



The Title I Messenger!

"Keeping YOU on Target!"



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Important Reminders

- Collect private school intent to participate forms from interested private schools in preparation for June Desk Audit.
- Begin (or continue) consultation process with private schools who have expressed interest in participating in the 2011-2012 school year.
- Verify Choice/SES participation date in eSchoolPlus by the end of May.
- LEAs and schools under improvement should review success plans and must complete 3 progress updates per year.

Month in Review

- The 2011-2012 monitoring and technical assistance schedule for Title I, Part A will be finalized shortly and distributed to all Title I, Part A contacts soon. Our plan for technical assistance for the 2011-2012 school year will include a mix of in-person technical assistance meetings and a variety of updated on-line resources. Our monitoring plan for the 2011-2012 school year will include participation in the Department's three year cycle of on-site monitoring (the LEAs to be monitored and schedule will be announced soon) and a variety of individual desk audits throughout the year. The checklists for Title I, Part A on-site monitoring and Title I desk audits are available now on the ESPEs website [here](#). We hope that you will take the time to look over the checklists soon so you are familiar with our expectations in advance of our monitoring. We have also updated the Title I Annual Calendar [here](#) to reflect the new schedule of desk audits and technical assistance opportunities that we will offer throughout the year.
- Lt. Governor Matt Denn held a session on Wednesday May 18 at the Buena Vista Conference Center titled *School, Family, and Community Partnerships: Working Together for Students' Success*. It was great to see several Title I coordinators in attendance. For those of you who were unable to attend, Dr. Mavis Sanders, Professor and Senior Advisor from Johns Hopkins University's [National Network of Partnership Schools](#) presented an overview of the 6 types of involvement including: Parenting, Communicating, Volunteering, Learning at Home, Decision Making, and Collaborating with the Community. She provided a checklist that LEAs can use encourage family and community support in all 6 areas. The checklist is available [here](#).

Now is a great time to begin planning your family and community engagement initiatives for the coming school year. Dr. Sanders suggests that LEAs and schools start by defining goals (i.e. increase reading comprehension, develop a culture that welcomes and encourages family and community engagement, etc.). LEAs and schools are then encouraged to review the checklist and select activities from the 6 categories that will support the LEA or school goals. We will circulate Dr. Sanders' presentation when it becomes available. The presentation includes, among other useful information, an overview of the outcomes LEAs and schools can expect to see when implementing each of the 6 involvement components.

Title I Calendar Updates

The Title I Annual Calendar has been updated to reflect the new monitoring and technical assistance schedule for the 2011-2012 school year. Please download and print the new version available [here](#).

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- Applications for the 1003(g) School Improvement Grants were received in mid-April. Applications that were substantially approvable are currently in the revision stages and we anticipate final approvals to be announced at the end of the month. All applications will be posted [here](#) once the final approvals are announced.



- This is a reminder that **your LEA Consolidated Grant Application is due on either July 15 or August 12, 2011**, at the very latest. Have you registered for any of the LEA Consolidated Grant Application supervised drop-in work sessions? Plan now so that you don't have to burn the midnight oil in the summer! If you need more information, visit the ESPES website [here](#) or call Geri Donahue at 302-857-3320 for the complete technical assistance schedule and to register.

Federal Update

As many of you know, a budget deal was reached for Fiscal Year 2011 in mid April. The agreement included a .2 percent across the board reduction for key formula-grant programs, including Title I, Part A grants. We don't expect the reduction to significantly impact LEAs in Delaware since Delaware receives a minimum allocation due to its size. We do expect LEA allocations to change slightly due to fluctuations in the number of students in poverty in each LEA which has been the case over the last few years.

The House and Senate continue to battle over the role of the Federal Government in Education as they prepare legislation for the FY 2012 budget. The Fiscal Year 2012 education budget will be significantly impacted by decisions concerning the nation's current debt ceiling. To complicate things further, discussions are still underway regarding the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. The reauthorization story continues to evolve daily. To keep up to date, you might consider (if you haven't done so already) subscribing to Education Week's "EdWeek Update: Daily News and Insights" a free e-newsletter that provides daily updates on this and many other important education stories. Visit www.Edweek.org for more information. In addition, the National Title I Association continually updates a [Legislative & Policy Update](#) blog that you can visit or subscribe to for regular updates as the story unfolds.

Family Engagement: A Secondary School Challenge

Title I, Part A places a heavy emphasis on family engagement through required parent communications and parent involvement policies and practices (for guidance on required notices and policies click [here](#)). Research on the impact of family engagement at the

elementary school level has drawn many correlations to student achievement. As a result, many elementary schools are implementing creative ways to involve families such as community events, reading nights, on-line communication tools and parent resource centers.

The challenge for many LEAs is keeping their family engagement momentum strong as students move on to secondary school levels. The drop in family engagement at the secondary levels is likely due to a variety of factors. As students move on to secondary schools there is a natural progression toward independence and they often discourage their parents from being involved. In addition, many parents are unsure of how to help their children in the secondary schools and they don't understand the value of their involvement. In the worst case scenario, some parents don't feel welcome in schools, or they simply don't know how they can become involved.

To combat the decline in family engagement in secondary schools, the National Parent Teacher Association (PTA) provided a list of examples of the components of comprehensive parent involvement programs operating in successful secondary schools. The components are as follows:

- Provide special transition or orientation sessions for parents and students entering middle and high school.
- Establish a family resource center at your school to share information and provide parenting classes and other resources on adolescent development.
- Provide training and instruction for parents on curriculum, teaching methods, and tracking, assessment, and placement procedures and how they effect students.
- Encourage parents to volunteer by adopting and sponsoring academic programs, school clubs, or teams.
- Invite parents and students to serve on site-based management teams to participate in school decision-making.
- Invite teachers, parents, and students to work together to design and monitor different community service experiences.

The Center on Innovation & Improvement recently released a publication in its Promising Practices Series titled *Changing the Conversation with Families in Persistently Low-Achieving High Schools: Guidance for Implementing School Improvement Grants*. Although the article is focused on high schools receiving 1003(g) School Improvement Grant (SIG) funds, it includes research, strategies and additional resources that all high schools could benefit from. For example, the article highlights the connection between parental style and expectations to student success, as documented in William H. Jeynes's book, *Parental Involvement and Academic Success* (2011). In the book, Jeynes concludes that parental style and parental expectations were more predictive of student success than household rules or parental participation in school activities. The article outlines the important role of LEAs and schools in helping parents understand:

1. Their children's current achievement and skill levels;
2. Their children's goals beyond high school;
3. The academic achievement requirements for their children to achieve these goals;
4. The course selection, level of effort, and persistence necessary to meet the academic requirements; and the ways the parents can support their children each step along the way.



According to the authors, LEAs looking to enhance their family engagement activities at the high school level should also develop family-friendly guidelines for assisting children in preparing for college and careers. In addition, LEAs should consider implementing a parent leadership training component to prepare parents to participate in formal settings as team members and leaders. Finally, the authors stress the importance of ensuring all parent engagement efforts are intentionally designed, carefully evaluated, and refined as the results of the evaluation indicate.

For more details on the high school family engagement initiatives outlined in the article and for access to a variety of planning and implementation tools, see the entire article available for free [here](#).



Just Ask John

Q: Dear John,

I am happy to report that after countless hours and multiple parent meetings, my LEA parent involvement policy is finally compliant! Now it's time to direct my focus to the Title I schools in my district. Several of the schools have upcoming meetings scheduled with parents to develop/revise their policies and compacts for the coming school year. I'd like to help and was wondering if there is a checklist I can use to facilitate the meetings and to help ensure all required components are included?

- Determined in Dover

A: Dear Determined,

Congratulations on finalizing your LEA policy! To ensure your hard work doesn't just end up sitting on a shelf somewhere, make sure you incorporate the policy into your daily activities and periodically review the document both internally and with parents to ensure it is meeting everyone's needs throughout the year.

The timing couldn't be better to take a look at your Title I school policies and compacts to ensure they are in compliance for the upcoming school year. We have developed checklists that schools can use to ensure all the required components are included. Click [here](#) for a checklist for school plans and compacts. Our friends in single school LEAs (Charter schools and single school technical districts) should use the checklist available [here](#) since they need to cover both the LEA and the school level requirements in their policy. Good luck!

- Just Ask John

Title I Toolkit – Family and Community Engagement

The Early Development and Learning Resources work group at the Department developed a perennial calendar that contains daily activities preschool children and adults can be involved with during the course of a year. The calendar also contains information on community links that offer families opportunities for activities that support learning. The calendar is available on the Department's web site [here](#). Printed copies of the calendar are also available through the Department of Education, Early Development and Learning Resources group. Contact Minnie Alfree at 302-735-4295 or email her: mrash@doe.k12.de.us Title I Coordinators are encouraged to let their early childhood center and elementary school principals know about this free resource for parents.

Additional Resources:

[DEDOE Family and Community Engagement Website](#)

[Delaware State Parent Advisory Council \(DSPAC\)](#)

[Parent Information Center of Delaware](#)

[Center for Innovation and Improvement](#)

[Making Your Family-Community Partnership Work – A Checklist for Schools](#)
