



Brockton Public Schools

Title I

Family Empowerment Toolkit

Welcome to the Title I Family Empowerment Toolkit

This toolkit was created to give our families useful information that will strengthen the partnership between you and your child's school. Research shows that the more parents are involved in their children's education, the better their children do: they succeed academically; they have better attendance; they show proper behavior; they exhibit better social skills; and they have greater goals of higher education.

We strive to include parents in the decision making process and to ensure that communication is regular, meaningful and two-way regarding student achievement. When you are involved and engaged in your child's education, great things happen.

We hope you find this toolkit easy to use and full of useful information!

Sincerely,

Karen McCarthy

Title I Coordinator

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508-580-7561

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What is Title I?

Title I is a federally funded program that provides financial assistance to districts and schools with high numbers or high percentages of children from low-income families to help ensure that all children meet challenging state academic standards.

How can students benefit from Title I?

Students may receive additional:

Academic, instructional and support services

Small group, intensive reading instruction/intervention

What is Parents Right to Know?

Federal law requires that Brockton Public Schools notifies parents of the following:

1. Professional qualifications of teachers and paraprofessionals who instruct
2. Notification if your child's teacher is not highly qualified
3. Individual report card that lets you know how your child is progressing
4. Access to Massachusetts school and district report cards to understand where the district and your school is succeeding and where there are areas for improvement. The report card answers important questions about our schools and district performance.



Important Phone Numbers

Brockton Public Schools	508-580-7000
Title I Office	508-580-7561
Parent Information Center	508-580-7950
Community Schools	508-580-7595
Special Education	508-580-7525
Bilingual Department	508-580-7508
Guidance Services	508-580-7521
McKinney Vento	508-580-7561
Smart Start Extended Day Program	508-894-4257
Brockton Public Library	508-580-7890
The Family Center	508-857-0272
DTA	508-895-7000
Parents Helping Parents	1-800-882-1250
Parental Stress Line	1-800-632-8188
Parent Advocacy Center	

BARBARA ALICEA
(Spanish) 508-580-5211
ADELE GOMES
(Cape Verdean) 508-580-5212
JEAN RODERICK CHERRY
(Haitian/French) 508-580-5220

Preparing for a Successful School Experience

Here are a few things to remember and prepare for the beginning of the school year:

Get ready over the summer

·If your child is starting at a new school, take them to visit the grounds to familiarize them with the building.

·Walk to the bus stop, or take the route to school several times before school starts.

Send your child to school “ready to learn”

·Establish regular sleeping hours and allow enough time for morning routines

·Dress your child appropriately for indoor or outdoor school activities.

·Encourage your child’s cleanliness and neatness.

Make a practice of reminding your child of appropriate behavior

·Model and encourage polite behavior and appropriate language at all times.

·Encourage your child to respect the rights and feelings of others.

Lend a helping hand

·Provide your child with a back pack to carry papers and notices to and from school.

·Review the content of your child’s back pack daily and provide a place in your home for your child to store the back pack and materials.

·Label all of your child’s belongings.

Maintain open communication

·Inform your child and the school about any changes for that day (transportation, etc.)

·Inform the teachers of any changes that may affect your child (sickness, moving, separation, trips, family situations, etc.).

End the day on a positive note

·Talk to your child about school and listen carefully to what he or she tells you.

·Encourage daily physical activity-indoors and out.

·Set aside a quiet place for your child to do homework activities.

·Be aware of your child’s television choices and limit the amount of time spent watching television or playing video games.

What to ask at a Parent-Teacher Conference

Effective parent involvement includes a range of actions from reading and talking with children and asking “What did you learn today?” to attending parent-teacher conferences and helping children make good choices about what they do after school and in the summer. Take advantage of parent-teacher conferences during the school year. Think of some questions and concerns you may have and write them down before your meeting. Keep track of your child’s schoolwork to help you with your questions. You are in a position to share important information, as well as ask questions. Remember, you can and should talk to your child’s teacher throughout the year.

- Is my child performing at grade level?
- What are my child’s strengths and weaknesses in reading, math, and science?
- How much time should my child spend on homework?
- Are my child’s assignments completed accurately?
- Does the school have special programs to meet my child’s needs?
- Does my child have special learning needs?
- Do you keep a folder of my child’s work? If yes, could you review it with me?
- Does my child have close friends?
- How well does my child get along with the other students?
- What can we do at home to support classroom learning?
- What is the best way to keep in touch with you?
- How can I help my child to work independently and make the best use of time?



Reinforce Learning Throughout the Year

- Check schoolwork every day as you empty your child's back pack.
- Read the school notices that are sent home.
- Participate in homework activities with your child two to three times a week for fifteen minutes.
- Show interest in school activities by participating in the school's PTA/PAC/PTO.
- Attend school events.
- Contact your child's teacher if you have questions or concerns
- Always praise your child for his/her efforts.
- Read to your child daily.
- Let your child see you read.
- Visit the public library.
- Give your child opportunities to solve problems.
- Allow your child to make choices.
- Assign your child responsibilities around the house.
- Encourage your child to express his/her feelings.



Get Involved!

- Take your child to school on the first day.
- Let your child know that school is important. Be sure to ask questions about homework and set up a quiet place for your child to work.
- Read everything that is sent home from school: report cards, homework assignments, school lunch plans, and vacation and bus schedules. Show your child that you are well informed.
- Get to know your child's teachers and school principal by attending school meetings, open house and parent-teacher conferences.
- Ask for copies of school policies (e.g., attendance and discipline). If there is something you do not understand, ask questions.
- Volunteer to help with school activities.
- Talk to other parents. If there is a parent organization, join it. If there is no parent organization at your school, think about starting one. Finding two or three other interested parents is a good start.
- Encourage your child to read at home. Visit local libraries or used book mobiles, school libraries or book fairs to pick out books together. Pick out books to read together and talk about them.
- Being involved in a child's education is just as important for step-parents, grandparents, and other adults who care for a child. Invite people who care for your child to participate in school activities.
- Your actions, not just your words, make an impression that will last a lifetime



Additional Resources for Parents

Understanding your Young Child's Stages of Development Information on child development for parents of one to five year olds. <http://www.cwla.org/>

Story Blocks – Literacy Development Collection of 30-60 second videos for parents, caregivers, and library staff designed to model songs, rhymes, and finger-plays appropriate for early childhood. Each video clip includes tips to increase caregivers' understanding of child development and pre-literacy needs. <http://www.storyblocks.org/>

Reading Tip Sheets Reading tip sheets, available in multiple languages, for parents of babies, toddlers, preschoolers, kindergarteners, first graders, second graders, and third graders. <http://www.colorincolorado.org/guides/readingtips/>

Reading Rockets teaches kids to read and help those who struggle. <http://www.readingrockets.org/audience/parents/>

Learn & Grow Together was developed by the Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care (EEC) to help you understand and nurture your child. It provides general information about the stages of child development and suggestions for fun activities you can do as a family to help your children learn and grow.

<http://www.mass.gov/edu/docs/eec/resources-for-families/eec-parent-guide-eng.pdf>

<http://www.mass.gov/edu/docs/eec/resources-for-families/eec-parent-guide-port.pdf>

<http://www.mass.gov/edu/docs/eec/resources-for-families/eec-parent-guide-span.pdf>



Additional Resources for Parents

The Family Center is an initiative of Community Connections of Brockton (CCB). It is a program of the United Way of Greater Plymouth County, supported by funding from the Department of Children and Families (DCF), and has a partnership with Brockton's Promise. All of the services at The Family Center are free and all families are welcome; there are no eligibility requirements for their services.

<http://www.ccbrockton.org/>

Phone -508-857-0272

Parents' Academy provides parents with free professional development and informational workshops in addition to a variety of family activity nights. The program is valued by parents, children, educators, and community members, whose annual input help shape the topics that are offered. The Parents' Academy workshop series is designed to help parents, school staff, and daycare professionals become full partners in the education of all students. Topics include academic support, effective discipline, parenting, health, nutrition, and safety issues as well as family fitness nights, craft nights, and game nights.

<http://www.brocktonpublicschools.com/parents-community/parents-academy>



Educational Terms to Know

Throughout the school year you will hear many words and acronyms being used at meetings, in letters, and conversations. It is difficult to be a part of the conversation when you are not familiar with the words being used. It can be confusing, but remember you can always ask questions. Here are a few definitions to get you started.

Assessment: Process of identifying strengths and needs to assist in educational planning; includes observation, record review, interviews, and tests

Common Core: A set of high-quality academic standards in mathematics and English language arts/literacy (ELA). These learning goals outline what a student should know and be able to do at the end of each grade

Curriculum: Knowledge and skills students are expected to learn, which includes the learning standards or learning objectives they are expected to meet; the units and lessons that teachers teach; the assignments and projects given to students; the books, materials, videos, presentations, and readings used in a course; and the tests, assessments, and other methods used to evaluate student learning

Digital literacy: Competency in using technology, including interpreting and understanding digital content and assessing its credibility as well as creating, researching, and communicating with appropriate tools.

Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE): Entitles a public school child with a disability to an educational program and related services to meet her unique educational needs at no cost to the parents; based on IEP; under public supervision and meets state standards

Individuals With Disabilities Education Act (IDEA): Federal law that provides for special education and related services to eligible children with disabilities

Individualized Education Program (IEP): Written plan to meet the unique educational needs of a child with a disability who requires special education services to benefit from the general education program; applies to kids enrolled in public schools

MCAS 2.0: The new test, informally called "Next-Generation MCAS," will build upon the best aspects of the MCAS assessments that have served the Commonwealth well for the past two decades. The test will include innovative items developed by PARCC, along with new items specifically created to assess the Massachusetts learning standards.

McKinney-Vento: Primary piece of federal legislation dealing with the education of children and youth experiencing homelessness in U.S. public schools. It was reauthorized as Title X, Part C, of the No Child Left Behind Act in January 2002

Modification: Modifications are changes in the delivery, content or instructional level of a subject or test. They result in changed or lowered expectations and create a different standard for kids with disabilities than for those without disabilities

Social-emotional learning: Learning that deals with understanding and managing emotions. Helps kids understand and manage their emotions and understand, interpret, and respond appropriately to others' reactions, as well as develop empathy for others.

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act: Federal civil rights law requiring school programs and buildings to be accessible to children with disabilities; protects from discrimination

WIDA: A multistate consortium focused on academic language development and academic achievement for linguistically diverse students through high quality standards, assessments, research, and professional development for educators

