

Merrett R. Stierheim, Superintendent of Schools

**SUBJECT: PROPOSED AMENDMENT OF BOARD RULE: INITIAL READING
6Gx13- 1B-1.011 PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT – A HOME-SCHOOL
PARTNERSHIP**

**COMMITTEE: LEGISLATIVE RELATIONS, PUBLIC RELATIONS AND
PERSONNEL SERVICES**

This item is submitted for consideration by the School Board to amend, and strengthen School Board rule 6Gx13- 1B-1.011, Parental Involvement – A Home-School Partnership, and make it compatible with research-based best practices. As passed in an action proposed by Dr. Marta Pérez, Board Member, at the July 10, 2002 Board meeting, the Superintendent was directed to establish an ad hoc Parental Involvement Task Force to review and propose ways to strengthen this rule.

Following several general and subcommittee meetings of this task force, recommended revisions to the rule have been proposed which are intended to improve home-school educational outcomes and to identify benchmarks that will increase the accountability for the implementation of this rule.

Attached is the Notice of Intended Action and the rule proposed for amendment. Changes from the current rule are indicated by ~~striking through~~ words to be deleted and underscoring words to be added.

Authorization of the Board is requested for the Superintendent to initiate rulemaking proceedings in accordance with the Administrative Procedure Act for the amendment of Board Rule 6Gx13- 1B-1.011, Parental Involvement - A Home-School Partnership.

RECOMMENDED: That The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, authorize the Superintendent to initiate rulemaking proceedings in accordance with the Administrative Procedure Act to amend School Board Rule 6Gx13- 1B-1.011, Parental Involvement - A Home-School Partnership.

MRS: igm

NOTICE OF INTENDED ACTION

THE SCHOOL BOARD OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA, announced on April 9, 2003, its intention to amend Board Rule 6Gx13- 1B-1.011, Parental Involvement – A Home-School Partnership, at its meeting of May 14, 2003.

PURPOSE AND EFFECT: To strengthen the current rule to make it compatible with research-based best practices; and to identify appropriate benchmarks to increase accountability for implementation of this rule.

SUMMARY: Parental Involvement is an essential element in effective education. It has been the policy of Miami-Dade County Public Schools to actively bring together families, schools and communities in the education of children. The proposed amendments accurately update the terminology used for Miami-Dade County Public Schools and the use of technology in communicating to parents and community members.

SPECIFIC LEGAL AUTHORITY UNDER WHICH RULEMAKING IS AUTHORIZED: 1001.41(1)(2); 1001.42(22); 1001.43(10) F.S.

LAW IMPLEMENTED, INTERPRETED, OR MADE SPECIFIC: 1001.32(2)(4); 1001.43(5); 1002.20(1)(2)(18)(b)(20)(b)(c) F.S.

IF REQUESTED, A HEARING WILL BE HELD DURING THE BOARD MEETING OF May 14, 2003, which begins at 1:00 p.m. in the School Board Auditorium, 1450 N.E. Second Avenue, Miami, Florida 33132. Persons requesting such a hearing or who wish to provide information regarding the statement of estimated regulatory costs, or to provide a proposal for a lower cost regulatory alternative as provided by Section 120.541(1), F.S., must do so in writing by May 5, 2003 to the Superintendent of Schools, Room 912, at the same address.

ANY PERSON WHO DECIDES TO APPEAL THE DECISION made by The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, with respect to this action will need to ensure the preparation of a verbatim record of the proceedings, including the testimony and evidence upon which the appeal is to be based. (Section 286.0105, Florida Statutes)

A COPY OF THE PROPOSED AMENDED RULE is available for inspection and copying at cost by the public in the Citizen Information Center, Room 158, 1450 N.E. Second Avenue, Miami, Florida 33132.

Originator: Dr. Marta Pérez
Date: March 19, 2003

Participation by the Public

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT – A HOME-SCHOOL PARTNERSHIP

Parental involvement is an essential element in effective education. Studies show ~~that~~ two major factors are necessary to improve learning: a sound instructional program, and consistent involvement of parents and other influential adults.

It is, therefore, the policy of Miami-Dade County Public Schools to ~~actively bring~~ together families, schools, and the community as active partners in the education of children.

In this School Board rule, the term "parent" refers to any adult -- mother, father, older sibling, aunt, uncle, grandparent, guardian, mentor -- who plays a significant role in the care of a student or students enrolled in Miami-Dade County Public Schools. Although parental involvement is the specific focus of this policy, it is recognized that all those concerned with the education of students must work together cooperatively to meet the needs of students. Schools have the responsibility to involve parents, and parents have the responsibility to become involved in schools.

When the term "school" is used in this Board rule, it is used in the broadest possible sense. It refers not only to the customary kindergarten through grade 12 programs, but also to: the ~~prekindergarten program,~~ early childhood, the adult education program, and the community schools programs.

I. HOME-SCHOOL COMMUNICATION

Communication serves as the foundation for all parent involvement activities. It is the Board's intent to establish a policy, which promotes clear, effective, on-going communication. To accomplish this, the Board endorses the following practices and programs.

- A. **General Communication.** ~~The Board affirms the need to utilize~~ Recognizing that meaningful parental involvement is fostered by efforts to widely publicize school activities and functions, the district's public relations office will annually provide to the Board a detailed plan of how it will support and assist each school's communications efforts. This includes the use of television, radio, electronic and the print media, as appropriate, to promote home-school communication. Meaningful parent involvement is fostered by efforts to widely publicize school activities and functions. Parent contact information should include parents' home and work phone numbers, e-mail addresses, and emergency contact information.

- B. **Cooperative Discourse.** School principals shall encourage communication between parents and the school should be cooperative not adversarial, in nature at all grade levels, including regular parent/teacher communication dialogue should be encouraged at all grade levels, and shall provide parents with a meaningful scope of student work.
- C. **Mutual Respect.** Parents and students ~~deserve to~~ will be treated with respect and courtesy by school personnel. Likewise, parents are expected to ~~should~~ treat school personnel courteously and respectfully, and ~~should~~ instill this kind of behavior in their children.
- D. **Linguistic Access.** Every reasonable effort ~~should~~ will be made to communicate with parents in their primary language or in the language in which they feel comfortable. The mode of transmission should also be adjusted, where necessary, to promote comprehension, acceptance, and trust.
- E. **Access to Schools.** Every reasonable effort will be made to make the school building should be a welcoming place, clearly accessible to parents. Parents should are expected to recognize, however, that their right to access does not transcend the rights of students and teachers to an orderly instructional environment.
- F. **Cultural Sensitivity.** School personnel, students, and parents ~~should~~ will be afforded opportunities to learn about different cultures, cultural practices, and cultural preferences so that understanding and communication can be promoted.
- G. **Sensitivity to Exceptionalities.** Special efforts ~~should~~ will be made to assist parents in understanding the needs and rights of their exceptional children. Special efforts will be made to assist school personnel, students and parents in understanding the needs and rights of exceptional children and their parents.
- H. **Business Involvement.** Businesses ~~should~~ will be encouraged to provide flexible time or release time for employees to visit their children's school. The district will establish a program to designate businesses as "school friendly" when they meet established district criteria as annually developed by the appropriate district office. The district will promote the concept by commending businesses that reach this level of commitment.
- I. **Accommodation to Parent Schedules.** School personnel ~~should~~ will utilize flexible and creative methods to accommodate the schedules of parents. ~~This~~ Every accommodation ~~should~~ will also

be made extended for to school system School Board employees who are parents.

- J. ~~**Selection and Training of School Personnel.** The Board supports the development of personnel selection procedures, which recognize the importance of parent involvement. The Board also encourages the development of training programs which will assist administrators, teachers, and other school personnel in acquiring techniques which promote effective communication with parents~~

II. PARENTS AS SUPPORTERS

~~Schools should encourage District personnel will support policies that empower parents to become active participants in, and advocates of, education. The Board This rule encourages practices such as the following, which will engender parent support of schools' activities: :~~

- A. ~~**Support Activities.** Each sSchool principals will seek support and parent group should set a goal to have from the Educational Excellence School Advisory Council (EESAC), to develop and support strategies that facilitate opportunities for all parents to be involved in at least one support activity during the course of the year.~~
- B. ~~**Space for Parents.** Where feasible, While fostering a positive educational environment schools principals should set aside space will provide a place within the building for parents to meet, post, and review current bulletins, and obtain resource information about parenting, the school system, and specific school activities exchange information.~~
- C. ~~**Parent Orientation.** Schools should set up programs which Principals will conduct orientation meetings that make parents new to the school feel welcome, and which provide information about school procedures and programs, as well as opportunities to actively participate. Volunteer procedures and forms will be made available, throughout the year, to parents on or before the school's annual open house.~~
- D. ~~**Business Community Linkages.** Schools should establish linkages with the business community to engender support for school system initiatives.~~
- E D. ~~**Planning and Participation.** Parents should will be invited to included in the planning and participate in implementation of school events, whenever feasible. —such as open houses, student~~

~~performances, field trips, book fairs, environmental awareness projects, and other activities, which support the school.~~

III. PARENTS AS LEARNERS

The educational process is enhanced when parents have opportunities to: improve parenting skills; learn more about curriculum, assessment, and school policies, and school activities; and to engage in other experiences which that promote lifelong learning.

- A. **Parent Outreach Specialists Liaisons.** Each school should ~~seek to~~ principal will identify one or more ~~parent outreach specialists individuals who agree~~ to act as a liaison to all parents in the school community. This person's ~~primary responsibilities would be~~ are to ascertain the needs of parents and to communicate this information to the school's principal administrators and the school's advisory group(s). ~~Particular attention should be paid to relating to parents~~ Additionally, this liaison will facilitate informing parents of school and district services, offerings, and programs in their primary language, if needed ~~when assessing needs~~.
- B. **Businesses, Agencies, Organizations, and College/University Involvement—Post-Secondary Institutions.** The active cooperation of the community's businesses, agencies, organizations, colleges, and universities post-secondary institutions ~~should~~ will be sought to partner with the district to provide on-site opportunities on the job site for parents to learn more about the school district, the educational needs of students, and about parenting in general. ~~Businesses, agencies, and post-secondary institutions~~ These entities will be asked to partner with the district should also be used to provide educational experiences for parents at the school sites.
- C. **Prekindergarten Early Childhood Training Programs.** Based on readiness research, Special parenting programs should be established for will be developed and offered to parents of children from birth to age six prekindergarten students.
- D. **Provision of Services to Parents.** In order to encourage parents to become learners, schools (with the ~~help~~ assistance of businesses, agencies, organizations, and other parents community members) ~~should~~ will make every attempt to ~~overcome obstacles to encourage~~ participation by addressing issues such as: lack of child

care, lack of resources, and transportation; differences in language and culture; and limited time scheduling conflicts.

- E. **Schools as Community Centers.** Schools ~~should~~ will adopt a identify and implement community-centered, parent-friendly focus and ~~establish or identify~~ programs and affiliations ~~which will benefit~~ parents and their children such as ~~homework assistance centers, open libraries, on-site government agency branches, and special class offerings~~ designed for parents and students to learn together.

Learning opportunities for parents ~~should be~~ will target appropriate for the student age levels of students. Information and services ~~should recognize the need to provide information and services relating to~~ shall be appropriate for the developmental and cognitive stages of the students. ~~sensitive and diverse issues such as: children's exceptionalities, appropriate discipline, child development theories, teenage problems, possible substance abuse, and teenage pregnancy~~

- F. **Parenting Skills.** The school curriculum ~~should~~ will include opportunities for young adults to learn how to become effective parents. ~~Appropriate p~~Programs to improve parenting skills ~~should~~ also will be provided for those who are already parents already.

IV. PARENTS AS TEACHERS

The child's first and most important teacher is the parent. Home-school partnerships should help to strengthen this role.

- A. **Teaching at Home.** The importance of ~~what the parents teaches at home through formal as well as informal activities~~ should be recognized and encouraged by the school as teachers shall be recognized and supported by the school. Schools should provide parents with the appropriate support and assistance needed in understanding and meeting the expectations of this role. Schools should familiarize parents with these expectations. Parents are expected to:

1. Set guidelines and clear expectations of good behavior and academic performance;
2. Ensure that their children have a quiet place and time to read, study, and complete homework;
3. Discuss daily work assignments, progress reports, and report cards with their children;

4. Ensure that their children attend school on time every day and promptly report any absences or tardiness;
 5. Communicate with the school through written and electronic messages, telephone, and/or conference meetings;
 6. Ensure that their children have the materials needed to complete class work and home learning;
 7. Take an active part in school activities, such as Back-to-School Night, PTA meetings, participating in workshops, and parent/student activities, etc.;
 8. Keep their children clean, as well as healthy, by ensuring that they get enough sleep, appropriate nutrition, and medical care;
 9. Bring to the attention of appropriate school personnel any problem or condition that negatively affects their children, or other children in the school community;
 10. Help their children develop a good self-image by providing care, discipline, support, interest, and concern;
 11. Provide the school with current and accurate home, work, and emergency contact information; and
 12. Foster in their child/ren a positive attitude towards school and learning.
- B. **"Alternative Parents" Other Caring Adults.** ~~Schools and parent groups should actively recruit persons to serve as role models, mentors, and "alternative parents" for students whose family structure does not include persons to assume these roles. Members of the community shall be encouraged to assist students by participating in programs such as listeners, mentors, role models, and surrogate parents.~~
- C. **Volunteers and Tutors.** ~~Schools should~~ Principals are encouraged to identify staff who will agree to actively recruit, and train, appropriately place, support, and monitor parents to assist with in instructional and non-instructional school programs and extra curricular-experiences programs.
- D. **Resources for Parents.** ~~In order to assist parents to become teachers, resources should be made readily available for check-out at the school site, such as: audio/visual video, print, and computer and web-based programs; to check-out and use at home, "how-to"~~

programs broadcast on educational television and radio; pamphlets and books developed especially to aid the parent- as teacher; copies of course schedules and homework assignments; lists of grade level and course objectives; testing guidelines; and schedules.

V. PARENTS AS RESOURCES

Parents have much to contribute to the school. Recognizing their expertise and involving them in school activities will have mutually beneficial results.

- A. **Utilizing Parents' Specific Knowledge.** Principals should utilize ~~the~~ special knowledge, abilities, talents, and cultural experiences of parents ~~should be utilized to enhance school activities and programs such as career day, arts fairs, and Dade Partners.~~
- B. **Employment of Parents.** Parents can positively contribute to school programs by performing ~~such school~~ various jobs ~~as traffic guard, cafeteria assistant, translator, classroom assistant, tutor, clinic assistant, and various other support positions in and around the school. School administrators should consider parents as resources for employment opportunities.~~
- C. **Resource Book Guide.** A resource book guide ~~should~~ shall be developed for school staffs members, and parents, and the community, ~~which would to include: ideas for increasing parental involvement; a directory of persons with expertise in this area; a listing of exemplary schools and programs which foster parental involvement; and suggested strategies for implementing this policy.~~ best practices and a directory of contact information for programs, and persons with expertise in the area of parental involvement.

VI. PARENTS AS ADVISORS, ADVOCATES, AND PARTICIPANTS IN DECISION-MAKING

~~If the previous aspects of this Board rule are well implemented, the natural result will be~~ School staff have a responsibility to reach out to involve parents in the school's decision-making efforts. Likewise, parents have a responsibility to contact the school and seek out ways in which they might participate in and influence decisions that will affect the children. ~~p~~Parents who will be provided the opportunity to function as school advisors and advocates, and who to participate equitably with administrators, teachers, and other school personnel in the decision-making process. ~~If this involvement is to be truly meaningful, however, p~~Parents must should be provided with opportunities for timely and substantive participation in the advisory, advocacy, and decision-making processes.

- A. **Advisors.** Parents should be provided understandable, accessible, and well-publicized opportunities to serve as advisors at the school, region, and district level. In this role, parents will be encouraged to participate in and influence decisions, raise issues or concerns, appeal decisions, and resolve problems.
- B. **Advocates.** Parents will be encouraged to become advocates for children on issues that affect children. Parents will be provided information about student and parent responsibilities and rights, as well as other pertinent issues, in a timely manner in order to advocate effectively.
- A. C. **Parent Participation Shared Decision Making** Parents should ~~must~~ be included as active members of Educational Excellence School Advisory Councils (EESAC) and other important decision-making bodies, including Parents also should be represented on the sub-committees associated with such groups.
- B D. **Parent Involvement Training.** ~~In order to promote informed, meaningful parent involvement, parents should be included in training programs related to the advisory, decision-making, and advocacy roles they will assume. To maximize the benefits of this training, school staff should be involved in inservice activities to help them effectively utilize parent input. The appropriate district office will develop and provide training programs to give parents the information, tools, and resources on how to be successful advisors, advocates, and partners in the decision-making process. The district will also facilitate parent-to-parent training programs.~~
- C. **Shared Initiative.** ~~School staffs should reach out to involve parents in the school's decision-making efforts. Conversely, parents should contact the school and seek out ways in which they might assist and influence the decisions that will affect their children.~~

VII. TRAINING OF SCHOOL PERSONNEL

Training procedures should include the importance of parental involvement. Training programs will be identified by the appropriate district office, which will assist administrators, teachers, and other school personnel in acquiring techniques that promote effective communication with parents and the cultivation of parental involvement.

VIII. GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

The intent of this policy on parental involvement is to strengthen the home-school partnership. Schools have the responsibility to involve parents; and

parents have the responsibility to become involved in ~~schools~~ the education of their children. In order to promote successful implementation of the policy, the following activities ~~should~~ will take place:

- A. **Evaluation.** Parental involvement ~~activities should be identified; benchmarks should be set; and progress tracked over time.~~ will be identified and set by the appropriate district office and/or committee and assessed through quantitative and qualitative measures and procedures designed to measure parental involvement to support student-learning programs. Annual recommendations will be gathered and published through public input. In addition, the Family and Community Involvement Advisory Committee will assess the progress in implementing this policy using outcome based data, including, but not limited to, the School Climate Survey, and the Educational Engagement Survey and will make written recommendations for improvement. Public hearings for parents should also be held as a part of this process.
- B. **District Parent Liaison Office.** ~~The Superintendent should designate a specific~~ A separate district office with direct access to the Superintendent will be established, to function as a liaison with parents to provide a district level, single point of communication for referral and direction on parental involvement issues. It will be the primary responsibility of this office to: promote parental involvement, facilitate implementation of this policy, and maintain contact with various groups and individuals representing parents.

Specific Authority: ~~230.22(2)~~ 1001.41(1)(2); 1001.42(22); 1001.43(10) F.S.

Law Implemented, Interpreted, or Made Specific: ~~230.03(2); 230.22(1); 230.23(15)~~ 1001.32(2)(4); 1001.43(5); 1002.20(1)(2)(18)(b)(20)(b)(c) F.S.

History

THE SCHOOL BOARD OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA

New: 9-23-92

Amended: 5-25-94; 7-22-98