

Parent Petition Overview

What is parent petition?

Parent Petition would allow parents and guardians of children at a school to petition the State Department of Education, through the Nevada Achievement School District, for a change at their school. This could include petitioning.

- For more flexibility for the school and/or principal.
- For a partnership with a non-profit organization that can help the school improve.
- For a school plan with evidence-based strategies.
- To become an Achievement Charter School outside of the local school district.

How would it work?

If more than 50% of parents sign the petition, then the petition is successful. After a successful petition, parents work together to help implement the plan with the current or a new administration, based on the petition.

What protections would be in place?

To ensure petitioners, students and school staff are protected, the following rules have been proposed:

- To prevent disruption to student learning, petitions **may not be circulated on school property** during school hours.
- The school and district **may not use public funds or resources** to campaign for or against a petition.
- **No gifts, rewards, incentives, threats or false statements** can be given to encourage parents or guardians to sign or not sign. This includes threats related to an individual's immigration status.
- **Students may not be threatened or harassed** based on their parent or guardian's decision to sign or not sign a petition.
- **School employees cannot be threatened or harassed** based on their decision to support or not support a petition.
- Circulators **may not share the contact information** of anyone who signs the petition.

What information and training would there be?

To ensure petition organizers and petition signers have access to information, the following resources have been proposed:

- Informational flyers for petition organizers, petition circulators and petition signers
- A website with organized resources
- Training videos for petition organizers, petition circulators and petition signers

1



A parent or group of parents decide that they want to make a change at their child's school.

2



The parents work together to draft a School Plan. The parents may involve school staff in developing the plan.

3



Then, they share the plan with other parents and ask them to sign a petition to support the School Plan.

4



Once they get the signatures of more than half of the student's parents, they turn the petition in for approval.

5



The parents work together to implement the School Plan for the next school year.

Examples

Here are some examples of how Parent Petition could be used in Nevada:

Example A:

At a low-performing elementary school in Las Vegas where 60% of students are English Language Learners, a group of parents decide they want a change. They want to work with the school staff to figure out a strategy to improve the school. A few parents talk to one of the teachers at their school, who points them to research that shows the positive impact on English Language Learners of bi-lingual instruction. The parents bring the idea and the research to the school principal and she agrees to hold a meeting for parents and staff. The principal, parents and some teachers work together to write a school plan that includes **evidence-based strategies** and collect signatures. Once the petition is turned in and approved by the State Board of Education, the parents work with the school staff to implement the plan to make their school bi-lingual. The school signs a performance compact with the State agreeing to the plan for the intervention and setting targets for student and school performance.

Example B:

At a school in Washoe County, families of a rising star school visit a nearby charter school and are impressed by the school environment, staff and student achievement results. The parents ask the charter school if they would be interested in expanding to serve their students. When the charter school agrees, parents decide to write a petition for the **charter school** to run their school. Parents work together to gather signatures. They bring groups of parents to visit the charter school and see it for themselves. Once the petition is turned in and approved by the State Board of Education, parents work with the charter school to turn their school into an Achievement Charter School. Several parents participate in committees to help interview staff and weigh in on important decisions. By the end of the year, two parents offer to become part of the charter school's board to fulfil the requirement for at least two board members to be part of the community served by the school. The school signs a contract with the State that includes student performance goals aligned to the State's targets.

Example C:

At one-star school in Clark County that is eligible for the Achievement School District, parents and school staff come together to propose that instead, the school become a part of the Clark County Turnaround Zone. Parents and staff visit turnaround schools to better understand the program and write a School Plan that includes **evidence-based strategies** used by the Turnaround zone. Parents and families work together, outside of school hours, to talk to parents and gather signatures of support. Once the petition is turned in and approved by the State Board of Education, the parents continue to work with school and district staff to plan for the next school year as part of the Turnaround Zone. The school signs a performance compact with targets for the school to become a 3-star school in 3 years.