



## Parents/Guardians Right to Know Title I, Part A Programs

The **Title I, Part A Program** makes it possible to expand the basic educational programs schools and districts offer with services and interventions that support struggling learners. Title I, Part A is one of many programs governed by the Elementary and Secondary Education Act or ESEA.

There are two kinds of programs that schools can fund through Title I, Part A — *schoolwide* and *targeted assistance*.

- *Schoolwide* means that all students—based on academic need—are eligible to receive the additional instruction this federal program will fund.
- *Targeted assistance* makes it possible to provide the same benefits but only to selected students based on academic need.

### Your Right to Know

ESEA directs schools and districts to notify parents about four key requirements of a Title I, Part A program.

1. Professional qualifications of teachers and paraprofessionals who instruct
2. Notification if your child's teacher is not highly qualified
3. Individual report card that lets you know how your child is progressing
4. Notification that the school has entered *school improvement* because its students did not make *Adequate Yearly Progress*—meet the state standard in math or reading or both—for two school years in a row.

### Your Right to Know —Professional Qualifications of Teachers

Parents of children, who attend schools that receive Title I, Part A funding, have the right to request and receive information about the qualifications of the educators who teach their children core subjects—reading, English language arts and mathematics. The same applies to paraprofessionals who instruct.

At a minimum, the information you receive must explain these 3 essential components of an educator's qualifications.

1. Whether or not the teacher met state qualifications and certification requirements for the grade level and subject(s) he or she is teaching,
2. Whether or not the teacher has an emergency or conditional certificate by which state qualifications were waived.
3. What undergraduate and graduate degree(s) the teacher holds, including graduate certificates and additional degrees, and major(s) or area(s) of concentration.

### Your Right to Know—Qualifications of Paraprofessionals Who Instruct

Districts employ paraprofessionals to provide instructional support—consistent with the instruction provided by the classroom teacher or teachers. In schools that operate a *schoolwide* program, all paraprofessionals who instruct must have special qualifications. In schools that operate a *targeted assistance* program, the paraprofessionals who instruct students served by the Title I, Part A program must also have earned these same qualifications.

1. Completed at least two years of study at an institution of higher education, **or**
2. Obtained an associate's or higher degree, **or**
3. Meet a high standard of quality either through **a)** the ETS ParaPro Assessment, **or b)** an paraeducator apprenticeship program approved by Washington state.

### Notification If Your Child's Teacher Is Not Highly Qualified.

ESEA directs schools to send timely notice to parents and guardians IF their child has been assigned to, or taught for more than four consecutive weeks by—a teacher of a core academic subject—who is not highly qualified.



## Parents/Guardians Right to Know Title I, Part A Programs

### Report Card for Every Student

You have a right to know how well your child is progressing. Schools that operate Title I, Part A programs must generate a report card for every student that explains how well that student scored on the state assessment in, at least, reading, English language arts and mathematics.

### State Report Card

The Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction—Washington's education agency—publishes a State Report Card online, <http://reportcard.ospi.k12.wa.us/summary.aspx?year=2012-13>. Use this website to find important information about your school and district, such as the results of state testing, enrollment numbers, facts and figures about the teachers in your school and much more.

### Notification—Mandatory Throughout School Improvement

Federal law—ESEA—sets a standard for state, district and school accountability, and directs public schools that receive Title I, Part funds to reach 100% proficiency: *all students reach state academic standards in math and reading.*

Under ESEA, schools, whose students have taken the state assessments and have not met these standards—two years in a row—begin a process of *improvement* in the next school year. There are five Steps to school improvement. At each Step, schools and districts must make sure parents and guardians receive a detailed explanation of the causes and consequences of the school's performance and how to get involved in their student's education.

These notifications must be clear and concise. You should be able to distinguish notifications related to school improvement from other information the school or district sends home. Here are the basics you should expect from your school district.

- What it means to enter a program of school improvement
- Reason this school was identified for improvement
- How the school compares—academically—to other schools in the district and state
- What the school is doing to address the problem.
- What the school district or state is doing to help this school
- How you can get involved, and how you can help to address the academic issues that led to the need for school improvement
- Public School Choice—the option to transfer your student to another public school not in a Step of improvement
- Supplemental Educational Services—the option to access remedial instruction for your student

We explain Public School Choice and Supplemental Services in companion brochures—*Parents' Guide Public School Choice & School Improvement* and *Parents' Guide Supplemental Educational Services & School Improvement*.

### Ask Us About Title I, Part A Programs & Your Right to Know

Title I, Part A Office at OSPI, 360-725-6100, online at [www.k12.wa.us](http://www.k12.wa.us)

Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI)

Old Capitol Building, PO Box 47200

Olympia, WA 98504-7200

U.S. Department of Education: 1-800-USA-LEARN (872-5327)

## **NIAGARA FALLS CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT DISTRICT-WIDE PARENT INVOLVEMENT POLICY**

The Board of Education of the Niagara Falls City School District supports a comprehensive parent involvement policy, which includes the engagement of parents and family members in the educational process of all students in our District schools.

This partnership includes shared roles and responsibilities as supporters, advocates, decision makers, learners and teachers.

The Board of Education believes in the research that suggests that parent involvement has a positive impact on student achievement. When parents are involved, the percentage of students who earn higher grades, attend school more regularly, improve their behavior, have better social skills, and graduate and pursue higher education increases.

The Niagara Falls City School District has expanded opportunities for parental involvement in all schools and across all District committees and activities. Some of these initiatives include shared decision making, parent education groups at each school, a District-wide Parent committee, representation on curriculum and reporting systems committees, membership on the Teacher Center Policy Board, the Code of Conduct committee and the Safe Schools Committee. Parents are stakeholders in our District-wide community of learners and they have an equal voice in the decision making process.

Parent involvement at home is made easier with monthly newsletters from each school, parent packets for academic support to students, *Our Schools*, a District newspaper delivered to each home monthly containing all of the important information related to the schools and the entire District, and a weekly cable access program on local television, that provides an alternate method of communication to parents and the larger community.

As a part of the ongoing commitment to parents, the Niagara Falls Board of Education recognizes and responds to the following key requirements:

Parents are entitled to, and will:

- Receive information on their children's academic progress in terms that they can understand and , when practical, in languages that they understand
- Participate on school support teams
- Receive notification if their child's school or district has been identified as in need of improvement. They will be told why the school or district was identified, how the school or district plans to improve and help students do better, how the State and local district are helping their child's school, and the options that are available to parents and how the parents can participate in upgrading the quality of the educational program at their children's school
- Transfer their children out of Title I schools identified as in need of improvement or schools designated as persistently dangerous
- Choose a supplemental education provider (SES) where it is allowable
- Receive information about the professional qualifications of teachers and paraprofessionals in the Title I programs
- Receive written notification if their child is assigned to a bilingual program and the options available to them

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District-Wide Parent Involvement Policy  
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- Receive report cards and other assessment reports on how the District and the school are performing, in a language that parents can understand
- Participate in the development of the school based and District-wide parent involvement policies
- Participate in the development of all school-level activities
- Determine the plan for the expenditure of building and District-wide parent involvement funds

In our effort to support parent involvement, the Board of Education recognizes the roles and responsibilities that the schools must play. Toward that end, each school will:

- Provide high quality curriculum and instruction
- Set high standards for all and pledge to satisfy or exceed the New York Standards for student achievement for all students
- Provide ongoing communication through parent-teacher conferences, student progress reports, and accessibility to meet with staff
- Promote opportunities to volunteer and participate in school activities
- Develop a site based parent involvement policy involving parents in the development process
- Issue report cards and other information, on a regular basis to inform parents of student achievement
- Meet regularly with the school-based parent group and support representation on the District Parent Committee
- Provide immediate and appropriate feedback to parents via home, face-to-face meetings, email, or whatever process they request to respond to questions/concerns related to their child(ren) or to School/District information.

The Niagara Falls City School District partners with other agencies, businesses and groups such as the Health Association of Niagara County, the Niagara Falls Housing Authority, Niagara Falls Memorial Medical Center, Focus on Families, community-based Pre-Kindergarten classes, EPIC and Head Start to support district-wide goals and beliefs about the importance of parent and family involvement. Workshops are held at various community sites to work with small groups of parents on skills and information they need to help their child be successful in school. Programs are offered, where necessary, to assist parents in gaining literacy skills through these and other collaborative partners.

The members of the Niagara Falls Board of Education, along with the entire Niagara Falls community, recognize and support the notion that together we form a community of learners. We believe that parent involvement is essential for student success, and therefore we will do all that we can do with the full intention of helping all children learn and to strengthen the relationship between school and home.

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**SUBJECT: PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT**

The Board of Education supports a comprehensive parent involvement policy, which includes the engagement of parents and family members in the educational process of our School District's students. The partnership includes shared roles and responsibilities as supporters, advocates, decision makers, learners, and teachers.

The following statements are examples of some of the many methods and activities recognized by the Board of Education as representative of Parent Involvement:

- a) Sharing the responsibility of improved student achievement
- b) Monitoring attendance, homework, and sleep time
- c) Supporting school policy for students concerning rules of behavior
- d) Encouraging each student to read by having books available and reading to them
- e) Attending Parent-Teacher Conferences and connecting regularly with the classroom teacher
- f) Volunteering and participating in school activities
- g) Staying informed by reading and responding to school correspondence

In our efforts to support parent involvement, the Board of Education recognizes the roles and responsibilities the schools must play. Toward that end, each school will:

- a) Provide high quality curriculum and instruction
- b) Set high standards for all and pledge to satisfy or exceed New York State Learning Standards for student achievement
- c) Provide on-going communication through parent-teacher conferences, student progress reports, and accessibility to meet with staff
- d) Promote opportunities to volunteer and participate in school activities

The Board of Education believes that Parent Involvement is directly linked with higher student achievement, more positive student attitudes and behavior, and improved school climates. School and parent partnerships are grounded in mutual respect, and involve much more than a series of unrelated volunteer activities.

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**SUBJECT: PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT (Cont'd.)**

The Board of Education has expanded opportunities for parental involvement through District initiatives such as shared decision-making, parent education groups, a District Parent Committee, representation on curriculum committees, Reporting Systems Committee, Teacher Center Policy Board, Code of Conduct, and the Safe Schools Committee. Parents are stakeholders in our District-wide community of learners and have an equal voice in the decision-making process. Parental involvement at home is made easier with monthly newsletters from each school, parent packets for academic support to students, *Our Schools* (a District newspaper delivered to each home monthly with all the important news of the District), and a weekly cable access program on local television that, again, shares School District information vital to all parents.

The Niagara Falls City School District Business Partners, together with Focus on Families, Evenstart, and EPIC, support District-wide goals and beliefs about the need for parent involvement in our schools. Workshops are held at community sites to work with small groups of parents on skills and information they need to help their child be successful in school. Programs are offered, where necessary, to assist parents in gaining literacy skills through these and other programs.

Parent involvement is essential for student success, therefore, all that we do is intended to help all children learn and to strengthen the relationship between home and school.

NOTE: Refer also to Policies #7660 -- Parent Involvement for Children with Disabilities  
#8260 -- Title I Parent Involvement Policy

Adoption Date: 4/23/2013

## Personnel

**SUBJECT: CERTIFICATION AND QUALIFICATIONS**

The following provisions shall govern certification and qualifications of District personnel:

- a) In accordance with applicable statutes, Rules of the Board of Regents, and Regulations of the Commissioner of Education, each employee whose employment requires certification or other licensure shall inform the Superintendent of Schools immediately of any change in the status of his/her certification or licensure. The changes shall include, but not be limited to, the granting, revocation, upgrading, expiration, conversion and/or extension of these documents as to their periods of validity or their titles.
- b) Through the New York Patriot Plan, Commissioner's regulations have amended education law. Provisions extend the expiration dates for various certificate holders engaged in active military service for the period of active service and an additional 12 months from the end of such service. These also reduce the professional development requirements for certification holders called to active duty for the time of such active service.
- c) The original certificates and/or licenses must be presented for examination and copying in the Office of the Superintendent of Schools as soon as they are available to the employee. The copies will be maintained in the employee's personnel file in support of the legitimate employment of each affected employee. The failure of any such employee to possess the required certification or other licensure may result in the discharge of that employee.
- d) Whether or not the District verifies an individual's certification or licensure does not waive the responsibility of the employee to maintain what is required for his/her assignment.

**Qualifications of Teachers**

- a) The District must ensure that all newly hired teachers in Title I programs who teach core academic subjects are highly qualified per Regulations of the Commissioner of Education. The term "core academic subjects" means English, reading or language arts, mathematics, science, foreign languages, civics and government, economics, arts, history, and geography. A "highly qualified" teacher is one who has obtained full state certification as a teacher, or has passed the state teacher licensing examination, holds a license to teach in the state and has at least a bachelor's degree, and also must show subject matter competency in the subjects they teach.
- b) The District is also required to provide to teachers who are not new to the profession the opportunity to meet the NCLB requirement to be highly qualified, in part, through passing a High Objective Uniform State Standard of Evaluation (HOUSSE). The HOUSSE shall be an evaluation, prescribed by the New York State Education Department and conducted locally either during a pre-employment review or at the time of an Annual Professional Performance Review (APPR), that enables a teacher who is beyond the first year of teaching to demonstrate subject matter competency in all core academic subjects that the teacher teaches. The evaluation

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## Personnel

**SUBJECT: CERTIFICATION AND QUALIFICATIONS (Cont'd.)**

shall be based upon objective, coherent information as prescribed by the department, and shall include, but not be limited to, information on the teacher's education, credentials, professional experience, and professional development.

- c) The District must ensure that on or after September 2, 2009 a candidate for a teaching certificate or license as a special education teacher shall, in addition to all other certification or licensing requirements, have completed enhanced course work or training in the area of children with autism.
- d) Enhanced training in the needs of autistic children shall also be completed by each certified school administrator or supervisor assigned on or after September 2, 2009 to serve as a special education administrator. Such training shall be provided prior to, or as soon as practicable following, assignment as a special education administrator. Individuals serving as special education administrators as of September 2, 2009 shall complete such training by such date. The enhanced course work or training shall be obtained from an institution or provider approved by the department except that a school district or a Board of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES) may provide such training as part of its professional development program.

**Parent Notification**

In accordance with the federal No Child Left Behind Act, the District is required to provide parents, upon request, with specific information about the professional qualifications of their children's classroom teachers. The following shall be provided by the District upon such requests:

- a) If the teacher has met New York State qualifications and licensing criteria for the grade levels and subject areas he/she teaches;
- b) Whether the teacher is teaching under emergency or other provisional status through which the State qualification or licensing criteria have been waived;
- c) The teacher's college major; whether the teacher has any advanced degrees and, if so, the subject of the degrees; and
- d) If the child is provided services by any instructional aides or similar paraprofessionals and, if so, their qualifications.

All requests shall be honored in a timely manner.

20 United States Code (USC) Section 7801(23)

34 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Sections 200.55 and 200.56

Education Law Sections 210, 305, 3001, 3001-a, 3004, 3006 and 3008

8 New York Code of Rules and Regulations (NYCRR) Subparts 52.21, 57-3, 80-1, 80-2, 80-3, 80.4, 80.5, 100.2(dd) and 100.2(o)

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