



# Austin ISD State, Federal & Private Accountability

## Frequently Asked Questions -Title I Parent & Family Engagement

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### 1. What meetings must schools hold to inform parents about Title I, Part A programs and parental/family involvement/engagement?

Each school served under Title I, Part A must convene an annual meeting, at a time convenient for parents, to inform them of their school's participation in Title I, Part A programs, and to explain the Title I, Part A requirements and the right of parents to be involved in those programs. To keep parents informed, schools must invite all parents of children participating in Title I, Part A programs and encourage them to attend other school meetings. Schools must also offer a flexible number of these and other parental involvement meetings, such as in the morning or evening, so that as many parents as possible can attend.

### 2. What is the purpose of the Title I annual meeting?

The purpose of the Title I annual parent/family meeting is to provide information to families/parents of participating children about the Title I program and their right to be involved in their child's education. See question three for specific information on the required content of the meeting.

### 3. What information should be included in the discussion at the Title I annual meeting?

The annual Title I meeting must be used to explain the Title I requirements, the school's participation in the program (schoolwide or targeted, whichever is applicable), and the rights for parents to be involved. In addition, each campus should cover:

- Explain what participation in Title I programs means, including:
  - A description and explanation of the school's curriculum and academic status,
  - Information on the forms of academic assessment used to measure student progress, and
  - Information on the proficiency levels students are expected to meet;
- Explain the district family/parent involvement/engagement policy, school involvement/engagement policy and school-family/parent compact;
- Explain the right of families/parents to become involved in the school's programs and ways to do so;
- Explain that families/parents have the right to request opportunities for regular meetings for families/parents to formulate suggestions and to participate, as appropriate, in decisions about the education of their children. The school must respond to any such suggestions as soon as practicably possible.

### 4. Which parents should be invited to participate in the annual Title I parent meeting?

All parents of enrolled students must be invited and encouraged to participate in the annual Title I meeting.

### 5. When should the Title I annual meeting be held?

The Annual Title I meeting should be held within the first nine weeks of the school year so that parents are provided with information they can use to help their child. The annual meeting should not be held during the "Back to School Night."



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#### 6. Can the annual meeting be combined with another function?

**No;** the annual meeting is for the sole purpose of informing families/parents, as outlined in question three. The meeting must be advertised and conducted as the annual meeting of Title I parents. Families/parents should leave the meeting with a clear understanding about the Title I Program and their rights as Title I parents. Based on recent monitoring findings from the United States Education Department (USED), the following meeting configurations may not meet compliance:

- Combining the annual meeting with another meeting;
- Combining the annual meeting of more than one Title I school at one location and time;
- Only including Title I as an agenda item during another meeting; or
- Conducting a PTA as the required annual meeting.

#### 7. Can the school use an Back to School/open house as the annual meeting if parents are provided a handout about the Title I program?

**No;** hosting a Back to School/open house does not meet compliance requirements for the required annual meeting; however, families/parents may be provided an opportunity to meet their child's teacher as part of the annual meeting. The teachers could build upon the information provided during the annual meeting by providing grade level-specific information on the standards, expectations, assessments, and curriculum. The Title I annual meeting must be advertised for informing parents about the Title I, Part A program.

#### 8. May the Title I annual meeting be a part of a Parent Teacher Association/Organization {PTA/PTO} meeting?

**No;** during recent monitoring visits, USDE found State Education Agencies (SEAs) out of compliance when schools used the PTA meeting as the only method for distributing information about the Title I program. Usually, PTA organizations require a fee to join; therefore, the meeting would not be open to all parents. Parents may not feel as though they can attend if they are not members of the PTA. Title I funds may not be used to support the activities of the PTA since the activities must be open and available to all Title I parents at no cost. Title I meetings must stand alone.

Title I parents are not prevented from being a part of PTA/PTO. Schools are also encouraged to provide information on the implementation of the Title I programs to PTAs/PTOs and other community-based organizations.

#### 9. Who should conduct the meeting?

Individuals conducting Title I annual meetings must be knowledgeable about Title I, Part A and how the program is implemented at the school. Persons such as the following may be able to provide appropriate information to parents:

- Principals;  
Academic Deans
- Assistant Principals;
- Title I Teachers;
- Federal Programs Coordinators; and/or
- Parental Support Specialist (in partnership with one of the above).



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#### 10. May "door prizes" be purchased with grant funds for a family/parent meeting?

**No.** "Door prizes" are considered gifts and are not allowable to be paid from grant funds under any circumstances. TEA suggests that you solicit donations from local vendors for the door prizes.

#### 11. Is the school required to have translators available at the meeting?

**Yes;** schools are required to take reasonable steps to provide information to families/parents in a language and format they can understand, including parents with limited English proficiency, disabilities, or parents of migratory children. This may include providing translators and/or assistive devices during the annual family/parent meetings.

#### 12. May Title I funds be used to provide a meal or snacks for parents during the annual meeting?

Federal funds cannot be used to purchase **full** meals. However, reasonable expenditures for light refreshments or *food*, particularly when parent involvement activities extend through mealtime are allowable. Title I, Part A funds may be used to purchase food for family/parent involvement/engagement activities if the following conditions have been met:

- Expenses are reasonable and necessary; and  
The meeting is at a time when parents would normally be eating.
- Campuses are advised to use caution in determining how much to spend on food. For example, if the school is allocated \$4,000 for parent involvement, spending \$3,500 on food would not be considered reasonable. This would also significantly limit the other types of activities the campus could fund for parent involvement.

Campuses should also use caution when serving staff at this same meeting since it is designed for parents. For example, while a few bagels would not substantially change the costs associated with the parent meeting; if the school provided bagels for 100 staff members and only a few parents, it would appear as if the meal was designed staff rather than parent.

#### 13. What type of documentation should the campus maintain to demonstrate compliance with Title I?

The campus must maintain a description of the campus level family/parent involvement/engagement activities paid for by Title I funds. Evidence should include:

- A description of **how family/parental involvement/engagement activities are aligned with the needs of Title I students** and a list of participants {district staff will review to ensure they are parents of Title I students, although others may be invited to participate}.
- The family/parent involvement/engagement activities **do not duplicate those that the district provides** for non-Title I parents that, in the absence of Title I funds, would be provided to all parents.

**RESOURCES:** • What's in it For Parents: <http://nafsce.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/ESSA-Review.pdf>  
• Quick Brief on Family Engagement in Every Student Succeeds Act <http://fla.nea.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/FCE-in-ESSA-in-Brief.pdf> • Parent and Family Engagement Provisions in the Every Student Succeeds Act <http://civilrightsdocs.info/pdf/education/ESSA-Parent-Family-Engagement.pdf>



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### Examples of Appropriate Expenditures and Activities

#### Workshops for Title I families/parents about the following topics:

- District and State Standards
- Promotion or Graduation Requirements
- Using \_\_\_\_to Monitor Your Child's Progress
- Title I, Part A Requirements
- School and District Accountability - Assessments
- School Curriculum
- Using Technology
- Math/technology night
- How to Work with Your Child's Teacher
- Nutrition or Health
- Internet Safety or Bullying
- Family Literacy
- Safety and Gang Awareness
- Middle and High School Selection Process
- College and Career Readiness
- Parenting Skills

Creating a school-parent newsletter, handbook, or website

Staff-parent book clubs; educationally related subjects

Partnerships with cultural institutions

Creation of a parent resource room or lending library

Joint staff-parent professional development seminars (e.g., reasonable cost of materials and presenters)

Reimbursement to parents for reasonable transportation expenses (e.g., Metro Cards) associated with attendance and participation during Title I workshops, activities and meetings

Reasonable expenditures for light refreshments or food, particularly when parent involvement activities extend through mealtime

### Examples of Non-Allowable Expenditures and Activities

- Activities that do not relate directly to the Title I educational program or provide an opportunity to associate professional development content to Title I parents will not be allowed.
- Activities that do not have an intrinsic educational or cultural value will not be allowed (e.g., trips to amusement parks, visits to shopping centers, dinner cruises, or sporting events)
- Theatrical performances (plays) that do not have an intrinsic educational or cultural value
- Payments (or stipends) to non-AISD approved consultants or providers
- Incentives that do not relate to the Title I educational program (e.g., T-shirts or mugs) School dances (e.g., father-daughter and mother-son dances)
- Recreational trips for students or parents
- Refreshments for regularly scheduled meetings of the CAC/PTA



*An event does not necessarily qualify if parents are in attendance. Parental involvement activities must include parents who are just parents, not school staff who are also parents.*