

Senate Bill No. 1595

CHAPTER 1037

An act to amend Section 51101 of, and to add Sections 51101.1 and 51101.2 to, the Education Code, relating to English learners.

[Approved by Governor September 28, 2002. Filed with Secretary of State September 28, 2002.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SB 1595, Escutia. Pupils: English learners.

Existing law gives the parents and guardians of pupils enrolled in public schools the right to be informed by the school and to participate in the education of their children and specifies the information they have a right to receive and the ways they may participate in the education of their children. Among the parental rights listed in a particular provision are the right to be informed in advance about school rules, attendance policies, dress codes, and procedures for visiting the school.

This bill would add disciplinary rules and procedures and retention and promotion policies, which are provided for in other provisions of existing law, to the list of things about which parents have a right to be informed. The bill would add to the list of rights the right to be notified, as early in the school year as practicable, and as required by existing law, if their child is identified as being at risk of retention and of their right to consult with school personnel responsible for a decision to promote or retain their child and to appeal a decision to retain or promote their child.

The bill would provide that a parent or guardian's lack of English fluency does not preclude a parent or guardian from exercising the rights guaranteed by existing law, would specify that a school district take all reasonable steps to ensure that parents and guardians who speak a language other than English are notified, as required by existing law, of the rights and opportunities available to them pursuant to existing law, and would list rights and opportunities available to parents and guardians of pupils who speak a language other than English.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

SECTION 1. This act shall be known as the Parents Rights Act of 2002.

SEC. 2. Section 51101 of the Education Code is amended to read:



51101. (a) Except as provided in subdivision (d), the parents and guardians of pupils enrolled in public schools have the right and should have the opportunity, as mutually supportive and respectful partners in the education of their children within the public schools, to be informed by the school, and to participate in the education of their children, as follows:

(1) Within a reasonable period of time following making the request, to observe the classroom or classrooms in which their child is enrolled or for the purpose of selecting the school in which their child will be enrolled in accordance with the requirements of any intradistrict or interdistrict pupil attendance policies or programs.

(2) Within a reasonable time of their request, to meet with their child's teacher or teachers and the principal of the school in which their child is enrolled.

(3) To volunteer their time and resources for the improvement of school facilities and school programs under the supervision of district employees, including, but not limited to, providing assistance in the classroom with the approval, and under the direct supervision, of the teacher. Although volunteer parents may assist with instruction, primary instructional responsibility shall remain with the teacher.

(4) To be notified on a timely basis if their child is absent from school without permission.

(5) To receive the results of their child's performance on standardized tests and statewide tests and information on the performance of the school that their child attends on standardized statewide tests.

(6) To request a particular school for their child, and to receive a response from the school district. This paragraph does not obligate the school district to grant the parent's request.

(7) To have a school environment for their child that is safe and supportive of learning.

(8) To examine the curriculum materials of the class or classes in which their child is enrolled.

(9) To be informed of their child's progress in school and of the appropriate school personnel whom they should contact if problems arise with their child.

(10) To have access to the school records of their child.

(11) To receive information concerning the academic performance standards, proficiencies, or skills their child is expected to accomplish.

(12) To be informed in advance about school rules, including disciplinary rules and procedures pursuant to Section 35291, attendance, retention, and promotion policies pursuant to Section 48070.5, dress codes, and procedures for visiting the school.



(13) To receive information about any psychological testing the school does involving their child and to deny permission to give the test.

(14) To participate as a member of a parent advisory committee, schoolsite council, or site-based management leadership team, in accordance with any rules and regulations governing membership in these organizations. In order to facilitate parental participation, schoolsite councils are encouraged to schedule a biannual open forum for the purpose of informing parents about current school issues and activities and answering parents' questions. The meetings should be scheduled on weekends, and prior notice should be provided to parents.

(15) To question anything in their child's record that the parent feels is inaccurate or misleading or is an invasion of privacy and to receive a response from the school.

(16) To be notified, as early in the school year as practicable pursuant to Section 48070.5, if their child is identified as being at risk of retention and of their right to consult with school personnel responsible for a decision to promote or retain their child and to appeal a decision to retain or promote their child.

(b) In addition to the rights described in subdivision (a), parents and guardians of pupils, including those parents and guardians whose primary language is not English, shall have the opportunity to work together in a mutually supportive and respectful partnership with schools, and to help their children succeed in school. Each governing board of a school district shall develop jointly with parents and guardians, and shall adopt, a policy that outlines how parents or guardians of pupils, school staff, and pupils may share the responsibility for continuing the intellectual, physical, emotional, and social development and well-being of pupils at each schoolsite. The policy shall include, but is not necessarily limited to, the following:

(1) The means by which the school and parents or guardians of pupils may help pupils to achieve academic and other standards of the school.

(2) A description of the school's responsibility to provide a high quality curriculum and instructional program in a supportive and effective learning environment that enables all pupils to meet the academic expectations of the school.

(3) The manner in which the parents and guardians of pupils may support the learning environment of their children, including, but not limited to, the following:

(A) Monitoring attendance of their children.

(B) Ensuring that homework is completed and turned in on a timely basis.

(C) Participation of the children in extracurricular activities.



(D) Monitoring and regulating the television viewed by their children.

(E) Working with their children at home in learning activities that extend learning in the classroom.

(F) Volunteering in their children's classrooms, or for other activities at the school.

(G) Participating, as appropriate, in decisions relating to the education of their own child or the total school program.

(c) All schools that participate in the High Priority Schools Grant Program for Low Performing Schools established pursuant to Article 3.5 (commencing with Section 52055.600) of Chapter 6.1 of Part 28 and that maintain kindergarten or any of grades 1 to 5, inclusive, shall jointly develop with parents or guardians for all children enrolled at that schoolsite, a school-parent compact pursuant to Section 6319 of Title 20 of the United States Code.

(d) This section may not be construed so as to authorize a school to inform a parent or guardian, as provided in this section, or to permit participation by a parent or guardian in the education of a child, if it conflicts with a valid restraining order, protective order, or order for custody or visitation issued by a court of competent jurisdiction.

SEC. 3. Section 51101.1 is added to the Education Code, to read:

51101.1. (a) A parent or guardian's lack of English fluency does not preclude a parent or guardian from exercising the rights guaranteed under this chapter. A school district shall take all reasonable steps to ensure that all parents and guardians of pupils who speak a language other than English are properly notified in English and in their home language, pursuant to Section 48985, of the rights and opportunities available to them pursuant to this section.

(b) Parents and guardians of English learners are entitled to participate in the education of their children pursuant to Section 51101 and as follows:

(1) To receive, pursuant to paragraph (5) of subdivision (a) of Section 51101, the results of their child's performance on standardized tests, including the English language development test.

(2) To be given any required written notification in English and the pupil's home language pursuant to Section 48985 and any other applicable law.

(3) To participate in school and district advisory bodies in accordance with federal and state laws and regulations.

(4) To support their children's advancement toward literacy. School personnel shall encourage parents and guardians of English learners to support their child's progress toward literacy both in English and, to the extent possible, in the child's home language. School districts are



encouraged to make available, to the extent possible, surplus or undistributed instructional materials to parents and guardians, pursuant to subdivision (d) of Section 60510, in order to facilitate parental involvement in their children's education.

(5) To be informed, pursuant to Sections 33126 and 48985, about statewide and local academic standards, testing programs, accountability measures, and school improvement efforts.

(c) A school with a substantial number of English learners is encouraged to establish parent centers with personnel who can communicate with the parents and guardians of these children to encourage understanding of and participation in the educational programs in which their children are enrolled.

