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CHAPTER 28.

 PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN THEIR CHILDREN’S EDUCATION

**SECTION 59‑28‑100.** Citation of chapter.

This chapter may be cited as the “Parental Involvement in Their Children’s Education Act”.

**SECTION 59‑28‑110.** Purpose.

It is the purpose of the General Assembly in this chapter to:

(1) heighten awareness of the importance of parents’ involvement in the education of their children throughout their schooling;

(2) encourage the establishment and maintenance of parent‑friendly school settings; and

(3) emphasize that when parents and schools work as partners, a child’s academic success can best be assured.

**SECTION 59‑28‑120.** State agency involvement.

The Governor shall require state agencies that serve families and children to collaborate and establish networks with schools to heighten awareness of the importance of parental influence on the academic success of their children and to encourage and assist parents to become more involved in their children’s education.

**SECTION 59‑28‑130.** Parental involvement plans; recognition of improvement; establishing criteria for staff training.

The State Board of Education shall:

(1) require school and district long‑range improvement plans required in Section 59‑139‑10 to include parental involvement goals, objectives, and an evaluation component;

(2) recognize districts and schools where parental involvement significantly increases beyond stated goals and objectives; and

(3) establish criteria for staff training on school initiatives and activities shown by research to increase parental involvement in their children’s education.

**SECTION 59‑28‑140.** Design of parental involvement and best practices training programs; incorporation into teacher and principal preparation programs.

The State Superintendent of Education shall:

(1) design parental involvement and best practices training programs in conjunction with higher education institutions and the pre‑K through grade 12 education community, including parental program coordinators, which shall include:

(a) practices that are responsive to racial, ethnic, and socio‑economic diversity, and are appropriate to various grade‑level needs;

(b) establishment and maintenance of parent‑friendly school settings;

(c) awareness of community resources that strengthen families and assist students to succeed; and

(d) other topics appropriate for fostering partnerships between parent and teacher;

(2) work collaboratively with the Commission on Higher Education to incorporate parental involvement training into teacher preparation and principal preparation programs consistent with the training provided in subsection (1) of this section.

**SECTION 59‑28‑150.** State Superintendent of Education activities to promote parental involvement.

The State Superintendent of Education shall:

(1) promote parental involvement as a priority for all levels from pre‑K through grade 12, with particular emphasis at the middle and high school levels where parental involvement is currently least visible;

(2) designate a Department of Education staff position whose specific role is to coordinate statewide initiatives to support school and district parental involvement;

(3) collect and disseminate to districts and schools practices shown by research to be effective in increasing parental involvement at all grade levels;

(4) provide parental involvement staff development training for district and school liaisons, as needed;

(5) provide technical assistance relating to parental involvement training to districts and schools;

(6) sponsor statewide conferences on best practices;

(7) identify, recommend, and implement ways to integrate programs and funding for maximum benefit to enhance parental involvement;

(8) enroll the Department of Education as a state member of national organizations which promote proven parental involvement frameworks, models, and practices and provide related services to state and local members;

(9) promote and encourage local school districts to join national parental involvement organizations; and

(10) monitor and evaluate parental involvement programs statewide by designing a statewide system which will determine program effectiveness and identify best practices and report evaluation findings and implications to the General Assembly, State Board of Education, and Education Oversight Committee.

**SECTION 59‑28‑160.** Local school board of trustees activities.

Each local school board of trustees shall:

(1) consider joining national organizations which promote and provide technical assistance on various proven parental involvement frameworks and models;

(2) incorporate, where possible, proven parental involvement practices into existing policies and efforts;

(3) adopt policies that emphasize the importance, strive to increase and clearly define expectations for effective parental involvement practices in the district schools;

(4) provide for all faculty and staff, no later than the 2002‑2003 school year, parental involvement orientation and training through staff development with an emphasis on unique school and district needs and after that, on an ongoing basis as indicated by results of evaluations of district and school parental involvement practices and as required by the State Board of Education;

(5) provide incentives and formal recognition for schools that significantly increase parental involvement as defined by the State Board of Education;

(6) require an annual briefing on district and school parental involvement programs including findings from state and local evaluations on the success of the district and schools’ efforts; and

(7) include parental involvement expectations as part of the superintendent’s evaluation.

**SECTION 59‑28‑170.** School district superintendent activities.

(A) Each school district superintendent shall consider:

(1) designating staff to serve as a parent liaison for the district to coordinate parental involvement initiatives and coordinate community and agency collaboration to support parents and families;

(2) requiring each school to designate a faculty contact for parental involvement efforts to work collaboratively with the district coordinator and network with other school faculty contacts;

(3) requiring each school principal to designate space within the school specifically for parents which contains materials and resources on the numerous ways parents and schools can and should partner for a child’s academic success; and

(4) encouraging principals to adjust class and school schedules to accommodate parent‑teacher conferences at times more convenient to parents and, to the extent possible, accommodate parents in cases where transportation and normal school hours present a hardship.

(B) Each school district superintendent shall:

(1) include parental involvement expectations as part of each principal’s evaluation;

(2) include information about parental involvement opportunities and participation in the district’s annual report; and

(3) disseminate to all parents of the district the expectations enumerated in Section 59‑28‑180.

**SECTION 59‑28‑180.** Parent expectations.

Parent involvement influences student learning and academic performance; therefore, parents are expected to:

(1) uphold high expectations for academic achievement;

(2) expect and communicate expectations for success;

(3) recognize that parental involvement in middle and high school is equally as critical as in elementary school;

(4) ensure attendance and punctuality;

(5) attend parent‑teacher conferences;

(6) monitor and check homework;

(7) communicate with the school and teachers;

(8) build partnerships with teachers to promote successful school experiences;

(9) attend, when possible, school events;

(10) model desirable behaviors;

(11) use encouraging words;

(12) stimulate thought and curiosity; and

(13) show support for school expectations and efforts to increase student learning.

**SECTION 59‑28‑190.** Education Oversight Committee survey to determine effectiveness of efforts to increase parent involvement.

The Education Oversight Committee shall survey parents to determine if state and local efforts are effective in increasing parental involvement. This information shall be used in the public awareness campaign required by the Education Accountability Act to promote the importance of parental involvement. The campaign shall include:

(1) advice for parents on how to help their children be successful in school and the importance of nurturing their children’s skills and abilities;

(2) requests to employers, state agencies, entities, community groups, nonprofit organizations, and faith communities that work with children and families to distribute and display parent advice and other pertinent parent information;

(3) promotion of the benefits of increased productivity, loyalty, and sense of community which result from parent‑friendly workplace policies;

(4) ideas and encouragement to employers to adopt parent‑friendly workplace policies and to provide information on the importance of parents to a child’s academic success;

(5) recognition of businesses and employers where parent‑friendly policies have been adopted; and

(6) recognition of agencies and faith communities that have supported and increased parental involvement.

**SECTION 59‑28‑200.** Development of informational materials.

The Education Oversight Committee and the State Superintendent of Education shall develop and publish jointly informational materials for distribution to all public school parents and to teachers. The informational materials for distribution shall include:

(1) an explanation of the grade‑level academic content standards and advice on how parents can help their children achieve the standards and the relationship of the standards to the state assessments; and

(2) printed information about the standards and advice relative to parental involvement in their children’s education for visible display and use in every public school K‑12 classroom.

**SECTION 59‑28‑210.** Distribution of informational materials.

The Education Oversight Committee shall disseminate the informational materials prepared pursuant to Section 59‑28‑200 to all districts and schools.

**SECTION 59‑28‑220.** Development of employer tax credit incentives for paid parent‑employee release time.

The Education Oversight Committee, in cooperation with representatives of the Department of Commerce, the Department of Revenue, and the South Carolina Chamber of Commerce, shall develop recommendations for employer tax credits as incentives to:

(1) provide parent‑employee release time for parent‑teacher conferences or attendance at their children’s academic‑related events without loss of pay; and

(2) develop workplace policies which enable parents to improve their literacy, assist their children with academics, and become more involved in their child’s education as a result of employers working with local school officials.

Recommendations shall be reported to the Senate Finance and Education Committees, House Ways and Means Committee, and the House Education and Public Works Committee no later than January 1, 2001.