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Parents' and Teachers' Perspectives Regarding Parental Involvement and Student Achievement

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This is to certify that the doctoral study by

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has been found to be complete and satisfactory in all respects,
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Abstract

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Christi Nelson Walker

MS, Jackson State University, 2005

BS, Alcorn State University, 1992

Project Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

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Abstract

The U.S. government has stated in federal guidelines that parents must be involved in their children's education in order for student achievement to increase. For more than 5 years, a small rural middle school in Mississippi was designated a low-performing school due to its failure to achieve the required standards for quality distribution index and adequate yearly progress on the Mississippi Curriculum Test, 2nd Edition. The purpose of this study was to examine whether parents' and teachers' perspectives regarding parental involvement and student achievement differed at the school. Epstein's theoretical framework was used as the basis for this quantitative study. Quantitative data from 250 parents and 28 teachers were gathered on the effectiveness of home-school collaboration for 4th through 8th-grade students. A t test was used to determine if there were significant differences in parents' and teachers' perspectives regarding parental involvement and student achievement. There was a statistically significant difference ($p < .001$) between parents' and teachers' perspectives, whereas the teachers' attitudes were higher regarding their general attitude of parental involvement, parental involvement practices, and parental responsibilities. Based on study findings, a 3-day professional development/training curriculum and materials project was developed to assist teachers at the school with developing strategies for increasing parental involvement and student achievement. This study could possibly contribute to positive social change by increasing teachers' understanding of parents' needs and enhancing their ability to effectively communicate with them, which may lead to more involvement by parents in their children's education and higher achievement by students.

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Dedication

I would like to first and foremost thank God for giving me the endurance to successfully complete what I started. I dedicate this study to my heavenly Father for giving me the ability to complete such a milestone in my life. I thank Him for guiding me through every step and decision made in completing each capstone.

I would also like to dedicate this study to my wonderful husband, Craig A. Walker, and children, Anthony Claude Walker and Makayla Addeona Walker, for their love and support. In addition to my husband and children, I would like to dedicate this study to my loving parents, Frederick D. Nelson, Sr., and Addean Nelson, and siblings, Shelia Nelson Allen and Frederick D. (Doug) Nelson, Jr., for listening to me when I needed to talk and giving me encouraging words.

Last but not least, I would like to dedicate this study to the members of Mt. Canaan M.B. Church and Egypt Hill M.B. Church for all the encouraging words, prayers, and phone calls.

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I would like to express my gratitude to the school principal at my study site for allowing me the opportunity to administer a survey to teachers. I would also like to thank the teachers and parents who participated in my study for taking time out of their busy schedules to complete the survey. Without you, I would not have been able to complete this study.

Special thanks to Dr. Sherry Rankin for reading and making the necessary edits to my study and giving encouraging words. Your reassurance gave me the confidence I needed to persevere. Everything you have done is greatly appreciated, and I assure you that you will never be forgotten.

Finally, I would like to say thank you to my family (parents, Addean and Fred Nelson, and siblings, Shelia Allen and Doug Nelson) for their encouraging words during rough times. To my husband, Craig Walker, and children, Anthony and Makayla, thank you for your patience, love, and support, as well as your understanding for the late nights I had throughout the doctoral program.

Most of all, I would like to thank my Heavenly Father for allowing me to cross paths with everyone who had a part in my success in completing this study. I appreciate each of you for assisting me in accomplishing this milestone in my life.

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Section 1: The Problem

Introduction

The purpose of this quantitative research study was to gain more understanding of parents' and teachers' perspectives regarding parental involvement and student achievement at a small rural middle school, Walker Middle School (pseudonym), in the U.S. state of Mississippi. Research indicates that parental involvement is significant to student achievement (Larocque, Kleiman, & Darling, 2011). Therefore, Walker Middle School must develop an effective parental development plan that benefits the children, parents, teachers, and school. According to Noel, Stark, Redford, and Zukerberg (2013), as early as the 1990's, there has been a decline in parental involvement in some U.S. states. When the student's transition from elementary to middle school, there is a decline in parental involvement (Lloyd-Smith & Baron, 2010). The focus of this project study was to work collaboratively with the school district and administrators and teachers to develop a plan that may close the gap between the parent and teacher perspectives regarding parental involvement.

In Section 1 of this project study, the problem of the study is described along with the information related to the local problem, rationale, and definition of terms. Also, Section 1 includes information about the significance of this research, as well as, the research question and hypotheses. Finally, in Section 1 I discuss the review of literature and implications of this project study.

The Local Problem

Based on my observations, since August 2005, there is a decrease in disruptive behavior and absenteeism when parents are active at Walker Middle School. Additionally, I have heard students inform their peers that when their parents are at Walker Middle School helping out in school activities, their behavior must be modified to avoid receiving a discipline referral. Parental involvement in schools plays a vital role in students' ability to learn the skills they need to be successful (Bracke & Corts, 2012). In the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001, parental involvement is defined as parents communicating with teachers about student learning and school events (Mississippi Department of Education [MDE], 2013c). Bracke and Corts (2012) indicated that when parents are involved in their children's education, it affects the intellectual, emotional, and physical development of children. While they also noted that parental involvement is beneficial to students' academic success, LaRoeque, Kleiman, and Darling (2011) noted that helping with their children's education can sometimes be often difficult for some parents. As Toper, Keane, Shelton, and Calkins (2010) noted, parental involvement in schools nationally is declining. According to Brock and Edmunds (2010), there is a decline in parental involvement in U.S. schools due to parents' lack of confidence in their ability to help their children and the demands of their work schedules.

Therefore, to address the issue of student achievement at Walker Middle School, educators have sought to develop a program or plan to increase parental involvement to close the gap between home and school. Increasing parental involvement was one of the

strategies implemented by the principal in Walker Middle School to improve student achievement. However, the strategies have been minimally successful, and only a small number of parents at the school are involved in their children's education, based on my observations. This insight led me to conduct this project study where I examined the perspectives of parents' and teachers' regarding parental involvement and student achievement at the school.

As early as 2002, students attending Mississippi public schools in third through eighth grades have been required to take a state standardized test, which is known as the Mississippi Curriculum Test, Second Edition (MCT2), to determine what they have learned during the school year (MDE, 2013b). In addition to providing data on the skills that students have mastered, the MCT2 is also used by MDE as a means of determining the success of schools (MDE, 2013b). School leaders, in turn, use the MCT2 to improve instruction and, subsequently, student achievement (MDE, 2013b).

For more than 5 years, MDE identified Walker Middle School as a low performing school due to its failure to achieve the required standards for Quality Distribution Index (QDI) and Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP; MDE, 2013e). The Annual Measurable Objective (AMO) as specified in the NCLB Act of 2001 was used by MDE to determine a school's letter grade by its QDI and AYP (MDE, 2013e). Growth was determined by comparing the results of the current year to the previous year (MDE, 2013e).

According to MDE (2013a), Walker Middle School served 630 students in Grades 4 through 8 during the 2014-2015 school year. Of the 630 students, 83% were African

Americans, 13% were Caucasians, and 4% were Hispanic. Forty-four percent were female participants, and 56% were male participants. There were 30 full-time teachers. Of these 30 teachers, six taught 4th grade, five 5th grade, five 6th grade, six 7th grade, and six 8th grade while two taught physical education (Grades 4-8). Ninety-one percent (91%) of the students received free or reduced lunch.

During the 2010-2011 school year, Walker Middle School was classified as a low performing school due to a low QDI and lack of substantial growth in reading/language arts and mathematics. Additionally, Walker Middle School received a letter grade of F in the 2011-2012 year because the QDI scores were low and did not meet growth in reading/language arts. Likewise, the school did not meet expected growth in the 2012-2013 school year in reading/language arts and mathematics but increased a letter grade of D. To meet growth, MDE compared MCT2 scores for the current school year to those for the previous school year. If a school has more students scoring advanced, proficient, and basic on the current MCT2 than in the previous year, the school is considered to have met growth (MDE, 2013e).

Walker Middle School had been identified by MDE officials as a focus school because it had not met growth due to a low performance from 2010 to 2015. A school is identified as a focus school when there is a large gap between the highest and lowest achieving subgroups or when it is a school that is among the group of schools with low achievement in the state (MDE, 2013c). When a school has been identified as a focus school, MDE personnel will evaluate the site and provide support for developing and

implementing a plan that school leaders can use in addressing areas deemed in need of improvement (MDE, 2013c).

Letter grades for schools that go to 12th grade which operate on a 4-year graduation rate are determined by adding the school's Quality of Distribution Index (QDI) to the high school's graduation rate (MDE, 2013c). Walker, a rural middle school, received a QDI of 135 during the 2012-2013 school year. When the high school's graduation rate of 75 was added to the QDI, it gave Walker Middle School a score of 210. However, because the overall score for Walker Middle School was 210, the school received a letter grade of D from MDE.

MDE created a QDI cut rate for schools with 12 grades and a 4-year graduation rate (see Table 1). Therefore, a school district would have a value of 210 when it has a QDI of 135 and a 4-year graduation rate of 75% (75 points). If a school does not meet growth, it will receive a D for a grade (MDE, 2013c). If a school does meet growth, the school would receive a grade of C. Growth was compared to previous school year scores. If a school does not show an increase in the current school year scores and the previous school year scores, the school does not meet growth (MDE, 2013c). However, if there is an increase between the 2 years, the school has met growth.

Table 1

2013 Accountability Information (4-Year Graduation Rate)

High school value (QDI + Grad Rate)	Does not meet growth	Meets growth
280 – 400	B	A
241 – 279	C	B
203 – 240	D	C
170 – 202	F	D
0 – 169	F	F

Note. A school that does not meet growth with a score of 210 receives a letter grade of a "D".

In an effort to meet growth, administrators at the Walker Middle School have implemented many strategies. Walker Middle School started an afterschool tutorial program, hosted multiple workshops, hired a consultant team, and purchased a variety of software. The afterschool tutorial program was designed to help students who were identified by teachers as needing extra help in the classroom. Each student was required to obtain a parent's signature before attending the afterschool program. The workshops are designed to address the needs of teachers so they can be effective in the classroom. Teachers are required to attend multiple workshops that focused on differentiated instruction, classroom management, group activities, and depth of knowledge (DOK). In addition to hosting workshops, school administrators hired various consultant teams to observe and study Walker Middle School and provide feedback on what changes could be implemented in order for the school to become effective. The school also purchased computer software (e.g., Study Island, Classworks, My Reading Coach, Star Math, Star Reading, and MindPoint Quiz Show) to assist teachers in educating students. However, many of the students at Walker Middle School continue to fail their nine weeks and state

tests. In an effort to prepare for state tests, currently identified as ESSA, educators at Walker Middle School administer nine weeks tests across the school year. Walker Middle School has four nine weeks tests containing standards for each grade level, identified by the state, to be taught by teachers in preparation for the state test.

School administrators also sought to encourage more parental involvement in the school. In an effort to close the achievement gap between the students, Walker Middle School teachers traveled to various communities within the city limits, making door-to-door visits to meet and inform parents about their children and the importance of having their support. The school also hosted a "Meet the Teachers Night" where parents and teachers could discuss concerns regarding students' behaviors, attendance, study habits, and learning styles. The school also hosted a number of parent workshops identified as Mississippi Curriculum Test, Second Edition, Nights to help parents understand what their children will see on the reading/language arts and mathematics state test. Not only did the educators at Walker Middle School discuss the style of the test, but the educators also informed parents the number of questions for each test, the different depth of knowledge levels, and the state goal, set by MDE, for schools by 2014, as well as the importance of students scoring proficient or higher, but less than 30% of the students' parents attended the workshops. In spite of all the strategies used by administrators and teachers, Walker Middle School continued not to meet AYP standards during the 2013-2014 school year.

Rationale

Evidence of the Problem at the Local Level

Walker Middle School has been identified by MDE as a low performing school since May 2006. Administrators at Walker Middle School have voiced concerns as to why the school has not moved to "successful." Every school year, the principal initiated quarterly parent-teacher conferences, monthly Parent Teacher Association (PTA) meetings, and one annual state test workshop for language arts/reading, math, and science, in the hopes of meeting AYP. During the 2012-2013 and 2013-2014 school year, the principal offered gift cards, ranging in value from $10 to $20, and served food in an attempt to increase participation at the events. Yet, parental involvement has not increased. In reviewing the 2011-2012 sign in sheets for parent teacher conferences at the school, I found that over 50% of parents were not participating in scheduled events.

Evidence of the Problem from the Professional Literature

Improving parental involvement was one of the strategies implemented by the federal government to improve student achievement. In 1994, the federal government recognized the importance of parental involvement in developing goals, known as Goals 2000, for U.S. school administrators to use in encouraging parental involvement (Goals 2000: Education America Act, 1994). In Goals 2000, eight goals were set by the United States, which stated by the year 2000, all children in America would be ready to start school, become responsible citizens, and schools would develop a partnership with parents (Goals 2000: Education America Act, 1994). Revisions made in 2002 to the goals stated that schools would supply students with the knowledge and skills required to

succeed in college, the working world, and the global community. Also, schools would help parents and citizens become more responsible in preparing third-grade students to read on grade level, as well as decrease the dropout rate to 13% by 2015. Finally, schools would have 60% of students scoring proficient and advanced on the Common Core State Standards by 2016 with an increase of 3% every year after 2016 (MDE, 2013g).

MDE (2013d), the National Center for School Engagement (2014), and the Michigan Department of Education (2014) have all indicated that parental involvement is extremely important for student achievement. Pomerantz, Kim, and Cheung (2012) asserted that a key concern for many countries was how to promote learning so that children can perform to their highest ability. Acknowledging that the majority of a child's time is spent outside the school, in the presence of one parent or family member (Pomerantz et al., 2012), the federal and Mississippi state government are promoting parental involvement in the schools (MDE, 2013c).

Noel et al. (2013) conducted a study consisting of 17,563 participants who used the National Household Education Survey. The study included participants from the 50 states and the District of Columbia regarding parental and family involvement in education. Noel et al. found that parental involvement levels had dropped slightly during 2012. They also found that students who had parents involved in their education were academically successful, had fewer behavior problems, and graduated from high school at a higher rate than those students whose parents were not active in their education (Noel et al., 2013).

Many schools in Mississippi received Title I Funding during the 2011-2012 school year (MDE, 2013h). Schools identified as Title I schools receive funds from the federal government. Title I Schools are schools containing a high percentage of students at or below the U.S. poverty level (U.S. Department of Education, 2014c). The U.S. Department of Education (2014c) stated that Title I is designed to support state and local schools in developing programs that will help improve teaching and learning for students so that they meet state academic standards. More importantly, funding is used to help students who are at risk of falling behind academically (U.S. Department of Education, 2014c).

This study is important because NCLB forced school administrators into striving to minimize the achievement gap between economically advantaged students from different economic, ethnic backgrounds, as well as students with disabilities in reading, mathematics, and science (MDE, 2013c). Therefore, school administrators are allowed to use Title I funds to include parents in assisting them in educating students. Giving the situation of academic achievement, school administrators are required to develop programs and strategies that will increase parental involvement while increasing student achievement. Therefore, principals, superintendents, and teachers must focus on increasing parental involvement to improve academics. For the reasons above, school administrators and teachers cannot be passive in addressing low parental involvement if students are expected to increase academically. In addition, school administrators and teachers must develop plans that can possibly close the gap between the parents' and teachers' perspectives.

Dietel (2013) indicated that one key indicator of student success is having a strong relationship between the parents and teachers. Therefore, by having a strong home-school relationship, schools will see a substantial gain in achievement (Dietel, 2013). However, Larocque et al. (2011) noted that teachers do not know how to include parents in their classroom activities and parents do not know how to include themselves in their children's education. Radzi, Razak, and Sukor (2010) stated that parental involvement must not be restricted to the home. Instead, school administrators and teachers must initiate activities that encourage and solicit parents to take part in their children's education. Teachers must communicate with parents to develop a strong partnership between the home and school. Developing the partnership could help teachers include parents in classroom activities and help parents become comfortable being involved in their children's education. In addition, teachers may learn what happens at home (Radzi et al., 2010). The purpose of the study was to understand the parents' and teachers' perspectives regarding parental involvement and student achievement at the Walker Middle School.

Definitions

Accountability: Schools and districts are required by the state to meet achievement standards to ensure AYP is met and every student receives a high-quality public education (U.S. Department of Education, 2014a).

Adequate yearly progress (AYP): A measure of the yearly progress of schools, districts, and state levels against annual targeted goals in reading, language arts, and

mathematics. AYP is used to determine whether U.S. schools are successfully educating their students (Young & Curcic, 2013).

Barriers: Situations or conditions that might prevent or reduce parental involvement (Brock & Edmunds, 2010).

Parental involvement: The participation of parents in school meetings and parent-teacher conferences and other activities, including helping with homework, providing structure at home, and showing interest in school activities (Baeck, 2010).

School district: The administrative unit that existed at the local level to assist in the operation of public schools and to contract for school services (Washington State Governors Office, 2014)

Successful: A school that has a Quality of Distribution Index (QDI) rating of 133 to 199, as established in the State Accountability Rating System (MDE, 2013f).

Significance of the Study

I conducted this study to examine the perspectives of parents and teachers regarding parental involvement and student achievement. The results will be used to assist school administrators and teachers with developing a plan for increasing parental involvement and student achievement. Lastly, the study will also be used to help many schools that have similar demographics, struggling to develop a plan to increase parental involvement so there may be an increase in student achievement.

Research indicates when there is a strong parent-teacher relationship; there is a positive effect on student achievement (Harris & Plucker, 2014). Epstein (1995) listed six types of involvements (parenting, communicating, volunteering, learning at home,

decision making and advocacy, and collaborating with the community) that could assist educators with creating a comprehensive program for their school and family partnerships and provide opportunities for parental involvement at school and home. Research indicated parents believe they should be a participant in their children's education (Bracke & Corts, 2012).

This study has the potential to help the school, students, parents, community, and teachers. Harris and Plucker (2014) noted when there is a strong partnership between the parent, school, and community; there will be an increase in test scores, positive attitudes, school attendance, improved behaviors, and completion of homework. In addition, parents will develop a positive and confident attitude with helping their children at home (Marshall & Swan, 2010). Schools will benefit when parents participate in their children's education (McKenna & Millen, 2013). When parents involve themselves in their children's education, schools experience an increase in student attendance, higher graduation rate, an increase in positive attitudes, an increase in math and reading scores, a decrease in discipline problems, and a minimization of grade failures (Larocque et al., 2011). Larocque et al. (2011) also indicated that there might be an increase in academic achievement at schools when parents are involved because teachers gain a better understanding of what they can do to meet the needs of their students, as well as plan more effective activities that will meet the need of the students. The results from this study will assist teachers, principals, and superintendents in developing plans that will increase parental involvement at the school. If administrators and teachers develop a plan

that could increase parental involvement and focuses on building a strong home-school partnership, the result could be an increase in academic achievement.

Guiding/Research Question and Hypothesis

Since 1994, school educators have been trying to develop a plan that will increase student achievement. However, the plans that have been develop and implemented have not been successful with achieving the desired goal. According to Lloyd-Smith and Baron (2010), parental involvement decreases as parents' children transition from elementary to middle school. Research, conducted by Hayes (2012) indicated there is an increase in academic achievement, school attendance, positive thinking, and a decrease in disruptive behavior when parents partake in their children's education.

Why some parents are not participants in their child education as they transition through middle school has been a concern to many. According to Brock and Edmunds (2010) parents did not participate in their children's education due to lack of confidence in their ability to help their children, parents' work schedule, and not having a babysitter or transportation to attend school events (Bower & Griffin, 2011). In addition, parents did not participate in their children's education because they felt that teachers were the best candidates for educating their children (Brock & Edmunds, 2010).

In this study, I used two surveys to gather the perspectives of parents and teachers that focused on a research question that relates to parental involvement and the effects it has on the academic performance of students attending the Walker Middle School. The research question was used to determine the value of implementing parental involvement strategies in the Walker Middle School.

Research Question: Are there differences in parents' and teachers' perceptions regarding parental involvement and academic achievement?

I tested the following hypotheses:

H_0: There will be no significant differences in parents' and teachers' perceptions regarding parental involvement and academic achievement.

H_A: There will be significant differences in parents' and teachers' perceptions

Review of the Literature

Parental involvement has been a concern in schools for many years (George & Mensah, 2010). George and Mensah (2010) indicated that prior to 1994, parents were responsible for educating their children with the basic skills needed prior to attending first grade and school administrators and teachers were responsible for teaching the academic skills, but parents did not have much input with what skills were needed for their children. Due to accountability in the schools today, parents are expected to play a role in their children's education (Zieger & Tan, 2012). Many researchers conducted research and shared their findings regarding the effect parental involvement has on student achievement, barriers of parental involvement, and strategies to increase parental involvement.

Parental involvement is important in educating the students and to the advancement of the school. Although there is a plethora of literature and theories regarding parental involvement and academic achievement, the purpose is to gather literature that is significant to parental involvement. To better understand the concept of parental involvement, research was conducted regarding parental involvement and

student achievement, as well as other areas needed to benefit schools. The literature review covers the following areas: theoretical framework, parenting, defining parental involvement, roles of parents, importance of parental involvement, benefits of parental involvement, types of parental involvement, barriers to parental involvement, strategies for getting parents involved, and responsibilities of the principal.

The literature review focuses on the parents' and teachers' perspectives regarding parental involvement and student achievement at the Walker Middle School in Mississippi. The literature review begins with the theoretical foundation of the study, followed by the six areas of parental involvement. The literature shows that there is a strong effect on student achievement when parents are active in their child's education.

Presently, there has been an extensive amount of literature on parental involvement including several theories and research on the importance and effects of parental involvement. The databases used to search for literature included ERIC, Education Research Complete, EBSCO Host, ProQuest, Google Scholar, Mississippi Department of Education, U.S. Department of Education, Thoreau: Search Multiple Databases, Journals, and the Internet. The key search terms and Booleans search terms used individually and with other terms between January 2010 and August 2014 were *parents, parental involvement, student achievement, academic achievement, achievement gaps, academics, benefits, roles of parents, importance, barriers, ethnicity, types of parental involvement, strategies, schools, improving, partnerships, challenges, home-school relationships, attitudes, expectations, beliefs, responsibilities of principal, socioeconomic status, lack of, missing, and increasing,* which was limited to peer

reviewed journals. Older studies were also identified while reading a plethora of literature for the current study and deemed important to include, particularly seminal pieces of literature in the theoretical framework section.

Theoretical Framework

Understanding the meaning of parental involvement has been a challenge. Jordan, Orozco, and Averett (2002) indicated that there has not been an agreement on what constitutes parental involvement. However, parental involvement is when parents become fully active in their child's education at the school and home (Bracke & Corts, 2012). Brock and Edmunds (2010) indicated that parents are considered involved in their child's education when they become affiliated with the school, assist without pay, or appear at school events.

Many educators and researchers have referenced Epstein's (1995) work regarding parental involvement. However, there is no specific definition of parental involvement. Bower and Griffin (2011) believed parental involvement can appear many ways, which can be serving at schools without pay, talking with teachers, assisting with homework, appearing at school events, or attending parent-teacher conference. George and Mensah (2010) indicated the traditional parental involvement consists of parents participating in their child's home-based activities and school-based activities. Home-based activities consist of helping with homework, encouraging the child to read, and promoting school attendance (George & Mensah, 2010). School-based activities consist of attending parent-teacher meetings, parent-teacher conferences, and participating in fundraising activities. Keane (2007) indicated parental involvement can be chaperoning field trips,

attending school activities, signing homework folders, signing classroom handouts, or volunteering for PTO committees. Karakus and Savas (2012) defined parental involvement falls into three categories – behavior, cognitive-intellectual, and personal. The behavior category focuses on parents attending parent-teacher meetings, conferences, and school activities, the cognitive-intellectual category focuses on having a discussion about their child's daily activities, and the personal category focuses on continuing to know and remaining updated on what happens at their child's school (Karakus & Savas, 2012). Brock and Edmunds (2010) defined parental involvement as parents voicing their thoughts with the school, serving as volunteers or instructional aides, attending school events, setting goals, monitoring homework, and establishing expectations.

With the various meanings of parental involvement, it is important for each school to have an action team. Before implementing an action team, it is important to develop a profile of where a school is in connection with the families (Epstein & Salinas, 1993). By gathering the perspectives of the teachers and parents, the action team will be able to identify and discuss the concerns and goals of the parents and teachers in an effort to developing a program that will increase parental involvement (Epstein & Salinas, 1993). Epstein and Salinas (2004) stated schools must have an action team that consists of teachers, administrators, parents, community partners, and school counselors. Of those listed for the action team, the school counselors can be used to meet the needs of families (Epstein & Van Voorhis, 2010). Epstein et al. (2002) developed a parental involvement framework that indicates ideas parents might implement to support their child in school to increase parental involvement. Epstein, Galindo, and Sheldon (2011) research offers a

comprehensive parental involvement program. Smith, Wohlstetter, Kuzin, and De Pedro (2011) stated that Epstein's typology has influenced many policymakers and school administrators in developing programs for increasing parental involvement in schools. Epstein et al. (2002) indicated that an effective parental involvement program consists of six types of parental involvement. The six areas parental involvement programs must focus on are: (a) parenting, (b) communicating, (c) volunteering, (d) learning at home, (e) decision making and advocacy, and (f) collaborating with the community (Epstein, Jansorn, et al., 2002).

Epstein's theory was based on years of research used to create an organized framework, theory, and program structure to guide schools' work (Epstein, 1995). The theory indicated that when two models, external and internal, combine and work together, academic achievement is accomplished (Griffin & Steen, 2010). Therefore, the three spheres of influence-schools, families, and community, must overlap (Epstein, 1995). Many researchers have indicated that when parents take part in their child's education, regardless of the household income or background, their child is more likely to succeed in school. Positive behaviors develop when children feel they are supported by their parents and as a result they are less likely to experience emotional distress or disengage from school and learning (Center for Disease Control and Prevention [CDC], 2012). Therefore, the belief is when parents become active in their child's education students' learning will improve, causing academic achievement to increase. Below is a list that identifies the types of parental involvement with an explanation.

Parenting. The first type of parental involvement focuses on increasing parents' knowledge about taking care of student needs by providing housing, safety, nutritional meals, and an environment that supports learning at home. When parents participate in their child's education, schools are able to develop a better understanding of the environment and conditions at home for learning. Therefore, school administrators and teachers must provide literature to parents about activities and ideas regarding special services, social services, and grades.

Communication. The second type of parental involvement involves communicating. Communicating builds a strong relationship between the parent, teacher, and school. Parents are able to share their concerns regarding their child's progress. Teachers are able to share what they have observed both positively and negatively. Schools can communicate with parents about the programs they have at the school and achievements of students. More importantly, when there is a strong relationship in communication, the school, teachers, and parents are able to develop a plan that might increase student achievement.

Volunteering. Another type of parental involvement identified by Epstein, Jansorn et al. (2002) is volunteering. Parents volunteering in their children's schools allow the parent an opportunity to assist teachers. In addition to assisting teachers, parents can assist the school administrators and teachers by becoming tutors to strengthen the educational program. When parents assist teachers, support at home will increase because parents are able to help their children at home. In addition to assisting teachers,

parents are able to understand the goals set for their children and are able to provide support in meeting the needs of their children (Larocque et al., 2011).

Learning at home. Learning at home is the fourth type of parental involvement. When school educators provide information that will improve the child's success in schools, parents are able to understand the skills needed to be successful. This would consist of parents participating in helping their children with homework and class work so they can master skills needed for the grade level.

Decision making and advocacy. The fifth type targets decision making and advocacy. Parents and other community people are able to have input regarding improvements of the school. Parents are also able to attend school board meetings and assist in making decisions that are best for the school. Parents are able to communicate with other members in the community to identify issues that can improve the community. Parents can share knowledge and strategies that are effective for the success of their children in a subject.

Collaborating with the community. The sixth and final type of parental involvement is collaborating with the community. Community organizations and the school can share responsibilities for developing students to be successful. School activities such as service learning projects and workshops can be used to help in educating students and parents needs for success.

The study was conducted to help teachers and administrators at struggling schools develop a relationship between the parent and teacher and school so student achievement can increase. Epstein's (1993) framework was chosen for this study because it is

research-based and it had been used in other research projects which focused on parental involvement in the schools. Epstein (1995) believed that the three spheres of influence (school, family, and community) must overlap. In an effort to coalesce the school, home, and community, the purpose of this study is to examine the perspectives of parents' and teachers' regarding parental involvement and student achievement at the Walker Middle School.

Defining Parental Involvement

Finding a specific definition for parental involvement has been a major challenge for many schools and researchers. Parental involvement has been described in various ways, but can be defined as parents supplying their child's school with classroom materials, making their expectations of their child known, communicating with their child's teacher, or participating in school activities (Ice & Hover-Dempsey, 2011). Hornby and Witte (2010) indicated that parental involvement occurs when parents participate in the educational processes and experiences of their children. Karakus and Savas (2012) used the definition of Grolnick and Slowiaczek (1994) which stated that "parental involvement is the devotion of resources by the parents to the child within a given domain" (Karakus & Savas, 2012, p. 2977). Hornby and Witte found that after recent reviews and meta-analyses of various literature, parental involvement has a positive effect in children's academic achievement.

Some parents view parental involvement as transporting their child to and from school and keeping their child safe, but administrators and teachers view parental involvement as parents periodically visiting the school (Rapp & Duncan, 2011). Parents

are expected to take part in their child's education at school and home. School-based involvement is when parents are volunteering during school hours, attending school meetings, participating in school events, and communicating with teachers (Rapp & Duncan, 2011). Home-based involvement is when parents play a part in their child's education at home by assisting with homework, communicating with their child about their day at school, and responding to their child's academic performance.

Bower and Griffin (2011) indicated parental involvement is viewed as an effective strategy to ensure student success, but there has been a disagreement on how parental involvement is defined. Parental involvement can take many forms, but the traditional definition includes parents participating in activities at school and home (Bower & Griffin, 2011). Parental involvement can be reactive where parents participate in their child's school when events or meeting have been scheduled and announced by the school or parents can be proactive where parents include themselves in their child's education by contacting the school to assist their child with their homework and track the progress of their child (Olmstead, 2013).

Roles of Parents

The role of parental involvement has the strongest effect on student achievement (Shute, Hansen, Underwood, & Razzouk, 2011). The Goals 2000: Educate America Act was signed into law on March 31, 1994, which indicated that by the year of 2000, every school was to have developed a partnership with parents to promote social, emotional, and academic growth in children (Paris, 1994).

The NCLB Act indicated parents have an important role in their child's education (MDE, 2013c). Parents believed the role as a parent is providing teachers support with schoolwork, providing guidance, and serving as a model (Durand & Perez, 2013). Parents also viewed their role as making sure their child was on time for school and solving issues that occur at home involving them (Young, Austin, & Growe, 2013). On the other hand, teachers looked at parents who volunteered their services as a teacher's assistant instead of a partner in education. Teachers assigned parents duties that allowed the teachers to accomplish other teaching goals and minimized their load in teaching (Christianakis, 2011). Selwyn, Banaji, Hadjithoma-Garstka, and Clark (2011) indicated that in the world today, parents are expected to partake in their child's education in various ways – homework, attendance, encouraging positive behavior, and a voice in how the school should operate. More importantly, parents believe that they must frequently communicate with their child's teacher so they can stay informed with the demands of the classroom (West-Olatunji, Sanders, Mehta, & Behar-Horenstein, 2010).

Importance of Parental Involvement

Literature indicated many parents understand the importance of becoming involved in their child's education. Gould (2011) stated parental involvement in education is an important factor in student achievement. For students to be successful in academics, it requires parental involvement instead of only teachers (Rafiq, Fatima, Sohail, Saleem, & Khan, 2013). Skaliotis (2010) indicated parents are more involved in their child's education because they understand that educating their child is the parents' and teacher's responsibility instead of just the responsibility of the teacher.

There is an increase in grades, test scores, and a decrease in student behaviors when parents take part in their children's education (Gould, 2011). Researchers found that parental involvement has a significant effect on the academic performance of children (Rafiq et al., 2013). Researchers also have revealed that the behavior and attitude of a child is strongly associated with the changes of involvement by both parents (Skaliotis, 2010).

George and Mensah (2010) encouraged parents to participate in their child's school because it helps increase student achievement and it increases the attitude of the teacher; resulting in the parent being satisfied with their child's education. George and Mensah administered a descriptive survey to 213 participants, consisting of a semi-structured questionnaire and semi-structured interviews. They found that when parents are constantly partaking in their child's education, it can protect children from the negative influences of poverty, tardiness, absenteeism, which can be one approach to minimizing the achievement gap in schools.

Benefits of Parental Involvement

Parental involvement has shown a positive impact on student achievement across all levels of education (Karkus & Savas, 2012). Vera et al. (2012) indicated that parental involvement is extremely important for school success in the United States and other countries as well. Hayes (2012) indicated that parental involvement has played an important part in the success of schools for years because it helps with increasing achievement, improving behavior, minimizing absenteeism, and it helps develop a positive attitude toward school. Dehyadegary, Yaacob, Juhari, and Talib (2011)

indicated that the advantages of parental involvement are behavior modification where children become engaged in their learning and the minimization of discipline referrals. Other benefits of parental involvement are that by taking part in their child's school, parents are able to learn what is required of their child in classrooms, the social relationships of their child, and if there is a need to request additional assistance for academic success (Wanat, 2010).

Hornby and Witte (2010) stated that there are benefits for children, teachers, and parents when parents participate in their child's education. Hornby and Witte indicated that the benefits for children were improvement in attitudes, behavior, attendance, and mental health. The teachers' benefits were improvements in parent-teacher relationships and teacher morale (Hornby & Witte, 2010). Teachers can also benefit by developing a partnership with parents who are culturally diverse because it can help them educate other culturally diverse students (West-Olatunji et al., 2010). Lastly, the benefits for parents were an increase in confidence, satisfaction and interest in their own education.

Altschul (2011) examined six types of parental involvement to determine which variable had a strong effect on academic achievement in Mexican American adolescents. The six variables examined were school organizations, discussion of school matters, help with homework, enriching activities, educational resources, and extracurricular instruction. The study focused on the role of parents in the home and school and the effect it has on academic achievement of Mexican American adolescents (Altschul, 2011). The researcher revealed that there is a positive association between parental involvement and academic achievement.

Although parental involvement had a positive improvement on behaviors, researchers have found that there is an ethnic difference in parental advising, parent-school communication, and parental participation in school functions (Fan, Williams, & Wolters, 2012). Fan et al. (2012) revealed that parental aspiration had a positive link to student motivation, but a negative link to parent-school contacts concerning school problems and student motivation.

Researchers have found that parental involvement has a different effect on males and females (Trask-Tate & Cunningham, 2010). Trask-Tate and Cunningham (2010) indicated that females with high parental involvement and high socioeconomic status (SES) displayed a positive influence; whereas, when there is a low parental involvement and a high SES displayed, there is a positive influence on males.

Types of Parental Involvement

Altschul (2011) examined the six types of parental involvement identified by Epstein (1995) to determine which variable has a strong effect on academic achievement in Mexican American adolescents. The study focused on the role of parents in the home and school and the effect it has on academic achievement of Mexican American adolescents (Altschul, 2011). The researcher revealed that there is a positive association between parental involvement and academic achievement. However, there is no association between parental involvement in schools and academic achievement. Altschul indicated that a parents' financial resource has a stronger effect on academic achievement than parents participating in school events.

Many researchers indicated that the ultimate goal of increasing parental involvement in schools is to increase student achievement. Wanat (2010) indicated that developing a relationship between parent and teacher is a major process. Epstein and Van Voorhis (2010) stated that the six types of parental involvement are parenting, communicating, volunteering, learning at home, decision-making, and collaborating with the community. Although there are six types of parental involvement, there were two types of parents-satisfied and dissatisfied parents (Wanat, 2010). The satisfied parents considered meaningful parental involvement as parents volunteering at school and in parent-teacher association (PTA); whereas, dissatisfied parents considered meaningful parental involvement as parents involved with children at home (Wanat, 2010).

Barriers to Parental Involvement

To understand possible barriers of parental involvement, administrators and teachers must develop a meaningful partnership with parents (Brock & Edmunds, 2010). Hourani, Stringer, and Baker (2012) indicated that there is a gap between the home and school environment and identified four constraints to parental involvement: expectations of roles and responsibilities for parental involvement, communication, sociocultural contexts, and provisions.

When there was a discrepancy between the parent and teacher and parents and students, there was a decline in parental involvement (Patel & Stevens, 2010). In addition, when the mother was involved or when the father and mother displayed parental warmth there was a positive relationship with academic achievement. But when the

father was only involved, there was a negative relationship with parental behavior and academic achievement (Kramer, 2012).

Brock and Edmunds (2010) indicated that some barriers for parents being involved in their child's education are time, work schedule, teachers doing a better job than they, and children refusing parent's help. Other barriers identified by Hornby and Lafaele (2011) are language spoken at home, SES, ethnicity, gender of parents and child's performance.

A language barrier is when parents feel they are not able to help their child because the instructions are not written in their first language (Hornby & Lafaele, 2011). When parents are not able communicate with teachers it may cause parents to withdraw their participation (Larocque et al., 2011). Larocque et al. (2011) indicated that parents may feel intimidated by the professional language used in schools because it may be hard to understand, which can sometimes make them feel as if they do not have a connection with the school.

Socioeconomic status (SES) is determined by the household's income, parents' educational level, and parents' occupational status (NCES, 2014). Dietel (2013) indicated that there is a strong relationship between the parents' educational and economic status and their child's academic performance. When parents have to work multiple jobs, trouble with transportation, and problems with having a baby sitter, parents are reluctant to volunteering in their child's school and attending school activities (Bower & Griffin, 2011). Despite the research findings that indicate parental involvement has a positive

effect on student achievement, parents of low SES have a tendency to reduce their participation in their child's education (Rapp & Duncan, 2011).

Turney and Kao (2009) in their quantitative longitudinal survey design found that ethnicity is a barrier to parental involvement because Caucasians participated more in their child's education than non-Caucasians. Hornby and Lafaele (2011) indicated that the difference in ethnicity has an effect on the extent to which parents will participate in their child's school. Bower and Griffin (2011) indicated that of the African American, Latino, and Caucasian families, African American and Latino families have a tendency to spend more time helping their child at home where Caucasian families spend more time in their child's school.

Gender is another barrier to parental involvement because research shows that mothers are more engaged in their child's education versus the father (Rapp & Duncan, 2011). Nelson (2011) conducted a quantitative research which consisted of administering surveys to 500 male participants and 250 early educational professional and found that children perform better in school when their fathers are involved. However, fathers were reluctant in playing an active role in their child's education due to lack of male staff and an invitation to events were targeted toward mothers. The major barrier was that fathers viewed their responsibility as earning a living for the family (Nelson, 2011).

Olmstead (2013) indicated that both parents and teachers believed that a major barrier for parental involvement is the busy schedule of parents. Cheung and Pomerantz (2011) conducted a quantitative study by administering surveys and found that in comparing American children ($n = 374$) to the Chinese children ($n=451$), the American

children were less engaged in their school, causing low achievement which may have been due to the amount of time and type of parental involvement in their schools. Although parental involvement is important to the success of schools, parents who work full-time could not participate in their child's education (Tezel-Sahin, Inal, & Ozbey, 2011).

Strategies for Getting Parents Involved

Implementing effective strategies for increasing parental involvement requires administrators understanding the needs of parents (Toper et al., 2010). Gillanders, McKinney, and Ritchie (2012) stated that creating a bridge between the home and school environment is a major goal for many school administrators. Gillanders et al. also indicated that to develop a strong home-school partnership, schools must learn about the beliefs of the parents so the stakeholders (parents, teachers, schools, and communities) would combine resources to support and maximize the learning of students.

Graham-Clay (2005) stated that due to the changes of today, it is extremely important for parents and teachers to develop a relationship to meet the needs of the children. School educators should not restrict parents' participation only to the home environment, for financial obligations, and physical activities, rather parents, should be identified as a partner to the teacher (Radzi et al., 2010). However, developing a relationship involves one-way or two-way communication (Graham-Clay, 2005). Graham-Clay indicated that one-way communication involves methods teachers use to inform parents about events, activities, where two-way communication involves parents and teachers sharing their thoughts. Some one-way communications were letters,

newsletters, report cards, radio announcements, websites, and some two-way communications were conversations by way of telephone calls, home visits, and parent-teacher conferences (Graham-Clay, 2005). As indicated by Graham-Clay for schools to be successful in developing a parent-teacher relationship, it is important to use both strategies when sharing information with parents.

Another strategy for increasing parental involvement would be teachers visiting the parents of the children at home because they will be able to reach those parents who lack transportation (Nisbett, 2010). In addition to visiting the homes of the children, schools can increase parental involvement by way of using technology (Zieger & Tan, 2012). Zieger and Tan (2012) in their case study research with 89 of 395 participants responding found that a large percentage of parents preferred to communicate with teachers via email because it allowed the parents and teachers an opportunity to communicate during the day and night than the use of the telephone. If teachers are not able to communicate with parents via email, school administrators and teachers should organize a community outreach program that encourages parents to take part in their children's education (Radzi et al., 2010).

Responsibility of the Principal

Since the implementation of NCLB, the duties of a principal have changed (Gray & Lewis, 2013). Rapp and Duncan (2011) indicated that principals play a vital role in developing a home-school partnership. Principals are held accountable by NCLB for increasing student achievement (Gray & Lewis, 2013). School principals have the responsibility of creating a strong partnership between the parents, teachers, and students.

Therefore, they have to work at convincing the parents, students, teachers, and community the importance of working together so student achievement can increase (Rapp & Duncan, 2011). Although teachers are the main initiator for involving parents in schools, principals are essential to developing an effective program for involving parents in the school (Young et al., 2013). Principals now have the task of introducing strategies to teachers they believe will help students meet AYP by the year of 2014 in language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies (Gray & Lewis, 2013). However, due to reports of schools meeting AYP, 5 to 91% of public schools in the United States did not meet AYP in 2010 (Usher, 2011). Therefore, for schools to be successful in educating students, schools must have an outstanding leader who can lead a group of people toward a specific goal (Sawati & Anwar, 2011). Hayden (2011) indicated that in a school setting, the principal is identified as that leader.

Taylor and La Cava (2011) indicated that the seven leadership responsibilities principals must have to be effective were: (a) knowledge of curriculum, instruction, and assessment, (b) optimizer, (c) intellectual stimulation, (d) change agent, (e) monitoring/evaluating, (f) flexibility, and (g) ideals/beliefs. However, there are nine practices that can change student achievement in schools; which were identified as Leader Action Themes (Taylor, 2010). The Leader Action Themes listed were: (a) focus the culture on learning, (b) make decisions for student learning, (c) stimulate intellectual growth, (d) personally invest in the change, (e) expect collaboration and results, (f) strategies for consistency, (g) data-based decision making, (h) engage families in learning, and (i) influence through the political environment (Taylor, 2010). Taylor and

La Cava (2011) indicated that principals who are striving to increase student achievement to meet AYP at their location must analyze their daily actions to the Leader Action Themes.

Conclusion

Studies have indicated that parental involvement definitely plays a very important role in academic achievement in students. With all the literature regarding parental involvement and the effects it has on academic achievement, research is continuing to be conducted to develop a better understanding of what is needed to increase parental involvement in schools. In addition to learning what is needed to increase parental involvement, research also continues to understand what schools must do to increase student achievement.

Many of the researchers' results showed that schools observed an increase in student achievement when parents were playing a part in their child's education. Results also indicated that when parents were playing a part in their child's education, parents developed a better understanding of what schools are expecting from them and what they can do to help their child with school work. Therefore, when parents learn the school's expectations, a strong relationship between the parent and teacher develops. When there is a strong relationship between the parent and teacher, communication between the parent and teacher improves. In addition to a strong communication between the parent and teacher, a better understanding of parental involvement is developed, as well as what is required to increase student achievement.

To achieve the goal of increasing student achievement, principals must communicate their plans to the assistant principal(s) and teachers. In addition to sharing their plan with the assistant principal(s) and teachers, the school principal must develop a strong partnership between the parents, teachers, and students.

Implications

This quantitative study contained parents' and teachers' perspectives at the Walker Middle School. The outcomes of many research studies indicated that parental involvement has a positive effect on student achievement. Many parents believed parental involvement programs have a positive effect on their child's education as well as their education (Tezel-Sahin, et al., 2011). The positive effects parental involvement might have on students are an increase in academics, a positive attitude regarding school, low absenteeism, and a minimization of disruptive behavior. To increase parental involvement, teachers can invite parents to assist with field trips (chaperones), classroom activities, and school activities.

The results of this study might reveal that there are no significant differences in the parents' and teachers' perceptions regarding parental involvement and academic achievement at the Walker Middle School or there could be vast differences in how each group perceives parental involvement. Tentative projects based on the findings of this study could include a workshop for parents, teachers, and principals to help increase parental involvement in the school. A professional development workshop could be provided specifically for teachers to provide them with ways to better include parents in the school.

Summary

The main concern school administrators and teachers are challenged with is how to increase parental involvement to increase students' academic achievement. The goal is for schools to work at closing the achievement gap by involving parents, so there will be a strong home-school partnership. As indicated by Rafiq et al. (2013) parental involvement is extremely important for school educators to increase student achievement. Therefore, school administrators must develop a plan that will include all stakeholders. However, lack of knowledge about developing a strong home-school partnership has been a concern because each school has different concerns and needs. To acquire the knowledge for developing a strong partnership requires thorough research in parental involvement and student achievement. School educators must learn the various types of strategies and interventions needed to increase parental involvement if they have any intentions on developing a strong home-school partnership.

To gather the knowledge required in developing an effective plan, there must be research conducted to gather the parents' and teachers' perspectives regarding interventions that can be implemented so school educators can aim at improving parental involvement. Once the parents' and teachers' perspectives regarding parental involvement and student achievement are gathered and analyzed, responses will be combined to determine what interventions might increase parental involvement in the school. Therefore, in Section 2 I will discuss the method that I used to gather the parents' and teachers' perspectives regarding parental involvement. In Section 3 I will discuss the project I developed to share with Walker Middle School principals and teachers, which is

based on the findings gathered from the parents' and teachers' perspectives regarding

parental involvement and student achievement. In Section 4, I will reflect on the research

process, the strength and limitations of the project, as well as recommendations for

alternative approaches and future research.

Section 2: The Methodology

Introduction

The purpose of this quantitative study was to examine the perspectives of parents and teachers regarding parental involvement and student achievement at Walker Middle School. In 1994, the U.S. Department of Education recognized the need for more parental involvement in U.S. public schools (Goals 2000: Education America Act, 1994). As a result, the federal government created the program Goals 2000 to help reduce the percentage of U.S. students who dropped out of school and also increase the percentage of students who scored above the minimum on state standardized tests (Goals 2000: Education American Act, 1994). In an effort to improve education, President George W. Bush signed into law NCLB in 2002, which is the successor of Goals 2000 (MDE, 2013g).

NCLB includes a guide for aiding school administrators in increasing student achievement in reading, mathematics, and science (MDE, 2013c). The focus of the plan was on increasing parental involvement so that students are ready for college and the working world by the time they graduate (MDE, 2013c). MDE (2015) indicated that student achievement was an issue in Mississippi schools and that parental involvement was the means by which student achievement could be improved.

Parental involvement has been, and continues to be, a major concern for educators. According to Toper et al. (2010), parental involvement in U.S. schools is steadily declining. Lloyd-Smith and Baron (2010) found that parental involvement

begins to decline during middle school years. The decline has caused principals and teachers to develop a plan that will target increasing parental involvement in schools.

In this section, I will present the research methodology I used in conducting this study. The section includes information on my research design and approach, setting and sample, instrumentation and materials, and instrument validity and reliability. Followed by the data collection and analysis procedures, assumptions, and limitations. Lastly, this section will include the scope and delimitations, measures taken for the protection of participants, and conclusion.

Research Design and Approach

I compared the perspectives of two different groups, parents and teachers, regarding parental involvement and student achievement at Walker Middle School. The parents who participated in my study had fourth through eighth-grade students enrolled in Walker Middle School. The teachers instructed fourth through eighth grade at the school. I modified a descriptive survey designed by Epstein and Salinas (1993) for the John Hopkins University on School, Family, and Community Partnerships.

I wanted to present a clear description of the participants' response to the research conducted at Walker Middle School; therefore, I used descriptive research to assist me in presenting a clear picture of the study. Lodico, Spaulding, and Voegtle (2010) stated that descriptive research is data retrieved from a population regarding behaviors and is also used to gather the perceptions, opinions, attitudes, and beliefs of a current issue. Descriptive research provides the five Ws (who, what, when, where, and why; Manos, 2005). According to Manos (2005), the five Ws bring clarity to individuals reading

newspaper articles, research articles, or listening to the news because they identify the

participants, event, time factors, location, and how the issue transpired. A quantitative

approach provides a description of the current status or phenomenon of identified

variables in the study (Lodico et al., 2010). According to Creswell (2009), quantitative

research contains closed-ended questions that are used to examine the relationship

between variables that can be measured and analyzed using statistical procedures. In this

study, I used a 4-point Likert scale to gather knowledge about the attitudes, opinions,

beliefs, behaviors, and demographics of parents and teachers. I also focused on the

characteristic of parental involvement and used a quantitative method to describe, record,

analyze, and interpret the data I obtained.

Setting and Sample

The school selected for this study was a small rural public middle school which

has fourth through eighth-grade levels. At the time that I conducted my study in 2016,

the population at Walker Middle School consisted of 28 classroom teachers and 604

students in fourth through eighth grades (MDE, 2013e). Of the 604 students, 86% were

African Americans, 9% were Caucasians, 5% were Hispanics, and less than 1% was

Asians. I used stratified random sampling to select the sample. Lodico et al. (2010) and

Laerd Statistics (2015) indicated that stratified random sampling is used to ensure

representation of a specific population. My study focused on the perspectives of parents,

who had students enrolled in fourth through eighth grade, regarding parental involvement

and student achievement at Walker Middle School. In addition to the parents, my study

focused on gathering the perspectives of teachers, who were employed in the fourth

through eighth grade, regarding parental involvement and student achievement at the Walker Middle School. The two groups were compared to determine if there was a difference in perspectives; thus, stratified random sampling was the best sampling technique for this study.

Although Walker Middle School had 604 enrolled students at the time I conducted my study, there were only 496 families who had children enrolled at the school. A survey link was given to these 496 families. Lodico et al. (2010) noted when there is a population of 400, approximately 50% of the population should make up the sample, which is a total of 200. Fifty percent of the population was required to make up my sample so I aimed to gather data from 248 or more of the 496 parents with children attending Walker Middle School. All parents were a survey link with the intent of receiving 248 returned surveys. If more than 248 surveys were returned, I would have used random selection to select 248 surveys from the larger number of completed surveys for my study. I received 250 completed surveys; therefore, random selection was not necessary.

I administered the survey to the entire population of teachers. This approach is also known as census sampling (Lodico et al., 2010). According to Lodico et al. (2010), researchers use a census sample when they are conducting a study in a school or district with fewer than 200 people in the population. At the time that I conducted my study in 2016, Walker Middle School had a total of 39 teachers. My study required teacher participants who had a homeroom in Grades 4-8. Of the 39 teachers employed, 28

teachers were prospective participants for my study, because they had a homeroom class; therefore, all 28 teachers were used in the study.

Instrumentation and Materials

The Parent Survey of Family and Community Involvement in the Elementary and Middle Grades is a descriptive survey designed by Epstein and Salinas (1993) in collaboration with the Johns Hopkins University Center on School, Family, and Community Partnerships. I administered the modified survey to parents who had children attending Walker Middle School and to teachers who were employed at the school. I mailed a letter to Epstein and Salinas requesting permission to use or modify their teacher survey to satisfy the needs of the study. Five days after sending the request, I received a letter from Epstein and Salinas giving permission to use or modify the survey (see Appendix C).

To gather the perspectives of the participants and to make the study more effective, I made modifications to Epstein and Salina's (1993) teacher survey. The teacher survey was modified so both participants – parents and teachers – could complete a survey containing similar questions and comparisons could be made between the two groups. I tailored the two surveys toward the participant answering the questions (i.e., parent or teacher). Some questions were eliminated because the question(s) asked were not appropriate for all participants. In addition to eliminating questions, I added some demographic questions in an effort to give insight into the parents and teachers participating in this study.

There were two surveys in the form of a 4-point Likert scale option (see Appendix D and E). The same questions were included in both surveys; however, one survey was tailored toward the parents (see Appendix D) and the other survey was tailored toward the teachers (see Appendix E). In 2016, there were 496 families who had a child enrolled at Walker Middle School. In an effort to reach a 50% response rate ($n = 60$) per grade level, a link to the survey was hand delivered by the oldest child to every parent who had a child enrolled at Walker Middle School in fourth through eighth grade. I did not use surveys that were returned with missing data in the study. A web link to the survey on SurveyMonkey was needed so the participants could successfully complete the survey for the study regarding parental involvement and student achievement. The parents and teachers were instructed in the letter to enter the link that focused on their perspectives regarding parental involvement and student achievement into the search engine and complete the survey. The participants were allowed 10 days to complete the survey before I sent a second notice. If there were two or more siblings in the school, parents were expected to complete the survey based on the eldest sibling. If the participants did not have a computer, the participant was allowed to complete the survey in the school's computer lab. When responses were accumulated in SurveyMonkey, I exported the data into the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS).

The parents and teachers gave their judgment regarding parental involvement at Walker Middle School by indicating their responses as *strongly agree* (SA), *agree* (A), *disagree* (D), or *strongly disagree* (SD). The parents and teachers also gave their opinion regarding how often families were contacted and how often parents were involved in the

school indicating their responses as *never*, *seldom*, *often*, and *always*. Finally, parents

and teachers gave their thoughts regarding type of involvement and the responsibilities of

parents as *not important* (NOT IMP), *a little important* (A LITTLE IMP), *pretty*

important (PRETTY IMP), or *very important* (VERY IMP). The language "pretty

important" was used by Epstein and Salinas (1993) in their original survey. Epstein

explained the reason for using "pretty important" via email:

> For a Likert Scale, we try to make the range of responses distinct enough to be
>
> treated as a continuum that can be scored from 1-3, 1-4, or 1-5, depending on the
>
> number of responses provided. Sometimes we use the responses *not important, a*
>
> *little important, pretty important, and very important* to help respondents make
>
> choices that we believe are clear enough to score them accordingly. For most
>
> people *pretty important* is more important than *a little* and less important than
>
> *very*. (Epstein, Personal Communication, May 18, 2015)

To maintain the integrity of the survey, no changes were made to Epstein's response

options.

Using SPSS (Version 21), data were entered and analyzed using frequency

distribution. The frequency distribution was set up in table format to give a summary of

entered data. In addition to frequency distribution, the entered data were analyzed with

inferential statistics to gather the overall means and standard deviations of parents' and

teachers' attitudes regarding parental involvement and student achievement.

Reliability

The reliability of a survey occurs theoretically when the results are consistent with previous results (Creswell, 2012). If a participant were required to complete the survey multiple times, that participant would give the same or close to the same response each time. Therefore, surveys must have good questions. If the participants' responses change over a period of time, the survey is not reliable. To ensure a survey is reliable, it is important for the survey to have well-phrased questions and participants' responses to be consistent.

Information was received from John Hopkins University Center regarding the consistency of the surveys' reliability. Epstein, Salinas, and Horsey (1994) indicated that the surveys regarding developing a partnership between home and school included scales for teachers' and parents' general attitudes, overall school programs, overall family practices, and subscales of some of the major types of involvement that created a comprehensive program of partnership. The survey included Likert-type items; therefore, the John Hopkins University Center recommended the Cronbach alpha (α) formula. The reliabilities of the teachers' and parents' scales ranged from modest ($\alpha = .44$) to very high ($\alpha = .91$), indicating their usefulness for research purposes. The researchers took extra precautions with specific examinations to make sure the surveys met the criteria for reliability. Epstein et al. (1994) indicated that the alpha reliability formula reflected the intercorrelation of a set of items, accounting for variations in responses to the items.

The teacher's survey was modified to gather the perspectives of the parents and teachers, which required the surveys be piloted to determine their reliability. I sent a

letter to a group of 15 teachers and parents, who were not affiliated with Walker Middle

School, requesting them to complete the surveys to test the reliability of the surveys.

According to Lodico et al. (2010), once a survey is piloted, time should pass prior to

administering the survey to the participants a second time to avoid the participants

remembering their responses on the survey and performing better due to prior knowledge.

After making the necessary edits based on the panel, Dr. Alkins, and former

committee member, Dr. Grimes, a Request for Change in Procedure Form with the edited

parent and teacher surveys and the parent and teacher surveys with changes highlighted

was submitted to IRB. Upon approval from IRB on November 13, 2015, I administered

the parent survey on November 22, 2015 to 15 parents, who did not have any children

enrolled in Walker Middle School, and the teacher survey was administered to 15

teachers who were not employed at the school via SurveyMonkey. When the surveys

were completed by the parents and teachers, there was a 10-day waiting period. After the

waiting period, to check the reliability of the surveys they were administered again on

December 7, 2015 to the same parents and on December 16, 2015 to the same teachers.

The surveys were administered through SurveyMonkey and the results were transferred

to The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) to check the internal

consistency reliability and test-retest reliability of the two set of responses.

The internal consistency reliabilities of the parent scales ranged from a Cronbach

alpha coefficient of .678 on the first administration of the survey, which is acceptable

when rounded to .7 to an alpha of .776 on the second administration, which is good when

rounded to .8, indicating the usefulness of the parent survey for research purposes. The

reliabilities of the teacher scales were both acceptable. The first set of responses were

alpha of .750, which is acceptable when rounded to 8 with a slight increase on the second

set of responses alpha of .776, which is also good when rounded to .8. The Cronbach

alpha formula was used in conducting the test-retest reliabilities of the surveys to

determine if the results are consistent over time. The parents' scale and teachers' scale

was high ($\alpha = .999$), indicating the usefulness of each survey for research purposes.

Validity

Lodico et al. (2010) stated surveys must be valid before administering to

participants. One way to validate a survey is to pilot an instrument by using a panel of

experts in a specific field of study, which is a form of content validity. To determine

validity, the researcher focuses on whether the questions on the survey measure the

content they were intended to measure. The surveys from John Hopkins University were

valid because Epstein and colleagues administered the surveys in various research studies

to gather data regarding the perspectives from parents' and teachers in elementary and

middle schools. The sample that provided data on which the scales were based included

243 teachers and 2,115 parents in 15 elementary and middle schools (Epstein, Salinas, &

Horsey, 1994). The schools were located in economically depressed areas in the inner

city. This study consisted of a small rural middle school located in Mississippi. The

percentage of persons below the poverty level in Mississippi is 22.3, and the county

where the school is located had a poverty level of 24.4 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2014).

There are four types of validity (face, content, construct, and concurrent) depending on

the type of study (Hyman, Lamb, & Bulmer, 2006). To determine if a survey is valid, the

following questions were considered: What is the purpose and goals of the survey? Will the survey gather the information needed for the study? Is this the best survey for the population? Does the instrument look like a survey? Will the instrument measure what it is supposed to measure? (Thayer-Hart, Dykema, Elver, Schaeffer, & Stevenson, 2010)

Epstein and colleagues indicated the surveys were used in various studies and were considered acceptable (Epstein & Salinas, 1993). Although the surveys were deemed acceptable, to better serve the population in this study, I modified the teacher's survey so that comparable data would be gathered from all participants (parents and teachers). After permission was granted from the Walden University Institutional Review Board (IRB) on August 18, 2015 (IRB Approval # 08-18-15-0304464) I sent a letter to five faculty members, who were knowledgeable in the field of parental involvement at a local university, asking them to validate the parental involvement surveys. Included in the panelists' packages were the Panel Validation Letter, Parent's Parental Involvement Response Form, and Teacher's Parental Involvement Response Form based on the Parental Involvement Surveys.

The surveys were submitted via Survey Monkey to five professors at a local university. A yes-no scale was used to measure the panel's attitude on the validity of the questions on the survey. The panelists were asked to state if the questions should or should not remain on the surveys. The end of the survey contained a blank sheet of paper for comments. The panelists were given five days to complete and return the Parental Involvement Response Forms. After three of the five days had passed, I sent an email reminding the panelists to complete and return the Parental Involvement Response

Forms. If all of the identified panelists did not complete and return the Parental

Involvement Response Forms within five days, another faculty member(s) was solicited

to participate in validating the questions on the survey. Upon receipt of all forms, each

form was analyzed and the question(s) that had been deemed not a valid by a majority of

the panelists were removed from the survey. The surveys were revised based on the

feedback from the local professors, Dr. Alkins, and by my former committee member,

Dr. Grimes.

Data Collection and Analysis

The parents' and teachers' responses on the survey were gathered through

SurveyMonkey. I provided the link for completing the survey in a cover letter hand

delivered to the parents through the oldest child in the household, who was enrolled

Walker Middle School and by the counselors to teachers who were employed at the rural

middle school. The letter instructed the participants to enter the link for the survey in the

search engine. The participants were informed in the cover letter and at the top of the

survey that completing the survey would serve as their consent to participate in the study.

The purpose of this study was to examine parents' and teachers' perspectives

regarding parental involvement and student achievement at Walker Middle School. Data

gathered from surveys were examined and analyzed using inferential statistics regarding

parental involvement and student achievement at Walker Middle School from fourth

grade through eighth grade. Responses were analyzed from parents of students attending

Walker Middle School and teachers who were employed at the school. I compared the

responses of parents and teachers and results were presented in a table format to display the summation of gathered data.

Data gathered consisted of 250 parents and 28 teachers. Parents were instructed to select their child's homeroom teacher. To avoid comparing multiple parent scores to one teacher score, parents who selected the same homeroom teacher were grouped so there would be one parent score and one teacher score. For example, of the 250 parents, 7 selected Teacher 1, and the mean and standard deviation was determined (see Table 17). The remaining parents were similarly grouped by teachers creating a total number of parent groups equal to 28. The mean and standard deviation was determined for each group. This allowed one score for each parent group (of each teacher) to be compared to one score for each teacher. The score for the parent group of Teacher 1 was paired with the score for Teacher 1. Each of the other groups was paired with the corresponding teacher.

Data Analysis

I analyzed Questions 1, 5, 6, and 7 on both surveys. Question 1 on both surveys was compared to develop a conclusion about the general attitudes of the teachers and parents regarding the school, the school and family partnership, shared positive attitudes, differences, the importance of parental involvement, and if there were common interests on which to build a stronger partnership. I also used a *t* test to compare Question 5 on both surveys to identify practices that both groups believe are important to add, strengthen, or keep strong in the home-school partnership. In addition to Question 1 and 5, I looked at Question 6 to understand the participants' perspectives on how important it

is for teachers to conduct practices to assist students and families, and Question 7 on parents' responsibilities. To determine if there is a significant difference between parent and teacher responses, a *t* test was used (Triola, 2012) at the significance level of *a* = .05 to determine whether to reject or fail to reject the null hypothesis. The null hypothesis states there are no significant differences in parents' and teachers' perceptions regarding parental involvement and students' academic achievement.

In addition to analyzing my data using the *t* test in determining if there is a difference between groups (parents and teachers), I used Cohen's Effect Size (ES), which is symbolized as *"d,"* to determine the size of the effect between the two groups. Sullivan and Feinn (2012) indicated that Cohen's effect size was used in a study to show the magnitude of the difference between groups. To determine the size of effect between the groups, I determined the differences between the two means divided by the standard deviation ($d = M_1\text{-}M_2/s$). Cohen classified the effect sizes .2 as small, .5 as a medium, and .8 or greater as large (Sullivan & Feinn, 2012).

Assumptions, Limitations, Scope, and Delimitations

Assumptions

The following assumptions for this study are:

- The parents and teachers will complete the entire survey.

- The parents and teachers will be honest when responding to the questions on the survey.

- There will be a 100% return rate of surveys from parents and teachers.

- The parents have participated in the past at their child's school.

Limitations

The following limitations for this study are:

- The responses to the survey are limited to the parents who have children
  enrolled and teachers who are employed at the Walker Middle School.

- The conclusions and recommendations will only be important to the Walker
  Middle School.

- Some of the participants might not understand the questions due to reading
  ability or language spoken in the household.

- Surveys returned with missing data were discarded, which could show
  partiality in the results of the study.

Scope

To acquire knowledge about the parents' and teachers' perspectives regarding parental involvement and student achievement at the Walker Middle School, a quantitative method was used. The instruments used in the study consisted of parents' and teachers' surveys, which were developed through John Hopkins University Center of School, Family, and Community Partnerships by Epstein and Salias (1993). Permission was given to use, adapt, or reprint for the study.

Various areas were addressed on the parents' and teachers' survey. Question 1 focused on the attitudes about parental involvement, Question 2 focused on the practices of contacting families, Question 3 focused on the use of volunteers in the classroom and at the school building, Question 4 focused on how much were parents presently involved, Question 5 focused on the types of parents involvement that the school should develop or

strengthen, Question 6 focused on what practices of involvement were important, Question 7 focuses on what are parents' responsibilities, and Question 8 focused on who supports parent involvement.

Delimitations

Delimitation for this study is the population used for this study will serve as valid results only for Walker Middle School. No other school in this district was considered because the school in the study had been identified as a failing school and the other school in the district had been identified as a passing school.

Protection of Participants' Rights

Prior to administering the survey to participants identified for the study in 2016, I mailed a letter to the superintendent requesting permission to conduct a study in the district and the principal requesting permission to conduct the study at Walker Middle School. Following approval from the superintendent and principal, I submitted an application to Walden University IRB asking for approval to conduct the study. After receiving approval from the Walden IRB in 2015, I sent a letter to identified participants (parents and teachers) asking them to participate in the study. There was a statement at the top of the survey informing the participants the purpose and topic of the study. The statement informed the participants their participation was voluntarily and they could refuse or end their participation in the study at any time and that completing the survey would stand as consent to participate in the study. The statement also informed the participants that all data collected were strictly confidential and reported in the aggregate and that their responses would be used solely for the purpose of the study.

Data Analysis Results

The purpose of this study was to conduct a quantitative study to understand better the parents' and teachers' perspectives regarding parental involvement and student achievement using a modified framework of Epstein's model. The surveys designed by Epstein and colleagues regarding parental involvement have shown that parental involvement has a positive effect on student achievement (Epstein & Salinas, 1993). In this section, I specifically focus on the data analysis results for Questions 1 (general attitudes of parental involvement), 5 (parental involvement practices), 6 (importance of parental involvement practices), and 7 (parents' responsibilities). Analyses were performed to test the null hypothesis in order to either reject or fail to reject the null hypothesis. The following hypotheses guided this study:

H_0: There will be no significant differences in parents' and teachers' perceptions regarding parental involvement and academic achievement.

H_A: There will be significant differences in parents' and teachers' perceptions regarding parental involvement and academic achievement.

The remainder of this section includes the descriptive data, data analysis, and the results for the null hypothesis followed by a summary.

Demographic Data

Walker Middle School is a small middle school located in the rural area of Mississippi identified as a low-performing school that has not met AYP each year for since 2006. Under NCLB in 2002, a school makes AYP if it achieves the minimum levels of improvement determined by the state in terms of student performance in

reading, language arts, and mathematics. There are 604 students enrolled at the Walker Middle School, which is composed of 86% African Americans, 9% Caucasians, 5% Hispanics, and less than 1% Asian between the grades of fourth and eighth.

Surveys were administered to the teachers who are employed and parents of students who are enrolled at Walker Middle School via Survey Monkey to gain their perspectives regarding parental involvement and student achievement. There were differences in the survey questions for teachers and parents, but the questions used for testing the null hypotheses remained the same. The school had 39 teachers on staff but the requirements for the study called for teachers who have a homeroom in Grades 4-8. Research participants consisted of 28 classroom teachers who are employed and 250 parents who have student enrolled at Walker Middle School. There was a total of 6 male teachers and 22 female teachers. The race/ethnicity for the teachers was 57% African American, 39% Caucasian, and 4% Hispanic. Their ages ranged from 26 - 55 with 79% between the ages of 26 and 45. Forty-six percent of these teachers had received a Master's or higher. See Table 2 for the teacher demographics.

Table 2

Demographics of Teachers in Grades 4-8

Category	*N*	%
Gender		
Male	6	21
Female	22	79
Race/Ethnicity		
African American	16	57
Caucasian	11	39
Hispanic	1	4
Age Range		
26-35	8	29
36-45	14	50
46-55	6	21
Educational level		
Bachelor's degree	15	54
Master's degree	10	36
Specialist degree	3	10

There was a total of 250 parents, who had students enrolled in fourth through eighth grade at Walker Middle School. See Table 3 for the demographic information. Of the 250 participants who completed the survey, the majority of the participants were females. Two hundred and three of the parents were African American, 32 were Caucasian, 14 were Hispanic, and 1 was Asian. The ages ranged from the 20 to 56 years and up. However, 92% ranged between 26 and 55 years of age. Fifty-three percent had received a degree higher than a high school diploma. Eighty-six percent of the participants completing the surveys were the students' biological parent.

Table 3

Demographics of Parents in Grades 4-8

Category	N	%
Gender		
Male	38	15
Female	212	85
Race/Ethnicity		
African American	203	81
Caucasian	32	12
Hispanic	14	6
Other (Asian)	1	1
Age Ranges		
Below 25	1	1
26-35	71	28
36-45	128	51
46-55	32	13
56 and up	18	7
Educational Level		
Junior High/Middle School	15	6
High School (Did not graduate)	30	12
High School (Graduated)	54	21
1 – 2 Years of College	21	8
Associate Degree	52	21
Bachelor's	60	24
Master's	17	7
Specialist	1	1
Participants		
Mother	185	74
Father	31	12
Stepmother	1	1
Stepfather	4	1
Aunt	3	1
Grandmother	21	8
Grandfather	2	1
Guardian	2	1
Other Relative	1	1

Testing Assumptions

For Questions 1, 5, 6, and 7, I checked the six assumptions to determine if the

independent *t* test was the correct test to use in analyzing the data (Laerd Statistics,

2015). According to Laerd Statistics (2015), if any of the six assumptions are violated

and are not correctable, the independent *t* test can no longer be used in analyzing the data.

However, the *t*-test can be used if the violated assumption is corrected (Laerd Statistics,

2015). Assumption 1 focused on having one dependent variable that is continuous.

Assumption 2 focused on having an independent variable that is categorical with two

groups. Assumption 3 focused on no participant is in more than one group, which is the

independence of observation. Assumption 4 focused on detecting if there are no

significant outliers in the study by using boxplots. Assumption 5 focused on testing for

normality using the Shapiro-Wilk test of normality. Assumption 6 focused on testing for

homogeneity of variances using the Levene's test for equality of variances (Laerd

Statistics, 2015). According to Creswell (2009) and Laerd Statistics (2015), a t test

should be used to analyze the data when comparing groups that consist of one

independent variable, one dependent variable, and when the gathered data is categorical

or continuous, or not covariant.

Testing assumptions for Question 1. For Question 1, the first assumption was

met because the dependent variable responses to each item were converted into a new

variable making one score for each participant, which transformed the Likert scale into a

continuous scale. The second assumption was met because analyses contained one

independent variable that consisted of two categorical groups (parents and teachers). The

third assumption was met because I did not have participants in the study who could

respond to both surveys. The fourth assumption was met because there were no outliers,

as assessed by inspection of a boxplot. See Figure 1 for Question 1 boxplot. The fifth

assumption was violated because the perspectives between the teachers ($p = .882$) were

normally distributed, but the perspectives were not normally distributed between the

parents ($p = .000$), as assessed by Shapiro-Wilk's test. See Table 4 for Question 1

Shapiro-Wilk's test. Therefore, I ran a Mann-Whitney U test to determine if there were

differences in perspectives scores between the parents and teachers. Distributions of the

perspective scores for the parents and teachers were not similar, as assessed by visual

inspection. Perspective scores for the teachers (*Mdn* = 45.00) were statistically higher

than the parents (*Mdn* = 41.00), $U = 4,665$, $z = 2.892$, $p = .004$. See Table 5 for

Question 1 Mann-Whitney test. According to Laerd Statistics (2015), if the distribution

of scores for the Mann-Whitney test is more than .05, it is normally distributed, but if the

distribution of scores is less than .05, it is not normally distributed. The independent *t*

test is fairly robust from the deviation of normality; therefore, I will carry on with the

interpretation of the results. The sixth assumption showed that the homogeneity of

variances was violated, as assessed by Levene's test for equality of variances ($p = .000$),

therefore; equal variances was not assumed. There was a statistically significant

difference in the mean perspective score between the parents and teachers, $t(55.13) = -3.484$, $p = .001$. See Table 6 for Question 1 Levene's test.
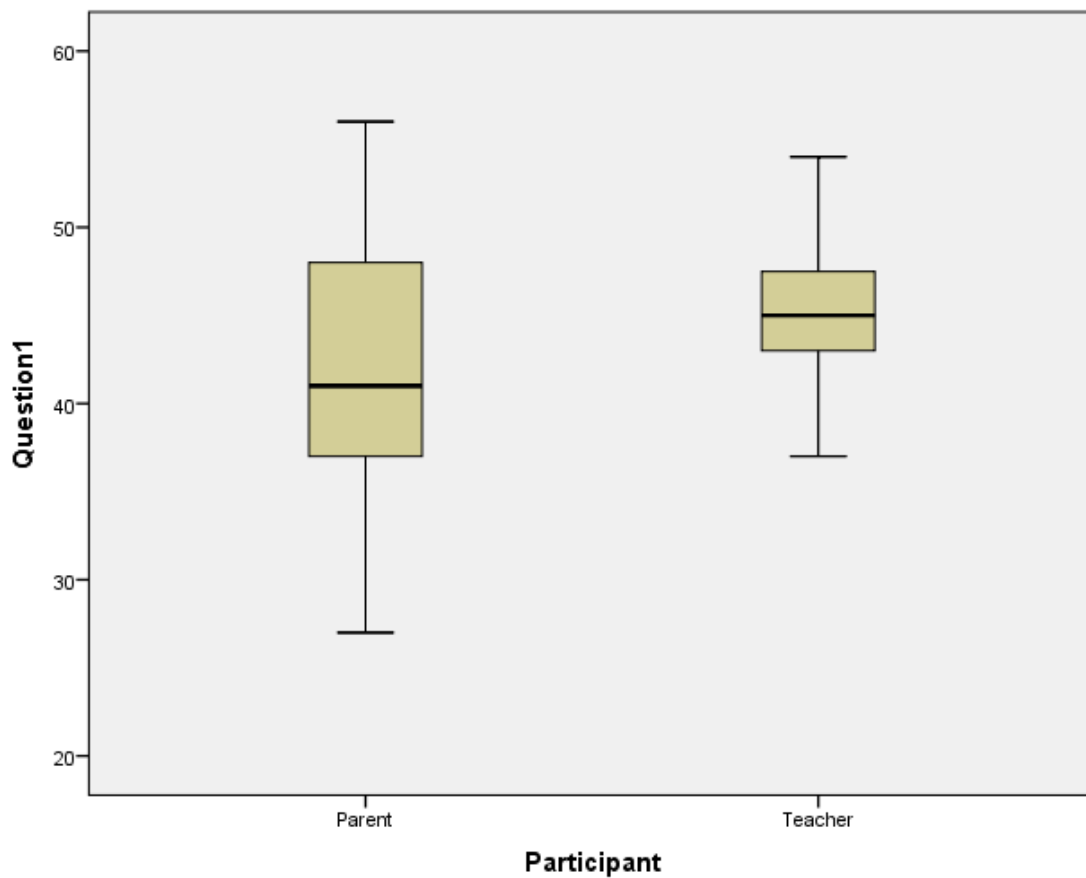
Figure 1. Box plot for Question 1.

Table 4

Test of Normality for Question 1

	Participant	Kolmogorov-Smirnov[a]			Shapiro-Wilk		
		Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Question1	Parent	.112	250	.000	.942	250	.000
	Teacher	.099	28	.200[*]	.981	28	.882

*. This is a lower bound of the true significance.

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

Table 5

Mann-Whitney U Test for Question 1

Hypothesis Test Summary			
Null Hypothesis	Test	Sig.	Decision
The distribution of Question 1 is the same across categories of Participant.	Independent-Samples Mann-Whitney U Test	.004	Reject the null hypothesis.

Asymptotic significances are displayed. The significance level is .05.

Table 6

Levene's T-Test for Question 1

		Independent Samples Test							
		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means					
		F	Sig.	*t*	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Question1	Equal variances assumed	16.067	.000	-2.071	276	.039	-2.886	1.394	-5.629	-.143
	Equal variances not assumed			-3.484	55.125	.001	-2.886	.828	-4.546	-1.226

Testing assumptions for Question 5. For Question 5, the first assumption was

met because the dependent variable responses to each item were converted into a new

variable making one score for each participant, which transformed the Likert scale into a

continuous scale. The second assumption was met because the analysis contained one

independent variable that consisted of two categorical groups (parents and teachers). The

third assumption was met because the study did not have participants who could respond

to both surveys. The fourth assumption was met because there were no outliers, as

assessed by inspection of a boxplot. See Figure 2 for the Question 5 boxplot. The fifth

assumption was met because the perspectives between the teachers ($p = .168$) were

normally distributed; however, the perspectives between the parents ($p = .000$) were not

normally distributed, as assessed by Shapiro-Wilk's test. See Table 7 for the Question 5

Shapiro-Wilk's test. Therefore, I ran a Mann-Whitney U test to determine if there were

differences in perspectives score between the parents and teachers. Distributions of the

perspective scores for the parents and teachers were similar, as assessed by visual

inspection. The perspective scores for teachers (*Mdn* = 21.50) and parents (*Mdn* =

21.00) were not statistically significantly different, $U = 3,932$, $z = 1.077$, $p = .282$. See

Table 8 for Question 5 Mann-Whitney test. According to Laerd Statistics (2015), if the

distribution of scores is more than .05, it is normally distributed. The sixth assumption

showed that the homogeneity of variances was met, as assessed by Levene's test for

equality of variances ($p = .972$), therefore; equal variances were assumed. There was not

a statistically significant difference in the mean perspective score between the parents and

teachers, $t(276) = -.701$, $p = .484$. See Table 9 for Question 5 Levene's test.
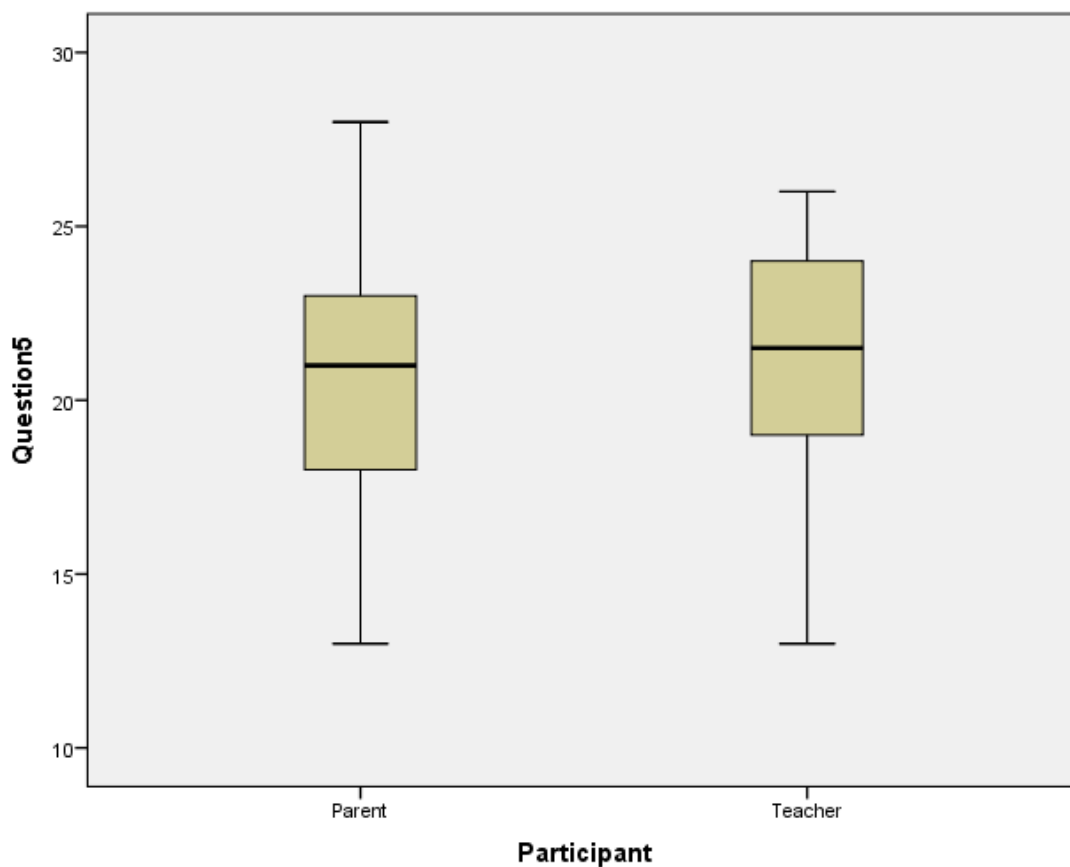
Figure 2. Box plot for Question 5.

Table 7

Test of Normality for Question 5

		Tests of Normality					
	Participant	Kolmogorov-Smirnov[a]			Shapiro-Wilk		
		Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Question5	Parent	.132	250	.000	.969	250	.000
	Teacher	.127	28	.200[*]	.947	28	.168
*. This is a lower bound of the true significance.							
a. Lilliefors Significance Correction							

Table 8

Mann-Whitney U Test for Question 5

Hypothesis Test Summary			
Null Hypothesis	Test	Sig.	Decision
The distribution of Question 5 is the same across categories of Participant.	Independent-Samples Mann-Whitney U Test	.282	Retain the null hypothesis.

Asymptotic significances are displayed. The significance level is .05.

Table 9

Levene's T-Test for Question 5

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	*t*	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Question5	Equal variances assumed	.001	.972	-.701	276	.484	-.499	.711	-1.899	.901
	Equal variances not assumed			-.702	33.350	.488	-.499	.711	-1.944	.947

Independent Samples Test

Testing assumptions for Question 6. For Question 6, the first assumption was met because the dependent variable responses to each item were converted into a new variable making one score for each participant, which transformed the Likert scale into a continuous scale. The second assumption was met because analysis contained one independent variable that consisted of two categorical groups (parents and teachers). The third assumption was met because the study did not have participants who could respond to both surveys. The fourth assumption was violated because it showed that there were no outliers in the parents' data but there were two outliers in the teachers' data, as assessed by inspection of a boxplot. See Figure 3 for the Question 6 boxplot. Although the fourth assumption was violated, I will move on to determine if each group is normally distributed. The fifth assumption was violated because it showed that the perspectives between the teachers ($p = .001$) and the perspectives between the parents ($p = .000$) were not normally distributed, as assessed by Shapiro-Wilk's test. See Table 10 for Question 6 Shapiro-Wilk's test. Therefore, I ran a Mann-Whitney U test to determine if there were differences in perspectives score between the parents and teachers. Distributions of the perspective scores for the parents and teachers were not similar, as assessed by visual inspection. Perspective scores for the teachers ($Mdn= 49.00$) were statistically higher than the parents ($Mdn= 40.00$), $U = 5.014$, $z = 3.768$, $p = .000$. See Table 11 for Question 6 Mann-Whitney test. According to Laerd Statistics (2015), if the distribution of scores for the Mann-Whitney test is less than .05, it is not normally distributed. The independent t test is fairly robust from the deviation of normality. Therefore, I will carry on with the interpretation of the results. The sixth assumption showed that the

homogeneity of variances was violated, as assessed by Levene's test for equality of

variances ($p = .000$), therefore; equal variances was not assumed. There was a statistically

significant difference in the mean perspective score between the parents and teachers,

$t(98.13) = -10.23$, $p = .000$. See Table 12 for Question 6 Levene's test.
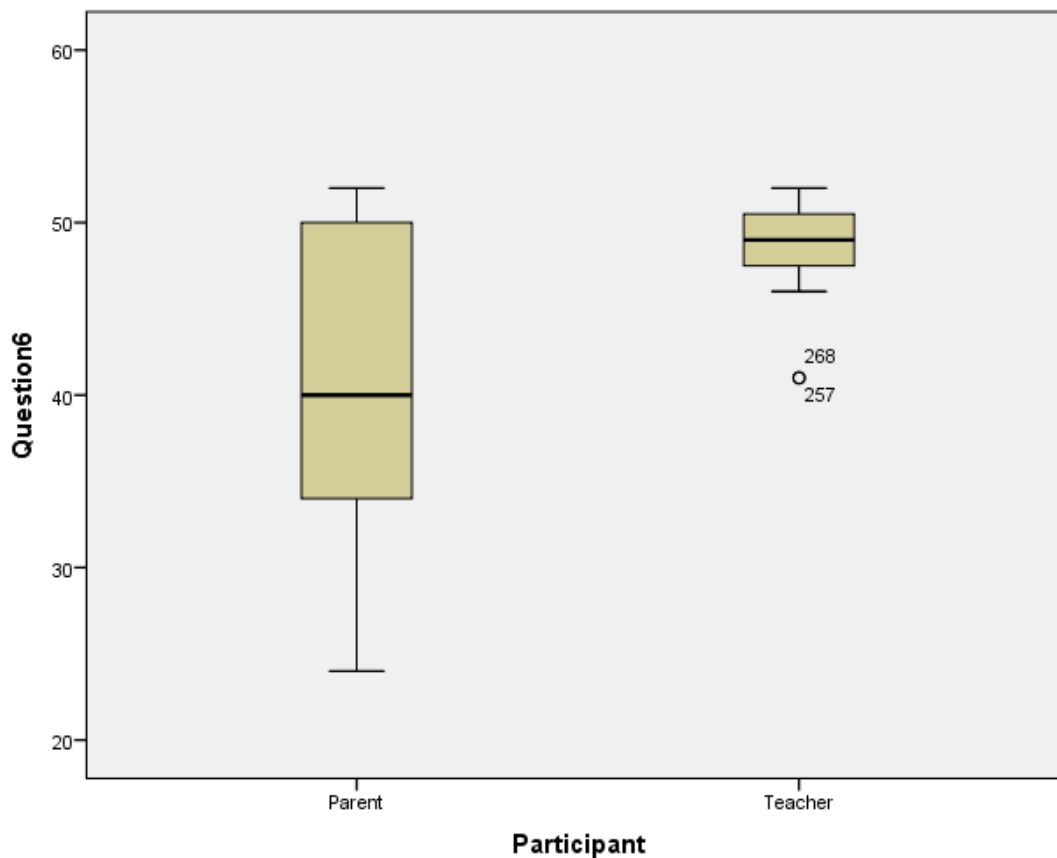
Figure 3. Box plot for Question 6.

Table 10

Test of Normality for Question 6

		Kolmogorov-Smirnov[a]			Shapiro-Wilk		
Tests of Normality							
	Participant	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	Df	Sig.
Question6	Parent	.149	250	.000	.898	250	.000
	Teacher	.184	28	.016	.850	28	.001

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

Table 11

Mann-Whitney U Test for Question 6

Hypothesis Test Summary			
Null Hypothesis	Test	Sig.	Decision
The distribution of Question 6 is the same across categories of Participant.	Independent-Samples Mann-Whitney U Test	.000	Reject the null hypothesis.

Asymptotic significances are displayed. The significance level is .05.

Table 12

Levene's T-Test for Question 6

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means							
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		
										Lower	Upper
	Equal variances assumed	62.234	.000	-4.793	276	.000	-7.598	1.585		-10.719	-4.478
Question6	Equal variances not assumed			-10.227	98.132	.000	-7.598	.743		-9.073	-6.124

Testing assumptions for Question 7. For Question 7, the first assumption was

met because the dependent variable responses to each item were converted into a new

variable making one score for each participant, which transformed the Likert scale into a

continuous scale. The second assumption was met because the analysis contained one

independent variable that consisted of two categorical groups (parents and teachers). The

third assumption was met because I did not have participants in the study who could

respond to both surveys. The fourth assumption was met because it showed that there

were no outliers in the data, as assessed by inspection of a boxplot. See Figure 4 for

Question 7 Boxplot. The fifth assumption was violated because it showed that the

perspectives between the teachers (p = .013) and the perspectives of the parents (p =

.000) were not normally distributed, as assessed by Shapiro-Wilk's test. See Table 13 for

Question 6 Shapiro-Wilk's test. Therefore, I ran a Mann-Whitney U test to determine if

there were differences in perspectives score between the parents and teachers.

Distributions of the perspective scores for the parents and teachers were not similar, as

assessed by visual inspection. Perspective scores for the teachers (*Mdn* = 42.00) were

statistically higher than the parents (*Mdn* = 33.00), U = 5.206, z = 4.248, p = .000. See

Table 14 for Question 6 Mann-Whitney test. According to Laerd Statistics (2015), if the

distribution of scores for the Mann-Whitney test is less than .05, it is not normally

distributed. The independent *t* test is fairly robust from the deviation of normality.

Therefore, I will carry on with the interpretation of the results. The sixth assumption

showed that the homogeneity of variances was not met, as assessed by Levene's test for

equality of variances (p = .000), therefore; equal variances were not assumed. There was

a statistically significant difference in the mean perspective score between the parents and

teachers, $t(148.91)$ = -11.93, p = .000. See Table 15 for Question 6 Levene's test.
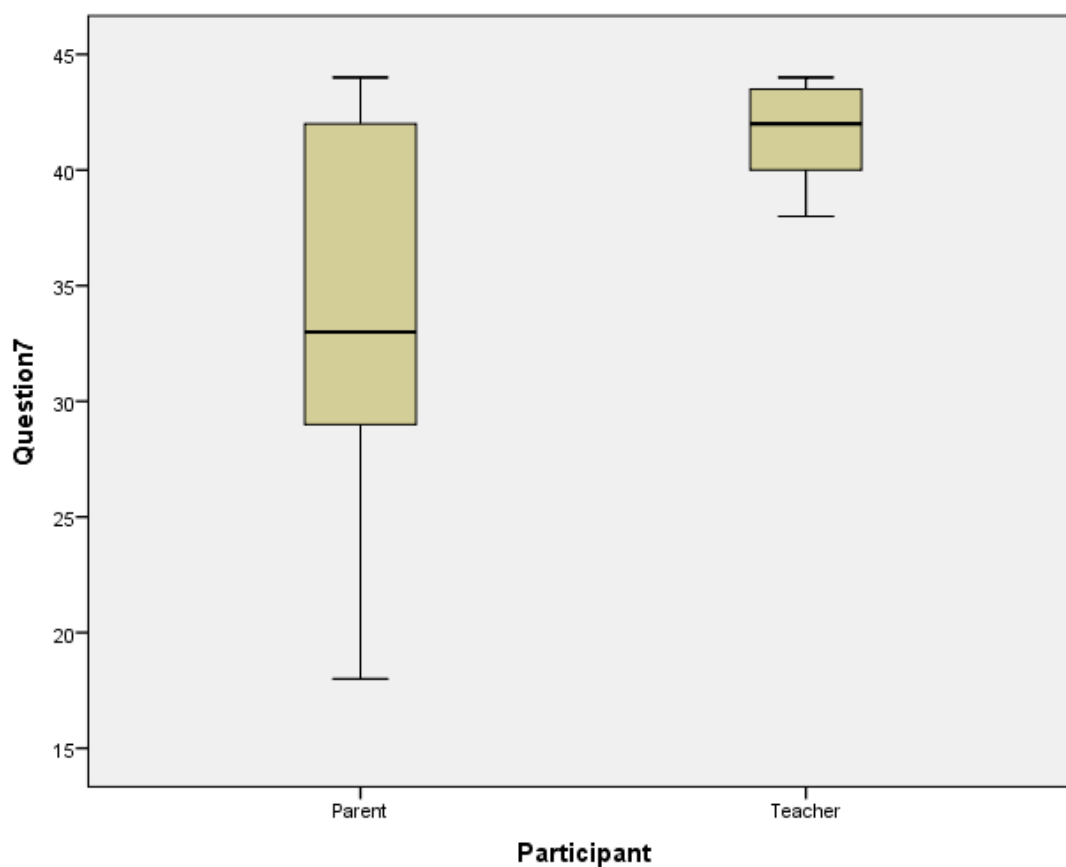
Figure 4. Box plot for Question 7.

Table 13

Test of Normality for Question 7

		Tests of Normality					
	Participant	Kolmogorov-Smirnov[a]			Shapiro-Wilk		
		Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Question7	Parent	.135	250	.000	.915	250	.000
	Teacher	.184	28	.016	.902	28	.013
a. Lilliefors Significance Correction							

Table 14

Mann-Whitney U Test for Question 7

Hypothesis Test Summary			
Null Hypothesis	Test	Sig.	Decision
The distribution of Question 7 is the same across categories of Participant.	Independent-Samples Mann-Whitney U Test	.000	Reject the null hypothesis.

Asymptotic significances are displayed. The significance level is .05.

Table 15

Levene's T-Test for Question 7

		Independent Samples Test								
		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Question7	Equal variances assumed	59.566	.000	-5.011	276	.000	-7.000	1.397	-9.749	-4.250
	Equal variances not assumed			-11.925	148.906	.000	-7.000	.587	-8.160	-5.840

Summary of assumption testing. Prior to analyzing my data using the

independent *t* test, I checked the six assumptions to determine if the *t* test was the correct

test to use. However, while checking the six assumptions, I found that some of the

assumptions for Q1, Q6, and Q7 of this project study were violated. The first four

assumptions were met in all questions, but Assumptions 5 and 6 were violated for Q1,

Q6, and Q7. Assumption 5, which is the Shapiro-Wilk test for normality, was violated but

was corrected by running a non-parametric test (Mann-Whitney U test). Assumption 6,

which is the test for homogeneity of variances, was violated but was corrected by running

the Levene's test for equality of variances. According to Laerd Statistics (2015), if any of

the six assumptions are violated and are not correctable, the independent *t* test can no

longer be used in analyzing the data. Although some of the assumptions were not

tenable, the *t* test was acceptable in analyzing my data, because each violated assumption

was corrected.

Research Question: Differences Between Parent and Teacher Perceptions

The independent *t* test was used at the significance level of alpha = .05 to test the

null hypothesis comparing the teacher and parent responses. The *t* test yielded a statistic,

t value, *df* (degrees of freedom), and significance (*p* value), which indicated if there was a

significant difference between the two sample means in each survey target question for

the parent and teacher group.

The methodology used to prepare the data to analyze the null hypothesis was the

same for the parent and teachers. First, the survey data were collected from the

participants (parents and teachers) through SurveyMonkey. Data were gathered in

SurveyMonkey, and I exported the data to SPSS. Both datasets (parent's and teacher's

survey) were combined. I completed statistical analyses and documentation for the

parents and teachers for Questions 1, 5, 6, and 7 on the survey instruments. Survey

documentation included frequency distribution of the respondents' answers. Responses

to the questions represented the extent of agreement regarding parental involvement, the

amount of development needed, the degree of importance and parents' responsibilities.

There were 250 parents and 28 teachers who participated in the study. The

parents, who selected Teacher 1 as their child's homeroom teacher, were grouped to

avoid having many scores, which would be the parents, to one score, which would be the

teacher score. For example, of the 250 parents 7 selected Teacher 1, and the mean and

standard deviation was determined (see Table 16). The remaining parents were similarly

grouped by teachers creating a total number of groups equal to 28. The mean and

standard deviation was determined for each group. This allowed one score for each parent

group (of each teacher) to be compared to one score for each teacher. The score for the

parent group of Teacher 1 was paired with the score for Teacher 1. Each of the other

groups was paired with the corresponding teacher. This allowed for equal numbers for

each group in order to perform the *t* test. The answers to the questions were assigned a

number as responses were designed. Using the assigned numbers, the arithmetic mean

for each survey entry was calculated for the parents, who had a child enrolled at Walker

Middle School and the teacher who was employed as the homeroom teacher at the school

in fourth through eighth grades. The arithmetic mean data contained in Tables 16-19

were used for descriptive purposes only. The inferential data contained in Table 20

provided the foundation for project and recommendations to be covered in the following

sections.

Valid and cumulative percentages were calculated. Then, each hypothesis was targeted to compute the means, standard deviation, *t* value, degrees of freedom, and significance levels between the groups (parent and teacher). This allowed the significance level of 0.050 to be tested to determine whether the null hypothesis was to be rejected or failed to be rejected.

Tables 16-19 show the mean scores of the survey data. The survey for teachers and parents addressed six areas, or dimensions, from Joyce Epstein's Parent Involvement Model. These six areas are parenting, communicating, volunteering, learning at home, decision-making, and collaborating with the community. Because there were multiple variables for Questions 1, 5, 6, and 7, the variables were computed into one score. In most cases for each question the teacher had a higher mean in comparison to the parents.

Table 16

Parents' and Teachers' Responses to Parental Involvement

	Number Parents	Parents' Mean	Teacher's Mean	SD
Fourth Grade				
Teacher 1	7	48.14	**49.00**	8.050
Teacher 2	6	45.17	**51.00**	8.353
Teacher 3	7	39.71	**44.00**	4.348
Teacher 4	6	39.33	**44.00**	7.474
Teacher 5	8	45.75	**54.00**	8.860
Teacher 6	9	44.89	**47.00**	7.390
Fifth Grade				
Teacher 7	6	**49.00**	42.00	6.197
Teacher 8	6	**51.00**	41.00	5.060
Teacher 9	9	**50.56**	43.00	4.503
Teacher 10	9	**47.78**	47.00	6.572
Teacher 11	6	43.17	**49.00**	3.488
Teacher 12	10	**46.30**	45.00	5.579
Sixth Grade				
Teacher 13	5	41.60	**44.00**	4.336
Teacher 14	7	45.57	**48.00**	6.754
Teacher 15	9	40.11	**43.00**	4.285
Teacher 16	10	40.60	**44.00**	7.486
Teacher 17	13	39.85	**43.00**	6.026
Seventh Grade				
Teacher 18	12	**45.08**	37.00	9.443
Teacher 19	13	41.62	**45.00**	6.665
Teacher 20	13	40.85	**43.00**	5.970
Teacher 21	15	41.47	**47.00**	6.896
Teacher 22	10	36.00	**49.00**	1.826
Eighth Grade				
Teacher 23	6	37.83	**47.00**	9.283
Teacher 24	11	38.73	**42.00**	7.058
Teacher 25	11	41.45	**45.00**	5.373
Teacher 26	7	37.86	**39.00**	5.178
Teacher 27	10	35.70	**49.00**	2.908
Teacher 28	9	39.33	**46.00**	6.384

Note. The higher mean is in bold.

Table 17

Parents' and Teachers' Responses to Types of Involvement

	Number Parents	Parents' Mean	Teacher's Mean	SD
Fourth Grade				
Teacher 1	7	**23.71**	22.00	2.690
Teacher 2	6	24.50	**25.00**	5.394
Teacher 3	7	19.57	**21.00**	2.225
Teacher 4	6	20.67	**23.00**	5.854
Teacher 5	8	21.88	**26.00**	4.581
Teacher 6	9	22.89	**26.00**	4.485
Fifth Grade				
Teacher 7	6	**22.67**	16.00	4.676
Teacher 8	6	**22.67**	18.00	1.506
Teacher 9	9	**21.33**	13.00	.707
Teacher 10	9	22.11	**26.00**	2.088
Teacher 11	6	22.67	**25.00**	2.658
Teacher 12	10	**21.90**	16.00	2.767
Sixth Grade				
Teacher 13	5	**21.40**	21.00	3.912
Teacher 14	7	**21.14**	20.00	2.673
Teacher 15	9	20.11	**24.00**	1.691
Teacher 16	10	20.10	**22.00**	3.107
Teacher 17	13	**20.62**	18.00	3.754
Seventh Grade				
Teacher 18	12	20.83	**22.00**	3.857
Teacher 19	13	**21.62**	20.00	4.174
Teacher 20	13	**19.23**	19.00	4.106
Teacher 21	15	20.67	**23.00**	2.664
Teacher 22	10	18.60	**25.00**	2.119
Eighth Grade				
Teacher 23	6	18.67	**24.00**	2.805
Teacher 24	11	19.00	**22.00**	2.793
Teacher 25	11	20.09	**21.00**	4.036
Teacher 26	7	**18.71**	14.00	2.430
Teacher 27	10	17.90	**21.00**	2.685
Teacher 28	9	17.11	**19.00**	2.147

Note. The higher mean is in bold.

Table 18

Parents' and Teachers' Responses to Important Practices

	Number Parents	Parents' Mean	Teacher's Mean	SD
Fourth Grade				
Teacher 1	7	46.00	**47.00**	5.627
Teacher 2	6	42.00	**50.00**	8.786
Teacher 3	7	37.43	**46.00**	6.079
Teacher 4	6	39.50	**49.00**	9.915
Teacher 5	8	45.63	**46.00**	8.551
Teacher 6	9	45.11	**50.00**	6.791
Fifth Grade				
Teacher 7	6	**50.17**	41.00	3.125
Teacher 8	6	**51.83**	47.00	.408
Teacher 9	9	**50.00**	48.00	4.000
Teacher 10	9	48.89	**50.00**	4.372
Teacher 11	6	46.67	**48.00**	7.789
Teacher 12	10	47.80	**52.00**	5.224
Sixth Grade				
Teacher 13	5	40.80	**52.00**	9.365
Teacher 14	7	43.29	**51.00**	7.455
Teacher 15	9	37.56	**49.00**	5.341
Teacher 16	10	39.80	**50.00**	6.909
Teacher 17	13	41.38	**49.00**	6.590
Seventh Grade				
Teacher 18	12	40.08	**41.00**	7.763
Teacher 19	13	43.85	**48.00**	7.614
Teacher 20	13	39.31	**49.00**	8.864
Teacher 21	15	39.53	**50.00**	8.871
Teacher 22	10	33.60	**49.00**	4.006
Eighth Grade				
Teacher 23	6	30.83	**51.00**	4.535
Teacher 24	11	36.27	**50.00**	6.739
Teacher 25	11	38.73	**51.00**	8.776
Teacher 26	7	36.00	**47.00**	5.196
Teacher 27	10	33.70	**51.00**	6.273
Teacher 28	9	33.78	**52.00**	5.044

Note. The higher mean is in bold.

Table 19

Parents' and Teachers' Responses to Parents' Responsibilities

	Number Parents	Parents' Mean	Teacher's Mean	SD
Fourth Grade				
Teacher 1	7	**40.29**	40.00	4.192
Teacher 2	6	37.67	**41.00**	7.763
Teacher 3	7	31.57	**42.00**	6.901
Teacher 4	6	33.83	**43.00**	7.960
Teacher 5	8	35.63	**40.00**	8.535
Teacher 6	9	38.78	**40.00**	4.919
Fifth Grade				
Teacher 7	6	**41.83**	40.00	3.710
Teacher 8	6	41.00	**44.00**	2.683
Teacher 9	9	41.67	**42.00**	6.633
Teacher 10	9	**41.00**	38.00	4.272
Teacher 11	6	40.67	**42.00**	4.633
Teacher 12	10	**41.20**	39.00	2.898
Sixth Grade				
Teacher 13	5	36.40	**44.00**	6.580
Teacher 14	7	33.29	**44.00**	7.342
Teacher 15	9	31.56	**44.00**	5.318
Teacher 16	10	33.30	**40.00**	7.319
Teacher 17	13	34.23	**44.00**	6.030
Seventh Grade				
Teacher 18	12	34.67	**40.00**	7.088
Teacher 19	13	36.31	**42.00**	6.170
Teacher 20	13	34.46	**39.00**	7.870
Teacher 21	15	33.20	**39.00**	7.858
Teacher 22	10	27.00	**42.00**	3.127
Eighth Grade				
Teacher 23	6	27.33	**42.00**	4.082
Teacher 24	11	28.55	**40.00**	6.758
Teacher 25	11	31.91	**41.00**	7.355
Teacher 26	7	30.29	**43.00**	4.152
Teacher 27	10	30.00	**44.00**	6.616
Teacher 28	9	27.67	**44.00**	4.183

Note. The higher mean is in bold.

T test. Table 20 shows the parents' and teachers' overall means and standard

deviation by groups for Questions 1, 5, 6, and 7 in the areas of general attitudes of

parental involvement, parental involvement practices, the importance of parental

involvement practices, and parents' responsibilities. There was a significant difference

between the parents and teachers in Question 1 because the perspective scores for the

teachers (*M* = 45.25, *SD* = 3.648) and the parents (*M* = 42.36, *SD* = 7.263) showed a

difference (*M* = 3), *p* = .004. There was significant difference between the parents and

teachers in Questions 6 and 7. There is a significant difference between the parents and

teachers in Question 6 because the perspective scores for the teachers (*M* = 48.71, *SD* =

8.325) and the parents (*M* = 41.12, *SD* = 2.774) showed a difference (*M* = 8), *p* = .000.

There is a significant difference between the parents and teachers in Question 7 because

the perspective scores for the teachers (*M* = 41.54, *SD* = 1.895) and the parents (*M* =

34.54, *SD* = 7.353) showed a difference (*M* = 7), *p* = .000.

Table 20

Parents and Teachers Overall Means for Questions 1, 5, 6, and 7

	N	Mean	*SD*	*F*	*t*	Sig.
Question1						
Parent	250	42.36	7.263	16.067	-2.071	.000*
Teacher	28	45.25	3.648		-3.484	
Question 5						
Parent	250	20.64	3.569	.001	-.701	.972
Teacher	28	21.14	3.566		-.702	
Question 6						
Parent	250	41.12	8.325	62.234	-4.793	.000*
Teacher	28	48.71	2.774		-10.227	
Question 7						
Parent	250	34.5360	7.35289	59.566	-5.011	.000*
Teacher	28	41.5357	1.89506		-11.925	

*p < .05

Effect size. To determine the size of effect between the groups, I use the Cohen's

Effect Size (ES) formula to determine the magnitude of the differences between the two

groups (parents and teachers). To make this determination of the effect size between the

two groups, I found the difference between the two means and divided the differences by

the standard deviation (*d* = *M₁*-*M₂/s*). Cohen classified the effect sizes as .2 as small, .5

as medium, and .8 or greater as large (Sullivan & Feinn, 2012).

Based on the results in Table 21, Question 6 has a large ES regarding the parents'

and teachers' perception about the importance for practices to be conducted at the school

because it has an ES of 1.3676, which is greater than .8. Question 7 has a large ES

regarding the parents' and teachers' perception regarding parent responsibilities because

it has an ES of 1.5138, which is greater than .8. The ES for Question 1 is 0.5297, which

according to Cohen is classified as medium, because is larger than .2 but less than .8.

Table 21

Cohen's Effect Size for Questions 1, 5, 6, and 7

	Mean 1	Mean 2	Differences between Means	Standard Deviation 1	Standard Deviation 2	Sum of SD1 and SD2	SD1+SD2/2 = Average SD	Differences between Means/Average SD = Effect Size
Question1	42.36	45.25	2.89	7.263	3.648	10.911	5.4555	0.5297
Question 5	20.64	21.14	.5	3.569	3.566	7.135	3.5675	0.1402
Question 6	41.12	48.71	7.59	8.325	2.774	11.099	5.5495	1.3676*
Question 7	34.54	41.54	7	7.353	1.895	9.248	4.624	1.5138*

*ES > .8

Discussion of the Findings

In the analyses, I specifically focused on Survey Questions 1, 5, 6, and 7.

Question 1 (Q1) included 11 items regarding the general attitudes of parental

involvement. Question 5 (Q5) included 8 items regarding parental involvement practices.

Question 6 (Q6) included 10 items regarding the importance of parental involvement, and

Questions 7 (Q7) included 11 items regarding parents' responsibilities. I conducted

analyses to determine if there were differences between the parents' and teachers'

perceptions regarding the same variables.

The null hypothesis stated that there would not be a difference in the parents' and

teachers' perceptions regarding parental involvement and academic achievement. There

were 250 parents and 28 teachers, totaling 278 participants who participated in the study.

Table 20 shows the parents' and teachers' overall means for Questions 1, 5, 6, and 7 in

the areas of general attitudes of parental involvement, practices, importance, and parents'

responsibilities. Question 1, 6, and 7 showed a difference between the parents' and

teachers' perceptions regarding parental involvement in the areas of general attitudes of

parental involvement, the importance of parental involvement practices, and parents'

responsibilities; therefore, I would reject the null hypothesis.

The teacher means score was higher than the parents for Question 1 regarding

general attitudes of parental involvement. Of the 18 items in Question 1, seven items

showed that there was a difference between the two groups. The teachers were more

likely to agree or strongly agree to parental involvement being an important factor in a

successful school ($n = 28$, 100%), whereas; some parents ($n = 53$, 21%) were more likely

to disagree or strongly disagree with parental involvement being an important factor in a

successful school (Q1a). The teachers indicated that parental involvement can help

teachers be more effective with students ($n = 28$, 100%), whereas; parents ($n = 54$, 22%)

were more likely to disagree or strongly disagree that parental involvement can help

teachers be more effective with students (Q1f). The parents ($n = 109$, 44%) also

indicated that they disagreed with the item that indicated parents of children at this school

want to be involved more than they are now at most grade levels and the teachers ($n = 16$,

57%) disagreed that parents of children at this school want to be involved more than they

are now at most grade levels (Q1h).

The teachers' mean scores were higher than the parents for Question 6 about the importance of parental involvement practices. Of the 11 items in Question 6, 9 items showed a difference between the two groups. The parents were more likely to indicate that it was not important for teachers to contact parents about students' problems or when their children improve (Q6c) and for teachers to provide specific activities for children and parents to do to improve grades (Q6f).

The teachers' mean score was higher than the parents for Question 7 concerning parents' responsibilities. Of the 12 items in Question 7, 11 items showed a difference between the two groups. The teachers were more likely to indicate that it was important for parents to send children to school with the items necessary for learning ($n = 27$, 96%), whereas; some parents ($n = 10$, 4%) indicated that it was not important or ($n = 54$, 22%) a little important (Q7a). The teachers were more likely to indicate that parents should teach children to behave well ($n = 28$, 100%), whereas; some parents ($n = 5$, 2%) indicated that it was not important or ($n = 39$, 16%) a little important (Q7b). The teachers were more likely to indicate that parents should set up a quiet place and time for studying at home ($n = 28$, 100%), whereas; some parents ($n = 10$, 4%) indicated that it was not important or ($n = 54$, 22%) a little important (Q7c). The teachers were more likely to indicate that it is important for parents to know what their children are expected to learn each year, whereas; some parents ($n = 26$, 10%) indicated that it was not important or ($n = 36$, 14%) a little important (Q7d). The teachers were more likely to indicate that parents should check daily that homework is done ($n = 28$, 100%), whereas; some parents ($n = 7$, 3%) indicated that it was not important or ($n = 53$, 21%) a little important (Q7e). The teachers

were more likely to indicate that parents should talk to their child about what they are learning in school ($n = 28$, 100%), whereas; some parents ($n = 12$, 5%) indicated that it was not important or ($n = 53$, 21%) a little important (Q7f). The teachers were more likely to indicate that parents should ask teachers for specific ideas on how to help their children at home with classwork ($n = 28$, 100%), whereas; some parents ($n = 10$, 4%) indicated that it was not important or ($n = 46$, 18%) a little important (Q7g). The teachers were more likely to indicate that parents attend PTA/PTO meetings ($n = 28$, 100%), whereas; some parents ($n = 36$, 14%) indicated that it was not important or ($n = 67$, 27%) a little important (Q7h). The teachers were more likely to indicate that parents should serve as a volunteer in the school or classroom ($n = 28$, 100%), whereas; some parents ($n = 22$, 9%) indicated that it was not important or ($n = 71$, 28%) a little important (Q7i). The teachers were more likely to indicate that parents should attend assemblies and other special events at the school ($n = 28$, 100%), whereas; some parents ($n = 19$, 8%) indicated that it was not important or ($n = 52$, 21%) a little important (Q7j). The teachers were more likely to indicate that parents should talk to their children about the importance of school ($n = 28$, 100%), whereas; some parents ($n = 11$, 4%) indicated that it was not important or ($n = 49$, 20%) a little important (Q7k).

The differences between the teacher and parent responses for Questions 1, 6 and 7 could be due to the level of parental involvement. Of the 250 parents who responded to Question 1, 5, 6, and 7, parents indicated that they seldom ($n = 148$, 59%) or never ($n = 61$, 24%) volunteer at their child's school, disagreed ($n = 56$, 22%) that the school views parents as important partners, disagreed ($n = 65$, 26%) that the school has a climate

conducive to successful learning, and disagreed ($n = 69$, 28%) that this school has a

climate conducive to parent participation, whereas; majority of the teachers viewed

parents as important partners and believed that the school had a climate conducive for

successive learning, and parental participation. According to Noel et al. (2013), in

previous years parental involvement has declined in some states across the United States.

However, research indicated that volunteering is one of the six types of parental

involvement for a school to have an effective parental involvement program (Epstein et

al., 2002). Research also indicated that there is a gap between the home and school

environment and that some of the constraints of parental involvement are expectations of

roles and responsibilities for parental involvement and communication (Hourani et al.,

2012). However, to develop a strong partnership between parents and teachers, schools

must initiate activities that will encourage and solicit parents to take part in their child's

education (Radzi et al., 2010). Teachers must communicate with parents to develop a

strong partnership between the home and school. Developing the partnership will help

teachers with including parents in classroom activities, and parents will become

comfortable with becoming involved in their child's education (Radzi et al., 2010).

Question 5 was the only question to show that there was not a difference between

the parents' and teachers' perceptions for the eight items regarding the types of parental

involvement that should be developed or strengthened within the school. Therefore I

would fail to reject the null hypothesis. Some teachers and parents indicated that the

types of parental involvement at the school needed to be improved ($n = 23$, 8%), but the

majority indicated that the types of parental involvement at the school were strong ($n =$ 188, 68%).

Findings presented indicated that parents and teachers of this study have some similar views and some differing views regarding parental involvement. Findings coincided with Bower and Griffin (2011) who indicated that parental involvement has been viewed as an effective strategy to ensure student success, but there has been a disagreement on how parental involvement is defined. Also, findings confirmed that there has not been an agreement on what constitutes parental involvement (Jordan et al., 2002). This research confirmed that it is extremely important for parents and teachers to develop a relationship to meet the needs of the children (Graham-Clay, 2005) and that schools should not restrict parents' participation only to the home environment, for financial obligations, and physical activities, rather parents should be identified as a partner to the teacher (Radzi et al., 2010). In strengthening the parent-teacher partnership, Zieger and Tan (2012) noted a large percentage of parents preferred to communicate with teachers via email because it allowed the parents and teachers an opportunity to communicate during the day and night than the use of telephone. However, if teachers are not able to communicate with parents via email, schools should organize a community outreach program that encourages parents to take part in their child's education (Radzi et al., 2010).

The overall feedback from the parents' and teachers' in the area of general attitudes showed that teachers' believe it is important for parents to be involved in their children's school but felt that the school lacked the support of the parents and

community; whereas, the parents felt that teachers and administrators at Walker Middle School did not view them as important partners and parents did not have the desire to be involved in their children's school at least four times in every nine weeks. In the area of practices, teachers felt it was important to meet with the children's parents to discuss ways to improve the behavior and academics of their children, as well as ways parents can assist their children with homework. The parents felt that it was not important for teachers to contact them regarding their children's behavior when there is an improvement in their children, or send activities they can use with their children to assist with improving academics. In the area of responsibilities, teachers felt it was important for parents to know what is expected of their children each school year, attend PTO meetings, as well as serve as volunteers in their children's school or classroom. Parents did not feel it was important to know what is expected of their children each school year, attend PTO meetings, or volunteer in their children's school or classroom.

Based on the findings regarding general attitudes, practices, and responsibilities in this study, a teacher workshop should be developed so teachers can devise a plan for communicating with the parents to develop a parent-teacher relationship. In addition, the workshop should be developed so teachers can develop a plan on how they will work with parents to increase student achievement. Finally, a teacher workshop should be developed so teachers can meet the needs of the parents to increase parental involvement and student achievement.

Conclusion

The results of this study provide information about the parents' and teachers perspectives regarding parental involvement and student achievement at Walker Middle School. The overall feedback from the parents and teachers showed that teachers want parents to become more involved in their children's education in the school and classroom so a partnership can be developed to improve academics of the children. The parents are a little reluctant on becoming more involved in their children's education because they do not feel that it is important to attend PTO meetings, serve as volunteers in their children's school or classroom, or that they are viewed as important partners by the school administrators and teachers. The surveys were sent to the parents and teachers and data were analyzed to either reject or fail to reject the hypotheses. The responses to the surveys gave valid information from teachers and parents regarding the school as they involve parents. However, the ultimate goal for completing this study is to identify strategies that will increase parental involvement, improve student achievement, and develop a strong home-school partnership.

The results from this study were used to create a Professional Development/Training Curriculum and Material Workshop to share with Walker Middle School principals and teachers. The findings of this study indicate there is a difference between the parents' and teachers' perspectives regarding their general attitudes of parental involvement, the importance of practices for teachers, and parents' responsibilities. Sharing the findings from this study with Walker Middle School will help the principals and teachers work toward increasing parental involvement and

developing a strong home-school partnership. Therefore, in Section 3 I will discuss the

project I developed to share with Walker Middle School principals and teachers regarding

the findings gathered from the parents' and teachers' perspectives regarding parental

involvement and student achievement.

Section 3: The Project

Introduction

Based on my findings, some parents are reluctant to participate in their children's education at Walker Middle School. Although there is a plethora of literature indicating that parental involvement is the key factor in increasing student achievement (Dietel, 2013; Larocque et al., 2011; Rafiq et al., 2013), educators around the world continue to struggle when it comes to having parents involved in their children's education. In spite of the efforts of the principals and teachers at Walker Middle School, there was still a gap between the parents and teachers in the areas of general attitudes, practices, and responsibilities. Therefore, my purpose in conducting this project study was to gather data and share my findings with the school's principals and teachers. More broadly, I wanted to develop a plan that would minimize the gap between parents' and teachers' perspectives to increase parental involvement and student achievement.

In analyzing the data I gathered in the area of general attitude, I found that the administrators and teachers need to effectively communicate how they view parents because according to the data, parents did not feel as if they were viewed as an important partner. In the area of practices, I found that teachers have not been successful in terms of showing parents the importance of developing a strong parent-teacher partnership. Also, teachers have not been successful in terms of showing parents ways they can assist teachers with improving children's behavior and academics. Parents in my study indicated that they do not feel it is important for teachers to contact them regarding their children's behavior and how they can help their child at home to improve academics. In

the area of responsibilities, I found that teachers have not motivated parents to want to know what is expected of their children academically, attend PTO meetings, nor volunteer at their children's school or classroom.

Based on my study findings, I developed a 3-day professional development workshop, to assist principals and teachers in developing strategies to build a strong home-school partnership at Walker Middle School. Questions will be evaluated by the Walker Middle School action team to determine whether these strategies are effective in increasing parental involvement and student achievement. These questions are (a) have Walker Middle School educators changed parents' views regarding them being important partners in the school and classroom?; (b) have Walker Middle School educators changed the minds of parents regarding the importance of partnering to change the behavior and academics of their children?; (c) have Walker Middle School educators changed parents' perceptions regarding what is expected of their children academically, the importance of attending PTO meetings, and the benefits of volunteering in their children's school or classroom?; and (d) have the strategies implemented at Walker Middle School achieved the expected outcomes? In this section, I include the description and goals of the project, the rationale for the design, a review of the literature, the proposed implementation schedule, the project evaluation process, the implications for social change, and information on the professional development workshop I developed (see Appendix A).

Description and Goals

In this professional development, I focused on developing strategies that might build a strong parent-teacher relationship so that there is an increase in parental

involvement and student achievement. The design of the professional development will consist of three components that address findings in the areas of general attitudes, practices, and responsibilities. In the area of general attitude, my overall study findings showed that teacher participants did not feel they had the support they believed was needed from parents and community members. In contrast, parent participants felt that they were not viewed as important partners by the administrators and teachers.

Based on these findings, I concluded that it is important for the administrator and teachers at the Walker Middle School to develop an understanding of what is considered parental involvement. Park and Holloway (2013) indicated that parent involvement is usually defined as parents' interactions with children and schools which are intended to promote academic achievement. Parental involvement has also been defined as a multidimensional construct that includes involvement at the school and in the home and, also, academic socialization (Wang & Sheikh-Khalil, 2014). According to Wang and Sheikh-Khalil (2014), academic socialization is the process of parents communicating with the child about the importance of education. As William and Sanchez (2012) noted, a single model with a concrete meaning of parental involvement is lacking. Wilder (2014) indicated that student achievement is affected by various factors. Other factors considered by Wilder were ethnicity, prior achievement, and socioeconomic status; however, parental involvement is a factor that plays the most significant role in student achievement (Wilder, 2014). However, finding a specific definition for parental involvement has been a major challenge for many administrators and researchers (Wilder, 2014). My intention for this component of the project is to develop a concrete definition

of parental involvement for Walker Middle School principals and teachers to share with parents. With this definition, parents and teachers will have a better understanding of what is required to develop a strong parent-teacher relationship, as well as to increase student achievement.

In the area of practices and responsibilities, the overall findings showed that it is important to Walker Middle School teachers that parents attend PTO meetings and volunteer at their children's school so they can learn about their children's academic expectations, as well as learn ways to assist teachers with their children's disruptive behavior. However, findings showed parents at Walker Middle School did not feel it was important for teachers to share ways to assist teachers and their children academically nor did parents see the importance of attending PTO meetings and volunteering at their children's school. Based on my findings regarding practices and responsibilities, it is important for Walker Middle School administrators and teachers to develop strategies targeting developing a communication line between the parents and teachers. Communication builds a strong relationship between the parent, teacher, and school. Parents are able to share their concerns regarding their child's progress. Teachers are able to share what they have observed both positively and negatively about the progress of a student. School administrators and teachers should not restrict parents' participation only to the home environment, financial contributions, and physical activities; rather parents should be identified as partners to the teacher (Radzi et al., 2010). Caspe et al. (2013) stated families play an important part in a child's life; therefore, it is important for parents and teachers to work together for the benefit of the child. Dietel (2013) indicated

one key indicator of student success is having a strong relationship between the parents

and teachers. Therefore, parents need to see that their participation is needed for students

to increase in academics. According to Harris and Plucker (2014), when there is a strong

home-school relationship, there is a positive effect on student achievement. Skaliotis

(2010) indicated that recent researchers have shown that parents are more involved in

their child's education because they understand that educating their child is the parents'

and school's responsibility instead of just the responsibility of the school. Therefore,

principals and teachers at Walker Middle School must work with parents to develop a

clear understanding that educating their children requires teamwork from both sides.

One goal for the 3-day professional development is for principals and teachers to

develop a plan that might change the minds of the parents regarding the importance of

developing a strong partnership with the school. Changing the minds of parents may

assist in modifying the behavior and academics of their children. Another goal is to

change the perceptions of the parents, so there is a desire to attend PTO meetings and

volunteer in their children's school or classroom. Finally, a goal is for parents to have the

desire to know what is expected of their children academically to increase parental

involvement and student achievement. The principals and teachers will meet to create a

solid definition of parental involvement, ways to communicate with parents, so they will

understand how important they are to Walker Middle School, strategies for implementing

parents in the school and classroom, and activities, with step-by-step instructions, for

parents to use as an at-home reinforcement.

Rationale

I chose this project so the principals and teachers a Walker Middle School could work together in developing a plan that will focus on increasing parental involvement within the school and home. Results of the study indicated parents did not feel teachers viewed them as partners and that parents seldom or never volunteered at the school; whereas, teachers felt it was important to have a parent-teacher relationship and that it was important for parents to volunteer in their children's school or classroom so parents may better understand the expectations of their child academically as well as assist their child with homework. Therefore, principals and teachers must develop a plan that will include parents. In my review of the literature, when there is a strong parent-teacher relationship there will be an increase in student achievement because parents have a better understanding of what is required of their children.

Choosing the professional development as a project plays an important role in developing a floor plan that builds on the findings rather than making recommendations. Allowing the principals and teachers opportunities to collaborate on the findings will help in understanding what parents' desire from the school to possibly develop a strong parent-teacher relationship. The goal is to increase the level of parental involvement at Walker Middle School so it could potentially have a significant effect on student achievement. Therefore, sending strategies or manipulatives home for students to use, with the intentions of increasing student achievement does not help with the goal, which is to increase parental involvement at Walker Middle School so there could possibly be an increase in student achievement.

For this project, teachers will work together in developing a meaning of parental involvement to serve as the foundation at Walker Middle School. In addition to developing the meaning of parental involvement for Walker Middle School, the principals and teachers will collaborate in developing a plan for communicating with the parents so both sides can understand what is needed to increase parental involvement. The teachers will also develop a plan for implementing volunteers within the classroom. Addressing the concern of teachers viewing parents as an important partner will help build a stronger parent-teacher relationship. My aim for conducting a 3-day professional development is to build a strong team of teachers who will strive toward changing how parents view Walker Middle School so they might feel the teachers' desire is to develop a parent-teacher relationship. I am aiming to build a strong team of teachers who will strive to change the minds of parents, in the area of practices and responsibilities and the importance of parents desiring to know about the behavior of their children. Additionally, teachers will strive toward getting parents to understand the importance of assisting their children with activities that may improve their children's grades, attending PTO meetings, and volunteering in their children's school or classroom.

Although there is a need to increase student achievement, it is important for teachers to increase parental involvement at Walker Middle School. According to Stringer and Hourani (2013), there is a need for increased parental involvement to improve student academic achievement and learning. Ishihara-Brito (2013) indicated that parental involvement has been found to improve students' learning outcomes, regardless of the parents' socioeconomic status or educational background. However, a resource that

has been underused is the support network for the children, which is the family and community (Ishihara-Brito, 2013). Ishihara-Brito stated that children are challenged with family and academic responsibility; therefore, it is extremely urgent and necessary to develop a strong partnership between the school, family, and community. Mahmood (2013), who interviewed 14 first-year teachers regarding their experiences with parental involvement, stated that teachers found that despite all attempts of including parents in the school it was difficult. Therefore, I recommend that Walker Middle School administrators and teachers implement strategies that can possibly motivate parents to become active in the children's school.

In an effort to increase parental involvement in the schools, there should be a clear understanding regarding developing a partnership between the parents and teachers. Stringer and Blaik Hourani (2013) noted parents and teachers must understand that parental involvement is not an isolated venture. Ishihara-Brito (2013) stated that to foster a more conducive learning environment, teachers should incorporate the families and the community into their educational activities. Therefore, it is imperative for schools to develop and initiate activities involving parents in their children's education. Teachers should contact parents to develop a partnership and parents should make an attempt to participate in school activities (Stringer & Blaik Hourani, 2013). When there is a parent-teacher partnership, parental involvement within schools can act as a forerunner to effective practices at home.

Based on the analysis of the data, I found that many of the parents never or seldom volunteered at their children's school, but the administrators and teachers want

more parents to volunteer in the school. I also found that parents believed they were not viewed as partners, but teachers felt that parents are important to the success of the students and school. Finally, I found that parents believe there is a need for more communication and teachers felt communication is important, but parents indicated that it is not important for teachers to contact them about their children's problems, the improvement of their children, as well as teachers providing activities to parents that could possibly improve the grades of their children.

Data from the study revealed that a professional development workshop should be developed so the teachers and administrators can discuss and implement, as a whole, various ways the administrators and teachers can communicate with the parents. Also, there should be a workshop to discuss strategies that can be used to include parents in the school and classroom so there may be an increase in student achievement. Finally, a workshop should be developed to discuss and implement strategies that can possibly develop a strong parent-teacher relationship so parents will feel the school needs their participation to meet the needs of the students.

When administrators and teachers include parents with developing plans for the school, it empowers them to become active in their child's education, which will, in turn, strengthen the relationship between the parent and teacher. Therefore, implementing this project will help me address the concern of parental involvement at Walker Middle School. I hope that by developing a plan for teachers to use will increase parent participation so administrators and teachers at Walker Middle School will experience an increase in student achievement. Developing an environment where parents might feel

their participation is required and is deeply needed within Walker Middle School is vital to the success of this project.

The work of Epstein was the inspiration for choosing the project of choice. Epstein (2001) indicated children are able to learn if the school implemented a partnership between the family, school, and community. Therefore, I pursued the task of working with teachers to develop a school-wide plan for communicating and implementing parents within the school and classroom. Dietel (2013) noted parental involvement is the key to student achievement in a school as well as social change within the community. This professional development was developed carefully to ensure all participants were able to visualize the desired outcome and easy to implement without becoming overwhelmed with the workload.

Review of the Literature

This section contains a review of literature that supports the importance of school administrators and teachers developing a strong parent-teacher relationship in hopes of enabling parental involvement and increasing in student achievement. ERIC, Education Source, Education Research Complete, EBSCO Host, ProQuest, and Thoreau: Search Multiple Databases were the major sources used to find literature related to parental involvement and student achievement. The key search terms and Booleans search terms used individually and with other terms between January 2012 and August 2016 were *parental involvement*, *student achievement*, *home-school relationships*, and *communication*. Other words included: *academic achievement*, *parental engagement*, *supportive parents*, *improving education*, *strategies*, and *technology*. These revealed a

plethora of peer-reviewed articles containing various perspectives. In the review that follows, I discussed parental involvement, communication, partnership, strategies, and professional development.

Parental Involvement

Developing a definition of parental involvement might help administrators and teachers with creating strategies that have the possibility of increasing parental involvement in the school. Goodall and Montgomery (2014) defined parental involvement as parents participating in an activity or event at their child's school. However, many parents of ethnic minorities, as well as, parents who are financially challenged find it difficult to become involved in their child's education (Goodall & Montgomery, 2014). Therefore, teachers must develop a partnership with the parent so the school can possibly see improvement in the learning of each child. Goodall and Montgomery noted there is no one size fits all when it comes to developing strategies that will support increasing parental involvement because not all households have the same challenges. Therefore, educators at other schools cannot expect methods used to improve student achievement by other schools to have the same effect at their school. Instead, strategies must be developed based on findings at their school.

Upon completion of my study, I learned that 56% of the participating parents agreed or strongly agreed that parents desire to be involved in their child's education at least four times in every nine weeks for each child. However, 44% of the participating parents disagreed or strongly disagreed that parents desire to be involved in their child's education at least four times in every nine weeks for each child. In my opinion, when

administrators and teachers allow parents to take part in developing strategies that will assist in educating their child, parents might feel they are an important stakeholder in their child's education. Therefore, it is necessary for schools to develop a plan that will enable parents to become more active in their children's schools and classrooms, as well as communicate the needs of parents. Pakter and Chen (2013) stated parents need to feel they should become involved in their children's education, feel that their input can make a difference in the performance of their children, and the success of the school, as well as feel welcomed by the school. Given these points, administrators and teachers must endeavor to improve parental involvement at their school.

As early as 1994, parental involvement has been the indicator of student achievement. According to Pakter and Chen (2013), there are decades of research that indicated there is a strong relationship between parental involvement and student achievement in schools. Frew, Zhou, Duran, Kwok, and Benz (2012) indicated that there is a strong link between a child's success in school and parental involvement in school-sponsored activities, which includes attending a school/class event and volunteering at the school. Pakter and Chen identified three primary factors that motivated parents to become active in their children's education. Parents who were active in their children's education were motivated because they (a) understood their role in their children being successful in school, (b) believed they could make a difference by being involved, and (c) understood their family current life conditions (i.e., work schedule, SES, and ethnic background). For the most part, teachers must communicate with parents so they can continue to learn what motivates parents to be active in their children's education.

In light of my findings, parental involvement has the potential to improve student achievement. According to Watt (2016), parental involvement is defined as parents actively engaged in the learning of their child. Watt also indicated that some of the activities for engaging parents may include helping with homework, reading with the child, and talking with the child regarding getting their education. Knowing the importance of education, many schools are challenged with getting parents to become involved in their child's education (Watt, 2016). However, to overcome the challenge of limited parental involvement, schools must reach out to parents inviting parents to become involved in their children's education (Watt, 2016). Watt stated children are at home more than they are at school; therefore, it is important that learning at school be transferred to the home. Therefore, it is important for parents and teachers to work together sharing the same knowledge, skills, and beliefs when educating their child.

Knowing that teachers are hired by schools to educate children so they have the skills required to pass state standards, it might be easier to accomplish this goal if parents are included in the process. Males, Kusevic, and Siranovic (2014) denoted the importance of parental involvement in children's education has been repeatedly confirmed. The failure or success of a child in a school is not due to the SES of the family or culture but to the parental involvement in the child's education (Males et al., 2014). However, if teachers recognize the competency of parents regarding the knowledge of their children and the influence they have on the progress of their schooling, teachers will find ways to reach out to parents, listen to the views of the parents, recognize the strong points of the parents, and use the parents' knowledge to

improve the academic success of the child (Males et al., 2014). Therefore, it important to know that the core members of a partnership are the teachers and parents while the community and school staff serve as a support.

A partnership between parents and teachers plays an important part in improving the learning of students. Yamamoto, Holloway, and Suzuki (2016) believed that promoting parental involvement in school is a major goal for everyone affiliated with educating students. However, Goodall (2014) indicated that when students matriculate to secondary school, parents do not know how to assist their children with learning. Therefore, policymakers must develop a better plan that will help educators improve their practice regarding communicating and supplying support for the parents (Peck & Reitzug, 2016). By doing this, teachers will develop practices to improve communication and perhaps increase parental involvement and student achievement.

The literature relating to schools developing a strong home-school relationship, so there will be an increase in parental involvement shows that the participation of parents is needed and is extremely important. However, according to Williams and Sanchez (2012) although there are models of parental involvement in existence there are no models that give a concrete meaning of parental involvement. According to Lau (2014), parents believed that their involvement is important in their child's education when they enter primary school. However, researchers found that although parents understand the importance of participating in their children's education, it is hard to paint a picture of how parents viewed parental involvement (Williams & Sanchez, 2012). Williams and Sanchez indicated that some parents viewed their role was to provide the necessities such

as food and shelter, monitoring student academic progress, involving their child in extracurricular school programs, developing a personal relationship with teachers, and developing a community support system. Whereas, teachers viewed parents' role was to communicate with the children and school, participate in school activities, and be effective in supervising and disciplining their children. Of all the literature regarding parental involvement, it has been stated by many authors that schools should include the parents in developing strategies that will assist in increasing parental involvement in the schools; therefore, a way to increase the parental involvement in schools is to develop a strong and successful communication line between the home and school.

Communication

I have learned as an educator that some parents will support my academic plan when I effectively communicate with them. Goodall (2016) indicated that for parents to give support, there must be communication between the teachers and parents. Knowing that having a strong communication between the parent and teacher can assist with increasing student achievement, many teachers are challenged when it comes to communicating with the parents due to limited background knowledge of the home (Epstein, 2001). Epstein (2001) indicated that when the school fails to develop a strong communication line with the home, the school is depriving their students of a full and complete education. Instead of teachers independently working to educate the students, in an effort to building a partnership between the parent and teacher, teachers must strive to develop a strong relationship with the parents. When there is a strong parent-teacher relationship, teachers learn some of the needs of the parents, along with a minimization of

disruptive behaviors and parents become knowledgeable of what is expected of their child, as well as, how to assist their child in completing their assignments. In addition, the school's average daily attendance (ADA) will be high across the school year and there will be an increase in student achievement (Aucejo & Romano, 2016). All in all, students might minimize missing days from school and student achievement might increase when parents and teachers work together with educating their children.

　Developing a two-way communication will allow parents to play a role in developing a plan that will meet the needs of the parents and teachers. Therefore, it is important for the administrators and teachers to find other ways to communicate with the parents rather than automated phone calls, sending a letter or memorandum home, or websites that display information (Pakter & Chen, 2013). Rather, schools must become creative with communicating with parents via phone calls, email, or texting. However, with two-way communication, teachers are often challenged with developing a parent-teacher partnership (Bruine et al., 2014). For the most part, parents and teachers must create a dialogue that allows them to better serve the students.

Improving communication between the parents and teachers is a strategy that might be used by teachers to improve student achievement. However, Reynolds, Crea, Medina, Degnan, and McRoy (2015) indicated that teachers were challenged with building a strong parent-teacher partnership. With the two-way communication, teachers were challenged with time and language. According to Reynolds et al. (2015), there was a challenge with two-way communication because teachers did not have enough time during their planning period, lunchtime, or after school to communicate with parents. In

addition, teachers could not communicate with parents who could not speak English, which required a translator. However, using a translator to communicate every word can be extremely challenging and time-consuming (Reynolds et al., 2015). Looking at the findings, I developed a project that would assist teachers with creating strategies, they will implement school-wide, toward developing a strong parent-teacher relationship.

Based on my findings, administrators and teachers should try to develop a working partnership with the parents so there might be an increase in parental involvement. Nonetheless, Hafizi and Papa (2012) revealed that parental involvement in schools is not thought about and is not often done because parents choose to participate. According to Hafizi and Papa, there are two reasons there is a low level of cooperation between the parents and teachers. The two low levels of cooperation identified are the parents' educational level and the economic circumstances. Hafizi and Papa suggested that schools should improve communication between the parents and teachers. To accomplish this goal, the administrators and teachers must view parents as a significant part of the process of educating students (Hafizi & Papa, 2012). Teachers must invite parents to become active in their children's education and parents must be interested in helping their children so they can carry the knowledge they acquire in the school to their parents (Hafizi & Papa, 2012). However, to improve communication between the parent and teacher, teachers must be transparent with the definition of communication (Goodall, 2016). Beattie and Ellis (2014) indicated that "communication occurs when an organism (the transmitter) encodes information into a signal which passes to another organism (the receiver) which decodes the signal and is capable of responding appropriately" (p. 3). In

this regard, both the parent and teacher must be transparent when communicating in hopes of developing an effective partnership to achieve the goal set by the administrators and teachers, which is to possibly increase parental involvement and student achievement.

Partnership

In this project study, I addressed the need to inform teachers of the importance of creating a partnership with the parents to increase parental involvement in the home and school. According to the MDE (2013d), the National Center for School Engagement (2014), the Michigan Department of Education (2014), Dann (2016), Larocque, Kleiman, and Darling (2011), and Brace and Corts (2012), parental involvement has been shown by many researchers as the key to increasing student achievement in schools. Currently, this school has parent-teacher meetings and Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO) as activities for parents. However, to experience an increase in student achievement the school must develop more activities that include the parents.

Although a partnership is a relationship when key people come together for the academic success of the child, parents must not only know that they are welcome but feel that they are welcome. They must also feel they are viewed as a valid partner in their child's education. Therefore, teachers must view parents as partners, and they must keep the parents informed of the classroom and school activities, as well as how parents can support their children in the classroom and school so learning can be transferred from the school to the home (Morrell & Bennett-Armistead, 2013). However, Morrell and Bennett-Armistead (2013) revealed that teachers often exclude the participation of

parents because they are challenged with knowing what is needed to involve parents. With that in mind, schools must develop a plan that will prepare the current teachers and future teachers with the knowledge and experience they need to interact with the parents.

From my experience, a strong partnership requires mutual respect between the parent and teacher. Haines, Gross, Blue-Banning, Francis, and Turnbull (2015) focused on developing a partnership between the school staff, families, and community. Haines et al. conducted a synthesis analysis of two studies that aimed at building a strong family community partnership in schools and analyzed their overlapping themes. The researchers found that it is extremely important for the school staff, families, and community to develop a partnership because it is required for the success of all students. According to Bryan and Henry (2012), there is an improvement in student learning, academic achievement, behavior, and attendance when a partnership is developed between the school, family, and community. Thus, it is essential for the school to invite the family and community to the school and assure they understand they are welcome to be active participants for the success of the students attending the school (Haines et al., 2015). Overall, clear communication can possibly have a strong partnership between the school staff, families, and community.

As an educator, I must have a clear vision of how to accomplish goals I wish to achieve. In like manner, principals must be clear on their goals for the school. In addition to the administrators inviting and assuring that families and community feel welcome, the principal must take an active role in creating a strong partnership between the family and community (Sanders, 2014). According to Sanders (2014), principals

must have a vision of developing partnerships between the school, family, and community and the school staff must share the same vision. If the principal does not have a positive attitude or is not receptive to developing a partnership, the family and community will feel reluctant in participating in the classroom and school (Sanders, 2014). Likewise, if the principal strongly enforces support developing a partnership between the family and community, the school will experience a strong support from the family and community (Sanders, 2014). Tschannen-Morgan (2014) indicated that it is extremely important for a school to have a trusting partnership between the families and community. With diverse cultures within schools, a trusting partnership must be intentional and ongoing to successfully educate students in a changing world (Tschannen-Morgan, 2014). With a trusting partnership between the parent and teachers, parents may be receptive to the strategies the school may use to possibly increase parental involvement

Strategies

My findings indicate that teachers at Walker Middle School should develop strategies that might increase parental involvement. Watt (2016) identified five strategies schools can use to encourage parental involvement. The five strategies identified were to regularly invite parents into the school, educate parents on how to teach their child, educate parents to increase aspirations, communicate regularly, and have friendly, caring, and firm communication. Watt found that many individuals interviewed indicated that there was a barrier between the parents and school. Therefore, the goal was to work at removing the barrier by inviting parents into the school for various events. Some of the

events parents were invited to attend were grandparent's day, award's day, Mother's day afternoon tea, and Father's day breakfast (Watt, 2016). In my opinion, the events hosted by Walker Middle School give teachers an opportunity to begin the process of developing a relationship with the family of the students.

In an effort to improve the functionality of the Walker Middle School, administrators and teachers must unravel the issue of low parental involvement. Dann (2016) conducted a study that focused on "what works" in five schools that were ranked outstanding despite their location. The drive for conducting this study was to determine what was effective in schools that were challenged with improving the school system (Dann, 2016). According to Dann, the staff and parents indicated there were strategies they used that contributed to their success. However, the key strategy they believed were most effective was parental involvement.

Being that parental involvement in schools is important to student achievement; in my opinion, administrators have the task of devising workshops that will help with informing teachers' changes made within the school. Bates and Watt (2015) identified strategies that would assist in staff development, which is recognized as continuing professional development (CPD). The strategies identified for CPD were providing CPD activities to all staff rather than only those involved in teaching and planning CPD activities in the light of school development main concerns. The CPD activities recognized by Bates and Watt (2015) are coaching and mentoring between staff, forming inter-school partnerships and networks, team teaching, peer review, and continual assessment of the effects of CPD. With these activities in mind, it is important to have

staff development that allows teachers an opportunity to share strategies they have found to be successful in their classroom.

Through my study, I have found that Walker Middle School educators should develop strategies that have the potential to increase parental involvement. Pakter and Chen (2013) identified strategies schools can use to increase parental involvement. According to Pakter and Chen, to accomplish the goal of increasing parental involvement, schools must move beyond the use of phone calls to homes, notes sent to homes by students, emails, and websites to communicate with parents. Instead, due to a large number of cell phone usage, it is recommended that schools implement texting. This recommendation was made because phone calls to homes are time-consuming for teachers and emails do not reach every household due to the low-income of parents (Pakter & Chen, 2013). However, without the support of all educators within the school, the plan developed for texting will not have a strong effect on student achievement (Pakter & Chen, 2013). Therefore, the actions of teachers at the school must be in unison when trying to increase student achievement.

To avoid confusion, it is important to communicate with individuals who play a role in achieving any goal identified by the person in authority; which can be in person or through technology. Similarly, Kosaretskii and Chernyshova (2013) suggested using electronics to communicate between the school and home. The use of email was identified as the source teachers can use to communicate with parents. Although communicating via email is a small step up in electronics, it has its advantages and disadvantages. According to Kosaretskii and Chernyshova, the advantage of using email

is the minimization of time required by teachers when scheduling meeting, which is important for working parents. However, when implementing strategies to communicate with the families and community, schools must remember that not all families have a home computer or easy access to the internet. Therefore, schools and teachers should not replace the traditional way of communicating with communicating via email (Kosaretskii & Chernyshoya, 2013). Instead, schools and teachers must attend professional development workshops to enhance the methods they are using or add to the methods they are using to communicate with the home in an effort to increase parental involvement and student achievement.

Professional Development

A method used to keep teachers abreast with changes or to enhance teaching methods can be done through professional development. Shava (2016) indicated that professional development is a program that is used to help teachers with strategies that will enhance student achievement. According to Vezne and Gunbayi (2016), professional development programs give teachers an opportunity to learn from their colleagues. Implementing a professional development program can help teachers develop their skills, as well as stay up-to-date on current research (Wood, Goodnight, Bethune, Preston, & Cleaver, 2016). Razak et al. (2016) stated that professional development programs can be in person or online across the duration of time and promotes active learning and collaboration. Therefore, continuing to improve or learn new methods regarding increasing student achievement, teachers should attend professional development workshops.

Attending professional development workshops teachers collaborate and learn strategies they can use in their classroom. Nishimura (2014) indicated that every teacher is on a journey and to effectively help teachers with practices in their classrooms, experienced teachers must meet with novice teachers to share some strategies that worked or did not work in their classroom. According to Nishimura, the traditional professional development programs, where teachers listen in workshops, have not been successful in changing the attitudes of teachers. Therefore, it is important for professional development workshops to consist of engaging teachers in hands-on sessions to develop a better understanding of new methods. It is also important for educators to continuously search for new methods that will enhance professional development programs.

As with any organization, to grow in a world that continues to change, it is important to attend professional development workshops that have the potential to assist administrators and teachers in educating their students. To achieve the goal of enhancing the outcome of students in the school and classroom, there must be the continuous implementation of professional development programs to enhance teaching in the classroom (Shava, 2016). Therefore, it is imperative to have a professional development program that will allow teachers an opportunity to engage in asking questions, learn from colleagues, as well as develop a support system that is centered on student learning (Nishimura, 2014). Furthermore, communicating with colleagues during a professional development workshop could transfer valuable information regarding what works with students who are struggling in their classroom.

Conclusion

With the high demands of student achievement in schools, innovative approaches to meet the needs of students are extremely important. The traditional approach targeting student achievement such as tutoring and the support of remediation no longer meet the challenges schools are faced with educating students. In an effort to meet the challenges of the schools, professional development workshops are essential in maintaining teacher professionalism. The workshop must meet the needs of teachers so teachers can be effective in the classroom and so the school can experience and increase in parental involvement and student achievement. Based on studies that focus on professional development, it is imperative to have programs that will enhance learning for teachers on all levels of education. Every year, there are multiple professional development workshops offered for teachers to gain knowledge as well as enhance their classroom skills so they can increase student achievement at their place of employment.

As teachers register for professional development programs during their summer vacation, it is proof that many teachers believe that professional development is important for the success of schools. To achieve the goal of increasing student achievement in the classrooms, teachers must attend professional development programs that will increase their knowledge regarding parental involvement in the school and classroom, communicating with parents, developing a partnership with parents, strategies for increasing parental involvement, and the importance of professional development workshops.

Project Description

In this section, I will describe the potential resources needed for the project, the existing supports, and potential barriers. I will also describe the proposal for implementation, which includes the timetable as well as the roles and responsibilities of the stakeholders. Upon completion of the project study, I will communicate with the administrators of the Walker Middle School to schedule a date to implement the professional development, determine the supplies needed, and quantity of supplies required for the success of the professional development. The school will be responsible for supplying all materials required for the project. During the professional development workshop, the teachers will interact to develop a plan that will be implemented school wide.

The goal of the project is to provide a means to potentially increase parental involvement and student achievement by developing a plan that will be workable for the teachers in hope of developing a strong parent-teacher partnership. The current study revealed that parents never or seldom participated in the child's school and that parents wanted more communication between the home and school. Therefore, in my PowerPoint presentation during the professional development, I will share findings from this project study and related research included in the literature review. A copy of the PowerPoint presentation will be sent to the principals and following the presentation the principal will complete and return a questionnaire to assist in guiding future work, follow-up meetings, and addressing any additional questions the principal may have regarding the study. The presentation will contain components that will focus on

developing a transparent meaning of parental involvement for the school, parents, and community; inform teachers on ways to involve parents as partners in the school and classroom; train teachers in home-school collaboration; and inform teachers on how to support parents at home.

Potential Resources and Existing Supports

This PowerPoint presentation will be delivered to all staff members employed at the Walker Middle School in August, which is the beginning of the school year. Given the timeframe for workshops chosen by the school district, time is the most important resource required for this professional development. If permitted by the superintendent of the Walker Middle School, when this project study is completed, this 3-day professional development workshop will be presented to teachers when they return for the next school year. After the 3-day professional development workshop, volunteers will be solicited to form a workgroup which will consist of a teacher from each grade level, counselors, and principal to discuss the next step to the continual communication of the implemented practices to reach the goal of increasing parental involvement and student achievement. The knowledge gained from this project will serve as a resource for future work.

Potential Barriers

Potential barriers might be having an opportunity to conduct the 3-day workshop early in the academic school year, the financial cost of resources needed for the workshop, and teachers' refusal to commit to the plan developed as a result of the workshop. Having an opportunity to conduct a 3-day professional development workshop

so an effective plan can be developed and implemented prior to the beginning of school might be a barrier because the Walker Middle School requires teachers to report 3 days prior to students returning. The 3 days consist of introducing new employees, last year students' scores, classroom preparation, reviewing of school handbook, reviewing first week agenda, issuing and collecting student information, preparation of lesson plans, and when the lesson plans are due each week. Therefore, it would be impossible to conduct a 3-day professional development workshop at the beginning of the school year. I will have to work with the school to find a time to implement the workshop as early as possible.

The financial coast of purchasing the resources could be a potential barrier because the professional development workshop will consist of supplying each individual attending the workshop with a copy of the PowerPoint presentation which involves the use of copy paper and ink, and access to a copier. The 3-day professional development workshop will also require chart paper, markers, pens, post-its, and notepads for each group to use during each work session. In addition to supplying the materials required for the workshop, food will need to be purchased for catering a light breakfast, which consists of water, coffee, tea, muffins, donuts, and fruit, each morning for 30 or more individuals attending the 3-day professional development workshop.

Professional development workshops are hosted at the Walker Middle School at the beginning of the school year, as well as at the end of the school year that focus on strategies teachers can use to increase student achievement. Bracke and Corts (2012) and Dietel (2013) indicated that for the success of the students, parental involvement is vital

in schools and a partnership between the parents and teachers is extremely important. Therefore, how schools set the stage at the beginning of school year is critical to the level of family involvement in the school. However, due to the different perspectives of the parents and teachers regarding parental involvement, there is often a failure to adequately communicate between the two groups (Young, Austin, & Growe, 2013). Therefore, another potential barrier could be teachers refusing to commit to the plan developed from the 3-day workshop, as well as parents rejecting the school vision of becoming involved in their children's education.

Proposal for Implementation and Timetable

Upon completion of the project, my plan is to implement the professional development in August 2018, which is the beginning of the 2018-2019 school year. I will present the 3-day professional development workshop, with the approval of the administrators, to the teachers at the Walker Middle School. Implementing this professional development workshop will not only assist teachers with developing a plan that will target increasing parental involvement and student achievement for the Walker Middle School but it can assist with increasing collaboration across disciplines.

The first step will be a 3-day professional development workshop for teachers and other staff during the month of August to share the findings of my research. The workshop is based on the findings of my study and will be in the form of a PowerPoint. Each day of the 3-day professional development workshop will consist of a PowerPoint presentation prior to each group session. At the end of each presentation, there will be opportunities for questions and answers prior to breaking into groups.

Secondly, during the 3-day professional development workshop, teachers and other staff will be placed in groups to discuss ways to communicate, ways to invite parents to the school and classroom, strategies for including parents in the classroom activities, and ways to support parents with working with their children at home. After which, the groups will share their methods with the other groups. Teachers and other staff members will determine the best plan for communicating, inviting, classroom activities, and home support to implement school-wide.

After the 3-day professional development workshop in August 2018, volunteers will be solicited to form a workgroup, which will consist of a teacher from each grade level, counselors, and the principal, to discuss the next step to the continual communication of the implemented practices. The workgroup task will share practices, identified by administrators and teachers during the 3-day professional development workshop, to reach the goal of increasing parental involvement and student achievement. The workgroup will function like a team that will work interdependently toward developing a better understanding of what is needed for teachers of each grade level to effectively implement the practices for increasing parental involvement at Walker Middle School. Additionally, the workgroup will work toward understanding what is required of the teachers, counselors, and principals for promoting the practices needed to increase parental involvement and student achievement.

After the 3-day professional development workshop, during September, the final stage will consist of Walker Middle School workgroup communicating with parents to comprise an action team that will include parents, teachers, and school administrators.

The action team at Walker Middle School will work at recruiting parents in the community to volunteer at their children's school, prepare monthly progress reports, prepare quarterly newsletters on the community participation in the school, and monitor the project to determine the achievement of meeting goals and objectives. The project will be fully implemented in October 2018. The proposed project is outlined in the Appendix A. There will be a continuous evaluation of the project. At the end of December, feedback will be acquired from the teachers regarding the effectiveness of the plan implemented schoolwide. The necessary adjustments will be made based on the feedback from those affected by the project.

Roles and Responsibilities of Student and Others

The students enrolled in the school of study, and the parents of the students will not attend the professional development workshop. Instead, the participants attending this professional development workshop will consist of teachers employed at the Walker Middle School. The teachers' role and responsibilities will be to communicate in the assigned groups, which will periodically change during the professional development workshop, as well as share their ideas with the other groups. As the researcher, I will be the person presenting the PowerPoint presentation and supervising the functionality of the 3-day professional development workshop.

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Project Evaluation Plan

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The project will be evaluated on a formative and summative basis. For the formative evaluation, upon completion of the professional development, I will ask participants to complete an evaluation sheet (see Appendix A). The overall success of

the project will be determined by the level of parental involvement in the school. Currently, the school requires all parents to report to the administrator's office upon entering the building. Therefore, to determine if there is an increase in the level of parental involvement in the school, parents will sign in at the administrator's office upon entering the school to participate and sign out when they depart from the school. Records will be kept in the administrator's office, and a data sheet will be developed by the action team to track parental involvement each month. If there is an increase in parental involvement in the school and classroom, it is believed that the project is making momentum toward the school's goal.

After December, I will meet with the members attending the professional development to conduct a summative evaluation. During this time, the members will compare the first nine weeks' grades to the second nine weeks' grades to determine if there is an increase in student achievement, as well as compare the previous year state scores to the current year state scores to determine the effectiveness of the project. The views from the home, school, and community will be solicited. Based on feedback, after the implementation of the project, from the administrators, counselors, teachers, and parents, additional workshops might be required to enhance the plan developed for the school during the 3-day professional development workshop. The goal of the summative and formative feedback is to develop a plan that will assist teachers, administrators, and future educators employed at the school to develop a strong parent-teacher relationship with the possibility of increasing parental involvement and student achievement at the Walker Middle School.

Project Implications

When there is collaboration between the school and parents, there is a possibility of an increase in parental involvement and student achievement. The research reported by Epstein (1995) shows that parental involvement can have a positive effect on student achievement. Knowing that parental involvement has been a major concern nationally as early as 1994 (Goals 2000: Education America Act, 1994), the goal is to have more parents participating in their children's education with the possibility of increasing student achievement. Therefore, in this section I will present the implications including social change in the Walker Middle School, local community, and other schools that are challenged with the task of increasing parental involvement and student achievement.

Local Community

This project addresses the needs of the school by providing a vehicle to potentially increase parental involvement and student achievement. The professional development workshop developed for this project study will help teachers develop a plan that will assist in building a relationship with the parents. Additionally, it will help the parents learn what they can do to help their child at home.

The effect of this professional development on students is endless. Enhancing teachers' knowledge and methods of communicating with parents as well as implementing parents in classroom activities might lead to a plethora of opportunities in the school and community. The opportunities might be an increase in parental involvement in the classroom and school, an increase in the performance of students, a decrease in attendance, an increase on the state test, and a strong relationship between the

teacher, parent, and student. Meeting the goal of this project could possibly provide a model for other schools in the district and school districts in the surrounding counties. In addition, this project could possibly be cited and adapted to other future research studies that target parental involvement.

Far-Reaching

The professional development was developed based on the finding of the research. The design of the project can be transferred to other schools with similar circumstances. Teachers at the Walker Middle School can be used to assist in training educators at other schools. In addition, parents at the Walker Middle School can help the parents in other communities. However, no schools are identical therefore each school will make the necessary changes required to meet their needs. The goal is to increase parental involvement at the school so there may be an increase in student achievement. Likewise, there will be improvement within the community because parents will gain knowledge in various subject areas, as well as develop the confidence they need to assist their child at home.

Conclusion

In this study, I focused on the perceptions of a population of 28 teachers and 250 parents from a small rural school district. The survey instrument was adapted from *The Parent Survey of Family and Community Involvement in the Elementary and Middle Grades,* designed by Epstein and Salinas (1993) through the Johns Hopkins University Center on School, Family, and Community Partnerships. The purpose of this professional development was to share research findings with the principals and teachers

at Walker Middle School so they could work together in developing a plan that will focus on increasing parental involvement within the school and home. Therefore, in this section, I described the proposed project, the rationale for selecting this project genre, strategies, as well as how the increasing parental involvement and student achievement can be addressed in this project.

In addition, I gathered current peer reviewed literature linking the project to my research findings. I also discussed the evaluation process for measuring the project goals, as well as the possibility of social change locally and beyond. It is hoped that the information presented will add to the continuing research and discussion on effective practices for increasing parental involvement and student achievement schools. In Section 4, I will reflect on the research process, the strength and limitations of the project, as well as make recommendations for alternative approaches, and future research.

Section 4: Reflections and Conclusions

Introduction

In this project study, I sought to quantitatively examine parents' and teachers' perspectives regarding parental involvement and student achievement in a single middle school setting. Walker Middle School's constant receipt of failing state test scores from MDE was one reason that I conducted this study. Another reason was that, during my tenure as an educator, I have observed that only a small number of parents actively participate in their children's education; many parents, I believe, show a lack of interest in this part of their children's lives. Also, as an educator, I have observed that many students have negative attitudes regarding their education until their parents become involved. Conducting this study has given me a better understanding of the benefits of a strong relationship between home and school for student achievement. In this section, I discuss the development of this project, its strengths and limitations, and its implications for positive social change and professional practice as well as offer recommendations for future research. I also discuss how the research affected me as a scholar, practitioner, and project developer.

Project Strengths and Limitations

One of the strengths of the project is that all stakeholders seem to have a desire to improve academics at the study school. I have found that many of the parent participants understand that parental involvement is important for schools to be successful. Therefore, I believe that schools must involve parents in their school and classroom activities to achieve student success. A second strength of the project is the knowledge

gained from parents. When parents participate in their children's education, they gain a deeper understanding of what is required to educate their children at home, as well as what the school requires of their children (Wanat, 2010). In addition, parents learn their own weaknesses and strengths from helping their children with homework while teachers learn about the strengths and needs of parents (Bower and Griffin, 2011). According to Bower and Griffin (2011), parents who are informed and involved might have a positive effect on children's attitudes toward education and performance in the classroom. When teachers are able to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the parents, teachers are able to capitalize on parents' strength, as well as give support to the weaker areas, which results in a strong partnership between parents and teachers.

There are some limitations to the project. One is that data were gathered from one school and the views are, therefore, representative of one school and, more specifically, the parents and teachers who chose to participate in my research. Surveys were limited to only teachers and parents of students who were enrolled at Walker Middle School at the time of the study. With changes in parental involvement, where parental involvement declines as the child matriculate through school (Lloyd-Smith and Baron, 2010), a different finding is possible if other schools were included in this study. Therefore, I believe that it would be prudent to conduct a quantitative study with teachers and parents at the elementary, middle school, and high school levels in order to compare perspectives from these stakeholders regarding the effect of parental involvement on student achievement.

Another limitation relates to some of the wording of questions on the survey I administered. The surveys were closed-ended, which limited participants in their ability to expand on their responses. Parents were asked if they attended parent-teacher conferences. I found that 44% of the parents never or seldom attended parent-teacher conferences. The parents could not elaborate on their response because the survey was closed-ended. It might be difficult for parents to have face-to-face contact with teachers because many of the parents are working. The time a parent could meet with a teacher may vary due to work schedule, which might require communication after school hours. Therefore, I recommend including open-ended questions in subsequent administrations of this survey or conducting a mixed method study to allow participants to elaborate on their responses.

Recommendations for Alternative Approaches

Based on the data I gathered, I could have developed a 9-week curriculum plan instead of a 3-day professional development workshop. Nevertheless, I chose the 3-day professional development workshop because the goal is to increase parental involvement. The 9-week curriculum would consist of a purpose and a process for improving the current educational system used by teachers at Walker Middle School; it would also incorporate parents in classroom activities as well as methods for teachers to communicate with parents. Developing a 9-week curriculum plan would require careful planning to ensure that teachers have a transparent understanding of what objectives are required of them to effectively teach course objectives. Additionally, careful planning

would be needed so that objectives are sequentially organized and topics are taught to meet school, state, and U.S. government standards.

Scholarship, Project Development and Evaluation, and Leadership and Change

Scholarship

The doctoral program at Walden University has allowed me an opportunity to acquire knowledge regarding scholarly writing, as well as gathering scholarly articles. Additionally, I have learned the importance of using an active voice instead of a passive voice while writing my project study. Finally, I have learned how to respond to a statement in a scholarly manner, how to support my statements with peer reviewed articles, and how to use American Psychological Association (2009) style and citation protocol while writing my project study.

Earlier in my doctoral coursework, I had to modify my process for responding to statements made by other colleagues. Prior to enrolling in the doctoral program, I would respond based on feelings. As I progressed through the program, I learned that I must gather information from various sources before responding to such statements and questions. I also learned to use my sources to justify my stances. Although I believe that I must use resources to support my statements, I learned that it is important to use peer reviewed articles when responding to a statement. I also learned that, while there is a plethora of literature available online, not all of it is scholarly. Therefore, it is extremely important to use a scholarly database such as EBSCO, ProQuest, and ERIC when conducting research. In addition to using a scholarly database, I learned the importance of citing my work using APA format.

Project Development and Evaluation

In developing this project study, I learned the importance of organization. It was imperative to build a foundation of literature that focused on the importance of increasing parental involvement so that parents, teachers and administrators at Walker Middle School notice an increase in student achievement. Findings from the parent survey showed that parent participants understood they are a key factor in their children's academic success, yet many of them did not actively participate in their children's education. This finding motivated me to develop a professional development workshop that may increase parental involvement in the school.

Evaluation will be ongoing for the project. The action team will gather feedback from teachers, counselors, administrators, and parents will be gathered periodically regarding the effectiveness of the project. The action team will make modifications to the project when necessary to reach the goal of increasing parental involvement and student achievement. Continuous evaluations will be conducted to ensure the success of the project.

Leadership and Change

I learned that leadership requires self-discipline, dedication, and good communication skills. I believe that an effective leader leads by example. Throughout the doctoral study, I also learned a leader must focus on the needs of the students and must implement practices that will meet the students' needs. If a school is constantly receiving a failing score based on the standards of MDE, the school administrators and teachers must change their current practice. Although many people are not partial to

change, it is important for school educators to make the necessary changes required to meet their goals, to increase parental involvement and have more student achievement. Therefore, all participants must understand the importance of partnership to have an effective program that increases student achievement.

Reflection on the Importance of the Work

Analysis of Self as Scholar

As I matriculated through the doctoral program, I have learned the true meaning of time management. I learned that it is extremely important to plan, set goals, prioritize, and set deadlines to complete a task. I also learned that to achieve a set goal I must create a balance between school, work, family, and other activities. More importantly, I learned to delegate duties to other family members in the house so I would have time to devote to Walden.

I also learned the meaning of change. Although it was a bit challenging at times, I learned that it is important to communicate with parents and students so there would be a clear understanding of what is expected from each individual. Previously, I would send a letter or memorandum by the student to the parent but after conducting this study I found that I must communicate with the parents in person or via telephone if I desire to have a strong support system.

Analysis of Self as Practitioner

As a practitioner, I have learned how important it is to be a lifelong learner. I often wondered why it always felt as if the school was outdated with implementing new and effective strategies that would benefit the students. Due to financial constraints,

teachers could not attend workshops, at the expense of the school, during school hours but could attend across weekends, holiday breaks, and summer breaks. The school would conduct in-house lectures, but the teachers walked away with no new strategies to implement in their classroom. It was to the point where teachers were satisfied with their current method of educating. However, being one of those teachers, who were not satisfied with the current method, motivated me to strive to change my attitude and my colleagues' attitudes by attending Walden University so I could become an effective leader for the school and community. Through my coursework and research at Walden University, I have learned the importance of developing a partnership between the parent and teacher.

My goal is to implement a project that will change Walker Middle School educators' current practices of involving parents in the school. It is my desire to share the knowledge I have gained, while completing this project study, the importance of developing a partnership between the parent and teachers and the benefits of developing this partnership. I strongly believe that when there is a partnership between the parents and teachers, student achievement should improve.

Analysis of Self as Project Developer

Developing a project for a professional development workshop, which consists of an agenda, activities, and PowerPoint for middle school teachers has been challenging. Using the knowledge I acquired earlier in the doctoral program at Walden University gave me the skills I needed to overcome this challenge. I constructed my presentation

around the background literature regarding parental involvement and student achievement. After which, I aligned the project based on the findings of my study.

My goal is to develop a project that teachers can use to devise a foundation that serves as a common goal for improving parental involvement at Walker Middle School. When everyone is striving to achieve the same goal it is easier for the school to reach parents and achieve the goal of student achievement. According to De Fraja, Oliveria, and Zanchi (2010), parental involvement has a stronger effect on students than schools. Therefore, the focus of my project study is to share my research findings so educators at Walker Middle School can develop and implement a plan that may increase parental involvement, as well as increase student achievement.

Implications, Applications, and Directions for Future Research

This project focuses on the need to develop a concrete definition of parental involvement for Walker Middle School so strategies can be developed to increase parent participation and student achievement. As early as the 1990's, research has noted parental involvement being significant to student achievement (Larocque, Kleiman, & Darling, 2011. Sharing the findings of my study with teachers and administrators at Walker Middle School can possibly assist them with meeting the needs of the parents. This project study has the potential of increasing parental involvement in the school and increasing student achievement. A strong partnership between the parent and teachers allows parents to learn skills they can use while assisting their children at home. This partnership has the potential to build confidence parents need to support their children academically.

This quantitative study consists of a small rural middle school. The findings of this study will add to the research that parental involvement is needed in the school and classroom so there can be an increase in student achievement. The ultimate goal was to identify strategies that will develop a partnership between the home and school so there will be an increase in student achievement. Therefore, this project's focus is to change the current functionality of the school to a school that strives to include parents in their daily activities by effectively communicating with the parents so they will feel their presence in needed at the school and in the classroom. As indicated by Goodall (2016), Epstein (2001), and Pakter and Chen (2013), communication is important for the school; however, developing a communication between the home and school is challenging. The implication of this study is when there is collaboration between the parents and teachers, teachers are able to share what they expect of the student and parents are able to share their needs of the teacher to assist their children and school educators to increase parental involvement and student achievement. Therefore, when parents feel their support is needed in the school and classroom and when they have a better understanding of the goals established by the teachers and schools, schools will begin to receive the support they need from parents.

This project might be applied to other schools within the school district or other schools with similar demographics to determine if the strategies used in this study will be effective with increasing parental involvement and student achievement in their school. Future research could involve conducting a study using the mixed method approach or qualitative method because it allows the researcher and opportunity to interview parents

to gather a more in-depth understanding of why parents are not active in their child's education. In addition, interviewing parents allows the researcher opportunity to ask probing questions to gather more information, as well as allow parents to elaborate on their response by giving clarity versus selecting a choice on a survey.

Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to gather the parents' and teachers' perspectives regarding parental involvement and student achievement at a small rural middle school. Researchers have confirmed that parents are the key component to the success of students academically in schools. My goal was to gather the perspectives of the parents and teachers to present to the teachers and administrators so strategies can be implemented to increase parental involvement and student achievement.

During this study, I learned that parents neither were reluctant to become involved in their children's education nor were they concerned about receiving feedback from teachers. I also learned that parents did not feel the school's climate was conducive to successful learning or for parent participation. Therefore, it is imperative for teachers and administrators to develop a plan that will aim at changing parent participants' views of the school by striving to build a parent-teacher relationship so there may be an increase in parental involvement and student achievement. However, the success of this project will not be determined by the information presented to the middle school teachers and administrators nor will it be determined by the plan developed by the teachers and administrators. Instead, it will be determined by the implementation of the plan and the continuous evaluation of the action team by gathering valuable feedback from the

teachers, counselors, administers, and parents regarding the effectiveness of the plan after

the presentation.

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Appendix A: The Project

Strategies for a Better School Professional
Development Workshop (PDW)

Parents' and Teachers'
Perspectives
Regarding Parental
Involvement and
Student Achievement
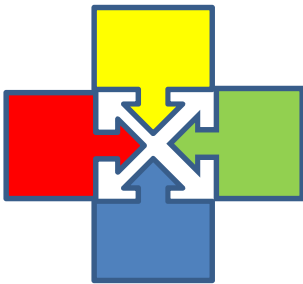
August 1-3, 2018
Walker Middle School

Facilitator/Presenter:
Mrs. Christi Walker

AGENDA

Wednesday, August 1, 2018

8 – 8:30 a.m.	PDW Check-in
8:05 – 8:25 a.m.	Complimentary Coffee and Light Breakfast
8:25 – 9:00 a.m.	Welcome and Introduction
9:00 – 10:00 a.m.	Keynote Session: *Parents' and Teachers' Perspectives Regarding Parental Involvement and Student Achievement – Findings Survey Question 1*
10:00 – 10:15 a.m.	Break
10:15 – 11:30 a.m.	Session

1. *Meaning of Parental Involvement*

Workshop #1: What is Parental Involvement?

11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.	Lunch (on your own)
1:00 – 2:15 p.m.	Session

1. *Benefits of Parental Involvement*
2. *Potential Barriers of Parental Involvement*

Workshop #2: Why parents are not involved?
                    How can we overcome the barriers?

2:15 – 2:30 p.m.	Break
2:30 – 3:45 p.m.	Session

1. *Building a Relationship with Parents*

Workshop #3: How can we communicate with parents?

3:45 – 4:00 p.m.	Summarization of the Day

AGENDA

Thursday, August 2, 2018

8 – 8:30 a.m.	Complimentary Coffee and Light Breakfast
8:30 – 9:00 a.m.	*Recap of Day One:* - *School's Definition of Parental Involvement* - *Potential Barriers Identified With Parents* - *School's Plan for Communicating With The Parents*
9:00 – 10:00 a.m.	Keynote Session: *Parents' and Teachers' Perspectives Regarding Parental Involvement and Student Achievement – Findings of Survey Question 5 & 6*
10:00 – 10:15 a.m.	Break
10:15 – 11:30 a.m.	Session 1. *Parents Perspectives of the school* *Workshop #1: How can we change how parents view the school?*
11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.	Lunch (on your own)
1:00 – 2:15 p.m.	Session 2. *Increasing Parental Involvement* *Workshop #2: What strategies can be used to increase parental involvement in the school?*
2:15 – 2:30 p.m.	Break
2:30 – 3:45 p.m.	Session 3. *Engaging Parents* *Workshop #3: How can we involve parents in the classroom?*
3:45 – 4:00 p.m.	Summarization of the Day

AGENDA

Friday, August 3, 2018

8 – 8:30 a.m.	Complimentary Coffee and Light Breakfast
8:30 – 9:00 a.m.	*Recap of Day Two:* - *Changing The Perspectives of Parents* - *Strategies for Increasing Parental Involvement* - *Engaging Parents in the Classroom*
9:00 – 10:00 a.m.	Keynote Session: *Parents' and Teachers' Perspectives Regarding Parental Involvement and Student Achievement – Findings of Survey Questions 7*
10:00 – 10:15 a.m.	Break
10:15 – 11:30 a.m.	Session 1. *Home Support* *Workshop #1: How can we support parents in the home?*
11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.	Lunch (on your own)
1:00 – 2:15 p.m.	Workshop Wrap Up - School's Definition of Parental Involvement - Ways Identified to Communicate With Parents - Plans for Changing the Views of Parents
2:15 – 2:30 p.m.	Break
2:30 – 3:45 p.m.	Workshop Wrap Up - Strategies for Increasing Parental Involvement in the School - Plans for Engaging Parents in the Classroom - Plans for Supplying Support in the Home
3:45 – 4:00 p.m.	Workshop Evaluation and Adjourn

Professional Development Workshop (PDW)

Welcome & Introduction

- **Name:**
  - Christi Nelson Walker

- **Education:**
  - 1986 – Graduated from High School
  - 1992 – Received Bachelors in Science
  - 2005 – Received Masters in Education
  - 2018 – Received Doctorate in Teacher Leadership

- **Ice Breaker**

Increasing Parental Involvement and Student Achievement

Presented By:
Christi N. Walker
August 1-3, 2018
8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Background

- According to the Mississippi Department of Education (2013a), this school has been a failing school for more than five years.

- Literature and research both indicate that the missing link to student achievement is parental involvement (Larocque, Keleiman, & Darling, 2011).

- Parental Involvement in education is an important factor in student achievement (Gould, 2011).

Background (Continued)

- Parents who are financially challenged find it difficult to become involved in their child's education (Goodall & Montgomery, 2014).

- Many schools and researchers have referenced Epstein's (1995) work regarding parental involvement.

- Bower and Griffin (2011) indicated that parental involvement can take many forms, but the traditional definition includes parents participating in activities at school and home.

Background (Continued)

- Finding a specific definition for parental involvement has been a major challenge for many schools and researchers.

Purpose

- To share research findings regarding the parents' and teachers' perspectives regarding parental involvement and student achievement and to develop a strategic plan that will meet the needs of the students.

Research Questions

- Are there differences in parents' and teachers' perceptions regarding parental involvement and academic achievement?

The following hypotheses guided the study:

- H_0: There will be no significant differences in parents' and teachers' perceptions regarding parental involvement and academic achievement.

- H_A: There will be significant differences in parents' and teachers' perceptions regarding parental involvement and academic achievement.

Objectives

By the end of the meeting, we will have –

- Learned about current research regarding parental involvement and student achievement
- Learned about the findings conducted at this middle school
- Developed a definition of parental involvement for the school
- Developed a plan for building a partnership between the home and school/parent and teacher
- Discussed ways to communicate with the parents

Instrument & Population

Instrument	Population
- Quantitative (5 Point Likert Scale) survey developed by Epstein - Modified and administered through Survey Monkey - Analyzed using a Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS)	- Teachers employed at this school with a homeroom class - Parents who have a child attending this school

Survey Focus Questions

- Question 1 (Q1) included 11 items regarding the general attitudes of parental involvement.

- Question 5 (Q5) included 8 items regarding parental involvement practices.

- Question 6 (Q6) included 10 items regarding the importance of parental involvement.

- Questions 7 (Q7) included 11 items regarding parents' responsibilities.

Take a Break

Findings

- Question 1 showed a significant difference between the parents' and teachers' perceptions regarding parental involvement in the areas of general attitudes of parental involvement.

- Disagreed to parental involvement being an important factor in a successful school

- Disagreed that parental involvement can help teachers be more effective with students

- Disagreed that parents wanted to be involved more than they are now in their child's education

- Parents felt that there was a need for more communication between the home and school

Defining Parental Involvement

- Bower and Griffin (2011) believed parental involvement can consist of volunteering, talking with teachers, assisting with homework, appearing at school events, or attending parent-teacher conference.

- George and Mensah (2010) indicated that the traditional parental involvement consists of parents participating in their child's home-based activities and school-based activities.

Small Group Activity (Grade Level)

- What is Parental Involvement?
- Develop a definition for parental involvement then report out by groups to share meaning.
- Finalize a definition to implement school-wide.

Lunch On Your Own

Report back for 1:00 p.m.

Session 2:
Benefits of Parental Involvement

- Dehyadegary, Yaacob, Juhari, and Talib (2011) indicated that the advantages of parental involvement are behavior modification where children become engaged in their learning and the minimization of discipline referrals.

- Other benefits of parental involvement are that by taking part in their child's school, parents are able to learn what is required of their child in classrooms, the social relationships of their child, and if there is a need to request additional assistance for academic success (Wanat, 2010).

Potential Barriers

- Brock and Edmunds (2010) indicated that some barriers for parents being involved in their child's education are time, work schedule, teachers doing a better job than they, and children refusing parent's help.

- Other barriers identified by Hornby and Lafaele (2011) are language spoken at home, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, gender of parents and child's performance.

Small Group Activity (Subjects)

- Why are parents not involved?
- Identify barriers, state why they are barriers, and determine how can we overcome the identified barriers then report out by groups.

Building a Relationship with Parents

- Epstein (2001) indicated that when the school fails to develop a strong communication line with the home, the school is depriving their students of a full and complete education.

- Dietel (2013) indicated that one key indicator of student success is having a strong relationship between the home and school.

- Having a strong home-school relationship, schools will see a substantial gain in achievement (Dietel, 2013).

- Radzi, Razak, and Sukor (2010) stated that parental involvement must not be restricted to the home.

Small Group Activity (Grade Level)

- How can we build a relationship with the parents?
- What ways can we communicate (two-way) with parents?
- Report out by grade level methods for building a relationship with the parents.

Tomorrow at 8:00 a.m.

Day

2

Recap of Day 1

- Definition of Parental Involvement
- Benefits of Parental Involvement
- Potential Barriers of Parental Involvement
- Overcoming Barriers
- Building a Relationship with Parents through communication

REFRESH
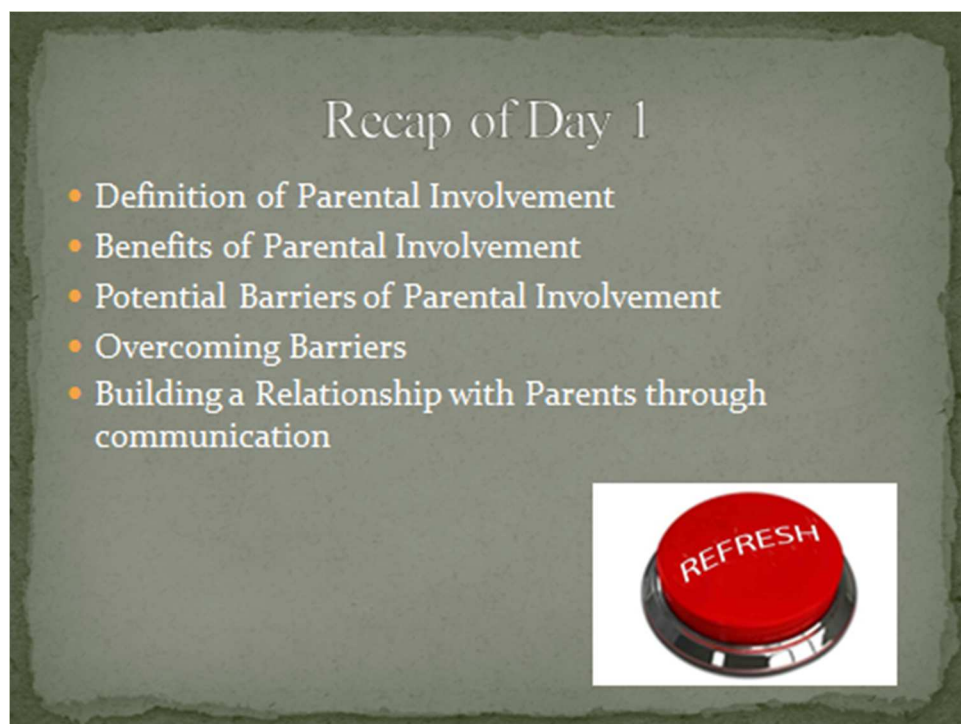
Parental Involvement and Practices

- Parental involvement is when parents become fully active in their child's education at the school and home (Bracke & Corts, 2012).

- For students to be successful in academics, it requires parental involvement instead of only teachers and schools (Rafiq, Fatima, Sohail, Saleem, & Khan, 2013).

- To develop a strong partnership between parents and teachers, schools must initiate activities that will encourage and solicit parents to take part in their child's education (Radzi et al., 2010).

- However, Larocque et al. (2011) indicated that teachers do not know how to include parents in their classroom activities and parents did not know how to include themselves in their child's education.

Findings (Continued)

- Question 5 showed that there was not a significant difference between the parents' and teachers' perceptions regarding the types of parental involvement that should be developed or strengthened within the school.

- Communication sent to homes so families can understand and use
- Communication about Report Cards
- Parent-teacher Conferences
- After-School Activities Help (recreation/homework)

Findings (Continued)

- Question 6 showed a significant difference between the parents' and teachers' perceptions regarding parental involvement in the areas of parental involvement practices

- Parents indicate that it was not important for teachers to contact them about students' problems or when their children improve

- Parents want teachers to provide specific home activities between the child and parent to improve grades

Findings (Continued)

- Parents disagreed that the school has a climate conducive to successful learning.

- Parents disagreed that this school has a climate conducive to parent participation

Small Group Activity (Grade Level)

- How can we change how parents view the school?
- Discuss and record promising practices we can implement in the school and then share ideas with colleagues by grade level.

Lunch On Your Own

Report back for 1:00 p.m.

Lunch Time

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Increasing Parental Involvement

- Prior research has indicated that parental involvement has been a major concern for years and it continues to be a concern.

- Parental involvement in schools is steadily declining (Toper et al., 2010).

- Parental involvement begins to decline during middle school years (Lloyd-Smith & Baron, 2010).

Increasing Parental Involvement

- Due to this circumstance, schools, principals, and teachers must develop a plan that will address increasing parental involvement in schools.

- Gillanders, McKinney, and Ritchie (2012) stated that creating a bridge between the home and school is a major goal for many schools.

- Effective strategies for increasing parental involvement requires administrators understanding the needs of parents (Toper et al., 2010).

Increasing Parental Involvement

- Goodall and Montgomery (2014) indicated that there is no one size fits all when it comes to developing strategies that will support increasing parental involvement because not all households have the same challenges.

Findings

- Parents never or seldom volunteered at their child's school.

- Parents believed they were not viewed as a partner.

Small Group Activity (Grade Level)

- What strategies can we use to increase parental involvement in the school?
- Discuss strategies we can implement school-wide to increase parent participation in the school and report by groups.

Engaging Parents

- Many schools are challenged with getting parents to become involved in their child's education (Watt, 2016).

- To overcome this challenge, schools must reach out to parents inviting parents to become involved in their child's education (Watt, 2016).

- Epstein et al. (2002) indicated that an effective parental involvement program consists of six types of parental involvement. One of the programs were collaborating with the community .

Engaging Parents

- Community organizations and the school can share responsibilities for developing students to be successful.

- School activities such as service learning projects and workshops can be used to help in educating students and parents needs for success.

- Watt (2016) also indicted that some of the activities for engaging parents may include helping with homework, reading with the child, and talking with the child regarding getting their education.

Small Group Activity (Subject)

- How can we involve parents in the classroom?
- Identify was you can use parents in your classroom and share ideas by groups with colleagues.

Day

3

Recap of Day 2

- Changing Parents Perspectives
- Strategies For Increasing Parental Involvement
- Engaging Parents in the Classroom
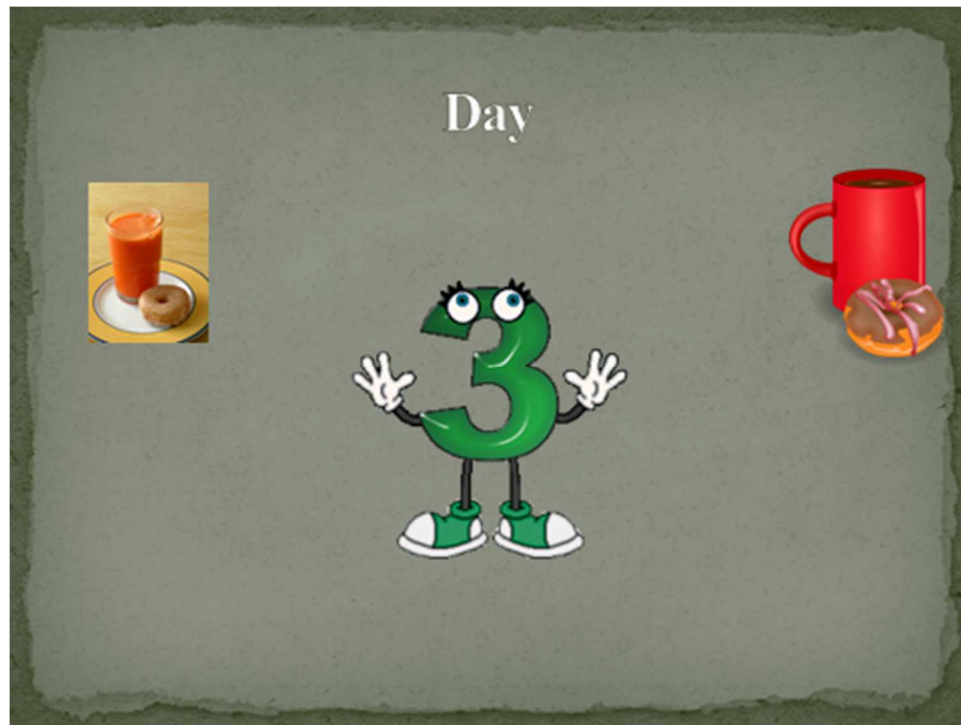
It's Time For A Break

Home Support

- Learning at home is the fourth type of parental involvement (Epstein, 2001).

- When schools provide information that will improve the child's success in schools, parents are able to understand the skills needed to be successful.

- When parents assist teachers, support at home will increase because parents are able to help their child at home.

- In addition to assisting teachers, parents are able to understand the goals set for their child and are able to provide support in meeting the needs of their child (Larocque et al., 2011).

Findings (Continued)

- Question 7 showed a significant difference between the parents' and teachers' perceptions regarding parental involvement in the areas of parents' responsibilities.

Parents indicated that it was not important or a little important for the parents to:

- Send their child to school with the items necessary for learning
- Teach their children to behave
- Set up a quiet place and time for studying at home

Findings (Continued)

- Know what their children are expected to learn each year
- Check daily that homework is done
- Talk to their child about what they are learning in school
- Ask teachers for specific ideas on how to help their children at home with
- Attend PTA/PTO meetings
- Serve as a volunteer in the school or classroom
- Attend assemblies and other special events at the school
- Talk with their child about the importance of school

Small Group Activity (Subject)

- How can we support parents in the home?
- Discuss ways we can implement school-wide to support parents with assisting their child at home and share by groups.

Lunch On Your Own

Workshop Wrap-Up

- School's Definition of Parental Involvement
- Ways Identified to Communicate With Parents
- Plans for Changing the Views of Parents
- Strategies for Increasing Parental Involvement in the School
- Plans for Engaging Parents in the Classroom
- Plans for Supplying Support in the Home

Interpretation

- The findings presented indicated that parents and teachers of this study have some similar views and some differing views regarding parental involvement.

- The overall feedback from the parents' and teachers' showed that a teacher workshop should be developed so teachers can devise a plan for communicating with the parents to develop a parent-teacher relationship. In addition, the workshop should be developed so teachers can develop a plan on how they will work with parents to increase student achievement. Finally, a teacher workshop should be developed so teachers can meet the needs of the parents to increase parental involvement and student achievement.

Implications

- When there is collaboration between the parents and teachers, knowledge is gained regarding what is expected and what is needed for the success of the student.

- If parents have a clear understanding of goals set for the students and if parents feel their support is needed in the school and classroom, schools will begin to receive the support they need to increase student achievement.

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Closing Comments and Meeting Evaluation

- Closing Comments
- Development of Action Team (Volunteers)
- Completion of Evaluation
- Questions

Adjourn

Thank You

Professional Development Workshop Evaluation

Indicate your response to the following statements				
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
The length of the workshop was appropriate				
Time was used effectively				
The presenter was prepared and knowledgeable				
The workshop enhanced my knowledge of current research				
Workshop objectives were clearly articulated				
Content was accurate and adequately delivered				

Overall Satisfaction

1. How was the workshop beneficial to you?

2. Which part of the workshop was the least beneficial to you?

3. In what ways can this workshop be improved?

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4. Additional comments

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Project Evaluation

When: Project implementation and post-project

Purpose: To assess whether the project has met/is meeting its goals, to identify what worked, what did not work, as well as identify areas for improvement and how to improve those areas.

Questions:

1. As of date, have all goals stated in the professional development workshop been implemented?

    If yes, what were the main factors for its success?

    If not, what were the main problems?

2. Did the implementation of the project go as planned?

3. Were there ample time given to effectively implement the project?

4. Has there been an increase in Parental Involvement?

5. What is the school doing to change how the parents view the school?

6. What have the school implemented to build a relationship between the home and school?

7. What are teachers doing to engage parents in their classroom?

8. How are we supporting the parents with home activities?

9. What significant issues were encountered during the project? How were they handled?

10. What are some other things the school/teachers can do to enhance this project?

11. Is there anything else you would like to comment on regarding the project?
.

Appendix B: Joyce L. Epstein Permission to Use Survey

Center on School, Family, and Community Partnerships
Johns Hopkins University • 2701 North Charles Street, Suite 300 • Baltimore MD 21218
TEL: 410-516-8800 • FAX: 410-516-8890 • nnps@jhu.edu

March 7, 2014

To: Christi Nelson Walker

From: Joyce L. Epstein & Steven B. Sheldon

Re: Permission to use:

- Sheldon, S. B. & Epstein, J. L. (2007). Parent and Student Surveys on Family and Community Involvement in the Elementary and Middle Grades. Baltimore, MD: Center on School, Family, and Community Partnerships at Johns Hopkins University.

- Epstein, J. L. & Salinas, K. C. (1993). Surveys and Summaries: Questionnaires for Teachers and Parents in the Elementary and Middle Grades. Baltimore, MD: Center on School, Family, and Community Partnerships at Johns Hopkins University.

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This letter grants you permission to use, adapt, or reprint the surveys noted above in your dissertation study.

We ask only that you include appropriate references to the survey and authors in the text and bibliography of your reports and publications.

Best of luck with your project.

Appendix C: Parent Survey on Parental Involvement

PARENTS' AND TEACHERS' PERSPECTIVES REGARDING PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT AND STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT AT A SMALL RURAL MIDDLE SCHOOL

INTRODUCTION

This survey is designed to serve one purpose – to analyze the parents' perspectives regarding parental involvement and student achievement at a small rural middle school. This survey is randomly sent to parents who are employed at the small rural middle school. Completing and returning this survey gives your consent to participate. Your responses to these questions will be held in strict confidence. Only aggregate data will be used to plan staff development activities, and no individual will ever be identified by name or school district. You may skip any question, and you may stop at any time.

General Demographics:

Sex: Male_____ Female_____

Educational Level: Elementary_____
Junior High/Middle School_____
High School (Did not graduate)_____
Graduate of High School_____
1 – 2 Years of College_____
Associated Degree_____
Bachelor's_____
Master's_____
Specialist_____
Doctorate_____

Race/Ethnicity: African American_____
Caucasian_____
Hispanic_____
Other (Specify) _____

Age: Below 25_____
26 – 35_____
36 – 45_____
46 – 55 _____
56 and up_____

Who is filling in the survey?   **PLEASE CHECK IF YOU ARE . . .**

_____ (1) mother   _____ (6) uncle   _____ (11) other (describe)
_____ (2) father   _____ (7) grandmother
_____ (3) stepmother   _____ (8) grandfather   _____
_____ (4) stepfather   _____ (9) guardian
_____ (5) aunt   _____ (10) other relative

Select your child's homeroom teacher:

4th Grade – Chapman_____   Elsadek_____
　　　　　　 D. Jones_____   V. Jones_____
　　　　　　 Miller_____   Williams_____

5th Grade – Bunkley_____   Ellis_____
　　　　　　 Hilliard_____   Sullivan_____
　　　　　　 Suggs_____   Thorton_____

6th Grade – Barnes _____   Coleman _____
　　　　　　 Funchess _____   Johnson _____
　　　　　　 Smith _____

7th Grade – Carter _____   Freeman _____
　　　　　　 Granger _____   Thomas _____
　　　　　　 Perry _____

8th Grade – Clay _____   Broome _____
　　　　　　 Lilly _____   Robinson _____
　　　　　　 Wilkinson _____   Wylie _____

A. HOW MANY CHILDREN in your family go to <u>this</u> school THIS YEAR? (Circle how many.)

　　　　　1　　　　2　　　　3　　　　4　　　　5 or more

B. What GRADES are they in? CIRCLE ALL of the grades of your children in <u>this</u> school.

PreK　Kindergarten　Grade 1　2　3　4　5　6　7　8　Other

If you have more than one child at this school, please answer the questions in the survey about your **OLDEST CHILD** at this school.

C. Is your oldest child a: _____ boy   or   _____ girl?

Q-1. The first questions ask for your judgment about parental involvement. Please **CIRCLE** the one choice for each item that best represents your opinion and experience.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
a. Parental involvement is important for a good school.	SD	D	A	SA
b. Most parents know how to help their children on schoolwork at home.	SD	D	A	SA
c. This school has an active and effective parent organization (e.g., PTA or PTO).	SD	D	A	SA
d. Every family has some strengths that could be tapped to increase student success in school.	SD	D	A	SA
e. All parents could learn ways to assist their children with schoolwork at home, if shown how.	SD	D	A	SA
f. Parental involvement can help teachers be more effective with more students.	SD	D	A	SA
g. Parents of children at this school want to be involved more than they are now at most grade levels.	SD	D	A	SA
h. Parental involvement is important for student success in school.	SD	D	A	SA
i. This school views parents as important partners.	SD	D	A	SA
j. Mostly when teachers contact parents it's about problems or trouble.	SD	D	A	SA

k. Compared to other schools, this school has
    one of the best school climates for teachers,
    students, and parents.   SD   D   A   SA

Q-2. How often have you been contacted in the different ways listed? Please CIRCLE
the one choice for each item that best represents your opinion and experience.

---

a. Letter or memo   Never   Seldom   Often   Always

b. Telephone   Never   Seldom   Often   Always

c. Scheduled parent-teacher
    conference   Never   Seldom   Often   Always

d. Report card pick-up   Never   Seldom   Often   Always

e. Performances, sports, or other
    events   Never   Seldom   Often   Always

Q-3. How often have you volunteered at the school?

Never   **Seldom**   **Often**   **Always**

Please check the ways you have volunteered in your classroom and in your school.
(CHECK all that apply in columns A and B.)

A. In the CLASSROOM,   B. In the SCHOOL,

___(a) Volunteers are NOT USED   ___(a) Volunteers are NOT USED

___(b) I listen to children read aloud   ___(b) Monitor halls, cafeteria, or
                                                     other area

___(c) I read to the children   ___(c) Work in the library,
                                                     computer lab, or other area

___(d) I give talks (e.g., on careers, hobbies, etc.)   ___(d) Work in "parent room"

___(e) Other ways (please specify)   ___(e) Other ways (please specify)

_____   _____

Q-4. How often have you done the following this school year? Please CIRCLE the one choice for each item that best represents your opinion and experience.

a. Attend workshops regularly at school   Never   Seldom   Often   Always

b. Check daily that your child's homework is
done   Never   Seldom   Often   Always

c. Attend PTA meetings regularly   Never   Seldom   Often   Always

d. Attend parent-teacher conferences   Never   Seldom   Often   Always

How often do you understand enough to help your child at home with:

e. …reading skills at their grade level   Never   Seldom   Often   Always

f. …writing skills at their grade level   Never   Seldom   Often   Always

g. …math skills at their grade level   Never   Seldom Often   Always

Q-5. Schools serve diverse populations of families who have different needs and skills. The next questions ask for your judgment about specific ways of involving families at the school. Please CIRCLE one choice to tell whether you think each type of involvement is:

NOT IMPORTANT   => NOT IMP   (Means this IS NOT part of your school
                                         now and SHOULD NOT BE.)

NEEDS TO BE DEVELOPED   =>DEV   (Means this IS NOT part of your school
                                         now, but SHOULD BE.)

NEES TO BE IMPROVED   =>IMPRV   (Means this IS part of your school, but
                                         NEEDS TO BE STRENGTHENED.)

A STRONG PROGRAM NOW =>STRONG   (Means this IS a STRONG program for
                                         most parents AT ALL GRADE
                                         LEVELS at your school.)

<u>**TYPE OF INVOLVEMENT**</u>   **AT THIS SCHOOL…**

a. COMMUNICATIONS from the school
to the home that all families can
understand and use.   NOT IMP   DEV   IMPRV   STRONG

b. COMMUNICATIONS about report
    cards so that parents understand
    students' progress and needs.   NOT IMP   DEV   IMPRV   STRONG

c. Parent-teacher CONFERENCES with
    all families.   NOT IMP   DEV   IMPRV   STRONG

d. SURVEYING parents each year for
    their ideas about the school.   NOT IMP   DEV   IMPRV   STRONG

e. VOLUNTEERS in classrooms to
    assist teachers and students.   NOT IMP   DEV   IMPRV   STRONG

f. INFORMATION for parents on
    HOW TO HELP their children with
    specific skills and subjects.   NOT IMP   DEV   IMPRV   STRONG

g. Involvement by families in PTA/PTO
    leadership, other COMMITTEES, or
    other decision-making roles.   NOT IMP   DEV   IMPRV   STRONG

h. Programs for AFTER-SCHOOL
    ACTIVITIES, recreation, and
    homework help.   NOT IMP   DEV   IMPRV   STRONG

Q-6. Teachers choose among many activities to assist their students and families.
CIRCLE one choice to tell how important it is for teachers to conduct the
following:

HOW IMPORTANT IS THIS PRACTICE TO YOU?

	NOT IMPORTANT	A LITTLE IMPORTANT	PRETTY IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT
a. Have a conference with parents at least once a year.	NOT IMP	A LITTLE IMP	PRETTY IMP	VERY IMP
b. Attend evening meetings, performances, and workshops at school.	NOT IMP	A LITTLE IMP	PRETTY IMP	VERY IMP

c. Contact parents about students' problems or failures or when their child does something well or improves.   NOT IMP   A LITTLE IMP   PRETTY IMP   VERY IMP

d. Involve some parents as volunteers in the classroom.   NOT IMP   A LITTLE IMP   PRETTY IMP   VERY IMP

e. Inform parents how report card grades are earned.   NOT IMP   A LITTLE IMP   PRETTY IMP   VERY IMP

f. Provide specific activities for children and parents to do to improve grades.   NOT IMP   A LITTLE IMP   PRETTY IMP   VERY IMP

g. Assign homework that requires children to interact with parents.   NOT IMP   A LITTLE IMP   PRETTY IMP   VERY IMP

h. Suggest ways to practice spelling or other skills at home before a test.   NOT IMP   A LITTLE IMP   PRETTY IMP   VERY IMP

i. Ask parents to listen to their child read and to a story or paragraph that their children write.   NOT IMP   A LITTLE IMP   PRETTY IMP   VERY IMP

j. Serve on a PTA/PTO or other school committee.   NOT IMP   A LITTLE IMP   PRETTY IMP   VERY IMP

Q-7. How important is it for parents to do the following things?

PARENTS' RESPONSIBILITES	NOT IMPORTANT	A LITTLE IMPORTANT	PRETTY IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT

a. Send children to school ready to learn. NOT IMP A LITTLE IMP PRETTY IMP VERY IMP

b. Teach children to behave well. NOT IMP A LITTLE IMP PRETTY IMP VERY IMP

c. Set up a quiet place and time for studying at home. NOT IMP A LITTLE IMP PRETTY IMP VERY IMP

d. Know what children are expected to learn each year. NOT IMP A LITTLE IMP PRETTY IMP VERY IMP

e. Check daily that homework is done. NOT IMP A LITTLE IMP PRETTY IMP VERY IMP

f. Talk to children about what they are learning in school. NOT IMP A LITTLE IMP PRETTY IMP VERY IMP

g. Ask teachers for specific ideas on how to help their children at home with classwork. NOT IMP A LITTLE IMP PRETTY IMP VERY IMP

h. Attend PTA/PTO meetings. NOT IMP A LITTLE IMP PRETTY IMP VERY IMP

i. Serve as a volunteer in the school or classroom. NOT IMP A LITTLE IMP PRETTY IMP VERY IMP

j. Attend assemblies and other special events at the school. NOT IMP A LITTLE IMP PRETTY IMP VERY IMP

k. Talk to children about the importance of school. NOT IMP A LITTLE IMP PRETTY IMP VERY IMP

Q-8. The next question asks how you perceive others' support for parent involvement in the school. Please circle one choice on each line. How much support does each give <u>now</u> to parental involvement?

	Strong Support	Some Support	Weak Support	No Support
a. You, personally	STRONG	SOME	WEAK	NONE
b. Teachers	STRONG	SOME	WEAK	NONE
c. The principal	STRONG	SOME	WEAK	NONE
d. Other administrators	STRONG	SOME	WEAK	NONE
e. Other parents	STRONG	SOME	WEAK	NONE
f. The school board	STRONG	SOME	WEAK	NONE
g. The district superintendent	STRONG	SOME	WEAK	NONE

PLEASE RETURN THIS SURVEY IN THE SELF-ADDRESSED, STAMPED ENVELOPE.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR HELP!

Appendix D: Teacher Survey on Parental Involvement

PARENTS' AND TEACHERS' PERSPECTIVES REGARDING PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT AND STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT AT A SMALL RURAL MIDDLE SCHOOL

INTRODUCTION

This survey is designed to serve one purpose – to analyze the teachers' perspectives regarding parental involvement and student achievement at a small rural middle school. This survey is sent to teachers who are employed at the small rural middle school. Completing and returning this survey gives your consent to participate. Your responses to these questions will be held in strict confidence. Only aggregate data will be used to plan staff development activities, and no individual will ever be identified by name or school district. You may skip any question, and you may stop at any time.

General Demographics:

Sex: Male_____   Female_____

Educational Level: Bachelor's_____
Master's_____
Specialist_____
Doctorate_____

Race/Ethnicity: African American_____
Caucasian_____
Hispanic_____
Other (Specify) _____

Age: Below 25_____
26 – 35_____
36 – 45_____
46 – 55 _____
56 and up _____

For statistical analyses purposes only, data will be reported in the aggregate, please select your name below:

4th Grade – Chapman_____   Elsadek_____
            D. Jones_____   V. Jones_____
            Miller_____   Williams_____

5th Grade – Bunkley_____   Ellis_____
            Hilliard_____   Sullivan_____
            Suggs_____   Thorton_____

6th Grade – Barnes _____   Coleman _____
            Funchess _____   Johnson _____
            Smith _____

7th Grade – Carter _____   Freeman _____
            Granger _____   Thomas _____
            Perry _____

8th Grade – Clay _____   Broome _____
            Lilly _____   Robinson _____
            Wilkinson _____   Wylie _____

> **Q-1.** The first questions ask for your judgment about parental involvement. Please **CIRCLE** the one choice for each item that best represents your opinion and experience.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
a. Parental involvement is important for a good school.	SD	D	A	SA
b. Most parents know how to help their children on schoolwork at home.	SD	D	A	SA
c. This school has an active and effective parent organization (e.g., PTA or PTO).	SD	D	A	SA
d. Every family has some strengths that could be tapped to increase student success in school.	SD	D	A	SA

e. All parents could learn ways to assist their
children with schoolwork at home, if shown
how.   SD   D   A   SA

f. Parental involvement can help teachers be more
effective with students.   SD   D   A   SA

g. Teachers should receive recognition for time
spent on parental involvement activities.   SD   D   A   SA

h. Parents of children at this school want to be
involved more than they are now at most
grade levels.   SD   D   A   SA

i. Teachers do not have the time to involve
parents in very useful ways.   SD   D   A   SA

j. Teachers need in-service education to
implement effective parental involvement
practices.   SD   D   A   SA

k. Parental involvement is important for student
success in school.   SD   D   A   SA

l. This school views parents as important
partners.   SD   D   A   SA

m. The community values education for all
students.   SD   D   A   SA

n. This school is known for trying new and
unusual approaches to improve the school.   SD   D   A   SA

o. Mostly when I contact parents, it's about
problems or trouble.   SD   D   A   SA

p. In this school, teachers play a large part in
most decisions.   SD   D   A   SA

q. The community supports this school   SD   D   A   SA

r. Compared to other schools, this school has
    one of the best school climates for teachers,
    students, and parents.   SD   D   A   SA

Q-2. How often do you contact families in the different ways listed? Please CIRCLE
the estimated percent of **students' families** you have contacted this year:

a. Letter or memo   Never   Seldom   Often   Always

                                       NA   0%   5% 10% 25% 50% 75% 90% All

b. Telephone   Never   Seldom   Often   Always

                                       NA   0%   5% 10% 25% 50% 75% 90% All

c. Scheduled parent-teacher
    conference   Never   Seldom   Often   Always

                                       NA   0%   5% 10% 25% 50% 75% 90% All

d. Report card pick-up   Never   Seldom   Often   Always

                                       NA   0%   5% 10% 25% 50% 75% 90% All

e. Performances, sports, or other
    events   Never   Seldom   Often   Always

                                       NA   0%   5% 10% 25% 50% 75% 90% All

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Q-3. How often do parents (or others) volunteer at the school?

Never   **Seldom**   **Often**   **Always**

Please check the ways that parents (or others) volunteer in your classroom and in your
school. (CHECK all that apply in columns A and B.)

A. In the CLASSROOM,   B. In the SCHOOL,

___(a) Volunteers are NOT USED   ___(a) Volunteers are NOT USED

___(b) Parents listen to children read aloud   ___(b) Monitor halls, cafeteria, or
                                                         other area

___(c) Parents read to the children

___(c) Work in the library, computer lab, or other area

___(d) Parents give talks (e.g., on careers, hobbies, etc.)

___(d) Work in "parent room"

___(e) Other ways (please specify)

___(e) Other ways (please specify)

_____

_____

Q-4. How often do parents understand enough to help their child at home with the following? Please CIRCLE the estimated percent for each.

a. …reading skills at their grade level

Never   Seldom   Often   Always

0% 5% 10% 25% 50% 75% 90% 100%

b. …writing skills at their grade level

Never   Seldom   Often   Always

0% 5% 10% 25% 50% 75% 90% 100%

c. …math skills at their grade level

Never   Seldom   Often   Always

0% 5% 10% 25% 50% 75% 90% 100%

Q-5. Schools serve diverse populations of families who have different needs and skills. The next questions ask for your judgment about specific ways of involving families at your school. Please CIRCLE one choice to tell whether you think each type of involvement is:

NOT IMPORTANT   => NOT IMP   (Means this IS NOT part of your school now and SHOULD NOT BE.)

NEEDS TO BE DEVELOPED   =>DEV   (Means this IS NOT part of your school now, but SHOULD BE.)

NEES TO BE IMPROVED   =>IMPRV   (Means this IS part of your school, but NEEDS TO BE STRENGTHENED.)

A STRONG PROGRAM NOW =>STRONG   (Means this IS a STRONG program for most parents AT ALL GRADE LEVELS at your school.)

TYPE OF INVOLVEMENT   **AT THIS SCHOOL…**

a. COMMUNICATIONS from the school
    to the home that all families can
    understand and use.   NOT IMP   DEV   IMPRV   STRONG

b. COMMUNICATIONS about report
    cards so that parents understand
    students' progress and needs.   NOT IMP   DEV   IMPRV   STRONG

c. Parent-teacher CONFERENCES with
    all families.   NOT IMP   DEV   IMPRV   STRONG

d. SURVEYING parents each year for
    their ideas about the school.   NOT IMP   DEV   IMPRV   STRONG

e. VOLUNTEERS in classrooms to
    assist teachers and students.   NOT IMP   DEV   IMPRV   STRONG

f. VOLUNTEERS to help in other
    (non-classroom) parts of the school.   NOT IMP   DEV   IMPRV   STRONG

g. INFORMATION for parents on
    HOW TO HELP their children with
    specific skills and subjects.   NOT IMP   DEV   IMPRV   STRONG

h. Involvement by families in PTA/PTO
    leadership, other COMMITTEES, or
    other decision-making roles.   NOT IMP   DEV   IMPRV   STRONG

i. Programs for AFTER-SCHOOL
    ACTIVITIES, recreation, and
    homework help.   NOT IMP   DEV   IMPRV   STRONG

Q-6. Teachers choose among many activities to assist their students and families.
       CIRCLE one choice to tell how important it is for teachers to conduct the
following:

HOW IMPORTANT IS THIS PRACTICE TO YOU?

NOT   A LITTLE   PRETTY   VERY
IMPORTANT   IMPORTANT   IMPORTANT   IMPORTANT

a. Have a conference
    with parents at
    least once a year.   NOT IMP   A LITTLE IMP   PRETTY IMP   VERY IMP

b. Attend evening
    meetings, performances,
    and workshops at
    school.   NOT IMP   A LITTLE IMP   PRETTY IMP   VERY IMP

c. Contact parents about
    students' problems or
    failures or when their
    child does something
    well or improves.   NOT IMP   A LITTLE IMP   PRETTY IMP   VERY IMP

d. Involve some parents
    as volunteers in the
    classroom.   NOT IMP   A LITTLE IMP   PRETTY IMP   VERY IMP

e. Inform parents how
    report card grades are
    earned.   NOT IMP   A LITTLE IMP   PRETTY IMP   VERY IMP

f. Provide specific
    activities for children
    and parents to do to
    improve grades.   NOT IMP   A LITTLE IMP   PRETTY IMP   VERY IMP

g. Assign homework
    that requires children
    to interact with
    parents.   NOT IMP   A LITTLE IMP   PRETTY IMP   VERY IMP

h. Suggest ways to
    practice spelling or
    other skills at home
    before a test.   NOT IMP   A LITTLE IMP   PRETTY IMP   VERY IMP

i. Ask parents to listen
    to their child read or
    to a story or paragraph
    that their children
    write.   NOT IMP   A LITTLE IMP   PRETTY IMP   VERY IMP

j. Work with other
teachers to develop
parental involvement
activities and
materials.   NOT IMP   A LITTLE IMP   PRETTY IMP   VERY IMP

k. Serve on a PTA/PTO
or other school
committee.   NOT IMP   A LITTLE IMP   PRETTY IMP   VERY IMP

Q-7. How important is it for parents to do the following things?

PARENTS' RESPONSIBILITES	NOT IMPORTANT	A LITTLE IMPORTANT	PRETTY IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT
a. Send children to school ready to learn.	NOT IMP	A LITTLE IMP	PRETTY IMP	VERY IMP
b. Teach children to behave well.	NOT IMP	A LITTLE IMP	PRETTY IMP	VERY IMP
c. Set up a quiet place and time for studying at home.	NOT IMP	A LITTLE IMP	PRETTY IMP	VERY IMP
d. Know what children are expected to learn each year.	NOT IMP	A LITTLE IMP	PRETTY IMP	VERY IMP
e. Check daily that homework is done.	NOT IMP	A LITTLE IMP	PRETTY IMP	VERY IMP
f. Talk to children about what they are learning in school.	NOT IMP	A LITTLE IMP	PRETTY IMP	VERY IMP
g. Ask teachers for specific ideas on how to help their children at home with classwork.	NOT IMP	A LITTLE IMP	PRETTY IMP	VERY IMP

h. Talk to teachers
    about problems the
    children are facing
    at home.   NOT IMP   A LITTLE IMP   PRETTY IMP   VERY IMP

i. Attend PTA/PTO
    meetings.   NOT IMP   A LITTLE IMP   PRETTY IMP   VERY IMP

j. Serve as a volunteer
    in the school or
    classroom.   NOT IMP   A LITTLE IMP   PRETTY IMP   VERY IMP

k. Attend assemblies
    and other special
    events at the school.   NOT IMP   A LITTLE IMP   PRETTY IMP   VERY IMP

l. Talk to children
    about the importance
    of school.   NOT IMP   A LITTLE IMP   PRETTY IMP   VERY IMP

Q-8. The next question asks how you perceive others' support for parental involvement in your school. Please circle one choice on each line. How much support does each give <u>now</u> to parental involvement?

	Strong Support	**Some Support**	**Weak Support**	**No Support**
a. You, personally	STRONG	SOME	WEAK	NONE
b. Other teachers	STRONG	SOME	WEAK	NONE
c. The principal	STRONG	SOME	WEAK	NONE
d. Other administrators	STRONG	SOME	WEAK	NONE
e. Parents	STRONG	SOME	WEAK	NONE
f. The school board	STRONG	SOME	WEAK	NONE
g. The district superintendent	STRONG	SOME	WEAK	NONE

Q-9.   YOUR STUDENTS AND TEACHING

A. How many different students do you teach each day, on average?

Number of different students I teach on average day = _____

B. Which best describes your teaching responsibility? (CHECK ONE**)**

    ____ 1. I teach several subjects to ONE SELF-CONTAINED CLASS.

    ____ 2. I teach ONE subjects to SEVERAL DIFFERENT CLASSES of students in a
        departmentalized program.

    ____ 3. I teach MORE THAN ONE subject to MORE THAN ONE CLASS in a
        semi-departmental program or other arrangement.

    ____ 4. Other (please describe): _____

C. (a) Do you work with other teachers on a formal, interdisciplinary team?
        ___ NO   ___ YES

    (b) If YES, do you have a common planning time with all of the teachers on your
      team?
        ___ NO   ___ YES

D. About how many hours each week, on average, do you spend contacting parents?

    _____ (a) None

    _____ (b) Less than one hour

    _____ (c) One hour

    _____ (d) Two hours

    _____ (e) Three hours or more

E. About how many of your students are in (circle the estimate that comes closest):

    (a) Special education   0% 10% 20%   30-50%   60-80%   90-100%

    (b) Gifted and Talented   0% 10% 20%   30-50%   60-80%   90-100%

Q-10. YOUR EXPERIENCE AND BACKGROUND

What is your experience?

_____ (a) Years in teaching or administration

_____ (b) Years in **this school**

PLEASE RETURN THIS SURVEY IN THE SELF-ADDRESSED, STAMPED ENVELOPE.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR HELP!