

# Instruction

## Parent Involvement

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The goal of the Vernon Board of Education is to provide high quality academic programming and instructional opportunities to maximize the achievement of all students and to minimize the achievement disparities that exist among groups of students. Vernon's Title I Program is one means by which the Vernon Board of Education ensures that all children have a fair, equal, and significant opportunity to obtain a high-quality education and reach, at a minimum, proficiency in meeting the State's challenging academic achievement standards and state academic assessment goals. Because research overwhelmingly demonstrates the positive effect that parent involvement has on a child's academic achievement, the Vernon Board of Education expects the participation of parents/guardians in regular, two-way, and meaningful communication involving student academic learning and other school activities.

To facilitate active and effective district parent involvement, the Vernon Public Schools, as required by federal legislation *No Child Left Behind*, will:

- A. Involve parents in the joint development/revision of the district's parent involvement policy by convening an annual meeting in September, at a convenient time, to which all parents shall be invited and encouraged to attend
  - to inform them of their rights in the five key areas addressed in NCLB, including assessment and accountability, highly qualified teachers, highly qualified paraprofessionals, English language learners, and parental involvement; and
  - to engage them as key stakeholders in the annual revision of the parent involvement policy
- B. Provide coordination, technical assistance and other support necessary to assist all schools in planning and implementing effective parent involvement activities to improve student academic achievement and school performance by
  - convening monthly meetings of the district's administrative team, the district's instructional council, and the school's PTO presidents to strategize renewed efforts to expand parent participation and to create links between and among the parents, the schools, and the district office.

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- accessing the expertise and resources offered by the state department of education to assist the district's schools in developing the school-level parental involvement compacts
- supporting school level participation (parents, teachers, and administrators) in professional workshops and conferences aimed at enhancing the school-family-community partnership

### C. Build the schools' and parents' capacity for strong parental involvement by

- providing materials and training to help parents understand what they can do to support their child's motivation and readiness to learn
- informing parents and parent organizations of the existence and purpose of the state's Parent Information and Resource Center
- educating teachers in how to reach out, communicate with, and work with parents as equal partners
- ensuring, to the extent possible, that information related to school and parent programs, meetings, and other activities is sent to the parents/guardians of children in a format and in a language that parents can understand
- providing financial support for parental involvement activities
- coordinating with the schools to provide parents timely information about programs (i.e. Elementary Handbook); a description and explanation of the curriculum in use (i.e. Curriculum on the Wall); the academic assessment used to measure student progress; the proficient levels students are expected to meet
- engaging the buildings' PTOs to actively seek out and invite parents/guardians through regular communication updates and information sessions
- publishing a master calendar of district meetings
- providing child care to enable parents to participate in school-related meetings and training sessions

### D. Coordinate and integrate parental involvement strategies with other programs and initiatives

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- through active participation in the monthly School Readiness Council meetings, which includes stakeholders from the Hockanum Valley Day Care Council, Head Start, the Rockville Public Library, Maple Street's Family Resource Center, the Vernon Regional Adult Basic Education Program, Vernon Youth Services, and Vernon Town Council
  - through the implementation of Vernon's strategic plan *Catalyst for Excellence*
  - through collaboration with other organizations and agencies that serve the interests and needs of students and their families
- E. Conduct, with the involvement of parents, an annual evaluation (survey) of the effectiveness of the parental involvement policy in improving the academic quality of the schools, which includes identifying barriers to greater participation, and using the findings to design strategies for more effective involvement
- F. Involve parents in the activities of the schools
- by communicating opportunities for parental involvement (which include volunteering, sharing expertise, leadership, home support, school decision-making, parent education, professional development, etc.) and by making personal connections to recruit them
  - providing calendar information to parents/guardians of upcoming meetings, discussions, and events and encouraging their participation

**Policy Adopted: January 12, 2004**