



# **2008–2009 Annual Report**

to the

## **Fairfax County School Board**

from the

## **Title I District Advisory Council**

### **June 2009**

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**Annual Report to the  
Fairfax County School Board  
by the  
District Advisory Council for the  
Title I Program**

**2008-2009 Charge from the School Board:**

**Find ways to strengthen family involvement in schools by creating school atmospheres that welcome families and strengthen partnerships.**

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**I. PARENT INVOLVEMENT IN TITLE I PROGRAMS**

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On January 8, 2002, the President signed into law the *No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB)*, Public Law 107-110, which amended the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965. Federal and state guidelines for parent involvement under Title I of this law require participation of parents in the design and evaluation of Title I programs.

The Fairfax County Public Schools Compensatory Education Title I program has complied with the requirement by establishing a District Advisory Council (DAC). The DAC is comprised of representatives from each Title I school and is governed by an executive board whose members are elected at the fall meeting.

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## II. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

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### Instruction

Title I served more than 17,700 children in 35 schools in Fairfax County this year. Schools implemented one of two models: the schoolwide program or the targeted assistance program.

Thirty-three schools implemented Title I schoolwide programs during the 2008-2009 school year. Schools are eligible to be served through a schoolwide model when 40 percent or more of the students receive free or reduced-price lunch. Schoolwide programs assess whole-school needs, and schools, in consultation with the Cluster and Title I offices, design their own plans for enabling students to meet the objectives of the Fairfax County Program of Studies (POS) and Virginia Standards of Learning (SOL). Schoolwide schools have a Title I mathematics and reading teacher and other resources to meet the needs of the students. More than 17,600 students benefited from Title I schoolwide programs this year.

Two schools received Title I services through the targeted assistance model. In this model, students are identified through classroom teacher referrals and criterion-referenced tests. This year, 110 students were served in targeted assistance schools.

Title I teachers serve as instructional leaders in their schools, modeling best practices in mathematics and language arts instruction. The Title I instructional program includes Step Up Math, Step Up Language Arts, Reading Recovery®, and Literacy Collaborative™.



*Step Up Math*

Step Up Math (SUM) is designed to provide mathematical learning experiences to reinforce concepts and skills in the students' classroom mathematics programs. Title I mathematics teachers focus on helping students develop mathematics concepts, problem solving strategies, and computational skills. They work with classroom teachers to assess students' strengths and needs and to plan appropriate mathematics instruction. SUM teachers provide ongoing professional learning for teachers in their schools. They work in classrooms as well as with small groups of students.

Step Up Language Arts (SULA) is designed to strengthen language arts skills. Title I language arts teachers and classroom teachers work together to assess students' strengths and needs. They plan appropriate literacy instruction to help students develop reading and writing skills. Instruction focuses on the five essential components of reading: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. SULA teachers provide ongoing professional learning for teachers in their schools. They work in classrooms as well as with small groups of students.



*Step Up Language Arts*

Reading Recovery is an early intervention program designed to prevent reading failure and accelerate reading growth. Instruction is delivered daily to first grade students on a one-to-one basis for approximately 16 to 20 weeks. Students learn effective reading and writing strategies and are taught to transfer the use of these strategies to the classroom setting. The Reading Recovery program is implemented in both Title I schoolwide and targeted assistance schools. This year, 490 students received Reading Recovery services in Title I schools.

Literacy Collaborative is a long-term professional development model designed to provide a comprehensive, schoolwide approach to literacy instruction both in the primary grades and upper grades. Implementation provides a framework for systematic instruction that is explicitly taught during literacy lessons. Literacy coordinators in each school are trained to coach staff in improving their abilities to teach skills and strategies within the Literacy Collaborative framework. Ten Title I schools are implementing the Literacy Collaborative model: Annandale Terrace, Bailey's, Braddock, Dogwood, Glen Forest, Hollin Meadows, Hybla Valley, Riverside, Timber Lane and Woodlawn.

### **Schools Served in 2008-2009**

#### Cluster I Schools

Hutchison Elementary  
Timber Lane Elementary

#### Cluster II Schools

Graham Road Elementary  
Pine Spring Elementary  
Westlawn Elementary

#### Cluster III Schools

Annandale Terrace Elementary  
Bailey's Elementary  
Beech Tree Elementary  
Belvedere Elementary  
Braddock Elementary  
Bren Mar Park Elementary  
Glen Forest Elementary  
Parklawn Elementary  
Sleepy Hollow Elementary  
Weyanoke Elementary

#### Cluster IV Schools

Bucknell Elementary  
Groveton Elementary  
Hollin Meadows Elementary  
Hybla Valley Elementary  
Mount Vernon Woods Elementary  
Riverside Elementary  
Washington Mill Elementary  
Woodlawn Elementary  
Woodley Hills Elementary

#### Cluster V Schools

Cameron Elementary  
Crestwood Elementary  
Forestdale Elementary  
Garfield Elementary  
Lynbrook Elementary  
Mount Eagle Elementary

#### Cluster VII

Brookfield Elementary  
Daniels Run Elementary\*  
Providence Elementary\*

\*Targeted assistance programs

#### Cluster VIII

Dogwood Elementary  
McNair Elementary

## Professional Development

Professional learning is a key component of the Title I program. High quality professional development has a positive impact on classroom instruction and student achievement. Title I mathematics and language arts teachers participated in professional development opportunities to deepen their knowledge of content and support best practices in teaching. The sessions included opportunities for Title I teachers to network, share instructional practices, and clarify their roles and responsibilities.

### Leadership and Best Practices

Mathematics teachers attended sessions on topics including *Supporting English Language Learners in the Mathematics Classroom*, *Kagan Strategies for Cooperative Learning*, *Supporting Teachers in the Use of Every Day Counts Calendar Math*, and *Coaching*. In addition, each mathematics teacher participated in a *Developing Mathematical Ideas (DMI)* seminar designed to help teachers think through the major ideas of K-6 mathematics and examine how children develop those ideas.

Language Arts teachers also attended a series of professional development sessions centered around best practices in literacy instruction. The workshops focused on using the balanced literacy framework to support students' comprehension and critical thinking skills. Additionally, language arts teachers deepened their understanding of coaching by reading and discussing the text, *Becoming a Literacy Leader*.

### Study Groups

Title I mathematics and language arts teachers also participated in study groups. The study groups read and discussed professional books on a variety of topics. Teachers selected the study group that best met their own learning needs. The groups shared highlights of their learning with all of the Title I teachers.



*Title I Professional Development*

## Parent Involvement

Because research shows that parent involvement has a significant influence on student achievement, Title I schools place high importance on involving parents in their child's education. Numerous events were held in Title I schools to provide parents with knowledge and skills to understand the curriculum and support their children at home. Interpreters, childcare, food, and occasionally, transportation were provided to help all parents attend these programs.

Every year, Title I schools send copies of their school Family Involvement Policies and their School-Home Compacts home to parents, using translations as necessary. These documents reflect each school's commitment to provide high quality education for every child and to include parents in the educational process. This year, Title I schools were asked to make these documents more easily accessible to parents by placing them on their school websites.



*Hybla Valley Parents As Partners Program*



*Glen Forest Parent Center*

The Title I office plays a central role in supporting family involvement in Title I schools. A Family Involvement Resource Teacher assists schools in developing and implementing parent involvement programs. This year, the resource teacher also provided support for four schools that were working to open or expand a parent center: Braddock, Hollin Meadows, Lynbrook and Garfield. Parent Centers strengthen the partnerships between school and home and expand the welcoming atmosphere of a school.

Title I collaborated with FECEP/Head Start to facilitate the transition from preschool to kindergarten by assisting schools in implementing the *Partners in Print* early literacy program. Parents and children at 25 schools participated in a series of workshops with high rates of attendance. The Title I office gave hundreds of books to families to bolster the schools’ literacy efforts, including dual language books for parents who cannot read to their children in English. The selection of dual language books was expanded this year to include six other languages in addition to the Spanish books purchased last year. A summer workshop was held for *Partners in Print* lead teachers to support the use of these books. The teachers also learned ways to support parents who are not literate in their first language. Parents who received the books were excited to have a book they could read in their first language. Completed parent surveys showed the books were read and discussed at home with the children.



*Partners in Print*

To support family-friendly climates in schools, the District Advisory Council learned about “Welcoming Atmosphere Walk-Throughs” offered by FCPS Family and School Partnerships. These Walk-Throughs provide feedback to school staffs on how to make the school more welcoming and inviting to a diverse community as well as the general public. A team looks at four areas: the physical environment, schoolwide practices and policies, staff communication, and written materials. Six Title I schools have employed Walk-Throughs to enhance parent and community receptivity, creating a more friendly and welcoming place.

Title I schools also create family-friendly climates in other ways, including holding International Dinners. Some schools have programs that enable families from different parts of the world to share their cultures and become familiar with the cultural practices of other families in their school community. These programs support Standard #1 of the new National PTA Standards for Family-School Partnerships: *Welcoming All Families in the School Community*. If the school is safe, warm and well maintained, the school becomes a nurturing environment conducive to learning and, as a result, improves the parent-school partnership.



*Culture Day at Glen Forest*

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### III. Summary of Title I 2008–2009 Parent Involvement Questionnaire for Schoolwide Schools

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Each Title I schoolwide school develops its own plan to strengthen student achievement. Parent involvement programs are a part of the schoolwide schools’ initiatives. Parent involvement is assessed annually through a school survey. The 2008-2009 survey revealed the following information:

(1) Total number of schools that have Parent Centers	26
(2) Total number of schools that held programs for parents this year focusing on:	
Curriculum Night	22
Literacy Event	23
Math Night	21
Technology Night	7
SOL Information Night	14
Parenting Skills Class	22
Other	14
(3) Total number of <i>Partners in Print</i> programs held	62
(4) Total number of schools that have utilized a Welcoming Atmosphere Walk-Through in the past three years	6

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### IV. Responses to the 2008-2009 Recommendations

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Each year the District Advisory Council (DAC) reviews program and parent survey data and communicates informally with parents at their schools to make recommendations for the upcoming year. The DAC, in partnership with the Title I office staff, works throughout the year to monitor progress in satisfying the recommendations. In the spring, the DAC evaluates and reports on actions taken. The responses to this year’s recommendations are outlined below.

*Continue to provide guidance and support for parents on how to help their children practice reading, writing, and mathematics skills at home.*

- More than 190 events were held for parents to provide information about the curriculum and ways to help their children at home. (see Questionnaire results above)
- Most Title I schools support literacy development by providing books for children to read at home with parents. Family literacy programs, such as Groveton Elementary’s *Bags of Books*, provide parents with strategies for reading with children. (Attachment 1).

*Continue to purchase dual-language books for distribution to families through the Partners in Print family literacy programs so that parents can share books with their children in either English or*

*their home language. Expand the purchase of dual language books to include languages other than Spanish.*

- 400 dual language books were purchased for parents who attended *Partners in Print* programs at 25 schools.
- The number of languages was expanded from the original Spanish/English books to include Arabic, Farsi, Chinese, Korean, Urdu and Vietnamese.
- Surveys regarding the use of dual language books were given to parents at selected schools. Sixteen surveys were returned. Parents expressed their joy at having a book to read to their child in their home language.
- Seven of the 16 surveys indicated that having a book with two languages enabled parents to explain the concepts in the book to their child.

*Encourage and assist schools to place their Family Involvement Policies and School-Home Compacts on their school web sites to provide parents easy access to these documents. Work with schools to standardize the location of the Title I information on their web sites*

- A Title I logo located at the bottom of the schools' home pages links to the FCPS Title I Internet site so that schools can be more easily identified as a Title I school and parents can readily obtain information about the Title I program in FCPS.
- Schools added a Title I section to their web sites that includes descriptions of the Title I programs.
- Schools posted their school level Family Involvement Policy and their School-Home Compact on their web sites.

*Continue sponsoring and coordinating Family Field Trips for Title I schools to provide opportunities for intergenerational learning.*

- Ten Title I schools participated in Family Field Trips to the Air and Space Museum, the National Gallery of Art, and the Museum of Natural History. Field trips were coordinated and supported by the Title I office staff.

*Use the District Advisory Council (DAC) meetings to provide more information to DAC representatives about family involvement resources available within Fairfax County Public Schools.*

- At the February meeting, a representative from Family and School Partnerships spoke about FCPS resources for parent involvement. These include Welcoming Atmosphere Walk-Throughs, the lending library of parent involvement materials and resources, the Speakers Bureau, and the Community Liaison program.

*Develop additional informational material, including a PowerPoint presentation, that schools can use to explain Title I to parents.*

- A PowerPoint was created and made available to principals via the Intranet site and CD's to use in presenting information about the Title I program.
- Descriptions of the four Title I instructional programs have been written and shared with principals for use on their school websites.

*Research options for family literacy programs for grades 4-6 that can be used at schools to provide support for parents of older students.*

- The guide “Family Reading Night” was purchased to review for possible distribution to schools.
- At the May DAC meeting, a presentation was given explaining how two Title I schools developed their upper grade family literacy programs, modeled after the *Partners in Print* early literacy program.

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## **V. Recommendations for 2009–2010**

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- Continue to provide guidance and support for parents on how to help their children practice reading, writing, and mathematics skills at home.
- Use the District Advisory Council (DAC) meetings to provide more information to DAC representatives about family involvement resources available within Fairfax County Public Schools.
- Provide support for schools in developing or adopting family literacy programs for grades 3-6.
- Have Title I information for school websites translated into other languages.
- Provide resources and information to schools to assist them in strengthening relationships with parents as an important support for student achievement.

