

## Focus Group Facilitation Template

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A focus group provides the opportunity for several people to get together in a confidential setting and it allows for structured evaluation that is intended to yield useful data. Schools and districts can facilitate focus groups as the main source of evaluating their Title I Parent and Family Engagement Policy and Program; however, it would require that many focus group meetings be held to ensure all parents and families are given an opportunity to participate. Focus groups can also be used as supplemental evaluation to follow-up on the feedback that is received from surveys.

*Start with an overview of the current Title I Parent and Family Engagement Policy and Plan.*

1. Think back to the beginning of the year, what programs would you like to see added to the parent and family engagement policy and plan in the future? Describe what you mean.
2. If applicable, to what extent have you found the parent resource center useful? Describe areas of improvement that could be made.
3. Let's talk about the opportunities you have had to network with other parents throughout the school year. Name a few instances when you have been able to take advantage of parent networking.
4. Explain how those networking experiences have helped you and your children during this school year.
5. If anyone has had a similar experience or one that differs, please share.
6. Name some ways in which the school has been successful in helping you and your children meet academic goals and challenges throughout the year? Describe what you mean.
7. To what extent have you been able to be involved in the revision and planning process of writing your school's Title I plan and policy?
8. How can the school and district get more parents and families to participate in this process? Describe what you mean.
9. Think back to some of the conversations you have had with other parents and challenges you may have faced yourself. What are some of the top barriers that prevent parents from being able to participate in school functions, activities, and planning events?
10. Explain what the school can do, within reason, to address these barriers.

## Open Discussion Forum Template

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This form of evaluation is designed to operate similarly to a town hall meeting. Its purpose is to provide parents with the opportunity to discuss matters of importance as it relates to evaluating the content and effectiveness of the parent and family engagement policy. The Open Discussion Forum can be conducted at the school or district level. It is advised that the Title I Director or a district administrator, as well as the principal, if held at the school level, be present during this meeting. It is important that the administrators understand that their role is to listen and support the open discussion with the objective of gaining the perspectives of parents.

*Start with an overview of the current Title I Parent and Family Engagement Plan and Policy.*

1. What type of training or programs to improve student academic performance would you be likely to participate in if they were offered by the school?
2. What are some of the top barriers that prevent parents from being able to participate in school functions, activities, and planning events?
3. Explain what the school can do to address these barriers.
4. How can the school assist you with helping your children in the core content areas of mathematics, English language arts, science, and social studies?
5. What hours are more convenient to conduct trainings, programs, parent meetings, and workshops?
6. If applicable, have enough materials been available to assist you with student learning via the Parent Resource Center (PRC)? Explain changes that could be made to improve the PRC.
7. By a show of hands, how many of you are aware of what the school improvement status is for your school? (Explain what the school's status is and where that information can be obtained.)
8. How can we get more parents involved in the revision and planning process of the school's Title I Parent and Family Engagement Plan and Policy and other decision-making committees?

## Checklist for Effective Title I Parent and Family Engagement Surveys

*Consider the following do's and don'ts when writing and formatting your Title I Parent and Family Engagement Surveys:*

<b>Do:</b>	<b>Don't:</b>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Begin with a family-friendly introduction that explains the purpose	<input type="checkbox"/> Use jargon or complex phrases
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Begin with easy to answer questions	<input type="checkbox"/> Ask for an overall assessment before asking topic details
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Give clear instructions	<input type="checkbox"/> Insert unnecessary graphics or mix many font styles and sizes
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Keep question structure simple	<input type="checkbox"/> Frame questions in the negative
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ask one question at a time	<input type="checkbox"/> Use abbreviations, contractions, or symbols
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Maintain a parallel structure for all questions	<input type="checkbox"/> Mix different words for the same concept
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Define terms before asking the question	<input type="checkbox"/> Use “loaded” or “leading” words or phrases
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ensure the response categories are both exhaustive and mutually responsive	<input type="checkbox"/> Bounce around between topics or time periods
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Label response categories with words rather than numbers	<input type="checkbox"/> Use emotionally charged words, stereotypes, or prestige images
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ask for a number of occurrences, rather than providing response categories such as often, seldom, or never	<input type="checkbox"/> Combine multiple response dimensions in the same question
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Use a mixture of open, closed, ranking, ordinal, matrix and rating type questions	<input type="checkbox"/> Give the impression that you are expecting a certain response
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Be explicit about the period of time being referenced by the questions	<input type="checkbox"/> Forget to provide instructions for returning the completed survey

Adapted from: University of Wisconsin System Board of Regents, (2010). *Survey Fundamentals: A Guide to Designing and Implementing Surveys*. Retrieved from [http://oqi.wisc.edu/resourcelibrary/uploads/resources/Survey\\_Guide.pdf](http://oqi.wisc.edu/resourcelibrary/uploads/resources/Survey_Guide.pdf)