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Primary Grade Teachers' Perceptions of Parental Involvement in School Activities

Darlisha Beard
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Walden University

College of Education

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Darlisha Beard

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Walden University
2017

Abstract

Primary Grade Teachers' Perceptions of Parental Involvement in School Activities

by

Darlisha Beard

MA, University of Phoenix, 2011

BS, University of Memphis, 2009

Project Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Education

Walden University

December 2017

Abstract

Researchers have concluded that parental involvement is necessary for students' success in school because parent involvement in school activities can positively affect children's learning and school experiences. Parent presence and participation is lacking in an urban school district in western Tennessee. The purpose of this study was to investigate parents' participation in school activities, the current level of parental involvement, and teachers' perceptions related to ways to engage parents more effectively in participating in school-related activities. A conceptual framework of Epstein's model for parental involvement and Hoover-Dempsey's model of the parental involvement process guided this study. The research questions focused on primary teachers' perceptions about parental involvement, the influence of parental involvement, and ways to engage parents in school activities. A case study design was used to capture the insights of 7 participants through 1-on-1 interviews, reflective journals, and artifacts in the form of parent contact logs. Emergent themes were identified through an open coding process and the findings were developed and validated through member checking and triangulation. The findings revealed that primary teachers want to engage parents in school activities, that teachers believe parent involvement is a positive motivator for students, and that teachers need more strategies to effectively engage parents. A project was designed to provide strategies to meaningfully engage parents in school activities. This study may influence positive social change by supporting teachers' and administrators' efforts to improve engagement with parents in school-related activities.

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Dedication

I dedicate this doctoral study to my husband, Tradanius Beard, who has been my #1 cheerleader and supporter during this doctoral journey. My daughter, Madison G. Beard, who has been my pride and joy and encouragement to continue to work hard and push through my difficult times. My parents, Barnabas and Gloria Tabor, who taught me to work hard for what I want and encouraged me to continue to reach for the stars. My sister, Dr. Camille Tabor-Cobb, who pushed me to work harder by saying, "Let's get it done!" My brothers, Kitrick and Barnabas Tabor III, whom I love dearly. Finally, I dedicate this work to all the teachers who commit their lives daily to ensure that our students become productive citizens in their ever-changing society.

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Section 1: The Problem

Introduction

Parental involvement is defined as parents' support for their child's education and academic achievement through home and school participation (Hayes, 2011). This project study is designed to examine primary grade teachers' perceptions of parental involvement in a local school in western Tennessee. I specifically examined (a) the current levels of parental involvement; (b) teacher perceptions of parental involvement in school activities; and (c) ways that schools can engage parents more effectively in participating in school-related activities such as parent-teacher organization (PTO) meetings, parent-teacher conferences, and volunteering in the classroom. For this study, I defined *parental involvement* as in-school involvement. Section 1 includes a description of the problem in the local school and in the larger educational context, and I also address the rationale for this study. I provide a review of the literature to examine the importance of parental involvement and ways that schools can engage parents. This section concludes with the implications of this project study and a summary of the problem and purpose.

Definition of the Problem

Parental involvement is essential to students' performance in schools. When parents are active participants in their child's education, they positively affect the child's learning and school experiences (Coleman & McNeese, 2009). Researchers have indicated that parents can become active participants through a commitment to parental participation and parental support (Vandergrift & Greene, 1992). Vandergrift and Greene (1992) suggested that a commitment to parental participation and support may consist of

things such as giving a child an encouraging word, exhibiting compassion and being understanding, assisting with homework, and attending parent-teacher conferences. Parents' commitment and support in being active participants in the home and school gives them an opportunity to become involved in their children's education. "This combination of level of commitment and active participation is what makes an involved parent" (Vandergrift & Greene, 1992, p. 57). Parents are children's first teachers, and their involvement in their children's education is crucial to the children's successes (Radzi, Razak, & Sukor, 2010). With the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) Act (2002), schools increased parental involvement in education on both the elementary and secondary school levels (Hill & Tyson, 2009). Parental involvement can bridge the gap between home and school by offering parents information and strategies regarding home-based and school-based instructional support activities (Hill & Tyson, 2009). Urban community schools have focused on increasing parental involvement to provide students with a better support system (Hayes, 2011). Although researchers have identified that parental in-school involvement influences student success, the local setting for this study is experiencing difficulty with engaging parents to actively participate in the school.

The local setting for this study is in a school district in western Tennessee. The school district is a large school district with 111,000 students and more than 200 schools (National Center for Education Statistics [NCES], 2013). The NCES estimated that the district employs 12,300 teachers, with 4,650 teachers working at the elementary school level. The local school for this study serves students who live in neighboring areas. The local student body consists of approximately 450 students in pre-kindergarten through

fifth grade (NCES, 2013). The student demographics are 100% African-American students. The student to teacher ratio is 18:1. There are 25 teachers (NCES, 2013), of which 73% are African American and 27% are White (local school website, 2014). The faculty education levels are as follows: 48% have a bachelor's degree, 52% have a master's or doctoral degree, and 100% hold a state teaching certificate/license (local school website, 2014).

A significant number of parents are not participating in school-related activities such as PTO meetings, parent-teacher conferences, and volunteering in the classroom, and primary teachers are feeling frustrated that parents do not seem to care as much as they do about student performance in primary grades (R. James, personal communication, August 5, 2014). Parents are not seen in the school, specifically during school-related activities, and teachers sense that some responsibilities related to school involvement are placed on them and are burdensome (J. Saulsberry, personal communication, August 13, 2014). Each week, teachers are required by the school administrators to send newsletters home to inform the parents about their child's weekly academic skills, homework assignments, and school-related activities that are taking place in the school. Many parents are not responsive to information found in the newsletter such as invitations to attend school-related activities and request to help children complete their homework assignments (T. Smith, personal communication, August 15, 2014). One frustrated teacher commented, "When are they going to hold the parents accountable for what their child does in school" (F. Jones, personal communication, August 15, 2014).

In this local setting, the current level of parental involvement has become a concern for primary teachers, who are encouraging parents to volunteer at the school, attend parent-teacher conferences, participate in the parent-teacher organization, and engage in other school-related activities through newsletters, the school website, and phone calls. At recent parent-teacher conferences that were scheduled and conducted to discuss individual student performance, an average of seven parents per classroom attended (S. Mayberry, personal communication, September 18, 2014). The average number of parents who attend parent-teacher conferences indicate the low level of parental participation in school-related activities.

According to the school principal, the parent-teacher conferences are intended to facilitate parent-teacher communications. “We want to strive to provide an opportunity to develop partnerships with each parent to support his or her child’s education” (S. Mayberry, personal communication, August 11, 2014). This is problematic because communication between parents and teachers is lacking, which prevents parents from being aware of their child’s progress in school (S. Mayberry, personal communication, September 18, 2014). Parent practices are associated with promoting positive academic and social skills, such as parent participation in school-related activities and attending parent-teacher conferences (Chen & Gregory, 2010). These parent practices may help build collaborative partnerships between parents and teachers. A gap in practice exists between the school’s efforts to develop more in-school parent involvement and the lack of parent participation in schools (B. Williams, personal communication, September 10, 2014). The school administrator is concerned about the current level of parental

involvement at the local school (S. Mayberry, personal communication, September 18, 2014). To address the gap in practice, the school administrator would like to find strategies to improve the lack of parental involvement and simulate more parent involvement in the local school (S. Mayberry, personal communication, September 18, 2014). Therefore, the local school is interested in reaching out to parents and implementing school programs that may engage more parents and provide them with resources and strategies to become effectively involved in their children's education.

Machen, Wilson, and Notar (2005) observed that collaboration between parents and teachers yields the best educational results and the role of the parent became stronger. Researchers have indicated that when parental involvement is present in the school, children become motivated in the classroom, do better academically, and have better behavior; in addition, positive relationships are formed between the home and school (Bartel, 2010; Coleman & McNeese, 2009; Fan, Williams, & Wolters, 2012; Larocque, Kleiman, & Darling, 2011; Sad & Gurbuzturk, 2013). When parents become involved, their children can possibly perform better in school and partnerships may be built between the parents and school. Researchers suggested that students' attitudes and behaviors and parent and community support of the school are also improved through parental involvement (Radzi et al., 2010). The researchers cited have identified activities that can improve parental involvement in the school, but many schools are still challenged with the issue of adequate parental involvement in schools.

Parental involvement is a critical issue in all schools today, as evidenced by research around the world, in countries such as the United Kingdom, the United States,

the United Arab Emirates, Turkey, and Japan (Bartel, 2010; Radzi et al., 2010). Because parental involvement is a critical issue, further research is needed to find ways to engage parents, especially parents of primary age students. Researchers have explained that parental involvement is linked to children's academic and social well-being and significantly affects children's early years of schooling (Powell, Seung-Hee, File, & Froiland, 2012; Radzi et al., 2010; Young, Austin, & Growe, 2013). I sought to investigate parents' participation in school activities, the current level of parental involvement, and teachers' perceptions related to ways in which this school staff can engage parents more effectively in participating in school-related activities.

Rationale

Evidence of the Problem at the Local Level

A western Tennessee school district is striving to find ways to engage parents more effectively in participating in school-related activities such as PTO meetings, parent-teacher conferences, and volunteering in the classroom. The local district administrators have identified their commitment to increasing parent participation by including school-related activities in the district's mission statement. The mission set forth by this western Tennessee school district is to build a positive relationship between parents, schools, and the community; improve partnerships between home and school; and provide opportunities for families to become continuously engaged in their children's education (Local School District, 2014). The local school district's mission highlights the importance of parent, school, and community engagement to develop partnerships and improve parental involvement practices (Local School District, 2014). To improve

parental involvement practices, the local school district offers a volunteer program to provide opportunities for parents and the community to become involved in the educational process of students (Local School District, 2014). Through the volunteer program, the local school district requires parents and community members to attend a 1-day orientation session. The local school district's mission is aligned with the requirements set forth by the state of Tennessee's Department of Education.

The state of Tennessee is dedicated to improving parental involvement practices between parents and schools. To improve parental involvement practices, the Tennessee Department of Education (TDOE) has created the TDOE involvement standards to help parents and schools build partnerships and make a meaningful difference in the education of students. The TDOE (2012) identified that teachers, parents, and schools contribute significantly to providing parental involvement opportunities. Furthermore, the Department of Education acknowledged that parents are a child's first and most influential teacher, and they should ensure that their children are prepared for elementary school with the foundational skills they need to become successful in school. During the 2013-2014 school year a state-wide school-level parental involvement survey was conducted using the TDOE Parental involvement standards (TDOE, 2014). The survey was rated according to teacher perceptions of current levels of parent involvement: 0 = not there yet, 1 = emerging, 2 = progressing, and 3 = excelling. Each school in the state of Tennessee participated in this survey to improve parental involvement practices. Teachers in the local school are using the parental involvement standards. Based on teachers' responses, the following five state standards indicated areas of local weakness:

(a) Standard 1: Welcoming all families, (b) Standard 3: Supporting student success, (c) Standard 4: Speaking up for every child; (d) Standard 5: Sharing power; and (e) Standard 6: Collaborating with community. Satisfactory performance was demonstrated on Standard 2: Communicating effectively. Overall, the local school district earned an average of 1.3 of 3.0 for all standards, which was a score between emerging and progressing (see Table 1).

Table 1

Tennessee Department of Education Parental Involvement Survey

	Standard 1: Welcoming all families	Standard 2: Communicating effectively	Standard 3: Supporting student success	Standard 4: Speaking up for every child	Standard 5: Sharing power	Standard 6: Collaborating with community	Six standard average
Local School	1.0	3.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.3
State	2.6	2.6	2.3	2.1	2.0	2.3	2.3

Note. Local school average versus state average. Adapted from the Tennessee Department of Education [TDOE], 2014.

Based on the TDOE parental involvement standards, the current average level of parent involvement in schools, based on teacher perceptions, throughout the state was scored 2.3 of 3.0 across the six standards (TDOE, 2014). The state average on the parental involvement standards survey showed that teachers perceived implementation of the parental involvement standards in the school and home are at the progressing level. In comparison, teachers in the local school rated the target school's performance on the parental involvement standards survey with a lower score of 1.3, indicating that the school's performance shows a gap in practice with the school's efforts to develop more

in-school parent involvement. Teacher responses indicated that the local schools are operating between the emerging and progressing levels (see Table 1). It is evident from the information presented by the TDOE parental involvement standards survey that the survey results show a need for the local gap in practice to be more deeply understood by teachers and administrators so that it can be more effectively addressed.

The local setting for this study is an urban school in western Tennessee where a small number of parents are present or participating in school-related activities. Many forms of parent participation exist in a school, such as PTO membership, parent-teacher conferences, and volunteering in the classroom. In the past 3 school years, the principal has attempted to invite parents to join the PTO to increase parental involvement in the school. The participation has not been as great as desired by the school administrators and teachers (Local School, 2014). During the 2012-2013 school year, the principal attempted to reach out to parents by inviting them to join the PTO during school registration. As an incentive, the principal offered a prize of a pizza party to the class that had the most parents join. The principal estimated that an average of 150 parents signed up for the PTO. As the school year progressed, there was an average of three parents at each PTO meeting (S. Mayberry, personal communication, 2014). The school administrator suggested that parents probably joined the PTO for their children to win a prize because most of those who joined did not attend any PTO meetings (S. Mayberry, personal communication, October 2014).

In the following school year, 2013-2014, the principal made another attempt at inviting parents to join PTO during school registration. Unlike the previous school year,

parents did not express interest in joining. The principal estimated that an average of 50 parents signed up for the PTO, and the average attendance at PTO meetings remained similar to the previous year (S. Mayberry, personal communication, 2014). In a school with approximately 450 students, there has been an average of three parents attending PTO meetings during the 2012-2013 and 2013-2014 school years, which indicates a lack of parent presence and participation in the school. Within the 2014-2015 school year, parent-teacher conferences have been scheduled once each semester to discuss individual student performance. Although the average class size is 18 students, approximately seven parents per teacher attended these important conferences (S. Mayberry, personal communication, 2014). Even though parent-teacher conferences are scheduled at prearranged times, parents are also welcomed to meet with their child's teacher any day during the teacher's planning time. Parents who are involved in their child's education assist them with school work; by doing this, they provide additional learning opportunities such as tutoring to assist their child (R. James, personal communication, 2014).

To improve student performance, teachers are required to tutor students once a week for an hour after regular school hours (J. Saulsberry, personal communication, 2014). Tutoring is offered to students who are not academically performing well in the classroom (Local School, 2014). One frustrated teacher stated, "Students are not attending tutoring as they should, so what do they expect me to do. I am teaching the students during the day and offering tutoring after school. What else do they want me to do when the parents don't send their child to a tutor?" (R. James, personal

communication, 2014). To encourage students to attend tutoring, teachers reach out to parents in several ways. They send weekly newsletters home, post tutoring schedules on the school website, and call parents (Local School, 2014). The lack of parent presence and participation in these school-related activities shows a need to improve the current level of parental involvement.

Evidence of the Problem From the Professional Literature

According to many researchers, parental involvement creates a positive influence on students' learning experiences (Lloyd-Smith & Barron, 2010, Rapp & Duncan, 2012, Regner, Loose, & Dumas, 2009). Lloyd-Smith and Barron (2010) and Regner et al. (2009) identified a positive relationship between the involvement of parents in the school and school performance. They explained the need for parental involvement among all ages and how the parental involvement that does exist in elementary schools begins to decrease as students get older. Rapp and Duncan (2012) believed that parental involvement is a necessity in students' success in school. They emphasized the need for schools to engage families in student learning because students can possibly make academic gains. A study conducted by Regner et al. (2009) examined students' perceptions of how they felt about their parents' involvement in their schooling. Through the students' responses, they found a relationship between parental involvement and students' achievement goals and that parental involvement is needed to help students master their academic goals.

The NCLB Act requires schools and districts to create and implement parental involvement programs to involve parents in their children's education (Epstein, 2005).

Through the NCLB Act, schools are held accountable for increasing student achievement and as a strategy, parental involvement has been determined as a factor to help improve student achievement (Bower, Powers, & Graham, 2010). Although, the NCLB Act focuses on engaging parents in schools, it does not give a precise meaning of how to engage parents (Howard & Reynolds, 2008). Despite the efforts of this federal mandate to increase parental involvement, some parents are not able or willing to participate in their child's education (Park & Holloway, 2013). Overall, the research indicates an absence of parental involvement in schools, and many urban school students are failing in school (Bower et. al, 2010; Howard & Reynolds, 2008; Park & Holloway, 2013).

In Chicago, Illinois, many urban schools suffer from a lack of parental involvement, which has contributed to a lack of academic skills in many students (Okun, 2008). Okun (2008) explained that the schools must provide educational support and services to students, which has often been the responsibility of the parents. In the Philadelphia School District, Parsley (2008) identified an absence of parental involvement in its schools. Pasley (2008) identified 10 reasons why many parents do not attend parent-teacher conferences in Philadelphia. Some of the reasons are outside of the control of the schools; however, the following identified reasons are common to these large city schools: (a) the schools are not inviting places, (b) parents are not aware of how to become involved in the schools, and (c) cultural barriers hinder involvement in schools. Regardless of these reasons, the district administrators believed that a consensus must be met between the district and parents, so that partnerships are formed between parents and teachers (Parsley, 2008).

In New York City, there has been a significant decline in parental involvement in a span of 4 years (Fleisher, 2012). Fleisher (2012) noted that many parents have become frustrated because they must go to many individuals before they can have their concerns heard by school officials; more than 50% of parents in the New York City School District have become uninvolved in their children's education because of the process difficulties. Overall, within these three large school districts in the United States, the problem is the same: a lack of parent participation or presence in the schools (Okun, 2008; Parsley, 2008; Fleisher, 2012). Although many school districts in the United States have been challenged with a lack of parent participation or presence in the school, other countries are experiencing different parental involvement issues.

Although school districts in the United States are challenged with parent involvement issues, a sense of separation exists between home and school in other countries. In some countries, such as the Netherlands and Norway, parents are not involved based on their beliefs about parental involvement in the home and school. Denessen, Bakker, and Giervald (2007) stated that these parents believed that they are responsible for the home and teachers are responsible for school. In addition, in the Netherlands, many ethnic minority parents do not believe that it is their responsibility to be involved in their children's education (Denessen et al., 2007). In Norway, parents' beliefs are like those of parents in the Netherlands. Many parents in Norway believe that the home and school are two different environments, which is why they are not present in school-related activities such as volunteering, decision-making, parent meetings, and parent-teacher conferences (Baeck, 2010). Baeck (2010) also found that parental

involvement differs based on the parents' level of education in which educated parents are more involved than uneducated parents. In-school involvement is seen by parents in other countries as the responsibility of the school. In some European countries such as England, Spain, and France, parents traditionally believe that education is the sole responsibility of the school system. In many post-communist countries including Albania, Bulgaria, and Romania, the way public education operated reflected the post-communist view by rarely inviting or allowing parents to participate (Radu, 2011).

Researchers have identified strategies such as parent participation in meetings with teachers and school events, and collaborative partnerships as ways to produce successful parent in-school involvement (Bhering, 2002; Machen et al., 2005; Trask-Tate & Cunningham, 2010; Vera, Israel, Coyle, Cross, Knight-Lynn, Moallem, & Goldberger, 2012). Bhering (2002) explained how school administrators and teachers can be more effective in their parental involvement practices. The author identified that school administrators and teachers can work with parents through three components: involvement in curriculum-related activities, communication through written messages and scheduled, informal meetings, and practical help with fundraising and school events. Researchers have tried to find out what types of parental involvement are most effective in producing positive academic outcomes (Trask-Tate & Cunningham, 2010; Vera et al., 2012). Machen et al. (2005) stated that schools and teachers have identified that there is a need to build a collaborative partnership between the home and school as a strategy to increase parental involvement and student achievement. A study conducted by Tunison (2013) on how family-school partnerships influenced the educational outcomes of an

urban school concluded that creating partnerships lead to stronger and positive relationships in schools. To become more efficient in school practices, schools can create and implement a useful model for parental involvement to increase parental involvement opportunities and student achievement (Rapp & Duncan, 2012).

Parental involvement initiatives in the United States focus on increasing parental involvement in schools through state and district-wide school reform efforts (Domina, 2005). Researchers indicated that teachers, families, and community members play a decisive role in student achievement and success (Bower & Griffin, 2011; Coleman & McNeese, 2009; Hourani, Stringer, & Baker, 2012; Larocque et al., 2011; Radzi et al., 2010). Although researchers indicated that parental involvement positively affected student achievement and success, many schools continue to lack parental presence and participation in the schools.

In my study, I focused on primary teachers' perceptions of parent participation in school activities in the local school. The perceptions of primary teachers may provide insights on the current level of parental involvement and importance of parental involvement in school activities in primary grades, and they may help examine how school administrators and teachers can engage parents more effectively in participating in school-related activities.

Definitions

Home-based involvement: Home-based involvement is a type of parent participation that includes, but is not limited to, engaging in educational activities in the

home, identifying ways schools can support parents, and planning for school and community activity (Hill & Tyson, 2009).

Parental involvement: Parental involvement is defined as parents' participation in school-related activities, parent-teacher conferences, helping children with their school assignments, and parents reading to their children at home (Midraj & Midraj, 2011).

School-based involvement: School-based involvement is a type of parent participation that includes but is not limited to engagement in school-related activities such as (a) volunteering, (b) parent and teacher communication, and (c) PTO membership (Hill & Tyson, 2009).

Student academic performance: Student academic performance is a student's self-reported grades and grade point average (Rivers, Mullis, Fortner, & Mullis, 2012)

Significance

Georgiou and Tourva (2007) defined *parental involvement* as the parents' actions and habits in the home and at school as it related to their child's education. Parental involvement plays an important role in a child's learning and cognitive growth (Midraj & Midraj, 2011). My project may be useful to the local and broader educational settings. I hope to shed light on the current problem of low parent participation and its importance to the parent's role in their child's education. Specifically, I will investigate parental involvement in primary grades and seek ways to engage parents effectively in the school. Parental involvement is important because children require their parents' involvement in guidance, motivation, and attention during their early years in school (Radzi et al., 2010). Primary age students' progress in their first years in school is linked to their parents'

involvement at home and in the school (Powell et al., 2012). Many studies have identified a possible connection between parental involvement and student performance (Hornsby & Lafaele, 2011; Larocque et al., 2011; Sad & Gurbuzturk, 2013), but I focused on parental involvement in primary grades as opposed to exploring parental involvement at all grade levels. More important, I will address the perceptions of primary teachers in an urban setting regarding parental involvement in school activities and I will seek to identify and examine effective ways of engaging parents during the time their child spends in school. This project may particularly help the school district because they are trying to find ways to promote parental involvement within the schools.

Guiding/Research Questions

Parental involvement is an opportunity that many schools have used to encourage parents to participate in their child's education and school activities. Parental involvement plays a significant role in student achievement, student success in school, and is essential to increasing student achievement. Schools must find strategies that can effectively engage parents to participate in school-related activities. The following research questions helped guide my project study:

RQ1: What are the perceptions of primary grade teachers regarding parental involvement in this local school?

RQ2: In what ways do primary teachers perceive that parental involvement or lack of parental involvement influences student attitudes, behaviors, and academic performance in this local school?

RQ3: In what ways do primary teachers think school staff can effectively engage parents of primary grade children to become involved in this local school?

By answering these research questions, I will investigate teacher perceptions regarding how school staff can engage parents more effectively in participating in school-related activities. In the next section, I will review current literature about the problem and identify research studies that address the importance and benefits of parental involvement.

Review of the Literature

I addressed the problem of a lack of parent presence or participation in school-related activities in an urban school in western Tennessee. To conduct the literature review, I searched major databases within the Walden University Library. The major databases that used were the Thoreau multiple databases, ProQuest dissertations, EBSCOHost, and Education Research Complete. During the search, I used the following keywords: *parental involvement, parent participation, student performance, student achievement, primary students, elementary students, urban education and parental involvement, urban education and school achievement, and primary teachers*. The subsections of the literature review include the conceptual framework that guided my study, definitions of parental involvement, parental involvement and student achievement, barriers to parental involvement, and benefits of parental involvement.

In the conceptual framework section, will provide an overview of Epstein's model for parental involvement and Hoover-Dempsey, Sandler, Green, and Walker's model of the parental involvement process. In the second subsection on the definitions of parental

involvement, I will highlight the traditional definition of parental involvement and how different researchers define parental involvement in the context of their study. In the third subsection on parental involvement, I will explain the association between parental involvement and student achievement and how parental involvement is shown to improve student success in school. In the fourth subsection on barriers to parental involvement, I will describe how some obstacles can hinder parental involvement in the home and school. In the last subsection on benefits of parental involvement, I will describe how parental involvement can yield positive outcomes.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework of this study is based on the models of Epstein (2001) and Hoover-Dempsey et al. (2007); these are models that both focus on helping schools set goals for promoting, motivating, and maintaining parental involvement. Epstein conceptualizes parental involvement using the model for parental involvement. Epstein's model for parental involvement addresses six strategies that schools can use to promote and maintain parental involvement: parenting, communicating, volunteering, learning at home, decision-making, and collaborating with the community. Parenting refers to assisting parents with parenting skills and building positive home conditions to support student learning. In communicating, the school gains contact with parents about programs offered by the school and student's progress. When schools involve parents in assisting children in learning activities such as homework and school programs, Epstein refers to this process as learning at home. In the process of decision-making, schools allow parents to be a part of school decisions and training them to be leaders and representatives. By

addressing parental involvement, schools can promote and maintain parental involvement by collaborating with the community. Collaborating with the community requires the school's effort to provide students and their parents with access to community support services to support their learning. According to Epstein (2001), these six levels of involvement can help schools set goals to increase parental involvement and meet the needs of the students and their parents.

Hoover-Dempsey et al. (2007) conceptualized parental involvement by using the model of the parent involvement process. The model developed by Hoover-Dempsey, et al. (2007) focuses on three sources for motivating and maintaining parental involvement practices: parents' motivational beliefs, parents' perceptions of invitations to involvement, and personal life contexts. The parents' motivational beliefs consist of the parents' role as it relates to involvement and parents' efficacy for helping their child succeed in school. The parents' motivational beliefs consist of the parents' role as it relates to involvement and parents' practices for helping their children to become successful in school. The parents' perceptions of invitations to involvement come from specific requests for the school, teachers, or students to participate in some school activity. The personal life contexts refer to the parents' educational background, personal schedule, and culture (Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2007). This model examines how parents view parental involvement and how other factors can affect parents' participation in schools, thus, emphasizing that parents' perceptions of parental involvement creates a determining factor for their level of participation in the school. Hoover-Dempsey et al. (2007) developed a conceptual framework to identify types of parental involvement and

ways in which parents are involved during the elementary and middle school years. The participants in this study were parents who have elementary level children attending a public school. The participants were given questionnaires to collect data to assess how frequent parents reported that they were engaged in school-based and home-based involvement activities.

The Hoover-Dempsey et al. (2007) model focuses on three sources for motivating parental involvement practices: parents' motivational beliefs, parents' perceptions of invitations to involvement, and personal life contexts. This framework identifies factors that affect parent participation in a child's education. The researchers found that parental involvement is necessary for student success, but little is known concerning parents' motivational beliefs and how these beliefs influence parents' decisions to become involved. Other researchers have used both Epstein (2001) and Hoover-Dempsey et al. (2007) models in their research to provide guidance for schools as they strive to improve their practices of promoting parental involvement and developing home-school partnerships (Bower & Griffin 2011; Radzi et al., 2010). Both models will be used to guide this study in addressing the research questions and primary teachers' responses regarding parental involvement in school activities. Hence, this conceptual framework will contribute to an understanding of different types of parental involvement strategies and factors that can positively affect parents' participation in the school.

Definitions of Parental Involvement

Parental involvement is viewed as an additional support for students in school (Chen & Gregory, 2009). An issue related to a lack of parental involvement includes the

absence of a precise definition of parental involvement (Young et al., 2013). Parent involvement is often defined by school administrators rather than by parents (Tveit, 2009). Tveit (2009) suggested that there is a need for schools to give parents an opportunity to define parental involvement from their point of views. Parents are valuable assets to the educational process and should be involved in the decision-making in schools (Machen et al., 2005). The traditional meaning of parental involvement includes home based and school based activities such as completing homework, monitoring the child's progress, telephone calls, volunteering at school, and parent-teacher conferences (Tveit, 2009). Besides the traditional definition of parental involvement, many researchers have defined parental involvement in many ways in which parental involvement takes many forms (Bower & Griffin, 2011; Georgiou & Tourva, 2007; Lloyd-Smith & Baron, 2010; Young et al., 2013).

In defining parental involvement, these researchers created two distinct categories: home-based involvement and school-based involvement. Bower and Griffin (2011) identified parental involvement as volunteering at the school, communication between teachers and parents, parents helping their children with homework, and attending school-related events. However, Sad and Gurbuzturk (2013) conducted a study that addressed ways in which parents of students in six primary schools participated in their child's education. Because of this study, Sad and Gurbuzturk (2013) found these parents were more involved in tasks such as communication with their child, creating a positive home environment, and helping with homework and less interested in volunteering at the school. They suggested that schools should provide parents with ways

to become involved in school-related activities. Parental involvement in school-related activities is known to contribute to the functioning of the school (Mncube, 2010).

Georgiou and Tourva (2007) examined how parents contribute to their children's education and to what extent do these parents participate in their child's education in both the home and school. The participants in this study were 313 parents, who had children attending either elementary or high school. There were two instruments used to collect data in this study, which the researcher adapted from the work of other researchers. The two instruments created and used were a parent attributions scale and a parental involvement scale. The parent attributions scale was used to determine parents' contributions to their child's education. The scale was based on a 5-point Likert scale. The parental involvement scale was used to measure parents' involvement at home and school; these were also scored on a 5-point Likert scale. Georgiou and Tourva (2007) addressed the relationships among parents' contributions to their child's education, their beliefs about parental involvement, and their actions regarding parental involvement. In addition, they defined parental involvement as behaviors and practices that take place in the home and school including parents' attitudes and beliefs about their child's education. As a result, the authors found that parental involvement is useful and essential to a child's school success. The findings showed that parents who believe that involvement is important will try to get involved. Some factors showed that some aspects of parental involvement are in the control of the parents and some are uncontrollable. Some things that are in control of the parents are home activities and volunteering. Things that are

uncontrollable are the child's ability and the selection of teachers (Georgiou & Tourva, 2007).

Parental involvement can include parents and schools working together as partners in education. When teachers and parents work as partners, there are open communications, involvement in decisions affecting the child, and a mutual respect for the ideas shared (National Association of School Psychologists, n.d.). Parental involvement has been defined as partnerships between the home and school, parent participation in schools, and parents working as partners (Lloyd-Smith & Baron, 2010). Even though researchers have defined parental involvement in similar ways, it is evident that there are still issues related to a lack of parental involvement (Young et al., 2013).

Based on evidence in research, there are issues related to a lack of parental involvement; however, some school administrators identified what they believe parental involvement should look like in schools. In a qualitative study, Young et al. (2013) attempted to determine how school administrators defined parental involvement. The participants in this study were school administrators who attended three different presentations conducted by the researchers. The presentations took place at a professional development (PD) program in a school district and a major conference. The participants were asked to respond to the following question: How do you define parental involvement? The participants were asked to respond to the following question: How do you define parental involvement? The participants' responses indicated that parents should participate actively in their child's academic, social, emotional, and psychological development. Young et al. (2013) explained that in order to address the problem of

parental involvement principals, teachers, and parents needed to develop a consistent definition of parental involvement that could help parents understand the expectations for involvement. Young et al. (2013) found that if parents are going to fulfill what school administrators want for parental involvement, school administrators must provide opportunities for parents to participate in the school.

To help parents with involvement, Aziz, Hassan, and Atta (2011) suggested that parents can become involved through activities such as reading a book to their child, asking their child how was their day, limiting television viewing, checking homework, and having discussions with their child's teacher. Aziz et al. (2011) explored parents, students, and teachers' perceptions of parental involvement and their roles in children's education and academic achievement. Parents, students, and teachers were randomly selected from ten schools. The schools included five schools for boys and five schools for girls. From each school, ten parents, ten students, and one teacher were selected to participate in the study. The selected parents, students, and teachers were asked to complete different questionnaires relating to parents' involvement in their children's academics and academic achievement. Using a Pearson product moment correlation, they found a link between the parents' and students' responses to the questionnaires and there was no correlation in teachers' responses. The results showed the parent involvement could influence student achievement. In defining parental involvement, research shows that parental involvement includes parents' participation in both the home and school (Bower, 2011; Georgiou & Tourva, 2007; Lloyd-Smith & Baron, 2010; Young et al., 2013).

Parental involvement is needed to support students in school (Rivers et al., 2012), but, in knowing this, there are some inconsistencies in what parental involvement is in education. In research, there are many definitions and viewpoints relating to parental involvement. Despite various meanings and ideas, the one idea that is consistent with researchers is that parental involvement involves parents being involved in both the home and school. Parental involvement can take on many meanings such as helping with and checking homework, involvement in parent-teacher conferences, attending Parent-Teacher Association meetings, and regularly reading together at home.

Parental Involvement and Student Achievement

A critical issue in schools is the achievement gap in academic proficiency rates in reading and math between students whose parents are actively engaged and those whose parents are not (Hayes, 2011). Throughout research, parental involvement has been identified as a predictor of student academic success (Fan et al. 2012; Grace & Mason, 2008; Trask-Tate & Cunningham, 2010). Parental involvement is an opportunity that parents can utilize possibly to improve student success in school (Bower & Griffin, 2011). For example, Bower and Griffin (2011) examined parental involvement practices along with the Epstein model within an urban elementary school. In using an evidence-based model, Bower and Griffin investigated why the school continued to struggle with low parental involvement and low student achievement. In this case study, the participants were two administrators and five teachers. These individuals were used as participants because they were familiar with standardized testing and student achievement. This study was conducted over a span of one semester. Observations,

interviews and documents were collected and analyzed. After analyzing the data, the authors found three themes and four subthemes associated with the parental involvement practices in this urban elementary school. The three themes were strategies employed, frustrations, and engagement. Each theme had subthemes associated with them. The subtheme found for strategies employed were communication and home learning activities. The subthemes found for frustrations were lack of reciprocity and low attendance. There were no subthemes found for engagement. A limitation for this study was that this study was conducted in one elementary school. The authors suggested that the themes found in this study could be used as a framework for further studies in other schools (Bower & Griffin, 2011).

Many researchers have found a link between parental involvement and student achievement (Bartel, 2010; Hayes, 2011; Richardson, 2009; Young et al., 2013). Further, researchers (Hill & Tyson, 2009; Quezada, 2014) identified that families, schools, and parental involvement in education are factors to increasing student academic achievement. Hill and Tyson (2009) conducted a meta-analysis to examine whether there was a relationship between parental involvement and academic achievement. They found that there is a relationship between parental involvement and academic achievement and that the types of parental involvement do play a role in academic achievement. They also found that home-based involvement has a positive impact on academic achievement, but school-based involvement has a moderate academic achievement. Quezada (2014) focused on the roles of the community, family, and school in student academic success. Quezada (2014) recommended that pre-service teachers receive training on the roles of

the community, family, and school in student academic success. He emphasized that teachers need to understand the importance of partnerships and how they can influence student achievement. Although both studies identify the role of families, schools, and parental involvement in education, Hill and Tyson focused on the relationship between parental involvement and academic achievement and Quezada (2014) presented the works of other researchers and elaborated on the importance of community, family and school involvement in academic success. The roles of families and schools are critical because they create partnerships that may provide positive educational outcomes for their children (Landmark, Zhang, & Montoya, 2007).

Researchers have tried to find out what forms of parental involvement are capable in producing positive academic outcomes (Tate & Cunningham, 2010). When families and schools are involved in children's education, children may become academically successful throughout elementary and middle school (Turney & Kao, 2009). But as children progress through school, there is a tendency for parental involvement to lessen (Lloyd-Smith & Baron, 2010). Hill and Tyson (2009) found that the connection between parental involvement and student achievement might decline between the elementary and middle school years. Even though the connection between parental involvement and student achievement may decrease, during the elementary years, children require their parents' attention and motivation in school between the ages of 7 through 10 (Radzi et al., 2010). Radzi et al. (2010) conducted a study to explore primary school teachers' perceptions and concerns about parent participation to improve primary school students' academic achievement. This study was a quantitative study used to gather data and

information on parental involvement in primary schools. This study was conducted in Malaysian schools, where an emphasis was placed on parental involvement. The participants consisted of sixty individuals who were from high performing schools in Malaysia. The purpose of this study was to investigate primary teachers' preference for parental involvement and to identify the areas of parental involvement favored by parents. The authors used the Epstein model to help develop survey questions. Sixty participants responded to the questionnaires, which displayed 40 questions with the six areas of parental involvement found in the Epstein model. The areas of parental involvement of the Epstein model are communication, parenting, volunteering, home involvement, school governance, and decision-making. As a result, the authors found that parenting was an area that was most favored by parents. In this study, Radzi et al. (2010) suggested that schools begin improving primary school students' academic achievement by encouraging and soliciting parents to get involved in academic activities. Parental participation in academic activities is needed because students' academic performance in their early years of school can be influenced by their parents' involvement in the home and school. Parent involvement can convey a positive message to their children to show they care about their success (Machen et al., 2005).

In a study conducted by Powell et al. (2012), the researchers found that there is a link between primary age students' progress in their early years of schooling and their parents' involvement at home and in the school. This longitudinal study examined the stability and change in parent involvement in grades prekindergarten through first grade. The researchers looked the dynamics of parental involvement in two dimensions:

prekindergarten and kindergarten and kindergarten and first grade. The participants were 90 children and their parents/guardians who were recruited from prekindergarten classrooms in an urban school district. Difference scores were used as measures to determine the degree of change in each dimension of parental involvement in children's learning. The researcher found there is a positive link between primary age students' progress in their early years in formal schooling and their parents' involvement at home and in the school.

Through the analysis of 313 parent responses on a parental attributions scale and a parental involvement scale, Georgiou and Tourva (2007) found that there is a relationship between parents' contributions to their child's education, their beliefs about parental involvement, and their actions regarding parental involvement. As a result, they found that parental involvement was beneficial and essential to a child's school success.

To contribute to student academic success, parents must create an environment for learning, set high expectations, and participate in their child's education (Aziz et al., 2011). When parents are involved, it not only contributes to their academic success, but it directly affects their personal and social development (Cripps & Zyromski, 2009). However, parental involvement can indirectly affect student achievement by influencing students' behaviors such as their attitudes and motivation (Xu, Kushner Benson, Mudrey-Camino & Steiner., 2010). To help build sufficient parental support, schools may have to identify practices that promote parents' trust and involvement in the school (Karakus & Savas, 2012). In this quantitative study, three hundred twenty-five teachers were randomly selected to participate in the study. The data were collected using a self-report

and 5-point Likert scale questionnaire to measure teachers' trust in parents and students. The data were analyzed using a factor analyses in SPSS software program. The authors found that teachers had higher levels of trust in parents and their students and those teachers could have control over conflicts. The authors recommended that further research should be conducted to explore the views of administrators, parents, students, and other stakeholders.

Despite other researchers' findings, there is opposition to whether parental involvement affects student learning. The results of Domina (2005) suggested that parental involvement alone does not improve student's learning, but there are some types of involvement that prevent behavioral problems such as volunteering in the school and helping with homework. In a study conducted by Coleman and McNeese (2009), they concluded that there was a negative correlation between parental involvement and student motivation and parental involvement and academic achievement. There was a positive correlation found between student motivation and academic achievement. This was a longitudinal study conducted over a span of six years. The purpose of this study was to explore whether there were interrelationships among parental involvement, academic achievement, and students' motivation. The participants in this study were fifth grade students, who were selected to participate during their year in kindergarten until fifth grade. The students' parents and teachers also participated in this study. Data were collected using a national study conducted by the United States Department of Education Institute of Education Sciences. The participants completed self-description questionnaires, food consumption questionnaires, physical measurements, and academic

assessments. The fifth-grade students' parents participated in interviews and their teachers participated by completing questionnaires. As a result, the authors found that there were no connections between parental involvement and student motivation and parental involvement and academic achievement. There was a link found between student motivation and academic achievement.

Parental involvement is a contributor to student academic achievement (Aziz et al., 2009). Therefore, it is important that parents are valuable assets in their children's education. To promote academic achievement, the parent must create a positive environment for learning, set high expectations for their child, and participate in their child's education. Not only does parental involvement influence student achievement, but it affects student motivation and behaviors. Researchers indicated when parents participate in their child's education; the child has better grades, is more motivated, and is better behaved in school (Anfara & Mertens, 2008; George & Mensah, 2010; Richardson, 2009).

Parental involvement and Homework for Academic Achievement

The home and school are two settings that contribute to factors that relate to positive student academic outcomes (Rath, Gielen, Haynie, Solomon, Cheng, & Simons-Morton, 2008). Parental involvement is a contributor of home-based involvement (helping with homework, reading a book, promoting school attendance) and school-based involvement (volunteering in the school, parent-teacher conferences, attending Parent-Teacher Association meetings) (George & Mensah, 2010). George and Mensah (2010) discussed how parental involvement has an impact on homework for children's academic

success. They found that parental involvement had a positive effect on students' attendance, attitudes, and academic achievement, and promoted partnerships between parents and schools. When parents start to participate actively in their child's education, their child progress academically (Mncube, 2010). To promote academic achievement, homework is given to students to enhance previously taught skills. Homework has potential academic benefits that involve parents in the process, which improves student study skills, develops an appreciation for education, and creates an understanding of assignments and materials (Tam & Chan, 2009). Tam and Chan (2009) examined parental involvement in homework and how it correlates with student academic outcomes. Tam and Chan (2009) examined parental involvement in homework and its relationship with children's academic outcomes. The participants included primary students, parents, and teachers from 36 schools. Data were collected from the students, parents, and teachers using homework and questionnaires. The results showed that the children give much time to completing their homework assignments and the level of parental involvement in homework was related to the child's grade level and the parent's education level.

Based on previous research, parental involvement has been found to be essential to student academic success. Parental involvement is necessary for student academic success. Parents and schools play an important role in student academic success. However, parents and schools can create partnerships to support student learning at home and school. When parents are involved in their child's education, the child will be

academically successful in school. Parental involvement does not only improve student academic achievement but it can improve behavior problems and student motivation.

Barriers to Parental Involvement

The significance of parental involvement has prompted a need for parents to assist schools in the responsibility of educating their children (Machen et al., 2005); however, there are some challenges to parental involvement in the home and school that serve as barriers for parents (Turney & Kao, 2009). Hornby and Lafaele (2011) discussed a disconnection between the meaning and practices of parental involvement, in which a model was used to describe and clarify barriers of parental involvement in four areas. The four areas used to describe some barriers of parental involvement include parent and family, child's ability, relationship between parents and teachers, and the environment. Each factor focused on different characteristics associated with parental involvement. Factors with the parent and family focused on parents' belief about parental involvement, how they are invited to their child's school, personal obligations, and culture. The child's ability focused on age, disabilities and difficulty with learning, natural abilities, and any behavioral issues. The relationship between parents and teachers focused on differences in language, attitudes, and objectives. Factors in the environment addressed past events, demographics such as class, sex, and race, politics, and income. Hornby and Lafaele also discussed that a partnership is needed between the home and school. To improve parental involvement practices, the authors found that schools need to be welcoming and demonstrate their concerns about parental involvement and its significance. The authors recommend that studies are needed for parents' beliefs about parental involvement and

how parents were invited by the school. Hornby and Lafaele (2011) discussed the need for a partnership between the home and school, which relates to the local study in investigating ways in which the school administrator and teachers can engage parents more effectively in participating in school-related activities.

In primary schools in Abu Dhabi, teachers, administrators, and social workers identified limitations to parental involvement that included communication and sociocultural contexts and provisions (Hourani et al., 2012). Hourani et al. (2012) conducted a qualitative study that took place in seven primary schools in the city of Abu Dhabi. Selected parents participated in focus group interviews and individual interviews were conducted with social workers, teachers, and administrators. Based on their involvement in the school, parents were selected to participate in this study. The teacher participants were selected based on their employment with the school for at least one year, and they had to be able to speak English. The researchers found that the participants held positive views about the importance of parental involvement.

Griffin and Galassi's (2010) qualitative study, parents of seventh-grade students who were earning passing grades and yet, were classified as "at risk", identified barriers, which can prevent students from succeeding in school and resources needed to overcome the barriers. The following six identified barriers derived from the data collection: school or educational system, parent and family, parent-teacher interaction, teacher and instructional, student, and teacher-student interaction. The results of the study showed ways in which the school counselor can help the parents overcome their barriers by using parents as resources, participating in collaborative activities, promoting parent-school

communication, providing a list of resources, and encouraging a welcoming school environment.

The barriers from the Griffin and Galassi (2010) study were like Hornby and Lafaele's (2011) conclusions of barriers to parental involvement in education. Griffin and Galassi (2010) identified barriers to student academic success through parents' perceptions. In this research, the researchers engaged parents through focus groups to identify their perceptions on barriers to student academic success and shared the results with the school administration and counselors to identify ways to address barriers to student academic success. Hornby and Lafaele (2011) developed a parental involvement model that discussed specific barriers to parental involvement such as parents' beliefs about parental involvement, learning disabilities, and economic issues. These barriers were identified using four categories: parent-teacher factors, child factors, parent-family factors, and political and economic factors. Both studies discuss several barriers that hinder parents from being involved in their children's education. In contrast to the outcomes of Hornby and Lafaele (2011), Griffin and Galassi (2010) identified barriers and found ways to address these barriers through parent perceptions, school administrators, and school counselors. They wanted to find ways to address the problem with barriers and improve their current school programs. Hornby and Lafaele (2011) developed a parental involvement model and specifically explained the barriers to parental involvement. This study focused on the specific barriers instead of focusing on ways to address these barriers as Griffin and Galassi (2010) did in their study.

A case study by Bartel (2010) was conducted to identify home and school-related factors that affected parents, students, and teachers in a Title 1 elementary school. The purpose of the study was to identify home and school-related factors that affected the level of parental involvement, assisted parents in improving their child's education at home and school, and made efforts to improve school practice regarding parental involvement. The participants in this study were parents and teachers. Interviews and surveys were conducted to measure the impact of home and school-related factors on parental involvement. The author conducted two one-on-one interviews with parents within a year's time. Based on the results of this study, parent interviews and teacher surveys showed some increase in responses within one year based on the school's effort to improve school practices regarding parental involvement. The author suggested that the results from the data is useful in helping the school improve their practices and help parents become involved in their child's education. To improve barriers to parental involvement, Hornby and Lafaele (2011) recommended schools needed to create a welcoming environment and demonstrate their concerns about the importance of parental involvement.

Cultural Barriers. Cultural barriers can become an obstacle for families of diverse backgrounds, traditions, values, race, or ethnicities. Parents tend to shy away from building partnerships with the school if there are cultural differences (Sohn & Wang, 2006). Some culture groups are less involved in their children's education for various reasons. Many minority families are not actively involved because they have a lack of knowledge and understanding about school functions and routines (Turney &

Kao, 2009). In using the results from the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study-Kindergarten Cohort, Turney and Kao (2009) explored differences in barriers to parental involvement of American and immigrant parents. They found that after becoming accustomed to American culture, immigrant parents were not likely to be involved in their child's school. When these parents do not participate, they more than likely follow their personal culture and traditions, which may include less involvement in the school and active involvement at home (Gonzalez, Borders, Hines, Villalba, & Henderson, 2013). For example, some Hispanic and Latino parents have difficulty being involved due to barriers such as, but not limited to, their inability to understand school expectations, communication barriers (Adamski, Fraser, & Peiro, 2013), job schedules, transportation, and the educational system (Ceballo, Maurizi, Suarez, & Aretakis, 2014).

Howard and Reynolds (2008) conducted a qualitative study to investigate the relationship between parental involvement of African-Americans in middle-class schools and race. The purpose of this study was to examine African American parents' views on parental involvement and whether different types of involvement influence academic achievement. This study was conducted using individual interviews and focus groups with African American parents, whose children attended a suburban school. The researchers found that many middle-class parents were not involved because they believed that the schools their children attended do not require their involvement. Some African American parents are not involved in their children's education, specifically in urban schools, which has contributed to low student academic achievement (Grace & Mason, 2008). Abdul-Adil and Farmer (2006) conducted a study to identify strategies to

help engage inner-city African-Americans in parental involvement. The results suggested that the strategies needed to engage inner-city African Americans in parental involvement are community programs, outreach, and empowerment (Abdul-Adil & Farmer, 2006).

Despite these barriers to minority families, Ceballo, et al. (2014) found that when minority families were involved in their child's education, they participated in both home and school activities. They concluded that the parents' involvement had a positive association with student academic outcomes (Ceballo et al., 2014). In a study on parental involvement policies and practices in multi-ethnic schools, Denessen et al. (2007) identified communication and culture differences as two barriers to getting parents involved in schools and that these barriers will create challenges for schools' parental involvement practices. Denessen et al. (2007) explored the current parental involvement in four elementary schools. They conducted interviews with school principals on their schools' parental involvement and interactions with diverse parents. The school principals acknowledged some challenges in getting parents of diverse ethnicities involved in their schools. The researchers found that ethnically diverse parents are not involved because of language and cultural barriers.

Furthermore, Rath et al. (2008) investigated factors connected to parental academic monitoring among underprivileged African American young adolescents. Academic monitoring includes parents being aware of their child's academic and behavior progress (Rath et al., 2008). They identified those young adolescents' friends' behavior, preferred social behavior of those around them, and their parents' knowledge and engagement in their academics were related to their academic achievement in school.

But, they concluded that there is not a clear understanding about the factors that are connected to parental academic monitoring and the young adolescents' risk for a lack of parental involvement and student achievement.

Besides the barriers to minority parents, Vera et al. (2012) found that minority parents were most commonly involved in home-based activities like monitoring their children's homework and asking questions about their child's typical school day. But, they found that these parents were not utilizing available community resources that may assist them in school-based involvement (Vera et al., 2012). Parents who assist their children at home, work directly with the school, and have fewer obstacles to parental involvement; their children tend to have positive relationships with their teachers and peers (McWayne, Hampton, Fantuzzo, Cohen, & Sekino, 2004). Therefore, if these barriers are not addressed by schools properly, individuals will resort to blaming and disengagement will increase (Muscott, Szczesuil, Berk, Staub, Hoover, & Perry-Chisholm, 2008). These barriers serve as limitations in how members of minority groups become participants in their child's education. To become active participants in school activities, parents must have an open schedule that will allow them to participate in these activities (Mncube, 2010). Parents should be readily available and open to parental involvement opportunities that the school provides for them.

Parents of diverse backgrounds, cultures, race and ethnicities experience unique barriers to getting involved in schools. This review has identified that school leaders and teachers need to develop a greater sensitivity to diverse populations and to provide more outreach to draw these parents in as partners. Parents may experience barriers to

becoming involved in the home and school. Some barriers that may deter parents from being involved are job schedules, communication barriers, and unfamiliarity with the education system. Although parents may experience these barriers to participating in their child's education, they must understand the importance of their involvement in the home and school. Parental involvement in the home and school plays a significant role in student academic success and can form positive relationships between the home and school. Therefore, schools must find ways to engage parents to participate in their child's education.

Economic Barriers. Socioeconomic status may influence student academic outcomes. Researchers indicated that students of high socioeconomic status have more parental support than students of low socioeconomic status (Trask-Tate & Cunningham, 2010). As it relates to parental involvement, parents of low socioeconomic status are less involved than parents of high socioeconomic status due to their limited resources (Young et. al, 2013). Reece, Straudt, and Ogle (2013) conducted a study with low-income parents living in urban communities, who face barriers to being involved in their children's schools. To help increase their involvement in their child's school, Reece et al. (2013) described a Neighboring Project that provided parents with resources to build their knowledge, skills, and confidence. These researchers found that the Neighboring Project led to an increase in parental involvement in the neighborhood and school. Although this project had a positive impact on parents, the researchers recommended for future practice that an outreach program be implemented to help parents continue to increase their skills, knowledge, and confidence. In a study on determining parent involvement in the home

and school among African Americans, Hayes (2011) investigated several African American parents in urban areas from either a low or high socioeconomic status. The purpose of the study was to identify what urban African American parents perceived as their level of parental involvement and to identify their personal contexts, such as socioeconomic status, parent education, employment, and educational aspirations. The author's findings showed that these personal parental contexts did not play a role in the parents' levels of involvement in the home or school. Driessen, Smit, and Slegers (2005) suggested there may be a need to strengthen the relationships between parents and schools to improve parent engagement among less privileged groups such as ethnic minorities and low socioeconomic individuals (Driessen et al.,2005).

In conclusion, parental involvement is essential to student learning and success. But, there are barriers that hinder parents from being active participants in their child's education. Many minority groups experience culture and socioeconomic barriers that deter them from participating their child's education. Some barriers include but are not limited to work schedule, communication barriers, lack of resources, and absence of knowledge and understanding about school policies and procedures. These barriers can limit parents from helping their children becoming successful in school. Therefore, school can possibly create a welcoming environment; express the importance of parental involvement, and find ways to help parents overcome some of these barriers.

Benefits to Parental Involvement

Since parental involvement is helpful in influencing academic success, it also provides many benefits to parents, school, and students in their education. Parental

involvement has been associated with benefits such increased academic and behavioral performance (Richardson, 2009), improved promotion rates (Grace & Mason, 2008), and greater daily attendance (Landmark et al., 2007). Semke and Sheridan (2012) conducted a study of journal articles ranging from 1995 to 2010. These are articles focused on family-school partnerships and parental involvement in rural settings. The articles were coded to identify information specific to rural areas. In a study of family-school connections, Semke and Sheridan (2012) emphasized the significance of parental participation and cooperation and its benefits to student academic outcomes. To achieve these results, Semke and Sheridan (2012) indicated that schools and parents could work both separately and together to support student learning. When parents are involved in their child's school, it shows that the parents care and it helps the child to feel confident about school (Machen et al., 2005). Parental involvement can possibly influence emotional and educational involvement at home and school as it relates to a child's social competence.

If children see that their parents are interested in their education, they are more willing to achieve and do well in school (Sehee, Sung-Kyung, Sukkyung, & Chih-Chun, 2010). In addition, parents and schools can create strong partnerships that helps students to be successful in school, lowers dropout rates, engages students in community activities (Lechtenberger & Mullins, 2004), and support all aspects of student achievement in school (Larocque et al., 2011). Lechtenberger and Mullins (2004) published an article that provided strategies educators, such as allowing families to participate in decision-making, providing school programs for parents, and parent-teacher partnerships to discuss and plan student academic goals. Larocque et al. (2011) conducted a quantitative

study that discussed the missing link in school achievement. The missing link was identified as parental involvement. The purpose of this study was to explore the issues associated with parental involvement within schools. This study described things that schools can do to increase parental involvement. Through other studies, the authors found that there is a correlation between increased parental involvement and student achievement. The authors looked at changing demographics, family involvement, what schools need to know, and what schools can do. They identified how parental involvement plays a part in these aspects. They found that the participation and support of parents in education of children is essential to student achievement and success in school. Partnerships involve parents, schools, and community members working together to ensure student success (Epstein, 2001). When parents and schools work together, not only does it help students succeed in school, but it helps them throughout life (Anfara & Mertens, 2008).

This literature review presents how research studies have demonstrated that parental involvement is beneficial to student learning and academic achievement. Parental involvement can lead to both academic and emotional benefits for a child's learning and development. The benefits of parental involvement are associated with but not limited to higher test scores, better attendance, and positive behaviors and attitudes. The benefits are reliant on parents and schools working together to support children learning. When partnerships are developed between schools and parents, the probability of children's learning increases (Lechtenberger & Mullins, 2004).

Implications

Parents need opportunities to become active participants in their children's school and schools should provide ways for parents to become involved in school-related activities (Sad, 2012). By using the anticipated findings of the data collection and analysis, several potential projects may be created for this proposed study. By using the anticipated findings of the data collection and analysis, several potential projects may be created for this proposed study. With a focus on the perceptions of primary teachers about parental involvement in school activities, one possible project may be to create a parent workshop to engage parents and provide ways in which they can play an important role in their child's education. Another potential project may be to develop a handbook for teachers to help them find ways to invite and encourage parents to become active participants in their child's education. These projects may possibly inform the local school in this study of ways it can possibly engage parents to participate in school-related activities.

Summary

Parental involvement plays an important role in a child's learning and emotional development. With the role that parental involvement plays in a child's life, it is imperative for parents to become involved in their child's education. Parental involvement can take on two distinct categories: home-based involvement and school-based involvement. Parents can become involved in their child's education in many ways. Parental involvement takes on many forms such as but not limited to attending parent-

teacher conferences, reading to a child, helping with homework, attending Parent-Teacher Association meetings, and volunteering in the school.

In Section 1, the local district problem was identified as a lack of parent presence and participation in an urban elementary school in western Tennessee. The purpose of this project study was to investigate parents' participation in school activities, the current level of parental involvement, and teachers' perceptions related to ways in which this school staff can engage parents more effectively in participating in school-related activities. The literature review provided a conceptual framework for the study and research studies that inform the problem and the research questions. The significance and rationale of the problem were discussed; this helped to explain why the problem needs to be studied and how it might be useful to the current issues of parental involvement. The research questions that will guide this study focus on primary teacher perceptions of how parents engage with schools and possible strategies that can effectively engage parents in participating in school activities. The key terms for the proposed study are defined and cited. Section 1 concluded with implications for possible projects. Section 2 will describe the research design and approach, data collection, and data analysis. The project that addresses the problem in Section 1 will be discussed in Section 3. Section 4 will address the researcher's reflections and conclusions of the study.

Section 2: The Methodology

Introduction

To explore primary grade teachers' perceptions of parental involvement in school activities, I conducted a qualitative study using a qualitative case study method. Once a clear problem is identified and supported through evidence, a qualitative researcher should proceed with a five-step process (Creswell, 2012). This process includes the following steps: (a) identifying the study participants, research sites and sampling technique that best fits the study; (b) gaining access to participants by obtaining permission; (c) determining what types of data are needed to answer the research questions; (d) designing instruments or protocols to collect and record data findings; and (e) identifying ethical issues that may arise during data collection (Creswell, 2012).

Case studies are characterized by the specific boundaries that are established. Creswell (2012) defined a case study as an in-depth investigation of a bounded system (p. 465). When a case is bounded, the case is sorted in terms of time, place, or some physical boundaries associated with the research (Creswell, 2012). Similarly, Merriam (2009) defined a case study as an in-depth statement and break down of information within a case. A case study was also defined as "an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon in depth and within its real-life context" (Yin, 2008, p. 18). My study was bounded by the perimeter of primary grades in a local school. A case study focuses on individuals or small group and records their experiences in a specific setting (Locido, Spaulding, & Voegtler 2010). I investigated parents' participation in school activities, the current level of parental involvement, and teachers' perceptions related to

ways in which this school staff can engage parents more effectively in participating in school-related activities.

A case study method was most appropriate because I addressed primary grade teachers' experiences and perceptions regarding parental involvement in an urban setting. A case study allowed me to investigate primary grade teachers' perceptions of the current level of parental involvement. The goal was to generate in-depth data necessary to discern ways in which this school can engage parents more effectively in participating in school-related activities.

I did not choose ethnography because it is a research method in which the researcher conducts an in-depth study on a cultural group during a prolonged period (Creswell, 2003, p.14). In addition, ethnography did not suit the participants or purpose for this study because I investigated the perceptions of primary teachers regarding parental involvement in school activities in an urban school not using a specific cultural group. Grounded theory is a method used to develop a general theory through data collection, which is grounded in participants' views, and it did not suit my study because my purpose was to gather information and gain insights through primary teachers' perceptions and experiences with parental involvement in the school. Phenomenology is a method used to identify the essence of human experience (Creswell, 2003, p. 15) to describe the shared experiences of the participants as they report them within a phenomenon. I did not choose phenomenology because it would have shifted my focus away from teacher perceptions of parental involvement, parent engagement ideas, and my interpretation of them. I did not choose narrative research as the research method because

narrative research is a form of inquiry used by the qualitative researchers to capture the lived experiences of individuals and ask them “to provide stories about their lives” (Creswell, 2003, p.15). This is not an essential option because I did not ask primary teachers to provide the stories of their life experiences with parental involvement. Rather, I captured different perspectives of primary teachers about current parental involvement and ways schools can engage parents in the school.

Participants

Population and Sampling

The sample for this study was drawn from an urban, western Tennessee public school. The school district in which this school is located is a large school district with 111,000 students and more than 200 schools (NCES, 2013). The NCES estimated that the district employs 12,300 teachers, with 4,650 teachers working at the elementary school level. The local school for this study serves students who live in neighboring areas around the school. The local student body consists of approximately 450 students in grades pre-kindergarten through fifth grade (NCES, 2013). There are 23 teachers in the local school. The potential participants were selected from the primary grade teachers K-2 at this local school. This school consisted of seven primary grade teachers, two kindergarten teachers, three-first grade teachers, and two-second grade teachers. The sampling technique that was used in this case study is convenience sampling.

Convenience sampling involves the selection of participants from one organization or from those who are available (Locido et al., 2010). This technique was chosen because I was attempting to localize the problem statement and to develop the subsequent project

within one school setting. The convenience sampling of volunteer primary teachers at the local school were identified as the participants in this study (Lodico et al., 2010).

Criteria for Selection of Participants

Participants were selected based on voluntary consent, being a member of the K-2 staff, and their experience in the local school. Since all primary teachers have prior experience working at the local site, I asked all primary teachers to participate in this study. As participants, the primary teachers played an active role in providing knowledge about parental involvement in primary grades.

Access to participants. Prior to data collection, I applied for research approval to conduct research in the school district by sending a copy of my proposed study for review to the school principal and local school district for approval. My next step I applied and obtained approval from the Walden IRB (Walden IRB# 12-10-15-0359128). I applied for research approval to conduct research in the school district by sending a copy of my proposed study for review to the school principal and local school district for approval. Once I was granted access to the participants, I invited potential participants to consider volunteering for my proposed study by sending an invitation letter (Appendix B), along with a copy of the informed consent agreement (Appendix C). This invitation letter detailed the information about the purpose of my study, the procedures, and the benefits and risks, if any, associated with the study. The potential participants were provided with the precise requirements of the participant's role, including the expectations for commitment of time and effort. If the potential participants were interested in

participating in the study, I asked them to send me an email using their personal email account. My email address was included in the invitation letter.

Researcher-participant relationship. I gained a researcher-participant working relationship through the measures of informed consent, confidentiality, and protection from harm. I further urged primary teachers to participate in this study by encouraging them to contact me with any questions so that I can discuss my role in the research, reassure them of confidentiality and high light the benefits of participating in this study. Each participant had a vested interest in parent participation and was willing to share information about perceptions and experiences working with parents.

Protection of participants. After the participants responded to the invitation letter, I obtained their consent to participate in this study by distributing an informed consent form to each participant. Creswell (2012) explained that an informed consent form provides participants with an opportunity to gain information about the study before they participate, understand their participant rights, and agree to be involved in the study. I ensured confidentiality of all participants by explaining to them that their identities will not be disclosed. If I referred to a person or the local school in this study, I used pseudonyms to hide their identities. Also, I explained to them that all data collected was confidential and maintained on a password protected computer, backed up on a portable flash drive, and placed in a locked cabinet at my home for 5 years. I informed participants that they may withdraw at any time and their participation is voluntary.

Data Collection

Introduction

Case studies necessitate gathering detailed information using “a variety of data collection procedures” including interviews, observations, and documents (Creswell, 2009, p.13). In this case study, I systematically examined the data collection methods. The data collection methods were significant in investigating primary teachers’ perceptions. The purpose of this case study was to investigate parents’ participation in school activities, the current level of parental involvement, and teachers’ perceptions related to ways to engage parents more effectively in participating in school-related activities. Primary teachers’ perceptions are significant because their perceptions may contribute to finding ways to engage parents more effectively in participating in school-

Table 2

Data Collection Schedule

Month/Week/Day	Participants	Location
Month 1, Week 1, Day 1	Interview 2 teachers	Secure room (TBA)
Month 1, Week 1, Day 2	Interview 1 teacher	Secure room (TBA)
Month 1, Week 1, Day 3	Interview 1 teacher	Secure room (TBA)
Month 1, Week 1, Day 4	Interview 1 teacher	Secure room (TBA)
Month 1, Week 1, Day 5	Collect/review reflection journals and logs	NA
Month 1, Week 2, Day 1	Interview 1 teacher	Secure room (TBA)
Month 1, Week 2, Day 2	Interview 1 teacher	Secure room (TBA)
Month 1, Week 2, Day 5	Make-up day for missed interviews Collect/review reflection journals and logs	Secure room (TBA)
Month 1, Week 3, Day 5	Collect/review reflection journals and logs	NA
Month 1, Week 4, Day 5	Collect/review reflection journals and logs	NA

related activities. The data for this study consisted of 7 semi-structured one-on-one interviews, 7 reflective journals, and parent contact logs.

Interviews

In most qualitative research studies, interviews are used as the primary data collection instrument (Lodico et al., 2010). Interviews are purposeful conversations that take place between two or more people to get information about a specific topic (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). According to Hatch (2002), unlike quantitative interviews, most qualitative interviews are conducted, usually with open-ended questions, that are focused on certain topics or guided by specific questions. In this study, one-on-one interviews were used to gain insights about primary teachers' perceptions of parental involvement in school activities. The one-on-one interviews consisted of open-ended questions and probes that I created for this study (Appendix D). Specifically, the open-ended questions consisted of questions pertaining to parent participation in primary grades and possible connections between parental involvement and students' attitudes, behaviors, and academic performance. Probes were used to gain more information and to seek clarity in the answers provided by the participants. Interviewers use probes to ask for clarification or for examples using responses made by the participants (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007).

The schedule in Table 2 was followed to conduct the one-on-one interviews with the study participants. The interviews took place during non-instructional times such as before and after school and lunch and conducted in a secured room, which was provided by the school and approved for exclusive use. The interviews lasted approximately 30-60 minutes depending on the open-ended questions and probes used during the study. The

one-on-one interviews were audio taped and transcribed verbatim on my computer; I also took notes for clarifications and impressions. The written notes and the transcripts were integrated to ensure that I captured the full responses of the participants. After transcription, I used member checking to validate the study participants' interview responses and provided all participants in this study with a copy of their responses (Creswell, 2007). I provided the participants with an opportunity to review my final findings, to discuss those findings with me, and to validate their transcribed interview (Creswell, 2007).

Parent Contact Logs

Archival documents are forms of qualitative data collection (Bowen, 2009; Merriam, 2009). These documents can be used to provide information and insights into historical documents or a situation that exists (Bowen, 2009). Archival documents can be in forms of public records, agendas, manuals, and personal writings (Lodico et al., 2010). For the purposes of this study, archival data was used to examine participants' purposes for contacting parents. Archival data in the form of parent contact logs were used to gather information about parental involvement in the school (Appendix E). Specifically, the parent contact logs were records of parent contact that are maintained by each teacher; these provided information about parent and school engagement. The logs identified information such as reasons why parents are being contacted, why parents are coming into the school, how long they stay at the school, and resolutions to issues rose during parent contacts. Each study participant was asked to provide a copy of his or her parent contact log. Teachers were asked to remove parent names, student names, and

telephone numbers before submitting the log (Appendix E). Each participant's parent contact log was collected at the end of each week for four consecutive weeks (see Table 2 on p. 51). The parent contact logs provided data on the type and frequency of parent involvement in the school.

Reflective Journals

Reflective journals give individuals an opportunity to express their thoughts, perspectives, or opinions (Ortlipp, 2008). In qualitative research, reflective journals can be organized by giving the participants questions to answer or allowing participants to write what they would like (Lodico et al., 2010). Reflective journals can actively engage and capture significant insights from participants that may be difficult to capture in other ways (Phelps, 2005). Reflective journals were maintained by the participants to record answers to a specific set of questions, which I created (Appendix F). The questions addressed primary teachers' ideas and thoughts about parental involvement, and their experiences with parental involvement. I supplied each participant with a journal notebook. Participants were notified to maintain the confidentiality of parents and students by removing names and identifying information from their journal entries. Each week, the participants wrote an entry to address the questions given to them for each specific week. The journals were retrieved and reviewed each week (see Table 2 on p. 51). For example, the journals were retrieved from the participants on Friday and returned to them on Monday to complete the week's entries. I kept my own reflective journal to reflect on what I reviewed from the participants' responses each week. In

qualitative research, researchers can keep a reflective journal to examine participants' personal perceptions and experiences (Ortlipp, 2008).

After four weeks of journaling, the reflective journals were retrieved, analyzed, and used to find themes and patterns in teachers' responses to the reflective journal questions. The journals served as a reflective tool for the participants to use to answer a specific set of questions. I answered the following research questions using the reflective journals:

RQ1: What are the perceptions of primary grade teachers regarding parental involvement in this local school?

RQ2: In what ways do primary teachers perceive that parental involvement or lack of parental involvement influence students' attitudes, behaviors, and academic performance in this local school?

RQ3: In what ways can schools effectively engage parents of primary grade children to become involved in this local school? By gathering data using this format, I collected essential information, which was used to cross verify the themes and findings through triangulation with the data from other sources.

Role of the Researcher

I am certified in the state of Tennessee as an elementary general education teacher for grades K-6 and I have taught first grade for four years. Currently, I am employed as a kindergarten teacher at the local school. I have regular professional interactions with all the participants, but I only work closely with kindergarten teachers, and I do not supervise or hold a position of power over any of the potential participants. I plan

lessons, attend Professional Learning Community (PLC) meetings, and work collaboratively with the kindergarten teachers. I gained some knowledge of parental involvement through parent-teacher conferences, the school's parent-teacher organization (PTO), and academic-based activities such as Reading Night, Math Night, and Write Night. To provide maximum protections to the study participants, I opened my research study to all K-2 teachers. To avoid coercion, the participants volunteered to participate and were not influenced to participate in this research study. All participants were asked to sign an informed consent and I separated my relationship as researcher and teacher and maintained a neutral position to my study topic, so I would not influence any of the participants. All personal biases were removed to avoid reflecting my viewpoints about the research topic. All potential risks were established and minimized by protecting the participants' safety and well-being. No information was given that will identify the participants and local setting. All data was kept safe and maintained on a password protected computer, backed up on a flash drive, and placed in a locked cabinet, which I will keep at my home for 5 years from the date of completion. During this study, participants were asked questions, but they had the right to decide if they would like to answer the questions.

Data Analysis Methods

Introduction

A key element in a research study is data analysis (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007; Creswell, 2012; Lodico et al., 2010). Bogdan and Biklen (2007), Creswell (2012), and Lodico et al. (2010) indicated that data analysis is an inductive process that allows

researchers to prepare and organize, breakdown, code, and search for themes and patterns in the data. Using the qualitative data analysis process, researchers can develop a deeper understanding of the data and interpret what the data mean in writing (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007; Lodico et al., 2010). Unlike quantitative data analysis methods, qualitative data analysis is an ongoing process that takes place throughout the study (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007; Creswell, 2012). In addition, researchers can consistently reflect on the data (Creswell, 2012). After reflecting on the data, Creswell (2012) suggested that the researcher could begin data analysis using the coding process, in which information can be organized into categories. The data analysis for this study used a coding process, which categorized data from interviews, parent contact logs, and reflective journals. An inductive approach was used to analyze the data. The inductive approach is an essential component to qualitative data analysis, which allows the researcher to compile rich, descriptive information into categories and themes (Hatch, 2002; Merriam, 2009). Using the inductive approach, the first step was to prepare the data for coding. Then, the data was reviewed using an open coding process. Prior to the coding process, the interview data was transcribed verbatim and typed into a Microsoft Word document on my computer after each interview session. The transcribed data resulted in 50 pages of raw interview data. To ensure accuracy and validity, member checks were employed to give participants an opportunity to review and validate the initial findings.

Coding

Coding is a process used in qualitative data analysis to examine, use labels to categorize, and connect the data (Bowen, 2009; Gläser & Laudel, 2013). An open coding

process was used to analyze the collected data and to “build patterns, categories, and themes from the bottom up, by organizing more abstract units of information” (Creswell, 2009, p. 175). Codes are descriptions used to depict some words or an image (Creswell, 2012).

A five-step process was used to code the data and to identify themes and findings. In step 1, the research purpose and conceptual framework were revisited to help me focus on what I wanted to learn about in this study as I analyzed the data. In step 2, using the transcripts from the parent contact logs, interviews, and journal entries, I read for recurrent themes; then the transcripts were reread to examine the data for possible additional themes. In the next step, to make the open coding process more efficient, copies were made of the interview transcripts, parent contact logs, and journal entries and organized into sections so the information can be physically sorted into piles. In step 4, information from the interviews, parent contact logs, and journal entries were used to separate data into categories and themes based on data similarities. The open coding process was used to help me identify themes and patterns by rereading all transcripts, logs, and journals and highlighting key words/phrases throughout the data. The highlighted words/phrases by identifying them according to the number of times they appeared as it related to the study problem. The words/phases that were identified were the following: (a) academic strategies to use at home, (b) time, (c) parent participation, (d) student attitudes, (e) behaviors, (f) academic performance, (g) invitations, (h) open-door policy, (i) incentives, and (j) homework help.

Accuracy and Credibility

Accuracy and credibility indicate whether the participants' responses match up with what the researcher portrayed while writing up the results (Lodico et al., 2010). To establish accuracy, the participants were asked to review their interview transcripts and the initial findings. These member checks were used to ensure that the researcher's bias or perspectives did not influence the results (Maclean, Meyer, & Estable, 2004). After I completed the five-step process to code the data and to identify themes and findings, the member checking process was employed and triangulation was used to cross verify the three data points. This allowed me to validate my findings. Member checks involved giving the participants a copy of the findings, and giving them an opportunity to analyze the findings and make remarks as needed (Creswell, 2007). The member checking process that was employed provided each participant an opportunity to review their responses and my proposed findings; I then offered each participant an opportunity to discuss those findings with me and validate his or her transcript. By doing this, I ensured that I had accurately captured the intended responses without making or adding any personal assumptions. Triangulation provides for cross verification of data (Lodico et al., 2010). Using the triangulation process, I compared the three data points to determine if the data from the parent contact logs, interviews, and reflective journals were accurate, credible, and consistent. The data were triangulated by comparing themes and patterns found in the data. I looked for similarities and differences in the study participants' responses and how their responses compared in relation to the research questions. Triangulation gave me an opportunity to use multiple data collections to establish and

verify meaning. The research results will be shared in a 1-2-page summary with the participants, principal, and the district superintendent through email.

Table 3

Data Analysis Schedule

Month/Week/Day	Participants	Time/Length
Month 2, Week 1, Day 1	Transcribe 2 teachers' interviews	2-4 hours per participant
Month 2, Week 1, Day 2	Transcribe 1 teacher interview	2-4 hours per participant
Month 2, Week 1, Day 3	Transcribe 1 teacher interview	2-4 hours per participant
Month 2, Week 1, Day 4	Transcribe 1 teacher interview	2-4 hours per participant
Month 2, Week 1, Day 5	Transcribe 1 teacher interview	2-4 hours per participant
Month 2, Week 2, Day 1	Transcribe 1 teacher interview	2-4 hours per participant
Month 2, Week 2, Day 5	Review reflection journals/logs	N/A
Month 2, Week 3, Day 5	Review reflection journals/logs	N/A
Month 2, Week 4, Day 5	Review reflection journals/logs	N/A

Discrepant Cases

According to Patton (2001), discrepant cases involve examining the components of the data that may differ or contradict patterns or themes that emerged from the data analysis. After comparing themes and patterns found in the data, I conducted a discrepant case analysis. To present efficient results, I looked for discrepant cases within my data. Merriam (2009) discussed how a researcher should ensure that all data and emerging findings are saturated, where he or she is not able to find any new information. Merriam (2009) suggested that the researcher should look for alternative statements or perceptions, besides what has already been drawn from the data. To identify discrepant cases, I looked for "alternative explanations or variations in the participants' responses to understand the phenomenon" (Merriam, 2009, p. 219). Morrow (2005) noted that the discrepant case analysis gives the researcher an opportunity to review and categorize data until the data

reflects participants' perspectives. During the analysis, I did not find any discrepant cases associated with the data. If I had any discrepant cases, I would have shared these cases along with the findings drawn from the data.

Evidence of Quality

After I gathered and analyzed the data, I triangulated by collecting data in various methods that can lend credence to one another (Merriam, 2009). Using the triangulation process, I compared the three data points to determine if the themes that emerged were accurate, credible, and consistent. By analyzing the data, I looked for similarities and differences in the study participants' responses and how their responses compared in relation to the research questions.

First, I conducted one-on-one interviews with individual participants through face-to-face interaction. An interview schedule (Table 2) was created to assist me in scheduling seven one-on-one interviews and it gave the participants an opportunity to decide which day and time was convenient for them. I conducted the interviews were after school in a secure room provided by the school. The room was locked and a "do not disturb" sign was placed on the door to ensure privacy and confidentiality of the participants. During the interviews, I used open-ended questions and probes (Appendix D). The probes were used to gain more information and to seek clarity in the answers provided by the participants. The interviews were audio-taped and transcribed verbatim on my computer into a Microsoft Word document; I listened to the recordings, typed participants' responses, and rewound if I needed to recapture any responses. During the one-on-one interviews, written notes were taken for clarifications and impressions. The

written notes and interview transcripts were combined so I can capture the full responses of the participants. This process gave me a chance to listen and type out participants' responses without placing my own perspective in with their responses.

Second, the parent contact logs were created allowing participants to keep a record of parent contact and solutions. Each participant was asked to keep a parent contact log to identify information such as reasons why parents are being contacted, why parents are coming into the school, how long they stay at the school, and resolutions to issues rose during parent contacts. The parent contact logs allowed participants to provide information about parent and school engagement. The participants maintained records of parent contact using the parent contact logs. At the end of the week for 4 consecutive weeks, I collected each participant's parent contact log and returned it to them at the beginning of the following week.

Third, the reflective journals were used to allow participants to respond to weekly questions that addressed their ideas and thoughts about parental involvement, and their experiences with parental involvement. I supplied each participant with a journal notebook. I asked each participant to maintain the confidentiality of parents and students by removing names and identifying information from their journal entries. At the end of each week for 4 consecutive weeks, the reflective journals were collected from the participants and returned to them at the beginning of the next week. Before returning the reflective journals, I read the participants' responses to the question.

An open coding process was used to code the data (Creswell, 2009; Creswell, 2012) and identify themes and findings. The process of member checking and

triangulation were used to validate the findings and cross verify the three data points: one-on-one interviews, parent contact logs, and reflective journals. I used member checking to validate the study participants' interview responses by providing a copy of each transcribed interview to each participant. The participants were asked to read over their responses and given an opportunity to make sure what I recorded reflected their perceptions and experiences as it relates to the research topic. Also, the participants were allowed an opportunity to review the final findings, validate their transcribed interview, and discuss the findings with me.

Findings

The study problem was that teachers were having difficulty engaging parents to actively participate in the school. Based on the data analysis, all participants believed parents should be more engaged with their children through participation in school-related activities and in school-related tasks at home. In addition, all participants believed that parents who engage with the school frequently in contact or activity communicate the importance of education to their children through their actions. Furthermore, all participants agreed that they needed more ideas about effective strategies, which they can implement to positively engage parents in school activities. The participants share common perceptions about parental involvement in their school. They believed that parents should assist their child with academic skills at home, parents' schedules hinder their ability to attend school activities, and parents should attend school activities to let their children know that they are interested and present. In addition, participants perceived that parental involvement or lack of parental involvement influences student

attitudes, behaviors, and academic performance and that students need their parents to motivate and encourage them to do their best in school academically and behaviorally. Finally, participants agreed that school staff could effectively engage parents in school activities through provided opportunities to visit or participate in the school. Also, they agreed parents should be provided with strategies they could use at home to help their children succeed academically.

In this section, I present and discuss the themes and findings that I have derived from the collected data. From the one-on-one interviews, reflective journals, and parent contact logs, the following themes were revealed: parents' involvement in schools, teachers' attempts to engage parents, barriers that prevent parents from school involvement, teachers' challenges with involving parents and successful parent involvement activities. I identify three findings that address the problem statement and the research questions. I explain the findings using examples and comments from the one-on one interviews, reflective journals, and parent content logs. To share the study participants' perceptions, I used pseudonyms to hide their identities and to present the findings that surfaced from the data.

The problem that prompted this study was a lack of parent presence and participation in an urban school district in western Tennessee. The research questions helped guide and frame my analysis as I captured themes and patterns from the perspectives of study participants about the extent and type of school involvement by parents and the ways schools can more effectively engage parents in the school. The research questions for this study are the following:

RQ1: What are the perceptions of primary grade teachers regarding parental involvement in this local school?

RQ2: In what ways do primary teachers perceive that parental involvement or lack of parental involvement influences student attitudes, behaviors, and academic performance in this local school?

RQ3: In what ways do primary teachers think school staff can effectively engage parents of primary grade children to become involved in this local school?

I investigated teachers' perceptions regarding ways in which this school staff can engage parents more effectively in participating in school-related activities by collecting and analyzing data from one-on-one interviews (Appendix D), parent contact logs (Appendix E), and reflective journals (Appendix F). The following findings were revealed through the analysis of all data sources, and each finding aligns with a research question (see Table 4).

Table 4

Comparison of Research Questions, Themes, and Findings

Research questions	Themes	Findings
RQ1: What are the perceptions of primary grade teachers regarding parental involvement in this local school?	<p>Teachers believe parents should assist their child with academic skills at home.</p> <p>Teachers believe parents' schedules hinder their ability to attend school activities.</p> <p>Teachers believe parents should attend school-related activities to let their children know that they are interested and present.</p>	<p>Teachers believe parents should be more engaged with their children through participation in school-related activities and in school-related tasks at home.</p>
RQ2: In what ways do primary teachers perceive that parental involvement or lack of parental involvement influences student attitudes, behaviors, and academic performance in this local school?	<p>Teachers believe that parents' presence in the school activities positively influences student attitudes, behaviors and academic performance because students become motivated to do their best in the classroom.</p> <p>Teachers believe that students need parents to motivate and encourage them to do their best in school academically and behaviorally.</p>	<p>Teachers believe that parents who engage with the school frequently in contact or activity communicate the importance of education to their children through their actions.</p>
RQ3: In what ways do primary teachers think school staff can effectively engage parents of primary grade children to become involved in this local school?	<p>Teachers believe that parents should be provided opportunities to visit or participate in the school when they are available.</p> <p>Teachers need to provide parents with strategies they can use to help their children succeed academically.</p>	<p>Teachers need more ideas about effective strategies which they can implement to positively engage parents in school activities.</p>

Research Question 1: What are the perceptions of primary grade teachers regarding parental involvement in this local school?

The first finding identified that teachers want parents to be more engaged with their children through participation in school-related activities and in school-related tasks at home. The following 3 major themes emerged: (a) teachers believe parents should assist their child with academic skills at home, (b) teachers believe parents' schedules hinder their ability to attend school activities, and (c) teachers believe parents should attend school-related activities to let their children know that they are interested and present. The 3 minor themes were (a) academic strategies to use at home, (b) time, (c) parent participation

Parents assist their child at home. Teachers believe parents should assist their child with academic skills at home. In one-on-one interviews, I asked the participants, "In your opinion, what are some strategies that parents can use to help their child succeed academically?" The participants shared some strategies that parents can use at home to help their child succeed academically. Participant 6 stated, "In my opinion, I think some strategies can be just continuing to help them with their homework or practice with the kids." Participant 3 stated, "I think the most important thing would be just to be involved with what the child is doing on a day to day basis or their weekly skills. One participant gave suggestions on what parents can do to assist their child at home, Participant 5 suggested, "Some strategies that parents can use...one strategy is when the child is at home, the parent can let the child read to them and make sure they know their sight words and spelling words. Another strategy a parent can use is...when a child read a story, let

them act out the story and just keep them involved.” In addition, one participant believed that parents’ assistance is important and that it is needed to show parent support and efforts in assisting their child at home. Participant 1 added, “We ask students to do a lot of work at home. If parents are helping them at home, involving themselves in their work, and showing that they care about their support, it will rub off on the students and the students will care about their homework.” Participant 1 further explained, “If the parents are not around to help them with their homework, then students are not going to care as much. If parents are at home and involved, they are going to drive them to get their homework done and get it right.”

As a reflective journal question, participants were asked, “This week, what are some successes you have had with parental involvement?” One participant discussed how some parents worked with their child at home as a success with parental involvement. Participant 2 responded, “One of the successes I’ve had with parental involvement is that some of my parents worked with their child at home every day including the weekends.” As an example, she replied, “I had one student whose mother searched the Internet and found appropriate level educational games and fun activities.” In her reflective journal, participant 3 gave an example of a personal experience she had with parents assisting their child at home. Participant 3 responded, “One student that I taught 2 years ago is very smart. She read on a grade level above her current grade; this is probably because her mother and grandmother helped and challenged her at home.” Although teachers believed that parents should assist their child with academic skills at home, teachers believed that parents are hindered from attending school activities.

Parents' schedules hinder their ability to attend school activities. Teachers believe parents' schedules, trust in the school, available time to participate, and lack of parenting experience hinder parents' abilities to attend school activities. Participants agreed that there are barriers that hinder parents' ability to attend school activities. Participants agreed that work and time are common barriers that prevent parent participation. Participants believed that parents are prevented from participating in their child's education because they must work and they do not have time to come to the school. During interviews, the words, "work schedule," "jobs," and "different shifts" repeatedly emerged in participant responses as they related to potential barriers of parent participation in school activities. For example, in interviews, the participants were asked, "what do you see as barriers to parental involvement at this school?" Participant 1 identified parents' work schedules. She stated, "A lot of parents work at this school. They have jobs where it is not easy to take time off in the middle of the day." Participant 4 agreed that work is a barrier that hinders parent participation in school activities. She explained that she believed parents' work schedule hinder their participation in the school. However, participant 2 commented that although parents are not able to participate in school activities, responding to written notes is another way to participate in school activities. Participant 4 responded, "But again, they do have the opportunity to respond in writing to the things that I do send home. Participant 3 agreed that parents' work schedule is a barrier, furthermore, parents can choose to participate in school activities. Participant 3 stated, "Well, a lot of parents work different shifts so that probably plays a role in it. I don't see any other barriers other than the parent's choice not

to come.” However, two participants added that trust and the lack of parenting experience prevent parents from participating in school activities. Participant 7 added, “Trust. I see trust as being one of them. Most of the time if I’m making a phone call, I’m calling a parent to let them know of a behavior issue.” She believed that trust is a barrier because a relationship between the teacher and parent should be established to help parents realize that the teacher is concerned about their child.

Participant 2 added, “I think a lot of our barriers are that we have a younger generation, and now they have children trying to raise children.” Participant 2 believed that parents are prevented from participating in their child’s schooling because they are young, inexperienced parents, and as such, they may not place importance on education. Although participants believed that there were barriers to parent participation, participants expressed ways that they and school administrators dealt with these barriers. The participants were asked, “How have school administrators and teachers dealt with some of these barriers?” Participant 5 dealt with barriers by encouraging and motivating her students every day. She explained, “For me, I always try to encourage and motivate the child.” Participant 5 added that the administrators reward the students for good behavior to motivate them. In contrast, participant 6 sends notes or meets with the parent when the parent is visible. Participant 6 responded, “If I can’t get in touch with parents, I send notes home. I try to speak with parents in person when they pick up their child from school.” One participant shared that the administrator changed the time that school events are offered to parents. Participant 6 explained, “One thing our principal has tried is offering school events at an earlier time when parents pick their child up from school.”

Then she explained that the purpose of this change is to allow parents to attend events at the time and not have to come back up to the school later in the evening. Despite the barriers that prevent parents from participating, school administrators and teachers try to find ways in which they can deal with these barriers.

Parent attendance at school-related activities. Teachers believe parents should attend school-related activities to let their children know that they are interested and present. Participants shared their responses on the importance of parent participation. In a one-on-one interview, participant 5 added that, “Some parents are very positive and you can tell in their children. They come to school and they are motivated; they do their work and have good attitudes and make good grades. So, you get good participation from that group of parents that show that they are motivated and involved in their child’s education.” She believed that if parents are involved in their child’s education, it will show in the child’s work habits, attitudes, and academics. One participant believed that not only is it important for parents to be present in school-related activities, but children want to see their parents present in the school. In her reflective journal, participant 3 stated, “I think most children want their parents to be involved. I think they are proud for their parent to come and be seen.” Furthermore, participant 4 stressed that students will see the importance of an education if parents are involved in their schooling. Participant 1 said, “The best way for students to see that education is a priority is for parents to be involved in their school life.” Then, she added, “It definitely will be nice to see parents in and out of the building throughout the day.” Participant 6 agreed that parents should be involved in their child’s education. Similarly, participant 6 believed that students will

believe in the importance of an education if their parents are involved in their schooling. But, participant 6 added that students will not have behavior issues either. Participant 2 stated, "If parents are involved in students' school work and the students view education as a priority (because their parents did) they will not act up in school. Parental involvement from an early age will positively affect the student." However, participant 2 added that the most effective time for parent presence is after school. She stated, "I think after school is effective since that's when I see some of my students' parents." Whereas, despite the issue with the lack of parent presence in the school, there are some events in which parents do participate. The participant was asked, "As a teacher, what do you think are some strengths of parental involvement in your local school?" Participant 4 responded, "Plays and sports and any activity in which their child is a participant." Then, she further explained, "Parents come to the school when their child is participating in something. If it is an extracurricular activity or if it is something that their child is doing on stage, the parents are all here." The participants made it clear that parental involvement is an issue in their school; regardless, teachers are dedicated to continuing to reach out to parents and to encourage parents to be involved in their children's learning.

Research Question 2: In what ways do primary teachers perceive that parental involvement or lack of parental involvement influences student attitudes, behaviors and academic performance in this local school?

The second finding identified that teachers believed that parents who engage with the school frequently in contact or activity, communicate the importance of education to their children through their actions. The following 2 major themes emerged: teachers

believe that parents' presence in the school activities positively influences student attitudes, behaviors, and academic performance because students become motivated to do their best in the classroom and teachers believe that students need parents to motivate and encourage them to do their best in school academically and behaviorally. The minor themes were (a) student attitudes, (b) behaviors, and (c) academic performance.

Parents' presence in the school is a positive influence. Participants believed that parents' presence in the school activities positively influence students in the classroom. In their reflective journals, teachers affirmed that students respond positively to their parents' presence in the school. They stated that students do well in the classroom academically and behaviorally when their parents are present in school activities. The parents' presence affects the child directly, as participants noted when the parent is involved: students become motivated to do their best in the classroom, Participant 7 explained, "Parental involvement is key to the academic and social success of any child. Parental involvement affects the child's academics and behavior because early parental/child interactions set parameters of what is appropriate and not appropriate in given settings and among different peer groups." In the parent contact logs, the participants were asked to record reasons why parents are being contacted, why parents are coming into the school, how long they stay at the school, and resolutions to any issues that arose during parent contacts. Each participant shared one common resolution to areas of concern, which was that parents agreed to talk with their children about the concern that was raised. Participant 6 gave an example of a student's improved academic achievement and behavior. Participant 6 explained, "RB is having behavior issues at

school and home. I have even had reports that the behavior is worse at home.

Conversations with mom, grandmother, aunt, and uncle are always positive. RB brings homework in. Parents check with me when RB says he does not have any homework. RB was on a Kindergarten grade level when he walked into my classroom. He is now starting to learn his primer and 1st grade sight word list. RB is improving both behaviorally and academically.”

In one of the reflective journal entries, participants were asked, this week, what are some successes you have had with parental involvement? Give an example.

Participant 5 replied, “This week, I have had to call a parent over a behavior concern with their child. This student had a bad attitude towards me, disruptive, and rude. After I tried to redirect her behavior, I called her mom from the school. Her mom was very responsive and came up to the school. She talked to her daughter about her behavior and asked her to apologize to me and her classmates. Then, I talked to her mom outside the classroom for a few minutes.” To resolve negative behaviors, Participant 3 noted that she sends a conduct sheet home for parents to review their child’s daily conduct in the classroom. She stated, “I use a daily conduct sheet to keep parents informed on behavior. I ask parents to initial the grade daily.” However, Participant 2 added, “When parents are involved, their child may be better behaved.” On the other hand, she explained that she has seen students who parents are involved, but the students misbehave in school. Participant 2 responded, “I have seen students who parents do care, are involved, and come to school and they still misbehave.” Participants agreed that not only does parents’

presence positively influence most students, but the students also need their parents to motivate and encourage them.

Students need parents to motivate and encourage them. Participants believe that students need parents' support to help them to be academically and behaviorally successful in school. In an interview, Participant 2 gave an example of how parents can support their children in school. Participant 2 stated, "Just today, I had a very involved grandmother come to school to give a small treat to her granddaughter in my class to praise her on receiving high marks on her report card. That was a good way to show her granddaughter that she cares and that good grade are important." In her reflective journal, participant 3 expressed that students will want to do well in school if they saw their parents present in the school. She gave an example of how a child may think aloud if his or her parent was involved. Participant 3 verbalized the child's inner speech, "I think if my mom is involved, I will try harder to do well. I will want her to be pleased with what I do at school."

One participant stressed that students' attitudes will match their parents' attitudes about their education. Participant 1 stated, "Parents that spend more time either at school, discussing school or helping students with their school work, have a positive impact on the students. The student will care more about academics if they are brought up in an environment that values education." However, one participant noted parental involvement is not enough; the parents must have a positive mindset to assist their children academically and behaviorally. Participant 4 explained in her reflective journal, "I am realizing it is more than just involvement, they have to actually have the correct

mindset to assist their children to obtain success.” To help parents gain the correct mindset, participants use strategies such as inviting parents in the school, praise, notes sent home, and positive phone calls. To positively influence parents, Participant 1. uses various opportunities such as invitations, praise, and notes sent home to involve parents. Participant 1 explained, “This week happens to be when our school passed out report cards. I always think this is a good time to further engage with parents. This is a good opportunity for me, as a teacher, to request more parental involvement either with homework at home or request that parents come into the school. Comments on their report card range from telling parents to keep up the good work at home to requesting that they help with homework or read to their child at night.” To positively influence parents, Participant 5 makes positive phone calls to parents. She stated, “I have had more successes with positive phone calls home than negative ones. I try to make positive phone calls home because it produces more positive than negative results, usually more of an improvement than a conquest.”

Research Question 3: In what ways do primary teachers think school staff can effectively engage parents of primary grade children to become involved in this local school?

The third finding identified that teachers need more ideas about effective strategies, which they can implement to positively engage parents in school activities. The following 2 major themes emerged: teachers believe that parents should be provided opportunities to visit or participate in the school when they are available and teachers need to provide parents with strategies they can use to help their children succeed

academically. The minor themes were invitations, open-door policy, incentives, and homework help.

Parent opportunities to visit or participate in the school. Participants believe that parents should be provided opportunities to visit or participate in the school when they are available. Teachers make efforts to engage parents in school activities through opportunities such as phone calls home, invitations, and open-door policy. In their reflective journal entries, the participants were asked, “How can you engage parents to participate in your classroom?” All participants stated that they engage parents in school activities through phone calls home. All participants use parent contact logs to record the student’s name, parent’s name, phone number, topic (s) of discussion, and solution. In the parent contact logs, the topic (s) of discussions included classroom behavior and academic progress. The solutions were discussions with parents and classroom visits from parents. The participants believed that phone calls to parents provide an opportunity for them to address behavior issues, to make requests for parental involvement, and to invite parents to the school. One participant stated that, “This is a good opportunity for me, as a teacher, to request more parental involvement either with homework or to request that parents come to the school.”

Another opportunity that teachers use to try to engage parents is through invitations. Participant 4 stated, “And of course for my behavior issues, I am constantly inviting those parents to the school for child correction with behavior.” However, participant 7 believed that inviting parents to come to a meeting will engage them in participating in school-related events. Participant 7 stated, “I believe one of the strategies

I would take advantage of if I could, would be to meet with parents from time to time on scheduled basis. I would like to be able to open my classroom and say that I'll be here from 8:30-4:30, you're welcome to come in and find out ways you can help reinforce classroom learning with your child at home." She went on to explain how she would like to assist parents in participating in school-related activities. Participant 7 stated, "I would love to have my classroom open, maybe once a month, to say 'Come in and get whatever you need to support your child's learning. Here are the spelling words. Here are the vocabulary words.' I would just have it all laid out for them." Not only do teachers use phone calls and invitations as opportunities to engage parents, but they also use an open-door policy as well.

The open-door policy is used to provide parents an opportunity to go into the classroom to observe daily classroom routines and talk with the teacher. The participants discussed efforts to engage parents through an open-door policy. Participant 2 responded, "As a teacher, I can engage my parents in participating in my classroom by first extending my hand with an open-door policy." She added that parents should know the importance of a home-to-school connection by stating, "I will let them know how important a home-to-school connection is for the success of their children." Participant 1 responded, "I invite parents into my classroom to sit with their child as an option to participating in their child education." She added that inviting parents into the classroom gives them an opportunity to know what is taking place in the classroom. However, Participant 5 stated that she asks parents to volunteer in the classroom as an effort to get them to come into the classroom and spend time with their children. Based on the

participants' responses, the open-door policy gives parents an opportunity to connect with both their child and their child's teacher to help with children's success in school.

Strategies for parents to help their children succeed. Teachers need to provide parents with strategies they can use to help their children succeed academically.

Participant 1 made efforts to engage her students' parents in the classroom. Despite her efforts, she did not feel that the strategies she uses are always effective. In her response, she stated, "Some strategies that I believe will be effective in engaging parents to participate in school activities is offering incentives such as providing food and giving extra homework grade will get parents involved and engage them in all activities in the school." In addition to offering incentives, one participant stated that she sends weekly newsletters home as a strategy for parents to help their children at home. Participant 4 stated, "I send a weekly newsletter home with strategies on how parents can assist their child at home." When asked, "What are some specific strategies that you give parents to assist their child at home?" Participant 4 responded, "I let them know that they can ask their child questions about the assignment, model how to perform the given task (s), give their child additional practice, and that the parents should assist but not do their child's work."

However, Participant 2 gave specific hands-on strategies that parents can use at home to promote academic success. In her response, she stated, "For spelling, a parent can get magnetic letters and take their child's words and have them spell their spelling or sight words using the magnetic letters." She added, "In Math, one strategy is for parents to use manipulatives to help their child complete addition and subtraction problems."

Furthermore, one participant believed that parents could help their child academically by being involved daily. Participant 3 explained, “I think that the most important thing would be just to be involved with what the child is doing on a day to day basis to help with their weekly skills.” Then, she gave examples of how parents can be involved to help their child succeed academically. Participant 3 responded, “I would like to see all of my parents sit down and look at the child’s folder that comes home every night.” Another example, she added, “Parents can look at the homework their child has done and give some feedback whether it’s correct or not.” Although teachers have an open-door policy to build a connection between the home and school, based on the participants’ responses, they are seeking ways to assist parents in building this connection to help their children succeed academically.

Discussion of the Findings

In this section, the following three study findings are discussed in connection to the study’s data and current literature: (a) teachers want parents to be more engaged with their children through participation in school-related activities and in school-related tasks at home, (b) teachers believe that parents who engage with the school frequently in contact or activity, communicate the importance of education to their children through their actions, and (c) teachers need more ideas about effective strategies that they can implement to positively engage parents in school activities.

Finding 1. The first finding indicated that teachers want parents to be more engaged with their children through participation in school-related activities and in school-related tasks at home. Parent involvement involves the parents’ relationship with

the school, however parent engagement involves the relationship between the parents and their children's learning needs (Goodall & Montgomery, 2014). Goodall and Montgomery (2014) explained that parent engagement requires parents to be more responsible, meaning that it requires parents' commitment and accountability to their children's learning. In which, parents can become engaged in the school and at home. Gonida and Cortina (2014) discussed the importance of parental involvement in homework and its benefits to children's education. Participants believe that parents should assist their children with academic skills at home. Gonida and Cortina (2014) explained that involvement at home leads to academic success. Home-based involvement is necessary to increase positive learning outcomes and academic achievement (Gonida & Cortina, 2014). However, parent engagement in the school and at home not only produces better learning outcomes and increase academic achievement, but it promotes cooperative relationships between the home and school (Okeke, 2014). Despite the current level of parental involvement in the school and its effects on the student, the participants want parents to be involved in their children's learning because of the role that they perceive parental involvement plays in a child's success in school. The participants shared reasons why they wanted parents to participate such as assisting children at home with academic skills being taught in the classroom and to attend school-related activities. When parents do not participate in school-related activities and tasks at home, the participants continue to make efforts to frequently engage parents by communicating the importance of education.

Finding 2. The second finding identified that teachers believe that parents who engage frequently with the school in contact or activity, communicate the importance of education to their children through their actions. Parental involvement in education plays a vital role in children's social skills and academic achievement (Qilong, 2015). One form of parental involvement is parent engagement in their children's education. Parent engagement plays a vital role in children's social skills and learning outcomes. Goodall and Montgomery (2014) indicated that an important link to parents helping their children in school is parent engagement. They discussed student outcomes when their parents are involved in their education. Parent engagement in children's education, participants stated, can build confidence and increase motivation in children's learning in school as found by Goodall and Montgomery (2014). When students are motivated, they value their learning and they have positive conduct in school (Lowe & Dotterer, 2013). The themes that emerged from finding two were: (1) teachers believe that parents' presence in the school activities positively influences student attitudes, behaviors, and academic performance because students become motivated to do their best in the classroom and (2) teachers believe that students need parents to motivate and encourage them to do their best in school academically. Similarly, Lowe and Dotterer identified that students need their parents to be involved to keep them motivated because it helps them to exhibit positive behaviors and do their best in school academically.

Finding 3. The third finding identified that participants reported teachers need more ideas about effective strategies that they can implement to positively engage parents in school activities. To help teachers in engaging parents in school activities, researchers

have found that relationships must be established between parents and teachers to help parents become involved (Berthelsen & Walker, 2008). Berthelsen and Walker (2008) indicated that building relationships with parents can require time, but it is needed to help children become successful. However, Berthelsen and Walker explained that to build an effective collaboration with parents, teachers should build a rapport with parents, implement a system of communication, and provide additional opportunities where parents can be involved. Risko and Walker-Dalhouse (2009) shared some effective strategies that can help teachers engage parents in school-related activities. To contribute to building relationships with parents, teachers must exemplify friendliness, allow parents to ask questions and share concerns, attend community events, and assist parents with home activities that they can use at home with their child. Schools must provide opportunities for parents to be involved as well as develop strategies to bring parents into the school. To bring parents into the school, some researchers believe that schools must provide opportunities and ways parents can become involved in the school (Rodriguez, Blatz, & Elbaum, 2014; Smith, Wohlstetter, Kuzin, & Pedro, 2011). Rodriguez et al. (2014) discussed ways in which schools can try to establish and maintain parent involvement and parents' involvement with their child at school. They explained some strategies that schools can use to bring parents into the school such as to contact and invite parents into the school and seek parents' input concerning their child's learning. Other researchers explained other strategies that can be used to bring parents into the school (Smith et al., 2011). Smith et al. (2011) examined the benefits of parental involvement and new strategies for increasing parent involvement among hard to reach

parents. Because of this study, they found that strategies such as incentives, parent contracts, advertisements for parent volunteer programs, and involving parents in decision making will increase parent involvement in the school (Smith et al., 2011).

The conceptual frameworks for this study were Epstein 's (2001) model for parental involvement and Hoover-Dempsey et al. (2007) model of parental involvement. Epstein's model for parental involvement focuses on six strategies for parental involvement: (a) parenting, (b) communicating, (c) volunteering, (d) learning at home, (e) decision-making, and (f) collaborating. These strategies for parental involvement address different ways parents can participate in the school. Conversely, the Hoover-Dempsey model of parental involvement focuses on three sources of parental involvement: (a) parents' motivational beliefs, (b) parents' perceptions of invitations to involvement, and (c) personal life contexts. These three sources of parental involvement focus on parents' perceptions of parental involvement and factors that affect parents' participation. Both the Epstein and Hoover-Dempsey models both focus on school goals for parental involvement and offer strategies to promote, motivate, and maintain parental involvement. These conceptual frameworks provided background knowledge that may assist teachers with finding strategies to engage parents in their local school.

The three findings showed what teachers believed about parents' involvement in schools, teachers' attempts to engage parents, barriers that prevent parents from school involvement, teachers' challenges with involving parents and successful parent involvement activities. Teachers discussed their attempts and challenges to engage parents, but they did not elaborate on their possible successes with engaging parents.

Teachers expressed throughout the data that they make efforts to engage parents in school activities such as phone calls home, invitations, and open-door policy. Although teachers use these different strategies to engage parents, I anticipated that teachers would express whether these strategies were effective in their individual classrooms. However, teachers did express that the school should provide opportunities for parents to be involved during times outside of regular school hours. The teachers believed that these opportunities should specifically take place after school dismissal for parents who are not able to participate during school hours. I was surprised that although teachers use various strategies to engage parents in school activities, they were desirous of finding other strategies that may attract involved and uninvolved parents. I anticipated that teachers would feel that they have done all they can do to attract parents whether they were involved or not involved in their school activities. However, the teachers were open-minded in finding more ideas on how and what they can do to engage parents in their local school.

Conclusion

In capturing different perspectives of primary teachers about current parental involvement and ways schools can engage parents in the school; I addressed the three research questions for this study. The research questions addressed parents' participation in school activities, the current level of parental involvement, and teachers' perceptions related to ways in which this school staff can engage parents more effectively in participating in school-related activities. I examined the findings; then I examined the three research questions to address the discovered findings:

RQ1: What are the perceptions of primary grade teachers regarding parental involvement in this local school? Finding 1 indicated that teachers believe parents should be more engaged with their children through participation in school-related activities and in school-related tasks at home. Teachers believe parents should assist their child with academic skills at home. Participants shared their perceptions about parental involvement in their local school. Teachers believe parents' schedules hinder their ability to attend school activities. Teachers believe parents should attend school-related activities to let their children know that they are interested and present.

RQ2: In what ways do primary teachers perceive that parental involvement or lack of parental involvement influences student attitudes, behaviors and academic performance in this local school? Finding 2 indicated that teachers believe that parents who engage with the school frequently in contact or activity communicate the importance of education to their children through their actions. Participants perceive that parental involvement or lack of involvement influences student attitudes, behaviors, academic performance in their local school. Teachers believe that parents' presence in the school activities positively influences student attitudes, behaviors and academic performance because students become motivated to do their best in the classroom. Teachers believe that students need parents to motivate and encourage them to do their best in school academically and behaviorally.

RQ3: In what ways do primary teachers think school staff can effectively engage parents of primary grade children to become involved in this local school? Finding 3 indicated that teachers need more ideas about effective strategies, which they can

implement to positively engage parents in school activities. Participants think that school staff can effectively engage parents in many ways. Teachers believe that parents should be provided opportunities to visit or participate in the school when they are available. Teachers need to provide parents with strategies they can use to help their children succeed academically.

Based on my findings, it is apparent to me that teachers are desirable of finding strategies to engage parents more effectively in school activities. I proposed that a PD will help provide teachers with strategies that they can use to attract and encourage parents whether parents are engaged in school activities or not engaged in school activities. In Section 3, I will use the information from the findings to create a project that will provide teachers with strategies they can use to engage parents.

Section 3: The Project

Introduction

Using a case study design, I captured the perspectives of primary teachers regarding parental involvement in school activities. The findings revealed primary teachers' perceptions of the extent and type of school involvement by parents and the ways schools can more effectively engage parents in the school. In this section, I will create a project based on the genre of professional development. This project will be used to provide teachers with strategies that they can use to attract and encourage parents whether parents are engaged or not engaged in school activities. In this section, I will provide a description of the project, the project's goals, rationale, implementation, potential barriers and resources, and existing supports to assist key stakeholders who would like to use this project to promote social change through parental involvement. I conducted the literature review to analyze research and how research supports the study's findings and the content of the project. I conclude this section with the project evaluation and implications for social change.

Description and Goals

This project will be a 3-day PD for teachers who want to expand their knowledge about how to engage both involved and uninvolved parents in school activities. This project will be based on the study's findings, which indicated that teachers recognize the importance of parent involvement and want to find strategies to engage parents more effectively in school activities. The goals of this PD are to provide teachers with the knowledge and skills they need to (a) address teachers' attempts to engage parents, (b)

develop and implement a plan to engage parents at school and at home, and (c) develop and implement effective strategies to address barriers that prevent parents from school involvement.

On the first day of the PD, teachers will evaluate their own parental involvement strategies that they use to engage parents and the school's needs to help to engage parents more effectively in school activities. I will give each teacher a self-assessment to evaluate his or her current strategies for engaging parents in school activities. After teachers assess their own strategies for engaging parents, I will give each teacher a needs assessment to determine what he or she believes the school needs to help engage parents more effectively in school activities. I will present the teachers with an overview of parental involvement, including the purpose, outcomes, and key stakeholders for parental involvement and their roles and responsibilities.

On the second day of the PD, the teachers and I will review and write down their results from both the self-assessment and needs assessment using chart paper and markers. I will discuss parental involvement, its benefits, and in-depth information about key stakeholders and their roles and responsibilities. In addition, I will present literature about what other schools have done to increase parent involvement. I will assist them in identifying and improving their current practices for parental involvement. Teachers will learn effective strategies to attract and encourage parents whether parents are engaged or not engaged in school activities.

On the third day of the PD, I will present literature on engaging parents and work with teachers to develop and implement an action plan to engage parents in school

activities. I will work with teachers to execute an action plan that assist them in engaging both involved and uninvolved parents. The teachers will learn to develop and implement a plan to engage parents, implement strategies for parent involvement, and build parent-teacher partnerships. The teachers will use construction paper, crayons, markers, scissors, glue, and scissors to create a final product of a project that will engage parents in the school (e.g., parents making a book with their child). At the end of the PD, teachers will learn to use the information from the PD to attract and encourage parent participation in school activities and be able to implement a plan to engage parents more effectively.

Rationale

The problem that prompted this study was a lack of parent presence and participation in an urban school district in western Tennessee. The conceptual frameworks of Epstein's model for parental involvement and Hoover-Dempsey's model of parental involvement led me to choose a genre of PD as a project. PD involves activities that can enhance an individual's professional growth through activities such as coaching and mentoring from peers, collaboration with peers, continuing education, and individual development (Goh & Loh, 2013). Goh and Loh (2013) stated that reflection is key to teachers evaluating their learning and experiences. I believe a PD is an opportunity for teachers to examine their current teaching practices as it relates to engaging parents and allow me to share information with them about how to engage parents in school activities whether the parents are involved or uninvolved.

I chose a genre of PD because based on the study's findings, teachers were desirable of finding strategies to engage parents in school-related activities whether

parent are involved or not involved in school-related activities. Whether teachers receive PD individually or collectively, teacher PD is a process where teachers should be cognitively and emotionally involved, examine where they stand as it relates to their teaching beliefs, and make the necessary changes or improvements to their beliefs (Avalos, 2011). However, I believe PD will assist teachers in evaluating their current practices and help them determine which practices need improvements and changes. To help teachers develop, it is necessary to determine what their area of concern or difficulty is with their teaching practices (Ryder, 2012).

The PD will be designed using the process of reflective practice. Reflective practice is used as a tool in professional learning as an opportunity for individuals to learn from their professional experiences and evaluate their current practices (Patil, 2013). I will create and design the PD based on the data analysis drawn from one-on-one interviews, parent contact logs, and reflective journals. The data analysis revealed themes and patterns from the perspectives of primary teachers about the extent and type of school involvement by parents and the ways schools could more effectively engage parents in the school. I will address my study's problem by creating a PD that incorporates activities that address evaluating self and the school through self-assessments, needs assessments, peer collaboration, prior background knowledge, and new knowledge. The content will be drawn from the study participants' perspectives of their current level of parent involvement and what they believe parents should do to become involved in school activities (Table 4).

I will develop a PowerPoint presentation to provide the participants with the PD's learning objectives and outcomes and help guide the participants through each daily PD session. As a guide, the conceptual frameworks of this study, Epstein (2001) and Hoover-Dempsey et al. (2007) will be implemented into the PD sessions. These are models that both focus on helping schools set goals for promoting, motivating, and maintaining parental involvement. In which, the PowerPoint presentation will include an overview of parental involvement, including the purpose, importance, and benefits of parental involvement, along with key stakeholders for parental involvement and their roles and responsibilities. The presentation was designed to help teachers examine their own teaching practices, the school's needs as it relates to parental involvement and assist teachers with finding strategies to engage parents in their local school. Participants will be given a copy of the PowerPoint presentation to follow along with each PD session and will be asked to take notes as needed. The presentation will be shown and projected on a screen to serve as a visual representation. The PD sessions that were developed for this project will help participants to understand parental involvement, develop an action plan, and implement strategies to engage parents in school activities. The participants will be given a self-assessment and needs assessment as a handout to fill out during a PD session. The participants will participate in peer collaboration to discuss the results of both the self-assessment and needs assessment. Day 2 will serve as an overview of parental involvement, who should be involved, and how parental involvement should look in the school and home. Day 3 will serve as a day for teachers to create an action plan for how

they will address parental involvement and what strategies they will use to engage parents in participating in school activities.

Review of the Literature

In the literature review, I connect related studies to the participants' responses about parental involvement in their local school and ways in which they believe parents should be involved in their child's education. Literature can also enable me to help teachers who want to find strategies to engage parents in their local school. To conduct a literature review, I searched major databases within the Walden University Library. The major databases used were The Thoreau multiple databases, ProQuest dissertations, EBSCO Host, and Education Research Complete. During the search, the following keywords were used: *teacher training, professional development, professional training, family engagement, parent involvement and parent engagement*. The review of the literature will expand my findings by allowing me to interconnect the participants' responses and what research says about topics addressed in findings that emerged from this study.

a.) Teachers believe parents should be more engaged with their children through participation in school-related activities and in school-related tasks at home.

b.) Teachers believe that parents who engage with the school frequently in contact or activity communicate the importance of education to their children through their actions.

c.) Teachers need more ideas about effective strategies, which they can implement to positively engage parents in school activities.

In sections of the literature review, I present scholarly research that was used to support and deepen my study's findings and inform PD.

Parent Participation in School and Home Activities

The findings of this study indicated that teacher participants believe parents should be more engaged with their children through participation in school-related activities and in school-related tasks at home and parents should assist their child with academic skills at home. Toren (2013) indicated that parents participate in their children's education through home-based and school-based involvement. Many teachers emphasize to parents the importance of parent support from home to promote student success in school (Klemenčič, Mirazchiyski, & Sandoval-Hernández, 2014). Parent participation involves parent interactions with their child in two dimensions of parental involvement: at home and in school (Park, Byun, & Kim, 2011). A determining factor of the level of parental involvement has been identified as the parents' level of involvement both in the home and at school (Durand, 2011). Furthermore, parents' involvement can play a vital role in the home and school, which are the key learning environments for children (Sormunen, Tossavainen, & Turunen, 2013). Parents can be involved through parent-teacher communication, home-based involvement, and school-based involvement (Thelamour & Jacobs, 2013). However, Epstein (2001) addressed this in her model for parental involvement that addressed the six ways in which parents can be involved in both the home and school: parenting, communicating, volunteering, learning at home, decision-making, and collaborating with the community. Park et al. (2011) identified three types of home and school involvement in which parents can participate in their

children's education: (a) parent monitoring academic and behavioral progress, (b) discussions between parent and child, and (c) contact with the school. They indicated that home involvement involves parents' actions at home, which includes parents' discussion with their children about school, parents' monitoring their children's academic and behavioral progress, and parents helping with homework. Home-based involvement is beneficial to children's academic learning and achievement (Yotyodying & Wild, 2016). Home-based involvement focuses particularly on the support given to the child from the home (Toren, 2013).

School-based involvement focuses particularly on the parents' relationships with the school as parents are involved with activities from children's academics to extracurricular activities (Toren, 2013). School involvement involves parents' actions in their children's school, which includes parents volunteering in their children's classroom, participating in parent-teacher organization, and attending school events (Park et al., 2011). Oftentimes, schools determine parents' levels of involvement on their involvement in the school (Hindin & Mueller, 2014). Many researchers have indicated that parents can be involved in their children's education in the home and the school (Durand, 2011; Park et al., 2011; Sormunen et al., 2013; Thelamour & Jacobs, 2013). In a study about home and school cooperation, Bæck (2015) added that interactions between the home and school are not limited to volunteering in the classroom, participating in parent-teacher organization, and attending school events. Parents can interact with the school in other ways such as communicating with the teacher in passing when picking up the child, phone calls, and emails (Bæck, 2015). However, Muir (2012) found that research on

home involvement has mostly focused on parental monitoring and homework activities rather than activities that allow parents to engage and interact with their child in a meaningful way such as teaching and learning with their child and providing feedback on their child's activities at home.

To assist children at home, teachers must assist parents in helping their children at home by communicating homework expectations, how often homework is assigned, and give instructions to parents on how to assist their children with homework (Tas, Sungur-Vural, & Öztekin, 2014). Lukie, Skwarchuk, LeFevre, and Sowinski (2014) conducted a study to determine how parent-child involvement affects academic skill development through academic activities. Lukie et al. (2014) indicated that when parents participate in academic activities in literacy and numeracy, these activities help increase their children's academic scores. The home environment can provide learning opportunities where parents can read to their children and engage in literacy and numeracy activities such as identifying letters and letter sounds, learning words and definitions, recognizing and singing alphabet, counting, adding, subtracting, recognizing numbers, and comparing objects (Lukie et al., 2014). However, parents can become active participants in their children's academic success by assisting and supporting their children in school and home activities.

Some researchers indicated that parents play an important role in their children's education and that their involvement determines their children's academic and emotional successes (Siddiqui, 2011; Taliaferro, DeCuir-Gunby, & Allen-Eckard, 2009). Parents are valuable assets to the school community; however, their role in parental involvement

plays an important part in their children's academic experiences and outcomes (Taliaferro et al., 2009). Parents should be more engaged with their children through participation in school-related activities and in school-related tasks at home because it has positive effects on the children's educational experiences (Siddiqui, 2011). In a study about a lack of parental involvement and its effect on children, Siddiqui (2011) found that when parents are connected and involved with their children's education, their children are more likely to do well in their studies and to be emotionally secure. In contrast, he added that parents who are not involved in their children's education hinder their children's academic and behavioral progress in school. Sometimes, there are some barriers that hinder parents from being involved in their children's education. Chang, Choi, and Kim (2015) conducted a study on school involvement of racial minority parents. They examined parental school involvement as it relates to parent participation in school activities, parent-teacher conferences, and informal and formal contact with the school. Chang et al. (2015) found low levels school involvement among some parents, due cultural differences and language barriers. Alexander, Cox, Behnke, and Larzelere (2017) conducted a study on barriers to involvement and investigated whether the reasons for noninvolvement among Latino parents were associated with academic achievement. They found that the reasons for noninvolvement were parents feeling unwelcomed in the school, parents' work schedules, lack of child care, little educational background, and transportation issues. Alexander et al. (2017) found reasons to support both parent involvement and to decrease parent noninvolvement because they effect academic achievement in very different ways. For example, Alexander et al. (2017) found that

parents' noninvolvement along with transportation issues were associated with low academic achievement and parents feeling unwelcomed was not associated with low academic achievement. Moreover, parents' involvement or lack of involvement in their children's education will accordingly have either a positive or negative effect on their children's academic and social success.

Parent Engagement in School Activities

Parents who are engaged in school activities usually have high expectations for their children, and they support their children in learning activities at home and at school (Lendrum, Barlow, & Humphrey, 2015). Parents can engage in school activities through teaching, learning, and decision-making when educators train parents to help children at home and in the school with academic skills and when educators create parent engagement programs to address student learning opportunities and goals (Hands, 2013). However, Hands (2013) believed that there may be a disconnect between school expectations of parent participation in education and parent engagement. Therefore, she recommended that parent engagement initiatives should be in place to give all parents an opportunity to be a part of their children's education. Moreover, parents can be engaged in the school through their presence and voice. McKenna and Millen (2013) explained that parent engagement involves parent presence in the school and home and parent voice. To properly engage parents, they added that parent presence in the school and the home involves contributions such as parents helping with homework, attending school activities, and joining the parent-teacher organization. Also, McKenna and Millen (2013) explained that giving parents a voice in their children's education gives parents the

confidence to participate. Parent engagement with school educators can have a positive influence on student success in school (Risko & Walker-Dalhouse, 2009).

When parents are involved in different school activities throughout the school year, their involvement sends a positive message to their children that both the parents and the school are working together to create a nurturing environment (Staples & Diliberto, 2010). Staples and Diliberto (2010) identified three components for successful parent involvement: (a) establishing and maintaining rapport with parents, (b) developing a plan that establishes effective communication between the parents and the school, and (c) creating opportunities for parents to become involved. The time that parents spend involved in their children's education tells children if their parents value education (Stacer & Perruci, 2013). Stacer and Perruci (2013) conducted a quantitative study on parental involvement with children in the home, school, and community. In this study, these researchers focused on parental involvement in terms of parent reports of their involvement at home, in the school, and in the community. Stacer and Perruci (2013) found that the parents' actions reflected the parents' perceptions and experiences with their child's school. The parents' perceptions and experiences with their child's school is shaped by the opportunities that the school provides for parents to be involved such as volunteering in the school and providing information about ways they can help their children learn (Stacer & Perruci, 2013). When parents are engaged in school activities, their level of engagement helps their children understand the importance of school success and increases their children's commitment to education (Pemberton & Miller, 2015). In contrast, Pemberton and Miller (2015) identified that lack of parent engagement

in school activities communicate the wrong message to children and contributes to low academic success.

Teacher participants, in this study, identified that parents who engage with the school frequently in contact or activity, communicate the importance of education to their children through their actions. Similarly, in a study about African-American fathers' involvement in their children's school-based lives, Abel (2012) investigated African-American fathers' impact on their children's school lives and their decision to be involved in their children's education. Abel (2012) found that invitations from the school to participate in school activities such as attending a school event or visiting a classroom influenced fathers' decisions to be involved in school-based activities. The fathers' decisions are influenced by the amount of knowledge they have about their children's schooling and time they can dedicate to the school (Abel, 2012). Abel (2012) added that the fathers' decisions to be involved were based on their knowledge of how to support their children's school lives and how much time they can spend participating in their children's school lives. When parents are knowledgeable of their children's capabilities and academics, they will be able to assist their children at home and school (Sonnenschein, Stapleton, & Metzger, 2014).

In a study on strategies to support parent engagement programs, Portwood, Brooks-Nelson, and Schoeneberger (2015) evaluated a parent engagement program called Parent University; this program was created to help parents become engaged in their children's education. As a parent engagement strategy, Portwood et al. (2015) facilitated this program by inviting parents to participate and providing them with activities such as

courses and workshops that were designed to assist parents in supporting their children's education. The courses and workshop were offered in four strands and designed to assist parents in gaining knowledge and building their skills to help them assist and support their children in school: (a) Strand I: Parent Awareness, (b) Strand II: Helping Your Child Learn in the 21st century, (c) Strand III: Health and Wellness, (d) Strand IV: Personal Growth and Development.

Effective Strategies for Positive Parent Engagement in School Activities

Schools can engage parents by forming family-school partnerships and involving them in making decisions and supporting school-related activities such as the parent-teacher association (Shaikah, 2013). Hindin and Mueller (2014) conducted a study on creating home-school partnerships and examined suburban and urban teachers' challenges, educational needs, and practices. They found that the teachers experienced many challenges with disengaged parents and wanted to find strategies that they can use to engage parents. Hindin and Mueller (2014) indicated that teachers, specifically, wanted to find strategies to motivate and encourage parents to be supportive of their children's education at home and to be more involved in the school. Similarly, in my study, teachers wanted to find ways to effectively engage parents in school activities.

Nai-Cheng (2016) added that schools must make efforts to engage parents by offering a welcoming environment and being aware of barriers to parental involvement. Crea, Reynolds, and Degnan (2015) conducted a mixed methods study about parent engagement in a Catholic school. They identified that there are some barriers to parent engagement such as language and cultural differences, the quality and consistency of

communication between parents and schools, and teachers' views of parental involvement in schools. Although these barriers exist, parents and schools must have a shared vision and mutual understanding with one another to develop positive family-school partnerships. Family-school partnerships occur when stakeholders such as parents and school officials have a shared vision and work together to provide support to students in their education (Hands, 2013). However, families and schools must attain a mutual understanding between the home and school regarding their children education (Wong, 2012). In a study on home-school relationships, Wong (2012) explored the relationship between the home and school using parents' perspectives. Wong (2012) found that effective communication is important to promoting home-school relationships. In addition, Wong (2012) suggested that consistent effective communication and mutual understanding between the home and school are key elements to productive family-school partnerships.

Some professional associations agree that parent engagement is important and are promoting parent participation and family-school partnerships in schools. The National Parent-Teacher Association and National Education Association (NEA) are two associations that work to promote family-school partnerships (National Education Association, 2016; National Parent-Teacher Association, 2016). The National Parent-Teacher Association (2016) works to promote family-school partnerships that cultivate parental involvement in the schools. This association encourages schools to provide opportunities to engage parents in participating in the life of the school and in their child's education (National Parent-Teacher Association, 2016). The NEA works to

provide initiatives such as community and family-community programs, programs to engage parents and other family members, and wraparound social and community services programs to engage parents and increase student achievement.

Family-school partnerships play a vital role in children's academic and social-emotional development in primary grades (De Bruïne et al., 2014). De Bruïne et al. (2014) conducted an explorative study on how prepared teacher candidates are to adequately address family-school partnerships. Whether teachers are prepared or not prepared to work with parents, they will need ideas about effective strategies such as communicating with parents, conducting a needs assessment and creating a school-based parental involvement program that gives parents an opportunity to interact with their child to improve academic success. Teachers need to implement a plan to positively engage parents in school activities such as being involved in parent-teacher organization, family curriculum night, parent-teacher conferences, and school events (Yamamoto, Holloway, & Sawako, 2016). Not only should teachers implement a plan, but Schaedel, Deslandes, and Eshet (2013) suggested that teachers should create meaningful and well-developed invitations to parents and meeting opportunities as an avenue to engage parents in the school. However, these school activities require teachers to share information with parents about their child's academic progress (Elicker & Benson-McMullen, 2013).

One strategy that teachers can use to share information with parents about their children is by conducting conferences at least two to three times a year. Also, Okeke (2014) conducted a case study on effective home-school partnerships in a primary school

and found effective strategies such as involving parents in the school curriculum, home visits, parent-teacher games, school debates, and speech days that can be used to promote parent participation in schools. Okeke recommended that schools that want to effectively involve parents must promote and publicize school activities within their communities and ensure parents are aware of how they can become involved in the school.

Similarly, Campbell, Dalley-Trim, and Cordukes (2016) conducted a case study on a school's approach to parent engagement and strengthening family-school partnerships. While interviewing parents in this school, Campbell et al. (2016) found that the parents wanted to be active participants in their children's education, but they did not know how to begin the process of being involved in the school. To formulate and strengthen family-school partnerships in schools, Campbell et al. (2016) explained that parents' perspectives are vital in the school's approach to developing these partnerships. As a strategy to improve parent engagement, Crea et al. (2015) suggested that schools focus on providing opportunities through parent workshops and allowing teacher-parent collaboration to increase awareness of parents' and teachers' roles in children's academic success. Also, they recommended that schools could appoint a parent coordinator to bridge the gap in communication between parents and school staff and help facilitate parent engagement activities during the school year. Other studies have indicated that communication is a key element in strengthening family-school partnerships (Donnell & Kirkner, 2014; Latunde & Clark-Louque, 2016). In addition to developing family-school partnership between the home and school, schools can engage parents in different programs within their school.

School can provide opportunities for parents to engage in their children's education through meaningful school-based programs (Muir, 2012). These school-based programs can provide opportunities for families to work together to promote student academic success. School-based literacy programs create a caring and safe environment for families to make meaningful connections and experiences with text (Montgomery & Smith, 2014). Researchers have identified programs that have been effective in which parents had an opportunity to engage with their children; there were increases in parent engagement and academic scores (Crosby, Rasinski, Padak, and Yildirim, 2015; Moore et al., 2016; Muir, 2012). To positively engage parents in school activities, Moore et al. (2016) conducted a quantitative study about parent engagement in school. The purpose of this study was to examine strengths and needs assessment model called The Positive Family Support-Strengths and Needs Assessment (PFS-SaNA; Moore et al., 2016). To gain positive parent engagement, the PFS-SaNA was used as a parent engagement strategy and given to parents at the beginning of the school year. PFS-SaNA is a 14-item survey used to evaluate parents' perceptions about their children's school needs such as their children's classrooms and relationships with their peers. It gives parents an opportunity to address their concerns about their children's education and school. Moore et al. (2016) found that this was a great tool to use early in the school year and that it helps schools address any academic or behavioral issues.

The PFS-SaNA addresses academic or behavioral issues by allowing parents to use the survey to provide information for their children's teacher with background knowledge about their children and their children's school needs. Moore et al. (2016)

explained that a needs assessment is an effective engagement strategy that can increase parent engagement. Parents can identify their children's strengths and needs and what areas need more support. PFS-SaNA focuses on building family-school partnerships by providing parents with strategies to help their children succeed academically and with opportunities to visit or participate in the school (Moore et al., 2016). Schools not only can use a needs assessment to increase parent engagement, but they can use a school-based parental involvement program as well.

There are several successful school-based parental involvement programs. Many school-based parental involvement programs support early literacy. These programs provided literacy activities that provide ways in which parents can be involved in school activities. Niklas, Tayler, and Schneider (2015) conducted a study on literacy activities and children's cognitive outcomes. They found that parents who provided a learning environment in their homes with literacy activities such reading to the child and working on phonic skills, were fortified with support when schools provided books to the homes; this additional at-home help increased children's cognitive development. For example, Crosby et al. (2015) conducted a 3-year study of a school-based parental involvement program in early literacy. In this program, parents and children are asked to work together to complete daily literacy lessons consisting of a poem or rhyme. During the lesson, the parent and child are required to alternate roles by reading the poem or rhyme and discussing the meaning of the word they have read. As a result, the study's findings indicated that through parent-child interaction, children literacy rates increased and, over

the 3 years of implementing the school-based program, the levels of parental participation increased (Crosby et al., 2015).

Literacy activities such as writing provide opportunities for parents to become involved and their children to work on their writing skills (Newman & Bizzari, 2011). A study by Newman and Bizzari (2011) was conducted to identify how families can stay connected to what is taking place in their children's education. As a strategy to build a connection between students, teachers, and families, Newman and Bizzari (2011) used a writing program called Friday Letters to help parents stay connected with their children's education. Students were asked to write letters every Friday, in which, they informed their parents about what they learned, their behavior, and what they liked during the week. Newman and Bizzari (2011) found that the writing program was successful because it provided an opportunity for parents to be informed about what their children learned, for students to practice their writing skills, and for teachers and parents to assist students in improving their writing. It is apparent that home literacy program and activities provide an opportunity to engage parents and assist parents with providing help to their child (Crosby et al., 2015; Moore et al., 2016; Newman & Bizzari, 2011).

As an engagement strategy, parents can use shared book reading to assist their children in developing their vocabulary and understanding words that they have not heard before (Evans, Reynolds, Shaw, & Pursoo, 2011). During shared book reading, parents actively involve their children by reading a storybook along with them, identifying vocabulary words, and asking them questions about what they have read (Evans et al., 2011). Furthermore, Montgomery and Smith (2014) conducted an action research study

on building literacy relationships through song. The purpose of this study was to develop an understanding of how song-based picture books played a role in engaging children and their families through meaningful text. They found that children's oral language skills increased when song-based picture books were used. Therefore, these literacy activities can help families build avenues for student academic success.

Researchers identified that parent engagement in literacy activities at home are linked to student success in school-based literacy activities (Vandermass-Peeler, Nelson, Bumpass, & Sassine, 2009). Minkle, Sheridan, Kim, Roo, and Koziol (2014) emphasized that when educators work to build family-school partnerships and engage parents to participate in the school, the educators can help develop and build relationships with parents based on respect, trust, and commitment to increase student academic success. To develop and build parent-teacher relationships, both educators and parents must view their relationships positively and share common goals as it relates to children's academic success (Minkle et al., 2014).

Conclusion

The review of literature includes studies that relate to my study topic and planned PD. Furthermore, the literature supported ways in which parents can participate in the home and school, how parents can engage in school activities, and how schools can engage parents effectively in school activities. The literature revealed that involving parents in responding to a needs assessment and implementing school-based programs for parents and children to participate together in learning activities have been effective in engaging parents in becoming active participants in their children's education.

After conducting the literature review, I have found approaches that align with the PD I want to create. Like the PFS-SaNA, the first approach I will use is a needs assessment that will provide teachers an opportunity to address what is needed to engage parents. The next approach I plan to use is to help teachers develop and implement a plan to engage parents at school and home. I want to assist teachers in developing and implementing a plan that consist of a parent engagement strategy like Parent University (Portwood et al., 2015). Parent University was designed for teachers to engage parents by inviting parents to the school and providing parent-child activities. Some activities that parents and children can do together include things such as reading a poem together, writing a friendly letter to someone, and writing a story together. I will work with teachers to create a product such as making a book for shared book reading during the last PD session.

Project Description

Potential Resources and Existing Supports

Professional development is an opportunity for teachers to build on their knowledge and to improve their teaching practices (Trust, 2017). The purpose of professional development opportunities not only should help build on teachers' knowledge, but it should encourage them to reflect on their own teaching practices (Yuejin, 2016). Schools use PD opportunities to support teachers and provide opportunities for professional growth and learning (National Education Association, 2016). By offering this PD, I will help teachers examine their current teaching practices

by sharing information with them about how to engage parents in school activities whether the parents are involved or uninvolved.

Before the PD begins, I will share my study results and proposed timeline for the PD sessions with the school principal. If the project is approved, I will schedule the PD. Then, I will invite teachers by sending an email to participate in the PD sessions. I will ask the teachers to respond to the email if they are available to attend the PD sessions. The email response will account for how many teachers plan to attend the sessions.

I will hold sessions in school classrooms or the school library using a Smartboard to project a PowerPoint presentation. To implement this project, I will need necessary resources. I will ask that photocopies for handouts, chart paper, chart markers, and name tag labels be provided using the school budget materials. If I do not receive these materials from the school budget, I will provide construction paper, crayons, markers, scissors, glue, and scissors for the PD.

Potential Barriers

One potential barrier that may arise is that the school administrator and PLC coach may not approve the PD sessions because they may believe that there is not a need now. If this barrier arises, I will provide the school administrator and PLC coach with a copy of my study results and dialogue with them on why providing a PD is helpful for teachers. To add to the dialogue, I will emphasize how the teachers desire to find strategies to engage parents more effectively in school activities. Another potential barrier may be that teachers' schedules do not permit them to attend the PD on the scheduled day. If this barrier arises, I will plan the PD during the summer vacation

months. Furthermore, teachers may feel that they have tried every strategy possible to engage parents in the school and feel that attending a PD will not be effective in engaging parents. I will share with the teachers that there are strategies that they can use to effectively engage parents. By attending this PD, they will have an opportunity to share and collaborate with their peers about possible strategies that may help to get parents involved in school activities.

I will ask the school administrator to provide funds for lunch and snacks for the participants during the PD sessions. If the school administrator is not able to provide lunch and snacks, I will either ask teachers to bring their own lunch or ask outside sources such as a local business or parent teacher association to provide food as a gift to the teachers. Space for meetings should be available because the PD will be held on a non-instructional day. If the PD is approved and scheduled, I will reserve rooms early in the year by working with the appropriate administrative office staff to ensure there is proper space for the PD.

Proposal for Implementation and Timetable

Planning for implementation of the PD will take place during the academic year. This planning will include the school principal, PLC coach, and me. The details of the proposed timeline are shown below (See Table 5).

Table 5

Proposed Timeline

Date	Task	Person	Deliverable
August	Meet with school principal and PLC coach	School principal, PLC coach, and researcher	Slide show
August/September	Plan meetings	School principal, PLC coach, and researcher	Program announcement
October	Design key participant emails	Researcher	Email
November	Develop and submit volunteer responses	Potential participants	Emails
December	Select first 20 participants	Committee	School email announcement
January	Share presentation with school principal and PLC coach	Researcher	Slide show highlighting PD
February	Coordinate time and place for PD	School principal, PLC coach, and researcher	Daily agenda
March-May	Conduct PD sessions	Researcher and participants	Slide show, handouts

Table 6

Proposed Professional Development Schedule

Day	Professional development topic	Time
Day 1	Parental involvement: What are our needs?	8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.
Day 2	Who's who in parental involvement	8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.
Day 3	Action planning: Tools for engaging parents in the school	8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Roles and Responsibilities of Student and Others

My responsibility and role will be to organize all meetings, facilitate communication between stakeholder groups, and present all workshops for the PD. The school administrator and PLC coach are important stakeholders who can contribute to the success of this initiative. The school principal will provide support and encouragement to the teachers to implement effective strategies for engaging parents, which will be addressed during the PD sessions. The PLC coach is responsible for working with the presenter to review and approve the strategies being discussed in the presentation and ensure teachers develop and sustain effective strategies for parent involvement in school activities. For this program to be successfully implemented, I will create collaborative learning experiences to involve and assist participants in finding effective strategies to engage parents in school activities.

Although this is a well-planned PD program, stakeholder support is needed for proper implementation. With this PD program, I understand that I will ask for teachers

and administrators for their time, institutional space, and collaboration when their schedules may not permit them not to attend the PD. As a tool, I will have to ensure that the presentation of the project works as an important vehicle for school improvement efforts that relate to the work of the district. In this way, my role will be a facilitator to all stakeholders.

Project Evaluation Plan

Formative Assessment

Formative assessments are used to provide feedback about students' understanding of information and to help teachers modify instruction to maximize student learning (Dixson & Worrell, 2016). The purpose of the formative assessments will be to allow participants an opportunity to expand on their knowledge of parental involvement and find effective strategies that they can use to engage parents in their school. In this project, formative assessments will be in the form of a self-assessment, needs assessment, reflection questions, and exit tickets. The self-assessment will be used to evaluate teachers' current strategies for engaging parents in school activities. The needs assessment will be used to determine what teachers believe they need to help engage parents more effectively in school activities. Using the reflection questions, participants will reflect on their learning and share what they have learned with the entire group. The reflection questions will consist of the following questions:

1. What did you learn today?
2. How will you use what you have learned today in your classroom?
3. What questions do you have?

If the participants have any questions, they will place their questions on a parking lot poster. The questions on the parking lot poster will be addressed at the end of the session or during the next session day. Using the exit tickets, participants will respond to a given question about the information discussed in the PD sessions each day. The participants will use an index card to respond to the question and place it in a basket. The exit tickets will provide an opportunity to assess what the participants have learned and determine if the information in the PD sessions need clarification or modification. The formative assessments used in each PD session are included in the PowerPoint presentations, handouts, and trainer's notes.

Summative Assessment

In this project, a summative evaluation will be given at the end of the Day 3 sessions. At the end of the PD, participants, administrator, and PLC coach will complete an evaluation on the effectiveness of the presenter and content they learned during the 3-day PD. The participants will answer questions pertaining to the content discussed as well as how the content will assist them in engaging parents in their school. For the summative evaluation, I will distribute a handout that asks participants to answer the following six questions:

1. Was the presentation of related information helpful?
2. How effective was the content presented during this PD?
3. Please explain how you intend to use the content gained from this PD.
4. What part of the PD was most valuable to you?
5. What strategies will you use to engage parents in your school?

6. For future PD, how can this PD be improved to meet teachers' needs?

The participants' responses to the six questions will serve as a product that I will analyze to help me determine how to structure future PD to assist teachers in engaging parents in school activities.

Overall Evaluation Goals

Evaluation methods, both formative and summative, are directly aligned with PD goals to assist teachers in finding and implementing effective strategies to engage parents in school activities. Teachers who participate in the PD will be able to expand their knowledge and understanding of parental involvement and provide effective strategies for engaging parents in school activities. I include formative assessments in every session by allowing participants an opportunity to engage in conversations about the content, a self-assessment and needs assessment, to respond to reflective questions, and to complete exit tickets. When the participants complete the PD, I will provide them with a handout where they will respond to six narrative questions. As a summative assessment, I will collect the responses to the six narrative questions to determine what has been useful for the teachers and what may need to be changed for future sessions. The evaluation process is a part of the PD training as it expands the participants' knowledge and understanding of parental involvement and provides effective strategies for engaging parents in school activities.

I will use the overall evaluation goal as a guide to assess if a parental involvement PD can help teachers find and implement effective strategies for engaging parents in school activities.

Key Stakeholders Groups

I created a PD based on my findings in this study. Based on those findings, it was clear to me that teachers work in communities that have many stakeholders and that it will be necessary to include those stakeholder groups in conversations and planning related to the project. Participants for the PD will be district teachers and the PLC coach who will participate in all 3 days of the PD, and volunteer administrators who participate will have a choice to attend all PD sessions or the day 3 session only. The PLC coach will engage with teachers in hands-on activities and assist the presenter during each session. As a result, the PLC coach will be able to assist teachers in developing, implementing, and sustaining effective strategies for engaging parents in school activities. When the administrators attend the PD, they will provide teachers with support and encouragement as they brainstorm ways to engage parents. In the timeline planning, I included key stakeholders such as teachers, administrators, and the PLC coach. I indicated in the timeline for project implementation when the stakeholder groups will be invited into the planning and implementation process.

Teachers. The core group of participants for this PD will be the first 20 teachers who self-select to participate in the program. The only additional group will be administrators who volunteer to participate in an action planning activity on day 3. However, the focus of the PD is to provide teachers with effective strategies they can use to engage parents in school activities. Teachers who volunteer to participate in the program may teach any primary grades, but some may continue to work together, as a cohort with the individuals that teach at the same grade level as them. Reflections,

collaboration, shared strategies, and action planning may prove useful in their ongoing efforts of engaging parents in school activities.

Administrators. School principals and assistant principals will form the administrative team that will be essential to the success of the PD. I will include district administrators in the planning and implementation discussions. Furthermore, in the recognition of the importance of this group, I will invite administrators to volunteer to participate in an action planning activity on day 3 of the PD. Perhaps this collaboration between teachers and administrators will help them incorporate new strategies and ideas while striving to better engage parents in school activities. This collaboration will provide an opportunity for administrators and teachers develop a plan of action for parent engagement and determine how they will implement their plan. In addition, the principals can discuss their expectations for implementation of the action plan and determine how the plan will be carried out.

PLC coach. The PLC coach is the person who facilitates all PLC meetings, who provides teachers with instructional resources and materials, who assists teachers with effective classroom strategies, and who provides opportunities for teachers to engage in effective PD that will build on their classroom instruction and professional growth. Furthermore, I anticipate that the PLC coach's guidance and teachers' reflective responses will help teachers identify strategies for engaging parents in school activities. In addition, the PLC coach and administrators will assist teachers in ongoing PLC meetings through collaboration, reflection, and implementation of new strategies to improve parent involvement practices.

Project Implications

Social Change Implications

When teachers understand their ability to improve their school's parent involvement and find effective strategies for engaging parents in school activities, they can become models of social change. In this study, the analysis of data has helped me reveal key findings that can have a strong impact on engaging parents in participating in school activities. Through my research, I have learned that teachers use strategies for engaging parents, but they have a desire to find more strategies for engaging parents in school activities, whether they are already involved or not. I also learned that when parents become active participants in their children's school and when schools provide ways for parents to become involved, children could benefit from the positive influences of these efforts. Furthermore, by using these findings as the basis to build my PD for teachers who desire to find effective strategies for engaging parents, I can assist teachers in their journey to plan and implement effective parent engagement strategies.

Effective parent engagement strategies will significantly impact individual lives. Sometimes, effective parent engagement strategies could improve the current parental involvement in the school for parents who are not involved. To improve parental involvement, more parents may attend school activities, such as programs that their children are participating in, volunteering to assist with classroom parties, or chaperoning a field trip.

Importance of the Project to Local Stakeholders

This project has potential importance to local stakeholders because I will offer it within the district where I currently serve. The district where I currently serve could benefit from the PD because primary teachers have a desire to find effective strategies that will assist them in their efforts to engage parents in school activities. Participants expressed their needs for more parent involvement in their school and shared their experiences based on their daily routines and procedures. This PD will provide teachers with an opportunity to expand their knowledge and understanding of parental involvement and provide effective strategies for engaging parents in school activities. I will reach out to the district's principals and PLC coach to support and encourage teachers and ensure teachers develop and sustain effective strategies for parent involvement. Because of this study's findings, this project could prove to be of immediate use to district leadership and teachers. In addition, other surrounding school districts have expressed interest in their teachers participating in collaborative PD opportunities. District administrators report that teachers have a desire to find effective strategies for parent engagement, but they need opportunities for collaboration with other teachers to learn new ideas and strategies. Therefore, I predict that these findings and the subsequent project will be important to local stakeholders.

Importance of the Project to the Larger Context

In the larger context, I believe that this project has significant potential for assisting teachers and schools. As I have stated in the review of literature, the National Parent-Teacher Association works to promote family-school partnerships that cultivate

parental involvement in the schools. This association encourages schools to provide opportunities to engage parents in participating in the life of the school and in their child's education (National Parent-Teacher Association, 2016). The NEA works to provide initiatives such as community and family-community programs, programs to engage parents and other family members, and wraparound social and community services programs to engage parents and increase student achievement. Therefore, by offering teachers effective strategies for parent engagement, opportunities will be provided for parents to form relationships with the school personnel, and for all stakeholders to participate in their children's education. This project is designed to update teachers about parent involvement strategies that can be used to engage parents in school activities. This PD can be used with teachers of all grade levels. I plan to share this study's initial findings with others on local, state and national levels to lead conversations about how these findings may be useful to teachers.

Section 4: Reflections and Conclusions

Project Strengths

The project's strength relates to the research and analysis of findings. Epstein (2001) identified different ways parents can participate in their children's schooling and Hoover-Dempsey et al. (2007) identified three sources of parental involvement that affect parents' participation in schools. Both Epstein (2001) and Hoover-Dempsey et al. (2007) provided a conceptual framework that guided me in developing a PD to provide teachers with strategies that they can use to attract and encourage parents whether parents are engaged or not engaged in school activities. Goh and Loh (2013) identified activities that teachers can use to enhance professional growth. Schools can engage parents in school activities with different strategies identified by Epstein (2001) and Hoover-Dempsey et al. (2007). Goh and Loh identified activities such as coaching and mentoring from peers, collaboration with peers, continuing education, and individual development as ways for teachers to enhance their professional growth, which I have strived to accomplish in the PD that derived from this study's findings.

Because of the PD, teachers will have an opportunity to improve their school's parent involvement and find effective parent engagement strategies. I have designed the sessions to engage participants in informative sessions incorporating reflection, collaboration, modeling, guided conversations, and research-based strategies, as well as to assist participants as they develop action plans for improving their current parent

involvement. Participants will also expand their knowledge and understanding of parental involvement as they gain effective strategies for engaging parents in school activities.

The greatest strength of this project is that it will provide participants with many opportunities. Participants will have opportunities to enhance their prior knowledge and improve their current parental involvement practices. Current parent involvement is improved by engaging in educational experiences. The educational experiences involve ongoing collaboration and implementing effective parental involvement strategies that will affect the students they serve. However, in this way, this study may foster an understanding that the teaching profession is valuable, purposeful, and public work.

Project Limitations

A limitation for this project involves ensuring stakeholders' support in developing and implementing action plans for addressing parental involvement. I designed PD sessions that will help participants find effective strategies for engaging parents in school activities and developing and implementing an action plan for parent involvement. Offering teachers an opportunity to participate in developing and implementing an action plan for parental involvement practices will influence individual classrooms and schools. Teachers can address parental involvement in their individual classroom and then collectively. However, the action plans that teachers develop may be difficult to implement if other stakeholders, such as principals and PLC coaches, do not agree with the plans when teachers present it to them. This can limit teachers' desire to address parent involvement due to limited support from administrators. To encourage teachers' desire for finding strategies to improve parental involvement, I suggest that program

members organize collaborative meetings with food and refreshments, on or off campus, throughout the school year that will promote a positive PLC. To promote a sense of community, I will ask teachers to share their successes from the PD sessions with their colleagues. Furthermore, I will encourage teachers to contact me through email to help them in promoting and maintaining ongoing PLCs for teacher support and resources.

Recommendations for Alternative Approaches

Alternative Approaches to the Problem

In the previous section, I indicated that this project would be difficult to implement if other stakeholders, such as principals and PLC coaches, do not agree with the development and implementation of teachers' action plans for addressing parental involvement. For this reason, an alternative approach to the problem is needed to provide learning opportunities, such as PD and local networking, for teachers who desire to find effective strategies for engaging parents in school activities.

Alternative Definitions of the Problem

The problem that prompted this study was a lack of parent presence and participation in an urban school district in western Tennessee. I worked with a participant group of seven teachers who were members of the K-2 staff and experienced in the local school. As a result, the data that were obtained from three forms of data collection indicated that teachers that teachers were desirable of finding strategies to engage parents more effectively in school activities. In this project that was based on this study, I supported professional growth of teachers who desire to find effective strategies for engaging parents in school activities. By participating in this project's PD, teachers are

given an opportunity to work together to develop and implement an action plan for engaging parents in school activities. However, some teachers may only complete this activity during the PD and not implement their action plans. Stakeholders, such as principals, may not see a need for developing and implementing an action plan for parent involvement in schools. Therefore, two alternative definitions of the problem for this study are as follows:

1. Reveal ways in which teachers can collaborate and develop action plans for parental involvement incorporating successful strategies to engage parents in school activities.
2. Reveal ways to create online and local networks of teachers who want to find successful strategies to engage parents in their school's activities.

These alternative definitions of the problem align with the problem that prompted this study because all the problem statements have been written to reveal how teachers can find effective strategies for engaging parents in school activities.

Alternative Solutions to the Local Problem

Teachers who work in schools where they do not have the opportunity to collaborate and develop action plans for parental involvement to engage parents in school activities may benefit from alternate solutions. These alternate solutions are designed to engage groups of teachers who may need to collaborate and develop action plans with other teachers or administrators to engage parents in the school and to give them an opportunity to share their successes and challenges. Alternate solutions are a good way

for researchers to identify strategies that teachers can use to attract and encourage parents whether parents are engaged or not engaged in school activities.

Ways in which teachers can collaborate and develop action plans. When teachers are not able to collaborate, and develop strategies to engage parents, they may feel frustrated and that there is no administrative support. In such a setting, teachers could develop a collaborative team that consists of teachers who are committed to improving parent involvement and implementing successful strategies for engaging parents in the school. A lead person could invite teachers to participate in a collaborative team for parent involvement. Once the team is established, they can develop a schedule to confirm meeting dates and times. The members could meet once a month to share their successes and challenges with parent involvement in their individual classrooms. In addition, teachers can evaluate their school's activities and programs that are used to attract and engage parents.

The purpose of the evaluation would be to determine effectiveness of school activities and programs. Furthermore, teachers can determine whether improvements are needed for the activities and programs or if any of them need to be removed altogether. This collaboration will not need the approval of a school administrator, but the school administrator could participate in the meeting to provide support and feedback. Perhaps, this type of collaboration would foster a joint agreement in the school or district about the successful strategies teachers use to engage parents in the school. However, inside the school, teachers could collaborate about successful strategies for engaging parents. Among teachers, PLCs, grade level meetings, or informal lunch and learn groups could

be established to share ideas about best practices and successful parent involvement strategies in their individual classrooms. Teachers will be invited to participate during non-instructional times to share their concerns and work together on developing action plans for encouraging parents to participate in the school. Schools can gain insight from teacher collaboration and shared practices that will help to attract and encourage parents to become active participants in the school.

Ways to create online and local networks of teachers who want to find successful strategies to engage parents. Many schools and districts offer teachers an opportunity to collaborate in PLCs and share their expertise. However, with the expansion of technology, teachers can connect with other teachers to collaborate and share their expertise online. Teachers may search and find resources online, but they may not be able to consistently arrange face to face meetings with teachers at their school or other teachers in the district. An alternative solution to the problem could be to create a private online group for teacher focused on parental involvement in schools. Teachers can join online blogs, discussion boards, and social media sites such as Facebook and Twitter. In addition, teachers could invite other teachers to share their successes and challenges with parental involvement. The purpose of this invitation will help support teachers who are experiencing difficulties and provide strategies that may or may not work.

To provide teachers with opportunities to meet face to face, encounters such as meeting at a coffee bar, a restaurant, or a library may be organized. Teachers could also engage in conference calls or attend webinars that focus on parent involvement in school.

Therefore, teachers who want to collaborate and develop strategies to engage parents, but do not have enough parent involvement in the school, will have various opportunities to find successful strategies and receive support from other teachers without feeling frustrated.

Scholarship, Project Development, and Leadership and Change

As I investigated the perceptions of primary teachers about parental involvement in school activities, I collected data and developed findings with primary teachers who have a desire to find strategies to engage parents more effectively in school activities. As a primary teacher, I have observed primary teachers who use different strategies to try to engage parents and have some parent involvement in their classroom, and I have observed other teachers use different strategies and have no parent involvement at all.

I desired to get an understanding of primary teachers' current level of parental involvement, the importance of parental involvement on student attitudes, behaviors, and performance in primary grades, and examine ways in which schools can engage parents more effectively in school activities. I was eager to learn how other teachers felt about parental involvement in their local school. As a scholar, I had to take myself out of the role of being a teacher and ground myself in the role of being a researcher. During the research process, I had to ensure that I withheld my opinions and biases related to the study topic. I found it to be challenging because of my experiences with parental involvement and my understanding of the importance it has in a child's education. I knew that a lack of parent presence in schools was a problem and effective strategies are needed, but scholars confirmed this as a problem in their research. In my literature

review, it was evident in the work of Epstein (2001) and Hoover Dempsey et al. (2007) that there is a lack of parent presence and effective parental involvement strategies are needed to engage parents in schools. Their ideas on parental involvement, on the importance of parental involvement, and on ways to engage parents in the school provided me a guide for assisting teachers with strategies that influenced my scholarship throughout the study.

Once I selected the participant group of 7 primary teachers, I was eager to begin collecting my three forms of data. Within one week, teachers consented to participating in the study and I began to schedule one-on-one interviews and distribute reflective journals and parent contact logs. After I completed my data collection and developed my findings, I began to develop my project in the genre of PD. Through this process, I learned that my findings served as a guide for project development and I learned what research-based strategies would assist teachers in engaging parents in their local school. However, developing a PD may expand their knowledge and understanding of parental involvement and provide effective strategies for attracting and encouraging parents to become active participants in school activities. As a researcher, I found that being in the role of a researcher provided me with an opportunity to gain experience in the research process and to see how my research unfolded from beginning to end. From these efforts, I learned that I could offer study participants a better opportunity to engage in professional learning where they could share their experience and insights. However, my success as a researcher contributed to my ongoing learning in the research process.

Reflective Analysis about Personal Learning

When I gained a deep understanding as an interviewer, my enthusiasm and confidence about completing my study grew. I began to see that teachers try to involve parents as partners in education for the success of all students in their real-life experiences. I captured data through ongoing conversations in both formal and informal settings. For example, I captured the lived experiences of children and their parents while attending a family game night at church. When I observed this interaction between children and their parents, I realized that all children enjoy their parents' presence especially in things that the children enjoy doing. Parent and child interactions build and strengthen parent-child relationships. I considered whether all parents understand the positive outcomes of working alongside their children or just spending time with their children.

Growth of Self as a Scholar

As I completed the research process, I considered myself a researcher. I began to see that I possessed similar qualities and commitment as known scholar researchers. This process led me to analyze my research with confidence, collect data efficiently, and use research skills to identify my findings in many pages of transcribed data and parent contact logs. For example, participants wrote in reflective journals to answer five questions within a 4-week period, where they answered the questions in a detailed, informative manner. I analyzed parent contact logs in a 4-week period along with transcribing interview responses. I had to listen to audio-taped recordings of the one-on-one interviews and transcribe them verbatim. During transcription, I had to listen, play

back the recordings, and type up responses. This was a tedious process, however, I wanted to ensure that I gave time to this data, so I could gain rich, detailed responses. I had to make sure I would see the patterns and themes that emerged from the participants' words and that I was not placing my biases into the participants' responses. As I looked at the data as a researcher, I identified the findings by identifying participants' repetitive words and ideas in all three forms of data collection. Through detailed analysis, I learned that primary teachers' perceptions and lived experiences might yield key findings.

Growth as a Practitioner

My research for this study contributed tremendously to my growth as a practitioner. I found this research process to be an opportunity for me to grow academically and professionally. The first contribution was evident in my teaching and analysis of quarterly progress monitoring assessment scores. My professional responsibilities include delivering instruction and giving progress monitoring assessments. So, immediately, I saw the research I was conducting as a doctoral researcher impacted my duties as a teacher. When analyzing assessment scores, I used my skills as a researcher to assist me in reading and analyzing data and determining whether my students have made academic progress. I began to develop teacher-created assessments to assist my students in making progress on their next test. Also, I explained to other teachers in how to read and analyze their students' data. Immediately, teachers began to know how to read and analyze their students' data and determine their students' academic needs. After each quarterly progress monitoring, data should be analyzed to identify the next steps for teaching and students' learning needs.

The second contribution was evident in my work with primary teachers at my school. I have been able to implement my research in grade level meetings and PLCs. I have shared ideas and parental involvement strategies with primary teachers as well as encouraged them to incorporate some of these strategies in their classroom. In addition, I have been encouraged to share strategies with intermediate teachers at my school. My knowledge and research experience in this study has clearly impacted my current parental involvement practices in my classroom.

Growth as a Project Developer

Developing a project gave me an opportunity to provide primary teachers with effective parental involvement strategies to use in their school. By creating a PD, I offered primary teachers an opportunity to expand their knowledge and understanding of how to engage both involved and uninvolved parents in school activities. To accomplish this, I needed to reflect upon what the findings indicated was necessary for primary teachers to engage parents in school activities. I learned that parents should be engaged with their children and teachers needed more ideas about effective strategies which they can implement to positively engage parents in school activities. A 3-day PD was designed to illustrate strategies teachers can use to attract and encourage parents whether parents are engaged or not engaged in school activities. For this reason, the 3-day PD focused on reflection, collaboration, modeling, guided conversations, and research-based strategies. I wanted to provide teachers with the knowledge and skills they need to address their attempts to engage parents, develop and implement a plan to engage parents at school and at home, and develop and implement effective strategies to address barriers that prevent

parents from school involvement. In my PD project, I sought to help teachers learn about parental involvement, the purpose and benefits of parental involvement, and effective strategies for engaging parents in school activities.

As I designed my project, I realized that the participants in my project would like to find ways they can engage parents. Therefore, I recognized that the teachers would want to engage in collaboration with their peers and develop and implement an action plan that they could use to help them engage parents in their school. This project indicated an opportunity for me to offer teachers planning and collaborative opportunities that they may not have in their current setting. As the project developer, I have grown to look at parental involvement through the eyes of the teachers as I have learned to use this study's findings to develop the content of my PD project.

Reflection on Importance of the Work

This research study is significant because I developed findings from the perceptions of primary teachers about parental involvement in school activities. The teacher participants in this study are primary teachers and have experience working in the local setting, in which, they can provide their experiences with parental involvement in school activities. Teachers with such experience can share successful and unsuccessful parental involvement strategies for getting parents to participate in school activities. This study could assist teachers with finding ways to effectively engage parents in school activities. This group of energetic teachers may create a model school for parental involvement guided by their own local school experiences and research instead of continuing with changes made by others who may not know or appreciate parent

participation in the school. In this way, teachers may create strategies that work in their local school that they can share with other schools. If this study can help teachers understand that parent participation in schools is important and that the strategies they use to engage parents can create change within their school will have far-reaching importance at the local, state, or national level. Collaborative teams of teachers are not limited to school buildings, but can connect through online blogs, discussion boards, and social media sites as well as at conferences.

As I reflect upon the importance of this work, I notice how influential collaborative and professional learning can be to an individual's professional practice. By allowing primary teachers an opportunity to reflect, collaborate, and develop an action plan through the PD, I will assist teachers with using research-based parental involvement strategies. When the first group of teachers have attended the PD and provided their feedback, additional sessions may be offered to other teachers. Therefore, these sessions may not be limited to a geographical location, but may be offered to teachers globally. Additionally, the PD sessions may be offered through webinars which would allow teachers to participate with their grade level teams, the entire school, or individually. As I reflect upon the importance of this project, I anticipate its potential impact on the lives and experiences of primary teachers who would like to expand their knowledge and understanding of parental involvement and provide strategies for engaging parents in school activities.

Implications, Applications, and Directions for Future Research

This study adds to the literature about how parents can become engaged and active participants in school activities (Epstein, 2001; Hoover-Dempsey, et al., 2007). By acquiring my findings from seven K-2 primary teachers, I have captured their perceptions and experiences about their current level of parental involvement, the importance of parental involvement, and how it affects the student. When I analyzed the data and revealed three findings, I designed a PD to assist teachers with finding ways to effectively engage parents whether they are involved or uninvolved in school activities.

Potential Influence on Social Change

As teachers reflect on their current parental involvement and their desires to find effective strategies to engage parents in the school, they express their needs for social change. By listening to teachers' responses and respecting their expertise, I can gather key information and lessons that can be shared with others who may want to take advantage of what is being shared. This study has given me an opportunity to gather and analyze data along with obtaining findings to design a PD project that can transfer key information directly to teachers who desire to find successful strategies to engage parents in the school.

The participants in the PD will bring their lived experiences and perceptions to the program. However, I began this study with a focus on the problem of a lack of parent presence and participation in an urban school, however, I did not realize how much insight study participants would share as it relates to the study topic. Throughout the study, I was amazed by the teachers' responses to the lack of parent presence and

participation in the school. The teachers' experiences and insights provide significant data for this research project. Therefore, I designed activities that could expand teachers' knowledge and understanding of parental involvement and provide effective strategies for engaging parents in school activities.

Because of this, I offered opportunities for reflection, collaboration, and action planning in each session. As the researcher in a project designed to assist teachers with research-based strategies for engaging parents in the school; it was essential to engage them in reflection, collaboration, and action planning. The potential impact for social change, therefore, may occur with teachers at the district, state, and national levels as teachers strive to change their parental involvement practice, implement successful strategies, and share their successes with other teachers through networking opportunities.

Methodological, Theoretical, and Empirical Implications

This study has important methodological, theoretical, and empirical implications because the problem that prompted it focused on a lack of parent presence in participation in an urban school in western Tennessee. The possible solutions to this problem were revealed from the lived experiences and insights of K-2 primary teachers, supported by scholarly research. In this study, the methodology that was used provided an opportunity for me to engage in communication with primary teachers through one-on-one interviews, reflective journals, and parent contact logs. Participants were provided with opportunities to reflect on the research questions and to provide their perceptions through three forms of data collection. Using a qualitative study design was the best method to

gather these experiences and perceptions to learn what participants believe about the current level of parental involvement in their local setting.

The conceptual framework of this study was based on the work of Epstein (2001) who addressed six strategies that schools can use to promote and maintain parental involvement: parenting, communicating, volunteering, learning at home, decision-making, and collaborating with the community. Hoover-Dempsey et al. (2007) focused on three sources for motivating and maintaining parental involvement practices: parents' motivational beliefs, parents' perceptions of invitations to involvement, and personal life contexts. I consistently analyzed data carefully through this lens as I focused on ways to assist teachers in finding effective strategies for engaging parents in school activities. The theoretical implications from this study imply that providing parents with different ways to participate in the school can be a driving force to promote, motivate, and maintain parental involvement in schools.

The empirical implication of this study suggests that primary teachers are good sources of information about their practice and expertise. In addition, researchers can establish this through analyzed data led by a conceptual framework that focuses on ways parents can become involved in schools and factors that contribute to parent participation. The data indicated that primary teachers use various strategies to engage parents, but they desired to find strategies that engage parents more effectively in school activities. To accomplish this goal, however, teachers have identified ways to collaborate with other teachers to identify and develop effective strategies for parental involvement.

Therefore, the empirical implication of this study suggests that additional studies that capture teachers' experiences and insights may prove useful to teachers and schools that desire to engage parents more effectively in schools. Furthermore, these studies could provide additional examples of effective practices and strategies that teachers can use for their own professional learning and growth.

Recommendations for Practice and or Future Research

In the education field, there are rich opportunities for future research that focus on capturing the experiences and expertise of primary teachers. This study's findings indicated that teachers want parents to be engaged with their children, teachers believe that parents who engage with the school frequently in contact or activity, communicate the importance of education to their children, and teachers need more ideas about effective strategies that they can implement to engage parents in school activities. Research that focuses on schools that use successful parental involvement strategies that have worked to engage parents in the schools, may be useful for potential K-2 primary teachers. Moreover, additional research that is focused on examining how schools engage parents and vice versa and ways to equip teachers and parents with developing partnerships (Sims-Schouten, 2016).

Research that focuses on the impact of parental involvement in schools can be beneficial because schools may be provided with additional parental involvement strategies that can encourage parents to become active participants in the school. Finally, research about how schools can address barriers that keep parents from participating in schools may be valuable because schools may be able to step in and assist parents with

some barriers that hinder them. Participants in this study consistently indicated when parents are engaged in the school, it communicates the importance of education to the child and more ideas are needed to effectively engage parents in the school. Therefore, research that capture data revealing ways that teachers can effectively engage parents in the school could be significant.

Conclusion

Parental involvement involves parents being active participants with their children and with professional school employees to assist in the academic success of students (Bhargava & Witherspoon, 2015). In this qualitative case study, I invited seven K-2 primary teachers to share their perceptions about the current parental involvement in their local setting. As I gathered and later analyzed the data, I attempted to grasp an understanding of this phenomenon to pinpoint how participants ascribed meaning to it (Merriam, 2009). Although parental involvement in schools has been a key topic for many national educational organizations, this study focused on primary grade teachers' perceptions of their current parental involvement in their local school and discern ways in which the school can engage parents more effectively in participating in school activities (National Association for Family, School, and Community Engagement, 2014; NEA, 2016; PTA, 2016).

The problem that prompted this study was there is a lack of parent presence and participation in an urban school in western Tennessee. When I collected and analyzed the data, I learned significant lessons that participants shared about their current levels of parental involvement, their perceptions of parental involvement in school activities, and

ways in which schools can engage parents in participating in school activities. I analyzed the data, guided by three research questions to reveal findings that captured participants' perceptions of (a) parent participation in school and home activities, (b) parent engagement in school activities, and (c) effective strategies for positive parent engagement in school activities. This study is significant because it reveals primary grade teachers' perceptions and experiences with parental involvement and ways they have engaged parents in the school. Teachers, who are aware of the impact parental involvement in school activities can have on the students and on the whole school community, may be encouraged to find effective parental involvement strategies to ensure parent presence and participation.

Therefore, the shared products of the PD participants make an important contribution to the education field. The products provide research-based evidence of ways that teachers can encourage parents, whether involved or uninvolved, to actively participate in school activities. The 21st century is a time where things are ever-changing and challenges exist when teachers must find ways to actively involve parents in their children's education and in the school. Teachers therefore, must be prepared to meet parents where they are and help them through those barriers that hinder them from being involved in the school. Teachers who are committed to utilizing effective parent involvement strategies to encourage parent involvement can provide students with promising futures and make positive contributions to school communities.

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Appendix A: Project

Goals: In this 3-day PD, teachers will be provided with the knowledge and understanding about how to engage both involved and uninvolved parents in school activities. The goal of this PD will be to provide teachers with the knowledge and skills they need to address their attempts to engage parents, develop and implement a plan to engage parents at school and at home, and develop and implement effective strategies to address barriers that prevent parents from school involvement. Teachers will learn about parental involvement, the purpose and benefits of parental involvement, and effective strategies for engaging parents in school activities. The trainer will use reflection, collaboration, modeling, guided conversations, and research-based strategies to assist teachers with finding ways to effectively engage parents in school activities.

Learning Outcomes: Teachers will be able to expand their knowledge and understanding of parental involvement and provide effective strategies for engaging parents in school activities. Teachers will engage in a self -assessment and needs assessment that will help them understand their current parent engagement practices and determine the current parental involvement needs of the school. Teachers will understand parental involvement and how to get parents involved in the school. At the end of the PD, participants will develop and implement a plan to effectively engage parents in school activities.

Target audience: Twenty K-2 primary teachers, who have volunteered to participate, will be the target audience in this project. On day 3, school administrators,

who volunteer to participate, will be invited to the planning session to provide support and feedback on effective strategies to engage parents and develop guidelines for implementing those strategies. On all three days, the PLC coach will be invited to provide support and feedback as teachers develop effective strategies to engage parents in school activities.

Components: The PD will be divided into the following topics that will help guide participants to accomplish their goal of implementing effective strategies for engaging parents in the school.

Day 1: Parental Involvement: What are our needs?

Day 2: Who's Who in Parental Involvement?

Day 3: Action planning: Tools for Engaging Parents in the School

To plan this PD project, three findings were used to guide to illustrate strategies teachers can use to attract and encourage parents whether parents are engaged or not engaged in school activities. The project was designed to assist teachers, who participate voluntarily, to find strategies that they can use to effectively engage parents in school activities. The third day of the PD has been designed to allow teachers an opportunity to develop an action plan for getting parents involved in school activities. Also, during development of the action plan, teachers will create a final product. The final product will show strategies parents can use to become involved in school activities such as making a book with their child. The participants will be asked to create a final product using a strategy that they have learned about during the 3-day sessions.

The PD activities are organized with slide shows and trainer's notes for each session. The slide shows contain all the information, links, and details needed for the trainer to facilitate the session. Participants will receive a hard copy of the slide show with a notes section as well as a projected view of the slide show. The slide shows are embedded with formative assessments along with questions for both the self-assessment and needs assessment. In addition, the questions for the summative evaluation are included in the trainer's notes for the day 3 sessions. The following charts outline the time, topic and methods used for each day of the PD program.

Day 1

Parental Involvement: What are our needs?

Time	Topic	Method
8:00-8:30	Sign-in, Icebreaker	Sign-in sheet, index card
8:30-9:00	Welcome, Introductions, and Overview of the 3-day PD	Presentation, PD trainer
9:00-10:30	Parental involvement: What are our needs?	PowerPoint Presentation, discussion
10:30-11:00	What am I doing to engage parents?	Self-assessment of teachers' parent involvement strategies
11:00-11:30	Think-Pair-Share	Paired discussion on participants' current parent involvement strategies
11:30-12:30	Lunch	On your own
12:30-1:45	Parental involvement in education	video clip, group discussion
1:45-2:30	Parental involvement: What are our needs?	Needs assessment of school's current needs for parent involvement
2:30-3:00	Closing Session	Reflective Writing/Exit Ticket

Day 2**Who's Who in Parental Involvement?**

Time	Topic	Method
8:00-8:15	Sign-in	Sign-in sheet
8:15-8:30	Icebreaker	PD trainer
8:30-10:00	What is parental involvement?	PowerPoint presentation, handout
10:00-10:30	Is parent involvement in school useful?	Article by Valerie Strauss
10:30-11:30	Think-Pair-Share	Group discussion, participants will use chart paper to write responses
11:30-12:30	Lunch	On your own
12:30-1:30	Why parents matter in education?	Parental involvement in education-video clip, whole-group discussion
1:30-2:30	Review self-assessment and needs assessment	Self-assessment, needs assessment, group discussion using chart paper
2:30-3:00	Closing Session	Reflective writing/Exit Ticket

Day 3**Action planning: Tools for Engaging Parents in the School**

Time	Topic	Method
8:00-8:30	Sign-in, Icebreaker	
8:30-10:00	How do I build parent-teacher partnerships?	
10:00-10:30	What strategies can be used to engage parents?	
10:30-11:00	Think-Pair-Share	
11:00-12:00	Lunch	
12:00-2:00	Action planning/Final product	
2:00-2:30	Final product presentations	
2:30-3:00	Closing Session/ Summative Evaluation	

Trainer's Notes for Day 1

Parental Involvement: What are our needs?

The trainer will attend to the following tasks at the beginning of the first Session, before the presentation:

- Welcome participants to the PD, introduce administrators and PLC, give an overview of the three-day PD. Explain that this is a three-day PD program that will help them expand their knowledge and understanding of parental involvement and provide effective strategies for engaging parents in school activities. Explain that on the third day, they will use what they have learned to develop an action plan as a final product. Explain that the first day of the PD will consist of identify strengths and weaknesses through a self-assessment of current parental involvement strategies and needs assessment to identify the parental involvement needs at their school.
- Write down the group norms on chart paper:
 - Be an active participant
 - Have an open mind for learning new ideas
 - Be respectful while others are speaking
 - Be honest and speak from experience
 - Keep cell phones on silent – use only for emergencies
- Ask the group if these norms work for them or if they would like to add more norms. If the group agrees on the norms, include them on the chart and daily PowerPoint presentation.
- Inform participants that they should feel free to drink water or use the rest room as needed in addition to breaks that seem necessary throughout the day.
- Inform participants that if they have any questions concerning information in the PD, they can post their questions on the parking lot poster.

- Once the welcome and introductions are done and norms are established, begin session one.

Sessions 1 – 4

- All relevant information for participants will be contained on the slide shows and the handouts of the presentations that the participants will receive during each session. Some participants will prefer to work from their computers and will receive electronic copies of the slide shows.
- Place sign-in sheet on front table to participants to sign-in each day.
- Be responsive to participants and notice when they are not engaged and need a break. A break will be given to the participants during the morning and afternoon sessions or as needed at the participants' discretion.
- Distribute chart paper and markers on each table in the room. Provide an additional table for materials to use and a stool to use for resting, when not presenting.
- Place a box at the back of the room to collect exit tickets at the end of each session.
- Hang up poster for participants to place parking lot questions.
- Slide shows are found for sessions 1-4 on the following pages of the appendix:
 - Session 1: Parental involvement: what are our needs? page 153
 - Session 2: Self-assessment: What am I doing engage parents? page

- Session 3: Parental involvement in education page 168
- Session 3: Needs assessment: what are our needs? page 175
- Session 4: Closing session page 179

Day 1 Session 1

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT: WHAT ARE OUR NEEDS?



ICEBREAKER

Who Am I?

Find out five things about the person sitting to your right.

You will introduce your person to the rest of the group using what you know about them.

You have 5 minutes!!!

GROUP NORMS

- ◉ -Be an active participant
- ◉ -Have an open mind for learning new ideas
- ◉ -Be respectful while others are speaking
- ◉ -Be honest and speak from experience
- ◉ -Keep cell phones on silent - use only for emergencies

LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this 3-day PD, participants will be able to

- ◉ Expand their knowledge and understanding of parental involvement
- ◉ Provide effective strategies for engaging parents in school activities
- ◉ Engage in a self-assessment and needs assessment that will help them understand their current parent engagement practices and determine the current parental involvement needs of their school.
- ◉ Understand parental involvement and how to get parents involved in the school.
- ◉ Develop and implement an action plan to effectively engage parents in school activities.

WHAT DO YOU SEE?



PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

Rapp and Duncan (2012) believed that parental involvement is a necessity in students' success in school. They emphasized the need for schools to engage families in student learning because students can possibly make academic gains.



WHAT'S THE PROBLEM

The problem that prompts this study is there is a lack of parent presence and participation in an urban school district in western Tennessee.

THE OUTCOMES OF PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

- ◉ Researchers explained that parental involvement is linked to children's academic and social well-being and has a significant impact on children's early years of schooling (Powell, Seung-Hee, File, & Froiland, 2012, Radzi et al. 2010, Young, Austin, & Growe, 2013).



WHAT'S THE PURPOSE

The purpose of this study is to investigate parents' participation in school activities, the current level of parental involvement, and teachers' perceptions related to ways in which this school staff can engage parents more effectively in participating in school-related activities.

WHAT CAN SCHOOLS DO TO ENGAGE PARENTS IN THEIR CHILDREN'S EDUCATION?

School can provide opportunities for parents to engage in their children's education through meaningful school-based programs (Muir, 2012).

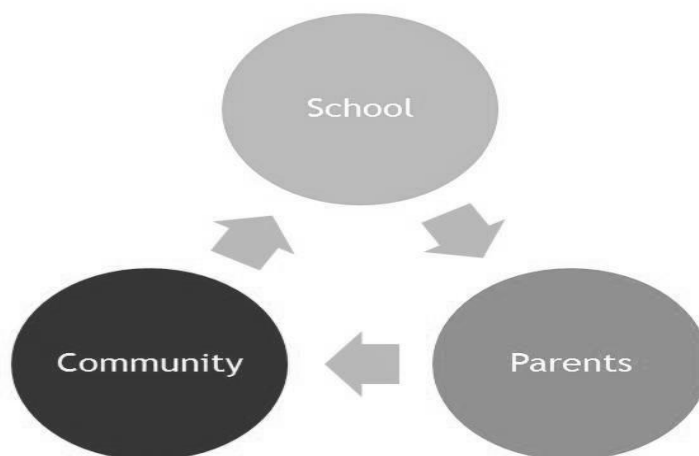


KEY STAKEHOLDERS

Family-school partnerships occur when stakeholders such as parents and school officials have a shared vision and work together to provide support to students in their education (Hands, 2013).



KEY STAKEHOLDERS



KEY STAKEHOLDERS

Stakeholders are individuals who are invested in the welfare and success of a school and its students (The Glossary of School Reform, 2014).

- ⊙ Administrators
- ⊙ Teachers
- ⊙ Staff members
- ⊙ Students
- ⊙ Families
- ⊙ Community members and leaders



KEY STAKEHOLDERS' ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

-Parents

- ⊙ Families

-School

- ⊙ Administrators
- ⊙ Teachers
- ⊙ Staff members
- ⊙ Students

-Community

- ⊙ Community members and leaders

FINDINGS

- ◉ Teachers believe parents should be more engaged with their children through participation in school related activities and in school related tasks at home.
- ◉ Teachers believe that parent who engage with the school frequently in contact or activity communicate the importance of education to their children through their actions.
- ◉ Teachers need more ideas about effective strategies which they can implement to positively engage parents in school activities.

GOALS FOR OUR 3-DAY PD

- ◉ In this 3-day PD, teachers will be provided with the knowledge and skills they need to address their attempts to engage parents, develop and implement a plan to engage parents at school and at home, and develop and implement effective strategies to address barriers that prevent parents from school involvement.
- ◉ Teachers will learn about the purpose, importance, and benefits of parental involvement, along with key stakeholders for parental involvement and their roles and responsibilities.

GOALS

- ◉ Day 1: Parental involvement: what are our needs?
-complete a self-assessment and needs assessment

- ◉ Day 2: Who's Who in Parental Involvement?
-an overview of parental involvement, including the purpose, importance, and benefits of parental involvement, along with key stakeholders for parental involvement and their roles and responsibilities.

- ◉ Day 3: Action planning: Tools for engaging parents in the school
-develop and implement an action plan to engage parents in school activities

WHAT TO EXPECT IN THE END

- ◉ Teachers will develop and implement a plan to effectively engage parents in school activities.
- ◉ Teachers will create a final product to show strategies parents can use to become involved in school activities (ex. making a book).

REFLECTION

- ◉ Using an index card, write down what you would like to learn from this 3-day PD.
- ◉ During this 3-day PD, a parking lot poster will be posted in the back for any questions you have pertaining to the content.

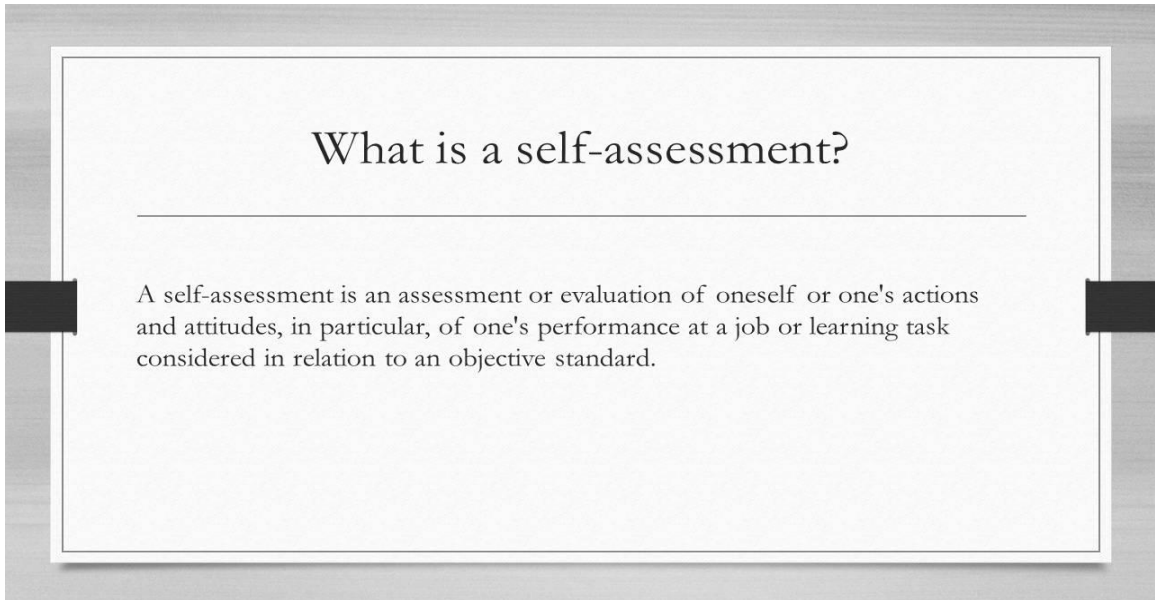
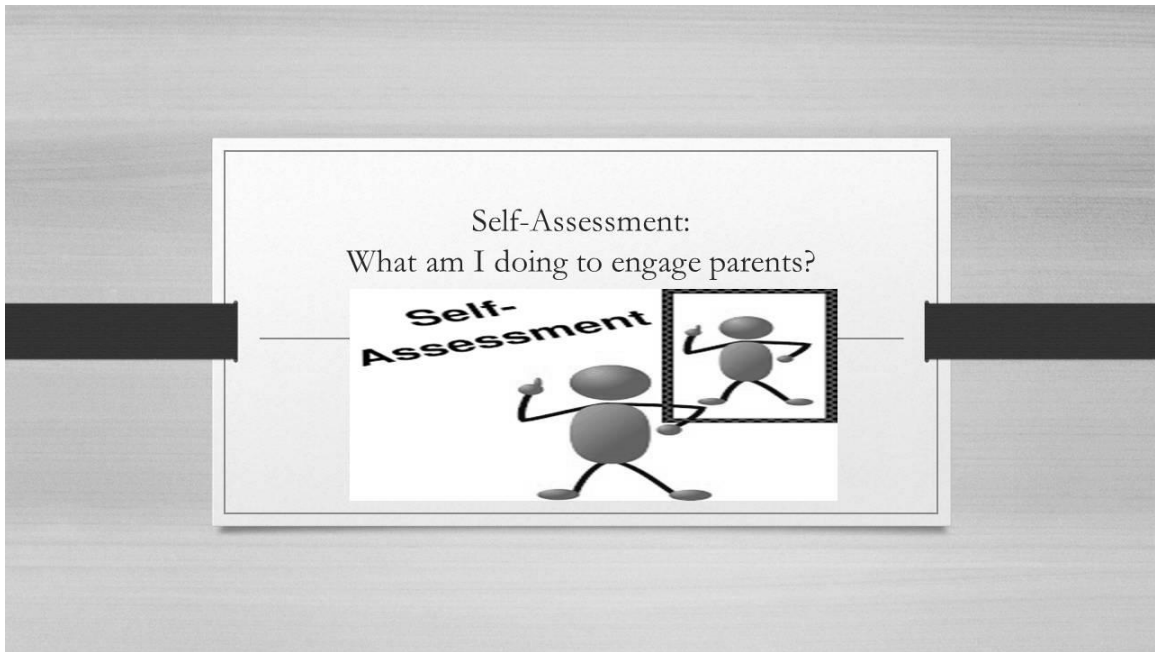
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Day 1 Session 2



Self-Assessment



- Today, we will complete a self-assessment to identify your current parental involvement practices and determine your strengths and weaknesses in engaging parents in school activities.
- Upon completion, we will share what we identified in our self-assessment about our current parental involvement practices.

Self-Assessment Focus

- Knowledge of parent involvement
- Parent involvement activities
- Practices around parent involvement and engagement

Self-Assessment

- <http://ocw.umb.edu/early-education-development/echd-440-640-ecclanguage-and-literacy-course/learning-module-1/module-13/Parent%20ENGAGEMENT%20SELF%20ASSESSMENT%20Answer%20Guide.pdf>
- This is a link for your self-assessment, but the self-assessment is in the form of a handout.
- You have 15 minutes to complete your self-assessment.

Think-Pair-Share

- Choose a partner and share your responses to your self-assessment
- What are your strengths? Weaknesses?
- How did you feel about your self-assessment? Were there any surprises?
- What type of support will you need to assist you with your strengths and weaknesses?

Take 10 minutes to discuss



Reflection

- As you attend this 3-day PD, what would you like to gain to add to your current parent involvement strategies?

We do not learn from
experience... we learn
from reflecting on
experience.

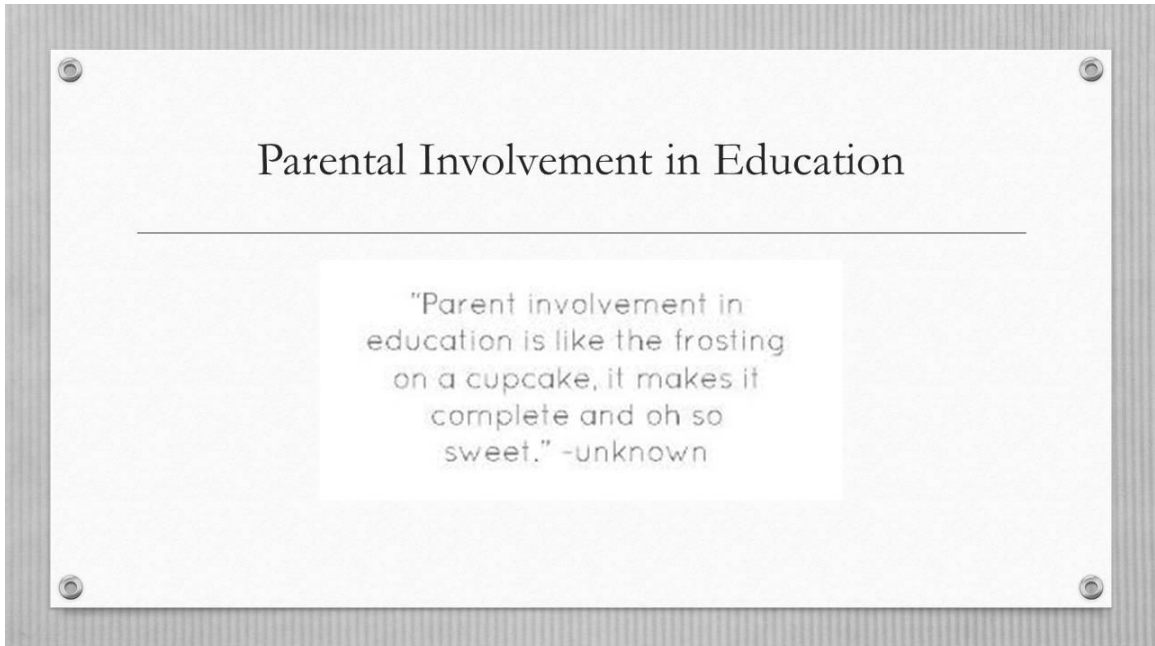
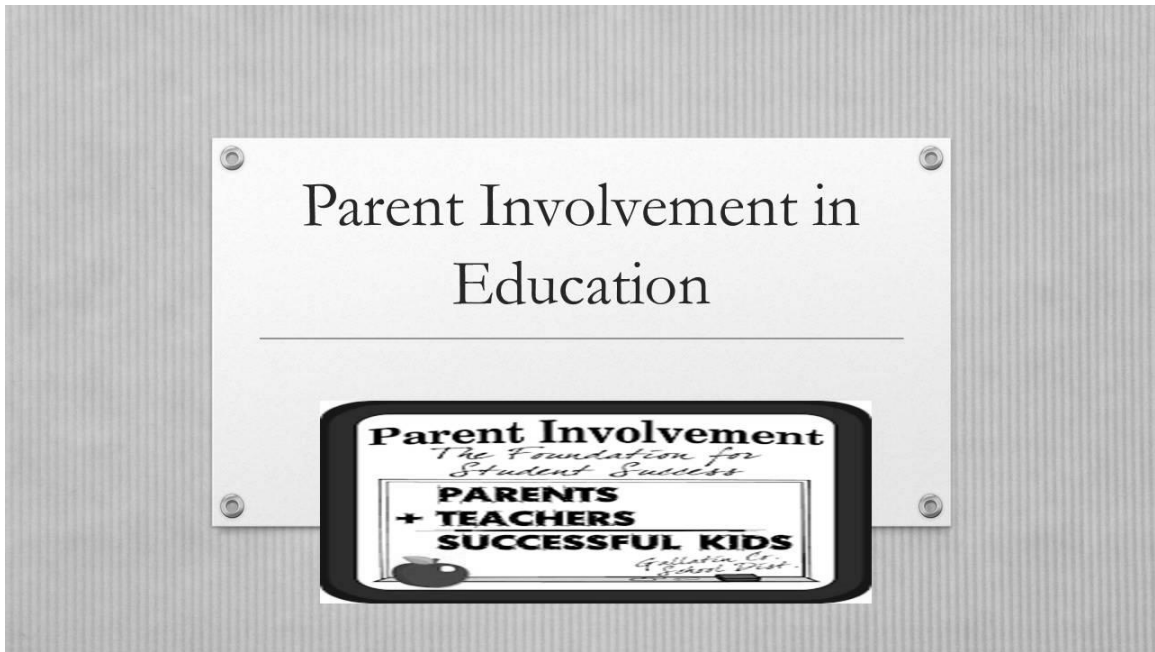
- John Dewey

Lunch

- Lunch will take place from 11:30am-12:30pm.
- Please be return on time for Session 3!

Enjoy your lunch!!!



Day 1 Session 3

Parental Involvement in Education

When parents are involved in their child's education, the child is most likely to:

- Earn higher grades and test scores
- Be promoted to the next grade level
- Attend school regularly
- Have better social skills, show improved behavior and adapt well to school
- Graduate and go on to post-secondary education

(Center for Public Education, 2011)



Parental Involvement in Education



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0973bx1bA8Y>

Turn and Talk

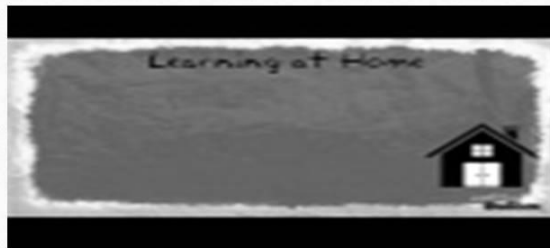
Group Discussion

In the video, Dr. Katsarou argues that parental involvement in a child's education needs to move beyond simply helping with homework towards a broader dialogue between parent and child

- Do you agree with this statement? Why or why not?
- How do you think parents can move beyond helping with homework?
- Does parental involvement include just school or home? Or both? Why?

Record your responses using chart paper and markers

How can parents become involved in education?



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xKezcODxcp>

Six Types of Involvement

Epstein's model for parental involvement addresses six types of involvement that schools can use to promote and maintain parental involvement: parenting, communicating, volunteering, learning at home, decision-making, and collaborating with the community.



Parenting



Parenting refers to assisting parents with parenting skills and building positive home conditions to support student learning.

Ex. parent education and other courses for training

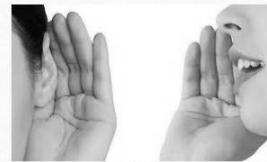
Volunteering

In volunteering, parents offer their help to contribute to the success of the school.

Ex. establish a parent center for meetings, volunteer work, and resources for parents



Communicating



In communicating, the school gains contact with parents about programs offered by the school and student's progress.

Ex. send home weekly or monthly folders, parent-teacher conferences

Learning at Home

When schools involve parents in assisting children in learning activities such as homework and school programs.

Ex. information on ways to assist families in learning activities, providing homework



Decision Making

In the process of decision-making, schools allow parents to be a part of school decisions and training them to be leaders and representatives.

Ex. active parent-teacher organization or other parent organizations



Collaborating with Community

Collaborating with the community requires the school's effort to provide students and their parents with access to community support services to support their learning.

Ex. utilizing community resources and partnerships with the community



Parental involvement: What are our needs?



Needs Assessment

What is a needs assessment?

A “*needs assessment*” is a systematic set of procedures that are used to determine *needs*, examine their nature and causes, and set priorities for future action.

(<https://www2.ed.gov/admins/lead/account/comneedsassessment.pdf>)

Needs Assessment

- Today, we will complete a needs assessment to identify your school’s current parental involvement practices and determine “what is” and “what is needed” in engaging parents in school activities.
- Upon completion, we will share what we identified in our school’s needs assessment concerning our current parental involvement practices.

Needs Assessment Focus

- Address current parental involvement needs using Epstein's six types of parental involvement
 - Parenting
 - Communicating
 - Decision Making
 - Volunteering
 - Learning at Home
 - Collaborating with Community



Needs Assessment

- http://www.heartlandaea.org/media/documents/EpsteinsSelfAssessment_ParentInvolv_10B3354118A13.pdf
- This is a link for your needs assessment, but the needs assessment is in the form of a handout.
- You have 15 minutes to complete your needs assessment.

Turn and Talk

- Choose a partner and share your responses to your school's needs assessment.
- What does your school currently do to engage parents?
- What areas need to be improved?
- How did you feel about your school's needs assessment? Were there any surprises or disappointments?
- What type of support will your school need?



Reflection

As you attend this 3-day PD, what would you like to gain to assist your school with its current parent involvement needs?



Reference

Center of Public Education (2011). Retrieved from
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www.heartlandaea.org/.../EpsteinsSelfAssessmentParentInvolv10B3354118A13.pdf

Day 1 Session 4

CLOSING SESSION DAY 1

A TIME TO REFLECT



REFLECTION

Reflect and share your responses with the group

- What did you learn today?
- How will you use what you have learned today in your classroom?
- What questions do you have?



If you have any questions, you can place them on the parking lot poster

EXIT TICKET

Write your name on a index card and answer the following statement:

Name three outcomes to parent involvement in education.

Place your exit ticket in the box at the back of the room



See you tomorrow!!!



Enjoy the rest of your day!



Trainer's Notes for Day 2

Who's Who in Parental Involvement?

Welcome participants to the second day of the PD that will focus on literature about what other schools have done to increase parent involvement. Then, the teachers will review and discuss their results from both the self-assessment and needs assessment with their table. Teachers will learn effective strategies to attract and encourage parents whether parents are engaged or not engaged in school activities.

Notes to trainer for sessions 1 - 3:

- Review the group norms
- Once again, the PowerPoint presentation are simply a frame for the day's activities.
- Review the materials for each session, making sure to include chart paper and markers, as indicated on the slides.
- Download video clips to the presentation computer and check speakers prior to the sessions.
- Place a box at the back of the room to collect exit tickets at the end of the session.
- Approach participants with an affirming attitude, with strong listening and facilitation skills.
- PowerPoint presentations are found for day 2 sessions 1-3 on the following pages of the appendix:
 - Session 1: Who's who in parental involvement? page 184
 - Session 1: What is parental involvement? page 185

- Session 2: Is parent involvement in school useful? page 191
- Session 2: Why parents matter in education? page 196
- Session 3: Closing session, page 203

Day 2 Session 1

WHO'S WHO IN PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT



LEARNING OUTCOMES (OBJECTIVES)

BY THE END OF SESSION 1, THE PARTICIPANTS WILL BE ABLE TO:

- **UNDERSTAND WHAT PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IS, ITS PURPOSE, IMPORTANCE, AND BENEFITS**
- **IDENTIFY KEY STAKEHOLDERS IN PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT AND THEIR ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

ICEBREAKER



LET'S GET TO KNOW YOUR GROUP MEMBERS A LITTLE MORE!!!

TWO TRUTHS AND A LIE

USING AN INDEX CARD, YOU WILL WRITE DOWN TWO THINGS THAT ARE TRUE ABOUT YOURSELF AND ONE THING THAT IS NOT TRUE.

AFTER YOU COMPLETE YOUR CARD, YOU WILL SHARE YOUR RESPONSES AT YOUR TABLE AND YOUR PARTNER(S) WILL GUESS WHICH ONE OF YOUR RESPONSES IS UNTRUE.

WHAT IS PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT?

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IS COMBINATION OF COMMITMENT AND ACTIVE PARTICIPATION ON THE PART OF THE PARENT TO THE SCHOOL AND TO THEIR CHILD.



WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT?

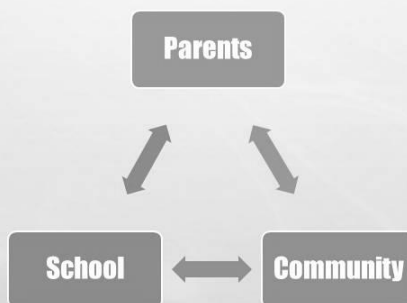
THE PURPOSE OF PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IS TO:

- PROVIDE PARENTS WITH AN OPPORTUNITY TO PLAY A PART IN THE EDUCATIONAL PROCESS
- IMPROVE SCHOOLS
- ENGAGE WITH THEIR CHILD



WHO'S WHO IN PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT?

- PARENTS
- SCHOOL
- COMMUNITY



PARENT'S ROLE IN PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

- Provide a home environment that supports learning.
- Share schools' and teachers' high expectations for students.
- Communicate with teachers and other school personnel.
- Participate in school decision making.

SCHOOL'S ROLE IN PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

- Use effective instructional strategies.
- Maintain high standards for all students by providing a rigorous curriculum.
- Understand students' diverse cultures.
- Create a professional learning community that will close achievement gaps.

COMMUNITY'S ROLE IN PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

- Maintain active partnerships with schools.
- Provide resources and opportunities that enrich school programs.
- Create a local economy that increase families' standard of living.

TURN AND TALK



"At the end of the day, the most overwhelming key to a child's success is the positive involvement of parents." ~Jane D. Hull

**TURN TO YOUR PARTNER AND DISCUSS:
WHAT DOES THIS QUOTE MEAN TO YOU?**

SIX TYPES OF PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT



LET'S REVIEW



EPSTEIN'S MODEL FOR PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT ADDRESSES SIX TYPES OF INVOLVEMENT THAT SCHOOLS CAN USE TO PROMOTE AND MAINTAIN PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT: PARENTING, COMMUNICATING, VOLUNTEERING, LEARNING AT HOME, DECISION-MAKING, AND COLLABORATING WITH THE COMMUNITY.

SIX TYPES OF PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT



BENEFITS FOR PARENTS

- **KNOWLEDGE OF HOW TO ASSIST AND SUPPORT CHILDREN**
- **INCREASED CONFIDENCE ABOUT WAYS TO HELP CHILDREN**
- **INCREASED KNOWLEDGE OF EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS AND HOW SCHOOL WORKS**

BENEFITS FOR SCHOOL

- **INCREASED TEACHING EFFECTIVENESS**
- **APPRECIATION FOR PARENT VOLUNTEERS**
- **IMPROVED MORALE**
- **INCREASE ABILITY TO UNDERSTAND FAMILIES**

BENEFITS FOR COMMUNITY

- **GREATER IMPACT ON SERVICES**
- **INCREASED ACCESS TO SERVICES TO FAMILIES**
- **RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN PARENTS AND SCHOOLS**

IS PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN SCHOOL REALLY USEFUL?

READ THE ARTICLE ENTITLED "IS PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN SCHOOL REALLY USEFUL? BY VALERIE STRUASS (HANDOUT ON THE TABLE)

[HTTPS://WWW.WASHINGTONPOST.COM/.../IS-PARENT-INVOLVEMENT-IN-SCHOOL-REALLY-USEFUL](https://www.washingtonpost.com/.../is-parent-involvement-in-school-really-useful)

THINK-PAIR-SHARE

AFTER READING THE ARTICLE, DISCUSS THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:

- **IS PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN SCHOOL REALLY USEFUL? WHY OR WHY NOT?**

- **(TAKE 10 MINUTES TO DISCUSS)**

WAYS SCHOOLS HAVE INCREASED PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

- **PARENT UNIVERSITY**
- **REALIZING THE AMERICAN DREAM (RAD)**
- **THE POSITIVE FAMILY SUPPORT-STRENGTHS AND NEEDS ASSESSMENT (PFS-SANA)**
- **SCHOOL-BASED PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT LITERACY PROGRAM**

PARENT UNIVERSITY

- **IN A STUDY ON STRATEGIES TO SUPPORT PARENT ENGAGEMENT PROGRAMS, PORTWOOD, BROOKS-NELSON, AND SCHOENEGER (2015) EVALUATED A PARENT ENGAGEMENT PROGRAM CALLED PARENT UNIVERSITY; THIS PROGRAM WAS CREATED TO HELP PARENTS BECOME ENGAGED IN THEIR CHILDREN'S EDUCATION.**
- **AS A PARENT ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY, PORTWOOD ET AL. (2015) FACILITATED THIS PROGRAM BY INVITING PARENTS TO PARTICIPATE AND PROVIDING THEM WITH ACTIVITIES SUCH AS COURSES AND WORKSHOPS THAT WERE DESIGNED TO ASSIST PARENTS IN SUPPORTING THEIR CHILDREN'S EDUCATION**

THE POSITIVE FAMILY SUPPORT-STRENGTHS AND NEEDS ASSESSMENT (PFS-SANA)

- **TO GAIN POSITIVE PARENT ENGAGEMENT, THE PFS-SANA WAS USED AS A PARENT ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY AND GIVEN TO PARENTS AT THE BEGINNING OF THE SCHOOL YEAR.**
- **PFS-SANA IS A 14-ITEM SURVEY USED TO EVALUATE PARENTS' PERCEPTIONS ABOUT THEIR CHILDREN'S SCHOOL NEEDS SUCH AS THEIR CHILDREN'S CLASSROOMS AND RELATIONSHIPS WITH THEIR PEERS.**
- **IT GIVES PARENTS AN OPPORTUNITY TO ADDRESS THEIR CONCERNS ABOUT THEIR CHILDREN'S EDUCATION AND SCHOOL.**
- **MOORE ET AL. (2016) FOUND THAT THIS WAS A GREAT TOOL TO USE EARLY ON IN THE SCHOOL YEAR AND THAT IT HELPS SCHOOLS ADDRESS ANY ACADEMIC OR BEHAVIORAL ISSUES.**
- **THE PFS-SANA ADDRESSES ACADEMIC OR BEHAVIORAL ISSUES BY ALLOWING PARENTS TO USE THE SURVEY TO PROVIDE INFORMATION FOR THEIR CHILDREN'S TEACHER WITH BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE ABOUT THEIR CHILDREN AND THEIR CHILDREN'S SCHOOL NEEDS.**

SCHOOL-BASED PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT LITERACY PROGRAM

- A STUDY BY NEWMAN AND BIZZARI (2011) WAS CONDUCTED TO IDENTIFY HOW FAMILIES CAN STAY CONNECTED TO WHAT IS TAKING PLACE IN THEIR CHILDREN'S EDUCATION.
- AS A STRATEGY TO BUILD A CONNECTION BETWEEN STUDENTS, TEACHERS, AND FAMILIES, NEWMAN AND BIZZARI (2011) USED A WRITING PROGRAM CALLED FRIDAY LETTERS TO HELP PARENTS STAY CONNECTED WITH THEIR CHILDREN'S EDUCATION.
- STUDENTS WERE ASKED TO WRITE LETTERS EVERY FRIDAY, IN WHICH, THEY INFORMED THEIR PARENTS ABOUT WHAT THEY LEARNED, THEIR BEHAVIOR, AND WHAT THEY LIKED DURING THE WEEK.
- NEWMAN AND BIZZARI (2011) FOUND THAT THE WRITING PROGRAM WAS SUCCESSFUL BECAUSE IT PROVIDED AN OPPORTUNITY FOR PARENTS TO BE INFORMED ABOUT WHAT THEIR CHILDREN LEARNED, FOR STUDENTS TO PRACTICE THEIR WRITING SKILLS, AND FOR TEACHERS AND PARENTS TO ASSIST STUDENTS IN IMPROVING THEIR WRITING.

REFERENCES

- MOORE, K. J., GARBACZ, S. A., GAU, J. M., DISHON, T. J., BROWN, K. L., STORMSHAK, E. A., & SEELEY, J. R. (2016). PROACTIVE PARENT ENGAGEMENT IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS. *JOURNAL OF POSITIVE BEHAVIOR INTERVENTIONS*, 18(4), 230-240. DOI:10.1177/1098300716632590
- NEWMAN, T. H., & BIZZARRI, S. A. (2011). FRIDAY LETTERS: CONNECTING STUDENTS, TEACHERS, AND FAMILIES THROUGH WRITING. *READING TEACHER*, 65(4), 275-280. DOI:10.1002/TRTR.01037
- PORTWOOD, S. G., BROOKS-NELSON, E., & SCHOENEBERGER, J. (2015). DATA AND EVALUATION STRATEGIES TO SUPPORT PARENT ENGAGEMENT PROGRAMS: LEARNINGS FROM AN EVALUATION OF PARENT UNIVERSITY. *CHILDREN & SCHOOLS*, 37(3), 145-153. DOI:CS/CDV018

LUNCH ON YOUR OWN

LUNCH WILL BE FROM 11:30AM-12:30PM.

**PLEASE RETURN ON TIME READY TO LEARN MORE ABOUT PARENTAL
INVOLVEMENT!!!**

Day 2 Session 2

WHY PARENTS MATTER IN EDUCATION



WHY PARENTS MATTER IN EDUCATION?



WHY PARENTS MATTER IN EDUCATION?

- PARENTS ARE A CHILD'S FIRST TEACHERS
- PRINCIPAL STAKEHOLDERS IN EDUCATION
- INFLUENCE STUDENT SUCCESS IN SCHOOL

WHY PARENTS MATTER IN EDUCATION?

RESEARCH SHOWS THAT PARENT INVOLVEMENT PLAYS A SIGNIFICANT ROLE IN IMPROVED STUDENT OUTCOMES (BOWER, 2011, LLOYD-SMITH & BARON, 2010) .

WHY PARENTS MATTER IN EDUCATION?



[HTTPS://WWW.YOUTUBE.COM/WATCH?V=WK-Y10G5W0](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Wk-Y10G5W0)

TURN AND TALK

DISCUSS THE FOLLOWING QUESTION WITH YOUR PARTNER:

WHY PARENTS MATTER IN EDUCATION?

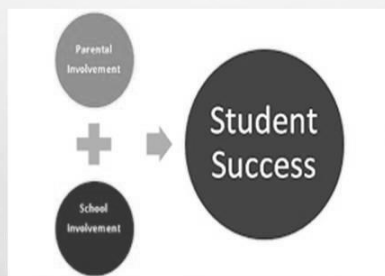
***RECORD YOUR ANSWERS USING CHART PAPER AND MARKERS**

LET'S SHARE

WHOLE GROUP DISCUSSION

SHARE YOUR GROUP'S RESPONSES TO THE QUESTION: IS PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN SCHOOL REALLY USEFUL?

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT?



WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT?

ACADEMIC BENEFITS

- POSITIVE STUDENT ATTITUDES TOWARD SCHOOL
- STUDENTS ATTEND SCHOOL REGULARLY
- INCREASE IN STUDENT TEST SCORES
- IMPROVEMENT IN GRADES

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT?

BEHAVIORAL BENEFITS

- LOWER DROP-OUT RATES
- HIGHER SELF-ESTEEM
- IMPROVED BEHAVIOR IN SCHOOL
- INCREASE IN ATTENDANCE RATE

BARRIERS TO PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

- **CULTURAL DIFFERENCES**
- **LACK OF KNOWLEDGE ABOUT THE EDUCATIONAL PROCESS**
- **WORK SCHEDULE**
- **NEGATIVE PAST EXPERIENCES**
- **CHILD CARE CONSTRAINTS**
- **LACK OF SCHOOL SUPPORT**

LET'S TALK IT OUT!



DISCUSS YOUR SELF-ASSESSMENT AND NEEDS ASSESSMENT RESULTS WITH THE INDIVIDUALS AT YOUR TABLE.

AS YOU COMPLETED THIS ASSIGNMENT YESTERDAY, WHAT DID YOU NOTICE?

WHAT WERE YOUR END RESULTS FROM BOTH THE SELF-ASSESSMENT AND NEEDS ASSESSMENT?

RECORD YOUR ANSWERS USING CHART PAPER AND MARKERS

REFERENCES

- **BOWER, H. A., & GRIFFIN, D. (2011). CAN THE EPSTEIN MODEL OF PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT WORK IN A HIGH-MINORITY, HIGH-POVERTY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL? A CASE STUDY. *PROFESSIONAL SCHOOL COUNSELING, 18*(2), 77-87 .**
- **LLOYD-SMITH, L., & BARON, M. (2010). BEYOND CONFERENCES: ATTITUDES OF HIGH SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS TOWARD PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN ONE SMALL MIDWESTERN STATE. *SCHOOL COMMUNITY JOURNAL, 20*(2), 23-44.**

Day 2 Session 3

OUR CLOSING SESSION
DAY 2



LET'S REFLECT ON OUR LEARNING



REFLECTION

Reflect and share with the group

- What did you learn today?
- How will you use what you have learned today in your classroom?
 - What questions do you have?

EXIT TICKET

Using an index card, answer the following question:

Why do parents matter in education?

Place your exit ticket in the box at the back of the room

CLOSING SESSION

See you tomorrow for our last day of PD!!!



Trainer's Notes for Day 3

Action planning: Tools for Engaging Parents in the School

Greet the participants to welcome them to the third and final day of the 3- day PD.

The following notes are specific to the sessions for the third day, especially since most of the day will be focused on teachers developing and implement an action plan to effectively engage parents in school activities. The third day has also been designed for teachers to create a final product (ex. making a book) showing a strategy that can use to engage parents. It is also a time when the trainer circulates, pairs up participants to collaborate and assists participants individually with their action plans. The role of the trainer is one of the facilitator who will assist participants with their action plan efforts. The following notes relate specifically to the sessions in the order that they are scheduled. Please refer to the timeline for additional information about the specific times for sessions.

Session 1: Parent-Teacher Partnerships/Action Plan Preparations

In this session, participants will learn about parent-teacher partnerships and its benefits. Then, the participants will brainstorm ideas for action planning and final product. Each group will brainstorm what strategies they will use to develop and implement their action plans. In session 2, the participants will create their plans and final products using their ideas.

Session 2: Action Planning Presentations

Once the participants have brainstormed ideas, they will create an action plan and final product using the information they have gained from the PD. As set aside in the

schedule, participants will engage in developing an action plan and final product that they can use to engage parents in their school. After the participants have developed their action plans and final product, they will share what they have created with the rest of the group. After the action planning activity, the participants will be allowed to reflect on what they have created, how they will implement their plans, and what they have learned from the activity. This section will also provide a summative assessment for the 3 day PD.

Participants will write a response to six narrative questions:

1. Was the presentation of related information helpful?
2. How effective was the content presented during this PD?
3. Please explain how you intend to use the content gained from this PD.
4. What part of the PD was most valuable to you?
5. What strategies will you use to engage parents in your school?
6. For future PD, how can this PD be improved to meet teachers' needs?

PowerPoint presentations are found for day 3 sessions 1-3 on the following pages of the appendix:

- Session 1: Parent-teacher partnerships/Action Planning Preparations, page 208
- Session 2: Action Planning Presentations, page 215
- Session 2: Summative Evaluation, page 217

Day 3 Session 1

Action Planning:

TOOLS FOR ENGAGING PARENTS IN THE SCHOOL



Learning Outcomes (Objectives)

- By the end of session 1, the participants will be able to:
- ▶ Identify ways to build parent-teacher partnerships
 - ▶ Identify effective strategies for engaging parents

Icebreaker

How well do you know your partner?

Write down 3 things that you have learned about one person during this 3-day PD.

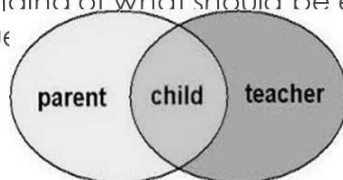
Parent-teacher partnerships



Parent-teacher partnerships

What is a parent-teacher partnership?

A parent-teacher partnership is a relationship between parents and teachers focused on meeting the needs of children. This partnership includes but is not limited to clear understanding of what should be expected from a child and frequent communication.



What does research say about parent-teacher partnerships?

Schools can engage parents by forming family-school partnerships and involving them in making decisions and supporting school-related activities such as the parent-teacher association (Shaikah, 2013).

Family-school partnerships play a vital role in children's academic and social-emotional development (De Bruine et al., 2014).

Family-school partnerships occur when stakeholders such

How do I build parent-teacher partnerships?

What can teachers and schools do to build parent-teacher partnerships?

- ▶ Provide information or workshops on parenting.
- ▶ Provide information about family support services and resources in the community.
- ▶ Develop an understanding of family backgrounds, cultures, and views of education.
- ▶ Develop learning activities for parents to do at home with their child.

How do I build parent-teacher partnerships?

What can parents do to build parent-teacher partnerships?

- ▶ Attend parent workshops and read information that is sent home
- ▶ Inform teachers about their cultural backgrounds and views about education
- ▶ Inform teachers about any conditions that affect their child's learning
- ▶ Support and attend school efforts and activities

Challenges to building parent-teacher partnerships

- ▶ Engaging parents who are working and very busy
- ▶ Providing information to parents that are clear, usable, and linked to their children's success
- ▶ Gaining effective lines of communication between teachers and parents
- ▶ Encouraging parents to participate in school activities

How do I build parent-teacher partnerships?

Make it positive!!!

Teachers often communicate with parents when a child's grades are low or when a child misbehaves in school. Parents want to know what their child is doing well, so it helps when teachers communicate positive things about a child. This helps parents become more responsive.

Make it practical!!!

Make specific suggestions to parents about how they can assist and support their child in their schooling.

What strategies can be used to engage parents?

- ▶ Send newsletters home including information about events and things to know
- ▶ Clear information about school policies and programs
- ▶ Annual survey of parents and students' needs and opinion about school programs
- ▶ Send weekly or monthly folders home for parents to review and comment
- ▶ Parent and student pick up report cards
- ▶ Continuous communication between parents and schools
- ▶ Conferences at least once a year with every parent and follow-up as needed

Think-Pair-Share

- ▶ You will work with your group to brainstorm ideas for your action plan and final product.

Lunch

- ▶ Lunch will be on your own from 11:00am-12:00pm.
- ▶ Please return on time!



Enjoy your lunch!

References

- ▶ De Bruïne, E. J., Willemse, T. M., D'Haem, J., Griswold, P., Vloeberghs, L., & van Eynde, S. (2014). Preparing teacher candidates for family-school partnerships. *European Journal of Teacher Education*, 37(4), 409-425. doi:10.1080/02619768.2014.912628
- ▶ Hands, C. (2013). Including all families in education: school district-level efforts to promote parent engagement in Ontario, Canada. *Teaching Education*, 24(2), 134. doi:10.1080/10476210.2013.786893
- ▶ Shaikah, A. (2013). The role of leadership in engaging

Day 3 Session 2

ACTION PLANNING



ACTION PLANNING

By the end of session 2, the participants will be able to:

- Develop and implement an action plan for effectively engaging parents in school activities.
- Create a final product (ex. making a book) showing a strategy that can be used to engage parents.

ACTION PLANNING

Using what they have learned, participants will create an action plan and final product using what they have learned during the 3-day PD.

Happy Planning!!!

ACTION PLAN PRESENTATIONS

Participants will share their action plan and final product of how to engage parents in school activities.

PD EVALUATION

- Fill out the handout and place it in the box in the back of the room.
- Answer the following questions:
- Was the presentation of related information helpful?
- How effective was the content presented during this PD?
- Please explain how you intend to use the content gained from this PD.
- What part of the PD was most valuable to you?
- What strategies will you use to engage parents in your school?
- For future PD, how can this PD be improved to meet teachers' needs?

THANK YOU!!!

Thank you for attending this 3-day PD!!!



Appendix B: Invitation Letter

Dear Teachers,

My name is Darlisha Beard, a doctoral student at Walden University. I am conducting a study on “Perceptions of Primary Teachers about the Importance of Parental Involvement on Student Performance.” The purpose of this study is to investigate the perceptions of primary teachers on the current level of parental involvement; the impact parental involvement may have on student performance in primary grades, and examine ways in which schools can engage parents more effectively in participating in school-related activities. I am inviting primary teachers in grades K-2 to be in the study. If you agree to be in this study, you will be asked to participate in one-on-one interviews, to provide a copy of your parent contact logs (with parent names, student names and telephone contact numbers removed), and to keep a reflective journal.

Your participation will be voluntary. There will be no compensation for your participation. Any information you provide will be kept confidential. Your personal information will not be shared with anyone. If you choose to participate, please read the attached Informed Consent Agreement. If you decide that you no longer want to participate, you may withdraw at any time.

If you like to participate and/or have any questions, please do not hesitate to email me or call me.

Thank you,

Darlisha Beard

Appendix C: Interview Questions

Thank you for participating in this interview today. You will be asked some questions about the current level of parental involvement in your school. The interview will last 30-60 minutes in length. The interview will be audio-taped during this session. If you decide that you no longer want to participate, you can withdraw from this interview. If you withdraw, there is no penalty and your information will be discarded.

Date: _____

Interviewer: _____

Interviewee: _____

1. How do you perceive the current level of parental involvement in this school?
2. In what ways do you perceive that parental involvement or lack of parental involvement impact student attitudes, behaviors and/or academic performance in this local school?
3. How do you involve parents in your classroom?
4. How do you view the role of parents as it relates to their child's academic performance?
5. How do you think school administrators and teachers try to encourage parent involvement?
6. What do you see as barriers to parental involvement at this school?
7. How has school administrators and teachers dealt with some of these barriers?
8. What strategies do you believe will be effective in engaging parents to participate in school activities?

9. In your opinion, what are some strategies that parents can use to help their child succeed academically?

10. Have you had any professional development related to parent involvement that has supported you in involving parents to participate in their child's school services/program? Please describe.

Appendix E: Reflective Journal

Week 1 Journal Entry:

How does parental involvement affect the student? ...student behaviors? ...student attitudes? Give an example.

Week 2 Journal Entry:

This week, how can you, as a teacher, engage parents in participating in your classroom? Why do you believe these strategies will help?

Week 3 Journal Entry:

This week, what are some challenges you have had with parental involvement? Give an example.

Week 4 Journal Entry:

This week, what are some successes you have had with parental involvement? Give an example.