



## What's a PIRC?

A PIRC is a Parent Information and Resource Center, supported by federal funds under the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001. The purpose of the PIRCs is to expand the role of parents in their children's education and academic success, primarily in Title I schools. In particular, PIRCs assist the parents of children who attend schools identified for improvement, corrective action, or restructuring under Title I, Part A of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA).

The Title I program provides federal funds to local educational agencies (LEAs) and public schools with high numbers or percentages of poor children to help ensure that all children meet challenging State academic content and student academic achievement standards. LEAs target the Title I funds they receive to public schools with the highest percentages of children from low-income families. Unless a participating school is operating a schoolwide program, the school must focus Title I services on children who are failing, or most at risk of failing, to meet State academic standards. Schools enrolling at least 40 percent of students from poor families are eligible to use Title I funds for schoolwide programs that serve all children in the school.

PIRCs are required to inform and educate parents, family advocates, educators, community organizers, faith-based activists and others committed to educational success for all students, especially low-income, minority, and English language learning students. All Title I schools must develop parent involvement policies and strategies, and all but the smallest (i.e., a district that receives under \$500,000 in Title I funding) must spend at least 1 percent of their Title I funding on parent training and education programs.

Any school or district identified as being "in need of improvement" -- because for two years in a row it has not reached sufficient "adequate yearly progress" (AYP) -- is required to have additional parental involvement programs. Individual parents must be informed in a timely and direct fashion if their school or district falls into "improvement" status and if, as a result, their child becomes eligible for school choice or supplemental educational services (SES). Parents must be engaged in the development of the school or district improvement plan, and the plan itself must include strategies to promote effective parent involvement.

No Child Left Behind (NCLB) requires that PIRCs use at least 50 percent of their funds to serve areas with high concentrations of low-income families, and to use a minimum of 30 percent of their awards to establish, expand, or operate early childhood parent education programs (Parents as Teachers (PAT), Home Instruction for Preschool Youngsters (HIPPI), or another early childhood parent education program).

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The law holds Title I schools more accountable than ever for helping all students succeed, including students with disabilities. If students in Title I schools do not make adequate progress in their schoolwork, NCLB gives parents two powerful tools: greater choice over the schools their children attend and extra help for struggling students.

NCLB gives parents more information, more options and more help than ever before. But where can parents go to find out about the law? How can parents learn what their rights are? How can they know the right questions to ask? Who can help parents get the information they need – in parent-friendly language – so they can make the best choices for their children's education? Parent Information and Resource Centers (PIRCs) can help.

**If your child attends a Title I school, you need to know about the resources and programs of the PIRC in your state.**

Every state has at least one PIRC. In Texas, the Intercultural Development Research Association (IDRA) is funded to provide services throughout the State as a PIRC. The Texas IDRA PIRC is a comprehensive, multicultural and multilingual parent leadership and support program for strengthening partnerships between parents and schools for student success. Their main office is located in San Antonio, Texas. They can be contacted at 210-444-1710, and their website address is [www.idra.org](http://www.idra.org).

To find out if your child's school is a Title I school, call the school's administration office and ask, or go to <http://ritter.tea.state.tx.us/nclb/PDF/rptSC5000SWandTA0809.pdf>. This site has a list of Title I, Part A campuses in Texas, arranged by region, by ISD, by campus. For example, if your child attends a middle school in Beaumont, you look under Region 5, then Beaumont ISD, then the name of the school.



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