

Springfield Public Schools

Search. Learn. Serve.

October 20, 2020

Dear Parent/Guardian:

The Elementary and Secondary Education Act was our country's most important education law. This law was revised and is now called the ***Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)***, formerly *No Child Left Behind (NCLB)* was designed to make changes in teaching and learning that will help our students achieve more in school.

The law requires that all schools receiving federal funds must inform parents of their right to ask schools about the qualifications of their child's teachers. Our school receives federal funding and we are happy to share this information with you.

We believe that nothing is more important to your child's education at school than having a well-prepared and highly qualified teacher. The law requires that all teachers must meet a specific legal definition of "highly qualified" in order to teach in schools that receive federal funding. The legal definition of a Highly Qualified Teacher has three parts. It states that the teacher must have the following:

1. A four-year college degree;
2. A regular teaching certificate/license; and
3. Proof of their knowledge in the subject they teach.

New Jersey has some of the most qualified teachers in the country, and we are extremely proud of the quality of the teaching staff in the Springfield School District. All of our regular teachers have college degrees and many have advanced degrees. The state of New Jersey has always required a teaching certificate/license for all teachers. In addition, every teacher continues his or her own learning through professional development activities and our teachers are evaluated each year to make sure that their teaching skills remain at the highest possible level.

All of Springfield Public School's teachers have met this legal definition of "highly qualified." All teachers hired after the beginning of the 2002-03 school year were required to meet this definition. Veteran teachers, hired before the 2002-2003 school year, who did not yet meet the legal definition of "highly qualified" had until the end of the 2005-2006 school year to do so.

To ensure that every child in every classroom has a highly qualified teacher, the state of New Jersey and our school district are working together to help teachers meet the requirements of the federal law by providing several options. Teachers are able to take a new test, or they can demonstrate their expertise through a combination of college coursework, professional development activities and experience.

A highly qualified teacher knows what to teach, how to teach and has a full understanding of the subject matter being taught. We believe that every teacher in our school is fully qualified and dedicated to teaching your child, and if necessary we will do everything possible to help our teachers who may not yet meet the legal definition required by the federal government.

I encourage you to support your child's education and communicate with his or her teacher on a regular basis. For more information on the ***Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)***, and the role of Title I parents, please read the information enclosed with this letter. By partnering together—families and educators—we can provide your child with the best education possible.

Sincerely,

Rachel Goldberg
Superintendent

Rachel Goldberg, Superintendent

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TITLE I – DISTRICT-WIDE PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

Policy 2415.04 - Revised March 18, 2019

This policy is being adopted in order to:

1. Support and secure an effective partnership among parents, legal guardians, schools and the community;
2. Provide students with a school environment that encourages high student academic achievement; and
3. Comply with the *Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)*, formerly *No Child Left Behind (NCLB)*, Title I requirements regarding the establishment of a parental involvement policy.

Definitions

"Parental Involvement" — The term parental involvement means participation of parents in regular, two-way and meaningful communication involving student academic learning and other school activities, including that parents play an integral role in assisting their child's learning, that parents are encouraged to be actively involved in their child's education, that parents are full partners in their child's education and are included, as appropriate, in decision making and on advisory committees to assist in the education of their child.

General Expectations

The Board believes that parental involvement is important to the establishment of an educational environment that encourages high student academic achievement. Parents of students have a unique opportunity for parent involvement through active participation in and support of School Leadership Committee and Parent Advisory Councils in schools. Springfield Public Schools agrees to implement the following statutory requirements:

- A. Place into operation programs, activities and procedures for the involvement of parents in all of its schools with Title I, Part A programs, consistent with section 1118 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). Those programs, activities and procedures will be planned and operated with meaningful consultation with parents and participating children.

* For the duration of this policy, parental/parents shall also refer to legal guardianship/legal guardians.

- B. Consistent with section 1118, Springfield Public Schools, the school district will work with its schools to ensure that the required school-level parental involvement policies meet the requirement of section 1118(b) of the ESEA, and each include as a component, a school-parent compact consistent with section 1118(d) of ESEA.

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- C. Springfield Public Schools will incorporate this district-wide parental involvement policy into its educational plan.
- D. In carrying out the Title I, Part A parental involvement requirements, to the extent practicable, Springfield Public Schools will provide full opportunities for the participation of parents with limited English proficiency, parents with disabilities and parents of migratory children, including providing information and school reports required under section 1111 of the ESEA in an understandable and uniform format and including alternative formats upon request and, to the extent practicable, in language parents understand.
- E. If the school district plan for Title I, Part A, developed under section 1112 of the ESEA, is not satisfactory to the parents of participating children, Springfield Public Schools will submit any parent(s) comments along with the plan when the school district submits the plan to the New Jersey Department of Education.
- F. Springfield Public Schools will involve the parents of children service in Title I, Part A schools in decisions about how the one percent of Title I, Part A funds reserved for parental involvement is spent, and will ensure that not less than ninety-five percent of the one percent reserved goes directly to the schools.
- G. Springfield Public Schools will inform parents and parental organizations that the State maintains a Parental Information and Resource Center to support parents in the education of their children.

The contact information for this organization is as follows:

NJ Parent Information and Resource Center
103 Church Street, Suite 200
New Brunswick, NJ 08901

Milady Murillo
PIRC Program Coordinator
732 246 8060 ext. 110

Implementation Activities

- A. *District-Wide Title I Parent Involvement Plan:*
Springfield Public Schools will jointly develop a district-wide parental involvement plan with parents by meeting regularly with a cross-section of parents, including, but not limited to, representatives of Every Student Succeeds Act Title I parents and Local School Council Advisory Board. The representatives will be encouraged to take information back to their respective members for input.

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B. School Review and Improvement:

Springfield Public Schools will continue to encourage School Leadership Committees which consists of parents, community members, teachers, division heads and high school students, to closely follow their State-mandated responsibility of:

1. Approving school improvement plans;
2. Monitoring school improvement plans; and
3. Sharing and informing other parents and community members of the progress or lack of progress of the school improvement plans.

C. School Parent Involvement Activities to Increase Student Achievement:

Springfield Public Schools will continue to provide the necessary coordination, technical assistance and other support to assist Title I, Part A schools in planning and implementing effective parental involvement activities to improve student academic achievement and school performance by helping schools to complete:

1. An inventory of present practice;
2. A three-year outline of broad goals that show how the school's partnership programs with parents and the community will grow over time; and
3. A one-year action plan specifying how parents can help support the school improvement plan and increase student achievement.

D. Integration of Parent Involvement Strategies:

Springfield Public Schools will continue to integrate parental involvement strategies in Title I, Part A schools with parental involvement strategies from other parental involvement programs such as: Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) and School Leadership Committees.

E. Evaluation:

Springfield Public Schools will take the following actions to ensure that an annual evaluation of the content and effectiveness of this parental involvement policy in improving the quality of its Title I, Part A schools, with the involvement of parents, is conducted.

Springfield Public Schools will ensure that an inventory of centralized present practices of parent involvement is conducted, with the input of parents; in addition, Springfield Public Schools will encourage Title I, Part A schools to conduct an inventory of present practices. Title I, Part A schools, with the input of parents, will also be given an evaluation tool to self-evaluate the effectiveness of their school-family-community partnership programs. The evaluation will include identifying barriers to greater participation by parents in parental involvement activities (with particular attention to parents who are economically disadvantaged, homeless, disabled, have limited English proficiency, limited literacy or are of any racial or ethnic minority background.)

Springfield Public Schools will use the findings of the evaluation about its parental involvement policy and activities to design strategies for more effective parental involvement, and to revise its parental involvement policy (with the involvement of parents), if necessary.

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F. Building capacity for Parental Involvement:

Springfield Public Schools will continue its current efforts to build the schools' and parents' capacity for strong parental involvement, in order to ensure effective involvement of parents and to support a partnership among the Title I Part A schools, parents and the community to improve student academic achievement, through the following activities specifically described below:

1. Springfield Public Schools will continue to provide assistance to parents of children served by the school district in understanding topics such as the following through an undertaking of the following actions:
 - a. Conducting classes or providing information on the following:
 - (1) The State's academic content standard;
 - (2) The State's student academic achievement standards;
 - (3) The State and local academic assessments including alternate assessments;
 - (4) The requirements of Title I, Part A;
 - (5) How to monitor their child's progress and their school's adequate yearly progress (AYP); and
 - (6) How to work with educators.
 - b. To the extent feasible, conducting conferences that offer tools to parents that will lead to student success.
2. Springfield Public Schools will continue to encourage schools to provide materials and training to help parents work with their children to improve their children's academic achievement, to foster parental involvement by aligning the Springfield Public Schools parent involvement program with Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) requirements and by strongly linking the program to student achievement. Specifically, Springfield Public Schools will continue to offer training or other information to parents on the following:
 - a. Ways to help families establish home environments that support children as students.
 - b. Information and ideas for families about how to help students at home with homework and other curriculum-related activities, decisions and planning.
 - c. How to design effective forms of school-to-home and home-to-school communications about school programs and children's progress.
3. Springfield Public Schools with the assistance of its schools and parents, will continue to provide staff development to its teachers, student services personnel, division heads and other staff on how to reach out to, communicate with, and work with parents as full and equal partners; the value and utility of the contribution of parents; and how to implement and coordinate parent programs and build ties between parents and schools, by conducting professional development classes and working with schools to implement parent and community partnership programs.

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4. Springfield Public Schools will encourage schools to take actions to ensure that information related to the school and parent programs, meetings and other activities is sent to the parents of participating children in an understandable and uniform format, including alternate formats upon request and, to the extent practicable, in a language the parents can understand.

District-Wide Parental Involvement Policy Components

In order to build parents' capacity for involvement in the schools and to support their children's academic achievement, Springfield Public Schools will continue its effort to:

- A. Maximize parental involvement and participation in their children's education;
- B. Encourage school meetings to be held at a variety of times;
- C. Adopt and implement model approaches to improve parental involvement; and
- D. Develop appropriate roles for community-based organizations and businesses, including faith-based organizations, in parental involvement activities, and find ways to identify and integrate resources and services from the community to strengthen school programs, family practices and student learning and development.

Adoption

The concepts in the District-Wide Title I Parental Involvement Policy have been developed jointly with, and agreed on by, parents of children participating in Title I, Part A programs. The required parental involvement activities will be implemented to the extent of one ***Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)***, formerly *No Child Left Behind (NCLB)*, fund. The school district will make this policy available for parents of participating Title I, Part A children on its adoption.