

BARROW COUNTY SCHOOLS



District Parent Involvement Plan

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Barrow County Schools

LEA Parent Involvement Plan

2011-2012

The Barrow County School District affirms and assures the rights of parents and teachers of children being served in schools receiving Title I, Part A funding. Barrow County Schools adhere to the parent involvement requirements outlined in Sections 1112-1118 of the Elementary and Secondary School Act, also known as No Child Left Behind (2001).

Development of the LEA Plan

The Barrow County School District takes the following actions to involve parents in the joint development and revision of its district-wide parental involvement policy under section 1112 of the ESEA:

- Reviews the results of annual school level parent surveys and school plans for feedback to be incorporated into the development/and revision of the LEA plan.
- Requests that principals of all schools receiving Title I, Part A funds submit names of parents to serve on a district-wide committee for the purpose of developing the LEA parent involvement plan. Places invitation to participate on the district website so that any interested parent may serve. The Title I coordinator facilitates the meeting on an annual basis to review and/or update the plan for the upcoming school year.
- Requires each school to provide documentation that parents have been involved in the development of the school-level Parental Involvement Plan. Feedback in the form of surveys, discussion outlined in the school council minutes, minutes from PTO meetings, focus groups, etc. are some of the strategies schools may employ for ensuring parental involvement in the planning process.
- Provides copies of the LEA plan for review at each school site with forms for parents to provide comments.
- Posts the LEA plan on the Barrow County Schools website with a link on each school's website for accessing that plan. Posts a link to the Title I coordinator for the purpose of receiving comments via e-mail.
- Submits unsatisfactory parent comments to the SEA.

School Review and Improvement

The Barrow County School District takes the following actions to involve parents in the process of school review and improvement under section 1116 of the ESEA by ensuring that each school receiving funds under Title I, Part A:

- Convenes a meeting each Fall to review school achievement data, outline the purposes of Title I, and solicit parent input. The school principal or his/her designee will facilitate this meeting and provide the LEA with copies of agendas and sign in sheets documenting parent participation.

- Convenes meetings of the school governance team and/or other parent groups each year for the purpose of reviewing school goals and providing input into ways Title I funds should be expended to promote student achievement.
- Conducts surveys with parents on an annual basis to get feedback on how parents believe that the school can be improved.
- Involves parents of students from schools identified as Needs Improvement in developing the School Improvement Plan.

Allocation of Funds and LEA Assistance to Schools

The Barrow County School District reserves at least 1% of the LEA allocation for the purpose of parent involvement and distributes at least 95% of this reserve to schools eligible to receive Title I, Part A funds as identified in the CLIP and Consolidated Application.

In addition to providing the required level of funding the LEA will enhance parent involvement by:

- Ensuring that LEA and school level plans incorporate feedback from parents to drive decision-making in how funds are to be allocated for parental involvement activities and which activities are of the highest priority to parents.
- Having the LEA Title I coordinator provide technical assistance and support to each school as needed for analyzing survey results and planning effective parent involvement programs.
- Having the LEA Title I coordinator annually collect data regarding the number of parents who have agreed to and signed Student Achievement Compacts at each Title I school.
- Including parent involvement/family engagement performance measures in the Barrow County Schools Balanced Scorecard.
- Using Title I funds to employ Title I Family Engagement Specialists who work with the families of all Title I students and with school staff to increase family engagement.

Coordination and Integration with Existing Programs

The Barrow County School District coordinates and integrates parent involvement strategies with other programs currently operating in the local area. Examples of programs and activities include:

- The Georgia Pre-K Program, housed at Barrow County elementary schools. School counselors continue to seek ways to involve these parents in activities to assist students in transitioning to Kindergarten.
- Elementary schools schedule visits for Head Start and private preschool students and parents each spring prior to enrollment in the public school kindergarten program.
- The Title I coordinator maintains regular communication with the system's Director of Student Services regarding activities planned and implemented by school counselors, social workers and school nurses that coordinate parent involvement strategies with other agencies.

- The Title I coordinator maintains regular communication with the system's Homeless Liaison to ensure that Title I funds are being used appropriately to support homeless students.
- The district employs a Parent Mentor who supports parents of children with disabilities. The Parent Mentor frequently collaborates with Title I staff.

Annual Evaluations of Parent Involvement Policy

The Barrow County School District coordinates the efforts of schools to collect an annual evaluation of the content and effectiveness parent involvement plans and policy including the identification of barriers to greater participation by:

- Utilizing members of school governance teams, Parent Teacher Organizations, and Parent Teacher Associations to distribute and collect surveys from parents.
- Utilizing technology, such as outbound phone messages, Parent Portal, school and district websites, and e-mails, to remind parents to complete surveys and return them to the schools.
- Utilizing an online parent survey linked to school and district websites that parents can complete.
- School principals and the Title I coordinator will review the findings to make improvements/revisions to policy and plans as needed.

Parental Assistance/Materials and Training

The Barrow County School District ensures that parent involvement plans at the school level include strategies for providing the necessary assistance to parents, as well as training and materials in such areas as a) Georgia Performance Standards, b) school improvement and corrective action process if applicable, c) components of a schoolwide program, d) components of a targeted assistance program if applicable, e) state and local assessments, f) requirements of Title I, Part A, g) ways parents can monitor children's progress and work with educators to improve the performance of their children, and h) ways parents can participate in decisions relating to the education of their children. The parent involvement plans of the individual schools are reviewed annually.

Resource materials for parents are available at the Barrow County Board Office (PDC) in the registration room. Materials include information on how to help your child with homework, reading skills and understanding standardized tests. The resources are available in both Spanish and English. There is a continued effort to keep the information current and updated.

Barrow County Schools publishes annual reports on school performance through articles in local newspapers and postings on school and district websites. The Barrow County Board of Education members are provided an annual update on school performance at the beginning of each school year and at the annual board retreat.

Barrow County Schools hosts Family Academy with cooperation from various community agencies and organizations. Family Academy is offered three to five Saturdays per year and caregivers attend sessions designed to increase their efficacy as a parent/caregiver.

Educating School Personnel on the Value of Parents and Reaching Parents

The Students Services Department of Barrow County Schools serves as a liaison with parents and works to educate school personnel on the value of working with parents. Our English Language Learner Support Specialist has offered workshops for teachers on ways to reach non-English speaking parents and has had school forms translated into other languages as needed. Barrow County Schools employs a Spanish-speaking registrar as well as a multi-lingual Language Evaluation/Migrant Specialist. School and district leaders attended a workshop with Dr. Steve Constantino of Family Friendly Schools. At this workshop, principals and system leaders learned ways to increase family engagement/parent involvement. The Title I Family Engagement Specialist works with faculties and individual teachers to provide strategies to more fully engage parents and caregivers in their children's education.

Community Involvement with Schools and Parents

Our district enjoys a large Partners-in-Education Program as well as a Mentor Program. Both groups are actively involved in all of our schools. Partners at the individual schools provide funding for activities that involve students and parents. Examples of such activities include supplying door prizes for parent workshops/meetings and awards for student achievement.

District Wide Parent Committee Involvement

The Barrow County School District has a Parent Advisory Council which meets annually to review and revise the Title I Parent Plan, provide input into the Comprehensive LEA Implementation Plan (CLIP), and to receive updates on activities throughout the district. The council is comprised of parent representatives nominated by principals as well as parents who express interest in participating. All parents are welcome to participate.

Parents and community members serve in an advisory capacity on other district committees as well, including but not limited to: Code of Conduct Review Committee, Partners in Education Committee, SACS/CASI Standard Review Committees, and Charter System Committees.

Parent Resource Centers/Access to Resources

The Barrow County School District will conduct other appropriate activities designed to help parents become full partners in the education of their children. Such activities may include:

- Employing a Title I Family Engagement Specialist to work with families
- Operating Family Academy
- Establishing, maintaining, or enhancing parent resource centers at each school
- Providing school letters/notices in languages parents understand whenever practicable
- Providing parent information and resources during the centralized registration process at the Barrow County Schools central office
- Continuing to utilize Parent Link and expanding the use of Parent Portal

Parent Comments Regarding the LEA Plan

Barrow County has made provisions for collecting parent comments by placing copies of the LEA parent plan in a prominent place in the office of each Title I school. Comment forms are

provided. E-mail addresses are provided as an additional means for parents to make comments. A parent who wishes to share a concern with the Georgia Department of Education may do so by visiting http://www.doe.k12.ga.us/title_complaint.aspx.

Support for Parent Involvement and Full Participation of Parents

The Title I Family Engagement Specialists will work with all families to ensure their involvement in their child's education. To maximize the participation of LEP parents, interpreters are provided for parent conferences and other meetings whenever possible. Many of our schools employ at least one individual who is bilingual and can assist in helping parents who do not speak English at the school site. The ELL Support Specialist and Language Evaluation/Migrant Specialist assist schools with translating documents into other languages. Some schools have chosen to subscribe to school newsletters that are printed in Spanish.

APPENDIX

Parent Comment Form Barrow County School District Parental Involvement Policy and Plan 2011-2012

Name: _____
School: _____ Date: _____

I would like to make the following comments on the Barrow County School District Parent Involvement Policy and Plan:

Signature _____

Thank you for your comments. Please 1) return this form to your school principal, 2) e-mail comments to Shannon Hammond, Barrow County Schools Title I Coordinator, at shammond@barrow.k12.ga.us, or 3) fax comments to 770-307-1266.