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Title I Newsletter

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Purpose of Title I, Part A

The purpose of Title I, Part A of the Public Law 107-110 is to enable schools to provide opportunities for children served to acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to meet challenging state content standards, and to meet the challenging state performance standards developed for all children.

Title I resources are distributed to schools where needs are the greatest, in amounts sufficient to make a difference in the improvement of instruction.

Title I provides greater decision-making authority and flexibility within the schools and for teachers. However, greater responsibility for student performance is the exchange made for this flexibility.

Components of a Title I Schoolwide Program

- A comprehensive needs assessment of the entire school is conducted.
- Schoolwide reform strategies provide opportunities for all children to meet the State's performance standards.
- Instruction is conducted by a highly qualified staff.
- Professional development is conducted on a continual basis throughout the year.
- Activities are conducted to increase parent involvement.
- Plans are included to provide transitional assistance from pre-school to elementary, from elementary to middle school, and from middle school to high school.
- Measures are taken to include teachers in decisions about assessment.
- Activities are conducted to ensure that students with learning difficulties receive assistance.

Parent and Family Engagement

The engagement of parents and families is an integral part of the Title I program. Parents are encouraged to become partners in helping their children achieve and become actively involved in all aspects of the process of the Title I program, from the writing of the plan to its implementation and evaluation.

A strong connection between the home and the school is a key element in student success. Materials, strategies, and help from teachers are available to all parents within a Title I school. Opportunities for active parent participation should include, but not be limited to, open houses, parent workshops, school-parent compacts, home visitations, parent-teacher organizations, conferences, monthly newsletters, and more.

Legislation requires schools to utilize a portion of their Title I funds to support parent and family engagement. Parents should contact the school principal with any comments or suggestions regarding the school's parent involvement expenditures.

If you have any questions regarding parent and family engagement, please contact Chaquilla Green, Parent and Family Engagement Coordinator, at 843-563-5923 or at cjgreen@dd4.k12.sc.us.

Parent and Family Engagement Policy and School-Parent Compact

Each Title I school is required to ask for input from parents regarding the development of a parent and family engagement policy and a school-parent compact.

The parent and family engagement policy explains how the school staff plans to work with parents to review and improve parent programs and it describes how parents can participate in planning these programs.

The school-parent compact outlines how parents, the entire school staff, and students will share the responsibility for improved student academic achievement and the way in which the school staff and parents will build and develop a partnership to help children achieve the state's high standards.

Title I Participation

With the exception of the high school, all schools in Dorchester School District Four are Title I schools. The district administration welcomes input from parents, school staff, and community members regarding its current and future Title I plans. If you would like to participate on the district's Title I planning team or make comments pertaining to the plan, please contact Dr. Tracy E. Jackson, Director of Federal Programs, at 843-563-5923, or at tjackson@dd4.k12.sc.us. If you are interested in participating in the development of a school's plan, please contact the school's principal. Thank you!

Description & Explanation of Curriculum, Forms of Academic Assessment, and Proficiency Levels Students Are Expected to Meet

Dorchester School District Four provides a high-quality curriculum based upon the South Carolina Curriculum Standards. This curriculum has been approved by the South Carolina Board of Education and adopted by the Dorchester School District Four Board of Education. Textbooks used in the classrooms have been reviewed by a committee of teachers and adopted and endorsed by the South Carolina Department of Education. Specific educational programs in each school are targeted to meet the identified needs of the children in the school.

During the 2025-2026 school year, the district will administer a variety of statewide standardized assessments to its students. End-of-Course assessments, a requirement of the Education Accountability Act of 1998, will be administered to students enrolled in the following courses: English II, Algebra I, U.S. History and the Constitution, and Biology I. The Kindergarten Reading Assessment (KRA) will be administered to evaluate the readiness of students enrolled in Kindergarten, and the Individual Growth & Development Indicators (MYIGDIs) will be used to evaluate the readiness of four-year-old students enrolled in Pre-Kindergarten.

SC Ready will be administered for the subject areas of math, ELA (reading, grammar and writing) to all students in grades 3-8 and science in designated grades 4 and 6. The ACT or SAT and WIN assessments will be administered to all 11th grade students. The ACT and SAT testing program includes multiple-choice tests in English, reading, mathematics, and science, as well as a writing test, which is an essay. The ACT and SAT test scores provide information about progress toward college readiness and are widely used by colleges in making decisions about admission.

In addition to the state assessments that will be administered, the district will use iReady, which is a computerized adaptive assessment, as a means to provide teachers of students in grades K through 8 with information throughout the school year in the subject areas of reading and math. Also, the Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT) and the Iowa Tests of Basic Skills (ITBS) will be administered to all students in grade 2, while the Performance Task Assessment will be given to qualifying students in grades 2 through 5 to identify candidates for the Gifted & Talented program.

Finally, to provide more information to enable teachers to better monitor student progress throughout the year, all students will be given curriculum and/or standards-based assessments.

South Carolina Department of Education Complaint Resolution Procedures

The State Department of Education (SDE) has the authority to hear complaints and appeals regarding certain federal programs and requires school districts to distribute the following information concerning the South Carolina Department of Education's complaint resolution procedures:

- Organizations or individuals may file a complaint that applies to Title I within thirty days of receiving the decision by the school district or group of districts.
- Complaints and appeals must be made in writing and they must contain a statement indicating the violation, the facts on which the statement is based, and the specific requirement of law or regulation allegedly violated. Complaints and appeals must be filed with the State Superintendent of Education at the S.C. Department of Education, 849 Learning Lane, West Columbia, South Carolina 29172.
- The SDE will confirm receipt of the complaint within ten business days and will conduct an investigation to determine the merits of the complaint. The Deputy Superintendent will issue a final decision regarding the complaint within 60 days, except under exceptional circumstances that warrant an extension.
- The final decision of the SDE may be appealed to the Secretary of the U. S. Department of Education.

Parent's Right to Know

As a parent of a student enrolled at a Title I school you have the right to know the professional qualifications of the classroom teachers and instructional assistants who instruct your child. Federal law allows you to ask for the following information about your child's classroom teachers and requires the district to make sure that this information is provided for you in a timely manner:

- *Whether the teacher has met state qualification and certification criteria for the grade level(s) and subject area(s) in which the teacher provides instruction;*
- *Whether the teacher is teaching under emergency or other provisional status through which state qualification or certification criteria has been waived;*
- *The baccalaureate degree major of the teacher and any other graduate certification or degree held by the teacher, and the field of discipline of the certification or degree; and*
- *Whether the child is provided services by paraprofessionals and, if so, their qualifications.*

A parent or legal guardian who wishes to inquire about the qualifications of his/her child's teacher or instructional assistant should make a written request to the school's principal. In the request, the parent may only inquire about qualifications listed above.