

Title I Newsletter
Darlington County School District
Office of Federal Programs/EIA
Emily G. Lunn, Director
2011-2012

Purpose of Title I

Title I (of the federal *No Child Left Behind* legislation) is a federal program that provides opportunities for the children served to acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to meet challenging state content standards.

Title I resources are distributed to schools where needs are the greatest, in amounts sufficient to make a difference in the improvement of instruction.

Title I coordinates services with other educational services and, to the degree possible, with health and social services programs.

Title I provides greater decision-making authority and flexibility within the schools and for teachers. However, greater responsibility for student performance is the exchange made for this flexibility.

Components of a Title I School-wide Program

- A comprehensive needs assessment of the entire school is conducted.
- School-wide reform strategies provide opportunities for all children to meet the State's performance standards.
- Instruction is conducted by a highly qualified staff.
- Professional development is conducted on a continual basis throughout the year.
- Activities are conducted to increase parent involvement.
- Plans are included to provide transitional assistance from pre-school to elementary, from elementary to middle school, and from middle school to high school.
- Measures are taken to include teachers in decisions about assessment.
- Activities are conducted to ensure that students with learning difficulties receive assistance.

Parental Involvement

Parental involvement is an integral part of the Title I program. Parents are encouraged to become partners in helping their children achieve and become actively involved in all aspects of the process of the Title I program, from the writing of the plan to its implementation and evaluation.

A strong connection between the home and the school is a key element in student success. Materials, strategies, and help from teachers are available to all parents within a Title I school. Opportunities for active parent participation should include, but not be limited to open house, parent workshops, school-parent compacts, home visitation, parent-teacher organizations, conferences, monthly newsletters, and more.

The *No Child Left Behind* legislation requires schools to utilize a portion of their Title I funds to support parent involvement. Parents should contact the school principal with any comments or suggestions regarding the school's parent involvement expenditures.

Parent Involvement Policy and School-Parent Compact

Each Title I school is required to ask for input from parents regarding the development of a parent involvement policy and a school-parent compact.

The parent involvement policy explains how the school plans to work with parents to review and improve parent programs and describes how parents can participate in planning these programs.

The school-parent compact outlines how parents, the entire school staff, and students will share the responsibility for improved student academic achievement and the way in which the school and parents will build and develop a partnership to help children achieve the State's high standards.

Title I Participation

The District Title I Office continually monitors the implementation of the Title I school-wide plans and welcomes input from parents, school staff, and community members regarding its current and future Title I plans. If you would like to participate on the District Title I Parent Advisory Committee or make comments on the District Title I plan, please contact Emily G. Lunn at 843-398-5100. The Title I District Parent Involvement Policy is provided to all Title I parents upon review by the District Title I Parent Advisory Committee. Thank you!

Description & Explanation of Curriculum, Forms of Academic Assessment, and Proficiency Levels Students Are Expected to Meet

The Darlington County School District provides a high-quality curriculum based upon the South Carolina Curriculum Standards. This curriculum has been approved by the South Carolina Board of Education and adopted by the Darlington County Board of Education. Textbooks used in the classrooms have been reviewed by a committee of teachers and adopted and endorsed by the State Department of Education. Specific educational programs in each school are targeted to meet the identified needs of the children in the school.

Darlington County School District administers a variety of standardized assessments to its students. Palmetto Achievement of State Standards (PASS) is part of the state assessment program. It is given to students in grades three through eight and measures student performance on the state standards. ITBS/COGAT are nationally norm-referenced tests administered by the District to students in grades two and seven. At the end of the second year of high school, the High School Assessment Program (HSAP) is administered. This test is in accordance with *No Child Left Behind* and measures students' academic achievement on high school academic standards. All students are given teacher-prepared and textbook-provided assessments to monitor student progress throughout the year.

Based upon requirements of *No Child Left Behind*, all students in grades three through eight are expected to score "*Met*" or "*Exemplary*" on PASS by the end of the 2013-2014 school year.

Parent's Right to Know

As a parent of a student enrolled at a Title I school-wide, you have the right to know the professional qualifications of the classroom teachers and instructional assistants who instruct your child. Federal law allows you to ask for the following information about your child's classroom teachers and requires the District to give you this information in a timely manner:

- whether the teacher is certified to teach the subjects and/or grade levels the teacher is teaching,
- whether the teacher's certificate is a waiver or substandard certificate,
- the teacher's academic major, graduate degrees, if any, and
- the teacher's certification area.

If you would like to receive this information, please call the Darlington County School District Personnel Department at 843-398-5100.

South Carolina Department of Education Complaint Resolution Procedures

The State Department of Education (SDE) has the authority to hear complaints and appeals regarding certain federal programs and requires school districts to distribute the following information concerning the South Carolina Department of Education's complaint resolution procedures:

- Organizations or individuals may file a complaint that applies to Title I within thirty days of receiving the decision by the school district or group of districts.
- Complaints and appeals must be made in writing and they must contain a statement indicating the violation, the facts on which the statement is based, and the specific requirement of law or regulation allegedly violated. Complaints and appeals must be filed with the State Superintendent of Education at the S.C. Department of Education, 1429 Senate Street, Columbia, South Carolina 29201.
- The SDE will confirm receipt of the complaint within ten business days and will conduct an investigation to determine the merits of the complaint. The Deputy Superintendent will issue a final decision regarding the complaint within 60 days, except under exceptional circumstances that warrant an extension.
- The final decision of the SDE may be appealed to the Secretary of the U. S. Department of Education.

Title I Expenditures for 2011-2012

The *No Child Left Behind* legislation includes provisions for all children to score "*Met*" or "*Exemplary*" on PASS by the end of the 2013-2014 school year. Each Title I school-wide is provided additional funds to supplement their regular school budget to aid in reaching this goal. These funds provide additional teachers, materials, technology, staff development and other resources to enhance classroom instruction.

District Level Parent Involvement

Title I Parents are involved on the District level through a Title I Parent Involvement Committee, which meets two-three times during the school year. This committee is made up of a representative from each of the Title I schools. All parents with a child being served at a Title I School-wide are periodically consulted for input into the Title I programs and activities during the school year. The District Title I Parent Involvement Committee reviews the District Parent Involvement Policy and instructional programs and provides input into the District Title I plan.