



# Michigan City Area Schools

Opportunity ★ Excellence ★ Pride



## District Office for Title I Services

*making sure every student has a chance to make a difference in the world!*

2024 – 2025

### Title I Parent Handbook

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### Joy Elementary School

1600 E. Coolspring Ave.  
Michigan City, IN 46360  
219.873.2090  
Ms. Karen Puchalski, Principal  
Mrs. Natalie Patino, Secretary

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## Parent Involvement Policy

*The Joy School community will provide opportunities for every student to reach their full potential in academic, social/emotional growth, and physical well-being. We are committed to preparing children to be lifelong learners who will be productive citizens in a rapidly changing global community. We believe:*

- ✓ *The purpose of our school is to assure all students accomplish their highest level of academic achievement, with an emphasis upon learning as a lifelong process*
- ✓ *Students need self-confidence along with respect for all members of the Joy community*
- ✓ *Everyone functions at their personal best when they are provided with well-defined guidelines in a non-threatening environment. Students should be willing to take risks and feel comfortable, appreciated, and accepted as an important member of the Joy community.*

**1. Joy School will hold an annual parent meeting early in the school year at a convenient time to explain:**

- Title I participation and requirements
- Parents' right to be involved
- The forms of assessment used to measure academic success and progress, including: iReady, Standards-based report cards
- Description and explanation of curriculum to be used, including: Indiana State standards, Illustrative Math, and EL Education.

**2. The following items will be distributed to parents for review and input:**

- Parent Needs Assessment Survey – early in the school year, an online survey will be sent to parents and also a link will be on the Joy Facebook page
  - Parent Involvement Policy – provided at registration
  - Family Involvement Calendar of Events – sent home in communication folder and also posted on Joy Facebook
  - Home School Compacts – provided at registration
  - Parent Notices as they apply to Title I will be distributed to each child in their communication folder. If a parent asks, a copy will be mailed.
  - Parents have access to grades/classroom progress online any time. The following assessment results are disseminated to parents:
    - ILEARN (online; mailed)
    - I AM (sent home w/ students)
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- o IREAD-3 (mailed)
  - o Report Card includes assessment data
3. **Joy School will provide parents of participating Title I students with timely information in a language and format easily understood in the following ways:**
- o Registration packets
  - o Teacher notes, phone calls, or emails
  - o Monthly school newsletter
  - o Wednesday take-home folder
  - o District and school websites
  - o Blackboard Connect
  - o Use of interpreter as needed
  - o Report cards
  - o Counselor and/or Student Success Coach
4. **Joy School will foster positive and productive family partnerships through:**
- o Strategies from the school reading plan and school improvement plan
  - o Providing opportunities for decision-making input related to the education of their children through school and district committees
  - o Offering flexible scheduling of events including but not limited to: Title I meetings, Open House, Family Literacy Nights, Breakfast events, parent workshops
  - o When possible, providing childcare and refreshments during parent meetings
  - o Staff meetings focusing on how to build positive family partnerships
  - o Fostering and encouraging good attendance
5. **Joy Families will in turn foster positive and productive partnerships with the school through:**
- o Supporting their students' learning by: Ensuring good attendance, monitoring homework completion, supervising television watching and electronic game playing, encouraging positive use of extra-curricular time, and encouraging reading at home
  - o Volunteering at school
  - o Participating in school activities
  - o Communicating with school staff
  - o Being positive advocates for their children
6. **Materials and training will be offered to parents on how they can assist, encourage and improve their child's academic achievement, through:**
- o A Family Resource Center in the school
  - o An Instructional Coach
  - o Take-home books with skills at the appropriate grade level for their child
  - o Home-school newsletter
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7. **Joy School will coordinate and integrate parent and community involvement with local agencies, schools, and other public programs:**
    - YMCA Early Learning Programs
    - Purdue University North West
    - Safe Harbor
    - Dunebrook
    - Junior Achievement
    - Swanson Center
    - LaPorte County Literacy Council
  
  8. **Joy School will communicate to the district any parent concerns with the Title I program. The Title I Department will receive the comments and respond to any suggestion or concern as timely and practically as possible.**
  
  9. **Early Learning Middle School Transition Plan**
    - a kindergarten "Joy Jumpstart" is offered to all incoming kindergarten students
    - a Head Start visit is done in early May
    - Middle School counselors visit our current 6th graders
    - Our 6th graders are offered a visit to the middle school of which they will attend
    - Counselor and/or Student Success Coach meets with 6th graders on class selection
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## Home – School Compact

Families and schools must work together to help students achieve high academic standards. Through a process that includes teachers, families, and students the following are agreed upon rules and responsibilities that we as partners will carry out to support student success in school and life.

### Staff Pledge

I agree to carry out the following responsibilities to the best of my ability by:

- ✓ Providing a safe and supportive learning environment.
- ✓ Teaching classes with an interesting and challenging curriculum that promotes student achievement.
- ✓ Motivating my students to learn.
- ✓ Setting high expectations and helping every child to be successful in meeting Indiana's academic achievement standards.
- ✓ Communicating frequently and meeting annually with families about student progress and the school and family compact.
- ✓ Inviting parents to volunteer, participate, and observe in my classroom.
- ✓ Participating in professional development opportunities that improve teaching and learning and support the formation of partnerships with our families and our community.
- ✓ Participating in collaborative decision making with parents and school colleagues to make our school accessible and welcoming for families.
- ✓ Respecting the school, students, staff, and families.

### Student Pledge

I agree to carry out the following responsibilities to the best of my ability by:

- ✓ Coming to school ready to learn and work hard.
- ✓ Bringing the necessary materials, completed assignments, and homework.
- ✓ Knowing and following school and class rules.
- ✓ Communicating regularly with my parents and teachers about school experiences so that they can help me be successful.
- ✓ Limiting my TV watching, video game playing, and internet usage.
- ✓ Studying or reading every day after school.
- ✓ Respecting our school, classmates, staff, and families.

### Family/Parent Pledge

I agree to carry out the following responsibilities to the best of my ability by:

- ✓ Providing a quiet time and place for homework and monitoring TV viewing.
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- ✓ Reading to my child or encouraging my child to read every day. (20 minutes K-3 and 30 minutes for grades 4-5).
- ✓ Ensuring that my child attends school every day and gets adequate sleep, regular medical attention and proper nutrition.
- ✓ Monitoring my child's progress in school regularly on PowerSchool.
- ✓ Participating in appropriate decisions about the child's education.
- ✓ Attending student-led conferences.
- ✓ Communicating the importance of education and learning to my child.
- ✓ Respecting the school, staff, students and families.

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Student

Teacher

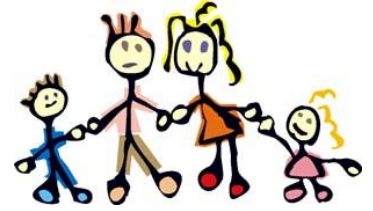
Parent/Guardian

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## Parenting Resource Center for the Family

**Indiana's Parenting Center** offers resources for parents and their children. When parents need to reach out for help/advice, resources are available. ParentingCenter.com is dedicated to helping families find parenting information. From family support to education, ParentingCenter.com offers advice for family and community. This website offers state-by-state resources. For information on Indiana's parenting resources please use the following link:



<http://www.parentingcenter.com/state/indiana.html>

### What We Do

ParentingCenter.com provides many different resources surrounding your child's education, health and wellbeing, as well as resources for fun, family friendly activities in the area! The following are just a few of the areas that are covered on ParentingCenter.com:

- Many different educational tools
- Family support links
- Health and medical resources
- Family/Parenting Articles
- Child care resources

For more information please use the following link:

<http://www.parentingcenter.com/>

Sponsors:

- ❖ **YMCA** – *We Build Strong Kids, Families*
- ❖ **Ford Motor Company**
- ❖ **Eli Lilly**
- ❖ **Disney Mobile**

Additional information for parents, including school achievement data, is available on the **Indiana Department of Education Website**, [www.doe.in.gov](http://www.doe.in.gov). If you do not have internet access at home, your school will provide internet access, or you may visit the Michigan City Public Library.

If you have further questions concerning the Indiana Partnerships Center or parent involvement, please call your child's school or:

<p><b>MCAS District Title I Office</b> 408 S Carroll Ave Michigan City, IN 46360 219.873.2000</p>	<p><b>Joy Elementary School</b> 1600 E. Coolspring Ave. Michigan City, IN 46360 219.873.2090</p> <p>Karen Puchalski, Principal Natalie Patino, Secretary</p>	<p><b>Parenting Center.com</b> 904 N. Line Street Loogootee, IN 47553 812-295-8491 <a href="https://www.parentingcenter.com/">https://www.parentingcenter.com/</a></p>
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## Title I Parent Involvement Policy

The Michigan City Area Schools Board will follow the parental policy guidelines in accordance with the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended by the *Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015*.

Michigan City Area Schools Title I program provides all students with fair, equal, and meaningful opportunities leading to a high-quality education and increased student achievement and parent involvement.

### **Policy Guidelines**

1. Families will have an opportunity to review the School-wide Title I plan and make suggestions for improvement. MCAS will do this by assisting each Title I school:
    - In arranging annual Title I meetings that inform families of and provide time to make suggestions regarding:
      - Title I program goals
      - Instructional strategies and curriculum
      - Assessments used
      - Expected student proficiency levels
      - Provide parents with materials and training to improve their child's achievement.
      - Families' rights to request information about the qualifications of teachers and paraprofessionals in their school. (Section 1119)
    - Annual meetings will be held at various times convenient for parent participation.
  2. MCAS will provide coordination, technical assistance, and other necessary support to Title I schools as they plan and implement effective parent involvement activities focused on improving student achievement and school performance by:
    - Providing training on how to build effective parent engagement activities focused on improving student achievement and relationships with families through various resources which may include:
      - PowerSchool training to navigate the site to obtain grades, attendances, schedule, and behavioral issues
      - Provide parents with technological information to guide them through the MCAS website as well as the communication portal, Peachjar
    - Recommending family literature and materials to enhance parental engagement in the home
      - Take-home books, academic materials, and other resources specific to their child's academic level
    - Supporting schools in developing a welcoming environment for parents.
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- Professional development focusing on developing positive family partnership and parental engagement for all staff
  - Continue to research best practices in positive parental engagement
  - Enhancing our external partnerships that support students, families, and staff
  - Ensuring that information is sent home in a language and format that parents can understand.
3. In order to enhance the schools' and families' capacity to form a strong partnership and increase student achievement, MCAS will support each Title I school by:
- Providing guidance to Title I schools in assisting families in understanding:
    - Indiana State Academic Standards;
    - Their child's progress;
    - How to work with educators to improve their child's achievement.
  - Encouraging teachers to create positive relationships with parents.
  - Scheduling parent/teacher conferences to support parents in understanding their child's progress
  - Encouraging schools to provide meaningful materials and information that promotes student achievement.
  - Providing opportunities for families to participate in district and school-level decision-making as it relates to their child
  - Coordinating and integrating Head Start, state-run preschool programs, and English as a new language instructional programs;
  - Ensuring that schools provide reasonable support for parent involvement as requested by parents.
  - Ensuring that parents are involved in revising the School-Parent Involvement Policy, Home-School Compact, and School-wide Plan.
4. Coordinate with Head Start and other community-based preschools to align our parental involvement strategies through activities to include but not limited to:
- Kindergarten Round-Up and Kindergarten Countdown
5. MCAS with parents, teachers, and principals will annually review the Title I program and the effectiveness of the Parent Involvement Policy.
- In collaboration with parents we will work to:
    - Identify and minimize barriers which may limit family participation
    - Identify strategies that lead to more effective and increased family involvement and engagement in decision-making.
    - Collaborate and revise the District and School Parent Involvement Policies annually (section 1112)
      - Assist in developing and recommending suggestions for the district Title I Program. (Section 1116)
      - Collaborate in developing the Parent Involvement Policy.
6. In collaboration with schools we will ensure that parents are involved in revising the school Parent Involvement Policy and Home School Compact annually.
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## Parents' Right to Know & Highly Qualified Teachers and Assistants

At the beginning of each school year, your child's school corporation will provide you (at your request and in a timely manner) information regarding the qualifications of your child's classroom teacher(s), including the following information:

1. Whether your child's teacher has met the State qualification and licensing criteria for the grade level and subject area in which the teacher is providing instruction.
2. Whether the teacher is teaching under emergency or other provisional status through which the State qualification or licensing criteria have been waived.
3. The baccalaureate degree major of the teacher, any other graduate certification for degree held by the teacher, and the field of discipline of the certification for degree.
4. Information on the level of achievement of your child in each of the State academic assessments.
5. Timely notice that your child has been assigned, or has been taught for four or more consecutive weeks, by a teacher who is not highly qualified.
6. Whether the student is provided services by paraprofessionals, and if so, their qualifications.

Remember This:

- The notice and information provided to parents shall be in an understandable and uniform format and provided in a language that parents can understand.
- This information may be obtained at the beginning of the school year.
- The school corporation must provide this information in a timely manner at the parent's request.

A request can be made by contacting the

District Office for Title I Services

By phone

219-873-2000





## Title I School-Wide Designation

All Michigan City Area Schools are Title I served schools and have received School Wide Plan (SWP) designation through the Indiana Department of Education. School faculty, staff and parents developed a plan to meet the ten components of the School Wide Plan at each of the district Title I Schools.

The Components of a School Wide Plan are:

1. A comprehensive needs assessment of the whole school.
  2. Implementation of school wide strategies that:
    - Provide opportunities for all children to meet proficient and advanced levels of student academic achievement.
    - Use effective methods and instructional strategies that are based on scientifically based research that:
      - Strengthens the core academic program,
      - Increases the amount of learning time,
      - Includes strategies for serving underserved populations,
      - Includes strategies to address the needs of all children in the school, but particularly low achieving children and those at risk or not meeting state standards,
      - Addresses how the school will determine if needs of those children have been met,
      - Is consistent with and is designed to implement state and local improvement plans.
  3. Highly qualified teachers in all core content area classes.
  4. High quality and on-going professional development for teachers, principals and paraprofessionals.
  5. Strategies to attract high-quality, highly qualified teachers to this school.
  6. Strategies to increase parental involvement, including:
    - 6a. A description of how the school will provide individual academic assessment results to parents.
    - 6b. Strategies to involve parents in the planning, review and improvement of the school wide plan.
  7. Plans for assisting preschool children in the transition from early childhood programs such as Head Start or state-run preschool programs.
  8. Opportunities and expectations for teachers to be included in the decision making related to the use of academic assessment results leading to the improvement of student achievement.
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9. Activities and programs at the school level to ensure that students having difficulty mastering proficient and advanced levels of academic achievement are provided effective, timely additional assistance.
  10. Coordination and integration of federal, state and local funds; and resources such as in-kind services and program components.
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## Title I Complaint Policy

### **What is a Complaint?**

A signed written statement that includes: 1) an allegation that a requirement related to Michigan City Area Schools has been violated; and 2) information that supports the allegation.

### **Who May Complain?**

Any parent, teacher, or other concerned individual(s), or organization(s) may file a complaint.

### **All complaints must:**

- Be written or typed;
- Be signed by the person or agency representative filing the complaint and include contact information;
- Specify the requirement of law or regulation being violated regarding the provision of Title I services and the related issue, problem, and/or concern;
- Contain information/evidence supporting the complaint; and,
- State the nature of the corrective action desired.

### **Complaint Procedure**

1. Receiving Complaints: Complaints should be formally registered with the Michigan City Area Schools Office of Title I located at 408 S. Carroll Ave, Michigan City, IN 46360
  2. Investigating Complaints: Upon receipt of the written complaint, the LEA will investigate the complaint within 10 business days.
  3. Resolving Complaints: The LEA will resolve the complaint within 15 business days.
  4. Appealing Complaints: If the LEA fails to resolve the complaint or fails to resolve the issue to the satisfaction of the complainant, the complainant can appeal to the Indiana Department of Education's Title I Grants and Support division.
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