

School-Parent Compact Guide



**Sharing Responsibility
for Student Success**

Kansas Parent Information Resource Center

www.kpirc.org

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A Project of Kansas Families and Schools Together, Inc.



Introduction

The school-parent compact is a written agreement between teachers and parents. It is a document that clarifies what families and schools can do to help children reach high academic standards. Every school receiving Title I funds must develop a compact. The compact serves as a clear reminder of everybody's responsibility to take action at school and at home so that children can learn what is required of them. It is a written commitment indicating how all members of a school community -- parents, teachers, principals, students, and concerned community members -- agree to share responsibility for student learning.

The purpose of this agreement is to help parents and teachers come to a consensus on the responsibilities of the individuals influencing student's achievement. However, the underlying assumption is that a student's academic success will improve when the home and school work together. Overall, if the compact is taken seriously and implemented effectively it will assure that there will be support for the academic success of the student by enhancing effective communications between school and the home.

To ensure that the compact is understood by all parties involved, many parents and teachers will need new skills to bridge language, cultural, economic, and social barriers and to build trust relationships between home and school. Parents and teachers need to communicate in a language they both understand in order that compacts reflect the needs and culture of the home as well as those of the student. In addition, meetings should be scheduled at times and places sensitive to work requirements.

If written effectively and with the input of all concerned parties, the compact can serve as a valuable tool to effectively and meaningfully engage the school and the home in supporting the academic development and needs of the students. The process involved in the development of the compact is its real strength. When parents and school officials sit down and discuss issues related to student success, parents are given a sense of voice and time to think about their responsibilities, schools are given a strong starting point at developing and sustaining momentum around communicating with families and developing relationships.

Did You Know.....

- ◆ The compact must outline how parents, the entire school staff, and students will share the responsibility for improved student academic achievement.
- ◆ All parents of Title I students are required to participate in the development and design of the compact.
- ◆ Compacts are developed to reflect the needs and culture of the home of the students.
- ◆ That the compact is part of the school's written parental involvement policy developed by the school and parents.
- ◆ The compact should/must be evaluated regularly for effectiveness

According to the Law

The School-Parent Compact

What are the requirements for a School-Parent Compact?

- ◆ Each school served under Title I shall jointly develop with parents for all children served under this part a school-parent agreement.
- ◆ Each school-parent agreement must outline how parents, the entire school staff, and students will share the responsibility for improved student academic achievement.
- ◆ Each compact must outline the means by which the school and parents will build and develop a partnership to help children achieve the State's high standards.

What Must a School-Parent Compact Include?

- ◆ To describe the school's responsibility to provide high-quality curriculum and instruction in a supportive and effective learning environment, that enables children to meet State academic achievement standards,
- ◆ To describe the ways in which each parent will be responsible for supporting their children's learning. (For example, monitoring attendance, homework completion, television watching, volunteering in their child's classroom, and participating in decisions relating to the education of their children and positive use of extracurricular time.
- ◆ To address the importance of communication between teachers and parents on a continuous basis, including at least annually during parent-teacher conferences in elementary schools, and through frequent reports home to parents on their children's process.
 - To provide a means to discuss an individual child's achievement
 - To foster reasonable access to staff and opportunities to volunteer and participate in their child's class, and observe classroom activities.

Tip Sheet

Linking a School-Family Compact to Learning

Copyright: Anne T. Henderson, Institute for Education and Social Policy, 2004. For more information, see *NCLB: What's in it for Parents*, published by Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence in Lexington, KY. To order or download, go to www.prichardcommittee.org

What's a Compact?

In a compact, families and school staff agree how to work together. Every Title I school must develop a school-family compact, according to the No Child Left Behind law (Section 1118). Teachers and parents like compacts because they make it clear who should do what to encourage students. Students like being treated as a responsible person. The compact should describe:

- ◆ What parents, school staff, and students will do to improve student progress.
- ◆ How the school and families will build a partnership to help children learn.
- ◆ How the school and families will communicate regularly with each other.

How is a Compact Linked to Learning?

Here are some suggestions:

- ◆ Check your school's test data. Look for areas where students' scores are low, and for gaps between different groups of students.
- ◆ Set two or three goals for improvement. If reading scores are low, adopt a goal of moving all students out of the bottom quartile ("below basic"), and moving more students into proficient.
- ◆ Ask parents, students, and school staff what THEY should do to meet the goals. Then ask each group to list what it wants the OTHERS to do.
- ◆ Focus on issues raised in the discussions, such as homework, communications, and rules of behavior. For each one, list what parents, teachers and students can do.
- ◆ Draw up a first draft, then ask for comments. Revise it based on how parents, teachers and students react.

Action Opportunities for Parent Leaders

- ◆ Provide training and in-service assistance to help parents understand the following components:
 - School culture and structure
 - Parental rights and responsibilities under NCLB
 - NCLB and its complex testing, assessment, standards, and accountability framework
 - How to analyze school report card data and how those data relate to student achievement
 - How to conduct a meaningful compact meeting with the teacher (identify the purpose of the meeting, decide what questions to ask, find out what parental assistance is available)
- ◆ Identify model compacts that can serve as guides for teachers and parents. Develop videos and other tools that demonstrate what meaningful compact relationships and meetings entail.
- ◆ Work with parents to evaluate compact commitments and determine how successful each party has been in holding up its end of the agreement. Hold periodic meetings to evaluate the compact process, answer questions and provide assistance, and identify schools and parents in need of additional help.
- ◆ Work with the district to develop LEA and SEA complaint procedures if the compact process does not proceed as designed, or if parents are not getting the assistance they need to fulfill their responsibilities.
- ◆ Work with parents to develop an understanding of how the compact can be used as an advocacy tool to hold the district accountable for its compact commitments.
- ◆ Parents and parent leaders need to know more than whether or not a compact is in place. They must know more than whether or not it is working. They must know what is and is not working. Ask everyone involved in the development of the compact questions like, “Has the fulfillment of compact commitments helped to improve student learning? Why or why not?”
- ◆ Ensure that the compact is linked to learning and addresses testing scores and academic proficiency.
- ◆ Think about how you can support your child's education, as the compact also outlines the role of parents. However, parents and families have certain privacy rights with respect to their home life which should not be violated. The compact should specifically state that families' rights of privacy will not be violated. Moreover, schools and parents must work to ensure that this privacy is honored.
- ◆ Encourage parents in your community to volunteer in their children's schools in order that they may obtain access to school staff and have the ability/chance/option to observe classroom activities.
- ◆ Ensure that the compact is distributed in the community. Encourage schools to include the compact in the school newsletter, send it home with students, ask them to create a Web site with the school compact, send out a mailing to the community. Find out how you can get the compact printed in the local newspaper

School-Parent Compact

SAMPLE TEMPLATE*

From the Parental Involvement: Title I, Part A Non-Regulatory Guidance (April 23, 2004)

*NOTE: Schools and parents may use the sample template below as a framework for the information to be included in their school-parent compact. **Schools and parents are not required to follow this sample template or framework. If they include all of the bolded items listed under “Required School-Parent Compact Provisions” below, they will have incorporated all of the information required by section 1118(d) to be in the school-parent compact.** Schools and parents, in consultation with students, are encouraged to include other relevant and agreed upon activities and actions as well that will support effective parental involvement and strengthen student academic achievement.*

* * * * *

SCHOOL-PARENT COMPACT

The **name of school** and the parents of the students participating in activities, services, and programs funded by Title I, Part A of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) (participating children), agree that this compact outlines how the parents, the entire school staff, and the students will share the responsibility for improved student academic achievement and the means by which the school and parents will build and develop a partnership that will help children achieve the State’s high standards.

This school-parent compact is in effect during the _____ school year.

REQUIRED SCHOOL-PARENT COMPACT PROVISIONS

Provisions bolded in this section are required to be in the Title I, Part A school-parent compact.

School Responsibilities

The name of school will:

1. **Provide high-quality curriculum and instruction in a supportive and effective learning environment that enables the participating children to meet the State's student academic achievement standards as follows:**

[Describe how the school will provide high-quality curriculum and instruction, and do so in a supportive and effective learning environment.]

2. **Hold parent-teacher conferences (at least annually in elementary schools) during which this compact will be discussed as it relates to the individual child's achievement.** Specifically, those conferences will be held:

[Describe when the parent-teacher conferences will be held.]

3. **Provide parents with frequent reports on their children's progress.** Specifically, the school will provide reports as follows:

[Describe when and how the school will provide reports to parents.]

4. **Provide parents reasonable access to staff.** Specifically, staff will be available for consultation with parents as follows:

[Describe when, where, and how staff will be available for consultation with parents.]

5. **Provide parents opportunities to volunteer and participate in their child's class and to observe classroom activities,** as follows:

[Describe when and how parents may volunteer, participate, and observe classroom activities.]

Parent Responsibilities

We, as parents, will support our children’s learning in the following ways:

Describe the ways in which parents will support their children’s learning, such as:

- Monitoring attendance.
- Ensuring that homework is completed.
- Monitoring amount of television children watch.
- Volunteering in child’s classroom.
- Participating, as appropriate, in decisions relating to my child’s education.
- Promoting positive use of my child’s extracurricular time.
- Staying informed about my child’s education and communicating with the school by promptly reading all notices from the school or the school district either received by my child or by mail and responding, as appropriate.
- Serving, to the extent possible, on policy advisory groups, such as being the Title I, Part A parent representative on the school’s School Improvement Team, the Title I Policy Advisory Committee, the District-wide Policy Advisory Council, the State’s Committee of Practitioners, the School Support Team or other school advisory or policy groups.

Student Responsibilities (revise as appropriate to grade level)

We, as students, will share the responsibility to improve our academic achievement and achieve the state’s high standards. Specifically, we will:

Describe the ways in which students will support their academic achievement, such as:

- Do my homework every day and ask for help when I need it.
- Read at least 30 minutes every day outside of school time.
- Give my parents or the adult who is responsible for my welfare all notices and information received by me from my school every day.

School

Date

Parent

Date

Student

Date

Completed Sample School-Parent Compact

(School Name/School District)

The _____ (School Name/District) _____ and the parents of the students participating in activities, services, and programs funded by Title I, Part A of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) (participating children), agree that this compact outlines how the parents, the entire school staff, and the students will share the responsibility for improved student academic achievement and the means by which the school and parents will build and develop a partnership that will help children achieve the State's high standards.

This school-parent compact is in effect during school year 2008-2009.

School Responsibilities

The (School Name/District) will:

- 1. Provide high quality curriculum and instruction in a supportive and effective learning environment that enables the participating children to meet the State's student academic achievement standards as follows:**
 - *Title I students will receive instruction and assistance from the reading specialist during the regular school day. Instruction occurs either in the regular classroom or in the Title I Reading Classroom. The curriculum consists of research-based materials designed to focus on comprehension strategies that transfer to reading in all subject areas.*
- 2. Hold the parent-teacher conferences (at least annually in elementary schools) during which this compact will be discussed as it relates to the individual child's achievement.**

Specifically, those conferences will be held as follows:

 - *Parent-Teacher conferences are held semi-annually, occurring after the completion of the first and third grading periods.*
 - *Additional conferences may be arranged through contacting the Title I teacher.*
- 3. Provide parents with frequent reports on their children's progress.** Specifically, the school will provide reports as follows:
 - *Report cards are generated for each student quarterly throughout the school year. The Title I teacher will have input for 50% of the reading grade given.*
 - *Additional progress reports will be generated by the teacher and communicated as necessary.*
- 4. Provide parents reasonable access to staff.** Specifically, staff will be available for consultation with parents as follows:
 - *Parents may contact the school at any time to arrange consultation with their child's teacher.*
 - *Conferences/consultation may occur before, during, or after the school day via phone, email, or in-person.*
- 5. Provide parents opportunities to volunteer and participate in their child's class and to observe classroom activities as follows:**
 - *Title I staff will provide parents information regarding their child's schedule and opportunities for classroom involvement.*

Parent Responsibilities

We, as parents, will support our children’s learning in the following ways:

- *Monitor attendance.*
- *Make sure that homework is completed.*
- *Monitor amount of television their children watch.*
- *Volunteer in my child’s classroom.*
- *Participate, as appropriate, in decisions relating to my children’s education.*
- *Promote positive use of my child’s extracurricular time.*
- *Stay informed about my child’s education and communicating with the school by promptly reading all notices from the school or the school district either received by my child or by mail and responding, as appropriate.*
- *Serve, to the extent possible, on policy advisory groups, such as being the Title I, Part A parent representative on the school’s School Improvement Team, the Title I Policy Advisory Committee, the District-wide Policy Advisory Council, the State’s Committee of Practitioners, the School Support Team, or other school advisory or policy groups.*

Student Responsibilities

We, as students, will share the responsibility to improve our academic achievement and achieve the State’s high standards. Specifically, we will:

- *Do my homework every day and ask for help when I need to.*
- *Be at school on time unless I am sick.*
- *Read every day outside of school time.*
- *Give to my parents/guardians all notices and information received by me from my school every day.*

School	Parent(s)	Student
Date	Date	Date

(PLEASE NOTE THAT SIGNATURES ARE NOT REQUIRED)

Additional Required School Responsibilities

The (School Name/District) will:

1. Involve parents in the planning, review, and improvement of the school's parental involvement policy, in an organized, ongoing, and timely way.
2. Hold an annual meeting to inform parents of the school's participation in Title I, Part A programs, and to explain the Title I, Part A requirements, and the right of parents to be involved in Title I, Part A programs. The school will convene the meeting at a convenient time to parents and will offer a flexible number of additional parental involvement meetings, such as in the morning or evening, so that as many parents as possible are able to attend. The school will invite to this meeting all parents of children participating in Title I, Part A programs (participating students), and will encourage them to attend.
3. Provide information to parents of participating students in an understandable and uniform format, including alternative formats upon the request of parents with disabilities, and, to the extent practicable, in a language that parents can understand.
4. Provide to parents of participating children information in a timely manner about Title I, Part A programs that includes a description and explanation of the school's curriculum, the forms of academic assessment used to measure children's progress, and the proficiency levels students are expected to meet.
5. On the request of parents, provide opportunities for regular meetings for parents to formulate suggestions and to participate, as appropriate, in decisions about the education of their children. The school will respond to any such suggestions as soon as practicably possible.
6. Provide to each parent an individual student report about the performance of their child on the State assessment in at least math, language arts, and reading.

This School-Parent Compact was developed by the:

Baldwin-Whitehall, MN School District (2008-2009)

School-Parent Compact Checklist

A compact is a written commitment that indicates how all members of a school, parents, students and even the community will agree to share in the responsibility of learning for an individual child. This checklist was created to help parent and community leaders assess their school's commitment and compliance with the law as it relates to compacts.

Yes **No**

- | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Does your school have a parent-school compact? |
| | | Does your schools' parent-school compact: |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Describe the school's responsibility to provide high-quality curriculum and instruction in a supportive and effective learning environment, |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Describe the ways in which each parent will be responsible for supporting their children's learning, |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Address the importance of communication between teachers and parents on a continuous basis through, |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Involve parent-teacher conferences in elementary schools, at least annually, |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Provide for frequent reports to parents on their children's progress, |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Describe access to staff, |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Describe opportunities to volunteer and participate in their child's class. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Is the compact easy to understand and provided in various languages so that parents and teachers can read and understand it? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Were parents involved in the development of the parent-school compact? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Are parents and teachers involved in the development of the programs and activities implemented for students being served under a compact? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Are parents aware of the process used to develop and evaluate the parent-school compact? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Does your school district have a written plan that defines the parent-school compact? |