



West Buffalo Charter School Parent Involvement Policy

This parent involvement policy addresses the No Child Left Behind commitment to shared accountability between schools and parents for high student achievement, including expanded public school choice and supplemental educational services for eligible children in low-performing schools, local development of parental involvement plans with sufficient flexibility to address local needs, and building parents' capacity for using effective practices to improve their own children's academic achievement.

New reporting provisions, added by the NCLB Act, offer parents important insight into their children's education, the professional qualifications of their teachers, and the quality of the schools they attend. The new legislation ensures that parents have the information they need to make well-informed choices for their children, more effectively share responsibility with their children's schools, and help those schools develop effective and successful academic programs. Parents now will know their children's academic strengths and weaknesses and how well schools are performing, and they will have other options and resources for helping their children if their schools are identified in need of improvement.

The new Title I, Part A is designed not only to help close the achievement gap between disadvantaged and minority students and their peers, but also to change the culture of America's schools so that success is defined in terms of student achievement and schools invest in every child.

The following plan lays out the respective responsibilities and commitments of the school, the administration and parents in working together for the academic success of students.

In particular:

Parents will be involved in the joint development of the Title I Plan through a variety of avenues including, but not limited to: parent representation on the board of trustees, participation in the school's parent organization; annual surveys; teacher conferences; and school planning, evaluation, and review committees.

West Buffalo Charter School will aid in the planning and implementation of effective parent involvement activities to improve student academic achievement and school performance in numerous ways including, but not limited to providing meeting space for a parent organization, distributing meeting notices, publishing parent organization articles and updates, recommending/making presentations to parents on issues (e.g., understanding learning standards, school and student performance, opportunities for greater involvement with the school, accessing services), and other coordination, technical assistance, and support necessary;

West Buffalo Charter School will build the school's and parents' capacity for strong parental involvement in a variety of ways including, but not limited to, making enhancing parent involvement a regular topic at staff and board meetings (as well as during employee evaluations), recommending/making presentations to the parent organization to develop parents' skills, confidence, and awareness of their role in interacting with the



school for their child's success; discussing parent involvement activities in every newsletter and at every parent/teacher conference.

West Buffalo Charter School will coordinate and integrate Title I parental involvement strategies with those of other programs (including federal, state and local programs) by making the parent involvement strategies universal. Parents are integral to the mission of the school and have a central role in any program implemented at West Buffalo Charter School.

West Buffalo Charter School will conduct, with the involvement of parents, an annual evaluation of the content and effectiveness of the parent involvement policy in improving the academic quality of the school. The evaluation will include identifying barriers (such as limited English proficiency, disability status, limited literacy, economic disadvantage, etc.) to greater participation by parents in activities authorized by Title I (such as limited English proficiency, disabilities, and use the findings of the evaluation to design strategies for more effective parental involvement and, to revise—if necessary—the parental involvement policies at the school.

Mission:

West Buffalo Charter School prepares students to explore their interests, aspire to challenging goals, and to connect to their environment. West Buffalo Charter School (WBCS) is a small elementary program that focuses on developing an exceptional foundation of literacy and personal skills that will give students the means to succeed and to reach their full potential. With high expectations for all students and a curriculum benchmarked to NYS Learning Standards, WBCS is committed to sustaining a safe, caring learning community that respects diversity and encourages strong home, school, and community partnerships. The school features a small group learning environment, intensive focus on building student literacy and personal management skills, ongoing commitment to staff development, the use of innovative instructional tools, integration of technology into instruction, and partnerships with local institutions and community organizations.

Parent involvement is a significant component in the success of the school and its students.

Parent Involvement Benefits:

The West Buffalo Charter School believes that education is a partnership among the student, parent, school, and community. The academic achievement and success of our students depend on the actions, relationships, and strengths of these partnerships.

Parents and families provide their children with the foundation of their values, including education values, responsibilities, expectations, rules for home/school environment, and aspirations. Parents are the primary providers in preparing their children for school readiness and academic success. Parents' knowledge of their children's unique histories, traditions, life experiences, and learning experiences are important to their success. Parents also share knowledge about community resources and challenges, both of which are valuable and critical to their child's progress. The educational responsibility for our students is shared by parents, school, and community.



Parent Involvement Framework:

West Buffalo Charter School plans to develop a parent organization that will serve as the volunteer parent/community organization. The school's director (or a designee) will be present at all parent organization meetings. The parent organization will assist West Buffalo Charter School in developing comprehensive programs of school, family, and community partnership as part of its efforts to increase parent involvement. West Buffalo Charter School believes in the following:

- I. Communicating: Communication between home and school is regular, two-way and meaningful.
- II. Parenting: Parenting skills are promoted and supported.
- III. Student Learning: Parents play an integral role in assisting student learning.
- IV. Volunteering: Parents are welcome in the school, and their support and assistance are actively sought.
- V. School decision making and advocacy: Parents are full partners in the decisions that affect students, though a representative on the school's Board of Trustees.
- VI. Collaborating with community: Community resources are used to strengthen the school, our families and student learning.

School Responsibilities/Expectations:

To successfully implement the School's beliefs in parent involvement, support will be comprised of, but not limited to the following:

1. Fostering a network of sharing among parents and other members of the school community through the parent organization and other parent involvement opportunities.
2. Disseminating information relevant to student achievement and parent's rights through community meetings, telephone contact, newsletters and the school website.
3. Providing opportunities for parent participation in school committees that may be formed (such as serving on an ad hoc committee of the board to review student discipline policies).
4. Ensuring compliance with Section 1118 (parent involvement) of the No. Child Left Behind legislation. Building parents' capacity for involvement through:
 - Providing assistance to parents in understanding such topics as the State's academic content standards and the State student academic achievement standards, state and local academic assessments, the requirements of this part, and how to monitor a child's progress and work with educators to improve the academic achievement of their children;
 - Providing—through the PTA and community-based organizations—materials and training to help parents to work with their children to improve their children's achievement (Note that charter schools have no authority to provide programs and services to anyone other than enrolled students.);



- Educating teachers, pupil services personnel, principals, and other staff, with the assistance of parents, in the value and utility of the contributions of parents, and in how to reach out to, communicate with, and work with parents as equal partners, implement and coordinate parent programs, and build ties between parents and the school;
- Coordinating and integrating—to the extent feasible and appropriate—parent involvement programs and activities that encourage and support parents in more fully participating in the education of their children;
- Ensuring that information related to school and parent programs, meetings and other activities is sent to the parents of participating children in a format and, to the extent practicable, in a language the parents can understand.
- Providing an effective mechanism to ensure mutual respect and accountability in the school/parent partnership.

Parent Responsibilities and Expectations:

Parents are partners in the West Buffalo Charter School and share responsibility for the successful education of the children. Parent involvement is the action parents take to participate in regular and meaningful communication with the school to provide an education that graduates productive citizens. All parent involvement is aimed at increasing student achievement through various levels of involvement

Parents can be defined as any parent, guardian, and/or person in parental relation to a child or children. Parents are expected to:

1. Ensure that children come to school prepared and ready to learn
2. Provide high-quality nutrition, adequate sleep, and exercise for their children.
3. Provide a learning environment for children to do homework and actively monitor their children's homework and level of completion.
4. Review and support the School Attendance Policy.
5. Review and support the School Discipline Policy.
6. Attend parent organization meetings, parent/teacher conferences and workshops designed to increase student achievement.
7. Communicate school staff, teachers and the principal as a partner in their children's academic success.

The West Buffalo Charter School Board of Trustees and the School Leaders endorse and support this plan to help ensure the success of all students.