

NC DPI, EC Division and ECAC present:
Parent Liaisons and Parent Advisory Councils as Family Engagement Tools



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Welcome!

Exceptional Children Division

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major programs & mission

NC PTI:

- Parent Training and Information Center funded through IDEA

NC HIC:

- Family to Family Health Information Center / US Department of Health and Human Services, HRSA - Health Resources and Services Administration.

NCDBP:

- NC Deaf-Blind Project in collaboration with NC DPI and ECU

NC SIP:

- NC State Improvement Project in collaboration with NC DPI

RPTAC:

- Region 2 Technical Assistance Center funded through IDEA '04

ecac is a private non-profit parent organization committed to improving the lives and education of ALL children through a **special emphasis on children with disabilities...**

Providing information, education, outreach and support to and for families across the state of NC.

SELF-ASSESSMENT:
A Journey of Change

66TH CONFERENCE ON EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN

Today's Discussion

- Family Engagement:
 - Definitions & Research
- Vision for Family Engagement:
 - NC DPI/EC Division
- Benefits and Structures for:
 - Parent Advisory Boards / Councils
 - Parent Liaisons
- Next Steps



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Smartphone? iPad?

Go to
www.govote.at
 and use the code
66 09 4.



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Defining Family Engagement...

Family Engagement refers to the systemic inclusion of families in activities and programs that promote children's development, learning, and wellness, including in the planning, development, and evaluation of such activities, programs, and systems.

US Department of Health and Human Services and the U.S. Department of Education,
Policy Statement on Family Engagement (Ages 0 – 8)



Defining Family Engagement...

Focus on activities that are linked to children's learning at home, at school and in the community, and to reflect the many different ways in which families, community organizations, and schools engage with and support one another, from encouraging reading at home, to school governance and improvement.

Family, School and Community National working Group



Parent Involvement/Engagement Benefits

When parents are actively engaged in their children's learning, students usually benefit in the following ways:



New Wave of Evidence: The Impact of School, Family and Community Connection on Student Achievement, Anne Henderson and Karen Mapp

- Earn higher grades and better test scores;
- Enrolled in higher-level programs;
- Promoted more and pass more of their classes;
- Earn more class or course credits;
- Attend school more regularly, and drop-out less;
- Have better social skills and demonstrate better behavior; and
- Go on to postsecondary education or other productive life choices.





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The old way of thinking was that parent involvement was all about parents. The new way is that it's about student success.

Joyce Epstein



Moments in America for Children

- Every 2 seconds a public school student is suspended.
- Every 9 seconds a high school student drops out.
- Every 30 seconds a public school student is corporally punished.
- Every 21 seconds a child is arrested.
- Every 62 seconds a child is born into extreme poverty.
- Every 47 seconds a child is confirmed as abused or neglected.
- Every 3.5 minutes a child is arrested for a drug offense.
- Every 8 minutes a child is arrested for a violent crime.
- Every 22 minutes a baby dies before his first birthday.
- Every 3 hours a child or teen is killed by a firearm.
- Every 5 hours a child or teen commits suicide.
- Every 6 hours a child is killed by abuse or neglect.

Children's Defense Fund

Recognize the Roadblocks to Parent Engagement



- Time
- Not feeling welcomed
- Not knowing how to contribute
- Educational background
- Not understanding the system
- Childcare
- Transportation
- Language
- Special needs
- Economic and other needs



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Schools that succeed in engaging families from diverse background share three key practices

- They focus on building trusting, collaborative relationships.
- Schools recognize, respect and address family's needs, as well as cultural and class differences.
- They embrace a philosophy of partnership where power and responsibility are shared.



Ann Henderson and Karen Mapp (2002)

**In Other Words....
The "Joining" Process**

Describes how schools can successfully develop a culture that honors and validates parents as true partners in their child's educational development that results in improved student learning.



Karen Mapp (2003)

Group Activity



What will be different when more parents are engaged with their child's school?



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Communication is Key !



Communication with families must be planned and.....

- 1. Done Early
- 2. Positive
- 3. Two-way

What Parents Say...

- Tell us what our kids do.
- Show us how to tell if our kids are doing well.
- Explain how you teach skills, reading and math.
- Show us some strategies to help our kids.
- Tell us how our children will be assessed.
- Let us know how we can help you.

Anne Henderson, Annenberg Institute for School Reform

3 Questions Parents Will Never Ask

- Do you see me - do you know who I am?
- Do you care about my child?
- Can I trust you?



Adapted from www.parent-institute.com.



**The Question Educators
Should Always Ask....**

What are
Your Hopes and
Dreams for
Your Child?



Group Activity



Where do
YOU
stand?

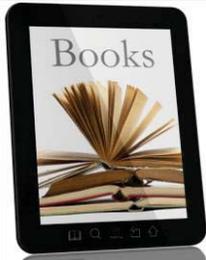
**Remember, Research
Shows...**

The most effective family
engagement / involvement
activities are what the parent
does at home.





Effective activities at home should be designed to:



- Engage the family
- Reinforce current classroom instruction
- Review or practice basic skills
- Challenge students who are ready to move forward

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Activities at Home can be FUN and we know they make a difference in a student's education.

Remember, families say they need **INSTRUCTIONS** on how to help their child at home.



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- Parents impact the individual child's learning
- True collaboration is a process rather than an event
- The outcome should be parents who feel they are a valued and important part of their child's education.

In Summary...



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Every family functions as a home learning environment, regardless of its structure, economic level, ethnic or cultural background.

Consequently, every family has the potential to support and improve the academic achievement of its children.

~Unknown

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BREAK TIME



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Overviews



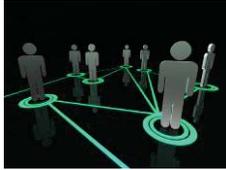
- NC DPI, EC Division's "vision" for Family Engagement
- Survey Results
- Benefits of Parent Liaisons & PAB's for effective Parent Engagement

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EC Division's Vision for Core Element 6: Communication and Collaboration



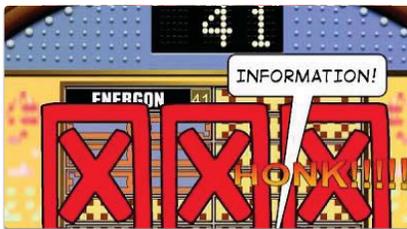
- “the LEA facilitates “meaningful parent involvement as a means of improving services and results for children with disabilities”
- Statewide Parent Liaison

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Technical Assistance Opportunities

- Replicate the Parent Liaison role at the local level
- Assist in the development of parent advisory councils
- Establish a statewide network of parent liaisons
- Customized training opportunities

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The Survey says...

Family Engagement Needs Assessment

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What can a PARENT LIAISON do for your LEA and your families?



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An active and effective special education parent advisory board can be a true asset to a school district by

providing opportunities for parent involvement, engagement and essential in, into special education issues



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The importance of parent participation on an Advisory Committee is research based

- **Decision Making**
 - one of the six types of parent involvement included on the framework by Joyce Epstein and colleagues (Epstein et al, 2002)
 - adopted by the NC Board of Education.

• **Decision Making is defined as:**

- Including families as participants in school decisions, governance, and advocacy activities through school councils and improvement teams, committees, and parent organizations.

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Family – Professional Partnership Models



Ann P. Turnbull, Vicki Turbiville, and H.R. Turnbull

Family – Professional Partnership Models



Ann P. Turnbull, Vicki Turbiville, and H.R. Turnbull

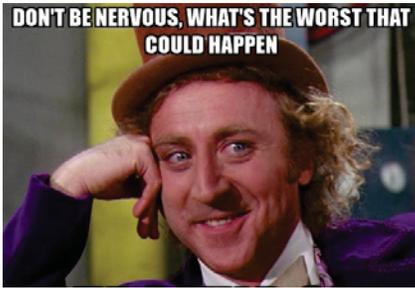
Collaboration is Hard Work!

- Is voluntary
- Not a quick fix
- Occurs among people — not among organizations
- Embraces the unique perspectives of all team members
 - Creative problem-solving skills must be developed and nurtured in those expected to collaborate
- Is based on at least one commonly agreed upon goal
- Requires a sense of equality, trust and a sense of shared responsibility among participants





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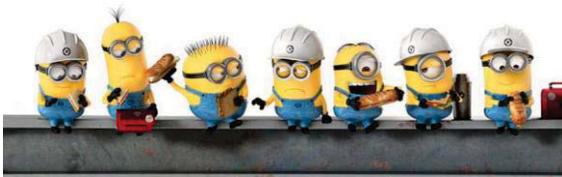
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**Effective Parent Advisory Boards,
Councils or Committees**



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Time for lunch!



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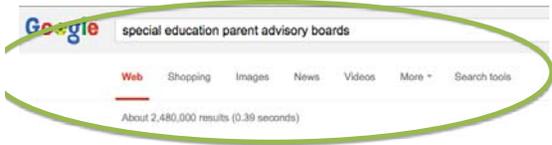


Critical Decisions and Steps

- Defining the role of YOUR Parent Advisory Board or Committee
- Defining Methods of Communication and Board Operations
- Define Knowledge needed to function as a group



Sounds pretty easy, right? Let's find some information...



Before you jump in, consider...

- What will be the purpose of the PAB in YOUR school district?
- Who decides?
 - LEA?
 - Members?
 - Somewhere in-between?





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Primary Types of Parent Advisory Groups

- Advisory only
- Planning
- Lobbying
- Public Awareness and Education
- Case Advocacy



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This work is definitely a Team Sport!

- ALL teams and members need to:
 - understand the purpose of the game,
 - know the rules,
 - have a playbook, and
 - be trained to "play" or participate
- Advisory Boards or Committees need the same things!!



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What's the Data Show?



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Establish your baseline and create a plan...

- Start small and build
- Celebrate success but but honest
 - Keep the data
 - What worked?
 - What didn't?
 - What should you never, ever, ever consider doing again? LOL
- Avoid inertia and burn out!
 - "oh no...not another initiative!"



Look for and share models of success

Set the tone:

- Expect and plan for successful family – professional partnerships

Share and delight in the stories:

When we see an individual experience success in the community, we find traces of these ways of thinking and being and doing in their stories.



trust

Trust!
 trust trust trust trust trust

Just can not say it enough!



PARENT...WHAT???

Parent Liaison

Why do I need one?
How can they help me build relationships with parents?

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LIAISON (*noun*)

a) a person who helps organizations or groups to **work together** and **provide information to each other**

b) one that **establishes and maintains communication** for **mutual understanding and cooperation**

Source: Merriam-Webster's Learner's Dictionary

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IF YOU **BUILD** IT, THEY WILL COME.



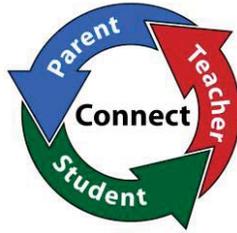
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What is the role of the parent liaison?

- Helping parents better understand special education processes and regulations
- Helping to address concerns about EC services at the lowest level possible



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What is the role of the parent liaison? (cont'd)

- Advising parents and educators about communication strategies that help support a team approach to a student's educational program
- Making recommendations to LEA leadership based upon common issues and patterns of complaints
- Serving as a resource for disability related information and referral

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Parent Liaison

- **Does NOT:**
 - Act as an attorney or provide legal advice
 - Determine special education or policy
 - Conduct investigations
 - Advocate on behalf of any party or organization
 - Have authority to order a school or LEA to “fix a problem”

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Keys to Successful Partnerships: Six Types of Involvement



- Epstein, et. al. 2002. *School, Family, and Community Partnerships: Your Handbook for Action, Second Edition*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press, Inc.
- <https://www.sps186.org/downloads/table/13040/6TypesJEpstein.pdf>





PARENTING

- **Help all families establish home environments to support children as students.**
 - Parent Education (Special Education Process)
 - Transitions
 - Student Services, Title I, LEP
 - Community Resources/Family Support Group
 - Understanding of Student Diversity



Annual Conference for Parents of Exceptional Children







COMMUNICATING

- **Conduct effective communications from school-to-home and from home-to-school about SCHOOL PROGRAMS and STUDENT PROGRESS.**
 - IEP Meetings & Teacher Conferences
 - Interpreters/Translated Materials
 - Website, social media, and automated phone calls
 - Readability of forms, memos, notices, etc.
 - Clear Two-way Channels for Communications
 - Increase understanding of programs and policies



Parent & Community Liaison



- Newsletters
- Email distribution lists
- Social Media
- Parent Resource page of Website
- Calendar of Events





VOLUNTEERING

- **Recruit and organize parent help and support.**
 - ALL families should feel welcome and valued
 - Sponsor school and community events
 - Special Education PTA
 - Build relationships between families and staff





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ABSS SEPTA
Alamance-Burlington School System
Special Education PTA

SEPTA Mission:

- Educate parents and staff through speakers, workshops, and resources regarding special education and related services;
- To provide information on the multitude of **community resources** available for our students locally, statewide, and nationally;
- To create **social and recreational opportunities** available for all children with special needs and their families and caregivers.

WE BELIEVE EVERY CHILD CAN LEARN.



**Annual
SEPTA
KICK-OFF**

@ Elon University



FOOD, FUN, AND FRIENDS!

Learn about **COMMUNITY RESOURCES** that can help your students and their families!





LEARNING AT HOME

- Provide information and ideas to families about how to help students at home on homework and other curriculum-related activities and decisions.
 - Parent Education/Workshops
 - Family Math and Reading Activities at the school
 - Information for families on skills required for students in all subjects at each grade level
 - Involve parents in all important curriculum-related decisions







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DECISION MAKING

- **Include families as participants in school decisions, and develop parent leaders and representatives.**
 - Stakeholder Groups
 - Recommendations from Parent Advisory Councils
 - Understanding student and parent rights are protected
 - Awareness of parent perspectives in policy development and decisions

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EC Parent Advisory Council

Building Relationships

A few examples:

- District's Strategic Plan
- Discussions about "hot topics" within the district or policy decisions with the EC Director
- Recommendations of topics of parent education workshops and conference

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COLLABORATING WITH THE COMMUNITY

- **Coordinate resources and services from the community for families, students, and the school.**
 - Awareness of resources to enrich curriculum and instruction
 - Knowledgeable, helpful referrals of children and families to needed services

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Community Partners

WHO are they? Anyone from a community agency that works with students

- Advocates (Advocacy Organizations)
- Service Organizations
- VR Counselors
- Care Coordinators
- Clinical Therapists or Medical Professionals
- Social Workers
- Employers



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What do all of these activities require?



Time

...and *maybe* some MONEY!

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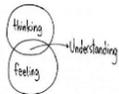


It also takes the right person!



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**BOTTOM LINE: Working together in the
BEST INTEREST OF THE CHILD
results in:**



Mutual understanding



Families and professionals gain knowledge about the child



Better OUTCOMES for the child!

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How strong is your BRIDGE?



*Are you building partnerships with parents that will help produce **POSITIVE OUTCOMES** for students with disabilities?*

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Assessment of Family Engagement

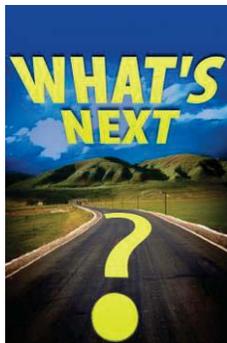
- LEA Self-Assessment Core Element 6
 - Guiding Questions
 - Data Sources
- Indicator 8 Parent Survey Data
- School Improvement Plans



WHAT TOOLS DO YOU NEED?



- Family Engagement Resources ?
- Training?
- Communication Network?





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Cohort I (Combination of Webinars and Face-to-Face Sessions)



- Session I: Planning and Budgeting
- Session II: Public Relations and Communication Plan
- Session III: Customized Training and “Toolkit”
- Session IV: Ongoing Support from the State



Training for Parent Advisory Councils



- Training designed to assist local school districts with the development and ongoing support of Parent Advisory Boards
- Leadership workshops for families, including Parents As Collaborative Leaders training



Interest Card



- Please indicate if you have interest in joining the Cohort.
- LEAs chosen for Cohort I will be notified by Dec. 1st.



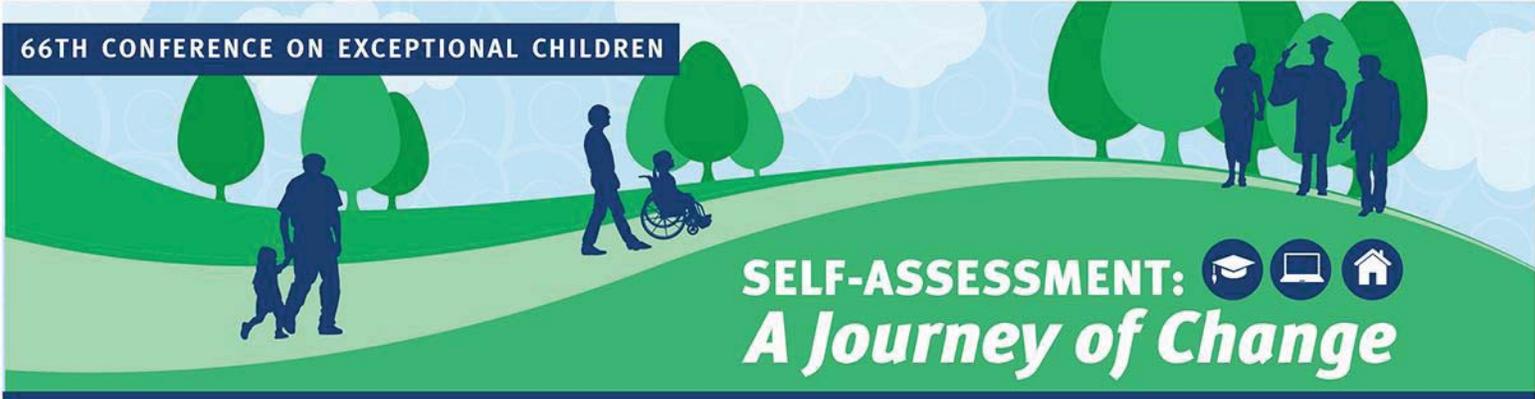
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Questions?



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SELF-ASSESSMENT: A Journey of Change



PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF NORTH CAROLINA

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION | June St. Clair Atkinson, Ed.D., *State Superintendent*

WWW.NCPUBLICSCHOOLS.ORG

August 24, 2016

To: Directors/Coordinators/Lead Administrators, Exceptional Children Programs
Members, Council on Educational Services for Exceptional Children

From: William J. Hussey, Director ~~WJH~~
Exceptional Children Division

Reference: Action Requested: Family Engagement – Parent Involvement

The Exceptional Children Division, in an effort to support the Local Education Agency Self-Assessment (LEA-SA) process, would like to establish a variety of technical assistance opportunities focusing on Core Element Six - Communication and Collaboration. The EC Division would like to support a specific Core Element Six strategy; the “LEA facilitates meaningful parent involvement as a means of improving services and results for children with disabilities.”

At the state level, evidence of the commitment to this core element has been demonstrated by establishing a Parent Liaison position within the EC Division. Ms. Heather Ouzts currently serves in this role. Key accomplishments for 2015-2016 include the revision of the Parent Rights and Responsibilities in Special Education – Notice of Procedural Safeguards; Special Education Surrogate Parent resource and training materials; initiation of the EC Language Access Plan; and collaboration with a variety of stakeholder groups focused on meaningful outcomes for children with disabilities.

In order to support this core element at the local level, the next steps include:

- Replicating the Parent Liaison role at the local level;
- Assisting in the development of parent advisory councils;
- Establishing a statewide network of parent liaisons; and
- Providing technical assistance through customized training opportunities.

To facilitate the implementation of these next steps, participation in a short, five-minute survey is requested.

The purpose of the survey is to identify LEAs who wish to initiate the development and implementation of a parent liaison role and/or parent advisory council. Information from this survey paired with a review of the needs documented within the Improvement Plan of the LEA Self-Assessment will determine the LEAs invited to participate in this cohort. The survey can be accessed by following the link below. The link will be active until September 9, 2016.

<https://goo.gl/forms/8S2DIC9ciaG7I4C62>

Additionally, one of the first customized training opportunities focused on family engagement will be offered as an Institute during the annual Conference for Exceptional Children. The Institute will be held on November 8, 2016. Participants may register through the conference links on the EC Division website.

We look forward to these collaborative opportunities. For additional information, you may contact Heather Ouzts at Heather.Ouzts@dpi.nc.gov.

WJH/CAH/ho

EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN DIVISION

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AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY/AFFIRMATIVE ACTION EMPLOYER

<http://ec.ncpublicschools.gov/policies/nc-policies-governing-services-for-children-with-disabilities/ncdpi-communication/2016-2017/ec-division-memos/family-engagement-parent-involvement/view>

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SAMPLE JOB DESCRIPTION: EC Parent Liaison

GENERAL STATEMENT OF JOB

Under the supervision of the Department of Exceptional Children, promotes advocacy and education for families of students with disabilities. Employee may perform a wide range of tasks in order to support parents to appropriate resources and services within [the school district] and the community; serving as a liaison to the EC parent advisory council; disseminating information to volunteers; representing the EC Department at district-wide and individual school events; developing training events and materials for families of exceptional children; and assisting families with issues related to the care and/or education of their children with disabilities by referring them to appropriate parties within the district. Employee provides support to school staff on issues regarding parental rights; coordinates documentation and scheduling of surrogate parent volunteers; trains all surrogate parent volunteers. Employee serves as a representative and liaison to community agencies and organizations. Reports to the Executive Director of the Department of Exceptional Children.

SPECIFIC DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

ESSENTIAL JOB FUNCTIONS

Act as a point of contact for families of students with disabilities; refer parents to the appropriate parties within the district. Direct families to the appropriate community resources and organizations.

Serve as a liaison to the EC parent advisory council as an ex-officio member. Attend quarterly council meetings and communicate information between the council and the Department of Exceptional Children.

Assist parents in accessing information about educational programs serving exceptional children.

Advocate for the inclusion of all EC students in district activities.

Promote awareness of child advocacy issues, such as accessibility, understanding parent rights, the evaluation process, the IEP, etc.

Coordinate parent education events for the department, in the individual schools, and in community settings.

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Develop familiarity with agencies and organizations within [County] and the state of North Carolina that offer resources and/or services to children with disabilities and their families.

Serve as a representative and liaison of the Department of Exceptional Children during community and school-related events and functions.

Serve as the Surrogate Parents Coordinator; support staff regarding issues of parental rights; coordinate documentation and schedule meetings involving surrogate parent volunteers; train all surrogate parent volunteers.

Performs various clerical duties as needed; maintains records of surrogate parent assignments; maintains listserv for EC parent communications; provides to Executive Director a log of contacts and outreach activities.

ADDITIONAL JOB FUNCTIONS

Create and distribute the monthly events newsletter and quarterly parent advisory council newsletter.

Participate in staff development workshops.

Perform other related work as required.

MINIMUM TRAINING AND EXPERIENCE

Bachelor's degree in a related field with at least 1 year experience in child development or family relations work is preferred; any equivalent combination of training and experience which provides the required knowledge, skills and abilities.

Parents of a child with a disability who receives/has received services through [the school district] are encouraged to apply.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS OR STANDARDS REQUIRED TO PERFORM ESSENTIAL JOB FUNCTIONS

Physical Requirements: Must be able to use a variety of equipment automated office machines such as computers, copiers, facsimile machines, etc. Must be able to exert a negligible amount of force frequently or constantly to lift, carry, push, pull or otherwise move objects. Due to amount of time spent standing and/or walking, physical requirements are consistent with those for Light Work.

Data Conception: Requires the ability to compare and/or judge the readily observable, functional, structural, or composite characteristics (whether similar to or divergent from obvious standards) of data, people or things.

Interpersonal Communication: Requires the ability to speak and/or signal people to convey or exchange information. Includes receiving instructions, assignments and/or directions from superiors. Requires the ability to maintain professionalism and confidentiality regarding matters related to students and families served.

Language Ability: Requires the ability to read a variety of correspondence, reports, handbooks, forms, lists, etc. Requires the ability to prepare correspondence, simple reports, forms, instructional materials, etc., using prescribed format and conforming to all rules of punctuation, grammar, diction, and style. Requires the ability to speak to people with poise, voice control, and confidence.

Intelligence: Requires the ability to apply rational systems to solve practical problems and deal with a variety of concrete variables in situations where only limited standardization exists; to interpret a variety of instructions furnished in written, oral, diagrammatic, or schedule form.

Verbal Aptitude: Requires the ability to record and deliver information, to explain procedures and to follow oral and written instructions. Must be able to communicate effectively and efficiently in Standard English.

Numerical Aptitude: Requires the ability to utilize mathematical formulas; to add and subtract; and to utilize decimals and percentages.

Form/Spatial Aptitude: Requires the ability to inspect items for proper length, width and shape.

Motor Coordination: Requires the ability to coordinate hands and eyes rapidly and accurately in using office equipment.

Manual Dexterity: Requires the ability to handle a variety of office equipment. Must have minimal levels of eye/hand/foot coordination.

Color Discrimination: Requires the ability to differentiate between colors and shades of color.

Interpersonal Temperament: Requires the ability to deal with people beyond giving and receiving instructions. Must be adaptable to performing under stress and when confronted with persons acting under stress.

Physical Communication: Requires the ability to talk and hear: (Talking: expressing or exchanging ideas by means of spoken words. Hearing: perceiving nature of sounds by ear). Must be able to communicate via telephone.

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ABILITIES

Considerable knowledge of philosophies, goals, objectives, and policies of the IDEA, NCGS Article 9, Department of Exceptional Children and the EC Parent Advisory Council.

Considerable knowledge of a variety of community and human services agencies and resources.

Considerable knowledge of eligibility requirements and screening procedures of area resources.

Considerable knowledge of parent education and outreach practices and programs.

Considerable knowledge of the values of System of Care.

Considerable knowledge of arithmetic, spelling, grammar, punctuation and vocabulary.

General knowledge of the principles of organization and administration.

Working knowledge of the principles and practices of education administration.

General knowledge of student handbook rules.

Skill in the operation of common office machines, including popular computer-driven word processing, spreadsheet and file maintenance programs.

Ability to plan and conduct training/information sessions.

Ability to research program documents and narrative materials and to compile reports from information gathered.

Ability to maintain complex schedules, records, and files.

Ability to make administrative decisions in accordance with laws, ordinances, regulations and school system policies and procedures.

Ability to develop and modify work procedures, methods and processes to improve efficiency.

Ability to communicate effectively orally and in writing.

Ability to maintain effective working relationships with school administrators, parents, and the general public.

Ability to maintain confidentiality toward issues encountered in service to children and families.

DISCLAIMER

The preceding job description has been designed to indicate the general nature and level of work performed by employees within this classification. It is not designed to contain or be interpreted as a comprehensive inventory of all duties, responsibilities, and qualifications required of employees to this job.