

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
RULES GOVERNING PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT PLANS

1.00 REGULATORY AUTHORITY

- 1.01 These rules shall be known as Arkansas Department of Education Rules Governing Parental Involvement Plans.
- 1.02 The State Board of Education enacts these Rules pursuant to its authority as set forth in Ark. Code Ann. §§ 6-11-105, 6-15-1005(f), 6-15-1701 *et seq.*, 6-15-2202, and 25-15-201 *et seq.*

2.00 DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of these Rules:

- 2.01 “Department” means the Arkansas Department of Education.
- 2.02 “Parent” means a natural parent, a legal guardian, or other person standing *in loco parentis* (including without limitation a grandparent or stepparent with whom the child lives, or a person who is legally responsible for the child’s welfare).
- 2.03 “Public School” means those schools created pursuant to Title 6 of the Arkansas Code and subject to the Arkansas Comprehensive Testing, Assessment and Accountability Program, specifically excluding those schools or educational programs created by or receiving authority to exist pursuant to Ark. Code Ann. §§ 6-15-501, 9-28-205, and 12-29-301, et seq., or other provisions of Arkansas law. Any reference to “Public School” in these Rules includes open-enrollment public charter schools except to the extent these Rules or the underlying statutes are specifically waived by the State Board of Education.
- 2.04 “Public School District” means those school districts created pursuant to Title 6 of the Arkansas Code and subject to the Arkansas Comprehensive Testing, Assessment and Accountability Program, specifically excluding those schools or educational programs created by or receiving authority to exist pursuant to Ark. Code Ann. §§ 6-15-501, 9-28-205, and 12-29-301, et seq., or other provisions of Arkansas law. Any reference to “Public School District” in these Rules includes open-enrollment public charter schools except to the extent these Rules or the underlying statutes are specifically waived by the State Board of Education.
- 2.05 “Title I Public School or Public School District” means a public school or public school district that receives funds under Title I, Part A of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 or any subsequent reauthorization thereof, including without limitation the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001.

3.00 PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT PLANS

3.01 Each public school district, in collaboration with parents, shall establish a parental involvement plan that establishes the district's expectations for parental involvement, and that includes programs and practices that enhance parental involvement and reflect the specific needs of students and their families.

3.01.1 Collaboration with parents may be accomplished through the coalition of parents and representatives of agencies, institutions, business and industry required for development and implementation of the district-level annual comprehensive school improvement plan (ACSIP) required by the Standards for Accreditation of Arkansas Public Schools and School Districts.

3.01.2 The parental involvement plan shall be incorporated into the public school district's annual comprehensive school improvement plan (ACSIP).

3.01.3 Annually by October 1, the public school district's parental involvement plan shall be:

3.01.3.1 Developed, or reviewed and updated by the public school district;

3.01.3.2 Posted to the website of the public school district; and

3.01.3.3 Filed with the Department's Division of Learning Services.

3.01.3.4 All public school district parental involvement plans filed with the Department shall be filed in electronic format, specifically in Microsoft Word (.doc or .docx), Adobe Acrobat (.pdf), or Rich Text (.rtf) format.

3.02 Each public school, in collaboration with parents, shall establish a parental involvement plan that reflects the specific academic improvement needs of the school, and that includes programs and practices that enhance parental involvement and address the specific parent involvement needs of students and their families.

3.02.1 Collaboration with parents may be accomplished through the coalition of parents and representatives of agencies, institutions, business and industry required for development and implementation of the school-level annual comprehensive school improvement plan (ACSIP) required by the Standards for Accreditation of Arkansas Public Schools and School Districts.

3.02.2 The parental involvement plan shall be incorporated into the public school's annual comprehensive school improvement plan (ACSIP).

3.02.3 Annually by October 1, the public school's parental involvement plan shall be developed, or reviewed and updated by the public school.

3.02.4 Annually by October 21, the public school shall post to the website of the public school or public school district:

3.02.4.1 The public school's parental involvement plan;

3.02.4.2 A parent-friendly explanation of the public school's and public school district's parental involvement plans;

3.02.4.3 The informational packet required by Section 5.01.1; and

3.02.4.4 Contact information for the parent facilitator designated by the public school under Section 5.08 of these Rules.

3.03 A public school's parental involvement plan shall:

3.03.1 Involve parents of students at all grade levels in a variety of roles, including without limitation:

3.03.1.1 Involvement in the education of their children;

3.03.1.2 Volunteer activities;

3.03.1.3 Learning activities that support classroom instruction;

3.03.1.4 Participation in school decisions;

3.03.1.5 Collaboration with the community;

3.03.1.6 Development of school goals and priorities; and

3.03.1.7 Evaluating the effectiveness of the comprehensive school improvement plan (ACSIP);

3.03.2 Be comprehensive and coordinated in nature;

3.03.3 Recognize that communication between home and school should be regular, two-way, and meaningful;

3.03.4 Promote and support responsible parenting;

- 3.03.5 Acknowledge that parents play an integral role in assisting student learning;
- 3.03.6 Welcome parents into the school and seek parental support and assistance;
- 3.03.7 Recognize that a parent is a full partner in the decisions that affect his or her child and family;
- 3.03.8 Recognize that community resources strengthen school programs, family practices, and student learning; and
- 3.03.9 Support the development, implementation, and regular evaluation of the program to involve parents in the decisions and practices of the school district, using, to the degree possible, the components listed in this section.

3.04 A Title I public school or public school district shall:

- 3.04.1 Include in its parental involvement plan any other appropriate components, policies, programs, activities or procedures required by federal law;
- 3.04.2 Provide information to parents of students participating in Title I, Part A programs in an understandable and uniform format, including alternative formats upon request, and, to the extent practicable, in a language that parents can understand;
- 3.04.3 Take the necessary steps to ensure that communications with parents with disabilities are as effective as communications with other parents; such steps shall include the furnishing of appropriate auxiliary aids and services when necessary to afford a parent with a disability an equal opportunity to participate in, and enjoy the benefits of, Title I, Part A programs, services, and activities, including the parental involvement provisions; and
- 3.04.4 Plan and implement its parental involvement programs, activities, and procedures with meaningful consultation with parents of children participating in Title I, Part A programs.

4.00 PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT RESPONSIBILITIES

- 4.01 Every teacher, whether licensed or not, in each public school district shall be required to have no less than two (2) hours of professional development designed to enhance understanding of effective parental involvement strategies. These two (2) hours may be included in the sixty (60) hours of professional development required by the Arkansas Department of Education Rules Governing Professional Development.

- 4.02 Every administrator, whether licensed or not, in each public school district shall be required to have no less than three (3) hours of professional development designed to enhance understanding of effective parent involvement strategies, the importance of administrative leadership in setting expectations, and creating a climate conducive to parental participation. These three (3) hours may be included in the sixty (60) hours of professional development required by the Arkansas Department of Education Rules Governing Professional Development.
- 4.03 Notwithstanding the provisions of sections 4.01 and 4.02, licensed school personnel may substitute for the required number of hours of staff development on parental involvement plans an equal number of hours of child maltreatment recognition training obtained under Ark. Code Ann. § 6-61-133. Substitution of hours shall be governed by the Arkansas Department of Education Rules Governing Professional Development.
- 4.04 Each public school district shall provide training at least annually for volunteers who assist in an instructional program for parents.
- 4.05 Every public school district shall annually review and approve the parental involvement plan for each public school under the district's authority.

5.00 PUBLIC SCHOOL RESPONSIBILITIES

- 5.01 To encourage communication with parents, each public school shall:
- 5.01.1 Prepare an informational packet to be distributed annually to the parent of each child in the school, appropriate for the age and grade of the child, describing in a parent-friendly manner:
 - 5.01.1.1 The school's parental involvement program;
 - 5.01.1.2 The recommended role of the parent, student, teacher, and school;
 - 5.01.1.3 Ways for the parent to become involved in the school and his or her child's education;
 - 5.01.1.4 A survey for the parent regarding his or her interests concerning volunteering at the school;
 - 5.01.1.5 Activities planned throughout the school year to encourage parental involvement; and

- 5.01.1.6 A system to allow the parents and teachers to communicate in a regular, two-way, and meaningful manner with the child's teacher and the school principal; and
 - 5.01.2 Schedule no fewer than two (2) parent-teacher conferences per school year.
 - 5.01.3 The school may plan and engage in other activities determined by the school to be beneficial to encourage communication with parents.
 - 5.02 To promote and support responsible parenting, each public school shall, as funds are available:
 - 5.02.1 Purchase parenting books, magazines, and other informative material regarding responsible parenting through the school library, advertise the current selection, and give parents an opportunity to borrow the materials for review;
 - 5.02.2 Create parent centers; and
 - 5.02.3 Plan and engage in other activities determined by the school to be beneficial to promoting and supporting responsible parenting.
 - 5.03 To help parents in assisting students, each public school shall:
 - 5.03.1 Schedule regular parent involvement meetings at which parents are given a report on the state of the school and an overview of:
 - 5.03.1.1 What students will be learning;
 - 5.03.1.2 How students will be assessed;
 - 5.03.1.3 What a parent should expect for his or her child's education; and
 - 5.03.1.4 How a parent can assist and make a difference in his or her child's education;
 - 5.03.2 Provide instruction to a parent on how to incorporate developmentally appropriate learning activities in the home environment, including without limitation:
 - 5.03.2.1 Role play and demonstration by trained volunteers;
 - 5.03.2.2 The use of and access to Department website tools for parents;

5.03.2.3 Assistance with nutritional meal planning and preparation; and

5.03.2.4 Other strategies or curricula developed or acquired by the school district for at-home parental instruction approved by the Department; and

5.03.3 Engage in other activities determined by the school to help a parent assist in his or her child's learning.

5.04 To welcome parents into the school, each public school shall:

5.04.1 Not have any school policies or procedures that would discourage a parent from visiting the school or from visiting a child's classrooms;

5.04.2 Encourage school staff to use the volunteer surveys to compile a volunteer resource book listing the interests and availability of volunteers so that school staff may:

5.04.2.1 Determine how frequently a volunteer would like to participate, including the option of just one (1) time per year;

5.04.2.2 Include options for those who are available to help at home; and

5.04.2.3 Help match school needs with volunteer interests; and

5.04.3 Engage in other activities determined by the school to welcome parents into the school.

5.05 To encourage a parent to participate as a full partner in the decisions that affect his or her child and family, each public school shall:

5.05.1 Include in the school's policy handbook the school's process for resolving parental concerns, including how to define a problem, whom to approach first, and how to develop solutions;

5.05.2 Sponsor seminars to inform the parents of students in grades nine (9) through twelve (12) about how to be involved in the decisions affecting course selection, career planning, and preparation for postsecondary opportunities; and

5.05.3 Engage in other activities that the school determines will encourage a parent to participate as a full partner in the decisions that affect his or her child and family.

- 5.06 Each public school shall investigate and, where feasible, utilize community resources in the instructional program of the school.
- 5.07 To take advantage of community resources, each public school shall:
- 5.07.1 Consider recruiting alumni from the school to create an alumni advisory commission to provide advice and guidance for school improvement;
 - 5.07.2 Enable the formation of a Parent Teacher Association or organization that will foster parental and community involvement within the school;
 - 5.07.2.1 Leaders of this organization shall be utilized in appropriate decisions affecting the children and families; and
 - 5.07.3 Engage in other activities that the school determines will use community resources to strengthen school programs, family practices, and student learning.
- 5.08 The principal of each public school shall designate one (1) licensed staff member who is willing to serve as a parent facilitator to:
- 5.08.1 Help organize meaningful training for staff and parents;
 - 5.08.2 Promote and encourage a welcoming atmosphere to foster parental involvement in the school; and
 - 5.08.3 Undertake efforts to ensure that parental participation is recognized as an asset to the school.
 - 5.08.4 The certified staff member serving as a parental facilitator shall receive supplemental pay for the assigned duties as required by law.

6.00 MONITORING OF PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT PLANS

- 6.01 Annually, the Department shall:
- 6.01.1 Review the parental involvement plan of each public school district; and
 - 6.01.2 Determine whether the plan is in compliance with law.
- 6.02. On each annual school performance report published by the Department pursuant to Ark. Code Ann. § 6-15-1402, the Department shall indicate whether or not the public school district is in compliance with this subchapter.

- 6.03 Periodically on a rotating schedule of at least once every six (6) years, the Department shall monitor each public school district's plan to:
- 6.03.1 Evaluate whether the school district is implementing its plan and the implementation's effectiveness; and
- 6.03.2 Assess the areas in which a school district needs to revise its plan or its implementation of the plan.
- 6.03.3 The Department shall place priority for monitoring on public school districts that have been identified as being in:
- 6.03.3.1 School improvement for two (2) or more consecutive school years; or
- 6.03.3.2 Academic distress.
- 6.03.4 The Department may monitor a public school district's plan at other additional times as determined necessary by the Commissioner of Education or the State Board of Education.
- 6.04 By January 1 of each year, the Department shall provide any recommendations in writing to a school district:
- 6.04.1 Concerning areas of noncompliance with these rules or Ark. Code Ann. § 6-15-1701 *et seq.*; or
- 6.04.2 Arising from the Department's review of public school district plans under section 6.01.2 of these Rules.
- 6.05 The Department shall allow a public school district opportunity of no more than ninety (90) days to incorporate the Department's recommendations into the district's parental involvement plan.