

No Child Left Behind:

New Expectations, New Options, New Opportunities for Parents to Be Involved

Parents have been hearing about *No Child Left Behind* for over a year-but not until recently have provisions of the new education law begun to hit home for parents.

No Child Left Behind (NCLB) is the name for the most recent re-authorization by Congress of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), which has governed federal education funding since 1965. *NCLB* lays out ambitious goals for student achievement and teacher quality and includes several opportunities for parents to be involved in efforts to improve their child's education. The law also sets out some unyielding requirements for student achievement gains and teacher qualifications that, if not met, carry strong consequences for schools and school districts.

Testing

One of the most talked about provisions of the law is the annual testing requirement. All students in grades 3 through 8 must take a statewide test every year and once in grades 10-12 by the 2005-06 school year. This means that states must develop new tests or modify existing tests to ensure that they match up with the state's standards in mathematics, language arts and reading, and can test at the appropriate grade levels. (For more on testing and accountability, see *Parent Press*, spring 2001.)

This testing will be a source of consistent, year-to-year data that will be used to measure student progress and hold school dis-

tricts and schools accountable for improvements.

Many critics of the law say the focus on test scores is a limited way of measuring progress and judging schools. Myrna Castrejón, former vice president for school and family networks at the Los Angeles County Alliance for Student Achievement and a PPS national board member, counters this criticism. "Test score data is a limited way to look at student achievement, and high-stakes testing isn't the best solution, but it's what we have. Anything that shines the light on the true nature of achievement is helpful. It can only produce a louder rallying cry for what needs to be changed."

Texas has had a system of testing and accountability similar to *NCLB* in effect since the early 1990's. Across the state, communities agree that test scores certainly can produce louder rallying cries, but parents in Texas have also found that assessment results need to be used wisely. Waco, TX, school board trustee and PPS member Charles Olson says, "Testing is only one component of comprehensive improvement. Along with that, you've got to constantly monitor how students and teachers are performing."

Goals for Progress

Each state must set what the law calls adequate yearly progress, or AYP, which is the minimum level of improvement that must be achieved each year. The goal is to get all students to achieve at a "proficient" level by the

2013-14 school year.

States, school districts and individual schools will all be held responsible for meeting AYP based on test scores and a second academic measurement, which, for high schools is the graduation rate.

Neal Robinson, policy consultant for the Mississippi Department of Education, president of Jackson (MS) PPS and National PPS treasurer, sees *No Child Left Behind* and Mississippi's accountability system in a similar light: Both are about unyielding expectations for students. "It's not acceptable for a student to sit in class for a year, or even three months, and not learn what he or she is supposed to learn...you have to put a process in place to make sure the student will learn at grade level," says Robinson.

Dick Boyd, director of education programs at The Barksdale Reading Institute in Jackson, MS, and a member of the PPS national board, warns that with each state determining its own level of "proficient," there won't be what he calls a "level playing field" across the country. "Parents need to observe how these definitions are being made, or changed, at the state level," he says.

Additional Academic Support

Schools receiving Title I funds that do not show yearly progress for all subgroups of students for *two* consecutive years will be identified as "needing improvement." Parents must be informed

within 30 days of the point when their child's school is identified with this label. Students in these schools are eligible to transfer to another public school, and in most cases the district pays transportation costs. In addition, parents must be consulted in the process to develop or revise the school improvement plan.

If a school needing improvement does not show progress for *three* years, then families at that school can request tutoring, enrichment or other academic support, which the law calls "supplemental educational services." Groups eligible to provide this support include non-profit organizations, for-profit companies, online providers and even churches or other faith-based groups. States must approve providers-in consultation with parents, teachers and other members of the public. School districts are then required to notify parents if their children are eligible and what providers have been approved.

These provisions for school choice and supplemental services were retroactive. Students were eligible starting in September 2002 if the state identified their school as "needing improvement" for a second year.

The number of schools identified as needing improvement in each state varies widely because this process requires more data organized differently than ever before. Some states have the ability to work with this data easily, and others don't. Some states have used the data to des-

ignate a large number of schools (360 in Georgia according to *Education Week*) and some just a few (two in North Carolina). All these factors affect the number of students who are eligible for school transfers or outside support.

In some circles, these provisions are being hailed as important for low-income families. In other places, there aren't enough real options of schools to move to or tutoring services to access. Says Castrejón of the situation in blighted urban areas, "Where else will the kids go? The choices aren't real." The picture is often the same in rural areas, where resources outside the school system are rarely sufficient to create these options.

Breaking Down Data

Unlike federal education laws had done in the past, *NCLB* requires that test scores be disaggregated, or broken down by the following subgroups of students:

- race and ethnicity,
- gender,
- limited English proficiency,
- migrant status,
- disability and
- income.

The data for each subgroup of students is used to monitor the achievement of all children in schools receiving federal money under Title I of *NCLB*. "States and districts can no longer hide this data," says Kati Haycock, director of the Education Trust. The requirement to report disaggregated data is a win for poor and minority children especially because they often get lost when

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PPS Wants Your District Parent Involvement Policies

If your district has a parent involvement policy, please send it to the PPS Clearinghouse at ppschapter@parents4publicschools.com OR

1520 N. State Street, Jackson, MS 39202.

And tell us how well it works to get parents involved.

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Letter from the Executive Director

Spring 2003

By Ken Rolling

The new, sweeping federal education law, *No Child Left Behind*, is all about accountability for student academic achievement and teacher quality. It relies heavily on standards-based education and the use of data to make decisions about how groups of students are making progress and the consequences schools face if their students do not show sufficient progress.

The work of Parents for Public Schools is about strengthening parent voices and putting parents at the decision-making table. Many of the topics and ideas in *NCLB* concerning where parents can take action already have been explored in past issues of *Parent Press*. (You may request any of these issues from our national office.)

The federal law stipulates a number of parent and community engagement opportunities. There are provisions for helping teachers understand better how to work with parents; for involving parents in the process to set key benchmarks and definitions and to develop school improvement plans; even for helping parents learn to read and learn English.

PPS believes that *NCLB* sets out the important attitude that all children can learn and that all teachers need to be highly qualified. We also believe that the process of setting goals and plans of action for improvement in schools must involve parents.

Students need a set of conditions to achieve at high levels and teachers need a set of supports to be highly qualified. *NCLB* makes some bold requirements, but there are some important ingredients for school reform that receive little emphasis in the law. While the federal government provides only 7 percent of school funding, massive expenditures must be made to implement *NCLB*. States and local districts are left to make up the difference in a time of state budget deficits and slow local economies.

PPS calls on parents to monitor implementation of the law in their districts. When we don't see evidence of the law, good or bad, we need to ask questions about what school leaders are facing and the changes they're making. Talk publicly about the successes due to *NCLB* and bring to light the pitfalls of the law that interfere or inhibit improved teaching and learning.

We parents need to understand why schools are labeled as failing and raise the discussion of what will be done to support principals, teachers and students in those schools.

Without parents who vigilantly work to understand and monitor the implementation of *No Child Left Behind*, we won't accomplish one of PPS's fundamental purposes: making sure all schools effectively serve all children.

Ken Rolling recently joined the PPS staff as our new Executive Director. Prior to that he was the Executive Director of the *Chicago Annenberg Challenge*, a public school reform project. Ken also organized a permanent public foundation supporting school improvement in Chicago, which is affiliated with the Public Education Network. In addition to his work with PPS, Ken serves as a trustee for the Needmor Fund.

Ken and his wife, Rochelle Davis, live in Evanston, Illinois, where they have two teenagers in public school.

A warm PPS welcome to our new executive director.

Opportunities and Challenges of *NCLB*: A Conversation with PPS Friends

We talked with **Dick Boyd**, director of education programs at The Barksdale Reading Institute, **Myrna Castrejón**, former vice president for school and family networks at the Los Angeles County Alliance for Student Achievement, **Susan DeVenny**, chapter president of the PPS of Lancaster County (SC), **Neal Robinson**, policy consultant for the Mississippi Department of Education—all PPS National board members—and **Lynn Ferguson**, accountability specialist for the Lancaster County (SC) public schools.

How will people react to new information about student achievement that must be reported each year by school and by subgroup of students?

Boyd: When the scores start coming out, there will be a myriad of schools that are going to get labeled "in need of improvement," and a lot of it will be because of the achievement levels of the subgroups of students. Up until now, many school districts have been doing okay as a whole, but when it's clear how many kids are performing below grade level at each school, people will pay attention to that. It'll put a burr under the school's saddle.

Ferguson: With targeted reporting of the data, schools will have to own the data. It can't be a blame problem when a report comes back to the teacher about his or her students' achievement.

Robinson: There hasn't been a need to discuss the details about achievement of all groups of students in the past because we haven't had a way to shine the light on who is really not performing. People seem to be satisfied until the day of reckoning when the newspaper publishes a list of bad schools, then people are ready to take drastic action.

Castrejón: The reporting requirements will help people be more aware of the conditions kids face in schools. We can shine the light on what students need to succeed and get the word out about the real picture—like the fact that 260,000 students don't have a seat in LA Unified School District. This awareness leads to a greater ability to create pressure on the district and the state to do things like step up school construction and explore options for smaller schools.

As you see it, what are the biggest challenges or consequences of the law?

Ferguson: The consequences for paraprofessionals will be great. We have a wonderful set of paraprofessionals, some who have worked in the district for 20 years and many who do not have a degree past a high-school diploma. The law requires these long-time paras, and new paras, to get a two-year degree or pass a standardized test. So we end up asking people earning less than \$20,000 a year to pay to get a degree. In response, our school district is working with a local community college to develop coursework that fits the qualifications we need in paraprofessionals and offer those courses so they are affordable.

Boyd: The devil is in the details. When large numbers of schools are labeled "in need of improvement" in two to three years, even Blue Ribbon schools, I expect that some current supporters of the law will cry foul—and possibly put immense pressure on the administration to do something about the fact that so many schools have a negative label.

Robinson: The biggest challenge I see is figuring out what we do with low-performing schools. How do we get to solving the problems of low-performing schools when there are

a myriad of things that happened over time to cause these problems?

How can states help—or how might states get in the way of what local schools, districts and parents should be doing to implement *No Child Left Behind*?

Castrejón: Many of the issues that come up as a result of *NCLB* are state-driven. The things we need to change are decided by the California department of education, the state legislature and the state board of education. States are developing the definitions of "highly-qualified teachers" and "proficiency." In Los Angeles, minority students are five times more likely to be taught by teachers without credentials. But the state doesn't have a mechanism to ensure these kids have credentialed teachers. Without a state mechanism, how can we ensure local districts will make the mark?

Boyd: Several states have not defined what it means to be a "highly qualified teacher." If the state hasn't defined it, then local districts are in a bind in meeting the requirements for notifying parents if their student is not being taught by a qualified teacher. In areas like the Mississippi Delta, where it is difficult to attract qualified teachers, parents are in a bind. Even if the districts notify about the qualifications of their student's teacher, parents and school districts would have so few options for getting all the highly qualified teachers they need.

What can PPS chapters do?

Boyd: PPS chapters can inform parents what their rights are under the law: what kind of information school districts are required to report and what kind of extra services students are entitled to. We also want parents to understand that, for a lot of places, the requirements of law will not be easy to implement.

Castrejón: They can disseminate the new data and information that will be available as a result of the reporting requirements. But, since information is only as good as the action that follows it, PPS chapters and other parent groups need to help their communities make sense of *NCLB* and respond to it in constructive ways. Parents need to work with local boards of education to help them see what's happening on the ground, in schools. Parents need to remind policymakers that "these are our schools" and that parents now have a place at the table.



Our Fearless Leaders: PPS's new executive director, Ken Rolling, is welcomed by National Board president, Margaret Hulbert, and Director of Chapter Services, Amina Shahid-El.



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MISSION STATEMENT: *Parents for Public Schools* is a national organization of community-based chapters working to strengthen public schools through broad-based enrollment. Invigorated by a diverse membership, our proactive involvement helps public schools attract **all** families in a community by making sure **all** schools effectively serve **all** children. We believe that quality public education is vital to our democracy and to America's future.

(No Child Left Behind: New Expectations... from page 1)

data is reported in averages. The Education Trust, in its materials on the law, says the new requirement to report data "is one of the most important levers which advocates can use to understand what is happening in their schools." (For more on using data, see "Driving Decision with Data," *Parent Press*, fall 2001.)

Reporting Results to Parents and the Public

NCLB outlines how test data and other indicators of progress must be reported to parents and community. State education agencies must issue a report card every year with state test results and information about the numbers of highly qualified teachers. School districts must report on overall district data as well as issue a report card for every school. These report cards must include comparisons of performance levels (to state and district levels) broken down by subgroups of students. The number and percentage of schools needing improvement must also be reported.

The law says that the information on these report cards must be presented in a format and language parents can understand and that school districts must start distributing school report cards in the 2002-03 school year. Districts are responsible for getting the report cards to all parents and making them available to the community.

Reporting is an important step, but many educators and parents still need training and support in *interpreting* and *using* the data to diagnose areas for improvement in schools, classrooms and even individual students.

Teachers

NCLB also contains requirements for teachers in Title I schools. Beginning with the 2002-03 school year, all new teachers and paraprofessionals in Title I programs must be "highly qualified," as defined by their state. The definitions outline standards for a teacher's level of education, the certifications

needed and the knowledge to be demonstrated. By the 2005-06 school year, *all* teachers and paraprofessionals must be able to demonstrate the required qualifications. How these positions will be filled remains to be seen. (For more on teacher quality, see "Teachers Matter," *Parent Press*, summer 2000.)

Each state must develop—with input from parents and communities—an action plan for how to meet these requirements. As part of their plans for meeting these requirements, school districts must provide training to teachers on ways to involve parents more effectively in their children's education.

NCLB says parents have the right to request information about the qualifications of their children's teachers. Starting in the 2002-03 school year, schools are required to notify parents if a teacher who is not highly qualified has been teaching their child for more than 20 consecutive days. Susan DeVenny, president of PPS of Lancaster County (SC) and a parent member of the PPS board of directors, predicts these notifications will be the first visible sign of the law for parents. But often, there will be more to the story. In rural Lancaster County, for instance, teachers are teaching more than one subject because there is no one else available—and therefore they probably aren't officially "qualified" in every subject they teach.

DeVenny suggests that groups like PPS should help parents understand who is teaching and what really is happening in schools. When the school community better understands the circumstances, it is more likely that parents and school staff can engage in a productive conversation about what the problems are and how they can work together to find solutions.

Says DeVenny, "It takes groups like PPS that care about all children to respond to the law and the changes we need to make it work in our communities."

All smiles: PPS of Lancaster County, SC, was honored with The Champion of Public Education Award from the South Carolina School Board Association. Chapter leaders celebrate with their superintendent and school board president.



OH NO! My School Needs Improvement. Now What?

YIKES! You just received notice that your child's school "needs improvement" because it hasn't met the state's expectations for student progress two years in a row. Now what?

Ironically, this label opens the door for parents and students to help the school develop plans for improvement and get resources for extra help. So it's time to get to work in partnership with the school to figure out what needs to be improved and how the changes should be made.

NCLB outlines several requirements for Title I schools that are identified as "needing improvement." These requirements—that take effect in the 2002-03 school year—are listed below, along with ideas for what parents can do at each point along the way.

If your school does not receive federal Title I money, check with your state department of education about the steps required. NCLB leaves this decision up to the states for non-Title I schools.

If a school that receives Title I money is identified as "needing improvement" two years in a row, the following steps are required.

■ Schools must notify parents in an "understandable language and format" what the "Needs Improvement" label means and how their school compares to other local schools.

WHAT PARENTS CAN DO:

- Ask parents at your school if they received the notice. Help them understand what it means, paying particular attention to parents who are not English-proficient.
- Obtain a copy of your state or local standards from your school or the district office. Examine where students at your school are not meeting the standards.
- Get a copy of the school and district report cards to see how your school compares with others in the district.
- Help organize a meeting between the principal, lead teachers, district personnel and parents to discuss this situation face to face.

■ The school must involve parents and community members in developing the required two-year School Improvement Plan (SIP).

WHAT PARENTS CAN DO:

- Volunteer to be a part of the group that develops the plan.
- Encourage businesses to offer paid time off to parent-employees to attend SIP planning sessions.
- Review school data and ask questions about the academic issues that caused the school to be identified as needing improvement. Make sure the SIP team bases the plan on these academic issues and identifies ways to address them. Make sure the plan includes measurable objectives for each subgroup of students. (See list of subgroups page 1.)
- Ask how Title I money is spent at the school. Consider ways to reallocate these funds to the areas targeted for improvement.
- Make sure the plan incorporates professional development that helps teachers and principals implement the plan and involves parents more effectively. (At least 10% of the school's Title I money must be used for professional development.)
- Make sure the plan includes ways to involve parents in implementing the strategies and monitoring success.
- Hold the school accountable for writing the plan within three months of being identified as in need of improvement.
- Consult district officials or school board members for the help they are required to provide for parents in identifying school needs, options for professional development and reallocation of school resources.
- Make sure the plan is written in a user-friendly format and in language parents can understand. Ask a group of parents to review it and offer feedback.

■ The school must inform all parents that they have the option of transferring to another public school or public charter school in the district and that the district will pay for transportation.

WHAT CAN PARENTS DO:

- Make sure all parents are aware of this option as soon as possible. The law requires parents to be notified by the first day of the next school year. Urge the district to give notice sooner.
- If all schools in your district are identified as in need of improvement, then make sure parents know they can request transfers to schools in neighboring districts.
- Gather and share school report cards for other schools and the district so parents are able to make informed requests for transfers.
- Organize training on what parents should see in effective schools.
- Arrange tours for parents to visit other schools.

■ The school must inform the parents of students who are in classes taught by a teacher who is not "highly qualified" for 20 or more consecutive days.

WHAT PARENTS CAN DO:

- Talk to other parents about the notice and make sure they understand what it means. If the notice is unclear, organize some parents to talk with the principal or district official about revising and redistributing it.
- Ask what definition of "highly qualified" is being used.
- Ask how many teachers at your school do not meet the definition of "highly qualified."
- Talk to teachers about their perspective. What training and support do they need to become "highly qualified?"
- Share with the school community a broader picture about who is teaching, their credentials, what issues they face, and what parents say about their interactions with teachers.
- Raise the issue at school board meetings and with district officials. Ask for data to compare the numbers of highly qualified teachers at higher-income and low-income schools.
- Ask for the district plan to help out-of-compliance teachers become highly qualified and the plan to recruit more highly qualified teachers. Offer to help develop this plan if none exists.

If a third year passes and the school fails to show adequate progress, the following additional step is required for Title I students.

■ The school must offer supplemental education services, sometimes as early as the 2002-03 school year. These services are to provide extra help in reading, language arts and math before or after school, on weekends and during the summer. All of these costs are paid for by the school district.

WHAT CAN PARENTS DO:

- Make sure the district notifies parents of this option when their children are eligible.
- Request a copy of the notice the district is using; make sure it communicates the option in ways that parents understand and provides all the information they need to get these services.
- Review the list of approved supplemental service providers (SSP) to ensure they are reputable and accessible.
- Work with the district to set up a fair process for selecting which students will receive services if the requests exceed the number of available spaces.
- Ask if the district will be paying for transportation costs.
- Help parents choose a provider that meets the needs of their child.
- Host a Supplemental Services Fair to provide a single location for parents to learn about the various providers.
- Help parents arrange a joint conference with the teacher and the provider to agree upon specific achievement goals, how progress will be measured, a timeline for meeting the goals and how parents and teachers will be informed of student progress.
- Ask who is accountable if the provider fails to help the student learn.

If the school does not show adequate progress in the fourth year, NCLB requires additional steps, such as replacing school staff or instituting a new curriculum. In the fifth year, the school must be restructured under new management, in some cases, by a private company or the state.

NCLB and Parent Partnerships

PPS knows it. Research confirms it. When schools and parents are partners, student achievement improves. *NCLB* provides three ways to build these partnerships and enforce requirements for more substantive parent involvement.

Report Cards

To be successful partners, parents need information. *NCLB* requires that annual district and school report cards provide data on student achievement by subgroups of students, dropout rates, teacher quality and much more. (See page 1.)

WHAT PARENTS CAN DO:

- Provide feedback to the district on how parent-friendly the report cards are and what additional information (such as class size, course availability, type and extent of parent involvement) would be helpful.
- Organize forums for parents to ask questions about their school's information and share ideas for improvement.
- Make sure local media understand and accurately interpret school report cards. Monitor coverage for accuracy and balance.
- Use the data to organize parents and the community to pressure elected officials for adequate resources to meet annual goals.
- Organize workshops to help teachers clearly communicate with parents on how to improve student learning.
- Explore best practices at other successful schools.

Parent Involvement Policies

Every Title I school, not just the district, must have a written parent involvement policy. When they are developed in a spirit of true partnership, parent involvement policies address the following three elements:

1. **Collaborative Development:** Parents need to be fully included in the process to develop the policy, not just convened to okay the school's proposed policy. The policy should include ways for parents to help decide how Title I money is spent.
2. **Ability to Work Together:** Parents and educators need opportunities to better understand how to work together across the dividing lines of class and culture. They need support as they learn to work as equal partners with different responsibilities. They also may need assistance in understanding state standards and assessments.
3. **Shared Responsibility:** Policies should reflect the shared responsibility for meeting the school's goals, including how school-parent compacts will be developed.

WHAT CAN PARENTS DO WHEN DEVELOPING THE POLICY:

- Make sure all three of the elements above are addressed in language that parents can readily understand.
- Include regularly scheduled meetings for teachers and parents at the school and elsewhere.
- Ask parents if the policy covers their concerns and ask teachers if their professional development needs related to working with parents are clearly addressed.
- Explore ways to expand supports for parents beyond parenting skills training to opportunities such as literacy training and materials to help children with math and reading at home.
- Help secure money to cover costs for transportation, childcare and food during parent-school meetings to encourage greater participation.

School-Parent Compacts

Compacts hold great promise for bringing parents and educators together to agree on important goals for student achievement and to share responsibility for success. Good compacts should outline shared goals; the responsibilities of the teacher, the family and the student in meeting those goals; and how they will monitor progress and communicate with each other. Though not a legal document, the compact is designed to strengthen the partnership between school and home.

WHAT CAN PARENTS DO:

- Work with educators to develop examples of good compacts and ways for teachers and families to tailor them.
- Make sure at least one parent-teacher conference is scheduled annually to discuss progress toward the compact's goals.
- Make sure that procedures related to how parents can visit classrooms, schedule appointments with educators, and participate in school decisionmaking processes all support the parents' role in the compact.
- Make sure that processes for frequent communication between school and home, including reasonable access to school staff, support the agreements in the compact.
- Help develop learning materials that schools can loan to parents for use at home.
- Identify ways that parents can support each other and build a community that supports all students.

RESOURCES

General NCLB References

An Action Guide for Community and Parent Leaders describes 10 major provisions of the NCLB that can serve as leverage points for parent and community advocates. Uses parent-friendly language and suggests several action opportunities for parents. Published by Public Education Network. www.PublicEducation.org

ESEA: Myths versus Realities from the Education Trust provides answers to common questions about NCLB. www.edtrust.org/main/documents/ESEAmyth&real.pdf

No Child Left Behind: What's in it for Parents, by Anne Henderson, explains how to boost parent involvement using key leverage points. Available from Parent Leadership Associates. www.plassociates.org

U.S. Department of Education Web site for parents with descriptions of key pieces of *NCLB*, definitions of terms and frequently asked questions: www.NCLB.gov

Full text of the federal *No Child Left Behind Act*: www.ed.gov/legislation/ESEA02

Education Week, a well-respected weekly national newspaper about K-12 education. Search back issues for NCLB stories on the law itself and on how the law is playing out in states and local communities. www.edweek.org

Supplemental Services

Information for parents on the U.S. Department of Education Web site: <http://NCLB.gov/parents/supplementalservices>

The Finance Project offers a report on after school programs that provide supplemental services with steps to become a provider and considerations for service delivery. www.financeproject.org/suppsvc.pdf

The *What Works Clearinghouse* is a project of the U.S. Department of Education to support NCLB's focus on encouraging schools to adopt research-based programs. Full Web site is to launch in spring of 2003. www.w-w-c.org

Data

The Education Trust offers a series of publications as part of their *Dispelling the Myth* project that identifies high-poverty and/or high-minority schools that are high-performing. www.edtrust.org/main/main/reports.asp

The National Staff Development Council archives articles on data-driven decision-making. www.nsd.org/library/data.html

Driving Decisions With Data. In the fall 2001 issue of *Parent Press*, PPS shares information about the 'why' and 'how' of using data to drive decisions in

schools. www.parents4publicschools.com/pics/newsletter.13.upload/DRVNGDEC.PDF

Accountability: Setting Expectations, Measuring Performance and Providing Support. An expanded version of the PPS newsletter filled with information on testing and accountability systems. www.parents4publicschools.com/pics/newsletter.11.upload/SCHLLDRS.PDF

Teachers/Principals

Teachers Matter: Getting Honest About Quality. An issue of *Parent Press* from PPS with research about the importance of effective teachers and questions parents can ask about teacher quality. www.parents4publicschools.com/pics/newsletter.10.upload/TCHRSMTT.PDF

School Leadership: It's About Teaching and Learning. A PPS newsletter that explores the changing role of the principal. www.parents4publicschools.com/pics/newsletter.11.upload/SCHLLDRS.PDF

Parent and Community Involvement

A New Wave of Evidence: The Impact of School, Family and Community Connections on Student Achievement describes the research on the positive relationship between family involvement and student achievement; highlights community organizing efforts; and makes recommendations for collaboration between parents and schools. By Anne T. Henderson and Karen L. Mapp. www.sedl.org/pubs/catalog/items/fam33.html

The 21st Century Community Learning Centers Program funds school districts and community-based organizations to provide academic enrichment and youth development programs. www.ed.gov/21stcclc

In *Parents Left Behind*, ACORN is critical of *NCLB* implementation in the areas of supplemental services and notifications to parents about teacher quality. www.acorn.org/acorn10/betterschools/reports.htm

SchoolSuccessInfo.org offers resources on helping parents get involved in their children's education. A useful resource for outreach with parents. www.SchoolSuccessInfo.org

Understanding Education Jargon

A thorough glossary of terms associated with *NCLB* is available in *An Action Guide for Community and Parent Leaders* from Public Education Network. www.PublicEducation.org

"Edu-Speak, Understanding the Words Educators Use" is available from the National Coalition of Education Activists. www.nceaonline.org/pubs/edspeakg.pdf



PPS chapter leaders met in Cincinnati and Dallas to hone their community organizing skills.