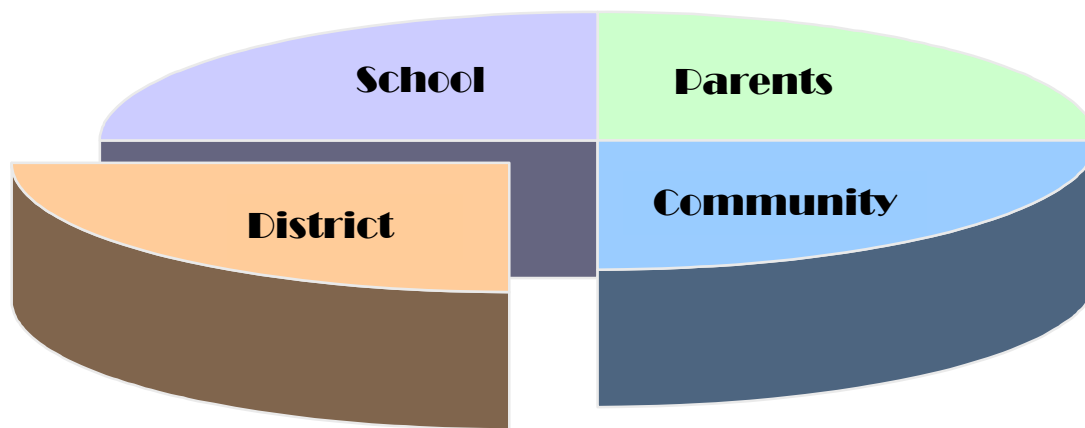


PARENT INVOLVEMENT in EVERY SCHOOL “P-I-E-S”

A Training Manual for Parent Involvement



**Developed by the Title I Statewide School
Support/Parental Involvement Initiative and the
Texas PTA under contract with
the Texas Education Agency**

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Dr. Shirley Neeley, Commissioner of Education, Texas Education Agency
Cory Green, Senior Director of NCLB Program Coordination, TEA
Terri Stafford, Coordinator, Title I Statewide School Support/Parental Involvement Initiative
Linda Currier, Title I Consultant, Region 11 Education Service Center
Skip Forsyth, Education Specialist, Region 16 Education Service Center
Caroline Sherman, Secretary, Texas PTA

Texas Education Agency

1701 N. Congress Avenue
Austin, Texas 78701
(512) 463-9374
www.tea.state.tx.us

Title I Statewide School Support/Parental Involvement Initiative

Region 16 Education Service Center
5800 Bell Street
Amarillo, Texas 79109
(806) 677-5126
www.esc16.net

Texas PTA

408 W. 11th Street
Austin Texas 78701-2113
(800) TALKPTA
(512) 476-6769
www.txpta.org



PREFACE

The Texas Education Agency (TEA) has placed great emphasis on the importance of parent and family involvement in public education. The agency has established the Title I Statewide School Support/Parental Involvement Initiative to address the need for improved parental involvement training and participation in our schools. Texas PTA, with over 635,000 members, is the largest child advocacy organization in the state and has existed as an affiliate member of the National PTA since 1909. These two organizations have worked closely on many projects over the years. It is natural for a TEA/PTA partnership to combine forces to build parent involvement in the schools of Texas. This training manual includes references to PTA and PTA resources; however, it is by no means limited to PTA participation. The materials may be adapted and used by any community-based organization that is striving to increase the involvement of parents and families in schools.

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INTRODUCTION

USE OF THE “P-I-E-S” MANUAL

This manual contains an introduction, three training sections, and an appendix with supplemental materials:

- I. How Students Benefit from Parent Involvement
- II. Understanding Your School
- III. How Texas Parents Become Involved
- IV. Appendix

A large portion of the manual is comprised of resource information, including parent involvement information from No Child Left Behind. Each section begins with trainer notes that introduce the topic and a proposed 45-minute agenda. Although some methods for using the materials have been offered, each trainer is encouraged to use the resource information in the way that fits his/her personal training style as well as meeting the needs of the audience.

Handouts and transparencies are included for each of the training sections. A trainer will need to select the training suggestions, visual materials, and handouts in a way that best suits the purpose of the meeting. As long as the key points are covered, the training will have served its intended purpose.

Any of the materials in this manual may be reproduced for use with educational parent involvement training or parent education workshops and programs according to the TEA copyright notice (p.3).

The material can be used one training section at a time, each approximately 45 minutes long. Or, the material can be used in a workshop format presenting all three sections consecutively, approximately three hours long. Additionally, selected portions of the material could be used in meetings with limited time. The trainer must choose a format that best suits the audience and the intended purpose of the meeting.

**Trainer:
Please take note of the materials in the appendix. Included are surveys, a list of resources including books, websites, Educational Service Center addresses, and other supplemental handouts.**

The manual can be used in several ways:

- I.** To enable a school or established parent group to look at new ways to involve parents and families in the education of their children, such as:
 - PTAs
 - Title I Parent Groups
 - Site-Based Decision-Making Committees
 - Teacher Associations
 - Professional Educational Associations
 - School Mentors/Adopters
 - School Volunteers
 - Capacity-Building Workshops

- II.** To enable all parents to feel more comfortable with the school so they will want to become involved. Meetings may be held at various places; other options to meeting on campus include:
 - Churches, Synagogues, Mosques, and other places of worship
 - Community Centers
 - YMCAs or YWCAs
 - Neighborhood Associations
 - Boys Clubs / Girls Clubs
 - Literacy Centers
 - Public Libraries
 - Head Start Centers
 - Businesses
 - Civic Group Facilities
 - Social Agency Facilities

- III.** To provide an overview of the key elements of parent involvement from:
 - No Child Left Behind – NCLB
 - Texas Education Agency – TEA
 - Parent Teacher Association – PTA

- IV.** To provide a suggested format for training:
 - A school district or campus might use this when training staff about parent involvement either during a professional development day or during a staff meeting.
 - A PTA/PTO could use this when training parents about parent involvement.
 - A parent night or Title I meeting could use some of the training material to provide specific information to parents and the community.
 - A Principal or Parental Involvement Coordinator/Liaison might find some of the resources useful when training parent volunteers.
 - A “self-help” tool for school personnel or parents to better understand the context for parent involvement in Texas.
 - ESC personnel might use this material when training educators or modeling training to parents.
 - Institutions of higher learning develop and offer both professional development and course work using information from this manual.

TRAINER NOTES

“GETTING THE WORD OUT – ADVERTISING”

Suggestions for advertising your parent involvement training. You can use all of the ideas that are appropriate for your audience.



A. Personal Invitation

1. **Principal**...on colored paper to draw attention
2. **Teachers**...a smiley face notice, provided by the PTA
3. **Parents**...each active parent invite another parent
4. **Students**...make reminder notes to be mailed to parents, offer parents play money for their child to redeem at the school store or for discounts to school activities
5. **Community leaders**...ask leaders to talk about the program in their newsletters

B. Telephone Calls

1. Reminder 24 hours prior to meeting
 - a. Create a telephone tree
 - b. Utilize key community people
2. Voice mail on school phones

C. Block Walks

Invite key community leaders to walk targeted neighborhoods and to distribute information about the school, a school calendar, lunch menu, etc.

D. Banners or fliers

1. **School signs**
 - a. “Give Your Child a Gift That Lasts....Your Involvement”
 - b. “Better Schools Begin With You”
 - c. “School Is What WE Make It”
2. **Neighborhood businesses** (most love to provide space)
 - a. Convenience stores
 - b. Discount and grocery stores
3. **Community gathering places**
 - a. Churches, synagogues, mosques or other places of worship
 - b. Parks
 - c. Bowling alleys
 - d. Community centers
 - e. Shopping malls
 - f. Adult or senior centers; seniors are very important influences in the lives of their family members. They also provide a caring and nurturing element for children who don't have parents or other adults as active parts of their daily lives.

TRAINER NOTES

“GETTING THE WORD ACROSS – ATMOSPHERE”

Suggestions for starting a meeting and maintaining a positive climate.

How you begin can “make or break” your training session. You may find yourself in a community where you are not known. You might have a different background from those with whom you have been asked to work. Trust is a critical component of this process. In order for the participants to be able to share their feelings and ideas about their school, their children and involvement in their children’s education, they have to feel good about the person asking them some hard questions... **you!**

MAKE YOUR AUDIENCE COMFORTABLE... MAKE CONNECTIONS

Having impressive credentials (college degrees, officer in the PTA, etc.) is wonderful but may create barriers with your audience. You want them to know that you are, in many ways, like them. So...

- Tell them about your family...not just who and how many, but also a short story about the time your youngest child had to stay after school or when your child’s teacher made you a little uncomfortable, or when your school principal really extended his or her hand to you.
- Share with them what you found to be “scary” about going to school, both as a child and as an adult.
- Let them know that you have feelings as well as experiences in common.

Remember that your audience will pick up on any “for me” and “because I say so” attitude. This can be a turn off, and you may not be able to regain their trust.

RULES FOR REACHING OUT TO PARENTS

- Be positive
- Focus on the child
- Emphasize their child's strengths
- Be sincere
- Don't talk down to parents
- Don't talk over their heads...watch the jargon
- Don't criticize their parenting skills
- Avoid touching or being overly familiar with parents who don't know you
- Never assume parents don't care about their children
- Be aware of cultural stereotype statements, such as:
 - “you people”
 - “you're different from other _____ people”
 - “many of my friends are _____”
- Don't blame or point out their weaknesses

TRAINER NOTES

“GETTING THE WORD AROUND – OBSTACLES”



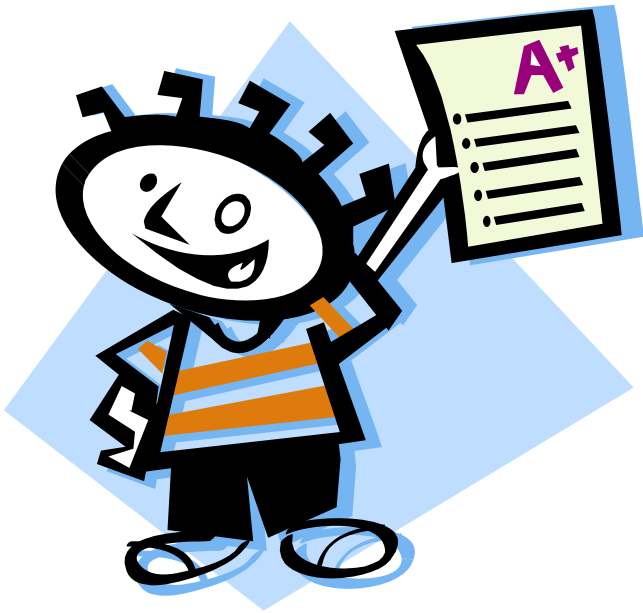
Descriptions of possible roadblocks and detours.

Certain issues come up consistently when local groups are working to improve parent involvement. It is helpful to be aware of these issues in advance, plan for them and thus, create detours instead of roadblocks.

Roadblocks!	Detours!
Time	Detour #1 —Be flexible when scheduling meetings and events. Try a mix of mornings, evenings, and weekends to allow every parent the opportunity to attend at least some of the time. Consider potluck dinners and brown bag lunches to meet the needs of working parents. Take care not to schedule anything during religious holidays and national observances.
Child Care	Detour #2 —Find available space in the school for child care. Either take turns volunteering as childcare providers or locate appropriate childcare professionals in the community that charge a nominal fee to pay for their services, if school funds are not available.
Language Barrier/ Special Needs	Detour #3 —Make printed materials available in an understandable format, and to the extent practicable, in a language the parent can understand. Provide translators for meetings and events. Be sure that homeless parents are offered opportunities for participation. Provide someone to interpret for hearing-impaired parents and be sure that there are no physical barriers that prohibit parents with disabilities from attending.
Cliques	Detour #4 —Make sure that all parents are welcomed as they arrive and are actively included in meetings and events. Arrange for a welcoming committee.
Transportation	Detour #5 —Plan events in convenient locations. Rural schools may want to encourage ride-sharing to school events.

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I. HOW STUDENTS BENEFIT FROM PARENT INVOLVEMENT



**Training I includes
introductory information
explaining the purpose and
benefits of parent involvement**

I. HOW STUDENTS BENEFIT FROM PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Both parents and teachers believe the most fundamental job for parents is to give their children the basic upbringing and supervision that make them ready to learn, including setting limits, creating structure, and holding children accountable for their behavior.

Lezotte and Pepperl, 2001

When schools, families, and community groups work together to support learning, children tend to do better in school, stay in school longer, and like school more.

Henderson and Mapp, 2002

I. HOW STUDENTS BENEFIT FROM PARENT INVOLVEMENT

PROPOSED AGENDA: Introduce the purpose and benefits of parent/family involvement.

Publicize the Meeting—“Getting the Word Out” p. 8

Introduction - Main Points to Be Communicated (5 minutes)

- Parent involvement is a much-used and important term in education today.
- Parents/families are the most important partners in the educational process of their children.
- There are numerous benefits to an effective parent involvement program.

Trainer Introductions (5 minutes)

See Trainer Notes: “Getting the Word Out” p. 8
“Getting the Word Across” p. 9
“Getting the Word Around” p. 10

Trainer introduces herself/himself

See Trainer Notes: “Make Your Audience Comfortable... Make Connections” p. 9

Ice Breaker (10 minutes)

NOTE: Quotes are included as a transparency and as a handout (p.18).

Present one or both quotes. You may want to use the prompts as discussion triggers.

“Both parents and teachers believe the most fundamental job for parents is to give their children the basic upbringing and supervision that make them ready to learn, including setting limits, creating structure, and holding children accountable for their behavior.” Lezotte and Pepperl, 2001

- Do you agree with the “job description” for parents?
- What might parents do to help make their children more responsive to learning?
- What are the possible benefits when students become enthusiastic learners?

“When schools, families, and community groups work together to support learning, children tend to do better in school, stay in school longer, and like school more.” Henderson and Mapp, 2002

- In what ways are your school, family, and community working together effectively?
- What might schools, parents/families, and the community do differently to work together more effectively?
- What are the possible benefits when schools, parents/families, and community groups work together?

Definitions (10 minutes)

See Trainer Notes: “Definitions”

p. 16

NOTE: Definitions from NCLB and PTA are included as transparencies and as a handout (p.19, 20, 26).

- Come up with definitions for “parent involvement.” If your attendance is ten or less do this as a group activity but if your attendance is greater than ten break into small groups with 5-7 people and instruct each group to write their responses on index cards that the trainer will gather and read aloud. Then show definitions from PTA and NCLB.
- Ask how or why parents are important partners in the educational process and have the group brainstorm some answers.

Benefits of Parent Involvement (15 minutes)

NOTE: A more complete list of findings is included as transparencies and as handouts. Be familiar with this information in advance of the training (p.21-25, 27-28).
“A Letter to Parents: School Is What You Make It” is included as a handout (p.29).

Ask your audience, “What do you think are the benefits of parent involvement?” Accept all answers. Keep it moving. Keep it brief.

For students:

- Higher grades, test scores, and graduation rates
- Better school attendance
- Greater enrollment in postsecondary education

For teachers and administrators:

- Higher morale
- Increased teacher effectiveness
- Greater job satisfaction

For parents:

- Improved communication with teachers
- Increased education skills
- Improved attitude toward school and school personnel

See: National Standards for Parent/Family Involvement Programs, National PTA, 2004

Summary (5 minutes)

NOTE: “Parent Involvement: Thoughts to Consider” is included as a handout (p.30).

Following are key points from Training I – How Students Benefit from Parent Involvement

- An introduction to the concept that parents are the most important partner in the educational development and success of their children.
- Definitions of parent involvement from the No Child Left Behind and PTA.
- Effective parent involvement has many benefits.

TRAINER NOTES

DEFINITIONS

Parent/Family Involvement is the participation of parents and/or families in every facet of the education and development of children from birth to adulthood, recognizing that parents are the primary influence in their children's lives. Effective parent involvement takes many forms including: communicating, parenting, student learning, volunteering, school decision making and advocacy, and collaborating with the community. (National Standards for Parent/Family Involvement Programs, National PTA)

The Texas Education Agency, under **No Child Left Behind (NCLB)** includes parental involvement in federally-funded programs. Parental involvement is defined by NCLB as participation of parents in regular, two-way, meaningful communication involving student academic learning and other school activities. NCLB is built on four common-sense pillars: increased accountability for results; an emphasis on doing what works based upon scientific research; expanded parental options; and expanded local control and flexibility. The intent of NCLB's "expanded parental options" is to assist in their child's learning, to be actively involved, and to be full partners in the education of their children.

Texas' Senate Bill 1 (74th Texas State Legislature) contains a number of parental involvement requirements. Among these mandates is a chapter in the law on parental rights and responsibilities.



TRAINING I TRANSPARENCIES/ HANDOUTS



QUOTES

Both parents and teachers believe the most fundamental job for parents is to give their children the basic upbringing and supervision that make them ready to learn, including setting limits, creating structure, and holding children accountable for their behavior.

Lezotte and Pepperl, 2001

When schools, families, and community groups work together to support learning, children tend to do better in school, stay in school longer, and like school more.

Henderson and Mapp, 2002

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Parent/Family involvement is the participation of parents in every facet of the education and development of children from birth to adulthood, recognizing that parents are the primary influence in their children's lives. Effective parent involvement takes many forms, including:

- **Communicating**
- **Parenting**
- **Student learning**
- **Volunteering**
- **School decision making and advocacy**
- **Collaborating with the community**

(National Standards for Parent/Family Involvement Programs, National PTA, 2004)

NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND

Parental involvement is defined by NCLB as participation of parents in regular, two-way, meaningful communication involving student academic learning and other school activities. NCLB is built on four common-sense pillars:

- **Increased accountability for results**
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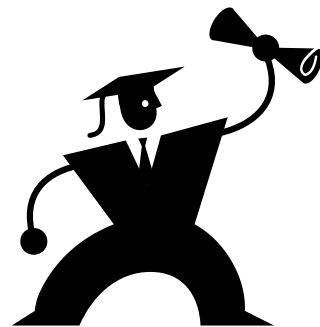
(U.S. Department of Education, Title I, Part A)



RESEARCH FINDINGS ON PARENT/FAMILY INVOLVEMENT: HIGHER STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

- **Students achieve more, regardless of socio-economic status, ethnic/racial background, or the parents' education level.**
- **Students have higher test grades and test scores, better attendance, and complete homework more consistently.**
- **Students have higher graduation rates and greater enrollment rates in postsecondary education.**
- **Student achievement for disadvantaged students improves dramatically.**

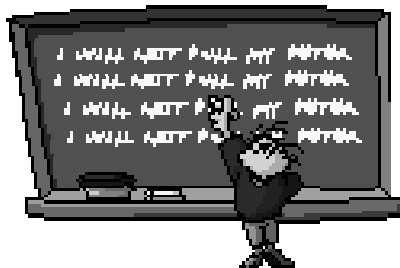
(National Standards for Parent/Family Involvement Programs, National PTA, 2004)



RESEARCH FINDINGS ON PARENT/FAMILY INVOLVEMENT: STUDENT BEHAVIOR

- **Students exhibit more positive attitude and behavior.**
- **Students have more self-confidence and feel school is more important.**
- **Student behaviors such as alcohol use, violence, and other undesirable behaviors decrease.**

(National Standards for Parent/Family Involvement Programs, National PTA, 2004)



RESEARCH FINDINGS ON PARENT/FAMILY INVOLVEMENT: CULTURE

- **Children from diverse cultural backgrounds tend to do better when parents and professionals work together to bridge the cultural gap between home and school.**
- **The school's practices to inform and involve parents are stronger factors in whether parents will be involved in their children's education than are parent education, family size, and marital status.**
- **Successful schools engage families from diverse backgrounds, build trust and collaboration, recognize and respect and address family needs, and develop a partnership where power and responsibility is shared.**
- **For low-income families, programs offered in the community or at church or through home visits are more successful than programs requiring parents to come to the school.**

(National Standards for Parent/Family Involvement Programs, National PTA, 2004)

RESEARCH FINDINGS ON PARENT/FAMILY INVOLVEMENT: AGE

- **Parent involvement clearly benefits students in the early years, but continued parental involvement shows significant gains at all ages and all grade levels.**
- **Middle school and high school students make better transitions, maintain the quality of their work, and develop realistic plans for the future.**

(National Standards for Parent/Family Involvement Programs, National PTA, 2004)

RESEARCH FINDINGS ON PARENT/FAMILY INVOLVEMENT: SCHOOL QUALITY

- **Schools with parent-teacher organizations have higher student achievement.**
- **Improved teacher morale and higher ratings of teachers by parents.**
- **When schools are held accountable, school districts make positive changes in policy and practice, improve school leadership and staffing, secure resources and funding to improve the curriculum and provide after-school and family support programs.**
- **Schools have more support from families and more respect in the community.**
- **Schools make greater gains on state tests.**

(National Standards for Parent/Family Involvement Programs, National PTA, 2004)

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Parent/family involvement is the participation of parents in every facet of the education and development of children from birth to adulthood, recognizing that parents are the primary influence in their children's lives. Effective parent involvement takes many forms, including:

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- Parenting
- Student learning
- Volunteering
- School decision making and advocacy
- Collaborating with the community

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(U.S. Department of Education, Title I, Part A)

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- Schools make greater gains on state tests.

(National Standards for Parent/Family Involvement Programs, National PTA, 2004)

A LETTER TO PARENTS: SCHOOL IS WHAT YOU MAKE IT

You are the biggest influence in your child's life and education. Teachers and your child's classmates are important, but you are much more important. You are the ones who have seen your child through the years. You have fed and clothed your child. You have loved and tried to teach your child right from wrong.

The difference between a good school and a great school is the involvement of its parents. It is true that students whose parents are involved do better in school. Children learn to place importance on the things that are important to their parents.

Maybe you feel you do not have much time to become involved or maybe you are not sure how to begin. It does not take a great deal of time to make a big difference in your child's education. Fifteen minutes of uninterrupted time spent with your child each day can improve study skills, build self-esteem and go a long way toward a successful school experience.

Communication with the teacher and other campus staff can help too. Simple, short notes to the teacher to keep him/her aware of any changes in your child's daily schedule or to thank the teacher for lessons your child has enjoyed are always good. Some parents feel it is important to give the teacher lots of "treats" on special occasions. While it is a nice gesture, a better gift is your time and attention given on a regular basis to your child's school work and education needs.

In order to be an advocate for your child and all children, learn about your child's school and, what you can expect from your child's school.

When schools, families, and community groups work together to support learning, children tend to do better in school, stay in school longer, and like school more.

Henderson and Mapp, 2002

PARENT INVOLVEMENT: THOUGHTS TO CONSIDER

When thinking about becoming involved in school, ask yourself these questions:

1. How did I feel about school as a student?
2. Were my parents involved in my education?
3. Were other parents involved in their children's education when I was a student?
4. What was the difference in the students with and without involved parents?
5. Where is a good place to study in our home?
6. Do I send my child to school clean, well-rested, well-fed, and ready to learn?
7. How does it feel to be a parent at my child's school? Have I shared that feeling with the school staff?

Then, think about these questions:

1. What condition is the school in? Could I help with a clean-up/fix-up campaign to improve the school building or grounds?
2. Could the principal, teacher(s), librarian or other staff use some preparation help that I could do at home?
3. Are there students in my neighborhood who need after-school care or tutoring? Could I help to arrange something for our neighborhood?
4. What is my favorite thing to do for fun? Is there a way to share my skills with the children?

These thoughts and questions are just a few to start you on the road to a beneficial, positive relationship with your child's school.

Think about following the U.S. Department of Education's Seven Good Practices for Families (*Achieving the Goals: Goal 8 – Parental Involvement and Participation, 1997*):

1. Find the time to **learn together** with your children.
2. Commit yourself and your children to **challenging standards**--help children reach their **full potential**.
3. **Limit TV** viewing to no more than two hours on school nights.
4. **Read together**. It's the starting point of all learning.
5. Encourage your children to **take the tougher courses** at school and **check their homework** every day.
6. Make sure your children **go to school every day** and support community efforts to keep children **safe and off the streets late at night**.
7. **Set a good example** for your children, and talk directly to them about the dangers of drugs and alcohol and the values you want them to have.

TRAINING I SUMMARY

Following are key points from Training I – How Students Benefit from Parent Involvement:

- Definitions of parent involvement from the No Child Left Behind and PTA.
- An introduction to the concept that parents are vitally important in the education process.
- Active parent involvement programs have enormous benefits to the school, family and community, and students.

II. UNDERSTANDING YOUR SCHOOL



**Training II includes
information about the NCLB
and TEA mandates for parent
involvement in schools**

II. UNDERSTANDING YOUR SCHOOL

Successful parent involvement programs require shared commitment around a foundation of shared educational values... When adults in the school community come together to discuss and decide on the values they can support, a spirit of community emerges. When parents feel a sense of belonging and importance in the school community, their involvement increases.

Lezotte & Pepperl, 2001

Student engagement in school is predicated upon five forces for engagement: desires, attitudes, motivation, behaviors, and actions. Schools can promote the engagement of students by encouraging the involvement of families in the educational lives of students and by supporting program offerings of both instructional and non-instructional natures.

Constantino, 2005

II. UNDERSTANDING YOUR SCHOOL

PROPOSED AGENDA: Provide information about the NCLB and TEA mandates for parent involvement in schools.

Introduction - Main Points to be Communicated (5 minutes)

- Educational and advocacy organizations share a belief in the importance of parent/family involvement. Other resources for information are available to parents including United States Department of Education, the Texas Education Agency, and Education Service Centers. Each has websites and contacts for parent involvement.
- No Child Left Behind provides resources and requirements that can assist schools to close the achievement gap and be more successful at meeting the state assessment standards.
- Texas Senate Bill 1 creates opportunities for parents to be more involved in the school decision making process. Schools are expected to be more parent and family friendly and to include parents as partners in student achievement.
- There are many ways in which parents can be kept informed and involved.

Ice Breaker - Acronyms (5 minutes)

NOTE: Acronyms are included as a transparency and as a handout (p.52-53).
Also, educational organizations and advocacy groups are included as a handout (p.54).

- Many educational and parental involvement organizations use acronyms or the initials of their program for identification. Display 10-15 acronyms. Ask participants to identify the acronym. Allow them to make up answers for the acronyms. Have fun with this activity. Then show the correct answer. Also, give the handout with the list of the educational and parental involvement organizations and web addresses.

AEIS	Academic Excellence Indicator System
AEP	Alternative Education Program
AYP	Adequate Yearly Progress
ELL	English Language Learner
ESC	Education Service Center
ESEA	Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965
ISD	Independent School District
LEA	Local Education Agency (a school district)
LEP	Limited English Proficient
NCLB	No Child Left Behind
PAC	Parent Advisory Council
PBM	Performance Based Monitoring
PTA/PTO	Parent-Teacher Association/Parent-Teacher Organization
SBDM	Site-Based Decision Making
SDFSC	Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities
SIP	School Improvement Program

see next page...

TAAS	Texas Assessment of Academic Skills
TABS	Texas Assessment of Basic Skills
TAKS	Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills
TEA	Texas Education Agency
TEAMS	Texas Educational Assessment of Minimum Skills
TEKS	Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills
USDE	United States Department of Education

NCLB – What Parents Need to Know (10 minutes)

See Trainer Notes: “No Child Left Behind Parent Involvement Requirements – Title I Schools” p. 38

- NCLB provides accountability, funding, help for children, mandates high-quality teachers, and empowers parental involvement. It supports learning in the early years; provides parent information about their children’s progress; alerts parents to the performance of their children’s school; gives children and parents a lifeline; informs parents of teacher quality; gives more resources to schools; allows more flexibility; and focuses on what works.
- Preview free parent involvement materials from the United States Department of Education (USDE).

Order free parent involvement materials from United States Department of Education at www.ed.gov/pubs/edpubs.html. Telephone orders may be placed by calling (877) 433-7827 or (800) 872-5327. Orders may be faxed to (301) 470-1244. It is suggested to order *No Child Left Behind: What Parents Need to Know* released in 2005 and revised in 2006. Or, *No Child Left Behind: What Parents Need to Know* can be printed from the USDE website at <http://www.ed.gov/print/nclb/overview/intro/parents/nclb.html>.

- NCLB Questions...
 - What does NCLB stand for?
 - When was NCLB signed into law?
 - Who do you think benefits from the NCLB legislation?
 - How might the NCLB legislation help your school and your child?
 - How does NCLB support and promote parental involvement?

TAKS & AYP (5 minutes)

See Trainer Notes: “TAKS” p. 39

- TAKS is an acronym for the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills, which is a test that all schools in Texas must administer each year in reading, math, social studies and science, beginning in the third grade. The purpose of this statewide test is to measure student learning and to be able to compare the effectiveness of schools.

- TEKS is an acronym for the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills. This is the content that must be taught during classroom lessons. Each subject at every grade level has a set of TEKS that is a continuation from the previous year. The purpose is to provide consistent information being taught from teacher to teacher, school to school, and district to district.
- While students do not receive a grade for their TAKS scores, schools do. Students in grades three and five must make a passing score on the TAKS before being promoted to the next grade. Students in grade eleven must pass the TAKS to be eligible for graduation in grade twelve.
- Remember, TEKS teaches and TAKS tests.

See Trainer Notes: “AYP Narrative”

p. 41

- Many schools receive additional federal funds, similar to a scholarship, to increase student learning on that campus. These funds are called Title I and are given to schools based on the number of free and reduced students residing in that campus’ attendance area. Title I funds may provide supplemental teachers, supplies and materials, technology hardware and software, teacher training, and other resources.
- Schools that receive Title I funds must meet certain goals for student achievement. Schools that do not receive their Title I funds must revise their campus plans. If these goals are met or not is called Adequate Yearly Progress. Campuses that do not meet the goals for two years in a row in the same subject are said not to have made Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP).
- When a campus does not make AYP for two years or more, additional assistance and resources are provided to that school to help students and teachers. The assistance comes from the United States Department of Education in the form of additional funds; from the Texas Education Agency with additional leadership and increased planning; from regional Education Service Centers with technical assistance and training; and from the local district with additional support.
- Students attending schools that have not made AYP for two years or more may be eligible to transfer to another school that is making AYP.
- Students who attend schools that have not made AYP for three years or more and who meet eligibility requirements may receive extended session tutorials funded by Title I.
- After the school has made AYP for two years, it no longer receives the supplemental resources.

TEA (10 minutes)

See Trainer Notes: “What Is TEA?”

p. 42

NOTE: A list of Education Service Centers is included as a handout (p.55).

- TEA is the acronym for the Texas Education Agency. This organization, located in Austin, is responsible for implementing the rules and regulations determined by the United States Department of Education, the Texas legislature, and the State Board of Education.

- TEA communicates with districts and charter schools, and districts then communicate with their campuses, about how the rules and regulations are to be carried out.
- Twenty regional Education Service Centers provide professional development, technical assistance, and other relevant services from TEA to districts and charter schools.
- Parents can learn more about the Texas Education Agency at www.tea.state.tx.us

See Trainer Notes: “TEA Mission Statement”	p. 43
“Parental Involvement Requirements”	p. 44
“Parent Notifications – NCLB “	p. 46
“School Report Card – AEIS”	p. 47
“State Accountability System”	p. 48

Parental Notifications (5 minutes)

NOTE: A list of parent notifications is included in the handouts (p.56-58).

- Provide a list of notifications and documents schools are required to provide to parents.

Summary (5 minutes)

Following are key points from Training II - Understanding Your School:

- Educational and advocacy organizations share a belief in the importance of parent/family involvement. Other resources for information are available to parents including United States Department of Education, the Texas Education Agency, and Education Service Centers. Each has websites and contacts for parent involvement.
- No Child Left Behind provides resources and requirements that can assist a school district, campus, and students to be more successful at meeting and exceeding the rigorous state assessment standards.
- Texas Senate Bill 1 (see page 15) creates opportunities for parents to be more involved in the school decision making process. Schools are expected to be more parent-friendly and to include parents as partners in student achievement.
- Officials from the State Board of Education all the way to the local campus are responsible for providing the best education possible, and parents have a right to take a role in decisions and information related to students' academic achievement. There are many ways in which parents can be kept informed and involved.

TRAINER NOTES

NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND

Parental Involvement Requirements – Title I Schools

FIRST IMPRESSIONS EXCERPT

"A child's optimal learning and personal growth depend upon security and guidance within the family; good health and nutrition; and high levels of collaboration between home, school and community. Parent and family involvement in education is essential to the intellectual growth and academic achievement of their children." (First Impressions, 1994, Texas Education Agency Report of the Early Childhood Education Advisory Committee)

Title I is the largest federally funded education program for elementary and secondary schools. Once known as "Title 1" of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, it was renamed "Chapter 1" in 1981. The Elementary and Secondary Education reauthorization (Improving America's Schools Act) of 1994 reverted "Chapter 1" back to "Title I." It was reauthorized again on January 8, 2002, as part of the No Child Left Behind amendment to ESEA.

Title I legislation provides federal funds to school districts in the United States based on how many low-income children they serve. Each school district that receives Title I funds must use them to pay for supplemental educational services for children who need additional instruction in school. The purpose of Title I is to help the lowest achieving students succeed and learn important academic skills. Title I funds provide opportunities for children served to acquire the knowledge and skills contained in the state content standards (TEKS) and to meet the state performance standards (TAKS).

Districts then target the schools with the highest concentrations of low-income students. Approximately 75% of all public elementary schools, 50% of all public middle schools and 25% of all public high schools receive Title I funds. After the district's Title I funds are allocated to the highest poverty schools in the district, students are served based on educational rather than financial need. There are two types of Title I schools: Targeted Assisted and Schoolwide. Targeted Assisted Schools serve only identified students in need of academic assistance with a designated Title I teacher. Schoolwide Programs serve all students on that campus, and all teachers are considered to be Title I teachers.

Parents must be involved in designing and developing the Title I program at their child's school, including how Title I funds are allocated for parent involvement activities. Parents with a child attending a Title I campus must be notified about certain things in an easy to read format, and in a language the parents can understand, including their child's teachers' qualifications, and if their child has been taught four weeks or longer by a teacher who is not highly qualified. Parents must be notified if either the district or their children's school has been identified for school improvement, and the options available within that program for school choice and/or supplemental educational services. Parents at Title I schools must be given information about annual school report cards, individual student assessment reports, progress reviews of their child, and parent involvement policies. Every Title I campus must have an annual meeting and a flexible number of other meetings. Other Title I requirements impacting parents: funds must be reserved from the Title I budget for parent involvement activities; districts and Title I campuses must have parent involvement policies; Title I campuses must have School-Parent Compacts; and the Title I program must be coordinated with other programs on campus.

TRAINER NOTES

TAKS – TEXAS ASSESSMENT OF KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS

The Texas student assessment program provides Texas students, schools, and the public with an accurate gauge of students' academic progress in learning the key components of the state content, Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS). For over ten years, as required by state statute, Texas assessed minimum basic skills in reading, writing and mathematics with such tests as the Texas Assessment of Basic Skills (TABS) and Texas Educational Assessment of Minimum Skills (TEAMS) examinations. Starting in 1990, state law required the implementation of a new criterion-referenced program, the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS). In 2002/03, challenging new state standards were phased in called Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS). By 2008, all students in Texas will be taking one form or another of the TAKS test.

As with any assessment instrument that records the progress of students in a snapshot, the scores from these assessment instruments must be used appropriately if they are to provide a valid indication of student performance. TEA designs the reports of student performance data to provide information about student achievement. This information may be used in a variety of ways, some of which are outlined below.

APPROPRIATE USES FOR SCORES AND REPORTS

The scores from assessment instruments must be used appropriately if they are to provide a valid indicator of student performance. All test results uses regarding individual students or groups should incorporate as much data as possible. Likewise, the reports developed for use in an assessment program must be clear, understandable and contain a broad collection of information to facilitate their use.

The state's student assessment program serves as a major indicator in the Texas system for school accountability. TAKS is based on these premises:

- The tests are founded in the state's essential knowledge and skills (TEKS) and reflect those skills and knowledge in a manner congruent with sound instructional practice.
- Information about the content, level of expectation, and structure of the tests is based on judgments made by Texas educators and the public.
- Texas educators guide all phases of test development.
- Test results are useful for providing a snapshot of individual student performance, an indicator of areas in which further diagnosis is warranted, and a mechanism for providing a "level playing field" for comparing the performance of campuses and districts.

TEA designs the reports of student performance data to provide information about achievement. This information may be used in a variety of ways, some of which are outlined below.

- **Reporting results to parents of individual students.** The test reports contain information about the student's scores in relation to the state's passing standards, the content areas in which a student may need accelerated instruction, the specific skills in which further diagnosis is indicated, and the student's performance in comparison with the performance of his or her peers. This information can help parents more fully understand their child's achievement.

- **Reporting results to the local school board, school professionals and the community.** Although an individual student's scores are confidential by law, reports of group (aggregated) scores are considered public record. However, if the specific group (e.g., limited English proficient students) contains fewer than 30 students, these scores are not included in reports in order to protect student confidentiality.
- **Evaluating student scores for use in placement decisions.** Accelerated instruction is required for students exhibiting difficulty with skills on the TAKS tests. Student test scores should also be used in conjunction with other performance indicators to assist in making placement decisions, such as whether a student should be placed in a gifted and talented program or exit a bilingual education program.
- **Evaluating programs, resources and staffing patterns.** Districts may use campus and district test scores in evaluating a particular program or staffing pattern. For example, a campus may use its scores to evaluate its improvement in an accelerated instruction program or to assess the need to focus resources and staff on a particular group of students.
- **Evaluating district and campus curriculum and instruction.** Because TAKS tests are designed to measure essential skills and knowledge in reading, writing, mathematics, science and social studies, considering performance results by subject area and objective may be helpful when evaluating curriculum and instruction. Generalizations from student scores may be made to the specific content domain represented by the objective or set of objectives being measured on the exam. However, because the tests are measuring a finite set of skills and knowledge with a limited set of item types, generalizations should be made only to student achievement measured by a particular test.

TRAINER NOTES

AYP Narrative

Schools receiving Title I federal funds must show that students on those campuses are achieving academically. This is determined by measuring student learning on TAKS based on set standards called Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). When students are being taught and are learning at sufficiently high levels, then students will be successful on the state test, the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS). Student scores on the TAKS are looked at in several different ways, such as student sub-populations. The goal is to make sure that all student groups are learning and achieving.

When Title I schools do not meet the standards set for making Adequate Yearly Progress, then they become a Title I School Improvement Program (SIP) School. SIP provides more resources to help the teachers and campus administrators help the students better. Then, the campus, together with parents and community members, determine how to use the additional teachers, materials, or equipment to increase student learning.

When a campus fails to meet AYP for two years, it must offer students school choice: the option of transferring to another campus that is making AYP. Districts make the decisions and arrangements as to which campuses students at the non-AYP school can transfer to. Students may transfer to certain campuses that have agreed to receive students under this program.

When a campus fails to meet AYP for three years or more, it must offer students supplemental educational services (SES). SES are opportunities for extended learning time in the form of additional tutorial services. Only eligible students may take advantage of SES, and this is based on free and reduced lunch count.

When a campus has returned to making Adequate Yearly Progress for two years, then it no longer receives the supplemental resources.

TRAINER NOTES

WHAT IS TEA?

Texas Education Agency (TEA) is the branch of state government that administers Texas' public elementary and secondary schools as well as adult education system. By working in partnership with local schools, the Agency is dedicated to the improvement of instruction and the educational environment in Texas schools. TEA seeks to achieve excellence in student performance so that all students in the state's public schools are properly prepared to meet the challenges they will face as adults.

The State Board of Education (SBOE) is the agency's governing body. Its 15 members are elected from 15 SBOE districts throughout the state. The board adopts rules and establishes policies for the state's public education system. The commissioner of education is appointed by the governor.

Since 1984, Texas has been a leader in public school reform. Beginning in January 2002, No Child Left Behind has allowed more flexibility for local school districts, increased accountability, focused on what works, and provided greater choices for parents and students. This approach at both the state and federal levels is responsible for the local school district to become more active in efforts to improve education. Innovations, such as site-based decision making and school choice, give communities the ability to have more of an effect on the achievement of their students.

TEA has twenty regional education service centers (ESCs) that are located throughout the state to assist school districts called Local Education Agencies (LEAs) in serving students. A list of those service centers is included as a handout.

TEA has decentralized some of its services including the Title I Statewide School Support/Parental Involvement Initiative which is served through Region 16 ESC. It is the goal of the Title I Statewide Initiative to increase collaboration between TEA, the ESCs, and LEAs to impact student achievement. The Statewide Initiative desires to provide ESC contacts networking opportunities for all parental involvement stakeholders in the state. Additionally, the Statewide Initiative provides professional development twice yearly for educators regarding relevant parental involvement issues and an annual three-day parental involvement conference for educators and parents.

TRAINER NOTES

TEA MISSION STATEMENT

“Fulfilling the Promise for All Texas Children”

All Texas students will graduate with a world-class education. All Texas graduates will contribute to the progress of their families, their communities, and our world.

Preparation for graduation from a world-class system of public education begins at home and on the first day of the first year of school. The promise of the Texas public school system is that every student will be challenged, and every student will have the instruction, opportunity, and support needed to succeed.

TEA has two roles in accomplishing its mission:

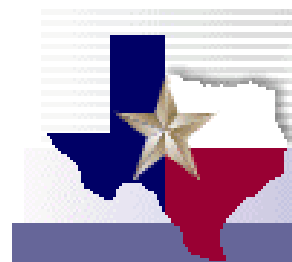
The first is to provide program leadership to Texas school districts and open enrollment charter schools by implementing curriculum standards, an assessment system, and education programs to ensure success for all Texas students.

The second is to attain excellence in its operations by ensuring school districts, policymakers, and the public that funding is efficient, accountability is meaningful, and monitoring and accreditation visits are efficient and aligned with state and federal regulations.

To achieve its mission, TEA must operate strategically, implementing the policy decisions of the Texas Legislature, developing partnerships with educators and administrators to ensure that all students are challenged and have the resources and support needed to achieve well-defined standards of success, and working with the federal government to provide the public education system the flexibility needed to support student achievement.

The agency must also operate tactically ensuring school districts, policymakers, and the public that it achieves excellence and efficiency in its operations by maximizing funding to school districts, ensuring the accountability system is a meaningful indicator of district, charter, and campus success, ensuring its business operations are efficient, and ensuring its human resources are deployed effectively.

--Texas Education Agency Strategic Plan, 2003-2006



TRAINER NOTES
PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT REQUIREMENTS –
SENATE BILL 1



The 74th Texas State Legislature added parental involvement requirements to the Texas Education Code with Senate Bill 1.

Parents are to be involved by:

- Receiving training in school restructuring in order to improve student achievement.
- Being part of the district and campus-level planning and decision-making process as well as to be asked for input into the process.
- Being a member of a local health education advisory council to ensure that local values and health issues are reflected in the district's human sexuality instruction.
- Receiving written notice of student's performance in each class once every 12 weeks.
- Being notified about eligibility for and information about special education programs and services; bilingual education, compensatory education, services for the deaf and services for children with visual impairments.
- Being notified when a student has violated the student code of conduct and attend scheduled hearings for removal from a classroom or campus or admitted to a School-Community Guidance Center.
- Notification of public hearings about the district and campus accountability report as well as receiving appropriate information about student performance at the campus.

In addition, parents are given the right to:

- Petition the board, designating which school in the district the child will attend.
- Request a class change for the student.
- Request the addition of a specific academic class if there is sufficient interest.
- Request the child attend a class above the child's grade level.
- Request that a child who completes all required courses may graduate early and participate in graduation ceremonies.
- Access to ten different types of student records.
- Review each test administered to the child (after it has been administered).
- Review all teaching materials and to have full information regarding school activities.

- Access to any meeting of the board of trustees (except an officially closed meeting or executive session, as allowed by law).
- Disallow certain activities without parental consent, such as tape recording or videotaping a student (except for purposes of safety, co-curricular/extracurricular activities, or regular classroom instruction).
- Remove a child from a class that conflicts with the family's religious or moral beliefs.

Texas Education Code, Chapter 26. Parental Rights and Responsibilities

For a complete text of Senate Bill 1, parents may contact their local school district offices or go to www.tea.state.tx.us.

TRAINER NOTES

PARENT NOTIFICATIONS – NCLB

School districts and campuses are required to notify parents about a number of matters relating to the school and student achievement, which is required by Title I statute. Important notifications include:

- Parents have the right to know teacher and paraprofessional qualifications.
- Parents have the right to know if teachers are not highly qualified.
- Parents have the right to know about AYP progress review and the School Report Card.
- Parents have the right to know about student achievement on state assessment and to receive frequent reports about student progress.
- Parents have the right to know about school status regarding school improvement, corrective action, or restructuring.
- Parents must be provided the parental involvement policy and the school-parent compact.
- Parents of students attending an elementary school must be invited to the campus for an annual teacher-parent conference, or more frequently as needed.
- Parents must have access to district and campus improvement plans; for Title I schools, the schoolwide plan; for Title III schools, the Migrant Education Plan; and for schools not meeting AYP for two or more consecutive years, the school improvement plan.
- Parents must be informed about the rights of homeless children.
- Parents must be invited to annual Title I meetings.
- Parents must be notified when a school is identified as a “persistently dangerous school.”

TRAINER NOTES
SCHOOL REPORT CARD
ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE INDICATOR SYSTEM (AEIS)

Legislation requires the Texas Education Agency to prepare and distribute to each school district a report card for each campus. The statute specifies that the following information is included:

1. student performance on state-adopted assessment instruments
2. attendance
3. dropout rates
4. student performance on college admissions tests
5. student/teacher ratios
6. administrative and instructional costs per student

In addition, the report cards are required to be based on the most current data available reviewed by student groups. Performance is required to be compared to previous campus and district performance, state-established standards, and comparable campus group performance.

Finally, AEIS school report cards must be sent to the parent or guardian of each student at a school.



TRAINER NOTES

STATE ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEM

The state accountability system is an integrated system of standard and alternative education accountability procedures. The purpose of the accountability system is to evaluate the performance of all public school districts and campuses, and the goal is to challenge schools to prepare all students for the 21st century. Alternative education campuses and charter schools are included.

We can understand the State Accountability System by looking at six important areas:

I. **Procedures** are based upon these guiding principles:

- **Student Performance** - The system is first and foremost designed to improve student performance.
- **Recognition of Diversity** - The system is fair and recognizes diversity among campuses and students.
- **System Stability** - The system is stable and provides a realistic, practical timeline for measurement, data collection, planning, staff development, and reporting.
- **Statutory Compliance** - The system is designed to comply with statutory requirements.
- **Appropriate Consequences** - The system sets reasonable standards for adequacy, identifies and publicly recognizes high levels of performance and performance improvement, and identifies campuses with inadequate performance and provides assistance.
- **Local Program Flexibility** - The system allows for flexibility in the design of programs to meet the individual needs of students.
- **Local Responsibility** - The system relies on local school districts to develop and implement local accountability systems that complement the state system.
- **Public's Right to Know** - The system supports the public's right to know levels of student performance in each school district and on each campus.

For review of the procedures, TEA staff invited the assistance and advice of educators, school board members, business and community representatives, professional organizations, and legislative representatives from across the state. The annual use of these advisory bodies will continue. With their assistance, the system can be modified, indicators improved, standards reevaluated, and other necessary adjustments made. The most recent significant change to the standard procedures is the increase in TAKS standards for achieving the Academically Acceptable rating.

II. To **determine ratings** under the standard accountability procedures, the accountability rating system uses four base indicators:

- Spring performance on the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS)
- Spring performance on the State-Developed Alternative Assessment II (SDAA II)
- The Completion Rate I for the previous year's class
- The previous year's Annual Dropout Rate for grades 7 and 8

The TAKS indicator is the percent of students who scored high enough to meet the standard to pass the test. This is calculated as the number of students who met the TAKS student passing standard divided by the number tested. Results for the English version of the TAKS (grades 3-11) and the Spanish version (grades 3-6) are summed across grades for each subject. Results for each subject tested are evaluated separately to determine ratings.

III. Districts and campuses test students on **TAKS subjects**:

- **Reading/ELA** - Reading is tested in grades 3-9; English language arts (ELA) is tested in grades 10 and 11. This is a combined indicator. It includes all students tested on and passing either the TAKS reading test or the TAKS English language arts test.
- **Writing** - Writing is tested in grades 4 and 7.
- **Social Studies** - Social Studies is tested in grades 8, 10, and 11.
- **Mathematics** - Mathematics is tested in grades 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11.
- **Science** - Science is tested in grades 5, 8, 10, and 11. (*Performance on the grade 8 science test will not be used for accountability purposes until 2008.*)

IV. **Standards** are the requirements for each rating level. The *Academically Acceptable* standard varies by subject, while the *Recognized* and *Exemplary* standards are the same for all subjects.

- **Exemplary** - For every subject, at least 90% of the tested students pass the test.
- **Recognized** - For every subject, at least 70% of the tested students pass the test.
- **Academically Acceptable** - Varies by subject:
 - Reading/ELA - At least 60% of the tested students pass the test.
 - Writing - At least 60% of the tested students pass the test.
 - Social Studies - At least 60% of the tested students pass the test.
 - Mathematics - At least 40% of the tested students pass the test.
 - Science - At least 35% of the tested students pass the test.

V. **Performance** is evaluated for all students and the following student groups: African American, Hispanic, White, and Economically Disadvantaged.

number of students passing [TAKS subject]

number of students tested in [TAKS subject]

Student group size is calculated subject by subject. For this reason the number of student groups evaluated will sometimes vary. For example, an elementary school with grades 3, 4, and 5 tested may have enough Hispanic students to be evaluated on reading and mathematics, but not enough to be evaluated on writing or science.

VI. **Stakeholders receive information** about school ratings through reports associated with the Accountability System:

Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS). All indicators used for accountability are reported in the AEIS, with additional disaggregations depicting how each grade level and different populations performed. The reports also show participation rates on the state-administered tests. Additionally, the AEIS shows demographic information about students and staff, program information, and financial information, all of which help in interpreting accountability results.

School Report Card (SRC). Also required by state statute, this report provides a subset of the information found on the AEIS report and is produced at the campus level only. Campuses must provide the School Report Card to each student's family.

Snapshot: School District Profiles. This provides a state and district-level overview of public education in Texas. The most current District Detail section of Snapshot-nearly 90 items of information for each public school district is available on the TEA website.

Pocket Edition. This brochure provides a quick overview of state-level statistics on performance, demographics, campus and district ratings, personnel, and finances.

Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). AYP is a federal accountability program mandated under the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act.

Online Reports. All of the reports listed above are available at www.tea.state.tx.us/perfreport/index.html.

For more information about State Accountability, go to <http://www.tea.state.tx.us/perfreport/account/2006/manual/index.html>

TRAINING II TRANSPARENCIES/ HANDOUTS



ACRONYMS

AEIS	PTA/PTO
AEP	SBDM
AYP	SDFSC
ELL	SIP
ESEA	TAAS
ESC	TABS
ISD	TAKS
LEA	TEA
LEP	TEAMS
NCLB	TEKS
PAC	USDE
PBM	

ACRONYMS

AEIS	Academic Excellence Indicator System
AEP	Alternative Education Program
AYP	Adequate Yearly Progress
ESC	Education Service Center
ELL	English Language Learner
ESEA	Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965
ISD	Independent School District
LEA	Local Education Agency (a school district)
LEP	Limited English Proficient
NCLB	No Child Left Behind
PAC	Parent Advisory Council
PBM	Performance Based Monitoring
PTA/PTO	Parent-Teacher Association/Parent-Teacher Organization
SBDM	Site-Based Decision Making
SDFSC	Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities
SIP	School Improvement Program
TAAS	Texas Assessment of Academic Skills
TABS	Texas Assessment of Basic Skills
TAKS	Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills
TEA	Texas Education Agency
TEAMS	Texas Educational Assessment of Minimum Skills
TEKS	Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills
USDE	United States Department of Education

EDUCATIONAL AND PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT ORGANIZATIONS

ORGANIZATION	WEB ADDRESS
U.S. Department of Education	www.ed.gov/
Texas Education Agency – No Child Left Behind	www.tea.state.tx.us/nclb/
Boys Town Press	www.girlsandboystown.org
The Center for Divorce Education	www.divorce-education.com
Communities in Schools	www.cisnet.org/intro.html
Dana Center	www.utdanacenter.org/
Family Frameworks	www.parentalinvolvementnetwork.org
The Grandparent Foundation	www.grandparenting.org
Harvard Family Research Project	www.gse.harvard.edu/~hfrp/
HIPPY	www.hippyusa.org
Hispanic Family Learning Institute	www.famlit.org
“I CARE” Positive Parenting Curriculum	www.icarenow.com
Love and Logic	www.loveandlogic.com
Mega Skills – Dr. Dorothy Rich	www.megaskillshsi.org
National Center for Fathering	www.unt.edu/cpe/
National Center for Family/Community Involvement (SEDL)	www.sedl.org/connections/
National Coalition for Parent Involvement in Education	www.ncpie.org/
National Fatherhood Initiative	www.fatherhood.org
National Parent Information Network	www.npin.org/
National Parent Teacher Association	www.pta.org/
National Partnership for Women and Families	www.nationalpartnership.org
Parent Institute	www.par-inst.com
Parents for Public Schools	www.parents4publicschools.com/
Practical Parent Education	www.practicalparent.org
Project Appleseed	www.projectappleseed.org
School, Family, and Community Partnerships – Dr. Joyce Epstein	www.westviewpress.com
Search Institute	www.search-institute.org

USDE Develops Spanish-Language Web Site

The U.S. Department of Education has developed a Spanish-language website to help Spanish-speaking customers obtain useful information. The site, which is titled “Recursos en Español (Resources in Spanish),” is available online at <http://www.ed.gov/espanol/bienvenidos/es/index.html>. Of particular interest is a link entitled Publicaciones y Materiales, which contains information on all of USDE’s publications that are available in Spanish through the Education Publications Center at <http://www.ed.gov/espanol/publicaciones/es/index.html>. The site also offers links to Web sites and provides toll-free numbers where more information on each topic may be obtained.

EDUCATION SERVICE CENTERS

There are 20 regional Education Service Centers. The purpose of the Education Service Center (ESC) is to assist the schools in its region. That means that the ESC will have teacher resources, training workshops, parent education information, and other resources and materials that will assist staff and volunteers who work with the school. To find your region, look for the location that is closest to your town. In some cases, there may be more than one center located nearby. ESC staff will be available to assist you. Following are the ESC addresses and telephone numbers:

Region I

1900 W Schunior
Edinburg, TX 78541-2234
956/984-6000
www.esc1.net

Region II

209 N Water Street
Corpus Christi, TX 78401-2599
361/561-8400
www.esc2.net

Region III

1905 Leary Lane
Victoria, TX 77901-2899
361/573-0731
www.esc3.net

Region IV

7145 W Tidwell
Houston, TX 77092-2096
713/462-7708
www.esc4.net

Region V

2295 Delaware Street
Beaumont, TX 77703-4299
409/838-5555
www.esc5.net

Region VI

3332 Montgomery Road
Huntsville, TX 77340-6499
936/435-8400
www.esc6.net

Region VII

1909 N Longview Street
Kilgore, TX 75662-6827
903/988-6700
www.esc7.net

Region VIII

PO Box 1894
Mount Pleasant, TX 75456-1894
Location: 2230 N Edwards 75455
903/572-8551
www.reg8.net

Region IX

301 Loop 11
Wichita Falls, TX 76306-3706
940/322-6928
www.esc9.net

Region X

PO Box 831300
Richardson, TX 75083-1300
Location: 400 E Spring Valley Road
972/348-1700
www.ednet10.net

Region XI

3001 North Freeway
Fort Worth, TX 76106-6596
817/740-3600
www.esc11.net

Region XII

PO Box 23409
Waco, TX 76702-3409
Location: 2101 W Loop 340
254/297-1212
www.esc12.net

Region XIII

5701 Springdale Road
Austin, TX 78723-3675
512/919-5313
www.esc13.net

Region XIV

1850 Highway 351
Abilene, TX 79601-4750
325/675-8600
www.esc14.net

Region XV

PO Box 5199
San Angelo, TX 76902-5199
Location: 612 S Irene Street 76903
325/658-6571
www.netxv.net

Region XVI

5800 Bell Street
Amarillo, TX 79109-6230
806/677-5000
www.esc16.net

Region XVII

1111 West Loop 289
Lubbock, TX 79416-5029
806/792-4000
www.esc17.net

Region XVIII

PO Box 60580
Midland, TX 79711-0580
Location: 2811 LaForce Boulevard
432/563-2380
www.esc18.net

Region XIX

PO Box 971127
El Paso, TX 79997-1127
Location: 6611 Boeing Drive
915/ 780-1919
www.esc19.net

Region XX

1314 Hines Avenue
San Antonio, TX 78208-1899
210/370-5200
www.esc20.net

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT REQUIREMENTS – SENATE BILL 1



The 74th Texas State Legislature added parental involvement requirements to the Texas Education Code with Senate Bill 1.

Parents are to be involved by:

- Receiving training in school restructuring in order to improve student achievement.
- Being part of the district and campus-level planning and decision-making process as well as to be asked for input into the process.
- Being a member of a local health education advisory council to ensure that local values and health issues are reflected in the district's human sexuality instruction.
- Receiving written notice of student's performance in each class once every 12 weeks.
- Being notified about eligibility for and information about special education programs and services, bilingual education, compensatory education, services for the deaf and services for children with visual impairments.
- Being notified when a student has violated the student code of conduct and attend scheduled hearings for removal from a classroom or campus or admitted to a School-Community Guidance Center.
- Notification of public hearings about the district and campus accountability report as well as receiving appropriate information about student performance at the campus.

In addition, parents are given the right to:

- Petition the board, designating which school in the district the child will attend.
- Request a class change for the student.
- Request the addition of a specific academic class if there is sufficient interest.
- Request the child attend a class above the child's grade level.
- Request that a child who completes all required courses may graduate early and participate in graduation ceremonies.
- Access ten different types of student records.
- Review each test administered to the child (after it has been administered).
- Review all teaching materials and to have full information regarding school activities.

- Access any meeting of the board of trustees (except an officially closed meeting or executive session, as allowed by law).
- Disallow certain activities without parental consent, such as tape recording or videotaping a student (except for purposes of safety, co-curricular/extracurricular activities, or regular classroom instruction).
- Remove a child from a class that conflicts with the family's religious or moral beliefs.

Texas Education Code, Chapter 26. Parental Rights and Responsibilities

For a complete text of Senate Bill 1, parents may contact their local school district office or go to www.tea.state.tx.us.

PARENT NOTIFICATIONS – NCLB

School districts and campuses are required to notify parents about a number of matters relating to the school and student achievement. (This is required by Title I statute.) Important notifications include:

- Parents have the right to know teacher and paraprofessional qualifications.
- Parents have the right to know if teachers are not highly qualified.
- Parents have the right to know AYP progress review and School Report Card.
- Parents have the right to know student achievement on state assessment and to receive frequent reports about student progress.
- Parents have the right to know school status regarding school improvement, corrective action, or restructuring.
- Parents must be provided the parental involvement policy and the school-parent compact.
- Parents of students attending an elementary school must be invited to the campus for an annual teacher-parent conference, or more frequently as needed.
- Parents must have access to district and campus improvement plans; for Title I schools, the schoolwide plan; for Title III schools, the Migrant Education Plan; and for schools not meeting AYP for two or more consecutive years, the school improvement plan.
- Parents must be informed about the rights of homeless children.
- Parents must be invited to annual Title I meetings.
- Parents must be notified when a school is identified as a “persistently dangerous school.”

TRAINING II SUMMARY

Following are key points from Training II - Understanding Your School:

- Educational and advocacy organizations share a belief in the importance of parent/family involvement. Other resources for information are available to parents including United States Department of Education, the Texas Education Agency, and Education Service Centers. Each has websites and contacts for parent involvement.
- No Child Left Behind provides resources and requirements that can assist schools to close the achievement gap and be more successful at meeting and exceeding the rigorous state assessment standards.
- Texas Senate Bill 1 creates opportunities for parents to be more involved in the school decision making process. Schools are expected to be more parent-friendly and to include parents as partners in student achievement.
- There are many ways in which parents can be kept informed and involved.

III. HOW TEXAS PARENTS BECOME INVOLVED



Training III includes information that focuses on key stakeholders and opportunities for parent involvement

III. HOW TEXAS PARENTS BECOME INVOLVED

Our educational system will need to move to a new kind of teacher-parent relationship if we are to reach all of our students. In this new relationship, teachers will develop a dialogue with parents that allows both parties to learn from each other.

Lezotte & Pepperl, 2001

Six types of involvement are now widely accepted as reflecting the many different ways in which families and schools can collaborate:

- 1. Parenting: the basic obligations of families;***
- 2. Communicating: the basic obligations of schools;***
- 3. Volunteering: family involvement at school;***
- 4. Learning at home: family involvement with children on academic activities;***
- 5. Decision making: family participation in school governance and advocacy;***
- 6. Collaborating with the community: exchanges with community organizations.***

Epstein, 2006

III. HOW TEXAS PARENTS BECOME INVOLVED

PROPOSED AGENDA: Identify the key stakeholders in a school and the opportunities for parent involvement.

Introduction - Main Points to be Communicated (5 minutes)

- Parents have a wide range of choices for ways to become involved in their child's schools, but first you need to know "Who's Who in Your Child's Education."
- Committed key stakeholders in the community are essential to the success of the school's parent involvement effort.
- Parents and teachers are part of the whole school community and everyone in the community should be involved to help the students to receive the best possible education.

Who's Who? (5 minutes)

NOTE: "Who's Who in Your Child's Education" is included as a handout (p.80-81).

- Ask participants to tell you who their school board members, superintendent, principal, site-based decision-making team, counselor, and nurse are. Use the handout in this section as a guide. Provide participants with the information to fill in the blanks that they do not know.

Key Stakeholders (10 minutes)

See Trainer Notes: "Key Stakeholders" p.65-74

NOTE: A list of key stakeholders is included in the transparencies (p.82).

- Divide the audience into five small groups. Assign the first group the role of school administrators, the second the role of teachers, the third the role of community representatives, the fourth the role of parents, and the fifth the role of students. Ask each group to discuss how they, in their assigned role, feel about parent and family involvement in the school. Write their responses on index cards that the trainer will gather and read aloud.
- Identify the key stakeholders and briefly state some of their responsibilities to enable effective parent involvement and student achievement.

Schools and Parents Working Together (10 minutes)

See Trainer Notes: “Ten Things Parents Wish Teachers Would Do” and
“Ten Things Teachers Wish Parents Would Do”

p.74-75

NOTE: “Ten Things Parents Wish Teachers Would Do” and “Ten Things Teachers Wish Parents Would Do” are included as a transparency/handout (p.83-84).
“What You Can Do to Help Your Child” is included as a transparency/handout (p.85).

- Brainstorm - what do you think parents wish teachers would do? And, what do you think teachers wish parents would do? Share your responses. Then refer to the transparencies/handouts.

PTAs and PTOs (10 minutes)

See Trainer Notes: “What Is Texas PTA?”

p. 76

PTA Mission Statement

p. 77

“What PTAs and PTOs Can Do”

p. 78

NOTE: “What PTAs and PTOs Can Do” is included as a handout (p.86).

Summary (5 minutes)

- There are many ways for parents to become involved in their children’s education.
- It is important to get committed participation from key players.
- Parents and teachers have different viewpoints, but both groups are part of the whole school community that can help children grow and thrive.

TRAINER NOTES
**KEY STAKEHOLDERS IN A SUCCESSFUL
PARENT INVOLVEMENT PROGRAM**

Parent involvement is truly a team effort. To be effective, all of the following players must believe in the potential of parent involvement efforts and participate to the fullest extent possible in parent involvement activities:

- **School administrators**—who understand, encourage and fully support parent involvement
- **Teachers**—who are committed to working closely with parents in a variety of capacities
- **Parents and family members**—who understand their potential influence and are ready to contribute actively to their children's education
- **Community members** (including businesses and community organizations)—who are willing to support the role of parents and families in public education

From: *Schools and Communities Together: A Guide to Parent Involvement*, Karen Wikelund, Northwest Regional Education Laboratory, September 1990, pp. 10, 15-25.

KEY STAKEHOLDERS: SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS

"Principals (and administrators) must build strong relationships with parents and the community. They must make school councils into capacity-building entities for mobilizing parents and the community, instead of stagnant structures... In all this, good relationships, nurtured carefully and developed patiently, through innumerable conversations and interactions, are essential."

Hargreaves and Fullan, 1998

The principal's leadership sets the tone--the climate--of the school. The principal, through policies and actions, must embody the image the school wants to put forth to the community about children and their ability to learn, and about the vital role of families in the learning process.

The principal:

- Provides educational leadership for all of the other key players--school personnel, students, parents and families, and other community members.
- Sets the tone for the school climate as positive, friendly, open to the community, and serving all children equally.
- Overtly recognizes and affirms the fundamental premises of parent involvement (all children can learn, parent involvement is a valuable resource, all parents/families can have an impact, etc.).
- Takes time to get to know the communities served by the campus--the history of their interactions with the school, their values and customs, local heroes, favorite pastimes, child-rearing practices, concerns, and aspirations.
- Assesses school and community perceptions of needs and available resources.
- Encourages opportunities for staff, parents, and other community members to get to know each other.
- Leads a team of staff, parents, and community members who together can design and develop your school's effective parent involvement program.
- Requires and encourages staff members to make use of parent involvement as a resource.
- Provides for and facilitates staff training in parent involvement.
- Designates staff or a volunteer to coordinate the school's parent involvement efforts.
- Facilitates the provision of parent training in school involvement and other topics of interest to parents and family members.
- Establishes mechanisms for open, two-way communication between the school and the community, and encourages their use.
- Provides opportunities for parents to have a voice in school management decisions.

- Communicates regularly with all other key players, actively soliciting their input (both formally and informally).
- Monitors the program and encourages the team to evaluate progress and revise program activities as necessary using multiple indicators of program success, such as:
 - Student achievement, attendance, attitudes and behavior
 - Teacher morale and quality of instruction
 - Amount and nature of communication between parents and school, level of parent participation
 - Amount of community support
- Acknowledges and rewards outstanding efforts by teachers, coordinators and outreach workers, parents, community members and children.

Depending on the size of the school and the amount of funding available for parent involvement, the principal may delegate many of the coordination activities to the staff person or volunteer designated to be the parent coordinator or community outreach specialist. Nevertheless, the principal must provide the overall school leadership to establish and maintain the parent involvement program, including visible moral and financial support and required staff participation.

In addition to school administrators, local school boards have a critical role to play in encouraging parental involvement. School boards have the responsibility to plan and establish well-designed, clear policies about the role of parents in the schools. Local boards need to include parents in that planning. They should also provide adequate budgetary support for their policies and publicly demonstrate their support of parent involvement. Additionally, school boards should conduct periodic reviews of local policy and its implementation.

KEY STAKEHOLDERS: TEACHERS

Is you the One? -- West African traditional midwife greeting to newborn

Teachers in schools where parents and families are actively involved find that their jobs become much easier. Working in partnership with students and parents creates an environment of trust, positive interaction and optimism for what can be accomplished. Having the support of parents relieves considerable stress for teachers who often feel they are struggling alone to improve children's academic options. Effective parent involvement programs can prevent burnout and the loss of hardworking, dedicated teachers.

Teachers are a pivotal link in establishing and maintaining solid parent involvement efforts. Without teachers who are actively committed to encouraging parents in the important roles they can play, schools will have a difficult time recruiting parents and keeping them involved.

The teacher:

- Maintains high expectations for every child to learn and achieve.
- Examines their own assumptions about student ability and interest, based on behavior, nonstandard English or lack of English, physical appearance or family background, and remain alert to negative stereotypes.
- Takes time to get to know the community represented by the children they teach--the history of their interactions with the school, their values and customs, local heroes, favorite pastimes, child-rearing practices, concerns, and aspirations.
- Treats all children and their families with respect.
- Welcomes every family into their classroom and makes them feel comfortable in the school.
- Establishes and maintains open, two-way communication with parents and other family members:
 - Contacts the parents of all children regularly for positive as well as negative information
 - Establishes regular times when parents can contact the teacher
- Provides a variety of options for parents to collaborate in the teaching of the children (including homework activities, class projects, volunteer work in the classroom and on field trips, fund raising, etc.).
- Participates in staff training about parent involvement.
- Participates in school activities designed to help staff and families get to know each other.
- Views individual or group differences (e.g., languages, ethnicity) as a resource and teaches children to respect them.

- Identifies and uses ways to validate children's experiences outside of school and incorporate them into instructional activities.
- Collaborates with other professionals and parents to address particular children's learning or emotional problems.
- Takes stock of parent involvement activities regularly with input from other key stakeholders and revises them as necessary.
- Never gives up on any child and never leaves any child behind.

WHAT SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS AND TEACHERS CAN DO

- Work with community-based organizations to develop an ongoing parent involvement action plan.
- Create a school environment that will make all parents feel welcome.
- Cooperate with community-based organizations in sponsoring parent education and information programs.
- Give priority to staff development and training that will assist staff in working and communicating with parents.
- Develop a plan for regular, two-way communication between school and home.
- Encourage regular parent communication with their child's teacher.
- Schedule programs, conferences, and other meetings with sensitivity to the needs of working parents or parents with young children still at home.
- Provide a forum for parents to share their ideas and/or concerns in a non-threatening atmosphere.
- Include community-based organization representatives on school advisory and decision-making committees so that information can be readily shared with parents.
- Encourage parent involvement in community-based organizations and school-sponsored activities.
- Recognize and alleviate barriers to parent/family involvement.
- Reach out to orient and train parents for effective involvement.
- Provide pre-service and in-service training for educators on a variety of mechanisms for parent/family involvement.
- Develop recognition programs for parents and acknowledge their role in supporting their children's learning.
- Convene local parent/family involvement summits to establish action plans.
- Write policies that cause administrators, teachers, businesses, and the community to enter into partnerships with families.
- Provide training programs for teachers, school personnel, parents and the community that address racial, ethnic, income and linguistic differences and help the school provide for parents from diverse backgrounds. Address special needs populations such as homeless parents or parents with disabilities.
- Ensure, through the work of administrators and school personnel, a positive school climate that is "family friendly."

KEY STAKEHOLDERS: PARENTS AND FAMILY MEMBERS

"Parents are their children's first and most influential teachers. Parents often replace spending time with their children with spending money on their children. It is important to remember, children need your presence, not your presents."

National PTA, 2000

It has been said many times, but it bears repeating: "parents are a child's first teachers." Parents spend more time with each individual child over the course of his/her lifetime than any teacher will. Parents can play a very positive role in the education of their children.

By working together with the schools, parents and families can have an even greater influence. They can encourage their children to excel, build self-esteem, and reinforce skills being taught through the schools.

Clearly, not every parent can volunteer in the classroom, go on field trips or attend evening meetings. Parents can be involved and have a strong influence in a wide variety of ways--from the simple practice of asking their children daily about school activities and homework to belonging to a parent advisory committee and having direct input on school decisions.

As a parent involved in your child's education, you:

At home:

- Send your child to school every day, well rested and fed, with a positive comment about him/her.
- Take an active interest in your child's schooling and let your child know how much you care about learning. Find out what happened at school each day and how your child felt about it.
- Learn as much as you can about being an effective parent.
- Try not to let any negative experiences keep you from supporting and encouraging your child's education.
- Try to provide a variety of interesting reading materials in your home and spend time reading and writing with your child.
- Take your child to the local library and encourage reading for fun.
- Provide an area in your home where your child can keep her/his school things and, if possible, where she/he can do school work without continual interruption. Find ways to involve the family in homework or similar activities and remain supportive of the child's need to do homework.
- Show pride in your child's work and display it in special places in your home.
- Establish regular blocks of time when you expect your child to do school work.
- Follow up with your child and monitor homework and be consistent in your expectations.

- As appropriate, work with your child on school-related projects on a regular basis.
- Include your child in daily household tasks and make the connection between learning in school and application in daily life.

At school:

- Establish a positive relationship with your child's teacher early in the school year and maintain it by:
 - Meeting with the teacher and other school personnel regularly
 - Calling, writing notes or sending e-mails
 - Never missing a parent-teacher conference and using the opportunity to share information with the teacher
- Make sure that communication flows two ways, both from school to home and from home to school:
 - Exercise your right and responsibility to voice your questions and concerns in constructive ways
 - Recognize and acknowledge how difficult teachers' jobs can be
 - Take every opportunity to let school personnel know when they are doing a good job
- Ask for ways you can work with your child at home to reinforce what the teacher has done in class.
- Volunteer to help on school projects, events, field trips, etc., if possible.
- Volunteer to help in the classroom, if possible.
- Become active in your child's school.
- Participate in school planning by serving on the school's Parent Advisory Committee.

In the community:

- Network with other parents in support of the school and the provision of quality education for your children.
- Encourage other community members to support effective education in your community through your place of worship, social club, business, employment, neighborhood, and city or state government.
- Hold high expectations for both your child and the school.

KEY STAKEHOLDERS: COMMUNITY MEMBERS

“Schools with strong community partnerships show some common patterns that have led to increased test scores through a type of beneficial chain reaction.”

Thomas Hatch, 1998

Children, families and schools form the core of any community. Employers and community-based service groups are becoming ever more aware that schools and families need their help to be able to do an effective job of educating children to become productive community members.

A concerned, involved community member:

- Supports their local school
- Participates in school events
- Volunteers for school committees
- Helps with fund-raisers
- Contacts local organizations to help publicize school activities
- Donates in-kind services (food for parent meetings, other merchandise for incentives/rewards, etc.)
- Adopts a school in which to concentrate efforts to increase parent involvement
- Supports and facilitates employees' involvement in their children's schooling:
 - Allows parent groups to meet in their building during lunch, after work or in the evenings
 - Provides parent education seminars/workshops
 - As an employer, stagger schedules as necessary so parents can attend important school events, parent/teacher conferences, etc.

WHAT BUSINESSES CAN DO

- Encourage parents to become involved in the education of their child or children.
- Encourage parents to join their school's PTA/PTO and become involved.
- Encourage parents to attend parent-teacher conferences, back-to-school nights, and student performances.
- Encourage parents to visit their child's classroom or school at least once a semester.
- Help develop a lending library for parents that contains parent education and involvement information. Libraries can include books, CDs, DVDs, and VHS tapes.
- Adopt a local school and develop a partnership:
 - Encourage employees to join organizations working with local education agencies;
 - Encourage employees to volunteer at school events; and
 - Encourage employees to serve as student tutors and/or mentors.
- Provide/facilitate training for employees, schools, parents, and community leaders regarding people and resources that are available in the community.
- Provide seed money for developing model programs for parent/family involvement.
- Identify and alleviate institutional barriers to parent/family involvement.
- Support early childhood education programs.
- Create policies and a work environment conducive to family involvement in education (e.g., flexible leave policies).



TRAINER NOTES

TEN THINGS PARENTS WISH TEACHERS WOULD DO

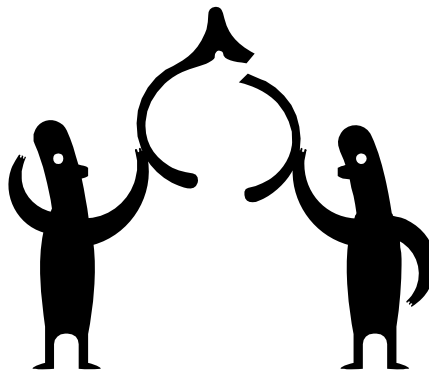


1. **Build students' self-esteem** by using praise generously, and avoiding ridicule and negative public criticism.
2. **Get to know each child's needs**, interests and special talents, as well as the way each child learns best.
3. **Communicate often and openly with parents**, contacting them early about academic or behavioral problems, being candid rather than defensive when discussing these problems.
4. **Regularly assign homework that helps children learn**, and advise parents how they can work with their children on their homework.
5. **Set high academic standards**, expecting all students to learn and helping them to do so.
6. **Care about children**, since children learn best when taught by warm, friendly, caring and enthusiastic teachers.
7. **Treat all children fairly** and do not play favorites.
8. **Enforce a positive discipline code** based on clear and fair rules that are established and fully explained at the beginning of the school year -- reinforce positive behavior as well as punish negative behavior.
9. **Be aware of students' different learning styles** and vary teaching methods to help each child achieve success.
10. **Encourage parent participation** by reaching out to involve parents in their children's education. Show parents how they can help their children at home. Understand that parents want to work with teachers to help their children be successful.

TRAINER NOTES

TEN THINGS TEACHERS WISH PARENTS WOULD DO

1. **Be involved in their children's education.** Parent involvement helps students learn, improves schools and makes teachers' jobs easier.
2. **Provide resources at home for reading and learning.** Parents should have books and magazines for their children and read with their children each day.
3. **Set a good example.** Parents should show their children that they believe reading is enjoyable and useful.
4. **Encourage children to do their best in school.** Parents should encourage children to do their best, and children should be helped to set obtainable goals.
5. **Academics should be a primary concern,** followed by their children's preparation for the world of work and involvement in athletics and activities.
6. **Support school rules and goals.** Parents should take care not to undermine school rules, discipline or goals.
7. **Use pressure positively.** Parents should gently urge their children to attempt new activities but they should not apply too much pressure by involving them in too many activities.
8. **Call teachers as soon as a problem becomes apparent** so that prompt action can be taken.
9. **Exercise parental responsibility** and do not expect the school and teachers to take over this job. For example, teaching basic discipline is a parental rather than a school responsibility.
10. **Understand that alcohol, tobacco, bullying, and violence are problems as serious as drug abuse.** All these can impact a student's health and classroom performance.



TRAINER NOTES

WHAT IS TEXAS PTA?

Texas Congress of Parents and Teachers, commonly referred to as Texas PTA and chartered under the laws of the state of Texas, is a volunteer organization actively engaged in working for the welfare of children and in certain lines of educational work. It is a branch of the National Congress of Parents and Teachers (National PTA), an organization with nearly seven million members. Texas PTA's over 635,000 members are active at the local, council, area and state levels.

The structure of the state branch follows closely that of the national organization. State bylaws indicate the relationship of the state branch to the national organization and show how the state branch is related to areas, councils, and local PTAs.

Area PTAs are geographic divisions of the state created to further PTA work. There can be up to 20 areas; the number is determined by the state board of directors. These areas were created to promote, strengthen, and expedite the work of the Texas PTA within their designated areas and to serve as connecting links between the state organization and the local PTAs of Texas.

Councils are composed of local PTAs as approved by the Texas PTA and are organized for the purpose of counseling and coordination. They provide public information and an opportunity to exchange ideas. They are a source of strength to local PTAs. They serve as a link between area, state, national and the local PTAs. They guide, but do not dictate to local PTAs.

The local PTA unit is the focus of all the efforts of the PTA. They plan programs and activities to meet the needs of children and youth in their local community. All other divisions are designated to promote and strengthen the work of the local PTA. The site-based decision-making teams at the local school campuses and the local PTAs can work closely together.

The Purposes of PTA

- To promote the welfare of children and youth in home, school, community, and place of worship.
- To raise the standards of home life.
- To secure adequate laws for the care and protection of children and youth.
- To bring into closer relation the home and the school, that parents and teachers may cooperate intelligently in the education of children and youth.
- To develop between educators and the general public such unified efforts as will secure for all children and youth the highest advantages in physical, mental, social, and spiritual education.

While the TEA is the central state agency responsible for the schools in Texas, the Texas PTA offers additional support and resources for parents who wish to be involved in their children's education.

PTA MISSION STATEMENT

- To support and speak on behalf of children and youth in the schools, in the community, and before governmental bodies and other organizations that make decisions affecting children.
- To assist parents in developing the skills they need to raise and protect their children.
- To encourage parent and public involvement in the public schools of this nation.

Website: National PTA: Who We Are



WHAT PTAs AND PTOs CAN DO

- Work with school staff to develop an ongoing, comprehensive parent involvement action plan.
- Work with school staff to create a warm, welcome setting for all.
- Offer a variety of family activity opportunities.
- Sponsor parent information programs on issues such as substance abuse, curriculum, textbooks and computer-assisted learning. Provide translators as needed.
- Take meetings into the community when necessary to make parents and other community members feel welcome. Use locations such as homes, community centers and public libraries.
- When sponsoring meetings and other activities:
 - Use sensitivity in setting dates, times and places for programs and activities;
 - Provide child care at no cost to the parents;
 - Publicize the event in a variety of ways--fliers, newsletters, bulletin boards, personal telephone calls, personal notes, e-mails, websites, cable television, places of worship and businesses; and
 - Greet people as they arrive and thank them as they leave.
- Promote teacher-parent communication with information about curriculum and how parents can work with their children. Information should be made available to parents in their primary language, if possible. Explore communication avenues for parents with disabilities.
- Encourage staff training to assist teachers in working with parents.
- Disseminate information to parents about how to contact their child's teacher and the school principal.
- Give parents opportunities to participate as volunteers in PTA or other parent organization activities.
- Assume an active role on school advisory and decision-making committees. Establish ways of getting information to and from parents.
- Establish parents' lending libraries that have parent education and involvement information. Libraries can include books, CDs, DVDs, and VHS tapes. This can be a separate parent resource center or a part of a school or public library.

For information about PTOs: www.ptotoday.com/index1.html

**TRAINING III
TRANSPARENCIES/
HANDOUTS**



WHO'S WHO IN YOUR CHILD'S EDUCATION

Parents sometimes do not realize that they are able to contact the people in charge of providing education for their children. School officials are in their jobs to provide the best education for all the students. It is helpful to those officials when parents and other citizens share ideas, concerns and questions about the school. Sometimes it is difficult to find the correct person to contact. Following are some key officials and helpful personnel. This list will enable you to locate telephone numbers and prepare you for what kinds of questions you can expect these resources to answer.

The State Board of Education, made up of elected officials, is the governing body responsible for development of public education policy in Texas.

Local School Board		
<i>School board members are elected by the public. Find out who your school board members are, how they are elected and where they stand on important issues. School board members bring an interest in education, a concern for children, a knowledge of their community, a sense of fairness and a great deal of common sense to their positions. The local school board approves the school budget, oversees operations of the school district, and hires and terminates the superintendent. Call the school district administration office or the superintendent's office to obtain the names of your school board members and their contact information to reach them with your questions and comments.</i>		
Local Board Member's Names		

School Superintendent		
<i>The superintendent oversees all schools in the district and has responsibility for local decisions relating to curriculum, transportation, testing, school schedule and personnel.</i>		
Superintendent's Name		Telephone Number

Principal		
<i>The principal is responsible for a campus. He/she works with the site-based decision-making committee or team to decide the management direction of the school. While the committee makes recommendations, the principal makes the final decisions based upon his/her legal requirements as administrator of the school.</i>		
Principal's Name		Telephone Number

Assistant Principal		
<i>In larger schools, the principal may have one or more assistant principals. If this is the case in your school, please use the following lines for information about the assistant principal.</i>		
Assistant Principal's Name		Telephone Number

Site-Based Decision-Making Committee/Team		
Parent Representative's Name		Telephone Number

School Counselor		
<i>The school counselor helps students with personal as well as educational problems and can sometimes be the first contact for families in need of counseling or social services. (NOTE: In Texas, many schools must share school counselors and nurses. Be sure to ask about the hours that those staff are present in your school.)</i>		
School Counselor's Name		Telephone Number

Nurse		
<i>The school nurse looks after the health needs of the children. He/she can provide valuable health information and can also act as a first contact for families in need of counseling or social services. (NOTE: In Texas, many schools must share school counselors and nurses. Be sure to ask about the hours that those staff are present in your school.)</i>		
Nurse's Name		Telephone Number

KEY STAKEHOLDERS IN SUCCESSFUL PARENT INVOLVEMENT PROGRAMS

Parent involvement is truly a team effort. To be effective, all of the following players must believe in the potential of parent involvement efforts and participate to the fullest extent possible in parental involvement activities:

- **School administrators** – who understand, encourage and fully support parent involvement.
- **Teachers** – who are committed to working closely with parents in a variety of capacities.
- **Parents and family members** – who understand their potential influence and are ready to contribute actively to their children's education.
- **Community members** (including businesses and community organizations) – who are willing to support the role of parents and families in education.

TEN THINGS PARENTS WISH TEACHERS WOULD DO



1. **Build students' self-esteem** by using praise generously, and avoiding ridicule and negative public criticism.
2. **Get to know each child's needs**, interests and special talents, as well as the way each child learns best.
3. **Communicate often and openly with parents**, contacting them early about academic or behavioral problems, being candid rather than defensive when discussing these problems.
4. **Regularly assign homework that helps children learn**, and advise parents how they can work with their children on their homework.
5. **Set high academic standards**, expecting all students to learn and helping them to do so.
6. **Care about children**, since children learn best when taught by warm, friendly, caring and enthusiastic teachers.
7. **Treat all children fairly** and do not play favorites.
8. **Enforce a positive discipline code** based on clear and fair rules that are established and fully explained at the beginning of the school year -
- reinforce positive behavior as well as punish negative behavior.
9. **Be aware of students' different learning styles** and vary teaching methods to help each child achieve success.
10. **Encourage parent participation** by reaching out to involve parents in their children's education. Show parents how they can help their children at home. Understand that parents want to work with teachers to help their children be successful.

TEN THINGS TEACHERS WISH PARENTS WOULD DO

1. **Be involved in their children's education.** Parent involvement helps students learn, improves schools and makes teachers' jobs easier.
2. **Provide resources at home for reading and learning.** Parents should have books and magazines for their children and read with their children each day.
3. **Set a good example.** Parents should show their children that they believe reading is enjoyable and useful.
4. **Encourage children to do their best in school.** Parents should encourage children to do their best, and children should be helped to set obtainable goals.
5. **Academics should be a primary concern,** followed by their children's preparation for the world of work and involvement in athletics and activities.
6. **Support school rules and goals.** Parents should take care not to undermine school rules, discipline or goals.
7. **Use pressure positively.** Parents should gently urge their children to attempt new activities but they should not apply too much pressure by involving them in too many activities.
8. **Call teachers as soon as a problem becomes apparent** so that prompt action can be taken.
9. **Exercise parental responsibility** and do not expect the school and teachers to take over this job. For example, teaching basic discipline is a parental rather than a school responsibility.
10. **Understand that alcohol, tobacco, bullying, and violence are problems as serious as drug abuse.** All these can impact a student's health and classroom performance.

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP YOUR CHILD

At Home

- Send your child to school every day, well rested and fed.
- Be positive and encourage your child daily.
- Take an active interest in your child's education and let your child know how much you care.
- Learn as much as you can about being an effective parent.
- Be sure a variety of interesting reading materials are available in your home.
- Let your child see that you spend time reading and writing.
- Take your child to the library.
- Provide a place in your home where your child can keep school things and go to study each day.
- Set a family quiet time each evening so that your child can study and feel support.
- Show pride in your child's work.
- Monitor homework. Offer to help your child find assistance in understanding any confusing topics or assignments.
- Help your child see the connection between things learned in school and their use in daily life, such as: using math in cooking or building, discussing current events, using maps.

At School

- Establish a good relationship with your child's teacher.
- Never miss a parent-teacher conference.
- Be sure that communication flows two ways, both from home to school and from school to home.
- Ask questions and voice concerns when necessary.
- Remember that teachers' jobs can be difficult.
- Take every opportunity to let school staff know when they are doing a good job.
- Ask for ways that you can work with your child at home to reinforce what has been done in class.
- Volunteer to help on school projects, events, and field trips, etc., if possible.
- Become an active member of a parents' organization at your child's school.
- Serve on the site-based decision-making committee/team if possible.

In the Community

- Work with other parents to support the school and quality education.
- Encourage other community members to support education (places of worship, businesses and other organizations).
- Keep high expectations for your child, the school, and your community.

WHAT PTAs AND PTOs CAN DO

- Work with school staff to develop an ongoing, comprehensive parent involvement action plan.
- Work with school staff to create a warm, welcome setting for all.
- Offer a variety of family activity opportunities.
- Sponsor and attend parent information programs on issues such as substance abuse, curriculum, textbooks and computer-assisted learning. Provide native language translators whenever possible.
- Take meetings into the community when necessary to make parents and other community members feel welcome. Use locations such as homes, community centers and public libraries.
- When sponsoring meetings and other activities:
 - Use sensitivity when setting dates, times and places for programs and activities;
 - Provide child care at no cost to the parents;
 - Publicize the event in a variety of ways--fliers, newsletters, bulletin boards, personal telephone calls, personal notes, e-mails and web pages, cable television, places of worship, community center, and businesses; and
 - Greet people as they arrive and thank them as they leave.
- Promote teacher-parent communication with information about curriculum and how parents can work with their children. Information should be made available to parents in their primary language, if possible. Explore communication avenues for parents with disabilities.
- Encourage staff training to assist teachers in working with parents.
- Disseminate information to parents about how to contact their child's teacher and the school principal.
- Give parents opportunities to participate as volunteers in PTA or other parent organization activities.
- Assume an active role on school advisory and decision-making committees. Establish ways of getting information to and from parents.
- Establish parents' lending libraries that have parent education and involvement information. Libraries can include books, CDs, DVDs, and VHS tapes. This can be a separate parent resource center or a part of a school or public library.

For information about PTOs: www.ptotoday.com/index1.html


TRAINING III SUMMARY

Following are key points from Training III – How Texas Parents Become Involved:

- There are many ways for parents to become involved in their children's education.
- It is important to get committed participation from key stakeholders.
- Parents and teachers have different viewpoints, but both groups are part of the whole school community that can help children grow and thrive.



IV. APPENDIX



**Appendix includes
Sample Surveys, Resources
and Supplemental Handouts**

SAMPLE SURVEYS



STARTING TO SURVEY

- Keep the questions simple and straight forward.
- Begin with a staff survey; annually conduct a survey to record changes and set priorities.
- Surveys need to be completed individually and without names.
- Have completed surveys returned in 48 hours.
- Tabulate the return rate for each survey.
- Participants should be able to respond easily.
- Balance the number of multiple-choice responses with some opinion questions. The person responding will be able to answer more quickly and still have an opportunity to share their opinions. This mix will be easier to tabulate.
- Keep open-ended responses to a minimum.
- Beware of timing of survey (elections). Be aware of local issues that may influence survey results.
- Accept the good and the not-so-good results. *Results are just perceptions, but we need to know they exist.*
- Keep surveys short, manageable, and useful.
- Share the results with ALL stakeholders.
- Make no assumptions. If the questions are objective, the responses will be more reliable.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT IN OUR SCHOOLS: WHAT IS, WHAT SHOULD BE

(Please check only one)

For the purposes of this survey, I am responding as a:

- Parent
 Teacher
 Administrator
 Other

The survey is intended to serve as a means for opening up a dialogue between parents and educators.

Section 1	
Indicate your response to each of the following statements by circling either "yes" or "no."	
1. There should be many school activities that involve students, parents and teachers, such as reading enrichment programs, sports events and recognition ceremonies to honor student achievement.	Yes No
2. Parents should be encouraged to work in the school as volunteers.	Yes No
3. Parents should supervise children with homework.	Yes No
4. Parents should be able to schedule visits to the school during the day to understand the kinds of experiences their child is having in school.	Yes No
5. There should be parent education classes run by trained personnel to teach parents how to help their children benefit from school.	Yes No
6. Parents' primary connection with the school should be to sponsor activities such as potluck suppers, fund raising, open houses and the like.	Yes No
7. Parents should initiate personal conferences with teachers when they feel it is necessary (outside of regularly scheduled parent-teacher conferences).	Yes No
8. Parents should attend school board meetings.	Yes No

Section 2

Please respond to each statement by circling the number that comes closest to your thoughts about the appropriate level of parent involvement.

HOW TO RESPOND

3 = Parents should be actively involved throughout this process.

2 = Parents should be asked for their input **before** education professionals plan programs or set policies.

1 = Parents should be asked to **review** revised programs and policies.

0 = Not an appropriate role for parents; should be left solely to education professionals.

9. Developing written school district policies (such as attendance, homework and graduation requirements).	0 1 2 3
10. Developing written goals for increasing parent involvement.	0 1 2 3
11. Planning written goals for increasing parent involvement.	0 1 2 3
12. Deciding/evaluating how well teachers and principals do their jobs and how to reward and retain good teachers.	0 1 2 3
13. Determining policy on when students should be held back rather than promoted to the next grade.	0 1 2 3
14. Setting up a school advisory group to bring suggestions for changes to the principal and school board.	0 1 2 3
15. Establishing the discipline code in the school.	0 1 2 3
16. Selecting textbooks and other learning materials.	0 1 2 3
17. Developing the school budget.	0 1 2 3
18. Serving on the team that revises report cards.	0 1 2 3
19. Participating in school events such as parties, field trips, sports events, plays, etc.	0 1 2 3
20. Establishing a policy for recognizing outstanding teacher performance.	0 1 2 3
TOTAL SCORE	

Section 3		
FINAL QUESTION: The parent involvement program in our school should be: <i>(circle one)</i>		
Expanded	Maintained	Reduced
Comments:		

<p>IF YOU RESPONDED AS A PARENT, WHAT YOUR SCORE MEANS:</p> <p>The lower the number circled in Section 2, the more you believe the schools should handle education decisions. You are unsure of the appropriateness of parents becoming involved as cooperative partners with school professionals. The higher you score, the more you want to help make school decisions on behalf of your own and all children in the community. You are highly motivated and want to empower other parents to be meaningfully involved.</p>
<p>IF YOU RESPONDED AS A TEACHER OR ADMINISTRATOR, WHAT YOUR SCORE MEANS:</p> <p>The lower the number circled in Section 2, the more you may question the value of parent involvement in education. The higher you scored, the more open you are to including parents in education planning. You are receptive to trying new ideas because the ultimate beneficiaries are the children. You have an easy relationship with parents in your community, and they ask your opinions and trust your judgment.</p>

Excerpted from: *President... The Easiest Job in the PTA.*

HOW WELCOME ARE PARENTS IN OUR SCHOOL?

Directions: Think about the experiences you have had when you visited your child's school. Your parent group and school staff want to make parents feel comfortable and a part of the school. Please take a few moments to fill out the following brief survey. Be honest. All answers will be anonymous -- please do not write your name on the sheet. Parent group leaders will collect the surveys.

After the parent group has analyzed the results, a committee--composed of parent and school leaders and other parents, the principal and teacher representatives--will decide how best to use the information and make recommendations, if necessary, for helping parents feel more welcome in our school.

(Circle one)

Am I always greeted in a friendly, courteous way when I contact the school either on the phone or in person?	Yes	No	Do not know
Does the school have a reception area for visitors, equipped with information about the school and directions so that I can find my way around the building?	Yes	No	Do not know
Did the school conduct some kind of orientation program for my family when I first enrolled my child?	Yes	No	Do not know
Do school staff and parents have informal occasions when we can get to know each other during the school year?	Yes	No	Do not know
Does the principal have regular office hours when parents and students can stop in?	Yes	No	Do not know
If "yes" to the previous two questions, are those hours convenient for me?	Yes	No	Do not know
Is there a school suggestion box where teachers', students' and parents' ideas are encouraged, and are those ideas implemented when possible?	Yes	No	Do not know
Does the school encourage me to visit my child's classroom outside of planned occasions (after checking first with the teacher involved)?	Yes	No	Do not know
Am I and other parents welcome to use the building after school hours for community purposes?	Yes	No	Do not know
Does the principal ask for parents' suggestions when making decisions that will affect the running of the school?	Yes	No	Do not know
Are limited-English-speaking parents given opportunities to understand the curriculum and participate in the school's activities?	Yes	No	Do not know
Does the school provide written information to parents about the school's rules, parent-teacher conferences and other important items?	Yes	No	Do not know
Feel free to write any comments and suggestions here:			

SAMPLE PARENT SURVEY

Dear Parent:

Our school is in the process of developing a parent involvement program. Parents play an important role in the intellectual, social and emotional growth of their children. This program will be designed to help children become more successful in school by working with their parents during these important years. In order to design a program that will meet the needs of you and your child, and help us form a better partnership, please answer the following questions and return this survey to a teacher or parent representative.

1. What specifically would you like to know about our school? _____

2. From what source do you get most of your information about our school?

- Newsletter
- Children
- Teachers
- Principal
- Friends
- Newspaper
- Television
- Other

3. Would you be interested in attending a class or session on how parents or family members can help their children learn at home?

- Yes
- No

4. If you checked "yes" in question 3, please indicate below the type of workshops you would like to participate in to help you help your child learn.

- Helping with homework
- Improving reading skills
- Improving math skills
- TAKS and what it means to your child
- English as a second language
- Improving your child's self-image
- Building your own parenting skills
- Communicating with the school (parent/teacher conferences)
- Career choices for students
- College admissions, SAT and ACT tests
- Children with children (teenage pregnancies)
- Drug use and gang prevention

5. Where would you like these parenting programs to be held?

- In the school
- In the home of a parent in your neighborhood or area
- Other _____

6. Would you be willing to host a session?

- Yes
- No

If you answered "yes," please write your name and telephone number so someone may contact you.

Name _____

Telephone Number _____

7. In order for you to participate in parent education programs at the school:

The meetings should be held

- Mornings
- Afternoons
- Evenings

Child care needs to be provided

- Yes
- No

Transportation needs to be provided

- Yes
- No

Other special needs (e.g., interpreter for the deaf or hearing impaired)

- Yes - please specify: _____
- No

8. As a parent, do you have trouble with any of the following?

- Your child's homework
- Discipline
- Spending enough time with your child
- Dealing with your child's problems
- Motivating your child to do well in school
- Working with the school and teachers
- Understanding the school district's program

9. What suggestions do you have of other ways we could help you to help your child learn?

TITLE I NEEDS ASSESSMENT PARENT SURVEY

Place an **X** by each item that you think should be included in [name of school] Title I Program.

The Program Should:

- Target improving achievement of eligible students identified as having the greatest need for special assistance.
- Ensure that parents participated in the planning of the program and the activities.
- Provide extended learning time, such as extended school year, before and/or after school programs, and summer programs and opportunities.
- Provide additional assistance in the classroom with an instructional aide.
- Coordinate classroom skills with computer programs that are designed to accelerate student learning.
- Provide counseling by a certified counselor.
- Assist parents and preschool children in the transition from early childhood programs to the elementary school programs.
- Provide a mentor program with junior high and/or high school students.
- Initiate a family literacy program for parents of Title I students.
- Offer a multicultural curriculum to all ISD students.

If you as a parent or guardian have other suggestions, ideas, or concerns which relate to the Title I (previously known as Chapter 1) program, please share them with us.

Please sign and have your child return the survey to his/her teacher.

Parent Signature

Date

CUESTIONARIO DE LOS PADRES DE FAMILIA DE NECESIDADES DE TÍTULO I

Ponga un **X** al lado de cada cosa que piensa debemos incluir en el programa Título I.

El programa debe:

- Tratar de improvisar el éxito de elegir los estudiantes identificados como los que necesitan mas ayuda.
- Estar seguro que los padres participan en el planeamiento del programa y las actividades.
- Dar mas tiempo para aprender, como extender el año escolar, antes y/o despues de las horas de la escuela, y programas y oportunidades de verano.
- Prover asistencia adicional en el salon de clase con un ayudante instruccional.
- Coordinar habilidades en el salon de clase con programas de computacion que han sido designados para acelerar el aprendizaje de los estudiantes.
- Dar consejo por un consejero certificado.
- Asistir los padres y los hijos pre-escolar en la transicion de un programa de niñitos hasta un programa de la escuela primaria.
- Prover un programa de ayudante llamado "mentors" para los estudiantes de escuela secundaria y/o escuela preparatoria.
- Empezar un programa de lectura familiar para los padres de estudiantes de Capítulo I.
- Ofrecer cursos multiculturales a todos los estudiantes de ISD.

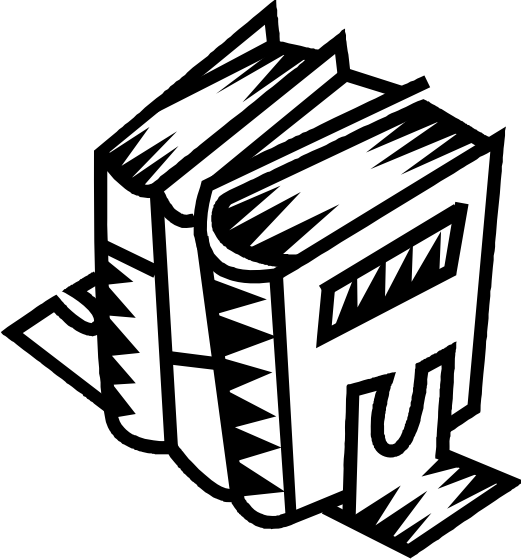
Si Uds. como padres tengan más sugerencias, ideas, o algo que consierna el programa Título I (anteriormente supo como Capitulo 1), por favor compartalos con nosotros.

Por favor firme este papel y que el niño lo regrese a el maestro o la maestra.

Firma de padre, madre, o tutor

Fecha

RESOURCES



RECOMMENDED PARENT READING

- *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective Families*, Stephen R. Covey
- *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective Teens*, Sean Covey
- *The 7 Worst Things Parents Do*, John C. Friel, Ph.D, Linda D. Friel, M.A.
- *The 10 Basic Principles of Good Parenting*, Laurence Steinberg, Ph.D.
- *10 Most Common Mistakes Good Parents Make and How to Avoid Them*, Kevin Steede, Ph.D.
- *25 Stupid Mistakes Parents Make*, Peter Jaksa, Ph.D.
- *The Big-R*, Gene Bedley
- *Building Successful Partnerships*, Dr. James P. Comer
- *The Complete Idiot's Guide to Parenting a Teenager*, Kate Kelly
- *The Don't Sweat Guide for Moms*, Editors of Don't Sweat Press, Foreword by Kristine Carlson
- *Fighting Invisible Tigers*, Earl Hip
- *Hear Our Cry - Boys in Crisis*, Paul D. Slocumb, Ed.D.
- *Kids Who Think Outside the Box*, Stephanie Lerner
- *Mrs. Cleanjeans' Housekeeping with Kids*, Tara Aronson
- *National Standards for Parent/Family Programs*, National PTA
- *Parenting by Heart*, Dr. Ron Taffel with Melinda Blau
- *Parents are Lifesavers; A Handbook for Parent Involvement in Schools*, Carol S. Batey
- *Parents in a Pressure Cooker; A Guide to Responsible & Loving Parent/Child Relationships*, Jane Bluestein, Ph.D. & Lynn Collins, M.A.
- *Raising Courageous Kids*, Charles A. Smith
- *Raising Happy Kids*, Elizabeth Hartley-Brewer
- *Raising Healthy Eaters*, Henry Leger, M.D.
- *Simple Secrets of Parenting - Easy as ABC*, John Q. Baucom, Ph.D.
- *Supernanny*, Jo Frost
- *Teenage Connection*, Carla Crutsinger
- *True Parenting*, Kathy Hayward

WEBSITES

RESOURCES FOR PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

U.S. Department of Education (USDE) Web Site

The following sites are designed to assist local educational agencies, schools and parents in meeting the requirements of parental involvement provisions required under Title I, Part A. Please refer to the law for more specificity and citations.

Work with Parents and the Community – Parent Involvement

<http://www.ed.gov/adminis/comm/parents/pntinv.html>

Work with Parents and the Community – The Partnership

<http://www.ed.gov/parents/academic/help/partnership.html>

NCLB Overview

<http://www.ed.gov/nclb/landing.jhtml>

NCLB Especially for Parents

<http://www.ed.gov/parents/landing.jhtml>

Parents' Guide to No Child Left Behind

<http://www.ed.gov/parents/academic/involve/nclbguide/parentsguide.pdf>

No Child Left Behind: A Parents' Guide (June 2003) summarizes the No Child Left Behind Act. It answers common questions about the law, explains what the law does for parents, and tells where to find additional resources. It is handy for teachers and community members as well as parents.

Back to School Checklist

<http://www.ed.gov/parents/academic/involve/nclbchecklist.html>

U.S. Department of Education (USDE) Spanish-Language Web Site

Recursos en español (Education Resources for Spanish Speakers)

<http://www.ed.gov/espanol/bienvenidos/index.html>

Publicaciones y Materiales

<http://www.ed.gov/espanol/publicaciones/es/index.html>

TEA and Title I Statewide School Support/Parental Involvement Initiative Web Sites

Texas Education Agency Website

<http://www.tea.state.tx.us>

Texas Education Agency – Division of NCLB Program Coordination

<http://www.tea.state.tx.us/nclb>

Region 16 Parental Involvement Resources Links

<http://www.esc16.net/dept/title1swi/parental/resources.html>

Region 16 Parental Involvement Newsletters

<http://www.esc16.net/dept/title1swi/newsletters.html>

Additional Web Sites

Please note: These websites are provided as a resource, and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Texas Education Agency or Texas PTA. Inclusion on this list should not be considered an endorsement.

Boys Town Press

<http://www.girlsandboystown.org>

Brain Connections

<http://www.brainconnection.com>

With information of interest to parents and educators, this site offers opportunity to learn about the brain, and how to use it!

The Center for Divorce Education

<http://www.divorce-education.com>

Children in the Middle is an educational and ethnically diverse program designed to teach parents with the skills needed to reduce family conflict, school problems, depression and anxiety, and anger. It has received the "Positive Parenting Award" from the National Council for Children's Rights, and the "Active Parenting Award" from the Children's Rights Council. Call toll-free at (877) 874-1365.

Communities in Schools

<http://www.cisnet.org/intro.html>

Dana Center

<http://www.utdanacenter.org/>

Education By Design

<http://www.edbydesign.com/parentres.html>

Educational web site that is dedicated to sharing a holistic approach to educating children. There are links to kids activities, learning resources, and special needs resource.

Family Frameworks

<http://www.parentalinvolvementnetwork.org>

Family Fun

<http://www.familyfun.go.com>

Contains a wide variety of topics, activities, and information of interest to families.

Financial Aid

<http://www.finaid.org>

The Grandparent Foundation

<http://www.grandparenting.org>

Grandparents who explore this site gain access to timely information and opportunity to share interests, concerns and insights.

Great Website for Kids

<http://ala.org/gwstemplate.cfm?section=greatwebsites>

Hands Net

<http://www.handsnet.org/>

Building the human services community online.

Harvard Family Research Project

<http://www.gse.harvard.edu/~hfrp/>

HIPPY

<http://www.hippyusa.org>

Hispanic Family Learning Institute
<http://www.familit.org>

"I CARE" Positive Parenting Curriculum
<http://www.icarenow.com>

Kidsource
<http://www.kidsource.com>

Helping your child with homework by Nancy Paulu is a helpful, thorough guide. If parents haven't started these practices early on, review them and provide some guides for teens. Some topics are talking to teachers about homework problems, learning styles, monitor TV viewing.

Love and Logic
<http://www.loveandlogic.com>

Mega Skills – Dr. Dorothy Rich
<http://www.megaskillshsi.org>

National Center for Family/Community Involvement (SEDL)
<http://www.sedl.org/connections/>

National Center for Fathering
<http://www.unt.edu/cpe/>

The National Center for Fathering features an online magazine, practical tips, research on fathering, a list of resources on fathering, and good links to other sites focusing on fathering.

National Coalition for Parent Involvement in Education
<http://www.ncpie.org/>

This site is designed to advocate the involvement of parents and families in their children's education, and to foster relationships between home, school, and community to enhance the education of all our nation's young people.

National Fatherhood Initiative
<http://www.fatherhood.org>

The National Fatherhood Initiative seeks to improve the well-being of American children by increasing the number of children whose fathers are involved, committed, and responsible. Information, chat rooms and activities that support fathers' efforts are provided.

National Parent Information Network
<http://www.npin.org/>

Parent News is an online magazine.

National Parent Teacher Association
<http://www.pta.org/programs/pistudy/>

Link to find the PTA in your district. Spanish sites also available.

National Partnership for Women and Families
<http://www.nationalpartnership.org>

The National Partnership for Women and Families offers information to help parents meet the dual demands of work and family.

NCLB News
<http://www.beyond-the-book.com/>

The Beyond the Book website and accompanying e-newsletter were developed specially for superintendents and administrators of pre-K through grade 12. The website invites you to share your stories of success and perspectives on leadership so that readers can learn and benefit from your years of experience.

Parent Institute
<http://www.par-inst.com>

Parent Resources
<http://www.eduplace.com/parents/>

Activities and resources for parents, caregivers, and homeschoolers who want to help their children excel in school.

Parent Soup
<http://www.parentsoup.com/>

This is a great site with lively layout and graphics! Under “Stuff You Need” see “How to Prepare for a Parent-Teacher Conference.” You’ll see information from a variety of sources. College planning time line with finances, course work, and activities is helpful.

Parenting Stages
<http://www.parentstages.com/index.asp>

Parenting Stages brings you the best parenting content, articles, and tools that the web has to offer so you can grow with your child.

Parents for Public Schools
<http://www.parents4publicschools.com/>

Practical Parent Education
<http://www.practicalparent.org>

Project Appleseed
<http://www.projectappleseed.org>

The mission for Project Appleseed, National Campaign for Public School Improvement, is to Leave No Parent Behind.

School, Family, and Community Partnerships – Dr. Joyce Epstein
<http://www.westviewpress.com>

Search Institute
<http://www.search-institute.org>

EDUCATION SERVICE CENTERS

There are 20 regional Education Service Centers. The purpose of the Education Service Center (ESC) is to assist the schools in its region. That means that the ESC will have teacher resources, training workshops, parent education information, and other resources and materials that will assist staff and volunteers who work with the school. To find your region, look for the location that is closest to your town. In some cases, there may be more than one center located nearby. ESC staff will be available to assist you. Following are the ESC addresses and telephone numbers:

Region I

1900 W Schunior
Edinburg, TX 78541-2234
956/984-6000
www.esc1.net

Region II

209 N Water Street
Corpus Christi, TX 78401-2599
361/561-8400
www.esc2.net

Region III

1905 Leary Lane
Victoria, TX 77901-2899
361/573-0731
www.esc3.net

Region IV

7145 W Tidwell
Houston, TX 77092-2096
713/462-7708
www.esc4.net

Region V

2295 Delaware Street
Beaumont, TX 77703-4299
409/838-5555
www.esc5.net

Region VI

3332 Montgomery Road
Huntsville, TX 77340-6499
936/435-8400
www.esc6.net

Region VII

1909 N Longview Street
Kilgore, TX 75662-6827
903/988-6700
www.esc7.net

Region VIII

PO Box 1894
Mount Pleasant, TX 75456-1894
Location: 2230 N Edwards 75455
903/572-8551
www.reg8.net

Region IX

301 Loop 11
Wichita Falls, TX 76306-3706
940/322-6928
www.esc9.net

Region X

PO Box 831300
Richardson, TX 75083-1300
Location: 400 E Spring Valley Road
972/348-1700
www.ednet10.net

Region XI

3001 North Freeway
Fort Worth, TX 76106-6596
817/740-3600
www.esc11.net

Region XII

PO Box 23409
Waco, TX 76702-3409
Location: 2101 W Loop 340
254/297-1212
www.esc12.net

Region XIII

5701 Springdale Road
Austin, TX 78723-3675
512/919-5313
www.esc13.net

Region XIV

1850 Highway 351
Abilene, TX 79601-4750
325/675-8600
www.esc14.net

Region XV

PO Box 5199
San Angelo, TX 76902-5199
Location: 612 S Irene Street 76903
325/658-6571
www.netxv.net

Region XVI

5800 Bell Street
Amarillo, TX 79109-6230
806/677-5000
www.esc16.net

Region XVII

1111 West Loop 289
Lubbock, TX 79416-5029
806/792-4000
www.esc17.net

Region XVIII

PO Box 60580
Midland, TX 79711-0580
Location: 2811 LaForce Boulevard
432/563-2380
www.esc18.net

Region XIX

PO Box 971127
El Paso, TX 79997-1127
Location: 6611 Boeing Drive
915/ 780-1919
www.esc19.net

Region XX

1314 Hines Avenue
San Antonio, TX 78208-1899
210/370-5200
www.esc20.net

SUPPLEMENTAL HANDOUTS



DEVELOPING A FAMILY-SCHOOL PARTNERSHIP

There is no blueprint for "The Family Partnership School" – the school that collaborates effectively with parents. Because schools are so different, there is no single model, no one set of practices or characteristics to which we can point and say, "Aha! That is the definitive family partnership school." All schools that work well with parents share a fundamental set of principles. If the principal, school staff and parents do not subscribe to most of these principles, their attempts to increase parental involvement will often fall short.

1. Create a school climate that is open, helpful and friendly.

- Post a "Parents and Visitors are Welcome" sign on the door. Have additional signs in home languages of all students on the campus.
- Design a special parent lounge or resource center. Provide materials and print resources in Spanish and other languages spoken by parents.
- Schedule new family orientations and tours. Provide translators as needed.
- Set aside weekly "drop-in" hours for parents to meet with the principal. Provide names of bilingual staff members who can help non-English speaking parents.
- Have monthly parent-teacher luncheons.
- Plan activities at flexible times so that all parents will have opportunities to attend.

2. Communicate clearly and frequently with parents about school policies and programs or about their children's progress.

- Send home wall calendars and school schedules to inform families of school events, holidays, in-service days and grading schedules.
- Host open houses and back-to-school nights for parents to meet school staff and to ask questions.
- Give teachers opportunities to call the homes of their students to introduce themselves and to encourage parents to visit the school.
- Post information about all campus activities on the school's website.

3. Treat parents as partners in the educational process.

- Develop student-parent-teacher learning compacts that explain responsibilities of each and are reviewed and signed annually by parents, teachers and the child.
- Request parent-teacher conferences at least once a year for students at all grade levels. Parent-teacher conferences are required for elementary schools receiving Title I funds.
- Send frequent reports to parents on their child's progress.
- Provide reasonable access to staff, opportunities to volunteer and participate in their child's class, and observation of classroom activities.
- Seek assistance from parents in classroom discipline of students by notifying them of unexcused absences; ask their advice when trying to solve behavior problems in the classroom.

4. Encourage parents, formally and informally, to comment on school policies and to share in some of the decision making.

- Print school policy handbooks and distribute them to every family and student in an understandable format, and to the extent practicable, in a language parents can understand.
- Establish parent advisory committees to promote communication and participation in decision making.

5. Get every family involved, not simply those most easily reached. Pay special attention to parents who work outside the home, extended families, divorced parents, homeless parents and culturally diverse families.

- Notify employed parents in advance about special daytime events; offer times to meet with school teachers outside the regular school hours, and work with the campus' parent organization to make sure parents have arrangements for coping with sudden student dismissals (on snow days, for instance).
- If your community has had a sudden increase in an immigrant population, hire those who speak the home language as outreach staff to make home visits, inform these parents about the schools and listen to their concerns.
- Encourage local businesses to provide flex-time for their employees to attend school-related activities.

6. Make sure that the principal and other school administrators actively express and promote the philosophy of partnership with all families.

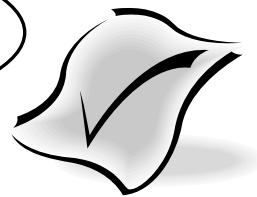
- Provide district wide professional development each year to train teachers to work with parents.
- Designate a special office or work area near the principal's office for the chairperson of the Parent Advisory Council.
- Work with the school board to develop a district wide policy on parental involvement. Parent involvement policies are required for districts and campuses receiving Title I funds.

7. Encourage volunteer participation from parents and other members of the community.

- Get volunteers involved in tutoring, recreation supervision, field trip coordination and supplementary education programs.
- Survey the interests and talents of community residents – let them suggest ways in which they would like to work with the school.

The above is adapted with permission from *Beyond the Bake Sale: An Educator's Guide to Working with Parents and Citizens* (1986) by Anne T. Henderson, Carl L. Marburger and Theodora Oomes; a publication of the National Committee for Citizens in Education, Suite 301, 10840 Little Patuxent Parkway, Columbia, Maryland 21044-31

CHECKLIST FOR PARENTS



Things I need to know about the school and my child's classroom:

1. I have asked for a handbook and information on school procedures such as:
 - time the school day begins and ends
 - the earliest time my child may arrive at school
 - notification about absences by school and by parent
 - whether my child may go home or off campus for lunch
 - permission for riding a bike to school
 - availability of after-school activities
 - yearly school schedule (year-round school or traditional schedule)
 - school policies regarding such activities as visiting the classroom, disaster preparedness plan, discipline, grading

2. I have contacted my child's teacher to introduce myself, supplied needed information about our family, and set up a way for us to communicate on a regular basis. I did this by:
 - telephone
 - e-mail
 - writing a note
 - in person

3. I made an appointment to ask the teacher about:
 - the amount of homework to be expected
 - being kept informed daily or weekly about my child's progress
 - what I can do to assist my child's progress
 - how and when to contact the teacher by telephone
 - notification of tests and how results are used
 - how I could be of help to the teacher

4. I have signed up to support my child's school by volunteering for activities as my time allows.

5. I have asked for information on the school's site-based decision-making committee/team, including who serves on the team, when it meets and how parents are able to participate or have issues placed on its agenda.

MAKING PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES WORK FOR YOU

A parent-teacher conference is a conversation between a parent and the child's teacher. There is no need for tension, fear and frustration. Although a certain amount of nervousness is natural, it may help to remember that teachers are nervous too. Many teachers are parents and have experienced your feelings.

If parents and teachers already know each other, the fear of the conference is removed. Therefore, it is a good idea to create a relationship with the teacher as early as possible. This shows teachers that you care about your child's education. This relationship can begin with a simple note, e-mail, or telephone call. Call the school to find out when it would be convenient to contact your child's teacher. Don't expect teachers to leave the class to take your calls. Remember, positive contacts can establish a good working relationship.

Some things to remember:

- If this is your first contact with the teacher, help to put him/her at ease. Ask how school is going.
- If you've initiated the conference, write down the main points you'd like to discuss.
- Try to come up with a plan upon which you and the teacher can agree.
- Does any other school representative (counselor, another teacher) need to be in on the conference? If so, contact them.
- It takes at least two weeks of doing something in a different way to produce good results.
- Remember you are the parent, the child is the student, and the school representative is the teacher. All must work together, but each has a different role.

How Do You Know If You Need to Call the Teacher?

You suspect your child is having a problem in school. Should you call the teacher, or should you say nothing and hope for the best?

Most teachers say they want to know what's going on in a student's life. If you notice a problem, chances are your child's teacher has too. By working together, you will be able to come up with a solution that's right for your child.

Below is a list of times you should definitely call your child's teacher:

- You see a dramatic change in your child's behavior.
 - A happy child becomes withdrawn. A friendly child wants to be alone.
- There's a change in your family.
 - A divorce, a new baby or a new marriage can affect your child's school work.
- Grades drop.
 - This may happen in one subject or all of them.
- Your child begins to tell you things about school that aren't likely to be true, such as, "the teacher doesn't like me" or "no one will play with me."

How Do I Learn About My Child's School?

You have decided it's time to learn more about your child's school. But how do you go about it?

- First, make an appointment to tour the school.
- Talk with other parents about their experiences.
- Look at the school's or school district's website.
- Read school board minutes and news articles in your newspaper.
- Take opportunities to visit the school.
- Attend school functions: athletic events, fine arts programs, UIL competitions, school dances, classroom parties, etc.
- Call, e-mail or write your child's teacher a note.
- Always join the PTA or other parent organizations and attend meetings, especially Open House.

Remember, the better you know the school and teachers, the better job you can do as a partner in your child's education.

SCHOOL IS WHAT WE ALL MAKE IT!!!

TEN STEPS TO A GOOD PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCE

1. Get to know your child's teacher early in the school year, before conferences are scheduled or problems develop.
2. Plan for conferences. Talk to your child. Jot down questions. Glance over your child's textbooks and the work he/she brings home. Think about your child's learning style and study habits.
3. Have at least one parent or family member attend the conference.
4. Ask questions about your child's schoolwork, his/her relationship with students and teachers, tests taken or scheduled, and any class or school rules you do not understand.
5. Stay calm. Do not get angry or defensive, argue or try to assess blame. Concentrate instead on developing a good working relationship with the teacher.
6. Share any information that might help the teacher develop a better understanding of your child.
7. Decide with the teacher what, if anything, needs to be done to help your child. Agree on plans and on any special assistance your child needs before you leave.
8. Talk with your child afterward and discuss what was decided.
9. Follow up. Implement your end of any agreement. Keep in touch with the teacher. If the plan does not seem to be working, or if new problems develop, call the teacher and ask for another meeting.
10. Ask for additional help if you are not getting results. Call the principal's office to see what you should do next.

Use this information in a newsletter, as a handout at a back-to-school night or a program workshop.