

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

Generally

The Essex School Board recognizes that the education of each student is a responsibility shared by the school and the student's family. The Essex School Board endorses the parental involvement goals of Title I (20 U.S.C. § 6318) and Title III (20 U.S.C. § 7012(e)) and encourages the regular participation by parents of all children including those eligible for Title I and Limited English Proficiency (LEP) programs in all aspects of those programs.

In keeping with these beliefs, it is the intention of the Essex School Board to cultivate and support active parental involvement in student learning. The Essex School Board will:

- provide activities that will educate parents regarding the intellectual and developmental needs of their children. These activities will promote cooperation between the division and other agencies or school/community groups (such as parent-teacher groups, the Head Start program, and Parents as Educational Partners Program) to furnish learning opportunities and disseminate information regarding parenting skills and child/adolescent development;
- implement strategies to involve parents in the educational process, including:
 - keeping families informed of opportunities for involvement and encouraging participation in various programs;
 - providing access to educational resources for parents and families to use with their children;
 - keeping families informed of the objectives of division educational programs as well as of their child's participation and progress with these programs;
- enable families to participate in the education of their children through a variety of roles. For example, family members may:
 - provide input into district policies
 - volunteer time within the classroom and school program
- provide professional development opportunities for teachers and staff to enhance their understanding of effective parent involvement strategies;
- perform regular evaluations of parent involvement at each school and in the division;
- provide access, upon request, to any instructional material used as part of the educational curriculum;

In addition, for parents of students eligible for LEP programs, the School Board will inform such parents of how they can be active participants in assisting their children:

- to learn English;
- to achieve at high levels in core academic subjects; and
- to meet the same challenging academic content and student academic achievement standards as all children are expected to meet.

Parental Involvement in Title I Plan

The Essex School Division encourages parents of children eligible to participate in Title I, Part A, programs to participate in the development of the Board's Title I plan. Parents may participate by

- Contacting the principal of each Title I school (Tappahannock Elementary School and Essex Intermediate School)
- Contacting the Director of Federal Programs.

Parental Involvement in School Review and Improvement

The Essex School Division encourages parents of children eligible to participate in Title I, Part A, and LEP programs to participate in the process of school review and, if applicable, school improvement as implemented by 20 U.S.C. § 2316. Parents may participate by

- Serving on a school improvement committee
- Serving as a member of school-based parent organizations.

District Responsibilities

The Essex School Division, and each school which receives Title I, Part A, funds, WILL:

- provide assistance to parents of children served by the school or division, as applicable, in understanding topics such as Virginia's academic content standards and student academic achievement standards, state and local academic assessments, and how to monitor a child's progress and work with educators to improve the achievement of their children;
- provide materials and training to help parents work with their children to improve their children's achievement, such as literacy training and using technology, as appropriate, to foster parental involvement;
- educate teachers, pupil services personnel, principals, and other staff, with the assistance of parents, in the value and utility of contributions of parents and in how to reach out to, communicate with, and work with parents

as equal partners, implement and coordinate parent programs, and build ties between parents and the school;

- to the extent feasible and appropriate, coordinate and integrate parental involvement programs and activities with Head Start, Virginia Preschool Initiative, the Home Instruction Programs for Preschool Youngsters, the Parents as Educational Partners Program, and public preschool and other programs, and conduct other activities, such as parent resource centers, that encourage and support parents in more fully participating in the education of their children;
- ensure that information related to school and parent programs, meetings, and other activities is sent to the parents of participating children, and
- provide such other reasonable support for parental involvement activities as parents may request.

The Essex School District, and each school which receives Title I, Part A, funds, MAY:

- involve parents in the development of training for teachers, principals, and other educators to improve the effectiveness of such training;
- provide necessary literacy training from Title I funds if the division has exhausted all other reasonable available sources of funding for such training;
- pay reasonable and necessary expenses associated with local parental involvement activities, to enable parents to participate in school-related meetings and training sessions;
- train parents to enhance the involvement of other parents:
- arrange school meetings at a variety of times, or conduct in-home conferences between teachers or other educators who work directly with participating children and parents who are unable to attend such conferences at school in order to maximize parental involvement and participation;
- adopt and implement model approaches to improving parental involvement; and,
- develop appropriate roles for community-based organizations and businesses in parental involvement activities.

School Parental Involvement Policies

Each school served under Title I, Part A, shall jointly develop with and distribute to parents of participating children a written parental involvement policy, agreed on by such parents, that shall describe the means for carrying out the following:

- convening an annual meeting, at a convenient time, to which all parents of participating children shall be invited and encouraged to attend, to inform parents of their school's participation in Title I, Part A, and to explain the requirements of Title I, Part A, and the rights of parents to be involved;
- offering a flexible number of meetings, such as meetings in the morning or evening, and may provide, with funds provided under this part, as such services relate to parental involvement;
- involving parents, in an organized, ongoing, and timely way, in the planning, review, and improvement of Title I, Part A, programs including the planning, review, and improvement of the school parental involvement policy and the joint development of the school wide program plan under 20 U.S.C. § 6312(b)(2), except that if a school has in place a process for involving parents in the joint planning and design of the school's programs, the school may use that process, if such process includes an adequate representation of parents of participating children;
- providing parents of participating children:
 - timely information about Title I, Part A, programs;
 - a description and explanation of the curriculum in use at the school, the academic assessments used to measure student progress, and the proficiency levels students are expected to meet; and
 - if requested by parents, opportunities for regular meetings to formulate suggestions and to participate, as appropriate, in decisions relating to the education of their children, and respond to any such suggestions as soon as practicably possible; and
- if the school wide program plan under 20 U.S.C. § 6312(b)(2) is not satisfactory to the parents of participating children, submitting any parent comments on the plan when the school makes the plan available to the School Board.

Parental Involvement in Allocation of Funding

Parents of children receiving services under Title I, Part A, shall be involved in the decisions regarding how funds provided under Title I, Part A, are allotted for parental involvement activities.

Policy Review

The content and effectiveness of this policy will be evaluated annually with regard to improving the academic quality of the schools receiving Title I, Part A, or LEP funds. This evaluation will identify barriers to greater participation by parents (particularly by parents who are economically disadvantaged, have disabilities, have limited English proficiency, have limited literacy, or are of any racial or ethnic minority background) and use the findings of that evaluation to design strategies for more effective parental involvement, and to revise, if necessary, this policy.

Adopted: April 9, 2012

Revised: November 10, 2014

Legal Refs.: 20 U.S.C. §§ 6312, 6316, 6318.

Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, §§ 22.1-78.

Cross Refs.: AD Educational Philosophy
BCF Advisory Committees to the School Board
IAA Notification of Learning Objectives
IKA Parental Assistance with Instruction