

**GRACE SNELL MIDDLE SCHOOL
TITLE I PARENT INVOLVEMENT POLICY
2011-2012**

Grace Snell Middle School shall abide by and support all rules and regulations pertaining to the Title I Program as they relate to improving the Academic Achievement of the Disadvantaged, No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, Public Law 107-110, and the Parent Involvement Policy of Gwinnett County Public Schools (GCPS). Further, the term parent(s) in this document shall refer to parents/guardians of Title I students only.

The administration, faculty, and staff of Grace Snell Middle School have met and jointly developed with parents this Title I Parent Involvement Policy. This policy describes the school's expectations for parent involvement. It will be distributed to parents of all students. The term parent in this policy refers to parents/guardians of students attending Grace Snell Middle School.

1. **Grace Snell Middle School will convene annual and accessible orientation meetings, in August and later on in the school year, for all parents. Parents will be invited and encouraged to attend. The purpose of these meetings will be to** inform parents about the guidelines, purpose, goals, and expectations of the Title I Program, inform parents of their important roles in their child's success and present parents with the Title I School/Parent Compact. The school will communicate the AYP results, the LSPI goals, the Title I Local School Action Policy and Plan, and Title I Instructional and Parent Involvement Budgets. Information about opportunities for parent involvement will be shared throughout the year and surveys given to solicit areas of concern in which parents would like more information.
2. **The school will offer a number of meetings during the morning or evening and may provide, with funds provided under this part: transportation, child care, or home visits, as such services will encourage parental involvement.**

In addition to the annual Title I Annual Orientation Meetings, we will survey parents to determine their interest, availability, need for childcare, need for transportation, need for home visits, translator and/or interpreters in scheduling parent activities. Information presented at the workshops will be available to be sent home and will be shared in face-to-face or phone call conferences. Meetings will be offered a variety of times. The faculty and staff will work with parents to model expectations, schedule meetings and training during the day and evening, and/or before PTA meetings to maximize parent participation, and provide childcare (by employees of GCPS) on an as needed basis, pending the availability of funds. Parent activities, conferences, other meetings and trainings will be offered a variety of times in order to best facilitate parents' schedules. Interpreters, translators, and home visits will be available as the need arises.

3. **Grace Snell Middle School will involve parents, in an organized, ongoing, and timely manner, in the planning, review, and improvement of programs under this part, including the planning, review, and improvement of the school parental involvement policy and the joint development of the school-wide program plan under section 1114(b)(2). An exception would be that if a school already has in place a process for involving parents in the joint planning and design of the school's programs, the school may use that process, if such process includes an adequate representation of parents of participating children.**

Parents have been included in the initial planning and development of the Title I Targeted Assistance Plan. A Parent Involvement Committee will be established by recruiting parents at the initial Title I Orientation Meeting, in addition to disseminating hand-written announcements/invitations. The Parent Involvement Committee will work along with administration, school staff, and other local school governing committees to develop the Local School

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Plan for Improvement (LSPI). Additionally, the Parent Involvement Committee, comprised of a majority of Title I parents, will review and/or revise the Title I Local School Parent Involvement Policy, Local School Action Plan, the School/Parent Compact, and the Title I Instructional and Parent Involvement budgets. Opportunities for other parents to provide suggestions and/or comments regarding the Title I program and/or Title I documents may include periodic surveys, brainstorming sessions, monthly "Coffee Chats" with the principal, and/or regularly scheduled meetings of the Parent Involvement Committee. Meetings will be held annually to evaluate, review, and revise the Title 1 program and local school plan of improvement goals. Meetings will be advertised through letters sent home and posted on the school's website.

4. Grace Snell Middle School shall provide Title 1 parents/guardians with:

- a. ***Timely information about the TAS or SW Program.*** Initial letters informing parents about their child's participation in the Title 1 program and other related information were sent home. The school's website was also used to disseminate pertinent information about the program.
- b. ***A description and explanation of the curriculum in use at the school, the forms of academic assessment used to measure student progress, and the proficiency levels students are expected to meet.*** Orientation meetings were held during which the Title 1 program was discussed in detail including the curriculum (GCPS Academic Knowledge, and Skills), forms of assessment (CRCT, ITBS, CoGAT), and students' performance expectations (AYP, report cards, GCPS Promotional Criteria). This information was also communicated at Curriculum Night, during parent conferences, parent workshops, via written communication, and the school's website. Parents will be invited, on an ongoing basis, to participate in conferences with their children's teachers, volunteer in the school and/or classrooms, serve as members of the PTA, Parent Involvement Committee, and/or the Local School Council.
- c. ***If requested by parents, opportunities for regular meetings to formulate suggestions and to participate, as appropriate, in decisions relating to the education of their children, and respond to any such suggestions as soon as practicably possible.***

Pertinent information including dates of upcoming events is posted via a link on the school's website. This medium is also used to solicit parent input by means of surveys regarding suggestions for meeting times and topics. In addition, contact information is also available on all correspondence and on the website. Parents' concerns, questions, and suggestions are handled by the Title 1 administrator within two school days through telephone calls, notes, emails, meetings, and/or conferences. Where needed, interpreters/translators are provided.

5. If the Title 1 School-wide Program plan under section 1114(b)(2) is not satisfactory to the Grace Snell Middle School's parents, the school shall submit any parent comments on the plan when the school makes the plan available to the local educational agency.

We will collect all data, comments, and/or suggestions regarding the Title I Local School Policy, Local School Parent Involvement Action Plan, School/Parent Compact, and Title I Instructional and Parent Involvement Budgets. We have been and will continue to include personal concerns from parents to teachers about Title I documents or the program. We will attach minutes from the meetings where Title I documents and/or the Title I program have been discussed. All documentation will be sent to the LEA, and will be considered in the revision of the Policy/Action Plan for our school.

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6. **Each school served shall jointly develop with parents, for all children served, a School-Parent Compact that outlines how parents, the entire staff, and 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 to help children achieve the State's high standards.**

In the development of the initial Title I Compact, parents were invited to join the Title I Targeted Assistance School Team. The School/Parent Compact will be presented to parents during the orientation meetings. The Compact defines the roles and expectations of all stakeholders involved. These stakeholders include parents, teachers, students, and administrators. Title I teachers will revisit the compact with parents and students during report card conferences or at other times as may be requested. Future reviews and revisions to the Title I School Parent Compact will be conducted by the Parent Involvement Committee. All parent comments and suggestions will be considered in the review and/or revision of this document, fostering a positive partnership between home and school. See attached parent compact.

7. **Grace Snell Middle School shall provide assistance to parents in understanding the State's academic content standards and State student achievement standards, State and local academic achievement assessments, and how to monitor a child's progress and work with educators to improve the achievement of their children.**

The administration and staff of Grace Snell Middle School are committed to providing Title I students with a high quality curriculum and instruction. We are committed to teaching the Academic Knowledge and Skills (AKS) which are aligned with the Georgia Performance Standards (GPS). We have employed highly qualified Title I teachers who utilize researched based Quality-Plus Teaching Strategies, driven by student data. We strive to maintain a clean and safe learning environment with small class sizes. We maintain open communication among Title I teachers, regular education teachers, support staff, parents, administration, and the community. Our goal is to ensure that each student is able to meet and/or surpass state and national standards, such as the CRCT, ITBS, and district-created Interim and Benchmark assessments, supporting Gwinnett County's vision of becoming a world class educational system. Every effort is made to conference with Title I parents and students to inform them of students' academic status.

The Parent Center will be utilized to provide opportunities for Title I meetings for parents. These meetings will include orientation meetings, parent/teacher workshops, and Curriculum Night. Parents will receive information about the GCPS curriculum (AKS) and explanations of the grading system and standardized assessments used to monitor student achievement. Parents will be informed on how to access the Go Portal as a way to monitor their child's progress. In addition, parents will be given opportunities to learn strategies for assisting their children in reading, writing, and math. Parents will be provided with conference time during which they may discuss their child's progress, individual assessment results, and/or any other concerns about their child's education. This may include concerns about the child's special needs. If it is determined that a student has specific needs beyond those being provided by the regular education or Title I program, the student may be referred to the Student Support Team (SST). The Title 1 AP-TI will provide the parent with support in understanding the SST process.

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8. **Grace Snell Middle School will provide materials and training to help parents work with their children to improve their children's achievement and to coordinate necessary literacy and technology training, as appropriate, to foster parental involvement.**

Resources such as books on tape, flashcards, and hands-on manipulative material, will be made available to parents. Copies of software programs used at school, brochures/applications which would include links to community resources, technology training for parents, *OnMyCalendar.com* training, and a Homework Help Line linked to GPCS resources will be part of our Parent Resource Center. To make this a successful partnership, several informational meetings and trainings with teachers, administrators, parents, and speakers will be offered on various days and times to accommodate parents.

9. **Grace Snell Middle School shall educate teachers, pupil services personnel, principals, and other staff with the assistance of parents, in the value and utility of contributions of parents, and in how to reach out to, communicate with, and work with parents as equal partners, implement and coordinate parent programs, and build ties between parents and the school.**

All school personnel will attend trainings/workshops provided by the Title I assistant principal and other trainers to stress the value and utility of parental contributions and involvement, in addition to the diversity of ethnicity, cultures, and religions. The parent organizations and the school will work jointly to reach all parents and to encourage building ties between home and school. Grace Snell Middle School will provide school activities and programs that promote family involvement such as individual teacher/parent meetings for each student before school starts in August. Questionnaires will be sent home to learn about the child's strengths, needs, and behaviors. During the school year, parents will be encouraged to send comments regarding their child's progress with the use of the agenda book and/or emails to promote the best possible teacher/parent communication. Grace Snell Middle School will also provide research/data-showing benefits of parent involvement including performance among students with supportive parents. Staff members will be trained to communicate effectively with parents before early release conferences.

10. **The school shall to the extent feasible and appropriate, coordinate and integrate parent involvement programs and activities with Head Start, Reading First, Early Reading First, Even Start, the Home Instruction Programs for Preschool Youngsters, the Parents as Teachers Program, and public preschool and other programs and conduct other activities, such as parent resource centers, that encourage and support parents in more fully participating in the education of their children.**

At Grace Snell Middle School we are committed to helping our students make a smooth transition to every grade level. Programs on the transition from elementary school and to high school, Special Education, ESOL, and other programs will be offered to parents. Orientations will be held for parents of rising 6th and 9th grade students from feeder schools. The orientations will address promotion criteria across grade levels and changes in curriculum and AKs standards. A summer "Jumpstart" program will be offered to rising sixth graders to assist them with becoming acclimated to middle school, parents will be invited to participate in program. Counselors and the sixth grade administrator will be available to meet and give the parents tours of the building and answer questions during a "Y'all Come" session that week. Resources will be available for check out to assist parents as they support their child's academic success in reading and math. At Grace Snell Middle School we believe a smooth transition between every grade level is critical to the success of every student.

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11. **Grace Snell Middle School shall ensure that information related to school and parent programs, meetings, and other activities is sent to all parents in a format and, to the extent practicable, in a language the parents can understand. Throughout the school year, Grace Snell will communicate with Title I parents by sending initial letters informing them about their child's participation in the Title I program, holding orientation meetings during which the Title I program will be discussed in detail and providing parents with content-related information and materials that will enable them to extend their children's learning along with other faculty and support personnel. There will be a posting of Title I information on the school's website and Title I information in a newsletter (electronic or hard copies as needed) will be provided.**

Grace Snell Middle School will ensure that information related to school and parent programs, meetings, and other activities is sent to the parents of participating children in a format and, to the extent practicable, in a language the parents can understand. Grace Snell Middle School will provide daily agenda books, access to teacher-created websites, hard copies of notices (in appropriate languages) for those who have no access to the Internet, and as funds are available, an Automated Message Center (phone calling service), poster maker to display data and a translator or interpreter may be provided. Teachers, staff and administrators will try to answer parents' questions, simplify wording, and explain educational abbreviations.

12. **The school may involve parents in the development of training for teachers, principals, and other educators to improve the effectiveness of such training.**

All school personnel will attend trainings/workshops provided by the Title I assistant principal and other trainers to stress the value and utility of parental contributions and involvement, in addition to the diversity of ethnicity, cultures, and religions. The parent organizations and the school will work jointly to reach all parents, encourage parental involvement, as well as strengthen the ties between home and school. Grace Snell Middle School will provide school activities and programs that promote family involvement such as individual teacher/parent meetings for each student before school starts in August. Questionnaires will be sent home to learn about the child's strengths, needs, and behaviors. During the school year, parents will be encouraged to share comments regarding their child's progress via a daily agenda and emails to promote the best possible teacher/parent communication. Grace Snell Middle School will also provide research/data-showing benefits of parent involvement including performance among students with supportive/involved parents.

13. **Grace Snell Middle School may provide necessary literacy training from funds received if the local educational agency has exhausted all other reasonably available sources of funding for such training.**

To the extent practicable, Grace Snell Middle School will provide full opportunities for the participation of parents with limited English proficiency, parents with disabilities, parents of migratory children, including providing information and school reports, required by Title 1, in a format and, to the extent practicable, in a language such parents understand. As a world-class school, Grace Snell Middle School will strive to communicate to parents in a parent-friendly manner and in a school friendly environment. Grace Snell Middle School will host new parent meetings throughout the year to foster student success.

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- 14. Grace Snell Middle School may pay reasonable and necessary expenses associated with local parental involvement activities, including transportation and child care costs, to enable parents to participate in school-related meetings and training sessions.**

We will provide reasonable support for parental involvement activities as parents may request such as a check-out system for materials from the Parent Center, computer use in the Parent Center, homework assistance, tutoring, links to community services, childcare (as needed), transportation, and counseling for family situations as needed. Comment cards will be available for parents to voice their needs and concerns with confidentiality.

- 15. The school may train parents to enhance the involvement of other parents.**

Grace Snell Middle School will provide reasonable support for parental involvement activities as parents may request such as a check-out system for materials from the Parent Center, computer use in the Parent Center, homework assistance, tutoring, links to community services, childcare, transportation, and counseling for family situations (as needed). Comment cards will be available for parents to voice their concerns with confidentiality.

- 16. The school may arrange school meetings at a variety of times, or conduct in-home conferences between teachers or other educators who work directly with participating children and parents who are unable to attend such conferences at school, in order to maximize parental involvement and participation.**

To the extent practicable, Grace Snell Middle School will provide full opportunities for the participation of parents with limited English proficiency, parents with disabilities, parents of migratory children, including providing information and school reports, required by Title I, in a format and, to the extent practicable, in a language such parents understand. As a world-class school, Grace Snell Middle School will strive to communicate to parents in a parent-friendly manner and in a school friendly environment. Grace Snell Middle School will host new parent meetings throughout the year to foster student success.

Grace Snell Middle School will address the importance of communication between teacher and parents through parent-teacher conferences, at least annually, during which the Title I School/Parent Compact shall be discussed as it relates to the individual child's achievement. Frequent reports to parents on their child's progress and reasonable access to staff, opportunities to volunteer and participate in their child's class, and observation of classroom activities will be provided. Grace Snell Middle School will host Title I orientation meetings, where all team members will be introduced and the Title I program at Grace Snell will be explained. The Title I School-Parent Compact will be introduced, signed and revisited whenever needed. Grace Snell Middle School will encourage close parent communication through the use of newsletters, both Title I and classroom teacher mid-term and progress reports (as often as semi-monthly), and parent/teacher conferences. Grace Snell welcomes parents as volunteers to ensure the strongest partnership between child, parent, administrator and teacher through programs such as: Student with a Goal (SWAG), FBLA, Peer Leaders, Student Ambassadors, Comet Buddies, and school representation including Title I Parent Committee, PTA, or Local School Council.

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17. The school may adopt and implement model approaches to improving parental involvement. Each school must strive to build the capacity of parents to help their children achieve at high standards. Building parents' capacity for involvement includes *Requirements for Building Capacity for Involvement*. The Six Strategies are:
1. **Program Information for Parents:** Each school shall provide assistance to parents of participating Title I children in understanding such topics as the state's academic content and achievement standards, the assessments being used, the requirements of Title I, Part A, and how to monitor their children's progress work with educators to improve their achievement.
 2. **Materials and Training:** Each school shall provide materials and training, such as literacy and trainings on how to use technology, to help parents work with their children to improve achievement.
 3. **Educate Educators:** Each school shall educate teachers, pupil services personnel, principals, and other staff with the assistance of parents, in the value and utility of contributions of parents, and in how to reach out to, communicate with, and work with parents as equal partners, implement and coordinate parent programs, and build ties between parents and the school.
 4. **Preschool Coordination:** Each school shall "to the extent feasible and appropriate," coordinate and integrate parental involvement programs with Head Start, Even Start, and other preschool programs and conduct other activities, such as parent resource centers, that encourage parents in more fully participating in the education of their children.
 5. **Understandable Communication:** Each school shall ensure that information related to school and parent programs, meeting and other activities is sent to parents of participating children in a format and, to the extent practicable, in a language the parents can understand.
 6. **Other Requested Activities:** Each school shall provide such other reasonable support for parental involvement activities as parents may request.

The "Be There" campaign, implemented by Gwinnett County Public Schools, provides model approaches to improving parental involvement. All learning opportunities provided for parents of Grace Snell Middle are based on the Six Strategies for Building Capacity for Parent Involvement. Gwinnett County Public Schools' curriculum, the Academic Knowledge and Skills (AKS), which are based on the Georgia Performance Standards (GPS), will be implemented in each classroom through Quality Plus Teaching Strategies. Administrators, faculty and staff, local businesses, and other community organizations will collaborate to provide resources and networks for parents and students. Parents will be invited and encouraged to attend Open House, Curriculum Night, parent-teacher conferences, PTA meetings, and other meetings, workshops and training sessions where they will be informed about grading procedures, promotion requirements, Georgia CRCT requirements, Georgia 8th Grade Writing Assessment, GCPS Benchmarks, as well as other achievement expectations. Grace Snell Middle School will provide materials and training to help parents work with their children to improve their children's achievement and to coordinate necessary literacy and technology training, as appropriate, to foster parental involvement by providing a Parent Resource Center with materials such as books on tape, flashcards, and hands-on manipulatives. Additional technology workshops will be provided for parents to inform them on how to use the Parent Portal to monitor their

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child's academic progress, as well as assist them with accessing the school website, accessing OnMyCalendar.com, accessing textbooks online, using a Homework Help Line linked to GCPs resources, using copies of software programs used at school, and accessing other useful academic or community resource links. The meetings, workshops, and/or training days, times, and locations will vary to accommodate parents' schedules in order to increase parent participation. All school personnel will attend trainings/workshops provided by the Title I assistant principal and other trainers to stress the value and utility of parental contributions and involvement, in addition to the diversity of ethnicity, cultures, and religions. The parent organizations and the school will work jointly to reach all parents and to encourage building ties between home and school. Grace Snell Middle School will conduct annual orientation sessions for 5th grade students and parents to visit the school. The same will be done for 8th grade students and parents of Grace Snell to visit the cluster high school, South Gwinnett, during the spring prior to promotion to 6th and 9th grades respectively. Grace Snell Middle School will communicate school events, parent workshops, programs, meetings, and other activities through the school's website, phone alerts, emails, flyers, USPS mail notifications, and/or other feasible means. We will incorporate the six strategies into our parent program.

18. The school district may establish a district-wide parent advisory council to provide advice on all matters related to parental involvement in programs supported with Title I funds.

Grace Snell Middle School will make efforts to recruit parents to become members of the Gwinnett County Public Schools' Title I Parent Advisory Council (PAC), which meets regularly to provide training on matters relating to parent involvement programs, as well as make decisions as they relate to the district's LEA Involvement Policy and Title I Program. Meeting dates will be announced, and will be listed in the Title I Action Plan. All Title I parents will be invited to attend the Parent Advisory Council.

19. The school may develop appropriate roles for community-based organizations and businesses in parent involvement activities.

Grace Snell Middle School will include community-based organizations and businesses in parent involvement activities to establish roles and responsibilities for all involved. They will be invited to participate in the South Gwinnett cluster events to build networks and disseminate other pertinent community information of interest to parents. The school will partner with the Hope Center in order to help parents understand the students' report cards and answer any questions on a one-to-one basis.

20. The school shall provide such other reasonable support for Title I parental involvement activities as parents may request.

Grace Snell Middle School will use results from surveys, questionnaires, suggestion boxes, and various other data collection methods to provide support for Title I parental involvement activities as requested by parents. Concerns may also be shared with administrators.

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21. **In carrying out the parental involvement requirements of this part, local educational agencies and schools, to the extent practicable, shall provide full opportunities for the participation of parents with limited English proficiency, parents with disabilities, and parents of migratory children, including the provision of information and school reports required under section IIII in a format and, to the extent practicable, in a language such parents understand.**

In partnership with the Title I Office, Special Education, Health and Social Services, and ESOL services, GCPS and Grace Snell Middle School will provide parents with full opportunities for participation in the Title I school services as funds allow including the following: translation and/or interpreter's services to all ESOL, migrant, and Title I families to help them understand how to be involved in their child's education; a language bank to provide written communication in other languages; Title I School Social Workers who serve and provide resources for homeless students and a variety of services to their parents to ensure their participation in the school programs; Special Education Mentors who provide support to families of children with special needs.

22. **In a State where a parental information and resource center is established to provide training, information, and support to parents and individuals who work with local parents, local educational agencies, and schools receiving assistance under this part, each local educational agency or school that receives assistance shall assist parents and parental organizations by informing such parent and organizations of the existence and purpose of such centers.**

During Title I meetings, Grace Snell Middle School will inform parents about the Metro Atlanta Parental Information and Resource Center (PIRC) named below and the resources, training, information and support available to them at the PIRC through flyers, postings on the school's website, and information in the on-site Parent Center. Grace Snell Middle School may use resources from PIRC to provide training and workshops for parents.

**Parent Information and Resource Center
Metro Atlanta Region: Communities in School of Georgia
600 West Peachtree Street, Suite 1200
Atlanta, Ga. 30308
Julie Hollis, director-jhollis@cisgeorgia.org, (800)838-5784**