



BLUE MOUNTAIN SCHOOL DISTRICT

Title I – Serving the Needs of Parents and Students

Title I and the Blue Mountain School District together form a partnership with you to present a unique Reading Program for your child.

PARTNERSHIP

The Blue Mountain School District and the Federal Government under the Every Student Succeeds Act have formed a partnership to present a special reading program called Title I. The program is offered to elementary children who are in need of supportive help to improve their reading and writing skills.

ENTITLEMENT

The Federal Government bases its entitlement on the statistical information found in the census. The financial entitlement may change each year. This year Blue Mountain's Title I Program received \$363,528 in funds.

TARGET SELECTION

The government has certain guidelines we must follow if we accept the federal money. We must identify which of our schools in the Blue Mountain District qualify for services. This process is called Target Selection. At Blue Mountain both Blue Mountain Elementary East and Blue Mountain Elementary West receive Title I services.

NEEDS ASSESSMENT

The Title I Program must complete a Needs Assessment to determine which basic skill should receive the services. In addition, a survey is completed by parents and staff. For the academic year at Blue Mountain, the basic skill identified to receive these services is **READING**.

SELECTION PROCESS

The next step is to determine which children should receive these Title I services. To identify these children we have a selection process which includes performance testing, teacher referrals, and benchmark assessments. Early reading skills assessments, teacher recommendations and a screening test are used to determine eligible students at the kindergarten level. At other grade levels criterion-referenced tests, benchmark assessments, teacher referrals, and reading inventories may be used. All students in kindergarten through third grade are evaluated for eligibility.

PARENT NOTIFICATION

Once the children are identified, a letter and information fact sheet is sent to parents requesting permission and explaining the program. Parents have the right to refuse services for their child. However, most parents choose to give their child this opportunity.

READING SPECIALISTS

The teachers who teach in the Title I Program are reading specialists certified by the Pennsylvania Department of Education. In addition to being certified as a teacher, they have earned extra certification by studying exclusively about reading at the graduate level of education.

Our reading specialists coordinate the needs of our Title I students with the classroom teacher, guidance department, special teachers, and other staff members. They support the classroom reading program and other content area subjects. They use children's literature to teach skills and strategies and create a strong reading/writing connection. The reading specialists help children succeed in the regular program.

The reading specialists for Blue Mountain School District are: Mrs. Daun Corse-Phillips, Mrs. Rachel Jones, Mrs. Diane Kerchner, and Mrs. Ann Lucarino.

PRIMARY CLASS STRUCTURE (K-Grade 1)

The Title I instruction occurs daily for the full school year. The children receive Title I instruction in the reading lab when appropriate and in the classroom, mostly during the classroom teacher's language arts block of time. The children receive reading instruction from the classroom teacher and also from the reading specialist. The children should not miss other classes or special activities by participating in the Title I instruction. The instruction in Title I is designed to help children succeed in the classroom, attain grade level proficiency on academic standards, and achieve success in basic and more advanced skills. A variety of techniques and strategies are used to develop and strengthen reading skills. Emphasis is on decoding skills from phonics.

The kindergarten screening program helps to identify students who could benefit from additional teaching assistance. We know all students grow physically and academically at different rates as well as learn differently. The purpose of the kindergarten program is to assist all students to gain the kindergarten skills to go on to first grade the following year. The class structure is an all-day kindergarten program with a full-time kindergarten teacher in the classroom.

INTERMEDIATE CLASS STRUCTURE (Grades 2-3)

Reading support instruction is targeted at students' reading fluency and comprehension. Students' reading skills at both decoding (figuring out words) and comprehension (understanding what they read) are measured. Students struggling in either or both of these areas are identified for additional support through Title I instruction. This instruction occurs through pull-out support classes. A program designed to assist students in these areas is Read Naturally. This program will be used with reading support students to help them grow in these areas. A great benefit of this program is the ability to place children into the program at their appropriate reading level and to evaluate individual student growth. More information is available on Read Naturally at www.readnaturally.com.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Communication with home begins even before instruction. Early in the school year a letter and information fact sheet are sent to each parent of eligible children. During Back-to-School Night parents are invited to visit with the reading specialist and classroom teacher. Needs assessments are reviewed to prioritize the federal projects program. Conferences are officially scheduled in the Fall to enable parents to meet with the teacher and discuss their child. In addition, the reading specialist is available to answer any concerns by contacting the school. Parents are invited free of charge to attend workshops and programs. As part of the State Department's guidance in parent involvement, a parent involvement plan is developed. A parent meeting is held annually to share information on the Title I Program and gain suggestions for program improvement. A copy of the Blue Mountain School District's Title I Parental Involvement policy is included with this packet. Finally, parents are asked to complete a questionnaire offering their input into the program.

PROGRAM EVALUATION

The Title I Program at Blue Mountain School District is monitored and evaluated by the Department of Education, Harrisburg. Local supervision is conducted by the Director of Elementary and Secondary Education, staff, and parents.

If you have any questions about the Title I Program, please contact Mrs. Gwendolyn J. Witmer-Belding at 570-366-0515, Extension 1028.