

BUFORD ELEMENTARY TITLE I PARENT INVOLVEMENT PLAN

The Buford Elementary community recognizes the importance of parent involvement in reaching individual student goals for successful completion of kindergarten and first grade. Educational research clearly shows that parents who are actively involved in their child's learning at home help their children become more successful learners in and out of school. In our efforts to improve student achievement, BES has developed a plan with goals and will implement strategies to increase parent and community involvement within our school. *NCLB Act of 2001 Section 1118-1-16.*

At Buford Elementary parent involvement is encouraged before the school year begins and continues throughout the year. Grade level supply lists were sent home with each student at the end of last school year for this school year and provided to new students to BES as they register in the Spring and Summer. The supply lists were also sent to Wal-Mart, K-Mart and several office supply stores a month prior to the school year. A school calendar was mailed home with the summer newsletter and included holidays and important dates for the school year. Student agendas were ordered for each student for this school year. Agendas were purchased at open house prior to the first day of school, on the first day of school, or as students enroll during the year. The agendas include:

- the school calendar
- student/parent/teacher compact
- school rules and consequences for infringement of rules
- school related procedures and laws
- a character education program

After a review of the agenda by parents, teachers, and students, the compact is signed. The agendas are then used throughout the year for home and school communication.

A BES new parent meeting is conducted prior to Open House to inform all new parents about the curriculum, school procedures, and to answer any questions they may have about the school. Open house is conducted prior to the first day of school so that students can locate their classrooms and meet their teachers. They have the opportunity to meet the teacher, make school

purchases, prepay for lunches, join PTO, purchase spirit wear, and familiarize themselves with the building and personnel. Parents also receive information about bus routes and Wolf Pack, the before and after school care program. During Open House, bilingual staff members are on hand to help our ESOL parents with completing forms and translating.

During the first few weeks of school each classroom hosts a parent/teacher curriculum night. BES also hosts an ESOL Curriculum night for our non-English speaking parents. Highlights of the curriculum, rules, procedures, grading, assessments and other informational items are presented to parents. Four days during the school year are set aside for parent/teacher conferences. The dates for this school year are October 15th, October 16th, March 18th, and March 19th. Parents are informed of state and local assessments used to measure student progress. The proficiency levels that the students are expected to meet are shared. Strengths and weaknesses of each student are also discussed. Parents are informed of their student's progress through the formal progress report at four and one-half weeks and the report card every nine weeks, in addition to the informal weekly reports. Parents can also access their child's grades and progress at all times through Powerschool. *NCLB Act of 2001 Section 1118-1 and 2 and 16-7.*

Buford Elementary has an open-door policy that encourages parents to be a part of the school day. Many activities are planned throughout the school year and parents are invited to attend. Some of these activities include:

- New Parent Meeting
- Open House
- Curriculum Night
- PTO family events and grade level performances
- Career/Community Helper Day
- Book Fair
- Fall Festival
- Mom's Tea
- Dad's Day
- Thanksgiving Family Lunch
- Arts/Technology Night
- Homecoming Pep Rally
- Classroom Celebrations and Parties
- Field Trips
- Field Day

Also, parents are encouraged and welcomed to volunteer. Volunteers are enlisted to:

- tutor students one-on-one
- support special events such as grade level social events, the Book Fair, and Secret Santa Shop
- accompany classes on field trips to assist with supervision
- support the reading and media programs
- work in the teacher workroom to assist in the making of bulletin boards/school displays etc.

Parents are provided with various forms of communication, such as weekly classroom newsletters, a monthly school-wide newsletter, flyers for upcoming events, websites, PTO information, phone calls, etc. All communication is translated into Spanish for our non-English speaking parents. A bilingual office manager, several paraprofessionals, and a custodian, provide translations for phone calls and conferences.

As assessment results are made available, they are mailed or sent home to parents and communicated in newsletters. A letter accompanies the results explaining to the parents how to read the results. The letter encourages parents to call the school with any questions they may have. *NCLB Act of 2001 Section 1118-1-16.*

Parents are involved in the planning, reviewing, and improvement of programs. The School Council, made up of teachers, parents, principal and community business leaders, meets quarterly to discuss educational issues, give input to the principal concerning ongoing programs, make suggestions, and evaluate the total school program. The Parent Involvement Committee meets several times a year to determine how parents will be involved and how Title I funding will be spent to involve more parents in the educational process. The Parent Involvement Policy will be reviewed each spring and at the beginning of the year to make appropriate changes determined by the members of the committee. Other meetings such as PTO, ESOL nights, and Arts Night keep parents informed and involved in the successes of their children. *NCLB Act of 2001 Section 1118-4 and 16.*

The Safe and Drug Free committee and the counseling programs conduct workshops to train parents in ways they can contribute to their child's progress. For the past four years a survey has been sent to parents – three from the School Council and one as part of the SACS self-study – giving them the opportunity to provide the school with valuable information. An annual survey will continue to be sent to parents each year. The data collected will be submitted to the Parent Involvement Committee and the School Council. The results will be presented to the faculty to ensure that parents are part of the decision-making process. One section of the survey will give parents an opportunity to express opinions about how we can make parent support groups more effective (i.e. increased attendance, parent with child support groups). *NCLB Act of 2001 Section 1118-8-10 and 13 and 15.*

The Parent Involvement Committee will assist the school in making parents aware that resources are available to help their children with academic and behavioral success. Communicating this through the newsletter and setting up a “booth” at Open House, PTO, and the first day of school are possibilities for getting this information to parents. An area is available for parents to view tapes and/or read informational books, pamphlets and brochures that will provide them with valuable “tools” for helping their children at home. These items will be available on a check-out basis from the school counselor and media specialist. Literacy activities and technology training will be provided, as appropriate, to foster parental involvement and increase student achievement. ESOL personnel will continue to have special nights to provide parents with home activities that promote literacy such as the Dolch Word Boxes and ESOL “parent backpacks” that can be checked out containing the activities explained in their native language. (Possible areas for additional “parent backpacks” are discipline issues, single parenting, and students with ADD/ADHD.)

Another initiative the Parent Involvement Committee has established is the weekly parent/child contract. This contract includes activities such as, cooking, singing, board games, reading, exercising, coloring, singing/dancing, etc. The form is sent home weekly with each student. As parents engage in the activities with their child, they place their initials by each activity completed. Once three activities have been completed within the week, students turn in the contract. At the end of each week a drawing occurs and students who have turned in a completed form are eligible to win a family involvement game or prize.

Using Parent Involvement funds, **“English...Yes I Can!”** has been purchased and available to our non-English speaking parents beginning in the 2004-2005 school year. This series of 34 tapes can be used at their convenience to learn English. This school year we have several of our bilingual staff members teaching the **“English...Yes I Can!”** series to K-12 parents who attend classes at the school. The first tape was shown at the first ESOL night to familiarize parents with the program and act as an orientation. Information on child development and parenting is available to parents. PowerSchool is available through the internet keeping parents informed of student performance. Technology support will be available to assist parents with this program at the school and system level. This site will be updated regularly by teachers. *NCLB Act of 2001 Section 1118-10-12 and 3.*

A welcome center in the main hall contains helpful information for parents. Brochures with information regarding many parent topics and current events are available in both English and Spanish. Suggestions for parent involvement are mailed in the monthly newsletter and provide ideas for helping their children at home. The Title I Coordinator sends timely suggestions to teachers on how to involve parents in the educational process. *NCLB Act of 2001 Section 1118-16-7.*