



Federal Programs Parent Focus Group Guide for Onsite Review

Purpose: Education Program Specialists will learn how federal programs are meeting the needs of the parents of participating children and how those programs may be improved.

Protocol: A formal letter has been sent to the district regarding expectations of the parent focus group. Prior to the onsite visit, the district will invite parents who have children participating in federal programs (not employees of the district) to attend a focus group with other parents for an hour or less to discuss the quality of federal program services. Assure that everyone has a chance to speak. A district/school administrative staff member may be present to observe and listen to the discussion and take notes. Two Office of Federal Programs employees should be present so one can ask the questions while the other takes notes. Remember that focus groups are basically multiple interviews. Close the session with gratitude.

Opening: Education Program Specialist will utilize the sign in sheet to introduce parents and announce their child's school and grade level. Parents will be asked to share what activities they have participated in this year.

(Summary to read prior to beginning the question portion of the focus group: We want you to be aware of the intent and purpose of Title I which is to provide supplemental educational services. These supplemental services are enhancements to regular classroom learning.)

Questions:

- 1) In your opinion, how have the Title I programs, such as additional help with your child's reading or evening programs that teach parents how to work with their child at home on academics, helped your child?
- 2) Are you informed about the Title I requirements and your rights to be involved?
 - A) Did you read a notice regarding the "Right to Know" the qualifications of your child's teacher?
 - B) Were you aware of an annual meeting that the school held to inform parents about receiving Title I funds?
 - C) Were you offered opportunities to volunteer or observe classroom activities?

- 3) How has your child's district/school involved you in the development/review of the:
 - A) District written parent involvement policy
 - B) School written parent involvement plan
 - C) School-parent compact

- 4) How has the district utilized your input to improve Title I programs?

- 5) What materials, training and information has your child's district/school provided to you on how to work with your child at home?

- 6) Have the trainings and family events you attended been worthwhile?
 - A) Has it made a difference in the way you work with your child?

- 7) Do you receive feedback or reports on how your child is performing academically?

- 8) Are there any challenges/barriers you face as you try to become involved in your children's education?

- 9) What could the school system do to make parents more involved?

- 10) How could the Title I program be improved?