

School Improvement and Parent Notification



When the LEA (local education agency) identifies a school for improvement, what information must be provided to parents?

When one of its schools is identified for improvement, the LEA must promptly provide the following information to the parents of each child enrolled in the school:

- an explanation of what the identification means and how the school their child attends compares to other elementary and secondary schools served by the LEA and the SEA (state education agency) in terms of the academic achievement of its students;
- the reason(s) for the school being identified for improvement, such as insufficient participation in assessments or one or more subgroups not meeting academic proficiency targets;
- an explanation of how parents can become involved in addressing the academic issues that led to identification; and
- An explanation of the parents' option to transfer their child to another school in the LEA that has not been identified for improvement. The notification must provide parents with enough relevant information to help them decide what school is best for their child and be made well before the beginning of the school year in which this option will be available, so that if parents choose to do so they have sufficient time to exercise their choice option prior to the beginning of the school year.

At a minimum, the LEA must inform parents about the academic achievement level of students at the school or schools to which their child may transfer, but it may also choose to include other information, such as a description of special academic programs, facilities, before-or-after school programs, the professional qualifications of teachers in the core academic subjects, or parent involvement opportunities. The LEA must also explain to parents that it will provide their child with transportation to the schools that the LEA identifies as options, subject to certain cost limitations. §200.37

Additional information on public school choice is available in the Department of Education's draft *Public School Choice Non-regulatory Guidance* available online at <http://www.ed.gov/policy/elsec/guid/schoolchoiceguid.doc>

What information must the LEA provide to both parents and the public?

In addition to providing school improvement information to the parents of each student in the school, the LEA must publish and disseminate, to both parents and the public, information explaining .

- what the school is doing to address the problem of low achievement; and
 - what the LEA or the SEA is doing to help the school address this problem.
- §1116(b)(6); §200.38

What guidelines should SEAs, LEAs, or schools follow when communicating with parents and the public during the school improvement process?

Meaningful parental involvement is one of the cornerstones of the reform initiatives contained in the No Child Left Behind Act. Therefore, it is essential that SEAs, LEAs, or schools communicate with parents throughout the school improvement process and welcome them as key partners in addressing the academic issues that led to the school being identified for improvement.

Clarity and timeliness of information are essential. The State, LEA, or school must ensure that required information is provided in an understandable and uniform format (including alternative formats upon request), regardless of the method or media used.

To the extent practicable, written communication must be in a language parents can understand, with special attention given to parents of migratory and limited English proficient students. If that is not practicable, the information must be provided in oral translations for parents with limited English proficiency.

The SEA, LEA, or school must provide information to parents directly, through regular mail or by e-mail. However, if an SEA does not have access to individual student addresses, it may distribute information through the LEA or school. The same information must also be disseminated through broader means of communication, such as the Internet, the media, and through public agencies serving students and their families.

Parent Information and Resource Center of Central Alabama
110 Company Street  PO Box 118  Wetumpka, AL 36092
334-567-2252  866-532-7660
Fax: 334-567-9938
www.pircca.com

