

# Parent Engagement Program Initiatives and Tools



*This section provides a summary listing of resources provided by the Department's Parent Engagement Program to ensure that Title I, Part A parental involvement regulations are met with meaningful and strategic actions to build parent capacity to improve student achievement and promote academic success as mandated by the ESEA. Included in this section are brief descriptions of initiatives and tools, along with website links to either locate or learn more about each resource.*

Unless otherwise specified, all initiatives and tools mentioned can be accessed on the Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE) Parent Engagement Program's website at:

<http://www.gadoe.org/School-Improvement/Federal-Programs/Pages/Parent-Engagement-Program.aspx>

# Initiatives

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The Parent Engagement Program has various initiatives to strengthen and recognize parent engagement efforts at the school and district level. These initiatives encompass a wide range of topics but all with the purpose of influencing and improving parent engagement in education.

## ***ACADEMIC PARENT-TEACHER TEAMS (APTT)***

Academic Parent-Teacher Teams (APTT) is a family engagement model that builds relationships with families by focusing on student academic growth and achievement. The APTT Model elevates the efforts of traditional parent-teacher conferences by inviting all parents of the same classroom teacher to meet together rather than individually. During a 75-minute meeting, the teacher explains the foundational grade-level skills that students must master by the end of the school year and shows a chart of every child's status on the skill, such as multiplication or recognizing letters. The chart is anonymous, but each parent receives a folder that includes a number randomly assigned to his or her child. The chart is a visual tool to help parents understand how strong their child's skill is in relation to peers and to the school's academic goals for that grade level. Next, the teacher models activities that are targeted to improve the skill, and parents practice the activities together in order to use them with their child at home. Revisiting the chart, each parent sets an individualized 60-day goal for their child on that skill to extend the learning time from the classroom into the home. All parents receive materials for the practice activities to take home. After 60 days, the parents are invited back to meet with the teacher and follow the same agenda including an updated chart of every child's progress and an introduction to another skill. Teachers and parents met for APTT meetings three times during the school year.

The Georgia Department of Education has partnered with WestEd to train and support Title I schools on this innovative approach to improve student outcomes and build parent and teacher capacity. More information on the Georgia APTT initiative can be found on our GaDOE APTT webpage:

<http://www.gadoe.org/School-Improvement/Federal-Programs/Pages/APTT.aspx>

## ***“GEORGIA FAMILY–FRIENDLY PARTNERSHIP SCHOOL INITIATIVE”***

To help schools, families, and communities work together in creating a Family-Friendly Partnership School the Georgia Department of Education created the Georgia Family-Friendly Partnership initiative. This initiative provides research-based tools to help schools determine their degree of family-friendliness, as well as provides tips for success that describe practical and innovative ideas for parent involvement. The initiative includes Georgia's Virtual Family-Friendly Partnership School program that allows viewers to explore rooms of an elementary school and a middle-high school as well as their surrounding areas through the lens of an interactive virtual program. An educator questionnaire, parent survey, walk-through evaluation, and scenarios accompany the interactive virtual program so data driven decisions can be based on the welcoming environment perceptions of the school community.

To access the materials, please visit:

<http://www.gadoe.org/School-Improvement/Federal-Programs/Pages/Georgia-Family-Friendly.aspx>

## ***“GEORGIA FAMILY–FRIENDLY PARTNERSHIP SCHOOL AWARDS”***

The Georgia Department of Education launched the Georgia Family-Friendly Partnership School Initiative in the summer of 2010 to assist schools, families, and communities in working together to create welcoming environments throughout Georgia's varied school communities. A welcoming environment increases family engagement which, in turn, helps students earn better grades, graduate from high school, and enroll in post-secondary education. Building on this initiative the GaDOE partnered with the Ritz-Carlton Hotels, the Georgia

Foundation for Public Education, and the Georgia Association of Educators to create the Georgia Family-Friendly Partnership School Award that further recognizes Title I schools that have gone above and beyond to create an environment where families and community members feel they belong, and in turn, play an important role in supporting their school's student success. Up to ten Title I schools a year are recognized for their exceptional commitment to fostering welcoming environments that encourage families to become active partners in improving student achievement.

To learn more about this award, please visit:

<http://www.gadoe.org/School-Improvement/Federal-Programs/Pages/Georgia-Family-Friendly.aspx>

### ***“GEORGIA PARENT INVOLVEMENT COORDINATOR (PIC) NETWORK”***

The Georgia PIC Network is a statewide system of support, divided into five regions, for more than 900 school and district Title I Parent Involvement Coordinators, federal program directors, family liaisons, parent professionals, parent mentors, and community outreach facilitators working to equip educators and families with the necessary tools to make the difference in students' and their parents' lives across the state. These individuals advocate for the parents in their schools, provide professional development to school staff on parent engagement strategies, offer a variety of informative workshops, link parents to resources in the community, and assist parents with navigating the school system so their children can obtain the resources required to help them achieve their maximum academic potential. Parent engagement professionals participate in professional development meetings that are held semi-annually in each of the five regions every other year, with a statewide family engagement conference held in the off years with the purpose of bringing the regions together for a more robust three day meeting. Minutes and materials from these meetings are available on the website and provide the best practices shared from schools and districts across the state that are valuable strategies for success.

To access more information about the Georgia PIC Network, please visit:

<http://www.gadoe.org/School-Improvement/Federal-Programs/Pages/Parent-Engagement-Program-Meetings-and-Materials.aspx>

### ***“GEORGIA PARENT LEADERSHIP AWARDS”***

The Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE) and the Georgia Parent Teacher Association (GA PTA) created this award to recognize parents across Georgia who utilize their various skills and talents to strengthen our schools and positively impact the lives of our children. The award also hopes to inspire all parents to use their unique talents, no matter how big or small, to lead the way in building positive outcomes for all children. Up to six awards are given annually, recognizing both parents from Title I schools and non-Title I schools for their outstanding leadership in creating a foundation of support for student achievement and success. Schools nominate parents during the month of November.

To learn more about this award and the current winners, please visit:

<http://www.gadoe.org/School-Improvement/Federal-Programs/Pages/Parent-Engagement-Program-For-Parents-Links.aspx> or <http://www.gadoe.org/School-Improvement/Federal-Programs/Pages/Parent-Month.aspx>

### ***PARENT ENGAGEMENT MONTH***

Each November, the state of Georgia recognizes Parent Engagement Month as a time for schools and districts to encourage all parents in the education of their child. Schools and districts utilize resources provided by the Georgia Department of Education to enhance their own activities and celebrations. Resources provided for parent engagement month as well as activities throughout the year include:



- **Brochures, Handouts, and Posters** – These motivate parents by providing 15 ways they can get involved in their children’s education across all grade levels. Brochures and posters are available for order by contacting the Parent Engagement Program, but please note quantities are limited. For ease of copying, a handout version is also available on the website. Brochures, handouts, and posters are available in English and Spanish. To access these items, please visit: <http://www.gadoe.org/school-improvement/Federal-Programs/Pages/Parent-Engagement-Resources.aspx>
- **Community Flyer** – Knowing that parent engagement is an ongoing process that increases active participation, communication, and collaboration between parents, schools, and communities with the goal of educating the whole child to ensure student achievement and success, the Georgia Department of Education created a GET INVOLVED Community Flyer to help community members play a part in Parent Engagement Month. A community is inclusive of any entity that shares a common interest in education. Communities should recognize that an investment in education is an investment in the community and they should work with schools to form a network that strengthens families and supports student success. Schools and districts are encouraged to use this flyer to engage local government and community organizations to partner with them in



celebration of Parent Engagement Month activities to benefit student achievement. To access the flyer, please visit: <http://www.gadoe.org/School-Improvement/Federal-Programs/Documents/Parent%20Engagement%20Month%20Community%20Flyer%209%2027%2012.pdf>

- **National Parent Involvement Day Letter** – The third Thursday in November is recognized across the country as National Parent Involvement Day. Each year, the State School Superintendent writes a letter to parents thanking them for their contributions, as well as reminding them about the importance of their involvement in their child’s education. Many schools and districts share the letter with parents at school events, send it home with students, or post it to their websites during the month of November. To access this year’s letter in English or Spanish, please visit: <http://www.gadoe.org/School-Improvement/Federal-Programs/Pages/Parent-Month.aspx>
- **Parent Videos** – Videos, filmed at both home and school, depict parents of students across all grade levels telling their real stories based on the 15 ways parents can get involved in their child’s education brochures. The 15 parent videos, along with an introduction video, can be downloaded or streamed in English and Spanish directly from our website. Schools and districts are encouraged to



utilize and share these videos by posting them on their websites, showing them at parent meetings and functions, or playing them on their local school cable channel. To access these videos, please visit: <http://www.gadoe.org/School-Improvement/Federal-Programs/Pages/GET-INVOLVED-Parent-Videos.aspx>

- **State Proclamation of Parent Engagement Month** – Each year, the Governor signs a proclamation officially dedicating November as Parent Engagement Month in Georgia. Many schools and districts share this proclamation with their parents or use it as a template for local school boards to create and adopt their own proclamations. To access the most recent state proclamation, please visit: <http://www.gadoe.org/School-Improvement/Federal-Programs/Documents/Parent%20Engagement%20Month%20Proclamation2013.pdf>

### ***“PARENT INVOLVEMENT COORDINATOR (PIC) SPOTLIGHT”***

The Georgia Department of Education highlights the important and extraordinary work Parent Involvement Coordinators (PIC) and other parent professionals are doing across the state by featuring one PIC each month during the school year in a spotlight story. PIC spotlight stories are submitted by individuals in schools or districts throughout the state and the chosen story is based on the progress they have made with parent engagement initiatives in their school, district, and/or community. Stories selected each month are sent out to the Georgia PIC Network and also compiled into a PIC Spotlight publication so other schools and districts can learn of the promising practices happening across the state.

To access the PIC Spotlight publication or learn how to submit a PIC Spotlight story, please visit: <http://www.gadoe.org/school-improvement/Federal-Programs/Pages/Parent-Engagement-Resources.aspx>

## ***SOCIAL MEDIA***

In order to improve communication with school districts and schools in Georgia as well as to raise awareness of current issues and promising practices in family engagement across the state, the Georgia Department of Education's Parent Engagement Program shares information with our followers on Twitter, Facebook, and our blog.

To receive these updates and to join the conversation, follow us on Twitter @GaDOEParents, find us on Facebook at [facebook.com/GaDOEParentEngagement](https://www.facebook.com/GaDOEParentEngagement) or participate in the discussion at our blog, <http://gadoeparentengagement.edublogs.org>.

## ***“SUPERINTENDENT’S PARENT ADVISORY COUNCIL”***

The State Superintendent's Parent Advisory Council (PAC) is a group of primarily Title I parents from across the state that meets to discuss education in Georgia. Advisory Council members are particularly focused on how to increase parent and family engagement to ensure student success. Members meet with the State School Superintendent twice throughout the school year.

To access a list of current PAC members, meetings, minutes, and projects, please visit: <http://www.gadoe.org/Pages/Parent-Advisory-Council.aspx>

# Tools

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The Parent Engagement Program has various tools and resources to guide schools and districts in their efforts to develop an effective, practical, and research-based parent engagement program. In addition, various communication materials on the factors that influence student achievement and success are also available for schools and districts to share with parents and families.

## ***“A PARENT’S GUIDE TO TITLE I BROCHURE”***

This brochure is a parent’s guide to understanding the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1965 as it relates to Title I, Part A, Parental Involvement. After reading it, parents will have a better understanding of not only their role, but the state’s, district’s, and school’s roles in supporting student achievement and success. Brochures are available free of charge by contacting the Parent Engagement Program, but please note that quantities are limited.

To access this brochure in English and Spanish, please visit:

<http://www.doe.k12.ga.us/School-Improvement/Federal-Programs/Pages/Parent-Engagement-Program-For-Parents-Links.aspx>

## ***“BUILDING PARENT LEADERSHIP MANUAL”***

This manual was created to assist school and district staff, as well as parent leaders, in organizing, planning, and implementing events, activities, and outreach programs to promote parent leadership in the school and greater community. Discover the research, strategies, and ideas needed to not only develop parent leaders, but implement quality parent leadership programs.

To access the manual, please visit:

<http://www.gadoe.org/School-Improvement/Federal-Programs/Documents/Parent%20Leadership%20Manual%20REVISED.pdf>

## ***“EFFECTIVE PARENT ENGAGEMENT STRATEGIES FOR PARENT INVOLVEMENT COORDINATORS”***

The Georgia Department of Education has developed a strategy sheet for Parent Involvement Coordinators to use as a guide in creating innovative ways to engage parents and families. In addition to providing a number of ways to overcome barriers that prevent effective parent involvement, this tool also helps parent professionals develop a framework for their programs.

To access the strategy sheet, please visit:

<http://www.gadoe.org/School-Improvement/Federal-Programs/Documents/Strategies%20for%20Parent%20Involvement%20Coordinators.pdf>

## ***“FAMILY ENGAGEMENT STANDARDS STRATEGY SHEETS”***

The Georgia Department of Education adopted the National PTA Standards for Family-School Partnerships as the state’s parent engagement model for what parents, schools, and communities can do together to support student success. In addition to the great National PTA resources, the Department has developed Family Engagement Standards Strategy Sheets to assist schools with implementing effective family engagement practices based on the six standards.

To access these strategy sheets, please visit:

<http://www.gadoe.org/School-Improvement/Federal-Programs/Documents/Family%20Engagement%20Standards%20Strategy%20Sheets.pdf>

## ***“FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS FOR PARENTS AND FAMILIES ON GEORGIA’S ESEA FLEXIBILITY WAIVER”***

This guide helps parents and families understand why the ESEA Flexibility Wavier is important to Georgia’s education system, as well as how the ESEA Flexibility Wavier affects Georgia students and the schools that they attend. Schools and districts are encouraged to use this guide, in part or its entirety, to help parents understand this part of federal law.

To access the ESEA Flexibility Waiver FAQ in English or Spanish, please visit: <http://www.gadoe.org/school-improvement/Federal-Programs/Pages/Parent-Engagement-Resources.aspx>

## ***“EDUCATIONAL WEBSITES & APPS FOR FAMILIES”***

These guides provide families with engaging learning resources to use at home or extra support throughout the school year. Designed to provide parents with different educational websites and apps that they can use to help their child in school, these guides can be shared with families at parent events, or placed in your parent resource center or front office. The listed resources are not endorsed by the Georgia Department of Education but offered as possible tools for Title I schools and school districts to utilize with families.

To access this resource, please visit:

<http://www.gadoe.org/School-Improvement/Federal-Programs/Pages/Parent-Engagement-Program-For-Parents-Links.aspx>

## ***“ENGAGING PARENTS CALENDAR”***

The Georgia Department of Education provides a calendar of unique and special days throughout the year to assist schools in celebrating and planning for parent and family engagement opportunities.

To access this calendar, please visit:

<http://www.gadoe.org/School-Improvement/Federal-Programs/Documents/Engaging%20Parents%20Calendar%20with%20Activities%202013-14.pdf>





### ***“PARENT ENGAGEMENT PROGRAM BROCHURE”***

The Georgia Department of Education provides the Parent Engagement Program to assist and ensure that Title I, Part A Parent Involvement regulations are met with meaningful and strategic actions to build parent capacity in schools and school districts under the law. Schools and districts must ensure that strong strategies are in place to: 1) build capacity to involve parents/stakeholders in an effective partnership with the school; and 2) share and support high student academic achievement. Brochures are available free of charge by contacting the Parent Engagement Program, but please note that quantities are limited.

To learn more about how the Georgia Department <https://www.facebook.com/GaDOEParentEngagement> of Education’s Parent Engagement Program works to increase student achievement by engaging and empowering parents to become actively involved in their children’s education across all grade levels, please read our brochure at:

<http://www.gadoe.org/School-Improvement/Federal-Programs/Documents/NEW%20Parent%20Engagement%20Program%20Brochure.pdf>

### ***“PARENT ENGAGEMENT PROGRAM’S RESOURCE GUIDE”***

The Georgia Department of Education has compiled a resource guide of select state and national resources that provide research-based strategies, as well as publications and programs on family engagement that build parent capacity within school communities in order to increase student achievement.

To access this guide, please visit:

<http://www.gadoe.org/School-Improvement/Federal-Programs/Documents/Parent%20Engagement%20Program%27s%20Resource%20Guide.pdf>

### ***“PARENT INVOLVEMENT COORDINATOR GUIDANCE JOB DESCRIPTION, JOB CHART, AND JOB AID TIMELINE”***

The Georgia Department of Education provides a Parent Involvement Coordinator (PIC) Guidance Job Description containing general language and descriptors that could be considered when developing a Parent Involvement Coordinator job description. This guidance was developed by drawing from examples from other states, as well as the Department’s own observations of many of the duties and responsibilities held by these individuals in Georgia. Overall, it contains a wide range of duties and responsibilities representative of a full-time position that would meet the needs of Title I students and their families. Please be reminded that the employment of a PIC and/or the use of this sample job description is/are not a federal requirement. To further assist PICs in the understanding of their role, the Department has also developed a job description chart, as well as a job aid timeline to further explain the types of activities mentioned in the guidance job description. The samples are provided as a reference for districts to use at their discretion.

To access the guidance job description, job chart, and job aid timeline, please visit:

<http://www.gadoe.org/school-improvement/Federal-Programs/Pages/Parent-Engagement-Resources.aspx>

## ***“PARENT LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT GUIDE FOR PARENTS AND ADMINISTRATORS”***

The Georgia Department of Education developed a parent leadership guide to provide parents with steps to acquire the knowledge and skills needed to have a meaningful voice in their child’s education. The guide also assists administrators with developing parent leaders through a progressive process to greatly contribute to the overall success of the school and its mission. Guides are available free of charge by contacting the Parent Engagement Program, but please note that quantities are limited.

To access this guide, please visit:

<http://www.gadoe.org/School-Improvement/Federal-Programs/Documents/Parent%20Engagement/Publications/Parent%20Leadership.pdf>

## ***“PARENT LEADERSHIP STRATEGY CARDS”***

These strategy cards, based on the National PTA Standards for Family-School Partnerships, provide parents and families with concrete ways in which they can fine tune their leadership skills, as well as support their child’s education. The strategy cards, available in English and Spanish, are perforated so that schools can educate parents using as few or as many standards at a time as they wish.

To access these strategy cards, please visit:

<http://www.doe.k12.ga.us/School-Improvement/Federal-Programs/Pages/Parent-Engagement-Program-For-Parents-Links.aspx>

## ***“RESOLUTION AND STATEMENT ON PARENT ENGAGEMENT”***

In 2010, the Georgia Department of Education, along with the Georgia State Board of Education, formally adopted a resolution and statement on parent engagement. This resolution not only adopted the National PTA Standards for Family-School Partnerships as the official family engagement standards for our state, but it gave significance to the field of family engagement as well as the important role parents play in the education of their child. The resolution not only recognizes that partnerships between parents, schools, and communities must be viewed as equal with shared responsibilities, but also that schools must take the lead in developing and sustaining these collaborative partnerships to ensure maximum effectiveness. Each partner, however, has a role to play as clearly outlined in the resolution and statement, and local school officials are strongly urged to use the resolution as a guide in developing local school and district policies.

To access the resolution and statement, please visit:

<http://www.gadoe.org/School-Improvement/Federal-Programs/Pages/Parent-Month.aspx>

## ***“SCHOOL TRANSITION TOOLKITS”***

The Georgia Department of Education, along with other state organization partners, has developed three toolkits focused on student-school transitions. The first toolkit, *Planning for Terrific Transitions: A Guide for Georgia Schools on Kindergarten Transition*, addresses the first school transition a child normally experiences. The second toolkit, *Middle School Matters: A Guide for Georgia Schools on Middle School Transition*, addresses the changes students and their families experience as they move from elementary to middle school. The third toolkit, *High School is Happening: A Guide for Georgia Schools on High School Transition*, focuses on the new roles and responsibilities that students and families encounter as along their path to high school. All toolkits feature frameworks to assist schools with building comprehensive school transition programs, as well as provide brochures, videos, and other resources in English and Spanish to support students and families during these transition times. A fourth transition guide focusing on the steps towards college and career will be released in the future. Parent transition brochures are available free of charge by contacting the Parent Engagement Program, but please note that quantities are limited.

To access the kindergarten and middle school transition toolkits, please visit:

<http://www.gadoe.org/School-Improvement/Federal-Programs/Pages/School-Transition.aspx>

## ***“SYSTEMIC FAMILY ENGAGEMENT: A COMPREHENSIVE GUIDE TO IMPLEMENTING AN EFFECTIVE TITLE I PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT PROGRAM”***

This handbook is designed to guide school and district staff, such as Title I Directors/Coordinators and Parent Involvement Coordinators, through the process of creating and maintaining an effective Title I Parental Involvement Program. The handbook explains and clarifies the requirements of the parental involvement provisions of Title I, Part A of The Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA), as well as provide guidance in how to implement effective parent engagement strategies that result in improved student academic achievement. This handbook contains various samples, templates, rubrics, and checklists developed to assist schools and districts in understanding and meeting Title I parental involvement compliance monitoring requirements, as well as additional measures to gauge efforts that go above and beyond in building parent leadership and capacity.