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**5 Ways to Profit From No Child Left Behind (NCLB)**

**By Detra D. Davis**

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The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (No Child Left Behind) is designed to reform and improve student achievement and change the culture of America's schools. According to this reform act each state must measure every public school student's progress in reading and math in each of grades 3 through 8 and at least once during grades 10 through 12. By school year 2007–2008, assessments (or testing) in science will be underway. These assessments must be aligned with state academic content and achievement standards. They will provide parents with objective data on where their child stands academically.

Parents may not be aware that their school is required by law to offer school sponsored activities to promote parent involvement, and there are special funds allocated for these activities. The funds are used to pay trainers, facilitators, and instructors, along with the materials used in these trainings, food and child care services so parents can focus on the information being delivered.

The seminars, workshops, and trainings are designed to assist parents in helping their student's academic achievement and performance.

Teachers, parents, business professionals, and all others who may be interested in helping parents help their children learn may be interested in creating a workshop, seminar and/or training for parents. Below are five suggestions for offering activities that will benefit parents and their children.

1.If education is your background, and you are a displaced teacher, become a Supplemental Educational Services Provider. Contact your State Department of Education to get more information on how you can qualify to become a Supplemental Educational Services Provider offering tutorial services to children who meet the criteria for those services. You will be paid through Title I funding received by the school district where you apply to service.

2.There is always a need for Parent Educators. Parent Educators teach parents how to "be better parents." They focus on parenting skills, disciplinary skills, learning how to help with homework, help with standardized test taking and more. Contact your local school district to get more information on

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how you can become a Parent Educator offering workshops or seminars to parents in your school district. You will be paid through Title I funding received by the school district where you apply to serve. Visit [www.detroitk12.org](http://www.detroitk12.org) to see a sample of the seminars offered to parents.

3. Educational professionals with a Science background should gear up to prepare for the 2007–2008 science assessment that will be required by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2002. Do you have a gift for gabbing about science? Do you know how to write educational materials for children centered on science? There will be a need for such items in the not too distant future and now is the time to prepare your goods. Summer time science packets that children can work on and workshops for parents, again all paid for by Title I funding will be needed. Contact your local school district with a proposal; they will be glad you did.

4. It is no secret that if your child goes to a public school, private school, religious school, or if they are home schooled, at some point in their life they will have to deal with standardized test. Are you a wiz at taking this type test? Are you a wiz at doing research to understand how to take this type test? Provide a workshop for parents so they can understand how to help their children. Every parent wants their child to have an upper hand when it comes to test taking skills. Contact your local school district and local library with a proposal, this service may even warrant a website.

5. Title I will pay for child care services for parents participating in parent involvement seminars/workshops. The child care service provider must be licensed and insured and willing to provide activities for a wide range of ages. According to the NCLB Title I requirements, child care services should be offered where schools offer parent workshops so parents can focus on the content being offered. If you operate a daycare center you may want to check with your local school district, or a local school in your area to see if your services are needed. The funding for payment is through the Title I (1%+ Parent Involvement Funding). For more information contact your school district or state No Child Left Behind Title I Office.

Detra D. Davis is a technical writer with over 20 years of experience. She writes technical and operational manuals, and works for a large school district in the Midwest.. Detra may be reached at 313–446–0896, at [www.supportingourchildren.com](http://www.supportingourchildren.com) or by mail at J. Davis & Associates Publishing, P. O. Box 44782, Detroit, MI 48244–0782, Attention: Detra D. Davis.

### **Baltimore Schools Designate Six Schools As Persistently Dangerous With A Warning To**

#### **Another**

#### **By Patricia Hawke**

The federal No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act requires that all states report any schools that are considered persistently dangerous. The state of Maryland is only one of six states that have reported having such schools. Some metro areas with similar or worse problems report no dangerous schools at all.

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Since each state sets its own suspension limits for reporting, the NCLB provision is inconsistent across the nation with many states ignoring it all together. The state of Maryland, however, takes it seriously with rules that are more stringent than most other states.

A "persistently dangerous" school designation means the school has a high rate of suspensions for serious offenses. These are violations of assault on another student or teacher, bringing a weapon to school, setting a fire at school, or sexual assault of any type.

The six schools designated as dangerous by the Baltimore schools are:

- Calverton, Thurgood Marshall, and Highlandtown Middle Schools — These schools have been considered dangerous by state standards for the past four years, with Highlandtown closing before the fall of 2006.
- Liberal Arts at Walbrook, Dr. Roland N. Patterson Sr. Academy, and Dr. W.E.B. Dubois High School were all added this year.

The Baltimore schools also had six such schools last year. The number of suspensions and expulsions for dangerous offenses declined at five of the six schools, with three dropping off the list for this year.

A dangerous designation is serious for any of the Baltimore schools. Parents with children attending these schools are notified of the situation and given the option to transfer their children to other schools, as long as the transfer is completed before the beginning of the next school year.

The dangerous schools provision in the No Child Left Behind Act does have some Baltimore schools educators concerned:

- First, it makes some of the Baltimore schools appear to be the most violent in the nation, though some public schools in other states that ignore the provision or set the suspension limits high are in a much worse shape.
- Second, some Baltimore schools educators question whether an entire school is being labeled for the repetitive acts of only a few students. The Baltimore schools new Academy for College and Career Exploration is one such example. This year it was given a warning and put on probation for only six incidents of suspension for a serious offense. With only 300 students, it quickly hit the state's ceiling, while larger schools do not.
- Third, some Baltimore schools teachers have argued that designated schools become even more chaotic. With principals who are reluctant to give suspensions, the violence at school escalates, while sending the wrong message to the other students — no punishment for breaking the rules.

Other Baltimore schools educators, however, like the reporting provision. It puts a much-needed focus on improving discipline at these schools, nipping the problem in the bud — before it is beyond repair. An example is Calverton and Thurgood Marshall. Though still on the list this year, suspensions for

serious offenses have dropped significantly over last year.

Designated Baltimore schools do not receive any additional funding to help with their problems; however, the Baltimore schools must present a plan to the state on its strategy to improve these school situations.

The Baltimore schools is committed to resolving the issues in these six middle and high schools. Baltimore schools administrators know that quality educational opportunities only come in a safe learning environment that is free of violence and disruption.

Patricia Hawke is a staff writer for Schools K–12, providing free, in–depth reports on all U.S. public and private K–12 schools. Patricia has a nose for research and writes stimulating news and views on school issues. For more information on Baltimore schools visit



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