



LAUSD Title I Parent Involvement Policy 2012



I. INTRODUCTION

LAUSD is committed to engaging parents in their child's education. Over 30 years of research confirms the important role of parent involvement in student achievement. Parents are their child's first and life-long teachers and can influence their child's education outcomes in powerful and long-lasting ways. The core belief that parents are our partners is the foundation for the District's overarching policy on parent engagement and is reinforced through its Title I Parent Involvement Policy and school-level parent involvement policies.

II. LAUSD POLICY ON PARENT ENGAGEMENT

The California Department of Education requires that every Local Education Agency establish parent involvement policies for all schools, both non-Title I and Title I (EC Section 11504 and EC Section 11502). In accordance with these obligations, the Los Angeles Unified School District Board of Education adopted the *Parents as Equal Partners in the Education of their Children (PAEP) Resolution* in December 2010 enhancing the vision and pathway for parent engagement for all LAUSD schools. The PAEP policy created a taskforce to further explore and define a framework for district-wide parent engagement tools and programs. The PAEP Taskforce, with participation of over 100 stakeholders, including parents from Title I schools, developed a common definition of parent engagement for the District:

"Meaningful parental engagement is when schools see parents/guardians as equal partners in promoting student achievement and recognize parents' talents and skills as resources to promote children's educational development."

Parents as Equal Partners Taskforce

This definition for parent engagement fully embraces and supports all Title I mandates regarding parent involvement and reaffirms that effective parental engagement occurs at the school-level. The PAEP policy is in alignment with the California Framework for Parent Engagement (2012) as well as the Title I Parent Involvement Policy herein this document.

III. LAUSD TITLE I PARENT INVOLVEMENT POLICY

A. Parent Involvement in the Policy Development Process

Pursuant to Title I, Part A, Section 1118a of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, the LAUSD Title I Parent Involvement Policy was developed in collaboration with and approved by more than 100 parents of Title I students. Representing over 60 schools district-wide, participating parents were representative of the District's Title I population at large.

Parents participated in the policy development and approval process through study group sessions that took place in each of the District's four Educational Service Centers. The study groups yielded important feedback on ways schools can improve parent

involvement practices and identified how the District can strengthen both school and parent capacity to foster trusting relationships that result in positive outcomes for students. The following overarching recommendations were expressed by parents district-wide:

- Parents want help in strengthening their knowledge, understanding and navigation of the educational system and how they can better support their children's achievement and performance at school and at home.
- Parents recognize the key role that administrators and teachers play in ensuring effective parent engagement and recommend staff training to ensure successful implementation and accountability for parent engagement plans.
- Parents want school staff to be respectful, create a welcoming environment and value and acknowledge their contributions to their child's learning by inviting them into schools as visitors, volunteers, and equal partners in supporting their child's academic achievement.
- Parents want to receive information from schools on a timely, ongoing basis, not just when schools need them for a special event or activity. They particularly want information impacting their child's learning, including the school's Title I program, expectations for English Learners (ELs) and students with special needs, volunteer opportunities, workshops/trainings and community resources available to their families.
- Parents want accessible parent centers that operate on a regular schedule, have well-equipped facilities and quality staff that is welcoming of all parents, including working parents, disabled parents and newly-arrived immigrant parents, and that provide them with learning opportunities that assist them in supporting classroom and home learning (math, reading, homework, etc.).
- Parents want improved communication with schools. They seek timely information from schools that is clear and comprehensible, in the language that they understand and delivered in a variety of ways using both technology (phone, text, email, websites) and traditional modes of communication (letter, phone calls, etc.).

These recommendations above are integrated throughout this District Title I Parent Involvement Policy and reinforce the District's core belief that parents are our equal partners in ensuring the success of all students.

B. Title I Parent Involvement Policy Requirements

Title I, Part A, Section 1118a, requires that the District's Title I Parent Involvement Policy address six key mandates that describe the programs, trainings and practices the District will provide to ensure meaningful parent involvement at all Title I schools.

Mandate 1: Involve parents in the joint development of its plan [LAUSD Program Improvement Plan] and the process of school review and improvement.

The District will involve parents in the joint development of the LAUSD Program Improvement Plan by:

- Utilizing Title I Parent Study Groups as a vehicle for parent participation in the annual development and review of the District's Program Improvement Plan.
- Increasing the number of Title I parent representatives participating in the District's Title I Focus Group which provides the District recommendations on LAUSD Title I Program implementation.

The District will issue the following directives, tools and trainings to ensure schools have the necessary information they need to effectively involve parents in the process of school review and improvement:

- **Policy Bulletin 5797.0 and Reference Guides 5862.0 & 5900.0:** Provides schools with operating guidelines and federal requirements for School Site Councils and other school advisory committees.
- **Memorandum 5838.0** (September 2012): Provides schools direction and guidance on school-level parent involvement mandates, including the involvement of parents in the decision-making process for the allocation of parent engagement funds, as required by Title I.
- **Title I Program and Budget Handbook Appendix D—*Budget Planning for Parental Involvement*** (March 2012): Assists schools and parents in identifying allowable school expenditures to support/bolster parent involvement in the school review and improvement process.
- **School Report Card, LAUSD Performance Meter and the School Experience Survey:** Assists parents in understanding the academic performance of their child's school and increases their ability to participate fully in the school improvement process.

- **School Site Council Training Tools for Parents:** Provides school staff with tools and training to support meaningful and balanced parent participation on the School Site Council.

Mandate 2: Provide the coordination, technical assistance, and other support necessary to assist participating schools in planning and implementing effective parent involvement activities to improve student academic achievement and school performance.

To meet this mandate, the District will provide technical assistance/training to school staff in the following areas:

- **LAUSD School Goals for Parent Engagement:** Describes the District’s vision and establishes district-wide expectations for parent engagement at every school. The LAUSD School Goals for Parent Engagement should be used at every school to create benchmarks and indicators for parent engagement (see Attachment C).
- **Family Engagement Action Teams (FEATs):** School-based teams, comprised of parents, teachers, principals/administrators, and community partners that lead the school’s effort in creating school-wide parent engagement plans, including the development of Home-School Compacts, the school’s parent involvement policy, Single Plan for Student Achievement, and other parent involvement activities linked to learning.
- **School Volunteer Program:** School-based program that strengthens home-school partnerships by connecting the expertise/wisdom of parents and community members directly to student learning and academic improvement strategies through volunteerism.
- **Targeted technical assistance:** Targeted support provided to schools undergoing periodic state and/or federal review of their parent engagement planning process.
- **Targeted training programs:** Training and tools provided to school staff to increase their capacity to engage, support and provide necessary information to parents of students with documented achievement gaps, ELs and students with special needs.

Mandate 3: Build the schools’ and parents’ capacity for strong parental involvement.

Under the PAEP Resolution, the District has established five school goals for parent engagement. To support schools in successfully meeting these goals, the District will make available the following training, tools and programs:

- **Parent Education Modules:** A collection of workshops/trainings that comprise the essential knowledge and skills all parents must have in order to support their child’s learning from PreK-12th grade. Possible training areas include (among others):
 - Early education/preparing for school
 - Literacy/math home-based support
 - A-G college prep requirements
 - Transition to middle and high school
 - LAUSD technology tools
 - Creating learning environments at home (includes promoting literacy, regulating TV time, supporting homework completion)
 - Master Plan for ELs
 - Common Core Standards
 - School Report Card & other data
 - Parents as advocates and leaders
 - Special Education Programs
 - Supporting good attendance habits

- **Parent Engagement External Partner Certification System:** Process that assesses the quality and alignment of parent involvement programs offered by non-LAUSD entities. The process will review costs, quality and relevancy of non-LAUSD programs to provide schools with a clear list of “preferred” partners from which they can choose.

- **LAUSD VISTA Community Partnership Program:** National volunteer service program that increases the capacity of schools to implement parent involvement plans by providing participating schools with a low-cost, full-time VISTA member for a term of one year to support the school/unit’s capacity to engage parents, improve attendance and garner local resources.

- **Parent & Family Center Improvement Program:** Board-approved bond program to upgrade and equip school-based Parent & Family Centers with standard facilities that assist schools in delivering effective parent engagement programs, including parent trainings/workshops, volunteer programs and local community resources. Key investment areas include: signage, computer technology, training technology, building upgrades, children’s corners and mobile/modular furniture.

- **Strengthening Staff Capacity for Effective Parent Engagement:** Training program that provides school staff, including but not limited to principals, teachers, front office staff, parent center staff and others, with training that fosters meaningful and sustainable parent involvement. Key areas include:
 - Parent involvement research and best practices
 - Creating welcoming environments
 - Engaging and expanding meaningful school volunteer programs
 - Growing and sustaining Family Engagement Action Teams
 - Informing parents of their rights and responsibilities and categorical/special programs such as Title I, EL and Special Education
 - Establishing effective school advisory committees and councils

- Addressing parent concerns
- Engaging parents to support homework completion, good attendance habits, and creating learning environments at home that reinforce classroom learning
- Engaging and effectively communicating with parents including working parents, disabled parents, newly arrived parents and non-English speaking parents.

Mandate 4: Coordinate and integrate the parental involvement strategies described in this policy with parental involvement strategies under other programs, including the various 0-5 federal programs that prepare children for school and parents for their role in supporting their children's learning.

To address this mandate, the District will coordinate and integrate its parent engagement programs and trainings with those of other District units, including:

- **Office of Multicultural and Multilingual Programs:** Coordination is centered on informing parents of EL students of the District's Master Plan for English Learners through a "Parent Institute". Parents provided input on this plan and guided all of the recommendations regarding the modules to be developed. Parents will participate in the development of the modules, which is scheduled to be completed by the end of 2012.
- **Division of Special Education:** Coordination is centered on the integration of the Division of Special Education's Community Advisory Committee into the portfolio of central parent advisory committees facilitated by the Parent Community Service Branch (PCSB). This integration ensures the coordination of parent engagement strategies, programs, and goals among parents of Title I, EL and students with special needs.
- **Division of Early Education:** Coordination is centered on the integration of the Division of Early Education's parent engagement program, *Abriendo Puertas*, as part of its training portfolio for school and parents with children in grades Pre-K to 3rd.
- **Adult and Career Education Division:** Coordination is under development and will focus on opportunities to integrate parent trainings offered by the Adult and Career Education Division with those of PCSB to ensure alignment with parent engagement goals and objectives and broad availability to parents district-wide.
- **Information Technology Division:** Coordination is centered on the Information Technology Division's initiative to develop, promote and train schools on web-based tools for parents that help support student achievement. Examples include the Parent Access System, ISIS Family Module, and access to LAUSD online applications for eChoices, Free and Reduced Lunch, and school volunteer programs.

- **Office of the Chief Operating Officer:** Coordination is centered on the Office of the Chief Operating Officer's effort to promote district-wide initiatives such as Breakfast in the Classroom, the Attendance Improvement Challenge and the Donors Choose Challenge that support student achievement among parents district-wide.
- **Beyond the Bell:** Coordination is centered on PCSB's promotion of Beyond the Bell's Expanded Learning and Enrichment Program and Supplemental Educational Services with parents district-wide. These programs provide extra-curricular and tutoring programs for students.
- **Student Integration Services:** Coordination is centered on PCSB's outreach to parents to promote the Student Integration Services' programs including the LAUSD Magnet, Permits with Transportation and No Child Left Behind-Public School Choice programs.
- **Office of Data and Accountability:** Coordination is centered on ensuring the inclusion of parents in the development of and participation in key school performance indicators including the LAUSD Performance Meter and the LAUSD School Experience Survey.
- **Federal and State Education Programs:** Coordination is centered on ensuring federal and state parental involvement requirements including the Home-School Compact, School Parent Involvement Policy, Performance Meter goals and the Single Plan for Student Achievement are met by all schools.

Mandate 5: Conduct, with the involvement of parents, an annual evaluation of the content and effectiveness of the parental involvement policy in improving the academic quality of Title I schools, including identifying barriers to greater parent participation in activities authorized by this section (with particular attention to parents who are economically disadvantaged, are disabled, have limited English proficiency, have limited literacy, or are of any racial or ethnic minority background), and use the findings of such evaluation to design strategies for more effective parental involvement and to revise, if necessary, the parental involvement policies described in this section.

To address this mandate the District will:

- Utilize ESC Title I Parent Study Groups to examine the effectiveness of the parent engagement strategies and programs described in this policy on student achievement at Title I schools.

- Invite school staff representatives such as principals, teachers, front office staff, community based organizations, and parent center staff from elementary, middle and high schools to participate in the ESC Title I Parent Study Groups.
- Provide training and coaching to Title I Parent Study Groups to identify specific policy issues to be studied, design effective evaluation processes and utilize various data collection tools including surveys, site observations, interviews, etc.
- Present Title I Parent Study Group findings with ESC Instructional Superintendents, Operational Directors, Parent and Community Engagement teams, the Title I Focus Group, the Superintendent of Schools, and the Board of Education.
- Use study group findings and recommendations to determine any necessary revisions of the policy annually.
- Consult with Title I parent study group participants in determining how central parent engagement funds are allotted to support the centrally-based parent engagement programs, practices, and strategies contained in the policy.
- Promote the completion and results of the annual LAUSD School Experience Survey to capture parent feedback on school-level parent engagement experiences, programs and practices.

Mandate 6: Involve parents in the activities of Title I schools.

To address this mandate, the District will:

- Ensure effective parent involvement at schools by growing their capacity to do the following:
 - Communicate effectively with parents
 - Create welcoming, respectful environments for all parents
 - Provide learning opportunities for parents that grow their ability to support classroom learning, particularly in math and reading, homework completion and attendance
- Ensure parents are knowledgeable about the following:
 - Parents' Bill of Rights and Responsibilities
 - Student and school performance data
 - Alternative school options including Magnet Programs, Public School Choice, Zones of Choice, etc.
 - School policies including the visitation policy, attendance policy and homework policy

IV. CONCLUSION

The District has demonstrated its commitment to parent involvement at both the school and central levels through its overarching policy for parent engagement, guiding documents and core beliefs, the LAUSD School Goals for Parent Engagement, the Parents' Bill of Rights and Responsibilities, and its Performance Meter. The programs and practices described in this policy provide further affirmation of this commitment and adherence to it will build school and parent capacity in fostering meaningful school-home partnerships to bolster student achievement.