



Lynchburg City Schools Parent Involvement Policy 2013-2014

PART I. GENERAL EXPECTATIONS

Lynchburg City Schools agrees to implement the following statutory requirements:

Lynchburg City Schools will put into operation programs, activities and procedures for the involvement of parents in all 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 of participating children.

- Consistent with section 1118, Lynchburg City Schools will work with the schools to ensure that their required school-level parental involvement policies meet the requirements of section 1118(b) of the ESEA, and include, as a component, a school-parent compact consistent with section 1118(d) of the ESEA.
- Lynchburg City Schools will incorporate this division level parental involvement policy into its Title I plan in the consolidated application developed under section 1112 of the ESEA.
- In carrying out Title I, Part A parental involvement requirements to the extent practicable, Lynchburg City Schools and each individual school 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/or alternative formats upon request to the extent practical, in a language parents understand.
- If Lynchburg City Schools' plan for Title I, Part A, developed under section 1112 of the ESEA, is not satisfactory to the parents of participating children, Lynchburg City Schools will submit any parent comments with the plan when Lynchburg City Schools submits the plan to the Virginia Department of Education.
- Lynchburg City Schools will involve the parents of children served in Title I, Part A schools in decisions about how the 1% of set-aside funds reserved for parental involvement is spent, and will ensure that not less than 95% of the 1% reserve goes directly to the schools.
- Lynchburg City Schools will be governed by the following statutory definition of parental involvement and expects that its Title I schools will carry out programs, activities and procedures in accordance with this definition:

Parental involvement means the participation of parents in regular, two-way, and meaningful communication involving student academic learning and other school activities, including ensuring—

- (A) that parents play an integral role in assisting their child’s learning;
- (B) that parents are encouraged to be actively involved in their child’s education at school;
- (C) 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;
- (D) the carrying out of other activities, such as those described in section 1118 of the ESEA.

PART II. DESCRIPTION OF HOW LYNCHBURG CITY SCHOOLS WILL IMPLEMENT REQUIRED SCHOOL WIDE PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT POLICY COMPONENTS

1. Lynchburg City Schools will take the following actions to involve parents in the joint development of its district wide parental involvement plan under section 1112 of the ESEA:

Each elementary school has two to three parent representatives requested to serve on the district wide parental involvement team in the development of the Parent Involvement Policies and Plan and other parental involvement activities.

2. Lynchburg City Schools will take the following actions to involve parents in the process of school review and improvement under section 1116 of the ESEA:

Each Title I school will have parent representatives serve on their school improvement team. The team will meet at various times during the year to formulate and/or review the school improvement plan. Additionally all parents are able to give feedback and make suggestions about various programs that their site school offers at Parent Advisory Council meetings scheduled throughout the year or through on-line/paper format surveys (sent home with students annually.)

3. Lynchburg City Schools will provide the following necessary coordination, technical assistance, and other support to assist in planning and implementing effective parental involvement activities to improve student academic achievement and school performance:

Lynchburg City Schools will support Title I schools as they schedule capacity-building activities and events at various times and locations to reach all parents in the community. These activities will include topics as identified by the Title 1 Parent Survey. Parents will be encouraged to participate in the *Give Me Five* parent program implemented as a part of the division’s Comprehensive Plan.

4. Lynchburg City Schools will coordinate and integrate parental involvement strategies in Part A with parental involvement strategies under the following other programs: Head Start, Virginia Preschool

Initiative, McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, 21st Century Community Learning Centers and others as appropriate by:

Lynchburg City School Virginia Preschool Initiative Program and Head Start have a joint brochure that includes Child Find and Head Start program information as a resource for parents of all children ages 3 or 4 living in the city of Lynchburg. Lynchburg City Schools provide a Homeless Education Specialist that ensures that all students have access to education as well as transportation. Title I schools that also have 21st CCLC programs integrate and coordinate services to parents.

5. Lynchburg City Schools will take the following actions to conduct, with the involvement of parents, an annual evaluation of the content and effectiveness of this parental involvement policy in improving the quality of its Title I, Part A schools. The evaluation will include identifying barriers to greater participation by parents in parental involvement activities (with particular attention to parents who are economically disadvantaged, are disabled, have limited English proficiency, have limited literacy, or are of any racial or ethnic minority background). Lynchburg City 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, if necessary (and with the involvement of parents) its parental involvement policies.

All Lynchburg City Schools parents (this includes all parents who are economically disadvantaged, disabled, have limited English proficiency, have limited literacy, or are of any racial or ethnic minority background) will be asked to complete a parent survey. We will use the results of the survey to develop our plan for capacity-building activities. Parents will be invited to serve on committees that focus on the parental needs at the school level, and on the division level Parent Advisory Committee.

6. Lynchburg City Schools will 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 school, parents, and the community to improve student academic achievement, through the following activities specifically described below:

- A. Lynchburg City Schools, with the assistance of its Title I, Part A schools, will provide assistance to parents of children served by Lynchburg City Schools, as appropriate, in understanding topics such as the following, by undertaking the actions described in this paragraph.

- Virginia Standards of Learning
- The requirements of Title I, Part A services
- Methods for monitoring student progress
- Effective methods for communicating with educators

Lynchburg City Schools will support schools in the scheduling of activities/events to assist parents in understanding the requirements and expectations of the Standards of Learning. Materials and supplies will be provided to parents to use at home to support their child. At the end of each nine weeks, parents will receive a copy of their child's division wide assessments. Schools will send letters which address how parents can access information on the highly qualified status of each employee at the school. Parent/teacher conferences will be held as

needed. Each school will be encouraged to send newsletters home to parents of all students in grades PreK-5. These newsletters may include tips on how to communicate with the school and the child's teacher, how to monitor your child's progress, suggested educational activities, how to build self-esteem and a sense of responsibility, methods on working with teachers, as well as information regarding school and classroom events and activities.

- B. Lynchburg City Schools will, with the assistance of its schools, provide materials and training to help parents work with their children to improve their children's academic achievement, such as literacy and technology training, as appropriate, to foster parental involvement, as described below:

Activities/training at the schools will be provided to parents in areas of reading, math, science and technology. Parents will be given the opportunity to participate in hands on learning in computer labs and experience the same programs offered to their children. The schools have been encouraged to create centers where Title I, Part A materials are available to all pre-school through elementary school age children. Materials may include games, books, videos, puzzles, and activities which support the language arts and math SOLs. Schools are also encouraged to develop a parent lending library. During the 2013-14 school year, Lynchburg City Schools is investigating the possibility of developing a partnership with the Lynchburg City Library to enhance and extend programs and materials currently available to parents.

- C. Lynchburg City Schools will, with the assistance of its schools, educate staff on effective methods of communication with parents, how to involve parents as equal partners, how to value and utilize the contributions of parents, and how to implement and coordinate parent programs and build ties between parents and schools, as explained below:

Lynchburg City Schools requires schools to analyze the responses from parent surveys and use the results to educate teachers and staff about the specific strengths and weaknesses noted by parents. Schools are encouraged to utilize the Superintendent's and Principal's Parent Advisory Council meetings and PTA or PTO meetings to address concerns and to communicate with parents. Schools are encouraged to use feedback from the annual School Culture survey as a source of information on how well they are communicating with and welcoming parents. Poverty simulation training was provided for all staff in 2013-14.

- D. Lynchburg City Schools will, to the extent feasible and appropriate, coordinate and integrate parental involvement programs and activities with Head Start, Virginia Preschool Initiative, 21st CCLC, and other programs, and conduct other activities that encourage and support parents in more fully participating in the education of their children.
- E. Lynchburg City Schools will take the following 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 alternative formats upon request, and, to the extent practical, in a language the parents can understand:

All schools are required to provide communications to families in alternative formats upon request. Schools work closely with Title III, Part A staff to ensure that all families receive materials in their native language.

PART III. DISCRETIONARY PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT POLICY COMPONENTS

Lynchburg City Schools agrees that a critical dimension of effective schooling is parent involvement. Research has shown the following:

- Families provide the primary educational environment.
- Parent involvement in their children's education improves student achievement.
- Parent involvement is most effective when it is comprehensive, supportive, long-lasting, and well-planned.
- The benefits of parent involvement are not limited to early childhood or the elementary level; there are continuing positive effects through high school.
- Involving parents in supporting their children's education at home is not enough. To ensure the quality of schools as institutions serving the community, parents must be involved at all levels in the schools.
- Children from low-income and culturally and racially diverse families have the most to gain when schools involve parents.
- The extent of parent involvement in a child's education is more important to student success than family income or education.
- We cannot look at the school and the home in isolation from one another; families and schools need to collaborate to help children adjust to the world of school. This is particularly critical for children from families with different cultural and language backgrounds.

Our efforts must be directed toward developing strong comprehensive parent involvement. Comprehensive means that parents need to be involved at all grade levels in a variety of roles. We must establish and develop initiatives that enhance parent involvement and reflect the needs of the students and families in our community. Our efforts must be designed to:

- promote two-way (school-to-home and home-to-school) communication about school programs and students' progress
- involve parents, with appropriate training, in instructional and support roles at the school and in other locations that help the school and students reach stated goals, objectives, and standards
- provide parents with strategies and techniques for assisting their children with learning activities at home that support and extend the school's instructional program
- help prepare parents to actively participate in school decision making
- provide parents with skills to access community and support services that strengthen school programs, family practices, and student learning and development

Lynchburg City Schools in collaboration with parents, teachers, students, and administrators, must establish and develop initiatives that enhance parent involvement and reflect the needs of the students and families in the communities that we serve.

During the 2013-2014 school year Lynchburg City Schools implemented a new division-wide initiative designed to promote and improve parental involvement at all grade levels. The *Give Me Five* program will be monitored at the school level and tailored to the needs of the parents at each school.

PART IV. CAPACITY BUILDING ACTIVITIES AND SCHOOL-WIDE EVENTS

NOTE: The Schoolwide Parental Involvement Policies may include additional paragraphs or bullets listing and describing discretionary activities that Title I schools, in consultation with parents, chooses to undertake to build parents' capacity for involvement in the school and school system to support their children's academic achievement.