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Education



Page 2

Parental Involvement: Title I, Part A Non-Regulatory Guidance April 23, 2004 TABLE OF CONTENTS INTRODUCTION 1 PURPOSE 2 A. GENERAL INFORMATION 3 A-1. What is parental involvement under No Child Left Behind? 3 A-2. What is the significance of the statutory definition? 3 A-3. Who is a parent for the purposes of Title I, Part A? 3 A-4. Why is parental involvement important? 3 A-5. What does the research show about how family involvement in children's education affects student achievement? 4 A-6. What are the key Title I, Part A parental notice requirements? 4 A-7. What are the parental involvement provisions in section 1118 of the ESEA? 4 A-8. How must SEAs, LEAs, and schools communicate with parents in general? 4 A-9. What is meant by providing information to parents with limited English proficiency, " to the extent practicable, " in a language parents can understand? 5 A-10. How must an SEA, LEA, or school communicate with parents with disabilities to ensure meaningful participation in Title I, Part A programs? 5 A-11. What Federal civil rights provisions are applicable to parental involvement activities? 6 A-12. May an SEA or LEA use funds from other Federal programs for activities related to parental involvement? 6 A-13. What are Parental Information and Resource Centers? 6 A-14. What other resources and research are available to help improve parental involvement? 7 B. RESPONSIBILITIES OF STATES 8 General SEA Responsibilities for Parental Involvement 8 B-1. What parental involvement provisions are included in State plans? 8 B-2. Must an SEA consult with parents in the development of the State plan? 8 B-3. What responsibility does an SEA have with respect to the parental involvement provisions in local plans? 8 B-4. May an SEA use the Title I, Part A funds it reserves for State administration to meet its parental involvement responsibilities? 8 Information Dissemination and https://assignbuster.com/gwewgegw/

Technical Assistance 8 B-5. What information about LEA and school performance must an SEA disseminate to parents? 8 B-6. What information about individual student academic assessment must SEAs provide to parents? 9 Progress Reviews 9 B-7. What are an SEA's responsibilities for reviewing and disseminating information about the progress of an LEA's parental involvement activities? 9 SEA Notification to Parents of Children in an LEA or School Identified for Improvement, Corrective Action, or Restructuring 9 B-8. How must an SEA, LEA or school communicate with parents during the school improvement process? 9 B-9. What are an SEA's responsibilities regarding notification to parents of children in an LEA identified for improvement or corrective action? 10 SEA Technical Assistance to an LEA or School in Need of Improvement 10 B-10. What technical assistance related to parental involvement must an SEA provide for LEAs and schools in need of improvement? 10 C. LEA RESPONSIBILITIES 11 General 11 C-1. Are the parental involvement provisions in section 1118 of the ESEA applicable to LEAs? 11 C-2. What is the basic parental involvement requirement under Title I, Part A for LEAs? 11 C-3. What specific information must an LEA's written parental involvement policy contain? 11 C-4. What is the relationship between the local plan an LEA submits to its SEA and the LEA's written parental involvement policy? 12 C-5. What other information related to parents must an LEA include in its local plan under section 1112? 12 C-6. What information must LEAs provide parents about the teachers and paraprofessionals who work with their children? 12 C-7. What information must LEAs provide to parents in the LEA report card about the performance of their child's school to assist parents in making decisions about their children's education? 13 C-8. What information must all LEAs receiving Title https://assignbuster.com/qwewqeqw/

I, Part A funds provide to parents of limited English proficient students? 13 C-9. What notice and information must LEAs with Title I, Part A-funded language instruction educational programs provide to parents of limited English proficient students? 14 C-10. What information must LEAs provide to parents of a child with a disability who is in a language instruction educational program? 15 C-11. Do parents of private school children in Title I, Part A programs have the right to equitable participation in parental involvement activities? 15 C-12. What responsibilities do LEAs have to parents with respect to complaint procedures relating to violations of Title I, Part A requirements? 16 LEA Funding for Parental Involvement 16 C-13. What funds must an LEA reserve for parental involvement activities under section 1118? 16 C-14. Do the parental involvement requirements of section 1118 apply to LEAs with a Title I, Part A allocation of \$500, 000 or less? 16 C-15. How does an LEA determine the amount of funds to be used for parental involvement activities for parents of private school children participating in Title I, Part A activities? 17 C-16. What amount of funds must an LEA allot to schools for parental involvement activities under section 1118? 17 C-17. On what basis may an LEA distribute to schools served under Title I, Part A, the funds it has reserved for schools to carry out the parental involvement provisions of section 1118? 18 C-18. What input do parents have in how an LEA allots to schools the funds the LEA has reserved for parental involvement? 18 C-19. If an LEA reserves more than the required one percent of its Title I, Part A funds for parental involvement, must 95 percent of the entire amount reserved be distributed to schools served under Title I, Part A? 18 LEA Responsibilities for School Improvement 19 C-20. In reviewing annually the progress of each school, what must an LEA communicate to

Page 5

parents, teachers, principals, schools, and the community? 19 C-21. What is an LEA responsible for communicating to parents of the children of a school identified for school improvement, for corrective action, or for restructuring? 19 C-22. What information about actions taken to address problems that led to a school's identification for school improvement, for corrective action, or for restructuring must an LEA provide to both parents and the public? 20 C-23. What opportunities do the principal and parents of a school have to present evidence if they believe that the elementary or secondary school proposed for identification for improvement, for corrective action, or for restructuring has been identified in error? 20 C-24. What responsibility does an LEA have regarding the school improvement plan of an identified school? 20 C-25. What responsibility does an LEA have for providing technical assistance related to parental involvement to a school identified for school improvement? 21 C-26. What responsibilities to parents does an LEA have with respect to supplemental educational services? 21 C-27. What responsibilities does an LEA have to parents of the children in a school that is in the restructuring phase of school improvement? 22 D. SCHOOL RESPONSIBILITIES 22 School-level Parental Involvement Policies and Funding 22 D-1. What written parental involvement policies must Title I, Part A schools develop? 22 D-2. What notification and dissemination requirements apply for school parental involvement policies? 22 D-3. What information do the parents' " right-to-know" provisions require schools to provide parents about the qualifications of teachers of their children who are not highly qualified? 23 D-4. How must schools involve parents to improve Title I, Part A programs? 23 D-5. What meetings must schools hold to inform parents about Title I, Part A programs and parental involvement? 23 D-6. What information https://assignbuster.com/qwewqeqw/

and opportunities must schools provide parents of children participating in Title I, Part A programs? 23 D-7. Which parents are eligible to participate in parent involvement activities in a schoolwide program school? 24 Shared Responsibility for High Student Academic Achievement 24 D-8. What is a " school-parent" compact? 24 D-9. What must a " school-parent" compact include? 25 D-10. What information must a school provide to parents about their child's level of achievement on the State academic assessment? 25 Schools in Improvement, Corrective Action, or Restructuring 25 D-11. Must an LEA pay for or provide transportation to service providers? 25 E. LEA AND SCHOOL RESPONSIBILITIES TO BUILD PARENT CAPACITY 26 Basic Requirement 26 E-1. How do LEAs and schools build parents' capacity for involvement? 26 Providing Assistance and Training 26 E-2. On what topics must schools and LEAs provide parents with assistance and training? 26 E-3. Does the LEA, with the assistance of its SEA, have a responsibility to upgrade the educational levels of parents of participating students, particularly those parents who do not possess a secondary school diploma? 26 E-4. What assistance do schools and LEAs provide to help parents work with their children? 27 E-5. Is volunteering in a child's classroom an activity in which parents can engage to help share the responsibility for student learning? 27 E-6. What school staff training must schools and LEAs provide related to parental involvement? 27 Activities to Strengthen Parental Involvement 28 E-7. How can schools and LEAs maximize parental involvement and participation in school meetings, conferences, and activities? 28 E-8. May Title I, Part A funds be used to support parents' attendance at workshops and conferences? 28 E-9. May a school or all schools within a district use their share(s) of the one percent reservation for parental involvement under

section 1118(a)(3)(C) to support a district-level parent resource center or some other district-level activity for parents? 28 Coordination with Other Programs and Community Involvement 29 E-10. How should schools and LEAs coordinate and conduct parental involvement activities? 29 E-11. How can schools and LEAs involve the community to help ensure the effective involvement of parents? 29 APPENDIX A: DEFINITIONS 30 APPENDIX B: KEY TITLE I, PART A PARENTAL NOTICE REQUIREMENTS 34 APPENDIX C: RESEARCH BASED RESOURCES 40 APPENDIX D: DISTRICT WIDE PARENTAL **INVOLVEMENT POLICY 45 APPENDIX E: SCHOOL-PARENT COMPACT 51** PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT INTRODUCTION The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB Act) reauthorized the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA), and is based on four principles that provide a framework through which families, educators, and communities can work together to improve teaching and learning. These principles are accountability for results, local control and flexibility, expanded parental choice, and effective and successful programs that reflect scientifically based research. The parental involvement provisions in Title I, Part A of the ESEA reflect these principles. Specifically, these provisions stress 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 gualifications of their teachers, and the guality of the schools https://assignbuster.com/qwewqeqw/

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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. As indicated by the parental involvement provisions in Title I, Part A, the involvement of parents in their children's education and schools is critical to that process. Secretary Paige put it succinctly when he stated, "[s]chools can't improve without the help of parents. " Three decades of research provide convincing evidence that parents are an important influence in helping their children achieve high academic standards. When schools collaborate with parents to help their children learn and when parents participate in school activities and decisionmaking about their children's education, children achieve at higher levels. In short, when parents are involved in education, children do better in school and schools improve. This guidance is divided into five major sections. The first deals with general issues related to parental involvement, the second addresses the parental involvement responsibilities of State educational agencies (SEAs), the third describes responsibilities of local educational agencies (LEAs), the fourth describes the responsibilities of schools, and the fifth describes the responsibilities of LEAs and schools to build parents' https://assignbuster.com/gwewgegw/

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capacity for becoming involved in improving their child's academic achievement. Included in the appendices are relevant definitions (Appendix A), key Title I, Part A parental notice requirements (Appendix B), a list of research-based resources for improving teaching and learning (Appendix C), a sample template that might be used for the development of a district-wide parental involvement policy (Appendix D), and a sample template for a school-parent compact (Appendix E). PURPOSE The purpose of this guidance is to assist SEAs, LEAs, and schools in administering the parental involvement provisions of Title I, Part A of the ESEA. This guidance is not intended to be all-inclusive; rather, it answers questions about and clarifies aspects of the law that have been brought to the attention of the U.S. Department of Education (ED). This guidance may be supplemented in the future as other issues arise. The guestions are primarily based on issues raised by State and local school officials and staff, education leaders, technical assistance providers, parents, parent advocacy organizations, parental involvement coordinators/liaisons, and others who are actively engaged in working with parents to improve student achievement and learning. A. GENERAL INFORMATION A-1. What is parental involvement under No Child Left Behind? Parental involvement always has been a centerpiece of Title I. However, for the first time in the history of the ESEA, it has a specific statutory definition. The statute defines parental involvement as the participation of parents in regular, two-way, and meaningful communication involving student academic learning and other school activities, including ensuring- - that parents play an integral role in assisting their child's learning; - that parents are encouraged to be actively involved in their child's education at school; - that parents are full partners in their child's education https://assignbuster.com/gwewgegw/

and are included, as appropriate, in decision-making and on advisory committees to assist in the education of their child; and - that other activities are carried out, such as those described in section 1118 of the ESEA (Parental Involvement). [Section 9101(32), ESEA.] A-2. What is the significance of the statutory definition? The definition of parental involvement sets the parameters, in conjunction with other sections of the law by which SEAs, LEAs and schools will implement programs, activities, and procedures to involve parents in Title I, Part A programs. A-3. Who is a parent for the purposes of Title I, Part A? The term " parent" includes in addition to a natural parent, a legal guardian or other person standing in loco parentis (such as a grandparent or stepparent with whom the child lives, or a person who is legally responsible for the child's welfare). [Section 9101(31), ESEA.] A-4. Why is parental involvement important? A synthesis of the research concluded that "the evidence is consistent, positive, and convincing: families have a major influence on their children's achievement in school and through life. When schools, families, and community groups work together to support learning, children tend to do better in school, stay in school longer, and like school more. " A-5. What does the research show about how family involvement in children's education affects student achievement? Studies have found that students with involved parents, no matter what their income or background, are more likely to- - Earn high grades and test scores, and enroll in higher-level programs; - Pass their classes, earn credits, and be promoted; - Attend school regularly; and -Graduate and go on to postsecondary education. A-6. What are the key Title I, Part A parental notice requirements? The key parental notice requirements for SEAs, LEAs, and schools are set forth in Appendix B to this guidance. A-7. https://assignbuster.com/qwewqeqw/

What are the parental involvement provisions in section 1118 of the ESEA? Title I, Part A provides for substantive parental involvement at every level of the program, such as in the development and implementation of the State and local plan, and in carrying out the LEA and school improvement provisions. Section 1118 contains the primary Title I, Part A requirements for SEAs, LEAs, and schools related to involving parents in their children's education. It is this section that identifies critical points in the process of improving teaching and learning where parents and the community can intervene and assist in school improvement. Although section 1118 is extensive in scope and has many requirements for LEAs and schools, the intent is not to be burdensome. These provisions reflect good practice in engaging families in helping to educate their children, because students do better when parents are actively involved in the education process, both at home and at school. A-8. How must SEAs, LEAs, and schools communicate with parents in general? Because regular communication is the foundation of effective parental involvement, SEAs, LEAs, and schools must provide information to parents of students participating in Title I, Part A programs in an understandable and uniform format, including alternative formats upon request, and, " to the extent practicable, " in a language that parents can understand. (See, for example, a State's notification to parents of LEA improvement status (section 1116(c)(6)), a school's notification to parents of the written parental involvement policy (section 1118(b)(1)), and LEA and school notifications to parents of information related to parent programs, meetings, and other activities (section 1118(e)(5).) [Title I, Part A Final Regulations, 34 CFR Section 200. 36 (" Title I Regulations") A-9. What is meant by providing information to parents with limited English proficiency, "

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to the extent practicable, " in a language parents can understand? This means that, whenever practicable, written translations of printed information must be provided to parents with limited English proficiency in a language they understand. However, if written translations are not practicable, it is practicable to provide information to limited English proficient parents orally in a language that they understand. SEAs and LEAs have flexibility in determining what mix of oral and written translation services may be necessary and reasonable for communicating the required information to parents with limited English proficiency. [Title I, Part A Final Regulations, 67 Fed. Reg. 71749 — 50, Comments and Discussion on Section 200. 36; available at ED's website at http://www. ed.

gov/legislation/FedRegister/finrule/2002-4/120202a. html.] This requirement is consistent with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Title VI), as amended, and its implementing regulations. Under those regulations, recipients of Federal financial assistance have a responsibility to ensure meaningful access to their programs and activities by persons with limited English proficiency. It is also consistent with ED policy under Title VI and Executive Order 13166 (Improving Access to Services for Persons with Limited English Proficiency). The Department of Justice's Guidance on Title VI and E. O. 13166, which provides clarification on how to determine an appropriate mix of language services, may be found in the Federal Register, 67 Fed. Reg. 41455-41472 (June 18, 2002), or online at http://www. lep. gov. A-10. How must an SEA, LEA, or school communicate with parents with disabilities to ensure meaningful participation in Title I, Part A programs? SEAs, LEAs, and schools must take the necessary steps to ensure that communications with parents with disabilities are as effective as https://assignbuster.com/gwewgegw/

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communications with other parents. Those steps include that SEAs, LEAs, and schools must furnish appropriate auxiliary aids and services when necessary to afford a parent with a disability an equal opportunity to participate in, and enjoy the benefits of, Title I, Part A programs, services, and activities, including the parental involvement provisions. SEAs, LEAs, and schools must provide an opportunity to parents with disabilities to request the auxiliary aids and services of their choice (such as sign language interpreters and large print or materials in Braille) to ensure meaningful participation in the different types of programs or activities carried out to implement the Part A provisions. The SEA, LEA, or school must give primary consideration to the expressed choice of a parent with disabilities by honoring that choice, unless the SEA, LEA, or school can demonstrate that another effective means of communication exists, or that use of the means chosen by the parent would result in a fundamental alteration in the service, program, or activity or in an undue financial and administrative burden. [28] CFR Sections 35. 104 and 35. 160-164, and Appendix A to Part 35 of Title 28T of the Code of Federal Regulations implementing subtitle A of title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990)] A-11. What Federal civil rights provisions are applicable to parental involvement activities? In implementing parental involvement programs, activities, and procedures, States, LEAs and schools may not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or age, consistent with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), and the Age Discrimination Act of 1975. A-12. May an SEA or LEA use funds from other Federal programs for activities related to parental involvement? A https://assignbuster.com/gwewgegw/

activities. Examples of such programs include Reading First, the Even Start Family Literacy Program, Comprehensive School Reform, and 21st Century Community Learning Centers. Subject to the rules and requirements of the program, those funds can be coordinated with the Title I, Part A funds that an SEA or LEA uses to meet its parental involvement responsibilities. An SEA or LEA also may find the new transferability authority added by the NCLB useful in maximizing available funds for parental involvement activities under programs subject to that authority. Subject to specific requirements, that authority allows SEAs and LEAs to transfer a certain amount of funds among some programs, such as into Title V, Part A (" Innovative Programs") to address local educational needs and priorities. [For more detailed information, see the Transferability Authority Non-Regulatory Guidance on line at http://www.ed.gov/programs/transferability/finalsummary04.doc.] A-13. What are Parental Information and Resource Centers? Parental Information and Resource Centers, authorized by subpart 16 of Part D of Title V of the ESEA, are school-linked or school-based centers established by nonprofit organizations and consortia of nonprofit organizations and LEAs under competitive grants from ED. These Parental Information and Resource Centers provide comprehensive training, information, and support to parents, individuals who work with parents, SEAs, LEAs, and other organizations that carry out parental education and family involvement programs. In awarding grants under this program, the Department has given priority to centers that make parents aware of, and help them take advantage of, the public school choice and supplemental educational services provisions of Title I, Part A. To contact a center see: pirc-info. net. https://assignbuster.com/qwewqeqw/

Page 15

[Section 5561 — 5566, ESEA.] A-14. What other resources and research are available to help improve parental involvement? Contact ED's Information Resource Center for information on ED programs, resources, and events at 1-800-USA-LEARN. Specific activities and resources include: - Education News Parents Can Use, a television series about ways to ensure children's educational success. The third Tuesday of each month during the school year, Education News provides parents with the tools and information they need to be effectively involved in their children's learning. [For information on how to register visit the following URL and go to FAQs: http://www.ed. gov/news/av/video/edtv/index. html.] - EDPubs, the Department's Publication Center has a multitude of free materials and resources that can assist SEAs, LEAs, schools, parents, communities, and organizations in encouraging and maximizing parental involvement. [EDPubs can be reached directly by calling 1-877-4ED-PUBS (433-7827). Order documents on-line at edpubs@inet. ed. gov.] - The Achiever, a biweekly electronic newsletter that provides information, events and announcements about No Child Left Behind, For other newsletters and journals from ED visit: http://www.ed. gov/news/newsletters/index. html - The No Child Left Behind website at: http://www.nochildleftbehind.gov/ - The "What Works Clearinghouse" (WWC), a project to help education decision-makers answer such questions as how do we create better schools and how can we make sure that all children can read? A part of the Department's Institute of Education Sciences, the WWC has been established to put solid evidence from highquality scientific research into the hands of educators, policy-makers and the public so they may make better choices about programs and practices. To receive e-mail updates, subscribe to WWCUpdate on the Web at www. w-w-c. https://assignbuster.com/gwewgegw/

org. or call 1-866-WWC-9799. - National Center for Family and Community Connections with Schools, funded through the Southwest Regional Educational Laboratory (SEDL) by the Department's Institute of Education Sciences, bridges research and practice to remove barriers to student achievement. The Center links people with research-based information and resources that they can use to effectively connect schools, families, and communities. The Center reviews emerging findings and research to develop an online database, annual conferences and annual reports to help advance procedural knowledge and provides training and networking across the regional educational laboratory system to link research findings to practice. [For more information visit http://www. sedl. org/connections/about. html.] B. RESPONSIBILITIES OF STATES General SEA Responsibilities for Parental Involvement B-1. What parental involvement provisions are included in State plans? SEAs must support the collection and dissemination of effective parental involvement practices to its LEAs and schools. Those practices must be based on the most current research, meeting the highest professional and technical standards, on effective parental involvement that fosters achievement to high standards for all children. In addition, those practices must be geared toward lowering barriers to greater participation by parents in school planning, review, and improvement experiences. [Section 1111(d), ESEA.] [See Appendix C for a sample of research-based resources on parental involvement.] In addition, each SEA must assure that it will provide technical assistance that is designed to improve teaching and learning to LEAs and schools including technical assistance relating to parental involvement under section 1118. [Section 1111(c)(4), ESEA.] B-2. Must an SEA consult with parents in the development of the State plan? Yes. An SEA https://assignbuster.com/gwewgegw/

must consult with parents, along with others, such as LEAs, in developing its State plan. [Section 1111(a)(1), ESEA.] B-3. What responsibility does an SEA have with respect to the parental involvement provisions in local plans? An SEA must review each LEA's plan to determine if the LEA's parental involvement activities meet the requirements of section 1118. [Section 1112(e)(3), ESEA.] B-4. May an SEA use the Title I, Part A funds it reserves for State administration to meet its parental involvement responsibilities? Yes, this is permitted. [Section 1004, ESEA.] Information Dissemination and Technical Assistance B-5. What information about LEA and school performance must an SEA disseminate to parents? State report cards must include information related to assessments, accountability, and teacher quality, and must include data from all LEAs in the State. A description of each of the data elements (assessments, accountability, teacher quality) for State report cards is included in the Report Cards, Title I, Part A Non-Regulatory Guidance available at: http://www.ed.

gov/programs/titleiparta/reportcardsguidance. doc.] The information in the report cards must be in an understandable and uniform format, including alternative formats upon request, and, " to the extent practicable, " in a language that parents understand. [Section 1111(h)(1)(B)(ii), ESEA.] B-6. What information about individual student academic assessment must SEAs provide to parents? A central requirement of the NCLB Act is that SEAs, in consultation with LEAs, must implement a set of high-quality, yearly student academic assessments that include, at a minimum, academic assessments in mathematics, reading or language arts, and (beginning with school year 2007-08) science. As a part of this assessment system, SEAs must produce individual student interpretive, descriptive, and diagnostic reports that allow https://assignbuster.com/qwewqeqw/

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parents, teachers, and principals to understand and address the specific academic needs of each student, and that include information regarding achievement on academic assessments aligned with each State's academic achievement standards. SEAs must provide these reports to parents, teachers, and principals of all public schools as soon as possible after the assessments are given. The information must be provided to parents in an understandable and uniform format, including alternative formats upon request (see A-8 and A-10) and, to the extent practicable, in a language that parents can understand (see A-9 and A-10). [Section 1111(b)(3)(C)(xii), ESEA.] Progress Reviews B-7. What are an SEA's responsibilities for reviewing and disseminating information about the progress of an LEA's parental involvement activities? As a part of its annual yearly progress review of each LEA receiving Title I, Part A funds, the SEA must determine if each LEA is, among other things, carrying out its responsibilities under section 1118 with respect to parental involvement. [Section 1116(c)(1)(A), ESEA.] The SEA must publicize and disseminate the results of this review to its LEAs,