

Standards for Increasing Family Involvement



Standards for Increasing Family Involvement

This document is a guide to help schools provide family involvement activities and supports in a diverse, balanced and comprehensive manner. The guidelines contain both the Title I expectations for family involvement and the district interpretation of the school board policy. In an attempt to help schools define “how much family involvement is enough” this document outlines the minimum expectations and also includes preferred and best practice columns. With the desire to strive for continuous improvement, many schools find that they are doing a remarkable job of providing activities in all areas (parenting, communicating, volunteering, learning at home, decision making, collaborating with community, and school capacity building), yet would like to build upon those activities to the level of best practice.

This document has gone through many revisions and has been developed with the support of various groups and members throughout the district. The task force consisted of:

- 2 Principals (1 elementary, 1 secondary)
- 1 Administrative Intern
- 1 Title I Program Manager
- 1 Family Involvement Program Manager
- 3 Parent Educators
- 4 Home/School Liaisons
- 1 Indian Education Supervisor
- 1 School Nurse
- 1 Teacher
- 1 Curriculum Coordinator
- 3 Community Outreach Specialists (TOSA’s Hmong, Latino, Somali)
- 1 MN Department of Education Family Resource Staff Member

Between March 31, 2005 and April 21, 2005 a draft was presented for comment to various groups in the district. The revised draft was also sent to Dr. Joyce L. Epstein, Director of the National Network of Partnership Schools at Johns Hopkins University, for her review. The suggestions and comments of the various groups were used to improve the guidelines.

- Hmong ELL Advisory Committee
- Somali Parent Leadership Group
- Education Committee of the African American Leadership Council
- NEAT Board of Directors
- American Indian Parent Advisory Council
- Special Education Advisory Council
- Open Focus Groups for Interested Parents
- Latino Consent Decree/Migrant Education Parent Workshop

It is our recommendation that the guidelines be used to serve as a blueprint for family involvement throughout the district.

**STANDARDS FOR
INCREASING FAMILY INVOLVEMENT
Saint Paul Public Schools**

AREA: PARENTING

TITLE I STATUTE	EXPECTATIONS ALIGNED TO BOARD POLICY	PREFERRED	BEST PRACTICE
Parenting resources available in appropriate languages, to the extent practicable.	Parenting resources available in newsletters, books, bulletin boards, agency brochures and referrals in appropriate languages.	PLUS: Advocates available to help families access resources and to help with school processes.	PLUS: Bilingual advocates and parent educators available for families.
Adult literacy information easily available for families.	Adult literacy information easily visible and available for families.	PLUS: On site Family Literacy classes if needed.	PLUS: Offer child care and family/child activity.
	(Elementary) Provide 2 diverse parenting skills workshops based on family surveys and needs using qualified presenters or St Paul's Parenting Resource Directory. (Secondary) Provide 2 informational family workshops. Use qualified presenters or St Paul's Parenting Resource Directory to find resources to enhance parenting skills.	PLUS: (Elementary) Provide 4 onsite parenting skills workshops & an ongoing series of parenting support groups to meet diverse needs. (Secondary) Provide ongoing series of parent workshops based on parent need.	PLUS: Provide a series of diverse parenting skills classes on site that align with school program (i.e. responsive classroom, restitution) or that support effective parenting.
	Home Visits as needed for conferences /attendance/ or per request from teacher/family for discipline, etc.	PLUS: (Elementary) Home Visits to welcome new families with family friendly educational materials and information. PLUS: (Elementary) Teacher phone call to their student's families at the beginning of the year.	PLUS: (Elementary) Teacher Home Visit to each student's family at the start of the year, providing information on grade level expectations & how families can help at home. (Secondary) Phone call from home room teacher/advisor.
Schools give parents information on transitions and integrate activities with Head Start, ECFE, etc. (Preschool to kindergarten)	Parent information and activities on transitions from: Pre-K to Kindergarten, Elementary to Middle School, Middle School to High School and High School to Post Secondary.	PLUS: Workshops and specific information about transitions at all school levels. (Secondary) Family workshop on 6 year plan.	PLUS: See preferred

**STANDARDS FOR
INCREASING FAMILY INVOLVEMENT
Saint Paul Public Schools**

AREA: COMMUNICATING

TITLE I STATUTE	EXPECTATIONS ALIGNED TO BOARD POLICY	PREFERRED	BEST PRACTICE
Compacts in fall, discussed and signed, kept on file and reviewed and revised with parents annually. (Translated into major languages, to the extent practicable)	Use compact like agreement/document with all families. Refer to at conferences, discipline issues, academic improvement plans and in student packets.	PLUS: References to agreements throughout school.	PLUS: See preferred
Annual Fall Title I meeting held at a convenient time to explain to families the requirements and the rights of families to be involved.		PLUS: Monthly parent meetings for diverse populations with an agenda based on family needs and wants.	PLUS: See preferred
Bi-Annual parent/teacher conferences at flexible times to meet family needs.	2 to 3 parent/teacher conferences at flexible times to meet family needs and with bilingual support.	PLUS: Use conferences to provide extra help, activities, information and resources for parents.	PLUS: Opening week parent/teacher conferences with all of the teachers.
Schools provide families information on curriculum, standards and assessments and how to monitor their child's progress throughout the year. Translated.	Schools inform families of what students are learning in each grade/course and the testing required each term. Translated.	PLUS: Curriculum, standards and assessments are explained in detail at a family meetings, PTO, Title I, conferences etc.	PLUS: All school activities and events support and communicate the curriculum while building parent information and awareness.
	Monthly school newsletter that includes diverse resources for families and translations. Monthly (Elementary) Bi Monthly (Secondary)	PLUS: (Elementary) Bi-weekly classroom updates from teacher. (Secondary) Parent portal updated weekly.	PLUS: (Elementary) Weekly classroom reports that include activities, curriculum and assessment information. (Secondary) Parent portal updated daily.
Frequent reports on a child's progress will be given to families.	(Elementary) Monthly student progress reports with bilingual support. (Secondary) Bi monthly student progress reports with bilingual support.	PLUS: Teachers notify parents of any behavior or academic issues that have emerged within 1 week.	PLUS: Ongoing parent/teacher communication that is individualized according to student need.
	Schools plan for and encourage family initiated communication in a welcoming, valued and systematic way.	PLUS: Teachers have a schedule of when they can be called and parents know this schedule. PLUS: Teachers respond daily to e-mail from parents.	PLUS: Teacher/schools respond to parent concerns within 24 hours.
	Schools track parent participation by student name and address to provide extra outreach to families or groups of families least likely to attend activities.	PLUS: Survey diverse parent groups to determine their needs for programming and outreach.	PLUS: Schools have a culturally diverse staff, volunteers and community agencies who build relationships between parents and the school.

**STANDARDS FOR
INCREASING FAMILY INVOLVEMENT
Saint Paul Public Schools**

AREA: VOLUNTEERING

TITLE I STATUTE	EXPECTATIONS ALIGNED TO BOARD POLICY	PREFERRED	BEST PRACTICE
	Staff Contact person identified for volunteers.	PLUS: Staff contact for volunteers who is visible and available to help provide an orientation for all new volunteers.	PLUS: Have volunteer coordinator to handle coordination of recruitment, orientation, development of placements, recognitions and training.
Provide opportunities for families to volunteer and observe in their children's classroom.	Develop and Provide volunteer opportunities with attention to increasing student achievement.	PLUS: All staff consistently recruit diverse families and community volunteers.	PLUS: Have diverse family and community volunteers on all committees.
	Provide an orientation for volunteers.	PLUS: Skill training for all volunteers and staff who supervise the volunteers.	PLUS: All volunteers in decision making have a reliable mentor to meet with before, be with during and meet after each meeting.
	Follow district procedures for background checks and provide a secure place to maintain applications.		
	Training for teachers/staff in value and management of volunteers.	PLUS: Individual support for staff with volunteer issues and concerns.	PLUS: Evaluate effectiveness of staff training and support. Survey staff to generate future needs.
	Plan and conduct a volunteer appreciation.	PLUS: Plan and conduct regular and varied recognitions appropriate to all volunteers.	PLUS: Involve all staff in volunteer appreciations and recognitions.

**STANDARDS FOR
INCREASING FAMILY INVOLVEMENT
Saint Paul Public Schools**

AREA: LEARNING AT HOME

TITLE I STATUTE	EXPECTATIONS ALIGNED TO BOARD POLICY	PREFERRED	BEST PRACTICE
Information to families on how they can help their child be successful in school by what they do at home.	Information to families on how they can help their child be successful in school by what they do at home.	PLUS: Interactive homework from teachers weekly at all levels.	PLUS: Video, DVD, Home Visits, and/or Classes on how to enforce homework rules and how to help children learn at home.
	Current information on school and community resources to help children do better at school. (homework help)		
	Information to families on the value of homework and how to help their children manage homework.	PLUS: Home visits available to help families organize around homework issues and communicate the community resources available to help families.	PLUS: See preferred.
	A family learning event that supports families as vital partners in the education of their children for each grade level/department.	PLUS: Minimum of 2 family learning events per grade level/department that focus on the curriculum and standards and what can be done at home to support this learning.	PLUS: Monthly learning events and activities for families offered daytime and evenings to accommodate families.
Provide diverse materials and training to help parents work with their child to improve academic achievement.	Schools plan with families to develop guidelines for an interactive and viable role for families in homework.	PLUS: Teachers have consistent weekly homework and the schedule is clearly communicated to parents.	PLUS: District/school has consistent and clear homework policy that is communicated to all parents.
	(Secondary) Information for families to know what classes students need for graduation or college. Include 6 yr. plan.	PLUS: (Secondary) Monthly promotions of all post-secondary options.	PLUS: Career events for elementary grade students and their families. Plus: (Secondary) Field trips to colleges and other post-secondary options.

**STANDARDS FOR
INCREASING FAMILY INVOLVEMENT
Saint Paul Public Schools**

AREA: DECISION MAKING

TITLE I STATUTE	EXPECTATIONS ALIGNED TO BOARD POLICY	PREFERRED	BEST PRACTICE
	<p>Form a diverse Family Action Team for Partnerships to guide family involvement planning.</p>	<p>PLUS: Recruit and provide support for families serving on building level committees.</p>	<p>PLUS: Parents/families are involved in planning at all levels of a school.</p>
<p>In a schoolwide program involve parents in an organized, ongoing and timely way in the planning, review and improvement of school programs. In a targeted program consult with parents of Title I students regarding your Title I plan.</p>	<p>Site council follows all district guidelines. In particular members reflect demographics of students and review parent involvement plan. At least 1/2 Site Council members are parents and community members. Schools will connect site council members to training opportunities or provide training for site council members. Site council minutes are published and made public.</p>	<p>PLUS: All community and family site council members have an effective personal mentor to help them understand the issues confronting the school. PLUS: Schools provide site council members and other parent group leaders with leadership training.</p>	<p>PLUS: Site Council members actively solicit information from parents on school issues. PLUS: All parents/families receive information on who their site council representatives are and how to contact them.</p>
		<p>PLUS: Have a parent/family representative who attends district meetings and reports back to parents.</p>	<p>PLUS: A representative from the site council or parent group attends district parent meetings and reports back to the groups consistently.</p>

**STANDARDS FOR
INCREASING FAMILY INVOLVEMENT
Saint Paul Public Schools**

AREA: COLLABORATING WITH COMMUNITY

TITLE I STATUTE	EXPECTATIONS ALIGNED TO BOARD POLICY	PREFERRED	BEST PRACTICE
Schools work with Head Start, Preschool programs and other schools to provide transition activities and assistance to families.	Schools collaborate with all early education programs, other schools and post secondary education programs to provide transition activities and assistance to families.		
	Schools collaborate with at least one community or professional organization that supports student success.	PLUS: Schools engage in multiple community partnerships that have at least one representative on the site council.	PLUS: Schools plan programming with partners. Schools recognize all partners.
	Schools collaborate with a least one community partnership that supports success of diverse students.	PLUS: Schools engage multiple community partnerships that have at least one representative on the site council.	PLUS: Schools work with local or neighborhood news organizations.
		PLUS: School contributes to the community through service activities.	PLUS: School represented at District Councils.

**STANDARDS FOR
INCREASING FAMILY INVOLVEMENT
Saint Paul Public Schools**

AREA: SCHOOL CAPACITY BUILDING

TITLE I STATUTE	EXPECTATIONS ALIGNED TO BOARD POLICY	PREFERRED	BEST PRACTICE
Present Title I law regarding Parent Involvement.	Beginning of year staff workshop on Parent Involvement Partnership Model, district policy and Title I law if applicable.	PLUS: Parent involvement staff trainings aligned with SCIP goals.	PLUS: Family involvement considered and addressed in all staff trainings.
Parent involvement guidelines reviewed annually with families , presented to staff and distributed to families & communities (translated).	Parent involvement guidelines reviewed annually with families , presented to staff and distributed/communicated to families & communities (translated).	PLUS: Monitor and evaluate implementation and effectiveness of Parent/Family Involvement by staff and parent/family surveys.	PLUS: Planning and changes are based on results of evaluations.
	Annual written family and community partnership components as required by the SCIP plan.	PLUS: The family involvement components of the SCIP are compiled into a unified plan.	PLUS: Regular reports on family involvement/SCIP plan at staff meetings throughout the year.
	Designated space for parent resources.	PLUS: Family Resource room that is visible and welcoming to parents/families.	PLUS: Staff available to interact with families at all times and help them with problem solving/resources.
	Family involvement action team for partnerships includes diverse families and teachers and other staff to implement SCIP goals for parent involvement. The focus is achievement.	PLUS: Team communicates with and actively seeks input from staff and families after each event..	PLUS: Team evaluates family involvement and the impact they're having on families and student achievement.
Schools provide bilingual support for families as needed and practicable. (interpreters/translators).	Schools provide bilingual support for families as needed (interpreters/translators).	PLUS: Schools have bilingual staff to work with students and families and they communicate concerns to site council.	PLUS: Bilingual staff take leadership to promote family involvement in the school and community.
	Schools will be represented at district family involvement meetings.	PLUS: Parents are aware of and know the schools family involvement person.	
	Parents know who to call at the school when they have questions.	PLUS: Most families have a contact person they personally know and they may call when they have concerns or need information about the school..	PLUS: See preferred.
Educate school staff in the value of contributions of parents, how to reach out to, communicate and work with parents as equal partners and build ties between parents and the school.	Training for all staff in the value of family involvement. Teacher training in using effective family interactive homework strategies.	PLUS: Teacher can choose to do their Professional Development Plan (PDP) around improving their skills in parent involvement.	PLUS: Teachers must include parent involvement as part of their PDP.