

Parent Involvement Policy

The Ritchie County Board of Education believes that parent involvement at the early childhood, middle, and adolescent level is absolutely fundamental to a healthy system of public education. Strong partnerships between homes and schools are needed if quality education is to be provided to all children. Parents and teachers, by promoting a sense of cooperative responsibility, can reinforce each other's efforts. As their children's first and most enduring teachers, parents can complement their children's school learning and behavior by serving as collaborators in the educational process. The resulting home-school partnerships can have positive effects on parent, teacher, and student attitudes, classroom instruction, and on student achievement.

The goal of this policy is to enhance cooperative efforts between homes and schools in the county that will encourage parents, through a variety of means, to become involved in the education of their children.

The term "parents" as used in this policy are those individuals with legal or quasi-legal custodianship (i.e. biological, adoptive, foster parents). The term also expands to include family members (i.e. aunts, brothers, grandparents, etc.) and significant others whose involvement may be important to the child.

One percent of Title I, Part A, funds received by the Ritchie County Board of Education, in the amount of \$500,000 or more, must be reserved for parental involvement, and at least 95 percent of the of reserved amount must be distributed to the schools. The schools may voluntarily return some their funds to the Ritchie County Board of Education to conduct county wide parental involvement activities, if they wish. An evaluation process (semi-annual Parent Involvement Survey) is to be conducted annually to determine weaknesses, strengths, and necessary areas of improvement.

Research shows that when schools and families work together to support learning, children tend to succeed in school and in life. In fact, the most accurate predictor of a student's achievement in school is the extent to which a child's family creates a home environment that encourages learning, expresses high (but not unrealistic) expectations, and becomes involved in their child's education at school and in the community. Title I personnel of Ritchie County Schools recognize the shared responsibilities of family, school and community for children's learning and development. Therefore, it is important that schools and families develop partnerships that help all children to succeed in school and in life.

Joyce Epstein of John Hopkins University defines six types of parent involvement:

Epstein's Framework of Six Types of Involvement

As Interpreted for Ritchie County Schools

1. **Parenting:** Help all families establish home environments to support children as students.
 - Parent education and other courses or training for parents (e.g., TASC, college credit, family literacy).
 - Family support programs to assist families with health, nutrition, and other services.
 - Home visits & transition events to pre-school, elementary, middle, and high school.

2. **Communicating:** Design effective forms of school-to-home and home-to-school communications about school programs and children's progress.
 - Conferences with every parent at least once a year.
 - Language translators to assist families as needed.

- Regular schedule of useful notices, memos, phone calls, newsletters, and other communications.
3. **Volunteering:** Recruit and organize parent help and support.
 - School and classroom volunteer program to help teachers, administrators, students, and other parents.
 - Parent room or family center for volunteer work, meetings, and resources for families.
 - Annual postcard survey to identify all available talents, times, and locations of volunteers.
 4. **Learning at Home:** Provide information and ideas to families about how to help students at home with homework and other curriculum-related activities, decisions, and planning.
 - Information for families on skills required for students in all subjects at each grade.
 - Information on homework policies and how to monitor and discuss schoolwork at home.
 - Family participation in setting student goals each year and in planning for college or work.
 5. **Decision Making:** Include parents in school decisions, developing parent leaders and representatives.
 - Active PTO, advisory councils, and every school is charged with the responsibility of conducting active Local School Improvement Council meetings (LSIC) in which, parents' representatives are required, or committees for parent leadership and participation.
 - Independent local business leaders (Partners in Education) who support school improvements.
 - Networks to link all families with parent representatives.
 6. **Collaborating with Community:** Identify and integrate resources and services, for example, Packs of Plenty, Shoes for Students, Ritchie County Ambulance Authority School Supplies Drive, community based Coats for Kids Drive, local Ministerial Association Angel Tree drive, dictionaries sponsored by local Grange organizations, from the community to strengthen school programs, family practices, and student learning and development.
 - Information for students and families on community health, cultural, recreational, social support, for example Pinwheels for Prevention sponsored by the Ritchie County law enforcement groups and Family Resource Network, and other programs/services.
 - Information on community activities that link to learning skills and talents, including summer programs for students, including Energy Express, 21st Century Community Learning Centers Grant, WVU Extension Services, Dolly Parton's Imagination Library, supported by Ritchie County's WV Leaders of Literacy: Campaign for Grade Level Reading, and Ritchie County Junior American Citizen

Ritchie County Schools, in cooperation with state and local agencies, will provide on-going, timely training to administrators, teachers, and parents in methods and procedures required to develop and implement home-school partnerships. We are committed to developing the six components of Epstein's Framework in an effort to guarantee the success of all students.

Activities and Strategies as implemented by Ritchie County Schools:

1. **Parenting and/or Volunteering**
 - Parenting workshops
 - Home visits
 - Parenting sessions during Child Find Events
 - Summer Math and Literacy Enrichment Take Home kits

- Volunteers who provide regularly scheduled duties and services at each school, including, office assistants, classroom tutoring, Library management, Yearbook development, etc.
- Parents
- Grandparents
- Local Community Members

2. Communicating and Learning at Home

- Ritchie County Schools Website
- Individual School websites
- Live Grades
- Report Cards
- Student Policy and Information Calendar
- Assessment notifications, preparation suggestions and results of interim assessments
- (i-Ready) and the WV adopted Summative Assessment system.
- School Messenger (county wide automated calling system)
- Lexia – reading intervention program accessible from home
- i-Ready – Instructional Modules (accessible at home)

3. Decision Making

- Strategic Planning Committee
- Semi-Annual County Meeting with Parents from Title I Schools
- Semi-Annual County Parent Satisfaction Survey
- Monthly Pre-School Collaboration Meetings
- LSIC – Local School Improvement Council

4. Collaborating with Community

- Pre – School Initiative
- Imagination Library Subscription
- 21st Century Community Learning Centers Grant (STARS)
- Ritchie County High School Volunteer Tutors who are affiliated with a Teacher Cadet Program
- Public Library Collaboration
- WVU Energy Express
- LSIC
- Partners in Education

Reference: WV Code 18-2-28
 WV Board of Education Policy 2220
 Ritchie County Board of Education Policy 6010

Approved: June 14, 2004

Revised: May 9, 2005
 April 20, 2010
 May 20, 2016
 May 19, 2017

May 24, 2018

Reviewed: January 28, 2013
June 13, 2016
May 22, 2017
May 29, 2018
July 16, 2019
June 22, 2020