

# ***2009-2010-Irving Elementary Title I Parental Involvement Plan***

Thursday January 7, 2010

Dear Parents/Guardians

Research has shown that parent involvement results in increased student success, increased parent and teacher satisfaction and overall improvement in the school climate. Parent involvement promotes a healthy and consistent learning environment by establishing mutual goals between parents and educators and developing activities that bridge home and school. Therefore, it is the vision of Irving Elementary to form a home-school collaboration that brings together school staff, parents, children and community members in hopes of maximizing all resources that will increase student achievement and development.

Children learn best when there are significant adults in their lives---teachers, parents, and other family and community members. Schools alone cannot address all of a student's needs. With parents as partners the faculty and staff of Irving Elementary School will share a joint responsibility for providing a stimulating and supporting environment for the children. Parent involvement is essential, as children learn first from their parents. Parents are teachers, learners, supporters and advocates for their children. It is therefore vitally important that they be included in their children's educational plan.



To support the mission of the Lorain City Schools Board of Education to provide all children with a premier learning experience where a quality education is achieved through a comprehensive curriculum, in a safe and orderly environment, Irving Elementary School will recognize and support a strong, comprehensive parent involvement program. A "partnership" that bonds educators and families in working toward a common goal will be implemented through the following standards.

## **STANDARD I**

### **COMMUNICATION**

Perhaps the most important tool in any partnership is communication. It is the foundation of a solid partnership.

When parents and educators communicate effectively, positive relationships develop, problems are more easily solved and the students make greater progress. Often communication is one-way without the chance to exchange ideas or share perceptions. Effective home-school communication is the two-way sharing of information vital to student success. Irving Elementary will therefore, promote regular, two ways, meaningful communication between home and school. Evidence that supports this standard will be presented in:

-  Parent/teacher notes
-  Messages from the principal and LCS Board of Education
-  Parent/teacher conferences

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- ✚ E-mail
- ✚ School/LCS websites
- ✚ Flyers/brochures
- ✚ Parent/student Handbook
- ✚ Newsletters
- ✚ Announcements in the local newspaper and radio station
- ✚ Calendars
- ✚ School Marquee
- ✚ Home visits/telephone calls
- ✚ Report cards and progress notes
- ✚ Parent Orientations
- ✚ Family Reading and Literacy Night
  - Reading is fundamental
  - Family Book Fairs
- ✚ Building Leadership Team
- ✚ PAC (Parent Advisory Council)
- ✚ Representatives from school/LCS speaking at local agencies and meetings
- ✚ Parent training resources--literature, magazines, videos, etc...

These opportunities for the exchange of information are vital and must be used consistently for meaningful parent involvement to occur.

One of the barriers to overcome and a puzzling aspect of parent involvement is the attempt to involve parents who are not always active or visible in the school. It is also imperative to reach parents with circumstances---single working parents or parents from different ethnic groups. With the help of the Parent Involvement Specialist, the faculty and staff of LCS will assist and determine methods to communicate with these parents so that they too may become integral partners in their child's education.

### **INDICATORS OF SUCCESS:**

Provide evidence that a variety of communication methods are used-Provide evidence of parent meetings

- ✚ 2009-2010 Learning goals and student expectations will be clearly communicated to parents
- ✚ Opportunities for parents and teachers to discuss student strengths and weaknesses will be held
- ✚ Report cards/progress notes will be sent with conference opportunities
- ✚ Student/parent handbooks which include procedures, policies, etc... will be distributed
- ✚ Student work will be distributed so parents may comment
- ✚ Language barrier issues will be identified and resolved

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## **STANDARD II**

### ***PARENTING***

Research has shown that environment and parenting techniques are a vital component to student success. The parents are the child's first teacher---they provide the primary educational environment. However, many parents often feel inadequate when it comes to the education of their children. Often other issues such as drugs, young parents, inappropriate behavior, cultural barriers etc... play a factor in the home environment. School personnel should support positive parenting by respecting and affirming the strengths and skills needed by the parents to fulfill their role. When staff and faculty recognize parent roles and responsibilities, ask parents what supports they need, and work to find ways to meet those needs, they communicate a clear message that parents are valuable and that their input in the education of their children is valued. Irving Elementary School will assist families with parenting skills and setting home conditions to support children as students, and also assist the faculty and staff to understand diverse families. With the growing diversity in the community, LCS has the opportunity to bring together a group of people with common goals, not withstanding of background, education or economic status.

#### ***Irving will therefore:***

- ✚ Provide family support programs to assist families with health, nutrition, financial matters and other resources that support families.
- ✚ Provide parent training classes (Computer classes etc...)
- ✚ Provide parent education classes to improve language barriers.
- ✚ Provide home visiting programs to help families understand the school environment.
- ✚ Provide parents with literature and other resources.

#### **INDICATORS OF SUCCESS:**

- ✚ Faculty and staff will exhibit respect for parents as the most influential support in their children's lives
- ✚ Faculty and staff will encourage all parents to be involved---not just the ones that are always visible
- ✚ Families of diverse cultures will be respected and valued for their contribution to the community. Barriers to communication will be resolved. Irving will find ways to help parents share their unique qualities
- ✚ Opportunities for parents to obtain parenting skills will be provided
- ✚ Parents will be used for their individual talents. They will be involved as trainers for children, staff and other parents
- ✚ Faculty and staff will have a list of community resources available to parents

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- ✚ Positive relationships between parents, teachers and children will be established
- ✚ A resource center will be provided with parent and community/local agency information in order to enrich the lives of not only students but the parents as well

### **STANDARD III**

#### ***STUDENT LEARNING***

Research confirms that the most critical relationship regarding student achievement remains the connection between the parent and teacher. Clear and concise expectations must always exist. It is a given fact that not all learning can take place in the school and that children will need additional help from their parents.

The importance of student learning and achievement presents an opportunity for schools and teachers to communicate with families and also provide avenues for involvement that will foster student success. Student learning increases when parents are invited into the process by helping at home. Most parents are willing to assist their children in learning, but many are not sure what assistance is most helpful and appropriate. Helping parents connect their children's learning enables parents to communicate in powerful ways that they value education and the achievements of their children.

#### ***To achieve this standard, Irving will:***

- ✚ Provide in-service training for teachers and staff about techniques to engage parents in learning. Teachers will share success stories.
- ✚ Provide student project that will require parental assistance.
- ✚ Offer classes and other training opportunities for parents to acquire learning strategies to assist their children at home.
- ✚ Offer parents opportunities to be involved in decision making.

#### **INDICATORS OF SUCCESS:**

- ✚ Evidence of parents involved in classroom activities or school-related events
- ✚ Evidence of parent/teacher conference forms
- ✚ Evidence of homework assignments/projects for the parent/child to complete together
- ✚ Examples of skill expectations for each grade level
- ✚ Samples of individualized education plans or portfolios for students
- ✚ Evidence that parents are involved in the decision making
- ✚ Evidence that parents with certain expertise are involved in classroom or other school related functions

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## **STANDARD IV**

### ***VOLUNTEERING***

When most think of parent involvement, volunteering comes to mind. The parent volunteer is one of the most used methods to incorporate parent involvement into the school. It is relatively easy and often not too time consuming. However, if the school is to profit from its volunteers, methods to ensure all parents are being utilized must be implemented. Opportunities for the stay-at-home parent or parents of different cultures must be incorporated. Personal interests, areas of expertise, significant life experiences also must be exposed in order to provide a range of variety for the school climate. The school must think about ways to also combine parent expertise to community resources.

#### ***Irving will:***

- ✚ Use surveys and interviews to reach all parents.
- ✚ Organize a parent volunteer program.
- ✚ Create a warm climate that welcomes parents and encourages volunteering.
- ✚ Train parents to develop the necessary skills to help where needed in the school.

#### **INDICATORS OF SUCCESS:**

- ✚ Evidence of parent interest surveys
- ✚ Evidence of parent representatives in the school
- ✚ Evidence of an organized method of recruiting volunteers and avenues to include non-active parents
- ✚ Evidence that there are certain processes for all parent volunteers

## **STANDARD V**

### ***SCHOOL DECISION MAKING AND ADVOCACY***

Parents are the “natural” advocates for their children and should be “full partners” with teachers and administrators in decisions affecting their children and families. They should also play an active role in policy-making. This partnership should be based on mutual trust, respect, and an appreciation for cultural diversity and tolerance for differing viewpoints.

#### ***Irving will:***

- ✚ Involve the parent advisory council, and other parent committees to incorporate parent leadership and participation.
- ✚ Provide networks to link all families with parent representatives and organizations.

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- ✚ Encourage parents to be involved on policy making that reflects representation of the demographics of the school and community.
- ✚ Involve parents in the process of evaluating and planning school functions.
- ✚ Provide parents with all school performance data from ODE website.
- ✚ Develop methods to treat parent concerns with respect.
- ✚ Provide parents knowledge of opportunities for involvement in educational issues beyond the local school level.
- ✚ Encourage parents to help with student placement.

### **INDICATORS OF SUCCESS:**

2009-2010 Evidence of administrative and teacher support for parent organizations

- ✚ Evidence that parents are involved in policy development and that the parents reflect the demographics of the community
- ✚ Evidence that parents are involved in the planning and evaluating of school functions
- ✚ Evidence that parents have access to student performance data
- ✚ Evidence that parents are involved with student placement

### **STANDARD VI**

#### ***COLLABORATION WITH THE COMMUNITY***

Communities are comprised of a variety of groups of people who share common geographical boundaries. All these people have something to contribute to the schools. To be successful, a school must take advantage of all their resources, experiences, knowledge and skills. These community resources have a vested interest in education and the functions of the schools. Schools have the opportunity to profit from community leaders being involved with the students. It is their duty to ensure that all educational goals are at the forefront of the community's agenda. The school should utilize not only the business perspective of the community, but other resources, such as senior citizen groups, public health institutions, fine art clubs, community groups/clubs and fitness and wellness centers.

#### ***Irving will:***

- ✚ Partner between local businesses and groups/clubs to assist families and students.
- ✚ Distribute literature and information about community events.
- ✚ Encourage student/parent participation in community events.
- ✚ Invite community members to volunteer in the school.
- ✚ Collaborate with various organizations and agencies to ensure all parents are able to be involved with their children's education such as daycare centers such as Horizon Centers and local Title 1 Supplemental

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Educational Services tutoring program providers like Sylvan learning Centers and The Salvation Army.

- ✚ Encourage employers to support parent involvement.
- ✚ Instill in the students/parents the importance of “giving back” to the community through service learning projects.

### **INDICATORS OF SUCCESS:**

- ✚ Evidence that there is a partnership between the school and local agencies, including businesses, health facilities, community clubs, and higher institutions of learning and senior citizen groups
- ✚ Evidence of literature and information about community events
- ✚ Evidence of student and parent participation in community events
- ✚ Evidence of community member involvement in the school
- ✚ Evidence that ample opportunities exists for the exchange of information between community agencies and the school
- ✚ Evidence that the students realize the importance of their community

Parent involvement provides an important opportunity for our school to enrich and enhance the already existing programs and include parents in the educational process.

Therefore, the vision of the Irving Elementary Parent Involvement Program is to form a family-school collaboration in which all resources will be utilized for optimal student development and success.

**Building Leadership Team:** Mrs. Susanne Silva, Mrs. Michele Newbacher, Mrs. Renee, Elizabeth Vilagi, Vrabel, Mrs. Kristin Morris, Candyce Owens and Michelle Davis-Quinones.

**Parents:** Mrs. Tracy Isenberg, Mr. Bill Molina, Mr. Jeff Kodman, Mr. Adriane Nelson, Mrs. Diane Perez and Mrs. Courtney Jones.

**Leila Flores, Principal**