

**How it works:**  
Parent Coalition  
Ionia County Great Start Collaborative

**These guidelines take effect January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2014**

Thanks for taking the time to find out what it means to work with the Ionia County Great Start Parent Coalition. We are a working group/subcommittee of the Ionia County Great Start Collaborative or ICGSC. This page explains how we work as parent representatives and how to collaborate with so many parents and professionals to make it possible for every child to be ready for success in school and life. As a parent, your voice is needed and is heard here.

**How does it work?**

In order for all of us to focus on the reason we do this work, i.e. our kids and their families and those who love them/us, we need a structure to keep this going, so that when we move on, the work will continue. The ICGSC offers a paid position referred to as the Parent Liaison(s) and a Director position to help facilitate the work that parents do in order to move toward a brighter future for Ionia's children and families. This work is described in detail below, under Liaison Duties. The positions are less than part time. These positions are to support the Parent Coalition. They allow for parents to grow in their leadership abilities and attend more trainings and conferences. The parent Coalition is made up of parent volunteers who are looking to become active in activities related to the five star points of the Ionia County Great Start system.

**What is the work I would be involved in?**

See page 5, part III in the green Parent Leadership booklet for complete details, but the following is a summary of what is required. You must:

- Be a parent with a child under 12 years of age
  - Attend collaborative meetings
  - Participate on the Parent Coalition committee
  - Participate on other committees of the ICGSC, as needed.
  - Read minutes and agendas prior to the meeting
  - Be accountable to an indentified parent network thru a signed letter of commitment
1. If you have a childcare provider who watches your child(ren) in order for you to attend a meeting, you will be reimbursed. Please see the child care form for specific rate restrictions. This is a separate form, from the honorarium and mileage reimbursement form.
  2. You will develop a plan or goal that you want to achieve so that the parent coalition and the larger collaborative can support you in this pursuit. You may receive trainings or attend a conference, for example, on men and fathers in the home, because you are interested in developing a better understanding of this topic. It may be that you are interested in advocating for improved access/comfort for children and the care-givers on public transportation in the county. We want to encourage your personal interests/passions in this work and will pay for your expenses to attend and develop.

**NOTE: WE WANT YOU!** Please contact with Cari O'Connor at 616-522-1412 or [coconnor@ioniaisd.org](mailto:coconnor@ioniaisd.org) to make arrangements for children with special needs or other needs that fall outside these guidelines.