

BWCS Community School /Akimel O'Otham Pee Posh Charter School Inc.

Parental Involvement Policy: SY 2023-2024

Purpose: Blackwater Community School/Akimel O'Otham Pee Posh charter School Inc. recognizes that parents are invaluable resources in the process of educating students. Parents play an important role as the first teachers of their children and parental support is critical to a child's success. It is the intent of our school to establish a collaborative partnership between the home and school, and that the Title I program will be used to facilitate this endeavor.

PART I. GENERAL EXPECTATIONS

Blackwater Community School/ Akimel O'Otham Pee Posh Charter School (hereinafter Blackwater Community School) agrees to implement the following statutory requirements:

- Consistent with section 1118 (Parental Involvement), of the Elementary & Secondary Education Act (ESEA) the School will work to ensure that the required school level parental involvement policies meet the requirements of section 1118 and each include, as a component, a school-parent compact consistent with section 1118(d) (Shared Responsibilities of High Student Academic Achievement) of the ESEA.
- Schools will notify parents of the policy in an understandable and uniform format and, to the extent practicable, in a language the parents can understand. The policy will be made available to the local community and updated periodically to meet the changing needs of parents and the School.
- In carrying out the Title I, Part A, (Improving Basic Programs Operated by Local Educational Agencies) parental involvement requirements, to the extent practicable, the school will provide full opportunities for the participation of parents with limited English proficiency, parents with disabilities, and parents of migratory children, including providing information and school reports required under section 1111(State Plans) of the ESEA in an understandable and uniform format and including alternative formats upon request and, to the extent practicable, in language parents understand.
- If the school-wide program plan for Title I, Part A, developed under section 1114(b)(Schoolwide Plans) of the ESEA, is not satisfactory to the parents of participating children, the school will submit any parent comments with the plan when the school submits the plan to the local educational agency (school district).
- The School will involve the parents of children served in Title I, Part A schools in decisions about how the 1 percent of Title I, Part A funds reserved for parental involvement is spent, and will ensure that not less than 95 percent of the 1 percent reserved goes directly to the schools.
- The School will build its own and the parents' capacity for strong parental involvement, in order to ensure effective involvement of parents and to support a partnership among the school, parents, and the community to improve student academic achievement.
- The School will provide other reasonable support for parental involvement activities under section 1118 of the ESEA as the parents may request.

- The School will be governed by the following statutory definition of parental involvement, and will carry out programs, activities, and procedures in accordance with this definition:

Parental involvement means the participation of parents in regular, two-way, and meaningful communication involving student academic learning and other school activities, including ensuring-

- (AJ That parents play an integral role in assisting their child's learning;*
- (BJ That parents are encouraged to be actively involved in their child's education at school,·*
- (CJ That parents are full partners in their child's education and are included, as appropriate, in decision-making and on advisory committees to assist in the education of their child;*
- (DJ The carrying out of other activities, such as those described in section 1118 of the ESEA (ESSA of 2015J.*
- (EJ **Elementary and Secondary Education Act: Title I Part A - Improving Basic Programs Operated by Local Education Agencies.***

What is Title I?

"Title I" is the federal program that provides funding to local school districts to improve the academic achievement of disadvantaged students. It is part of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) first passed in 1965. That Act is reauthorized by Congress from time to time, and often given a new name. It was known as the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, the new name is 'Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015' (ESSA).

"Disadvantaged" students are those who come from low-income families, are in foster homes, or are neglected or delinquent, or who live in families receiving temporary assistance from state governments.

How do schools qualify for Title I Funds?

Schools qualify based on demonstrating that the K-12, ages 5 -17, membership has a sufficiently high percentage of economically disadvantaged students. Title I regulations require school districts to provide services to all school where at least 75% of students qualify for free and reduced-price meals.

Why are Title I funds allocated exclusively to high poverty schools?

Research studies done over the past 30 years show conclusively that schools with high concentrations of economically disadvantaged students generally demonstrate lower levels of achievement than do schools with lower concentrations of economically disadvantaged students. As a result, Congress, in the reauthorization of Title I under the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, now requires districts to allocate

Title I funds to those schools with the highest concentration of such students, particularly to those schools falling above 75%. Districts may extend Title I benefits to schools lower than 75%, yet not below the district average percentage of free/reduced price meals.

Which children are Title I children?

There is a common misconception that a Title I child is a child eligible for free or reduced-price meals, but this is false. Because the Title I program in a district operates at the school level in the form of Schoolwide Programs, there are technically no Title I children in the district/school; only Title I schools. The children within each Title I school have no designation related to Title I. A Schoolwide Program is a school that consolidates funds with other Federal, State and local funds in order to upgrade the entire educational program of a school that services eligible Title I students.

How are schools allocated Title I funds?

Once a school qualifies, funds are then allocated to the schools from the Arizona Department of Education and the Bureau of Indian Affairs that projects the number of qualifying children at the school for the following year. Occasionally, a further adjustment is made after the first month of school the year funds are allocated, to ensure that schools receive funds commensurate with the number of qualifying children actually enrolled.

How can Title I funds be used at the school site?

Title I funds must be used to promote:

1. High academic achievement for all children;
2. A greater focus on teaching and learning;
3. Flexibility to stimulate local initiatives coupled with responsibility for student performance; and
4. Improved linkages among schools, parents and communities.

In general, funds cannot be used to purchase/lease/rent/or improve facilities or provide routine transportation costs for the transport of students to and from school or support funds the school is already entitled to from other sources.

Are there restrictions on using funds to hire staff?

The intent of the law is to use funds to acquire "highly qualified staff" (professionals, i.e. teachers, psychologists, social workers, paraprofessionals, etc). Although the final draft of the law permits the use of funds for other staff, the primary focus remains on "highly qualified staff". Schools intending on hiring a non- professional staff with Title I funds should request clearance from the district Title I office. The state further prohibits the expenditure of Title I funds in school level clerical, administrative or school safety personnel.

Do Title I Funds follow the child if he moves to another school?

As indicated in the Act, the intended purpose of these funds is to improve the school. This is why funds are allocated to schools not to children. As a result, if a child leaves

a Title I school and transfers to another school, there is no transfer of Title I to the receiving school.

Do Private Schools also receive Title I Assistance?

Federal regulations required that districts provide access to academic support serving in private schools that qualify to receive Title I funds. Assistance is limited to remedial reading and/or mathematics tutorial services that support the regular instructional program for certain students in qualifying private schools. As required by federal law, these students must (1) be experiencing significant difficulty in reading and/or mathematics in their regular classes and (2) live in a neighborhood that is served by a public school that is an identified Title I school.

Title I - Program Purposes

Title I Programs (Part A of Public Law (PL) 107-334 of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001), provide funds to districts in order to assist schools with the highest level of economically disadvantaged youngsters to:

1. Improve in student achievement for all participating children;
2. Improve staff development; and
3. Improve parental and community involvement.

In accordance with the federal law, funds are allocated directly to schools to work towards these three goals. Funds are allocated on a per qualifying child (child with free or reduced-price meal status) basis. Federal law requires that a district not use Title funds to offset expenses to a Title I school that would normally be paid by other sources if Title I funds were not available.

PART II. DESCRIPTION OF HOW SCHOOLS WILL IMPLEMENT REQUIRED SCHOOL PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT POLICY COMPONENTS

1. Blackwater Community School will take the following actions to involve parents in the joint development of its school parental involvement plan under section 1118 of the ESEA:

At the School's annual open house, the School discusses the requirements of Title I, including related to parent involvement and advises them of their right to participate in development of the parental plan. The School asks parents to submit their names if interested in working on the plan. Several existing staff members are parents, guardians, and Community members, so there is a good deal of representation and cross-participation in the process.

2. Blackwater Community School will take the following actions to involve parents in the process of school review and improvement under section 1116 of the ESEA:

During the annual open house, the School presents information on school review and improvement, so that the parents are informed on changes related to school improvement initiatives, changes in the curriculum, and the like. Parents are further advised that these issues will be discussed at later planning meetings and are advised to provide their contact information if interested in attending those meetings.

Additionally, the School issues an annual survey to parents seeking input and evaluation of the School's instructional program, including parent involvement. The School uses this to guide it on decisions related to annual Title I plan.

3. Blackwater Community School will hold an annual meeting to inform parents of the 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 Title I, Part A programs. The school will convene the meeting at a time convenient for parents and will offer a flexible number of additional parental involvement meetings, such as in the morning or evening, so that as many parents as possible are able to attend. The school will invite all parents of children participating in Title I, Part A programs to this meeting, and will encourage them to attend, by:

The annual meeting is held in August of each school year, as further detailed above. Agendas and sign-in sheets from these meetings demonstrating parent/guardian participation are available.

4. Blackwater Community School will provide parents of participating children information in a timely manner about Title I, Part A programs that includes a description and explanation of the school's curriculum, the forms of academic assessment used to measure children's progress, and the proficiency levels students are expected to meet by:

See above - these issues are addressed in detail at the annual meeting.

5. Blackwater Community School will at the request of parents, provide opportunities for regular meetings for parents to formulate suggestions and to participate, as appropriate, in decisions about the education of their children. The school will respond to any such suggestions as soon as practicably possible by:

During the annual meeting, parents are advised if they desire additional information, they can request it or a meeting with administration for clarification of the plan, or about any other information related to Title I. Should the school receive any such requests, they would provide the requested information or hold a meeting. (No requests have been received).

6. Blackwater Community School will provide each parent an individual student report about the performance of their child on the State assessment in at least math, language arts and reading by:

Twice a year, the School conducts parent/teacher conferences during which information regarding student performance on core academic content areas, formative and summative assessment, behavior, attendance, and extracurricular activities are provided to parents.

7. Blackwater Community School will take the following actions to provide each parent timely notice when their child has been assigned or has been taught for four (4) or more consecutive weeks by a teacher who is not highly qualified within the meaning of the term in section 200.56 of the Title I Final Regulations (67 Fed. Reg. 71710, December 2, 2002) before the end of September month.

The School sends out the 4-week notice letter, along with an action plan as to how the students will be taught by a (Highly Qualified Teacher) HQT teacher as described in Every student Succeeds act (ESSA).

8. Blackwater Community School will provide assistance to parents of children served by the school, as appropriate, in understanding topics by undertaking the actions described in this paragraph --

- the state's academic content standards,
- the state's student academic achievement standards,
- the state and local academic assessments including alternate assessments,
- the requirements of Part A,
- how to monitor their child's progress, and
- how to work with educators:

First, the School has a parent compact that addresses the student, parent, and the School's responsibility to support the student's academic responsibilities. Weekly, teachers send out a newsletter to the parents outlining curriculum, homework, and other types of class related activities relating to the academic progress. Each month, the School hosts a family involvement night focusing on curriculum, literacy, anti-bullying program, health, culture, community outreach, book fairs, and other educationally related activities.

9. Blackwater Community School will provide materials and training to help parents work with their children to improve their children's academic achievement, such as literacy training and using technology, as appropriate, to foster parental involvement, by:

Again, the monthly family events have a strong focus on literacy and parent involvement. These events include book giveaways, to promote in-home literacy and in-home libraries. During these events, the School also addresses parental involvement via reading to children, technology application in the classroom (with parents participating in use of technology), and discussion of how to use the School's portal to access student test results.

10. Blackwater Community School will, with the assistance of its parents, educate its teachers, pupil services personnel, principals and other staff in how to reach out to, communicate with, and work with parents as equal partners in the value and utility of contributions of parents, and in how to implement and coordinate parent programs and build ties between parents and schools, by:

The School ensures that there are weekly newsletters communicating what is going on to parents, there are the monthly meetings between parents and staff, there are opportunities to volunteer in the classroom, fieldtrips, and at large events. Teachers are also required to keep communication logs detailing their interactions with parents. There are also the aforementioned parent/teacher conferences. Regular Board meetings are held after work hours, so that parents can attend. In short, the School takes communication and parental involvement very seriously.

11. Blackwater Community School will, to the extent feasible and appropriate, coordinate and integrate parental involvement programs and activities with other educational departments located within the exterior boundaries of Gila River Indian community. The school will also conduct other activities, such as parent resource centers, that encourage and support parents in more fully participating in the education of their children, by: October 31st.

On campus, there are three preschool programs - one funded by (Family & Child Education) FACE, one funded by Native Youth Community Project (NYCP) grant awarded to Blackwater Community School by US Department of Education, and the other by Arizona State's Quality First. There is also a strong partnership with the Community's Early Childhood Education Program and we coordinate Child Find along with the Early Childhood Education Program. In addition, the School provides extended learning opportunities to all students under 21st CCLC grant funding, Tribal and BIE funding. These extended learning opportunities are offered to our students either during after-school, inter-sessions and or during summer months. The School also provides a Gifted and Talented (G&T) program to the eligible students with the funding provided by Bureau of Indian Education.

12. Blackwater Community School will take the following actions to ensure that information related to the school and parent-programs, meetings, and other activities is sent to parents of participating children in an understandable and uniform format, including alternative formats upon request, and, to the extent practicable, in a language the parents can understand:

Information is conveyed to parents through a variety of measures, including the previously mentioned newsletter, annual meeting, and parental meetings with teachers, via social media posts, robo-calls. In the event parents need help with translation due to language, the school maintains a strong language and culture program that can assist in this situation.

PART III. DISCRETIONARY SCHOOL PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT POLICY COMPONENTS

In addition to the foregoing, Blackwater Community School will, in consultation with its parents, chooses to undertake the following additional discretionary steps to build parents' capacity for involvement in the school and school system to support their children's academic achievement, as outlined in section 1118(e) of the ESEA:

- Arranging school meetings at a variety of times, or conducting in-home conferences between teachers or other educators who work directly with participating children, arrange meetings with parents who are unable to attend conferences at school in order to maximize parental involvement and participation in their children's education.

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PART III. ADOPTION

This School Parental Involvement Policy has been developed jointly with, and agreed on with, parents of children participating in Title I, Part A programs.

This policy was adopted by Blackwater Community School/Akimel O’Otham Pee Posh Charter School and will be in effect for the period SY 2023-24. The School will distribute this policy to all parents of participating Title I, Part A children on or before August 30th, 2023.

Signatures of Authorized Official:  Date: 08/18/2023
President Board of Trustees