educator meetings at various times in school or at other locations to maximize parent participation.

- Adopt model approaches to improving parent involvement.
- Establish a district parent advisory council.
- Involve community-based organizations and businesses in parent involvement activities.
- Upon request, provide reasonable support for parent involvement activities.

Schools and districts should provide full opportunities for the participation of parents with limited English proficiency, disabilities, and those who are migrants in languages they can understand.

Parental Information and Resource Centers (PIRCs)

Schools and districts must inform parents of the existence and purpose of parental information and resource centers to provide training, information, and support to parents and those who work with parents, districts, and schools. Wisconsin's PIRC is Parents Plus of Wisconsin: www.parentspluswi.org.

Challenges and Questions to Expect for the District Parent Involvement Policy

Challenge

The school must meaningfully involve parents in developing district school improvement plans.

Questions to Expect

- How does the district listen to the ideas and needs of parents from all backgrounds and neighborhoods about their child's learning?
- How does the district communicate in multiple ways and languages so that all parents feel welcome to ask questions or give ideas?
- How does the district provide enough resources and support to integrate parent involvement in all school programs and decision making?
- How could parents be more involved at the district level?

School Obligations for the Parent Involvement Policy

Challenge

The school must "build capacity" or increase the quality, amount, and support for parent involvement among parents, staff, and the community.



Parent Involvement Policy (continued)

Questions to Expect

- How do school staff establish positive, caring relationships with each student and with families?
- Does the school respond quickly and efficiently to obstacles or problems that parents perceive?
- Is the school as specific as possible in the parent involvement suggestions and opportunities it offers?
- How does the school train parents to participate as school decision makers and advocates for children's learning?
- How does the school train teachers and other staff members about the value of and effective methods of parent involvement?
- How could parents be more involved in the schools?

The School-Parent Compact

Challenge

The school-parent compact must outline how students, parents, and staff will share responsibility for improved student achievement.

Questions to Expect

- Does the school staff communicate frequently, positively, and in ways that parents understand if their child is meeting learning goals? How does the school staff offer assistance to parents if the child is not meeting learning goals?
- Do parents understand their role as a child's most important teacher? Do parents know how they can help children learn at home and in school on a practical, daily basis?
- Does the school offer many opportunities during the school year for parents and teachers to interact, form relationships, and work together for children's learning?

Activities and Ideas for Schools to Build Capacity in Parent Involvement

- Invite parent representative of all families to serve on the school committee and be part of the district process to develop a parent involvement policy and plan.

- Disseminate the parent involvement policy and plan to parents via the district website, at the start of the school year, and at parent meetings throughout the school year.
- Enlist the help of the community as the school strives to communicate with parents in a format and language they can understand by
 1. identifying unmet language needs
 2. providing interpreters and translators
 3. eliminating bureaucratic language
 4. being culturally sensitive.
- Include in the policy creation of a school improvement monitoring team to ensure parent involvement strategies and activities are implemented. The team should include community members and should meet with teachers and other school staff periodically to identify areas of progress and need. Inform parents and staff of the team's actions.
- Invite parent ideas for a policy and a compact at school-sponsored parent forums. Ask parents, teachers, and students to agree to the compact during parent-teacher conferences.
- Work with the nearest Parent Information and Resource Center to provide parents with the skills and resources they need to be advocates for their children and participants in school decision making.

For More Information

More information about parent involvement in NCLB is available at the U.S. Department of Education website at <http://www.ed.gov/parents/landing.jhtml> or the DPI website at www.dpi.state.wi.us by clicking on No Child Left Behind.

More information about school and district parent involvement requirements in Title I, Part A, including examples of school policy and building capacity, is available at the U.S. Department of Education website at www.ed.gov/legislation/ESEA/Title_I/parinv.html#policy.

Title II — Part D

Enhancing Education through Technology

School districts applying for Title II, Part D, funds must have in place a process for effective use of technology to promote parent involvement and increase home-school communication. The process must include efforts to regularly inform parents about technology used in the educational program.

For More Information

A brief summary of Title II, Part D, provisions in NCLB is available at the DPI website at www.dpi.state.wi.us/dpi/esea/tiisummary.html#anchorD.

Title III — Limited English Proficient

Language Instruction for LEP and Immigrant Students

School districts using Title III funds must implement an effective means of outreach to parents of limited English proficient children. The outreach must inform parents how they can be involved in their children's education and be active participants in helping their children learn English and achieve academically. Outreach shall include holding, and sending notices of opportunities for, regularly sched-

uled meetings with parents of LEP children to formulate and respond to parent recommendations.

For More Information

A summary of major NCLB provisions on language instruction for limited English proficient students is available at www.dpi.state.wi.us/dpi/esea/tiisummary.html#anchorA.

Title IV — 21st Century Schools

Part A: Safe and Drug-Free School Activities

Districts that receive safe and drug-free school funds must inform and involve parents in violence and drug abuse prevention programs and activities. Schools should make reasonable efforts to inform parents of the content of such programs or activities. If a parent submits a written request, the school must withdraw a student from the program or activity.

The district must have “meaningful and ongoing” input from parents in developing drug and violence prevention activities and should work to promote the involvement of parents in these activities.

For More Information

An information update on safe and drug-free schools is available on the DPI website at www.dpi.state.wi.us/dpi/esea/bul_0205.html.



Title IV—21st Century Schools

Part B: Community Learning Centers

A school district, private school, or community-based organization using Title IV funds to operate a 21st Century Community Learning Center should meaningfully involve parents in the development and administration of the center, for example, as members of the site council or advisory council that oversees center operation.

Schools or community-based organizations using Title IV funds to operate a 21st Century Community Learning

Center must inform parents of the services available for students and family members. The school or organization also must inform parents about the results of evaluations of the center.

For More Information

More information about Community Learning Centers is available on the DPI website at www.dpi.state.wi.us/dpi/dlsea/sspw/clc.html.

Title V — Part A

Promoting Informed Parental Choice and Innovative Programs

School districts receiving Title V funds under Part A, Innovative Programs, must systematically consult with parents of elementary and secondary students attending district schools on the spending of these funds and in planning, designing, and implementing innovative assistance programs.

For More Information

A summary of major NCLB provisions for Title V is available on the DPI website at www.dpi.state.wi.us/dpi/esea/tvsummary.html.



Section 3

Families and Schools Working Together to Improve Achievement

The No Child Left Behind Act puts into law what effective educators have known for a long time: students achieve most when parents are informed about, involved in, and supportive of their child's education. Thirty years of research have shown that schools with involved parents enjoy higher student achievement and greater support from the community. These schools also employ teachers who have higher morale, higher expectations of students, and higher opinions of parents.

Section 3 offers schools and parents many ideas on ways to come together to improve student achievement, understand the diversity of families, and form lasting, meaningful relationships with students' and schools' greatest champions: parents.

Improving Your Child's School

10 Tips for Parents in Schools Identified for Improvement

Many parents are surprised when their child's school is identified for improvement. Provisions in the No Child Left Behind Act allow parents in schools that receive federal Title I funds the option to transfer their child to a school not identified for improvement in the district. For a variety of reasons, many parents choose to stay at their neighborhood school. For some parents, their child's learning success or the relationships they have built with school staff are good reasons to remain. Long bus rides or a lack of other schools or classroom vacancies in the district leave no option for other parents.

The NCLB options do prompt most parents to reflect on their child's school and their support for it. What can parents who stay do to improve their child's school? What can parents do to help secure a better education for their child? Although this is written for parents who stay, the following 10 tips are good ideas that can apply to any parent in every school.

1. Find out why the school has been identified for improvement and what areas need improvement.

Schools identified for improvement may not have met state student achievement goals for math and reading, may not have tested enough students, or may have experienced low rates of student attendance or graduation. Attend school meetings to explain where improvement is needed or ask your school principal to explain it.

2. Find out what's good about your school and build upon it.

What areas do students perform well in? Why? How can that success be replicated in other programs? Examine your school's annual performance report that describes student performance and learning opportunities for students. Identify and celebrate successes. Use good work in one area to promote promise elsewhere.

3. Get help for your child.

Title I schools that fail to make Adequate Yearly Progress — or meet state learning goals — for three straight years may offer extra academic help for children, such as after-school tutoring or summer learning programs. These “supplemental educational services” are paid for by the school. Other schools may offer tutoring or mentoring programs pro-

vided by community groups such as the YMCA, Boys and Girls Club, or literacy volunteers. Check with your school principal to see what sources of help are available. If no programs presently exist, ask how you can help get one started.

4. Help your child at home.

Parents make the difference. Set high expectations, read together, monitor your child's homework, make sure she has a quiet place to study and gets to school well-rested and on time. Research shows that parent involvement improves student achievement. Ask your child's teacher how you can help her at home. For lots of ideas, visit websites such as www.pta.org and www.ed.gov/parents.

5. Get involved at school.

Find out how you can help your school improve. When parents are involved, student achievement for the whole school increases. Parents should be warmly welcomed, respected by school staff, and connected in many ways to children's school learning—as volunteers, decisionmakers, and advocates for children and families. Every parent can contribute. Ask your child's teacher or principal how you can help. Visit the National Network of Partnership School's website at www.partnershipschools.org for lots of ideas.

6. Make sure your voice is heard at school.

Under No Child Left Behind, parents must participate on improvement teams in Title I schools to help set policy, build capacity, and develop family-friendly programs and activities for parent involvement. School improvement teams, usually made up of teachers, principals, and parents, must listen and respond to parents' suggestions for helping children learn better. Work with other parents to push for better communication and more opportunities for parents to be involved in the school and connected to children's learning.

7. Make sure your school's improvement plan focuses on areas where the school is not doing well.

Schools now have to publish report cards describing how all students in the school are doing in reading and math. In Wisconsin, other measures of student performance are also



10 Tips for Parents (continued)

available by school and district on the Department of Public Instruction's WINSS website at www.dpi.state.wi.us/data/selschool.asp. If data show that your school's math scores are low, for example, parents should make sure that the school improvement plan has steps for strengthening the math program. Maybe the school will spend more time on math during the school day, create an after-school program to help struggling students, or train teachers on ways to improve student performance in math.

Schools also have to report how different groups of students are performing by race, economic status, disability, and ability to speak English. The improvement plan should describe what will be done to help groups of students whose scores are lagging. Start by asking if *all* classes offer high-quality teaching and a challenging curriculum so that all children will meet the standards.

8. Get a copy of your school's or district's parent involvement policy.

NCLB requires Title I schools and districts to have a parent involvement policy developed and approved by parents. About half of Wisconsin schools receive Title I funds and nearly all Wisconsin school districts do, which means that nearly every district must have such a policy.

Ask your school principal or leader of your school parent group for a copy of the policy. Make sure the policy spells out how parents will be involved in meaningful ways in making decisions about the academic program. What process does your school or district have for getting parent input and approval of key decisions about children's learning? What should the school do to make meetings and other events convenient and helpful to

families? Do the topics reflect the interests and needs of families? Do families receive advance notice and get help with transportation and childcare? NCLB says schools must provide these.

9. Find out what other parents think about the parent involvement policy and if it covers their concerns.

Ask parents how the policy could be stronger. What kind of support do they want from school to be more involved, both in improving the program and in helping children learn more? How do they want to be involved? What kind of training do parents receive from the school to help them understand the school's tests and academic standards? Present everyone's ideas and comments to the school improvement team. Work with other parents and the team to make changes.

10. Make sure your school has a school-parent compact developed and approved by parents.

Another NCLB requirement of Title I schools, the compact should describe how educators and parents will work together to improve achievement and reach high standards for all students. For example, will children get extra help as soon as they need it? What kind of help? How will teachers keep parents informed about how their children are doing? What support will teachers give families to help their children at home?

This article was adapted from one published by Parent Leadership Associates for the Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence, an education advocacy organization based in Lexington, Kentucky. More information about Parent Leadership Associates is at <http://www.plassociates.org/index.html>.

Build Trust through Communication

Key to Closing the Achievement Gap

A gap in home-school communication often accompanies the achievement gap between minority students and others at all levels of K-12 education. Schools that create frequent and ongoing opportunities for parents, teachers, and administrators to communicate, to meet face-to-face, and to form relationships will diminish barriers of race, economics, language, and geography.

One study by the Institute for Responsive Education (IRE) in Boston identified a “process for joining” in family-school partnerships that most middle-class families know, but that low-income or culturally-diverse families may not. The IRE found that schools who take the time and effort to **welcome, honor, and connect** to parents establish effective, student-focused partnerships with families from all backgrounds.

Following are some ideas for building contact and trust among parents and schools that encourage everyone to work together for children.

Recognize at-home parent support. Unless staff receive training on acknowledging all forms of parent involvement in children’s education, they may assume parents aren’t involved. A California study of Latino families identified types of parent involvement that are unrecognized by school staff:

- verbal encouragement to do well in school,
- verbal encouragement to do homework,
- one-on-one help with homework,
- involvement in activities outside of school, and
- contributions of extended family such as grandparents and siblings.

Welcome parents. Is your school a friendly place? Do school hallways feature student artwork and student accomplishments? Is there a family resource room or another place for visiting parents to meet or to leave their coats? Remind staff members of the importance of a smile and friendly word to all parents they encounter.

Encourage families to communicate with one another. Schools cultivate a sense of belonging when they provide opportunities for families from different backgrounds to get to know and to mentor one another. Provide opportuni-

ties for families to “stand around and talk;” to share a conversation, a meal, an activity, and, ultimately, a friendship.

Let parents talk about their children. Structure the format of parent-teacher meetings to allow parents to tell teachers about their children. One teacher begins parent-teacher conferences with questions such as, “What is your child good at?” and “What is your child really like?” During school open house night, another teacher lets parents’ questions guide her remarks. Teachers who listen show parents they care.

Help parents understand learning goals. Report cards, state tests, and school goals are confusing to many parents. Schedule parent meetings and send home brief written materials to explain them and link to at-home learning strategies. Ask parents what they want help understanding.

Kindergarten teachers in one school found that many mothers were unaware their children needed to be able to master letter sounds and do simple addition. The school began a series of learning nights for families to share a meal and a learning activity. All parents also received a brief written summary of what participants learned.

Help parents understand how to solve problems. Clearly communicate to parents the problem-solving process in your school building. Do parents know who to contact when their child has difficulties in the classroom or on the playground? How and when to contact the appropriate staff member? Take time to clear up misunderstandings or hurt feelings. How can staff be responsive and flexible in addressing parents’ concerns about their children’s learning and safety? Engage parents and staff members in developing a problem-solving plan.

Ask parents — again and again. Whether it is at a parent forum, through a parent survey, via a suggestion box, or during a chance encounter in the school hallway, provide lots of opportunities for parents to offer ideas and feedback. Summarize ideas in school newsletters or at school meetings and give parents a chance to react to recommendations.



Closing the Achievement Gap (continued)

For principals: Be there. It's good for a principal to say "my door is always open," but it's better to be *outside* the door. Whether it's directing traffic in the school parking lot or greeting children by name at the start of the school day, the presence of the school administrator makes a sincere statement about the importance of good communication.

Invite parents to examine data. Open staff meetings and inservice sessions to parents to ensure that everyone is aware of state and local data that show the strengths and needs of students and the school. Gather ideas from parents about how families can support school improvement initiatives. What do state and local data show about

student achievement, family structure, housing, and immunization rates? How can parents and the community work together to support data-driven school improvement?

Keep families informed about community resources. The school can greatly assist parents by being a source of information about after-school programs, tutorial help, adult education opportunities, job assistance, and places in the community that families can obtain health care, food, or other necessities. Children and families with emotional or behavioral needs often don't know how to, or are reluctant to, obtain counseling or other services that could help.

Engaging Families to Improve Achievement

Advice from the Research

Taken together, decades of research strongly suggest that families have a major influence on their children's achievement in school and through life. When schools support family involvement at home and at school, students of all backgrounds achieve at higher levels. In short, when parents are involved in education, children do better in school, and schools get better.

According to a new review of recent research published by the Southwest Educational Development Laboratory (2002), students with involved parents are more likely to:

- Earn higher grades and test scores and enroll in higher-level programs
- Be promoted, pass their classes and earn credits
- Attend school regularly
- Have better social skills, show improved behavior, and adapt well to school
- Graduate and go on to post-secondary education.

Key Findings

Families of all backgrounds are involved at home. Several studies show that families of all income and education levels, and from all ethnic and cultural groups, are engaged in supporting their children's learning *at home*. White, middle-class families, however, tend to be more involved *at school*. Supporting more involvement at school from all families may be an important strategy for addressing achievement gaps.

Programs and special efforts to engage families make a difference. For example, teacher outreach to parents results in strong, consistent gains in student performance in both reading and math. Effective outreach practices include meeting face-to-face, sending learning materials home, and keeping in touch about progress. Workshops for parents on helping their children at home are linked to higher reading and math scores. Schools with highly-rated partnership programs make greater gains on state tests than schools with lower-rated programs. Practices like these should be included in a school's parent involvement policy and school-parent compact.

Higher-performing schools effectively involve families and community. Schools that succeed in engaging families from diverse backgrounds share three key practices:

- Focus on building trusting, collaborative relationships among teachers, families and community members
- Recognize, respect and address families' needs, as well as class and cultural differences
- Embrace a philosophy of partnership where power and responsibility are shared.

Effective practices directly link the school's parent involvement efforts to student learning.

- Include information on standards and exhibits of student work at open houses and back-to-school nights.
- Engage parents and students in math and reading games at Family Nights. Explain where students' skills need to be stronger. Use scoring guides while making craft projects to let parents know how to use them.
- Use the school newsletter to discuss test results and what students are doing to meet higher standards.
- Use the annual school and district Report Cards as a chance to have focused conversations with parents and community members about each school's strengths and weaknesses — and how teachers, parents and community members can work together to make improvements.

Match practices to grade levels. Programs that are linked to gains in children's learning take children's age and developmental needs into account.

1. Families with young children

- Home visits from trained parent educators with cultural backgrounds similar to their own or with knowledge of their culture
- Lending libraries that offer games and learning materials to build skills at home
- Discussion groups with other families about children's learning
- Classes on how to stimulate their children's mental, physical, and emotional development



Engaging Families (continued)

2. Families of elementary and middle school students

- Interactive homework that involves parents with their children's learning
- Workshops on topics that parents suggest, like building their children's vocabulary, positive discipline strategies, and supporting children through crises
- Regular calls from teachers, not just when there are problems, about how their children are doing in class
- Learning packets in reading, science, and math, with training in how to use them
- Meetings with teachers to talk about their children's progress and what they're learning

3. Families of high school students

- Regular meetings with teachers and counselors to plan their children's academic program
- Information about program options, graduation requirements, test schedules, and post-secondary education options and how to plan for them
- Information about where to find academic support, such as help with homework, tutoring, afterschool programs, and special classes. Include subject areas covered and associated costs
- Explanations of courses students should take to be prepared for college or other post-secondary education
- Information about financing post-secondary education and applying for financial aid

Facilitate transitions. Children of all ages do better when they make a solid adjustment to school. By adjustment, we mean that students feel comfortable and respected, feel they belong at school, and feel supported by teachers. Here are some practices that research suggests help students adjust as they enter a new school:

- Offer families and students tours of the school and opportunities to visit and observe in the classrooms.
- Meet with students and families at the feeder schools or programs to introduce staff, explain the school's programs, and answer questions.
- Make home visits the summer before school starts to begin building a relationship with each family.

- Work with families to prepare children for the next level and help them plan for postsecondary education and a career.

Develop families' sense of confidence and power. Researchers call this "efficacy." Studies find that when parents have a sense of confidence and power, their children do better in school. For example, we want parents to feel they can help their children do well in school, and be happy and safe. We also want parents to feel that they can overcome negative influences on their children (such as violence and drugs), and have a positive impact on the school and neighborhood. Many practices that help empower families, such as these listed here, are required by the No Child Left Behind law.

- Engage families in planning how they would like to be involved at school.
- Consult a representative sample of parents and families, not just the PTO leadership, about school policies and proposed actions.
- Involve families in action research. Ask them to develop and conduct surveys of other families. Invite them to observe in the classroom, review books and materials, and visit other schools to gather ideas.
- Make it easy for parents to meet and discuss concerns with the principal, talk to teachers and guidance counselors, and examine their children's school records.
- Invite families to attend staff development sessions and faculty meetings.
- Facilitate families' connections with youth groups and programs for young people.
- Work with families to help them monitor their children's activities. Create a school directory, so they can contact other parents.
- Offer workshops on communicating with their children, about topics they suggest, such as talking with children about drugs, dating, problems with friends or family, and values.

Support families' efforts to improve the school and community. When parents feel they have the power to change and control their circumstances, their children tend

to do better in school. Their parents are also better equipped to help them. When schools work with families to develop their connections, families become powerful allies of the school and advocates for public education.

- Give families information about how the education system (and local government) works. Make field trips to district offices and school board meetings.
- Keep voter registration forms and information about local government agencies in the school office or family center. Develop a student-run voter registration drive.
- Invite candidates for school board and other local offices to speak to families at the school.
- Open the school to community meetings.
- Go with families to press local officials about needed funding, programs or law enforcement.
- Work with families to develop action research skills to document problems in the neighborhood.
- Invite local banks and businesses to talk with families about their services, loan programs, and employment opportunities.

Develop the capacity of school staff to work with families and community members. All school staff, from the principal to the custodian, need opportunities to learn more about working more effectively with parents and community members. Design educational opportunities for *all* school staff that:

- Help staff recognize the advantages of school, family and community connections.

- Explore how trusting and respectful relationships with families and community members are achieved.
- Enhance school staff's ability to work with diverse families.
- Enable staff to make connections with community resources.
- Explore the benefits of sharing power with families and community members.

Work with local after-school programs and supplemental service providers to link their content to what students are learning in class.

- Form a partnership between after-school program staff and teachers. Encourage them to share ideas and knowledge about the students, observe each other at work, and attend staff development sessions to update and build their teaching skills.
- Inform supplemental service providers about the school's curriculum and learning programs (especially math and reading).
- Share textbooks and other learning materials with program staff.
- Give program staff information about students' progress and academic needs.

From A New Generation of Evidence: The Family is Critical to Student Achievement, by Anne T. Henderson and Nancy Berla (Washington, DC: Center for Law and Education, 1994) and *A New Wave of Evidence: The Impact of School, Family and Community Connections on Student Achievement*, by Anne T. Henderson and Karen L. Mapp (Austin, TX: Southwest Educational Development Laboratory, 2002 – in press).



How Schools Can Promote Understanding Communicating with Parents of American Indian and Spanish-Speaking Students

Again and again, the language of the No Child Left Behind Act asks schools to respect the contributions and needs of all parents as their children's first and most influential teachers. The NCLB Act insists that schools communicate in formats and languages that parents understand. It demands that schools pay special attention to the needs of poor parents, homeless parents, those with limited English skills, and those whose children attend schools needing improvement. In fact, NCLB asks educators not only to understand families and their cultures, but also to improve schools by *using* parents' knowledge, their time, and their deep desire to help their children find a better place in the world.

This article attempts to give educators some background and ideas for communicating with and involving parents from two diverse cultures:

- American Indian and
- Spanish-speaking.

The history and evolution of each culture and people is complex and cannot be understood by reading a brief article. Indeed, diversity within cultural groups is always greater than across cultural groups, and the individuals who comprise any culture are shaped by a wide variety of learning styles and experiences.

But the need for teachers and other school staff to compassionately understand and respect cultures other than their own continues to grow, both academically and demographically. According to the 2000 U.S. Census figures, about 30% of Americans are non-white. Of these, about 14% are Spanish-speaking; 13% are African American; 5% are Asian; and about 1% are American Indian. By 2010, children of immigrants will comprise 22% of the population. If schools are to truly embrace the concept that "no child will be left behind" in learning, culturally-responsive staff development must be a priority.

American Indian Families

Language

All of the 11 federally-recognized bands and tribes in Wisconsin speak a native language other than English. Although six of the 11 share the common Ojibwe language,

there is no single native language that all American Indian people speak. Until recently, most of these languages were strictly oral.

Most American Indians are somewhat bilingual, with varying degrees of fluency in one or more native languages. Even those who lack fluency, however, believe that the native language provides necessary cultural identity, self-esteem, and balance. Many families speak the native language — or a mix of the native language and English — at home, with elders, and at rites and ceremonies. Children, especially those previously enrolled in tribal Head Start or other early childhood programs, may enter public school with several years of bilingual education.

Beliefs

Despite differences in beliefs among tribes, many American Indians strive for harmony and balance in life. The interrelatedness of the natural world, spiritual world, and individual physical and emotional well-being is central to their way of life.

For many Indian parents and children, the discord between the ways of home and community and the ways of school represent an imbalance. They may not be able to articulate why they feel uncomfortable or resistant. Non-Indian educators would do well to study the communities in which they teach and develop strategies that close the distance between the way students and families operate at home and in school.

Most American Indians will appreciate efforts to learn about the culture of their community. Indian culture maintains a belief that all humans be allowed feelings of integrity and pride connected with who they are and with how they identify.

Some American Indians may:

- rely on nonverbal communication, speak only when necessary, and have long pauses in conversation
- speak in a soft voice; a loud voice indicates anger or aggression
- avoid eye contact with the speaker and interject less often in conversation
- display a deep sense of humor and an ability to see the humor in life.

Learning Styles

While the majority of middle class Caucasian parents are auditory learners who talk to their children a great deal from early childhood on, many Indian students are visual learners. Their parents teach them to do things by showing them how, through direct experience in real-world activities.

The following learning styles may be more prevalent among Indian students:

- Prefers an informal atmosphere
- Visual learner, prefers demonstrations, illustrations
- Observes carefully, then tries when secure in doing so
- Wants teacher as model
- Prefers to be shown; likes learning through stories, pictures, activities
- Accepts intuition, coincidence, feelings, emotions, or hunches
- Cooperates and assists
- Socially oriented
- Personal, informal, spontaneous
- Likes guided approach
- Relies on images for thinking and remembering
- Likes drawing and manipulation.

From Teaching the Native American Indian by Hap Gilliland. Dubuque, Iowa: Kendall/Hunt Publishing Co., 1998.

American Indian teachers and aides are appropriate and often willing resources for information and ideas. School staff must be flexible enough to give Indian families room to be who they are while helping them offer children skills that will make their lives in school and beyond purposeful and hopeful.

Spanish-speaking Families

A Diverse Population

Many people refer to Spanish-speakers as Hispanics, a term coined by the U.S. Census Bureau in 1968 to describe a large, diverse population. Because they are from many countries — Mexico, Cuba, Spain, Central and South America, and the Caribbean — “Hispanics” share a common language but span many groups of people with different histories, traditions, and relations with this country. For that reason, this article will refer to members of this culture as “Spanish-speaking families.”

School Experiences

Educators should know that Spanish-speaking students come to school with a wide variety of experiences. His-

panic countries vary greatly in their literacy rates, from 93% or more in Cuba, Spain, Cost Rica, Chile, and Argentina, to 65% or below in Guatemala, El Salvador, Bolivia, Honduras, and Peru. Many children from Mexico, Guatemala, and Bolivia may have been expected to help their families survive by going to work instead of to school, supplementing the family income with their earnings. Other children may have lived in remote, rural areas where their formal schooling was irregular.

It is important for educators to

- learn about the educational background of each Spanish-speaking child and family to determine effective ways of communicating with the family. Each child’s situation will be unique.
- understand that Spanish-speaking families have varying attitudes about language and education. Many families value maintaining the Spanish language and may feel confused or uncertain about the purpose of bilingual programs.
- know that many parents of bilingual children speak only Spanish and are not always able to help their children with homework or to provide academic support at home.
- know that some parents may feel uncomfortable at school and may not understand the school system or educational terms, even when communicated in Spanish.
- understand that parents, themselves, are in the process of becoming acculturated to this country.

Generally, studies have shown that recent Spanish-speaking immigrants feel schooling will provide greater opportunities for their children. In addition, most Spanish-speaking parents encourage their children to learn English and to be responsible for their own learning.

Celebrated Holidays

Many Spanish-speaking families share similar holidays, often celebrating Christian-based holidays that commemorate the Virgin Mary, saints, or deceased loved ones. School attendance may decrease on these holidays as families travel, sometimes long distances, to celebrate with relatives. Many schools help all students learn lessons of culture and history by inviting Spanish-speaking families to share traditions of food and music at school celebrations, especially for Cinco de Mayo.

Some holidays of note for Spanish-speaking families include:

- Christmas, including the Posadas or Novenas which reenact Mary’s and Joseph’s journey to Bethlehem over nine days, from December 16 to 24



Communicating (continued)

- New Year's Eve and Day
- January 6, the Feast of the Three Kings
- May 5, Cinco de Mayo, which honors Mexican-American friendships and the defeat of the French army
- Nov. 1 and 2, Dia de Los Muertos or Day of the Dead, when families honor deceased relatives and offer food, drink, candy, and flowers. One of the most popular Mexican holidays, it coincides with Christian celebrations of All Saints' Day and All Souls' Day.
- May 10, Mother's Day.

Beliefs and Styles of Communicating

Spanish-speaking families and their children have a different set of cultural assumptions and expectations than non-minority educators. Teachers and administrators must strive to understand the differences between communication patterns at home and at school. Commonly-held beliefs and communications practices of many Spanish-speaking families include:

- each person is unique, with unique qualities that form that person's soul
- elders are entitled to respect and are addressed formally
- men and women commonly greet each other by shaking hands
- conversations are polite and begin with questions about personal well-being and interest before proceeding to the business at hand
- family connections are strong and lasting
- extensive use of gestures by adults and children
- people's needs are more important than schedules or appointments.

Efforts to involve Spanish-speaking families in their children's education and in planning and developing school will be more successful if educators

- help Spanish-speaking parents understand the expectations of schools and how schools work
- include some communication in Spanish and interpreters who are known and trusted
- emphasize to families the important role they play in their children's school success

- offer specific learning strategies parents can do at home with children
- invite families to help set school rules and discipline procedures
- explain how school success contributes to success in post-secondary education and work
- participate in professional development opportunities
- encourage families to engage their children in rich oral discussions in Spanish and to read to their children in Spanish. Research shows that children who speak and read well in their first language — in this case, Spanish — also become better readers and writers in their second language, English.

For Further Reading

On Educating American Indian Students

Ambler, Marjane. "Re-envisioning American Indian Education." *Tribal College Journal*, Fall 1997, pp. 8-10.

Krouse, Susan Applegate. "Kinship and Identity: Mixed Bloods in Urban Indian Communities." *American Indian Culture and Research Journal*, 23:2 (1999), pp. 73-89.

Loew, Patty. *Indian Nations of Wisconsin: Histories of Endurance and Renewal*. Madison, WI: Wisconsin Historical Society Press.

Rhodes, Robert W. "Holistic Teaching/Learning for Native American Students." *Journal of American Indian Education* 27:2 (Jan. 1988).

On Educating Spanish-Speaking Students

Brett, Joni. *HOLA! Communicating with Spanish-speaking parents*. Good Apple (A Division of Frank Schaffer Publications) 23740 Hawthorne Blvd., Torrance, CA 90505-5927

National Research Council. *Educating Language-Minority Children*. Washington, DC: National Academy Press, 1998.

Thuro, Barbara. *Reporting to Parents in English and Spanish*, 1990. Ammie Enterprises, P.O. Box 2132, Vista, CA 92085-2132.

This article was adapted from the publication, *Linguistically Culturally Diverse II*, published by the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction. It is available through the DPI Publications Sales Office (800-243-8782 or www.dpi.state.wi.us/pubsales).

Using the Partnership Action Team to Meet NCLB Parent Involvement Requirements

How can schools simultaneously involve families in meeting NCLB requirements, reaching student achievement and other school improvement goals, and strengthening partnership efforts? Following are some ideas for coordinating all three areas through an Action Team for Partnerships.

The forms and charts mentioned below can all be downloaded from the Learning Together booklet, The Action Team, on the DPI website at www.dpi.state.wi.us/dpi/dltcl/bbfcsp/pdf/fcswintr.pdf. Visit the DPI Bright Beginnings/Family-School-Community Partnership Team page at www.dpi.state.wi.us/dpi/dltcl/bbfcsp/index.html for many more useful resources and ideas.

Steps to Take

Step 1

Create an Action Team for Partnerships — or use another existing team that includes parents and teachers representing different grade levels, the school principal, and other staff — to

- analyze which NCLB requirements the school or district is meeting
- evaluate how many parents are reached and how well they understand NCLB-related efforts about their child's learning, and
- create partnership goals and activities that link families to student learning and meet NCLB requirements.

Be sure to connect this team to a larger School Improvement Team through one or more liaisons, sharing of information, and regular reporting.

Basic information about starting an Action Team, gathering information, and linking team activities to school improvement is available on-line in Part 1 of "The Action Team" booklet at www.dpi.state.wi.us/dpi/dltcl/bbfcsp/pdf/fcswintr.pdf.

Step 2

Inventory what partnership practices the school presently conducts by grade level. Which are done well? Which are no longer needed? Where do gaps in student performance and expectation occur? How can effective partnership practices be expanded or revamped to meet NCLB requirements?

See the NCLB Parent Involvement Checklist for Schools on page 64 of this booklet to help organize your efforts.

Step 3

Write a One-Year Action Plan to link partnership goals to NCLB requirements and to school improvement goals.

Visit the on-line DPI Action Team booklet to download a useful one-year planning form (page 59 of 71) and to view sample activities that support specific school improvement goals (page 22 of 71).

Step 4

Develop a parent involvement policy at the district and school level (Note: process is important!).

Step 5

Plan a program of partnerships to build capacity for partnerships.

Consider conducting partnership activities such as

- workshops on student attendance, student achievement, other topics
- organize parent and community volunteers to support student achievement
- communicate with families in clear language and understandable format
- help students improve homework completion
- involve parents in decisions about school programs, including efforts to integrate parent involvement policies and practices across departments and programs
- provide staff development on working with families positively and effectively
- train parents to work as advocates and participants in the decision making process for children's learning.

Step 6

Develop a parent-teacher-student compact.

Step 7

Convene an annual parent meeting. Share results of parent surveys, the one-year action plan, and program achievements in student performance and partnerships.

Step 8

Evaluate effectiveness of parent involvement programs.

Step 9

Join the National Network of Partnership Schools (www.partnershipschools.org) and join more than 100 Wisconsin schools and districts who are NNPS members. Enjoy easy access to the most recent, research-based practices and planning tools of the NNPS. The Network's guidelines, activities, and forms can help districts and schools meet NCLB requirements for parent involvement.



NCLB Parent Involvement Checklist for Schools

The Six Types of Family-School-Community Partnerships are a useful way for schools to gauge how extensively they reach out to involve families and the community in children's learning. The No Child Left Behind Act requires schools to work hard at involving all families in school improvement. Following are examples of practices and programs that schools and districts can use to meet NCLB requirements and to encourage a higher level of family and community support.

Practices listed below under specific federal Title programs will meet NCLB requirements, but it should be noted that these practices are good ideas for *all* schools to implement. These are just ideas and should be adapted to the needs of each school and district.

Parenting and Family Skills

- We provide families with information on child development.
- We offer family learning workshops on topics suggested by families, held at times and places easily accessible to all families.
- Each edition of our school newsletter features information on parenting skills and how to support their child's school success.
- We have a school family center or we help parents access other resource centers in the community.
- We make available parent liaisons or advocates to help parents meet with school staff.
- We help parents locate services they need to meet the family's social, economic, and behavioral needs.

Especially for Title I schools

We provide information to parents about the importance of monitoring

- student attendance
- homework completion and
- television watching.
- We train all staff members on the importance of and strategies for working with families.

Communicating

- We make sure that parents who do not speak or read English well have the help they need to understand written school communications or to participate in school meetings.
- We reply promptly to parent requests, questions, and suggestions.

- We notify parents immediately when their children have problems in school.
- We use a variety of ways — written documents, meetings, the Internet, and through the media — to communicate school goals and activities.
- We offer workshops to help parents understand student report cards, student achievement reports, school goals, and policies.
- We have a school website and inform parents about how to use it.

We make sure parents understand their rights to request information and help make decisions about the following NCLB requirements:

- military recruiters
- student surveys
- Safe and drug-free school activities
- 21st Century Community Learning Centers.
- We hold at least one annual parent-teacher conference for all students with additional conference time for children or families requesting it.

Especially for Title I schools

- All communications from our school are in a format and language understandable to parents.

Our school notifies parents about

- Title I programs
- the school curriculum
- how their child will be assessed
- how to reach school staff
- regularly-scheduled Title I parent meetings with school staff.

We make sure parents understand their rights to request information and help make decisions about the following NCLB requirements:

- teacher qualifications
- paraprofessional qualifications
- school improvement goals or areas identified for improvement
- district report cards
- the parent involvement policy
- student test results on state tests.
- Our school notifies parents if their child has been taught for 20 consecutive days by a teacher who is not highly qualified.

For Title I schools identified for improvement

Our school notifies parents

- that the school has been identified for improvement
- what the identification means and what is being done to improve
- how parents can be involved in school improvement
- student transfer options
- the availability and quality of supplemental education services.

For Title III schools

Our school notifies parents of children with limited English proficiency

- why their child has been placed in an LEP program
- of the child's level of English proficiency
- how the program will help the child speak English and meet the child's needs, and
- of the parent's right to immediately remove the child from the program.

Decisionmaking

- Our school's parent-teacher group has a liaison member linked to school improvement efforts.

Especially for Title I schools

- Our school has at least one annual meeting for Title I parents.
- Our school offers meetings at a variety of times so all parents can attend.

Our school involves parents in planning and making decisions about

- developing a written parent involvement policy and other school policies
- planning, reviewing, and improving the Title I program
- school programs and workshops for parents
- teacher training and staff inservices
- encouraging parent involvement in children's learning
- school improvement goals
- school academic programs.
- Our school has a parent advisory council to provide advice on all matters related to parental involvement.
- We train parents to become decisionmakers and occupy leadership roles.
- Parent leaders and decisionmakers reflect the diversity of children in our school.

We involve parents in

- revising or planning the curriculum
- hiring staff
- planning programs for families new to the school
- recruiting members for decisionmaking committees such as site-based or school improvement councils.
- Our school coordinates Title I parent involvement strategies with other programs such as Head Start, Reading First, Early Reading First, Even Start, Parents as Teachers, Home Instruction Program for Preschool Youngsters, state-run preschool programs, and other literacy efforts.
- Our school provides funding to parents for transportation and childcare to enable their attendance at meetings.
- Our school provides funding to staff to conduct home visits.
- Our school jointly develops with parents a school-parent compact that outlines how parents, the entire school staff, and students will share the responsibility for and work toward improved student academic achievement.
- Our school frequently reports to parents on their child's progress.

For Title III schools

Our school notifies parents of children with limited English proficiency about

- the parent's right to have his or her child removed immediately, upon request, from the language instructional program.
- the other possible programs or methods of instruction available, and the parent's option to decline enrolling his or her child.
- how parents will receive assistance in selecting another program or method, if one is offered by the district.

For Title IV 21st Century Schools

Our school

- involves parents in developing the content of violence and drug abuse prevention programs and activities.
- informs parents of the content of violence and drug-abuse prevention programs.
- informs parents of their right to withdraw their child from participating in violence and drug abuse prevention programs.
- involves parents in developing programs for and administering 21st Century Community Learning Centers (CCLC).



Checklist for Schools (continued)

- informs parents about CCLC services.
- informs parents about the results of CCLC evaluations.

Volunteering

- We encourage parents and community members to volunteer.
- We offer a wide variety of volunteer opportunities at various times and places to allow all parents to volunteer.
- We offer youth service-learning opportunities that link service to the curriculum.
- We recognize school volunteers.
- We involve parents in planning and evaluating volunteer opportunities.
- We ask parents how they would like to volunteer.
- We train staff members to work with parent and community volunteers.

Especially for Title I schools

- We offer volunteer opportunities to
- parents with limited English proficiency,
 - parents with disabilities, and
 - parents of migrant children.

Learning at Home

- Our school regularly informs parents about how they can reinforce at home what their child is learning at school.
- Our school asks parents for ideas about what they need to help their child learn at home.
- We ask parents for their ideas to link the curriculum to home and the community.
- We give parents information about how to help children cultivate good study skills.
- We give parents information about how to monitor homework and encourage their children's academic success.
- We give parents ideas and resources for creating a learning-friendly environment at home.

- We offer learning ideas and activities for the whole family.
- We help parents learn how to evaluate their child's progress and invite them to discuss their child's progress with teachers.
- We help staff members recognize the unseen ways in which families contribute to children's learning at home, including by verbally encouraging children to do well, monitoring homework, and involving children in community activities outside of school.
- We keep parents who do not read or speak English well informed about and involved in helping their child learn at home.

Community Collaboration

- We act as a source of information and referral to families about services available in the community.
- We work with local media and public agencies to disseminate the results of school and student assessments.
- We encourage local civic and service groups to become involved in our school in a variety of ways such as mentoring, "adopting" classrooms, speaking to classrooms, and helping with fund-raising.
- We open our school building for use by the community beyond regular school hours.
- We work with local businesses to offer students the opportunity to enhance work skills.

Especially for Title I schools

- Our school or district works with the nearest PIRC (parent information and resource center) to train, inform, and support parents and individuals who work with parents and schools.
- Our school works with local businesses and community groups to strengthen parent involvement and children's learning.

The Six Types of Family-School-Community Partnerships are based on the research of Dr. Joyce Epstein, director of the National Network for Partnership Schools at Johns Hopkins University. Visit their website at www.partnershipschools.org for many more useful practices and ideas.

Resources

More Information about Parent Involvement and the No Child Left Behind Act

In Wisconsin

Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction

www.dpi.state.wi.us/dpi/esea/index.html. Scroll down to “Major Topics of Interest Related to the Provisions of NCLB” and look for Parents.

Wisconsin Association of School Boards

www.wasb.org/nclbchecklist.pdf. To download an NCLB Policy Checklist for school districts.

The Wisconsin Association of School Public Relations

www.wspra.org. WSPRA has developed a down-loadable pdf file on Guidelines for Communication about NCLB.

Nationally

National Network of Partnership Schools

www.partnershipschools.org. Offers a wealth of information and ideas on meeting NCLB requirements for involving parents.

Federal Guide to No Child Left Behind

<http://www.ed.gov/nclb/landing.jhtml>. Highlights include an on-line Parents Guide to the NCLB and selected topics of interest to parents.

The Council of Chief State School Officers

www.ccsso.org/federal_programs/NCLB/index.cfm. An extensive list of resources used and developed by CCSSO staff, state education agencies, and others to communicate about and implement the NCLB.

National Coalition for Parent Involvement in Education

www.ncpie.org/WhatsHappening/NCLBBulletin.html. Offers on-line bulletins on topics related to parents, as well as others for sale.

Center for Education Policy

www.ctredpol.org. Features current articles and reports analyzing NCLB goals and results for students and schools.

Frequently Asked Questions about No Child Left Behind

<http://edworkforce.house.gov/issues/108th/education/nclb/nclbfaq.pdf>. This 33-page document can be downloaded and provides useful information on NCLB issues big and small to parents and school staff.

The Institute for Responsive Education

www.responsiveeducation.org/NCLB.html. The IRE, based at Northeastern University, Boston, has compiled a list of links to websites that break down the NCLB law into what parents need to know.

National Education Association

www.nea.org/esea/index.html. NEA presents NCLB-related issues concerning teacher quality, school improvement, and student testing and accountability in concise format for parents, from the perspective of teachers.

National PTA (National Congress of Parents and Teachers)

www.pta.org. Click on “parent involvement” for useful information on general parent involvement standards and practices, school testing and accountability, and implementing NCLB requirements.

The Learning First Alliance

www.learningfirst.org/publications/nclbguide/. An on-line guide suggests practical strategies and samples of how schools can talk to parents and community members about NCLB and larger school improvement issues. The Alliance is a permanent partnership of 12 leading education associations dedicated to improving student learning in America’s public schools.

For Middle Schools

Alliance for Excellent Education

Policy Brief on NCLB and Middle Schools: www.all4ed.org/. Under “Publications and Materials,” click on “Issue Briefs” to download information about the difficulties middle schools face in implementing the NCLB.

Parents and Reading

How A Child Becomes a Reader

www.nifl.gov/partnershipforreading/. Two new booklets draw on findings from scientifically based research to suggest how parents can help young children become strong readers. One booklet is for parents of newborns through preschoolers; the other, for parents of children in kindergarten through 3rd grade. (Look for “A Child Becomes a Reader” at the bottom left of home page.)