

## **FAMILY INVOLVEMENT**

In a democracy, parents and guardians are encouraged and welcomed to become involved in the formal education of their children enrolled in public schools. This early and consistent parental involvement helps children to do well academically. When this involvement is combined with a partnership between home and school, the student, the school, and the community benefit.

Parents and guardians of enrolled students have the right to be included in the educational process and to have access to the system on behalf of their children. These rights are outlined in Chapter 864, Statutes of 1998.

- Classroom Observing
- Teaching conferencing
- Volunteering
- Student attendance
- Student testing
- School selection
- Safe school environment
- Curriculum materials
- Student academic progress
- Student records
- Standards
- School rules
- Psychological testing
- Councils and committees
- Policy development

Education Code Section 51101(c) notes: “This section may not be construed so as to authorize a school to inform a parent or guardian, or to permit participation by a parent or guardian in the education of a child, if it conflicts with a valid restraining order, protective order, or order for custody or visitation issued by a court of competent jurisdiction.” (Chapter 864, Statutes of 1998.)

### **Classroom Observing**

Parents have the right to visit their child’s classroom to observe activities. The time and date of the visitation must be arranged in advance with the school.

### **Teacher Conferencing**

Parents have the right to request a conference with their child’s teacher(s) or the principal. Parents should contact the school to schedule a date and time convenient to all participants.

### **Volunteering**

Parents have the right to volunteer their time and resources for the improvement of school facilities and programs. Parents should contact the school to determine the terms and conditions of this service.

### **Student Attendance**

Parents have the right to be notified in a timely manner if their child is absent from school without permission.

### **Student Testing**

Parents have the right to be notified of their child’s performance on standardized and state-wide tests and the school’s ranking on these tests. (Under other State law, parents may request that their child not participate in statewide tests.)

### **School Selection**

Parents have the right to request that their child be enrolled in any school in the district. The district is not compelled to grant the request.

### **Safe School Environment**

Parents have the right and are entitled to the assurance of a supportive learning environment for their child.

### **Curriculum Materials**

Parents have the right to examine the curriculum materials of the class or classes in which their child is enrolled.

### **Student Academic Progress**

Parents have the right to be informed of their child’s academic progress in school and of the persons to contact if they wish more information or assistance with their child.

### **Student Records**

Parents have the right to access their child’s records and to question anything they feel is inaccurate or misleading or an invasion of privacy. Parents have the right to a timely response from the school district about their questions.

### **Standards**

Parents have the right to receive information regarding the academic standards their child is expected to meet.

## **School Rules**

Parents have the right to receive written notification of school rules, attendance policies, dress codes, and procedures for school visitations.

### **Psychological Testing**

Parents have the right to receive information on all psychological testing recommended for their child.

### **Councils and Committees**

Parents have the right to participate as a member of a parent advisory committee, school-site council, or site-based management leadership team in accordance with established rules and regulations for membership.

Parents also have the right to attend at least two meetings per year scheduled by the school to get information on school issues and activities.

### **Policy Development**

Parents and guardians have the right and should be given the opportunity to work in a mutually supportive and respectful partnership with the school to help their child succeed. The governing board of each school district shall adopt a jointly created policy that outlines how parents and guardians, school staff, and students may share the responsibility for the intellectual, physical, emotional and social development, and well-being of their students. This policy shall include, but is not limited to:

1. How parents/guardians and the school will help students to achieve academic and other standards.
2. How the school will provide high-quality curriculum and instruction in a supportive learning environment to all students enrolled.
3. What parents and guardians can do to support their child’s learning environment, including but not limited to:
  - Monitoring school attendance
  - Monitoring homework completion
  - Encouraging participation in extracurricular activities
  - Monitoring and regulating television viewing
  - Planning and participating in home supportive classroom activities
  - Volunteering at school
  - Participating in decision-making processes at school

## **Resources and Information**

To obtain information on parents' rights or family involvement issues, contact the Educational Partnerships Office, California Department of Education, 721 Capitol Mall, Sacramento, CA. To obtain copies of any of the materials listed below, please contact the publisher.

## **Comprehensive Partnership Materials**

Ballen, J., and O. Moles. 1994. *Strong Families, Strong Schools: Building Community Partnerships for Learning*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Education.

California Department of Education. 1997. *Family-School Compacts*. Challenge Toolkit series. Sacramento: California Department of Education.

de Kanter, A.; A. L. Ginsburg; J. Pederson; T.K Peterson; and D. Rich. 1997. *A Compact for Learning: An Action Handbook for Family-School-Community Partnerships*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Education.

Epstein, J., et al. 1997. *School, Family and Community Partnerships: Your Handbook for Action*. Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Corwin Press.

Rich, D. 1994. *The New Megaskills Bound: Breakthrough in Building the T.E.A.M. for Better Schools*. Washington, D.C.: Home and School Institute.

Sanders, M.G. 1997. *Building Effective-School-Family-Community Partnerships in a Large Urban School District*. Center for Research on the Education of Students Placed at Risk (CRESPAR), Report No. 13. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University; and Washington, D.C.: Howard University.

U.S. Department of Education. 1999. *America Goes Back to School: Challenge Our Students and They Will Soar*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Education.

## **Organizations**

■Center for Research on the Education of Students Placed at Risk (CRESPAR)  
Howard University  
2900 Van Ness Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20008  
(202) 806-8484

■Center on School/Family/Community Partnerships  
Johns Hopkins University  
3505 North Charles Street  
Baltimore, MD 21218  
(410) 516-8818

■U.S. Department of Education  
1-800-USA-LEARN

## **Online Resources**

California Department of Education Parent Involvement:

<<http://www.cde.ca.gov/cyfsbranch/lsp/f-phome.htm>>

Center on School, Family, and Community Partnerships Publications: Johns Hopkins University:

<<http://scov.csos.jhu.edu/p2000/listab.htm>>

U.S. Department of Education Partnership for Family Involvement in Education:

<<http://pfie.ed.gov/>>

U.S. Department of Education ED Pubs Online Ordering System:

<<http://www.ed.gov/pubs/edpubs.html>>

## **Beyond High School**

Students and parents have the right to be informed of college entrance requirements. It is critically important to know how to assist those students who choose to pursue a college education. Students and parents need to know the series of college preparatory classes to take in high school. The minimum requirements vary, depending on the selected college or university. The *a-g* requirements noted below are submitted by the Regents of the University of California and are, generally, the most rigorous.

- a. An English class every semester of every year for four years.
- b. A mathematics class every semester of every year for three years, including algebra and geometry. Four years are recommended.
- c. Two years of a laboratory science beyond the ninth grade. An additional year is recommended.
- d. Two years of history-social science, which are to include U.S. government, world history, culture, and geography.
- e. Two years of the same language other than English
- f. Two years of college preparatory elective in addition to those required in "a-e" above.
- g. One year of visual and performing arts.

To gain admission to college, students must also take and submit scores from either the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) or the American College Tests (ACT). Your child's high school counseling office can provide the testing dates and locations.

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Teacher Conferencing***

***Volunteering***

***Student Attendance***

***Student Testing***

***School Selection***

***Safe School  
Environment***

***Curriculum Materials***

***Student Academic  
Progress***

***Student Records***

***Standards***

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***Psychological Testing***

***Councils and  
Committees***

***Policy Development***

Chapter 864, Statutes of 1998

Education Code Sections

51100-51102