

Minutes
Parental Involvement Task Force
Commission on Professional Standards in Education
October 11, 2011

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

The Parental Involvement Task Force met via telephone conference and a public location at the Nevada Department of Education Office, Superintendent's Conference Room, in Carson City on October 11, 2011. The meeting was called to order at 2:36 P.M. by Chair Elissa Couch.

Task Force Members Present:

Elissa Couch, Chair - via telephone conference call
Ann Bingham, Member – via telephone conference call
Eva Melendrez, Member – via telephone conference call
Karen Taycher, Member – via telephone conference call
Rorie Fitzpatrick, Member – via telephone conference call
Margaret Ferrara, Member – via telephone conference call
Amy Henderson, Member – via telephone conference call
Shawn Vogel, Member – via telephone conference call

Task Force Members Absent:

D'Lisa Crain, Member
Lyn Gorrindo, Member

Staff Present:

Christina Harper, Commission Administrative Assistant
Dr. Katherine Rohrer, Licensure Office

Public:

None

Chair Couch determined that quorum of the Task Force was present.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: July 28, 2011 and September 13, 2011

MOTION: Following a review of the July 28 and September 13, 2011 Parental Involvement Task Force meeting minutes; Task Force Member Bingham moved to approve the July 28 and the September 13, 2011 minutes, seconded by Task Force Member Ferrara. The motion passed unanimously.

REVIEW GOALS AND COURSEWORK RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DEVELOPING REGULATIONS TO ADD COURSEWORK FOR TEACHERS IN THE AREA OF PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

Task Force Chair Couch ensured that Task Force Members received copies of the current Nevada Administrative Code in special education, which currently requires a parental involvement component, in an effort to help this Task Force make recommendations to the Commission regarding a potential regulation that will require parental involvement coursework and teacher preparation for licensure.

Task Force Member Fitzpatrick stated that the appointment of the Director of the Office of Parental Involvement is in the State Personnel Office awaiting for them to post for the position. Ms. Fitzpatrick stated that the Department hopes to be able to post the job this week and stated that recruitment for this position may be difficult as an individual will have to accept the lowest salary step.

It was discussed that the Parental Involvement Policy, NRS 392.457, talks about communication between home and school. The Task Force reviewed and discussed the following NRS:

NRS 392.457 Adoption of policies by State Board and school districts concerning effective involvement and engagement; annual review of policies.

1. The State Board shall, in consultation with the boards of trustees of school districts, educational personnel, local associations and organizations of parents whose children are enrolled in public schools throughout this State and individual parents and legal guardians whose children are enrolled in public schools throughout this State, adopt a policy to encourage effective involvement and engagement by parents and families in support of their children and the education of their children. The policy adopted by the State Board must be considered when the Board:

(a) Consults with the boards of trustees of school districts in the adoption of policies pursuant to subsection 3; and

(b) Interacts with school districts, public schools, educational personnel, parents, legal guardians and families of pupils, and members of the general public in carrying out its duties pursuant to this title.

2. The policy adopted by the State Board pursuant to subsection 1 must include the following elements and goals:

(a) Promotion of an atmosphere for parents and families to visit the school that their children attend and feel welcome, valued and connected to the staff of the school, other parents and families and to the education of their children.

(b) Promotion of regular, two-way, meaningful communication between parents, families and schools relating to learning by pupils.

(c) Collaboration among parents, families and schools to support learning by pupils and healthy development of pupils at home and school.

(d) Empowerment of parents and families to advocate for their children and the children of other parents and families to ensure that all pupils are treated fairly and have access to learning opportunities that support pupil achievement.

(e) Promotion of an equal partnership between parents, families and schools in making decisions that affect children, parents and families and in informing, influencing and creating school policies, practices and programs.

(f) Collaboration of parents, families and schools with the community to connect pupils, parents, families and schools with learning opportunities, community services and civic participation.

3. The board of trustees of each school district shall, in consultation with the State Board, educational personnel, local associations and organizations of parents whose children are enrolled in public schools of the school district and individual parents and legal guardians whose children are enrolled in public schools of the school district, adopt policies to encourage effective involvement and engagement by parents and families in support of their children and the education of their children. The policies adopted pursuant to this subsection must:

(a) Be consistent, to the extent applicable, with the policy adopted by the State Board pursuant to subsection 1;

(b) Include the elements and goals specified in subsection 2; and

(c) Comply with the parental involvement policy required by the federal No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, as set forth in 20 U.S.C. § 6318.

4. The State Board and the board of trustees of each school district shall, at least once each year, review and amend their respective policies as necessary.

NRS 392.4575 Educational involvement accords; policy by school districts for development and distribution; annual review; submission of information to school support team.

1. The Department shall prescribe a form for educational involvement accords to be used by all public schools in this State. The educational involvement accord must comply with the policy:

(a) For parental involvement required by the federal No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, as set forth in 20 U.S.C. § 6318.

(b) For parental involvement and family engagement adopted by the State Board pursuant to [NRS 392.457](#).

2. Each educational involvement accord must include, without limitation:

(a) A description of how the parent or legal guardian will be involved in the education of the pupil, including, without limitation:

(1) Reading to the pupil, as applicable for the grade or reading level of the pupil;

(2) Reviewing and checking the pupil's homework; and

(3) Contributing 5 hours of time each school year, including, without limitation, by attending school-related activities, parent-teacher association meetings, parent-teacher conferences, volunteering at the school and chaperoning school-sponsored activities.

(b) The responsibilities of a pupil in a public school, including, without limitation:

(1) Reading each day before or after school, as applicable for the grade or reading level of the pupil;

(2) Using all school equipment and property appropriately and safely;

(3) Following the directions of any adult member of the staff of the school;

(4) Completing and submitting homework in a timely manner; and

(5) Respecting himself or herself, others and all property.

(c) The responsibilities of a public school and the administrators, teachers and other personnel employed at a school, including, without limitation:

(1) Ensuring that each pupil is provided proper instruction, supervision and interaction;

(2) Maximizing the educational and social experience of each pupil;

(3) Carrying out the professional responsibility of educators to seek the best interest of each pupil; and

(4) Making staff available to the parents and legal guardians of pupils to discuss the concerns of parents and legal guardians regarding the pupils.

3. Each educational involvement accord must be accompanied by, without limitation:

(a) Information describing how the parent or legal guardian may contact the pupil's teacher and the principal of the school in which the pupil is enrolled;

(b) The curriculum of the course or standards for the grade in which the pupil is enrolled, as applicable, including, without limitation, a calendar that indicates the dates of major examinations and the due dates of significant projects, if those dates are known by the teacher at the time that the information is distributed;

(c) The homework and grading policies of the pupil's teacher or school;

(d) Directions for finding resource materials for the course or grade in which the pupil is enrolled, as applicable;

- (e) Suggestions for parents and legal guardians to assist pupils in their schoolwork at home;
- (f) The dates of scheduled conferences between teachers or administrators and the parents or legal guardians of the pupil;
- (g) The manner in which reports of the pupil's progress will be delivered to the parent or legal guardian and how a parent or legal guardian may request a report of progress;
- (h) The classroom rules and policies;
- (i) The dress code of the school, if any;
- (j) The availability of assistance to parents who have limited proficiency in the English language;
- (k) Information describing the availability of free and reduced-price meals, including, without limitation, information regarding school breakfast, school lunch and summer meal programs;
- (l) Opportunities for parents and legal guardians to become involved in the education of their children and to volunteer for the school or class; and
- (m) The code of honor relating to cheating prescribed pursuant to [NRS 392.461](#).

4. The board of trustees of each school district shall adopt a policy providing for the development and distribution of the educational involvement accord. The policy adopted by a board of trustees must require each classroom teacher to:

- (a) Distribute the educational involvement accord to the parent or legal guardian of each pupil in the teacher's class at the beginning of each school year or upon a pupil's enrollment in the class, as applicable; and
- (b) Provide the parent or legal guardian with a reasonable opportunity to sign the educational involvement accord.

5. Except as otherwise provided in this subsection, the board of trustees of each school district shall ensure that the form prescribed by the Department is used for the educational involvement accord of each public school in the school district. The board of trustees of a school district may authorize the use of an expanded form that contains additions to the form prescribed by the Department if the basic information contained in the expanded form complies with the form prescribed by the Department.

6. The Department and the board of trustees of each school district shall, at least once each year, review and amend their respective educational involvement accords.

7. If a school support team is established in accordance with the regulations of the State Board adopted pursuant to [NRS 385.361](#) for an elementary school, the principal of the school shall provide to the support team information concerning the distribution of the educational involvement accord and the number of accords which were signed and returned by parents and legal guardians. The information must be provided in an aggregated format and must not disclose the identity of an individual parent, legal guardian or pupil.

Task Force Member Fitzpatrick read and reviewed the State Board of Education's Parental Involvement Policy statement:

PARENT INVOLVEMENT POLICY

(Pursuant to NRS 392.457)

Parent Involvement: Empowering parents to participate in their children's education.

The Nevada State Board of Education recognizes that parental involvement is the key to academic achievement. The term *parent* refers to any caregiver who assumes responsibility for nurturing and caring for children, including parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, foster parents, stepparents, etc. Studies demonstrate that when parents are involved in their children's education, the attitudes, behaviors, and achievement of students are positively enhanced.

Parents and families provide the primary educational environment for children; consequently, parents are vital and necessary partners with the educational communities throughout their children's school career. Although parents come to the schools with diverse cultural backgrounds, primary languages, and needs, universally all parents want what is best for their children. School districts and schools, in

collaboration with parents, teachers, students and administrators, must establish and develop efforts that enhance parental involvement and reflect the needs of students, parents, and families in the communities which they serve.

In order to enhance parental involvement, six essential elements should be promoted:

1. Communication between home and school is regular, two-way, and meaningful: Effective communication requires school-initiated contact with the parent and parent-initiated contact with the school where both parties provide vital information about a child's strengths, challenges, and accomplishments. To effectively communicate, both parties must be aware of issues such as cultural diversity and language differences and appropriate steps must be taken to allow clear communication for all participants.
2. Responsible parenting is promoted and supported: The family plays a primary role in a child's education, and schools must respect and honor traditions and activities unique to a community's cultural practices and beliefs. Parents are linked to programs and resources within the community that provide support services to families.
3. Parents play an integral role in assisting student learning: Educators recognize and acknowledge parents' roles as the integral and primary facilitator of their children's education. Research demonstrates that student achievement increases when parents are actively involved in the learning process.
4. Schools are open and inviting to parents and families and are actively seeking parental support and assistance for school programs: Parents are welcome in the school, and their support and assistance are sought. Capitalizing on the expertise and skills of the parents strengthens the family, school and community partnership.
5. Parents are full partners in the decisions that affect children and families: Parents and educators have a joint responsibility to make informed decisions related to all aspects of the education provided to Nevada's youth. The role of parents in shared decision making should be continually evaluated, refined, and expanded.
6. Community resources are made available to strengthen school programs, family practices, and student learning: Schools and parents will cultivate relationships with additional members of the community in order to promote and effectively increase educational opportunities for children. Together, parents, educators and community members will join efforts toward identifying and promoting community resources and innovative programs for strengthening schools, families, and student learning.

Providing all Nevada's children with equal access to quality education is a primary goal. It is vital that all partners (parents, educators, communities, etc.) have the opportunity to provide input and offer resources to meet this goal. These partnerships are mutually beneficial. Developing cooperative efforts and linking access to resources will ensure improved academic achievement for all students, as well as quality schools.

Task Force Chair Couch raised the question of what are we going to require in the area of parental involvement for teachers?

Task Force Member Bingham expressed concern with the philosophical statement and suggested looking at this as a partnership.

Task Force Member Taycher stated that the current policy is communication between home and school.

Task Force Member Melendrez stated that the Clark County School District adopted the PTA National Standards and every school district has adopted the parental involvement policy as specific to district needs and includes NRS 392.457.

Task Force Member Fitzpatrick stated that the six essential elements need to be attended to in the coursework.

Task Force Member Bingham suggested using language in recent legislation and align the parental involvement and family engagement requirements with the Department's policy.

Ms. Rohrer suggested placing the proposed language in NAC 391.030, as this regulation applies to all licenses and not include this requirement in each specific license requirements.

ACTION: Task Force Member Fitzpatrick, Ms. Rohrer and Mrs. Harper will draft language based upon the comments and recommendations at this meeting and submit to the Task Force to review at the next meeting.

SCHEDULE NEXT MEETING DATE – IF NECESSARY

The next meeting of the Task Force was scheduled for November 1 at 2:30 P.M.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments.

TASK FORCE MEMBERS COMMENTS

There were no Task Force Member comments.

ADJOURNMENT

Task Force Chair Couch adjourned the meeting at 3:36 P.M.