

Revised: May 14, 2009

**Thomson Middle School
TITLE 1 PARENT INVOLVMENT POLICY
2009-2010**

Thomson Middle School shall abide by and support all rules and regulations pertaining to Title 1: Improving the Academic Achievement of the Disadvantaged, No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, Public Law 1007-110, and the Parent Involvement Policy of Houston County Public Schools as follows:

This Parent Involvement Policy is available to all parents through email, the Thomson Middle School Web Page and a copy is kept in Media Center and Parent Involvement Coordinators office. Translate copies are also available upon request.

Thomson Middle School will foster a parent-friendly environment and provide parents with strategies to use at home that support academic achievement and success. Parent meetings are scheduled at various times throughout the school year. Parents are invited and encouraged to attend an annual orientation meeting that is held at the beginning of the school year. Translators will be provided when needed. The purpose of this meeting will be to:

- Inform parents about the guidelines, purposes, goals, and expectations of the Title 1 Program
- Inform parents of their important role in their child's success
- Inform parents of school, grade level and individual teacher policies and procedures
- Present an introduction to the grade level curriculum

Thomson will survey its parent population, at least annually, to evaluate the effectiveness of our parent involvement program. As part of this evaluation, the Parent Involvement Committee which consists of parents, community members, school administration, and staff shall meet to review and/or revise the Local School Parent Involvement Policy, the Local School Parent Involvement Plan, and the Local School Parent-Teacher-Student Compact. A printed agenda shall be presented and each committee member shall acknowledge his/her presence by signing an attendance log. The Title 1 office will provide technical assistance and/or advisement in the development of the local school parental involvement workshop opportunities. All suggestions for improvement and identified barriers to parent involvement shall be noted.

The Parent Involvement Coordinator, a certified teacher, along with other faculty and support personnel, will involve parents in their children's education by providing them with information and materials.

Our school shall communicate regularly with parents through a variety of media/methods, including but not limited to: parent meetings, parent-teacher conferences, parent workshops, whole school call outs, news letters, information sent home via students, letters mailed home to parents/guardians postings on school sign, TMS Web Page and recommended websites that provide ideas for working with children at home. Translations will be provided to the extent practicable.

The school curriculum will be shared through the Houston County Board of Education website (www.hcbe.net). The website communicates the content of the K-12 curriculum. The Assistant Principal of Instruction houses the following curriculums for grades six through eighth: language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, technology, fine arts, health, and physical education. Parents/Guardian are also asked to sign class syllabi for each content area which explains specific information pertaining to individual classes. Our community believes the Houston County K-12 curriculum encompasses the essential knowledge and skills students need to progress from one grade level to another and be prepared for entry into college and/or the workplace.

Assessments used to measure student's progress and proficiency levels the students are expected to meet will be explained in the class syllabus and reviewed during parent/teacher conferences. Information that will be shared will include the following:

How teachers use classroom performance, portfolios, standardize and teacher constructed tests, language checklists, performance tasks, student/parent questionnaires, and professional judgment in determining student progress toward meeting both local and State student performance standards.

The process for effectively identifying students who may be at risk for reading failure or who have difficulty with math is done through diagnostics and classroom-based instructional assessments. These assessments will identify students' specific areas of strengths and weaknesses in phonemic awareness, decoding, fluency, vocabulary, comprehension, computation, and math computation problem solving.

An explanation of the Georgia Criterion Referenced Competency Test (CRCT) is provided. Parents are made aware that this test assesses a student's knowledge of the local and state curriculum. Further, the CRCT scores in Mathematics and English/Language Arts are combined and used in the Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP).

Parent meetings held throughout the year will provide parents the opportunity to provide suggestions and to participate in discussions relating to the education of their children. Additional opportunities for parents to be involved at local schools shall include volunteering in the school and/or classroom, PTO in addition to serving as part of governing teams such as: Parent Involvement Committee, and the Local School Council. These school-based organizations of parents, educators, and citizens collaborate to set goals for improving student achievement and evaluate the progress in reaching these goals. In addition, the parents are encouraged to attend grade level programs and meeting's regarding their child's progress.

The school will handle responses to parent questions, concerns, and suggestions in a timely manner (2-3 school days) through telephone calls, notes, emails, agenda and conferences. Translators will be provided as needed.

All data, comments, and/or suggestions, including unsatisfactory comments, regarding the Title I School Plan and Parent Involvement Policy shall be collected and sent to the LEA and will be considered in the revision of the Policy/Action Plan for our school. In addition, an end-of-the-year unsatisfactory comments will be attached to the school plan and submitted to the LEA. The school will provide timely responses to comments or suggestions.

The school/student/parent compact is jointly developed with parents for all children. The compact is used to guide discussions about academic goals between the teachers, students, and parents and how they, along with entire school staff, will share the responsibility for improving student academic achievement. The compact is the means by which the school and parents will build and develop a partnership to help children achieve the state's high standards. The compact will be distributed in the Student/Parent handbook and the beginning of the school year and sent home with students to be signed both by parent/guardian and students. Translations in other languages will be available as needed and to the extent practicable. Homeroom teachers will have copies of the compact while the originals will be kept on file in the Parent Involvement Coordinator's office and are available as needed.

Parents will be encouraged to become vital partners in their children's education. The compact will include ways in which each parent will be responsible for supporting their child's learning such as monitoring attendance, homework, completion, and television watching; volunteering in their child's classroom and school; and participating in decisions relating to the education of their children, and to use extracurricular time in a positive manner. It will address the importance of communication between teachers and parents on an ongoing basis through parent-teacher conferences, response to frequent progress reports, and reasonable participation in school activities

The school will provide assistance in understanding the National Educational Goals, Georgia's content standards, the curriculum, and student performance standards on state and local assessments. The assessments are used to measure student progress and proficiency levels the students are expected to meet. In addition, the teachers will use the Georgia Performance Standards in all classrooms to accelerate student achievement. These strategies will be implemented school-wide to ensure student success. Our school is committed to reach high standards for student achievement through identifying needs, setting short term attainable goals, and providing immediate feedback with appropriate interventions or extensions to achieve the standards. Student progress will be monitored and shared with parent partners through the SmartWeb online grade report, regular progress reports and report cards (see 2009/2010 Houston County calendar for dates) and conferences, emails and phone calls as needed.

Through parent meetings/workshops, the school will provide information to parents to further their understanding of local and state's academic content standards and student academic achievement standards, state and local academic assessments, and how parents can monitor their children's progress and work with the school to improve the achievement of their children. Opportunities for parents to share questions/concerns will be provided at these parent meetings and on an individual basis through their child's progress and work in partnership with our staff to improve the achievement of their children through volunteering in the classrooms, contacting the school with questions or comments, and working with their child at home.

Parents receive a copy of their child's assessment results whenever a national, state, or district level assessment is given. An explanation guide is also provided so that parents can understand the meaning of the results. Every effort is made to provide parents with conference time which to share the results and answer questions. Students may be included in these conversations. Students with specific needs are involved in the Student Support Team (SST). At the SST meeting, parents, administrators, and teachers meet to develop a plan that supports the student's academic achievement.

Our Parent Involvement Coordinator and other school personal will provide opportunities and materials for parents to become full partners in the educational programs of their children to improve their academic achievement. The national standards for parent/family involvement reiterates the importance of this by reporting that parents develop confidence when they feel empowered and may go on to further their own education and become active in school and community. Our school offers a Parent Resource Center that provides information for parents with individual needs to help their children be successful.

School personnel will receive information provided by the Parent Involvement Coordinator to stress the value and importance of parental contributions and involvement. The Action Team, Parent Involvement Committee and School Council will work jointly with the school staff to reach all parents and to encourage building ties between home and school.

Our school will coordinate and integrate parent involvement programs and activities with programs such as Special Education, Transition from Elementary School to Middle School and Middle School to High School, and other programs to the extent feasible and appropriate. Our school has a parent resource center to provide information and support to parents.

Open communication between our staff and parents related to school and parent programs, meetings, and other activities will be addressed through parent-teacher conferences, parent-student handbooks, newsletters, notices, Title I literature, progress reports, phone calls, school website, school call out system, student agendas and email. This communication will be provided in a language that parents can understand, to the extent practicable.

Our school shall ensure that information related to school reports, parents programs, meetings, and other activities is sent home to encourage the participation of all parents including parents with limited English proficiency, parents with disabilities, families that are homeless, parents of migrate children in format and to the extent practicable, in a language such parents can understand. In addition, school personnel will make home visits if necessary and practicable.

Our parents and local community join our school staff in developing and assessing school improvement strategies. Parents are encouraged to participate in decision making. We work collaboratively as a team to address issues, make plans, and implement those plans. Compacts will be revisited annually, and in addition to the student's progress and report cards, frequent parent contact will be made as needed concerning individual student progress. Our faculty will communicate about the student's progress through email, notes, and phone calls. Our faculty and staff embrace these ideals and will provide access to classroom activities and encourage frequent communication. Parents are also encouraged to participate in our School Council, PTO and Parent Involvement Committee in addition to special events.