



Illinois State Board of Education

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BULLETIN NO. 03-08

TO: School District Superintendents
School District Title I, Part A Directors

FROM: Gina Hopper, Division Administrator, Grants and Programs

RE: Title I Parent Involvement Notification Requirements

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The No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) of 2001 makes it clear that Congress expects that schools receiving federal funds must ensure that parents are actively involved and knowledgeable about their schools and their children's education. The law requires schools to give parents information and notices in a uniform and understandable format, and to the extent practicable, in a language that the parents can understand. Attached are several key notifications that districts and schools must provide to the parents of Title I served students.

- Teacher Qualifications.
- District and School Report Cards.
- Individual Student Achievement Data.
- School and District Adequate Yearly Progress Standing.
- Options for parents to access Public School Choice or Supplemental Educational Services (SES) when a Title I school is in federal improvement status.

Parent Request for Teacher Qualifications

At the beginning of each school year, districts must notify parents that they have the right to request specific information about the professional qualifications of their child's classroom teacher(s). This information includes:

1. Whether the teacher has met state qualifications and licensing criteria for the grade levels and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction.
2. Whether the teacher is teaching under emergency or conditional certification.
3. The baccalaureate degree major of the teacher and other graduate certification or degree, and the field of discipline of the certification and/or degree.
4. The information must also disclose whether the child is provided services by paraprofessionals, and if so, the paraprofessionals' qualifications. [20 U.S.C. Sec. 1111(h)(6)(A)]; [U.S. Department of Education's non-regulatory guidance on Parent Involvement in Title I, Part A, question C-6.](#)

Title I Schools Parent Notification (if the teacher is not highly qualified)

Timely notice to parents must be sent if their child has been taught for four or more consecutive weeks by a teacher who is not highly qualified. Timely notice means that this notification must be provided to parents of students no later than the end of the fourth consecutive week. The notice and information provided to the parent must be in an understandable and uniform format and, to the extent practicable, provided in a language that the parents can understand. [Sec. 1111(h)(6)(B)(ii)]

Sample notification letters on Teacher Quality that meet the above requirements are available at:

- o [Parents Rights to Know](#)
- o [Parents Rights to Know](#) - Spanish Version
- o [Parent Notification Regarding "Highly Qualified" Status of Teacher](#)
- o [Parent Notification Regarding "Highly Qualified" Status of Teacher](#) - Spanish Version

District and School Report Cards

At the beginning of the 2008–09 school year, every district and school must prepare and distribute to parents an annual district and school report card. ISBE prepares the information for these reports for districts and schools to use. The Report Card may be accessed on ISBE's website at <http://iirc.niu.edu>. Districts and schools may provide the information to all parents in a variety of formats. The requirements that must be included in the report cards are met through our state's report card. Districts and schools may use the link to the Illinois State Report Card for electronic distribution. Districts and schools must also provide this information in a written format to be available to those parents/guardians that do not have electronic accessibility. [Sec. 1111(h)(1) and (2)(B)(ii)]

Individual Student Achievement on State Assessments

Each year a school that receives Title I, Part A funds must provide parents with an individual student report informing them of their child's level of achievement on the State's assessments in at least reading/language arts, and math. [Sec. 1111(h)(6)(B)(i)] This requirement is covered by the state's individual student academic assessment report.

Title I Districts Identified for Improvement Letter

A district that is identified for improvement must notify parents of each enrolled student of its improvement standing. The communication may go out through a variety of formats. It must include the reasons why the district is in improvement and identify ways in which parents can assist the district in meeting adequate yearly progress.

Title I Schools Identified for Improvement Letter

A school receiving Title I funds must promptly notify parents of each student enrolled in an elementary or secondary school that is identified for improvement, corrective action, or restructuring with the following information:

1. An explanation of what the identification means, and how the school compares in terms of academic achievement to other elementary schools or secondary schools served by the district.
2. The reasons for the identification.
3. An explanation of what the school identified for school improvement is doing to address the problem of low achievement.
4. An explanation of what the district or State Educational Agency is doing to help the school address the achievement problem.
5. An explanation of how the parents can become involved in addressing the academic issues that caused the school to be identified for school improvement.
6. An explanation of the parents' options to transfer their child to another public school (Public School Choice) with transportation provided by the district or the option to obtain Supplemental Educational Services (SES) for the child. [*Sec. 1116(b)(6)*]

The school improvement letter requirements are usually satisfied through the Choice or SES notification letters described below. Detailed information on SES and Choice notification requirements is also available in E-Bulletin # 01-08.

Public School Choice and Supplemental Educational Services

If a district identifies a school for improvement, for corrective action, or for restructuring, the district must provide a notice to parents of each student enrolled in the school. The notice may be specific to public school choice or SES or may combine information for both of the options.

Public School Choice

In the case of a school identified for improvement, the district must provide all students enrolled in the school with the option to transfer to another public school in the district. If there is not a transfer school available then the district must contact surrounding districts to see if they will accept the sending school's students. The surrounding districts are not required to accept the sending school's students. The district must offer this option no later than the first day of school following the year in which the students took the ISAT or PSAE. The notification must provide parents with enough relevant information to help them decide on the best option for their child. The following information must be addressed in the letter:

- Provide a reasonable timeline for selection and a contact name and number.
- Provide this opportunity to parents no later than the first day of the school year.
- Inform parents that their child is eligible to attend another public school due to the identification of the current school as in need of improvement.
- Identify each public school, which may include charter schools that the parent can select.
- Include information on the academic achievement of the schools that the parent may select. [*34 C.F.R. 200.37(b)(4)*]

Supplemental Educational Services (SES)

SES are tutorial services for Title I low income students in schools in improvement. SES providers are selected by the parent from the SES Approved Providers List on ISBE's website at http://www.isbe.net/ses/html/service_providers.htm. A district contracts with the provider and the provider must work with the district to provide services that are tied to state standards and district curriculum. Providers are required to provide student achievement reports to the student's school

and to the district. The district must start services no more than four weeks from the date that the parents sign up for the services. Contracts must be signed before services begin.

Annual notification to parents of the availability of these services must be provided to parents of eligible students at the beginning of the school year and must include the following:

- Identify each approved service provider within the district or in its general geographic location. *[Sec. 1116(e)(2)(A)(ii)]* The notice should also identify providers that are accessible through technology, such as distance learning.
- Describe the services, qualifications and evidence of effectiveness for each provider. *[Sec. 1116(e)(2)(A)(iii)]*
- Describe the procedures and timelines that parents must follow in selecting a provider to serve their child. *[Sec. 1116(e)(2)(A)(i)]* (See also [U.S. Department of Education's non-regulatory guidance on Parent Involvement in Title I, Part A, question E-4](#))
- Be easily understandable, in a uniform format, including alternate formats upon request, and to the extent practicable, in a language the parents can understand. *[Sec. 1116(e)(2)(A)]*

If the district anticipates that it will not have sufficient funds to serve all students eligible to receive services, it should also include in the notice information on how it will set priorities in order to determine which eligible students do receive services (see [U.S. Department of Education's non-regulatory guidance on SES, question F-3](#))

Improvement Plans

District Improvement Plan

A district must develop a district improvement plan that includes parents in the committee that develops and implements the plan. The plan needs to be developed during the first 90 days after the district has been informed of its improvement status. It must be implemented no later than the beginning of the following school year. The plan must address these components:

- The academic issues of low-achieving students.
- Measurable goals and targets for each of the student subgroups who have not met AYP.
- Scientifically-based research strategies that strengthen instruction in core academic subjects.
- Student learning activities before school, after school, during the summer, and during any extension of the school year.
- High-quality professional development for instructional staff that is focused on improving instruction.
- Strategies to promote effective parental involvement in the schools. *[Sec. 1116(c)(7)(A); CFR 34 -200.52]*

School Improvement Plans

When a school moves into school improvement status, it is required to write or amend its existing school improvement plan. It is a requirement to involve parents in the writing of the plan. The plan must be written within three months of notification of the school's AYP standing and cover a two year span. The plan must:

1. Specify the responsibilities of the school, the district and the state serving the school.
2. Incorporate scientifically-based research strategies that will strengthen instruction in the core academic areas.
3. Adopt practices most likely to ensure that all student groups in the school will meet state standards.
4. Establish measurable achievement goals.

5. Assure that 10% of the school's Title I allocation will be used for professional development.
6. Describe the process for informing parents of the school's improvement status and provide information on how the parents will be engaged in effective parental involvement.
7. As appropriate, incorporate out-of-school time additional learning opportunities.
8. Establish a peer review process for the plan. *[Sec. 1116(B)(8)(v)]*

School Restructuring Plans

If a school moves into restructuring, the district must promptly notify the teachers and parents and provide them an opportunity to comment before restructuring action is taken and must be offered the opportunity to participate in developing the restructuring plan. *[Sec. 1116(b)(8)]*

For more information on the School or District Improvement Plans, District Corrective Action Plans, or Restructuring Plans, go to: http://www.isbe.net/sos/htmls/improvement_process.htm

This e-bulletin contains basic information on NCLB provisions. It is meant to provide a ready reference for school administrators, teachers, and the public on NCLB implementation within Illinois. It is not intended as a comprehensive source of information on the rules and regulations which govern NCLB Title I.