

WEST NEW YORK SCHOOL DISTRICT
District-Wide Parental Involvement Policy
2011-2012

PART I. GENERAL EXPECTATIONS

The West New York School District agrees to implement the following statutory requirements:

- The school district will put into operation programs, activities and procedures for the involvement of parents in all of its schools with Title I, Part A programs, consistent with section 1118 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). Those programs, activities and procedures will be planned and operated with meaningful consultation with parents of participating children.
- Consistent with section 1118, the school district will work with its schools to ensure that the required school-level parental involvement policies meet the requirements of section 1118(b) of the ESEA, and each include, as a component, a school-parent compact consistent with section 1118(d) of the ESEA.
- The school district will incorporate this district-wide parental involvement policy into its LEA plan developed under section 1112 of the ESEA.
- In carrying out the Title I, Part A parental involvement requirements, to the extent practicable, the school district and its schools will provide full opportunities for the participation of parents of children with limited English proficiency, with disabilities, and of migratory children, including providing information and school reports required under section 1111 of the ESEA in an understandable and uniformed format and, including alternative formats upon request, and, to the extent practicable, in a language parents understand.
- If the LEA plan for Title I, Part A, developed under section 1112 of the ESEA, is not satisfactory to the parents of participating children, the school district will submit any parent comments with the plan when the school district submits the plan to the State Department of Education.
- The school district will involve the parents of children served in Title I, Part A schools in decisions about how the 1 percent Title I, Part A funds reserved for parental involvement is spent, and will ensure that not less than 95 percent of the one percent reserved goes directly to the schools.
- The school district will be governed by the following statutory definition of parental involvement, and expects that its Title I schools will carry out programs, activities and procedures in accordance with this definition:

Parental involvement means the participation of parents in regular, two-way, and meaningful communication involving student academic learning and other school activities, including ensuring—

- (A) *that parents play an integral role in assisting their child's learning;*
- (B) *that parents are encouraged to be actively involved in their child's education at school;*

- (C) *that parents are full partners in their child's education and are included, as appropriate, in decision-making and on advisory committees to assist in the education of their child;*
- (D) *the carrying out of other activities, such as those described in section 1118 of the ESEA.*

PART II. DESCRIPTION OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF DISTRICT-WIDE PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT POLICY COMPONENTS

The West New York Parental Involvement Policy has been organized through the research-based frameworks of Joyce Epstein from the National Network of Partnership 2000 Schools and the Center on School, Family, and Community Partnerships at Johns Hopkins University. The six types of parental involvement used in the Epstein model have been adopted by the National PTA and used in establishing National Standards. The organization of the West New York Parental Involvement Program through the six National Standards/Framework is as follows:

- **Type I—Parenting:** Assist families with parenting and child-rearing skills, understanding child and adolescent development, and setting home conditions that support children as students at each age and grade level.
 - **Type II—Communicating:** Communicate with families about school programs and student progress through effective school-to-home and home-to-school communications.
 - **Type III—Volunteering:** Improve recruitment, training, work and schedules to involve families as volunteers and audiences at the school or in other locations to support students and school programs.
 - **Type IV—Learning at Home:** Involve families with their children in learning activities at home, including homework and other curriculum-linked activities and decisions.
 - **Type V—Decision-Making:** Include families as participants in school decisions, governance and advocacy through PTA/PTO, school councils, committees, and other parent organizations.
 - **Type VI—Collaborating with the Community:** Coordinate resources and services *for* families, students, and the school with businesses, agencies, and other groups, and provide services *to* the community.
1. The West New York School District will take the following actions to involve parents in the joint development of its district-wide parental involvement plan under section 1112 of the ESEA:

A district-wide Parental Involvement Advisory Council was established. Comprised of all stakeholders, it includes the NCLB Grant Administrator, the District Parent Involvement Supervisor/Title I Program Manager, the District Parent Involvement Coordinator, Title I Facilitators/Teachers, and Parent Partners from all Title I schools. Through a series of formal and informal meetings, ideas were discussed and plans were outlined. Federal requirements were reviewed to assure compliance. Once the plans were developed into a draft format, the entire committee reviewed the

document and made recommendations for additions and/or deletions. Based on the team's recommendations, the final plan was developed.

2. The West New York School District will take the following actions to involve parents in the process of school review and improvement under section 1116 of the ESEA:

Parents are provided with the opportunity to become partners in the decisions made that impact their child's education. These decision-making opportunities include:

- As we continue to implement Whole School Reform, a School Leadership Council (SLC) has been established at each school. Members representing all stakeholders, including parents, may be included in this planning and leadership committee.
- A PTO/PTA exists at each school with varying degrees of participation. Among other activities, these organizations serve as a resource for the school, providing funds for classroom/school educational needs positively impacting their children's success.

3. The West New York School District will provide the following necessary coordination, technical assistance, and other support to assist Title I, Part A schools in planning and implementing effective parental involvement activities to improve student academic achievement and school performance:

Each Title I, Part A School has elements to assist them in the planning and implementation of school-based parental involvement activities. These elements include:

- Parent Facilitator—Based on letters of application, one teacher at each school is chosen and appointed by Board Resolution for this stipend position. The role of the Parent Facilitator is to coordinate all the activities within her/his individual school, conduct and participate in a variety of parent workshops, and serve as a member of a district-wide committee that organizes and implements parent activities that include, but are not limited to, workshops and parent/child trips.
- Parent Partner—Based on letters of application, one parent representative from each school is chosen and appointed by Board Resolution for this stipend position. The role of the Parent Partner includes participating in the decision-making process of the program, preparing information to be distributed to parents, translating at parent meetings/workshops and acting as a liaison between parents and the school.
- Workshops during the school day—Early in the school year, the Parent Advisory Council meets with the District Parent Involvement Supervisor/Title I Program Manager to discuss possible topics to be addressed throughout the year at workshops. Monthly meetings, to be held at each school, are planned and scheduled for the year. Notices are sent home prior to each meeting through the efforts of the Parent Facilitator and Parent Partner. Presented by the Parent Facilitator, these meetings have included topics such as: "A Positive Approach to Discipline," "Helping Your Child Be a Successful Test Taker," and "NCLB and the Rights of Parents." Refreshments are served at each meeting and raffles are

- held where parents have the opportunity to “win” books, puzzles and other educational items to use at home with their children.
- Evening workshops with childcare—As the yearly calendar is developed, evening workshops are included. Meetings are held at one school with parents from all the elementary public and nonpublic schools invited to attend. Consultants, such as the Substance Awareness Coordinator (SAC), can present at these meetings. In order to accommodate the parent’s childcare needs, the Parent Facilitators and/or Parent Partners supervise the children who attend with their parents in separate rooms to allow the parents to acquire the information without distractions.
 - Parent/Child trips/presentations—A series of trips/presentations for parents and children are scheduled throughout the year for a variety of events which may include presentations of children’s literature.
 - Parent members of School Leadership Council—West New York has established a School Leadership Council (SLC) at each school to plan and implement activities to address their individual needs. Composed of all stakeholders, the SLC frequently includes staff representatives, student representatives, parents and community members.
4. The West New York School District will coordinate and integrate parental involvement strategies in Part A with parental involvement strategies under the following other programs, which include, but are not limited to, Family Math and the Eisenhower Professional Development School Project.
5. The West New York School District will take the following actions to conduct, with the involvement of parents, an annual evaluation of the content and effectiveness of this Parental Involvement Policy in improving the quality of its Title I, Part A schools. The evaluation will include identifying barriers to greater participation by parents in parental involvement activities (with particular attention to parents of children who are economically disadvantaged, are disabled, have limited English proficiency, have limited literacy, and/or are of any racial or ethnic minority background). The school district will use the findings of the evaluation of its Parent Involvement Policy and activities to design strategies for more effective parental involvement and to revise, if necessary (and with the involvement of parents), its parental involvement policies.
- The Parent Involvement Advisory Council (see Part II, 1), which includes parents, will meet at least once a year, to review the content and effectiveness of the Parental Involvement Policy in improving the quality of all Title I, Part A Schools.
 - The district Parent Involvement Supervisor/Title I Program Manager will be responsible for planning and conducting the meeting.
 - All activities will be reviewed with continued attention given to the needs of parents whose children are economically disadvantaged, are disabled, have limited English proficiency, have limited literacy, and/or are of any racial or ethnic minority background.
 - All decisions for revisions and strategies for more effective parental involvement will be made jointly by administrators, teachers and parents.

- All stakeholders will review and approve the final policy document.
6. The West New York School District will build the schools’ and parents’ capacity for strong parental involvement in order to ensure effective involvement of parents and to support a partnership among the schools involved, parents, and the community to improve student academic achievement, through the following activities specifically described below:
- A. The school district will, with the assistance of its Title I, Part A schools, provide assistance to parents of children served by the school district or school, as appropriate, in understanding topics such as the following, by undertaking the actions described in this paragraph:
- the State’s academic content standards
 - the State’s student academic achievement standards
 - the State/Local academic assessments including alternate assessments
 - the requirements of ESEA Section 1118 (e) and NCLB Title I Part A,
 - how to monitor their child’s progress
 - how to work with educators to improve the achievement of their children.

The school district will, with the assistance of its Title I, Part A Schools, provide assistance to parents of children served by the school district, including but not limited to, the following:

- Workshops during the school day—Early in the school year, the Parent Advisory Council meets with the District Supervisor of Elementary Education/Parent Involvement/Title I Program Manager to discuss possible topics to be addressed throughout the year at workshops. Monthly meetings, to be held at each school, are planned and scheduled for the year. Notices are sent home prior to each meeting through the efforts of the Parent Facilitator and Parent Partner. Presented by the Parent Facilitator, these meetings can include, but are not limited to, topics such as: state and district testing, NCLB/Title I Programs, working to increase the home-school connection, and students achieving the NJCCCS. Refreshments are served at each meeting and raffles are held where parents have the opportunity to “win” books, puzzles and other educational items to use at home with their children. Parents provide feedback through evaluation sheets regarding the content of the workshop and topics that they would like to see addressed at future workshops.
- Evening workshops with childcare—As the yearly calendar is developed, evening workshops are included. Meetings are held at one school with parents from all the elementary schools invited to attend. Consultants may include the Substance Awareness Coordinator (SAC). In order to accommodate the parent’s childcare needs, the Parent Facilitators and Parent Partners supervise the children who attend with their parents in separate rooms to allow the parents to acquire

information without distractions.

- Parent/Child trips/presentations—A series of trips/presentations for parents and children are scheduled throughout the year for a variety of events which may include presentations of children's literature.

B. The school district will, with the assistance of its schools, provide materials and training to help parents work with their children to improve their children's academic achievement, such as literacy training and using technology, as appropriate, to foster parental involvement, by:

- Using portable laptop computers and lab computers, workshops will be provided to parents to expose them to the technology that is available to both them and their children and to the District's website.
- Parent workshops may be held at the WNY Public Library to assist parents in learning about both the technology and the literacy options available to both them and their children.
- At workshops, parents have the opportunity to acquire books, puzzles and other educational items to take home that will support their child's academic efforts.
- At parent workshops, informational materials may be provided to parents to use as a reference and a resource.

C. The school district will, with the assistance of its schools and parents, educate its teachers, pupil services personnel, principals and other staff, in how to reach out to, communicate with, and work with parents as equal partners, in the value and utility of contributions of parents, in how to implement and coordinate parent programs to build ties between parents and schools, by:

- The district's approved Professional Development Plan provides ongoing and sustained training for all administrators, teachers and other staff members in all areas that positively impact student achievement.
- To coordinate parent programs and build ties between parents and schools, the District Parent Involvement Supervisor/Title I Program Manager establishes an annual Parent Involvement Calendar that includes workshops held at individual schools and field trips held at local sites.

D. The school district will, to the extent feasible and appropriate, coordinate and integrate parental involvement programs and activities with other related programs, and conduct other activities, such as parent resource centers, that encourage and support parents in more fully participating in the education of their children, by:

- Coordinated through the Technology Department, all district programs/activities, including parental involvement programs, are integrated through a district calendar formulated through the input of each school and each program. These include but are not limited to—the Eisenhower Professional Development School Project.

- E. The school district will take the following actions to ensure that information related to the school and parent programs, meetings, and other activities, is sent to the parents of participating children in an understandable and uniform format, including alternative formats upon request, and, to the extent practicable, in a language the parents can understand:

A variety of methods have been established within the schools to provide school-to-home communication. These include:

- Parent workshop notices that are distributed through the Parent Facilitator and the Parent Partner to notify parents of upcoming workshops either during the school day or in the evening. Presented in both English and Spanish, logistical information is provided along with a brief description of the workshop's topic. In order to provide sufficient refreshments and material, parents are asked to respond regarding their ability to attend.
- Progress Reports are sent home by teachers at a midpoint in the marking periods to notify parents of the progress or lack of progress of their children. These reports provide the opportunity to work with parents to help address and/or remedy any areas of need.
- Computer generated report cards are sent home on a quarterly basis to notify parents of their child's effort and academic progress.
- Parents are welcomed into the schools to attend "Back to School Night," and/or "Parents' Night" when they can learn first hand from their child's teachers what their child will be doing throughout the school year and how they can help to ensure their child's success.
- Parents are welcomed into the school during "National Education Week" to visit their child's classrooms to observe the learning process.
- The district website www.wnyschools.net is user friendly and has links to information that is useful for parents to access.
- Parent Handbooks have been developed to provide parents with policy issues and general information about the school and the district. These handbooks are either stand-alone booklets or are included in students' assignment books that are purchased to assist them in organizing their study habits and assignments.

- F. The school district will coordinate and integrate parent involvement programs and activities with other related programs.

PART III. DISCRETIONARY COMPONENTS

The organization of the program, through the six National Standards/Framework, is as follows:

Type I—Parenting: To assist families with parenting and child-rearing skills a series of workshops is planned with the Parent Facilitators and an annual calendar is established. The activities may include, but are not limited to:

- workshops during the school day presented by the Parent Facilitator such as: “Everything that You Ever Wanted to Know About NCLB, Parents Rights and PS#__” and “How to Help Your Child Be Successful on Tests.”
- parent/child trips/presentations to view productions of children’s literature
- evening workshops presented by district specialists such as the Elementary Substance Awareness Coordinator on topics including “Substance Abuse Prevention” and through community resources for topics such as “Fire Safety.”
- workshops presented by out-of-district consultants.

Type II—Communicating: A variety of methods have been established within the schools to provide school-to-home communication. These may include, but are not limited to:

- Parent workshop notices that are distributed through the Parent Facilitator and the Parent Partner to notify parents of upcoming workshops either during the school day or in the evening. Presented in both English and Spanish, logistical information is provided along with a brief description of the workshop’s topic.
- Progress Reports are sent home by classroom teachers at a midpoint in the marking periods to notify parents of the progress or lack of progress of their children. These reports provide the opportunity to work with parents to help address and/or remedy any areas of need.
- Computer generated report cards are sent home on a quarterly basis to notify parents of their child’s effort and academic progress.
- Parents are welcomed into the schools to attend “Back to School Night,” and/or “Parents’ Night” when they can learn first hand from their child’s teachers what their child will be doing throughout the school year and how they can help to ensure their child’s success.
- Parents are welcomed into the school during “National Education Week” to visit their child’s classrooms and observe the learning process.
- The district website www.wnyschools.net is user friendly and has links to information that is useful for parents to access.
- Parent Handbooks have been developed at several schools to provide parents with policy issues and general information about the school and the district.

Parents are encouraged to visit the school and contact administrators, teachers, social workers, the nurse and/or other professional staff members when needed. The home-to-school connection may be addressed through the following:

- Parent Partner interactions before school, during school and after school hours.
- Parent Suggestion/Evaluation Forms that are distributed in both English and Spanish to acquire feedback about workshops, suggestions for future workshops and other information that parents feel they would like to share or issues for which they would like to receive information or support.

Type III—Volunteering: Parents at each school volunteer their time to support their children and their endeavors. Volunteering activities may include, but are not limited to:

- Participating in PTA/PTO activities that include fundraisers such as book fairs, plant sales and Teacher Appreciation Day activities.
- Participation in trips building upon the parent/child bond and sharing educational experiences, such as stage productions of children’s literature.
- Attendance at student performances and exhibitions to support the efforts of their child and the school.

Type IV—Learning at Home: A variety of methods have been established to help parents become more involved in activities that promote learning at home. These may include, but are not limited to:

- Adult Evening School provides parents and members of the community with the opportunity to expand their English language skills and improve their abilities in academic areas acquiring their GED.
- Several of the workshops presented through the Parent Facilitator help lay the groundwork for learning to take place at home. Workshops, such as “Teaching through Storytelling,” encourage parents to find the time to sit and talk with their children discussing such things as family stories or using family photographs as a means to establish communication and bonds. Other workshops, such as “All About Testing” and “Homework Tips for Parents,” provide parents with more specific information that they can use to help their children be successful in school by increasing their learning opportunities at home.

Type V—Decision-Making: Parents are provided with the opportunity to become partners in the decisions made that impact their child’s education. These decision-making opportunities may include, but are not limited to:

- As we continue to implement Whole School Reform, a School Leadership Council (SLC) has been established at each school. Members representing all stakeholders, including parents, may be included in this planning and leadership committee.
- A PTO/PTA exists with varying degrees of participation. Among other activities, these organizations serve as a resource for the school, providing

funds for classroom/school educational needs positively impacting their children's success.

Type VI—Collaborating with the Community: Efforts have been undertaken to utilize the resources in the community to positively impact student achievement. These collaborations may include, but are not limited to:

- Walk-A-Thons have been held at some elementary schools to raise funds for a selected cause. Administrators, teachers and students alike acquire donations from local businesses to sponsor their “walk” around the school. Students in each class carry signs indicating the name of the local sponsors. In addition to small donations, larger companies have joined the cause.
- A local business owner has “adopted” one of the elementary schools and has provided the school with items such as risers for the school auditorium. In addition, he has presented scholarship awards to graduating 8th graders who maintain honor roll status.
- Members in the senior citizen center are invited to attend productions put on by the students. Students also visit the center to interact with the seniors with positive benefits for all participants.
- Local businesses, such as McDonald's, Burger King and Pizza Hut, provide educational opportunities and complimentary meals/certificates.
- Celebrity sponsors have also made a positive impact on the educational achievement of the students by visiting the students.
- Schools have also chosen a “cause” to adopt such as knitting hats and scarves for hospitals and shelters.
- Working with the police department for our DARE program and with the fire department for safety presentations.
- Collaborations have also resulted through former graduates who are now employed in local businesses. For example, a former graduate initiated a large donation of computers.
- Local newspapers and cable channels attend events throughout the schools to make the community aware of the positive achievement of the schools and of the students.
- Local businesses sponsor a variety of incentive programs that encourage students to focus on their academic achievement and reward their efforts through such items as store gift certificates.

PART IV. ADOPTION

This District-Wide Parental Involvement Policy has been developed jointly with, and agreed on by, parents of children participating in Title I, Part A programs, as evidenced by meetings of the Parent Advisory Council.

This policy, along with the Elementary School Policy, was revised and will be adopted by the West New York School District on November 9th, 2011. It will be in effect for the period of one school year from September 2011 through June 2012. The school district will make this policy available to all parents of participating Title I, Part A children on or before November 21, 2011.

(Signature of Authorized Official)

(Date)