

PARENT INVOLVEMENT 1110

Evidence indicates that meaningful involvement of parents, guardians, and other care-givers in the schooling of children improves the quality of education significantly. The Board of Education believes that closer connections of parents and others responsible for the home care of the children with our schools can result in enhanced academic performance, improved behavior, and reduced absenteeism.

Therefore, all parents, guardians, and care-givers of students enrolled in our school district are encouraged to take an active role in the education of their children.

Further, the Board of Education, professional staff and parents working in partnership must take whatever steps are necessary to facilitate a broad variety of opportunities for parents to connect frequently with the schools in which their children are enrolled, and with the overall system. These steps should include the following:

- ▶ Parenting skills shall be promoted and supported.
- ▶ Communication between home and school shall be regular, two-way, and meaningful.
- ▶ Parents shall play an integral role in assisting student learning.
- ▶ Parents shall be welcome in every school and their support and assistance sought.
- ▶ Parent input shall be sought regarding decisions that affect children and families.
- ▶ Community resources shall be made available to strengthen school programs, family practices, and student learning.

In accordance with Section 1118 of the *No Child Left Behind* Act of 2001 ("NCLB"), Public Act 107-110, it is the policy of the Meriden Board of Education to provide parents of all students, as well as parents of students participating in the district's supplemental programs (supplemental educational programs funded by Title I or other federal programs as well as state-funded programs), substantial and meaningful opportunities to participate in the education of their children. To facilitate parental participation, the Board encourages all parents, especially parents of Title I eligible students, to be involved in regular meetings, communications, and activities that will inform them about the district's supplemental programs, to participate in the improvement of such programs and to help improve their child's progress within these programs.

This policy has been developed jointly with, and agreed upon by, parents of children participating in such programs. The district shall distribute this written parental involvement policy to parents of eligible students in an understandable and uniform format. The policy shall be made available to the public and updated periodically, as necessary, to carry out the requirements of parental involvement under Section 1118 of NCLB.

The Board's designee shall, with the involvement of program parents, conduct an annual evaluation of this policy in order to assess its effectiveness in involving parents in the improvement of the supplemental programs and to identify barriers to greater parent participation in program activities.

Each year, the Board's designee shall also conduct a meeting, at a convenient time, to involve parents in the planning, review and improvement of programs funded by supplemental services. All parents of participating children must be invited and encouraged to attend. At this meeting, parents shall be given a description and explanation of the curriculum, the forms of academic assessment used, the proficiency levels students are expected to meet and information regarding the importance of parental involvement.

In addition to the required annual meeting, and if requested by parents, the Board's designee shall offer opportunities for regular meetings at flexible times of the day in order to allow parents to formulate suggestions for the district's supplemental services programs and their application to their children's programs; and to participate, as appropriate, in decisions related to the education of their children.

Parents will be given opportunities to participate in the joint development of the district's supplemental plan, as required by Section 1112 of NCLB, and in the process of any school review and improvement should a school fail to make adequate annual progress as required by Section 1116 of NCLB. At any time, if a parent is dissatisfied with a school's supplemental program, he/she shall have the opportunity to submit comments for review at the district level.

The Board's designee will provide the coordination, technical assistance and other support necessary to assist Title I schools in planning and implementing effective parent involvement. Parental involvement in Title I programs shall be coordinated with parental involvement strategies under other district programs.

In order to build the schools' and parents' capacity for strong parental involvement, the Board shall:

1. provide assistance to parents of eligible students in understanding topics related to their child's progress, such as explanation of state academic standards and assessment tools, the requirements under Title I, and how to monitor their child's progress;
2. provide materials and training to help parents to work with their children, such as literacy training and using technology;
3. educate teachers, staff and administrators about how to better communicate and work with parents;
4. ensure that information related to school and parent programs, meetings and other activities is sent to participating parents in a format and, to the extent practicable, in a language the parents can understand;
5. provide such other reasonable support for parental involvement activities as parents may request; and
6. inform parents and parental organizations of the existence and purpose of the Parent Involvement Policy and the School-Parent Compact.

School-Parent Compact

This policy further requires that each school involved in supplemental programs shall jointly develop, with parents of eligible children, a School-Parent Compact that outlines how parents, staff, and students will share the responsibility for improved student academic achievement and the means by which the school and parents will build and develop a partnership to help children achieve the State's high standards.

The School-Parent Compact shall:

1. describe the school's responsibility to provide high-quality curriculum and instruction in a supportive and effective learning environment that enables supplemental services students to meet the State's student academic achievement standards;
2. indicate the ways in which each parent will be responsible for supporting their child's learning, such as monitoring attendance, homework completion, and television watching; volunteering in their child's classroom; and participating, as appropriate, in decisions related to their child's education and positive use of extracurricular time; and
3. stress the importance of ongoing parent-teacher communication through parent-teacher conferences, frequent reports to parents, reasonable access to school staff, and opportunities to volunteer, participate in and observe their child's classroom activities.

The Board authorizes the Superintendent, or his/her designee, to develop a School-Parent Compact and other procedures such as those relating to meetings, parent communication and parental involvement activities, as he/she deems necessary in order to ensure compliance with this policy.

The Superintendent is required to include information about parental involvement and actions taken to improve parental involvement, in the strategic school profile he or she submits annually to the Board of Education and Commissioner of Education. Such actions to improve parental involvement may include methods to engage parents in the planning and improvement of school programs and to increase support to parents working at home with their children on learning activities.

Legal Reference:

Connecticut General Statutes, Section 10-221Section 1118 of *No Child Left Behind* Act of 2001, Public Act 107-110

Cross Reference:

Policy 1210 (Relations with Parents' Organizations)

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