

TITLE I HANDBOOK

2015-2016

Avella Area School District Mission Statement

The mission of the Avella Area School District is to promote responsible citizenship and the pursuit of educational excellence for every student.

Avella Elementary Center Title I Mission Statement

The Title I Program of the Avella Elementary Center in accordance with the Mission of the district and with the guidelines and regulations of the Title I Program is committed to providing a safe and nurturing environment for students, staff and parents. Through a trusting, sharing and open partnership, the parents and staff will share the responsibility for student achievement in reading, for open, two-way and frequent communication and for providing opportunities for shared decision making.

Revised by Parent Council on 5-11-16

What is Title I?

Title I has been the largest federally funded program in education. It was signed into law in 1965 by President Lyndon Johnson. The Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) or Title I was designed to help students having difficulties with reading by providing funds for extra attention, as well as materials and teachers. Since it began, the program has gone through numerous name changes but it continues to provide instructional help for those students needing it the most. Funding is directed to schools based upon their poverty levels.

Avella Elementary Center Title I Goals

1. To increase active participation of all parents/guardians in the education of their children.
2. To improve student performance in basic reading skills.
3. To provide an environment where the child, not the program, is most important.

Compact

A Compact is a document that is sent home from school stating what the school, the child's parents and the child is willing to do during the school year. When everyone does his/her part the child experiences valuable and lasting success at school.

Teachers, parents, and students are asked to give their input into putting together the Parent/ Student/ School Compact. Each parent/guardian of a Title I student will receive a compact document.

The Parent Involvement Policy can be found of the Avella School District webpage.

What makes the Title I program successful?

In order for Avella Elementary students to be successful, a unified effort must be carried out between the school, students, and parents working together. The Title I program centers around the belief that children are capable of making decisions, solving problems, and learning from their experiences. Parents of Title I students are an important part of this team approach. The administration and teachers of the Avella Elementary Center encourage and welcome parent involvement in the education of their children.

SCHOOL WIDE ASSESSMENTS

The fall, winter, and spring school wide assessments are part of the secured assessment component of the Avella Area School District. Assessments measure cumulative grade level knowledge and skills.

Study Island benchmarks and PSSA tests show results as Below Basic, Basic, Proficient, and Advanced. Students who score in the proficient range are reaching grade level expectations. Students who score in the advanced range are exceeding grade level expectations. The goals that we will be using in our DIBELS testing are Recommended Goals, which align with our curriculum and Common Core. DIBELS tests show results as Core, Strategic, and Intensive. Students who score as Core are at their grade level. Students who score as Strategic or Intensive are in need of some type of support and may qualify for Title I services.

Curriculum and Standards

The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania has adopted State Standards in Language Arts and Math for all public schools in Pennsylvania.

The Avella Area School District has aligned the K-12 curriculum to prepare students for the state assessment tests that are administered in grades 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 11. Standards tell us what students should know and be able to do in a content area and at a specific grade level.

Highly Qualified Staff

Every school receiving Title I money is required to notify parents of their rights to receive information concerning the professional qualifications of their child's teacher(s) including the degrees held, certifications held, and whether the teacher is certified in the area he/she is teaching.

Parents may also receive information as to whether or not their child is receiving instruction by a paraprofessional, and if so, his/her qualifications.

Any parent who requests this information should call the Elementary Center at (724-356-2294 or 724-222-6460) and ask to speak to Mr. Zebrasky, Elementary Principal.

Title I Staff

Mrs. Lauren Baker, Reading Specialist
Phone: 724-356-2294 ext. 5216
Email: bakerl@avellasd.org

Mrs. Lisa Conn, Title I Reading Aide

Mr. Zachary Zebrasky
Elementary Principal
Federal Programs Coordinator
Phone: 724-356-2294, ext. 5500
Email: zebraskyz@avellasd.org

What is the role of Title I Program in the Avella Elementary Center?

After reviewing PSSA scores and teacher and parent input, the Avella Area School District has chosen to provide Title I support in reading to selected students in grades K – 6 for the 2015-2016 school year.

What does the Avella Elementary Title I program look like?

The Title I program supplements the regular curriculum. Small groups of students in Kindergarten through Sixth grade work with Mrs. Baker, our Reading Specialist and/or Mrs. Conn, the Title I teacher's aide daily. Students in Title I receive instruction that is targeted to their area(s) of need.

Who is eligible for the program?

To be eligible to receive Title I services, students can be identified in several ways:

- Classroom performance as evidenced by final grades and/or pretest
- Standardized testing (PSSA, OHS)
- DIBELS reading assessment
- Referrals from teachers

Avella Elementary Center

Title I Parent Involvement Policy

The Avella Elementary Center's Policy in accordance with Section 118 of the NCLB (No Child Left Behind) act of 2001, will implement programs, activities and procedures for the involvement of parents.

Communication with parents will include:

- An annual meeting to inform parents of their rights and responsibilities.
- Results of individual assessments (including an interpretation of the results).
- Descriptions of the curriculum, forms of assessment used to measure student progress, and proficiency levels that are expected.
- Shared responsibility in developing school-parent-teacher compacts.
- Opportunities for regular meetings scheduled at various times.

Involvement strategies will be coordinated with Headstart and Early Intervention programs to promote an easier transition into public school.

Information and materials will be provided to enhance the understanding of the importance of parental involvement and to build more effective communication skills.

A portion of the Title I allocations will be reserved for the parent involvement activities. Use of the funds will be decided by members of the Parent Advisory Council

Parent's Rights

The Elementary Center is operating under a Title I Targeted Assistance Program. This means that students having the greatest need have been identified to receive the services of the program. These services are provided in a variety of ways. Parents of these Title I students have certain rights. Some of the more important of these rights are discussed below:

1. Parents must receive a copy of a written Parent Involvement Policy. This Policy will describe how parents and the school staff work together to make sure your child succeeds in school. The Policy also describes in detail your rights as parents and what is expected of you. You can be involved in the writing/revising of this policy. This policy is included in this booklet.
2. The school must hold a meeting to explain the Title I Program to all parents and what their rights are under the program.
3. Parents can be involved in the writing of school-parent compacts. The compacts are agreements or contracts between parents, school staff, and the children. It explains how parents will work together to make sure their child is successful in school. It should be used to help make sure everyone involved is doing what is necessary for the child to succeed.
4. Because communications between teachers and parents are considered to be so important, parental rights include at least one parent-teacher conference during the year. Also, parents have the right to receive frequent reports from their child's teacher(s) on their performance.
5. Each year the school staff must review with the help of parents the Parent Involvement Plan. The parent involvement plan can be changed if certain activities are not working. Parents can be involved in this review.

Evaluating Parent Involvement

A yearly evaluation of the parent involvement policy is required. Parents should be involved in this process. Both the content and effectiveness of the parent involvement policy should be evaluated.

A questionnaire is distributed near the end of the school year and is sent home with all K-6 students. Parents are asked to respond to questions and to provide additional suggestions concerning parent involvement. The findings are used to develop strategies for school improvement and revisions to the Title I Parent Involvement Plan.

Assessment in the Avella Elementary Center

The purpose of assessment in the Avella Elementary Center is to monitor student progress toward district and state learning outcomes. The District Framework for Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment provides for multiple forms of assessment. Assessments administered at Avella Elementary Center include PSSA, GMADE, Study Island, OHS, and classroom assessments including traditional performance assessments, classroom portfolios and teacher observations.

Avella Elementary Center also administers a school wide reading assessment called DIBELS. DIBELS is administered electronically, via I-Pads, to the students and scores are received electronically. These scores are shared with parents, teachers, and administrators via e-mail.

Students in first through sixth grade receive report cards every nine weeks, and midterm progress reports. Kindergarten students receive report cards every nine weeks. Students in Title I will receive a progress report every nine weeks.

