



The Indiana Academy for Parent and School Leadership[®]

2009-2010 Application Packet

The Indiana Partnerships Center, Indiana Parent Information and Resource Center
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www.fscp.org

The Indiana Academy for Parent and School Leadership is funded in part by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Innovation and Improvement through the Indiana Partnerships Center, Indiana Parent Information and Resource Center.

The Indiana Academy for Parent and School Leadership[®]

The purpose of the Indiana Academy for Parent and School Leadership (Academy) is to *grow* leaders, who work to improve family, school, and community partnerships for student success.

The Academy is based on the following core beliefs:

1. *Parent* is defined as any adult in the life of the child who acts as an advocate and support for their learning.
2. Students are more successful as learners when their parents/families are actively involved in their learning.
3. Students learn in the classroom, the community, and at home so that parent/family engagement in student learning can happen anywhere at any time.
4. School improvement and planning that is done without the active involvement of families is limited in scope, possibilities, and potential impact. Schools that actively engage families in the process of continuous improvement are more likely to see the change and development they seek for their students.
5. Growing parents as leaders within the school improvement process takes time, intentional support, strategic action, and multiple opportunities for parents to learn and experience themselves as contributors not only to their children, but to the larger school community.
6. As the school community engages families through parent-friendly policies, communications, opportunities for leadership, education, and connection, all students benefit and grow as learners and citizens.
7. Affirming and building upon cultural differences among students, families, and community members strengthens the capacity of schools to effectively engage all learners and their families.

Responsibilities	
Schools	Parents
It is the responsibility of the school staff to actively work with parents to better understand their children, their culture, and life experiences so that teachers can design learning that connects to the lives and interests of individual students.	It is the responsibility of parents to assist teachers to design learning that connects to the lives and interests of their children by working with the school staff to better understand the uniqueness of their children, their culture, and life experiences.
It is the responsibility of the school staff to communicate with families about their children’s learning and what they can do to support the success of their children.	It is the responsibility of parents to seek to understand what will be helpful to their children’s learning and to work with school staff to support their child’s academic and social growth.
It is the responsibility of the school to create an inclusive and inviting environment in the school so that all parents and community members are welcome and experience being part of the school community.	It is the responsibility of parents to be present and active partners within the school community, helping to create an inclusive and welcoming school environment.

Goals for participants in the Indiana Academy for Parent and School Leadership

Participants will:

1. Develop a working understanding of the school improvement process and the importance of having data and best practices inform school-wide decisions to support student learning.
2. Increase their knowledge about their school so that they can become active contributors and influencers within their school.
3. Know the research-based impact of parent engagement and best practices as represented by the national PTA Standards for family, school, and community partnerships.
4. Acquire the skills they need to work effectively within a team, from making decisions to designing and monitoring action plans, to giving and receiving feedback and communicating directly with others.
5. Improve their abilities to market to, recruit, and enroll other parents, school staff, students, and community members in the work of their school.
6. Develop competencies in working across differences of class, race, religion, culture, age, ability, and sexual orientation.

Active participation and follow through of school leadership for one year will result in the following school-based outcomes:

1. Support for the School Improvement Plan that includes:
 - a. A clear understanding of the existing strengths and growth areas for fostering a welcoming environment for families and communities as documented by the completion of the school surveys.
 - b. An action plan for making the school a more welcoming environment for families.
 - c. Increased number of parents who are prepared to participate in the school improvement process and will serve on the leadership team for the School Improvement Plan
 - d. Increased numbers of parents who give input through focus groups that can be incorporated into school improvement plans
 - e. A parent-generated project that supports the current school improvement priorities.
2. School staff who understand and value the importance of family, school, and community partnerships in student learning.
3. Greater numbers of parents who initiate communication with their children's teachers to support student learning.
4. More parents who participate in parent education experiences focused on supporting student learning

Academy Design

School Teams of 5 Individuals

A school team is composed of a minimum of three parents and at least one school staff member (principal, teacher, counselor, etc). The fifth team member can be a community partner, an additional school staff member, or a fourth parent. It is critical to have a core of parents, representing the diversity of families in the school, who can support each other in new territories of learning, and to have school personnel present who can gain new skills, increase their understandings of parents, and be a bridge between parents and teachers and school leadership.

Focused Learning Team Sessions at the Academy

The Academy brings ten teams together for focused shared learning experiences designed to increase participants' knowledge and skills and prepare them for their work back home. The Academy draws on the principles of experiential learning and the dialogue learning process. Participants reflect on previous experiences, are introduced to new concepts, work with the concepts, consider the potential applications, practice and apply what has been learned, and then reflect on new insights and uses of the information and skills gained.

Integrating Learning and Application

After each Academy Session, participants apply what they learn as they go back to schools and engage in conversations with school leaders, conduct surveys, recruit and enroll parents in workshops and focus groups, and initiate parent projects that support student learning as identified in the School Improvement Plans. It is essential that the school principals and school improvement teams (or school leadership teams) are active in this process and commit time to support parents to implement their work and become a part of their school improvement process.

On Site Assistance and Support

Indiana Partnerships Center (IPC) Regional Coordinators work with team members at their school site to accomplish their identified tasks. The IPC staff supports implementation of initial on site assessments, facilitates the Right Question Workshop for parents, assists team members with the parent focus group process and supports the team in working together to design and implement their School Improvement Project. Each school will have up to 6 days of on-site support and assistance from the Indiana Partnerships Center personnel.

Overview of Design

SESSION I: September (two-day session) – 9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m. each day
<p>Content Introduce family, school, and community partnerships research; establish processes to work effectively across differences as a group for decision-making, communication, and accountability to support a professional learning community; generate data through the school Assessment tools; introduce the Right Question Workshop.</p>
<p>Application Meet with Principal and School Leadership or Improvement Team to explain the school assessment tools and identify ways to determine base line of parent communication with teachers. Meet with principal and make plans for the Right Question Workshop and Professional Development Session related to research in family, school and community partnerships.</p>
<p>IPC on site - Assists the Academy team to: Work with the School Principal to set the date and process for the school assessments, identify participants, and complete his/her portion of the assessment. (via phone, email or in person)</p>
SESSION II: October (two-day session) – 9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m. each day
<p>Content Introduce NCLB and the laws that require parent involvement in student learning and school improvement; explore school improvement plans and the student data driving these plans. Participate in one activity of the Right Question Workshop and develop marketing plan to enroll diverse parents in the RQP workshop back at School.</p>
<p>Application Generate parent and staff participation for the Right Question Workshop. Host Right Question Workshop for parents and school staff at school. Complete the school assessment with core school team.</p>
<p>IPC on site - Assists the Academy team to: Support Academy team in implementing their plans to recruit parents for the RQP workshop. Facilitate Right Question Workshop for parents and school staff. Lead a staff development session on Research & Best Practices in Family, School and Community Partnerships. Facilitate the school assessment with a school team. (On site for two days)</p>

Session III: November (one-day session) – 9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.

Content

Reflect on RQP insights, benefits to other parents, and success of recruitment (through Focus Group experience); review results of school Assessments and develop initial plans for presenting Focus Group and questions to School Leadership or Improvement Team.

Application

Meet with School Leadership or Improvement Team to share results of assessment and to get their input on questions for the parent focus groups.
Facilitate focus group sessions with parents who reflect the diversity of families in the school.

IPC on site - Assists the Academy team to:

Support the school team in facilitating the parent focus group process and determining process for synthesizing and sharing what is learned.
(On site for one day)

Session IV: December (one-day session) – 9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.

Content

Partnership Expo - Learn about the successful best practices of other schools to support school improvement through practices to partner with families and/or community in school transitions, literacy and mathematics, student attendance and college readiness.

Application

Meet with Principal and School Leadership or Improvement Team to share results of focus group and to discuss possible parent initiated projects that could be implemented to support the current school improvement plan.
School Team decides on a project and develops a plan.

IPC on site - Assists the Academy team to:

Meet with the school team to introduce the project planning process.
Provide support and feedback on how they are working together.
Support the team in developing a project plan and working to include school staff and additional parents that represent the diversity of parents in the school/ in the process.
(On site for one day)

January

No Academy Session - School Team finalizes project plans and reviews with School Leadership or Improvement Team.

IPC on site - Assists the Academy team to:

Communicate via email, conference calls and if needed site visit to support the team in finalizing project proposal
(On site for one day)

Session V: February (2 Hours Per Team Scheduled)

Content

The panel review is a process where each team presents their project and gets feedback from a panel related to the project’s feasibility and potential for impact on student learning and cultivation of family, school, and community partnerships in student learning. The panel includes school board members, community representatives, teachers, parents, and school administrators.

Application

Modify and implement project, based on evaluation of feedback received by panel review.
Implement project during second semester.
Develop project portfolio for Academy Celebration and presentation to School Leadership or Improvement Team and school staff.

IPC on site - Assists the Academy team to:

Work with the school team to support project implementation and or evaluation and the development of their portfolio and presentation to share and sustain their efforts.
Work with school principal to explore a school-wide action team planning process for year two.
(On site one day)

Session VI: April (Celebration) – 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. (All Teams meet in Indianapolis)

Content

The culminating luncheon celebration brings together teams from all of the Academies throughout the state. Participants, principals, funders, and community partners are able to hear about family, school, and community partnership efforts taking place throughout the state, and celebrate the accomplishments of their teams.

PRINCIPAL CHECKLIST	
May 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicate with School Leadership or Improvement Team and secure their commitment to The Academy.
May 15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine funding for The Academy and promote participation with staff and parents.
June 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submit application to The Indiana Partnerships Center with PO#.
August <i>(after the school Year begins)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicate with all of The Academy members and thank them for their commitment. • Initiate School Leadership or Improvement Team meeting to introduce Academy Team.
September	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schedule the Right Question Workshop and staff development session for mid-October.
November-December	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initiate School Leadership or Improvement Team meeting that includes presentation by The Academy parents and staff on the results of school assessment and discussion of focus group questions. • Schedule parent focus groups with IPC staff and the Academy parents and staff.
January-March	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give feedback to the team on the draft project proposal. • Informally talk with The Academy team about their progress on their project. • Secure the participation of additional parents recruited from the team in the review and revision of the School Improvement Plan.
April	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initiate School Leadership or Improvement Team meeting where The Academy participants share results of their projects. • Discuss potential for a second year of in depth school-wide assessment and planning effort for family/school/community partnerships. • Attend The Academy Celebration.

2009-2010 ACADEMY DATES

SEPTEMBER - Session I				
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
			10 9am-3pm	11 9am-3pm
OCTOBER - Session II				
			8 9am-3pm	9 9am-3pm
NOVEMBER - Session III				
			5 9am-3pm	
DECEMBER - Session IV				
			3 9am-3pm	
FEBRUARY - Panel Review				
			4 2 hrs per team scheduled sessions	5 2 hrs per team scheduled sessions
APRIL - Celebration				
<p>Friday, April 30</p> <p>11:30am – 1:30pm</p> <p>All Teams in Indianapolis</p>				

TEMPLATE FOR EMPLOYER LETTER

(If you want The Indiana Partnerships Center to send this letter to your employer, please contact Stacy Mathis at 317-205-2595 or smathis@fscp.org.)



Date

Dear **Employer Name**:

The Indiana Partnerships Center, a Parent Information Resource Center funded by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Innovation and Improvement, is pleased to announce that **Participant Name**, an **Employer Name** employee, has been selected to participate in the Indiana Academy for Parent and School Leadership.

The Academy is a six (6) session leadership series, in which parents from across the state work with community members and educators to enhance understanding, develop new skills, and plan applications that make a difference in the educational lives of students and families. We know that many employers understand the importance of their employees gaining leadership skills. We are pleased to offer this opportunity to **Participant name** to build on **his/her** strengths as a leader in your community. The 2009-2010 sessions will be from 9:00am – 3:00pm in **City Name** on the following dates:

September _____ **October** _____ **November** _____ **December** _____ **February** _____ **April** _____

Participant’s Name selection as a participant in the Academy speaks highly of **his/her** commitment to our youth and will be a powerful tool for creating the meaningful home-school-community connections that have proven beneficial to students both academically and personally. When companies, such as **Employer Name**, allow citizens like **Participant Name** the time to become actively involved in the lives of students, the overall well-being of the Hoosier state is improved. Research demonstrates that parental involvement is a key factor in encouraging positive social behaviors and increasing the academic achievement of students. The more parents are involved, the more likely a young person is to graduate from high school, be drug-free, and pursue higher education. In turn, companies such as **Employer Name** are rewarded with employee loyalty, a more skilled future workforce, and safer communities that allow their businesses to thrive.

Aesop said, “In union, there is strength.” When parents like **Participant Name** and employers such as **Employer Name** join forces to support education, parents are able to become more involved in the lives of young people, the community grows stronger, and children realize their dreams. Thank you, **Boss’s Name**, for supporting your employee in this noteworthy endeavor.

Sincerely,

Jacqueline Garvey, *Executive Director*

Should you have any questions about the Academy, or need more information, please do not hesitate to call Executive Director, Jacqueline Garvey, at The Indiana Partnerships Center at 317-205-2595 or 1-866-391-1039 (toll free).