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ABSTRACT

A practicum was developed to improve the involvement of minority parents and low-income families in the education of their children. Subjects were 30 parents and 17 teachers and staff. A parent resource center was organized at a Head Start site in a public housing community where parents attended workshops and were provided with school and community resources. Workshops designed to build self-confidence were held for parents. Topics covered included understanding child development and helping children with homework. Parents participated in language enrichment activities and reviewed and completed materials printed by the school district. Handbooks were developed for parents and for the teachers and school staff. Results of the practicum indicated that the organization of a parent resource center in the public housing community helped parents build self-confidence in their ability to gain access to school and community resources. Findings indicated that about half of the parents initiated at least two contacts with their child's teacher, and half of the teachers actively sought parent participation in school activities. Appendixes contain questionnaires administered to the parents and teachers. (Contains 26 references.) (SM)

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**Strengthening The Parent School Partnership:
Improving Access of Minorities to School and Community
Resources**

by

Brenda Goza George

Cluster XL

A Practicum II Report presented to the Ed. D. Program in Child
and Youth Studies in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
the Degree of Doctor of Education

NOVA UNIVERSITY

1993

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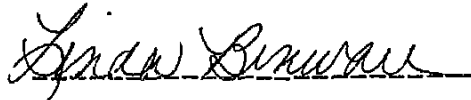
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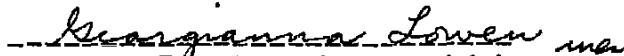
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Approved:

10-21-93
Date of Final Approval
of Report


Dr. Georgianna Lowen. Adviser

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"Until schools acknowledge the range in dispositions, backgrounds, experiences, and strengths among families, efforts to establish sound home/school communication and partnerships will continue to falter."

Patricia A. Edwards and Lauren S. Jones Young

Phi Delta Kappan September 1992

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Abstract

Strengthening the Parent School Partnership: Improving Access of Minority Families to School and Community Resources. George, Brenda Goza, 1993. Practicum II Report, Nova University, Ed. D. Management of Programs for Children and Youth. Descriptors: Parent School Partnerships/Building Parent School Partnerships with Minority Families/ Parent School Partnerships With At Risk Families Improving/Access to School and Community Resources for Minority Families/Building Strong Parent School Partnerships with African American Families/ Building Parent School Partnerships with Socio-Economically Disadvantaged Families / Parent Resource Centers for Accessing School and Community Resources in Public Housing for Families with Students in Regular and/or Exceptional Education.

The goal of this practicum was to improve the parent school partnership with minority and/or economically disadvantaged families. Three broad objectives were designed to achieve this goal: (1) That there would be an organization of a parent resource center in the public housing community for workshops and parent library to help parents to build self confidence in their own ability to access the school and community resources; (2) That the parents will increase contact with the school; (3) That there will be increased leadership from teachers to involve parents with the school.

During the eight month practicum period the organization of the parent resource center was coordinated by a committee made up of representatives from various agencies serving minority and/or economically disadvantaged populations. Teachers were encouraged to take a leadership role toward involving parents in their child's education by utilizing the parent resource center. Efforts were made to provide user friendly information for parents regarding school and community programs and resources. Parents were encouraged to be active participants in their child's education.

The outcomes of the practicum were positive. The school district is considering duplicating this initiative in other parts of the district in order to be more accessible to their school customers.

Permission Statement

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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

Description of Work Setting and Community

The writer is employed by a large suburban school district located near a metropolitan city. The community is in a densely populated area, with a total PreK thru 12 population of 97,000 students, making it the sixth largest school district in the state. This puts the school district in the top 25 percent of the largest school districts in the nation.

The school district has the same boundary lines as the county, and is located on a long thin peninsula. The distance from north to south is approximately 45 miles. The northern part of the school district has a large ethnic minority population, and there are several black communities located through out the county with a large concentration in the southern section. The district has been under court ordered busing for approximately 22 years, and spends over 7 million dollars of its' yearly operating budget to transport students in order to guarantee racial balance.

Writer's Work Setting and Role

The work setting for the writer is in the Gifted and Able Learners Division of the Exceptional Education Department, and specifically as a coordinator of a state funded grant for identifying potentially gifted minority students for referral to programs for gifted and able learners. The student population with which the writer is involved includes four to five year olds at Head Start or comparable preschool programs, and elementary kindergarten through grade five minority and/or economically disadvantaged students. Minority is defined as one whose racial/ethnic background is other than white non-hispanic, who is limited English proficient, or who is from a low socioeconomic status family.

The writer works with the families of Head Start students identified as potentially gifted to help them develop their children's strengths, and to remediate their children's weaknesses in order to reach their full potential. This has a two fold purpose, to qualify their children for placement in the gifted program and/or academic excellence programs, and to help the families become involved in the education of their child or children.

In addition, the writer is also responsible for developing the district plan to increase the number of minority and/or economically disadvantaged students

placed in the gifted program through a new identification process, and to provide for teacher training and greater parent involvement.

The identification plan will be piloted in six elementary schools in the school district during the 1992-93 school year, and will be instituted district wide in seventy elementary schools by the 1993-94 school year. This responsibility was given to the writer as a direct result of the development of a matrix, developed by the writer, to identify minority preschool students for referral to the gifted program.

Chapter II

STUDY OF THE PROBLEM

Problem Description

Minority and economically disadvantaged families are generally uncomfortable with the public education system. The school is viewed as a place where their child or children will have very little success. These parents, or often grandmothers, are afraid and unsure of their own ability to communicate with the school. The parents feel alienated by the educational jargon and forms which they do not completely comprehend. Some parents just do not understand the educational bureaucracy.

Communications from the school are almost always perceived by these families as an indicator of a problem. Students say they are going to be "in trouble" if they bring any papers home from school.

Briefly stated, the problem was minority and/or economically disadvantaged families were intimidated by the educational bureaucracy, and they did not understand their role in the education of their child or children.

Problem Documentation

The participants in parent workshops expressed the lack of interest by the school for them or their child. Scheduling of conferences and school meetings were arranged without taking into consideration parents' limited access to transportation. School newsletters always shared programs and community activities for the area in the school community, but not activities for students bused in from other communities (court ordered busing).

Their families were excluded from after school activities because there was no late transportation available for their children. The schools did not come into the community for meetings with minority and/or economically disadvantaged families who live far away, and the families did not have private or public transportation available to them. Some parents even tried to ride the school bus with their child just to meet the teachers or attend a school activity, but were turned away because of school policy.

Interviewing principals indicated there was very little participation in parent-teacher organizations by the minority families (Table 1). Some principals have sent school buses to pick up parents for evening school

meetings, but the attendance was very low because in high crime areas it is too dangerous to be seen walking from the bus drop off.

Table 1
Responses from Interviews with Educators

| | Principal | Professor | Teacher |
|---|-----------|-----------|---------|
| Poor Participation In School Organizations & School Activities | X | x | x |
| Lack of Home Visits By School Personnel | | x | |
| Communications from Schools Are Insensitive to Minority Families Reading Level and Resources | | x | x |
| No Follow-up by School to Invite Parents to the School | | | x |
| Assumes Parents Know How to Help Their Child at Home With School Skills | | x | |
| Parents Perceive School Hostile and Insensitive to Their Abilities Because They Are Poor | | x | |
| Parents Do Not Know They Can Initiate School Conference | | | x |

An interview (Table 1) with a professor, of the local junior college who worked with parent education programs, indicated there was a lack of home visit contacts by the school with minority families, which are needed in order to build trust with the school. These families perceived the

school as hostile and insensitive to their abilities because in the eyes of the school they are poor and somewhat limited.

Communications from schools were insensitive to the minority families; in particular, the reading level was inappropriate. The families therefore did not identify with the school as a source of support. In addition, schools wrongly assumed all families knew how to help their child or children be successful in school and would do so if they were interested.

In an interview with the lead teacher at a preschool center serving minority families (Table 1) it was indicated there was no real follow up after the beginning of the school year to invite parents to volunteer and/or visit at school. Only those parents who asked seem to get involved. There was a lack of confidence by minority parents in their own ability to help in the academia of the classroom, such as reading a story or working on a computer.

A letter sent home by the school for a conference was not followed up with a phone call to invite the parent to come in, or to suggest the possibility of scheduling at a more appropriate time. Parents did not know they could initiate a conference.

Information sent home with lots of small writing made it a struggle to read, and was frequently put aside. There was a lack of confidence in their own abilities as parents, which made it difficult for them to perceive their child as being successful in school.

Causative Analysis

It is the writer's belief that there were at least ten causes for the problem. Minority families were intimidated by the education jargon and bureaucracy. The paperwork alone, just to get a child registered for school, was overwhelming, and this was only the beginning of the labyrinth if the child was to be considered for placement in an exceptional education program. The school did not communicate to the parent the need for a partnership with the family by soliciting input from the family. Instead, the school was more directing, projecting an attitude of this is the way things are done regardless of the stumbling blocks for the parent. It was no wonder there was such animosity toward the schools.

Court ordered busing caused the students to be bused far from their homes (maximum of 14 miles) and the bused students were rotated to different schools every two years. This further distanced minority families from identifying with the school. These families usually did not have access to private transportation in order to be more involved in far away school activities.

Schools did not take the time to win the trust of the minority family. Trust does not happen in one school year or in just one parent neighborhood meeting. Many of these

families were very hesitant to get involved with a program or with a group of individuals from the outside. These families felt very vulnerable to any perceived criticism of themselves or their children. Therefore, they would not allow themselves to be put in this position when they already felt inadequate enough in a school environment. Many of them did not experience success in school and had little expectation their children should be able to have any possible chance of doing better than they did.

Communications from the school to the home were not language appropriate and were insensitive to minority families and their needs. There was not enough personal contact, i.e., telephone, notes, initiated by the school to reach out to the minority community in order to increase communication and involvement. Minority families lacked the self-confidence to initiate communications with the school, such as for parent/teacher conferences, school volunteer, or membership on a school advisory committee.

Minority families did not understand how they could improve their child's chances for success in school by accessing the school and community resources. There was a real lack of leadership by schools to actively initiate parent involvement from these families.

Relationship of the Problem to the Literature

Many professionals report concerns about the need for strengthening the parent school partnership among minorities and economically disadvantaged families. The low participation by families of that portion of the school population can be attributed to many factors, including resistance to early reading, atypical cultural activities, environmental limitations, and little exposure to or encouragement of skills that help children experience success in the education environment (Stronge, Lynch & Smith, 1987).

Parents of students from minority and/or economically disadvantaged families are not known to be good managers of their children's education careers because many have not had successful experiences with their own education (Natriello, McDill, & Pallas, 1990). Therefore, many of these parents cannot be expected to have the skills necessary for providing their children with the support to be successful in the school environment without some guidance and support from the school for their efforts.

Other literature gives evidence of the need for strengthening the family school partnership. For a number of years research on family environment has shown that involvement and support of the family in the educational process, such as when there is a common goal, has a high

correlation of success for the student (Epstein, 1983; McDill & Rigsby, 1973; Morse, 1992; and others).

The simultaneous influence of schools and families on students is often ignored in research and practice. Sociologists who study families very seldom study how the family affects student success in school or how school practices affect family attitudes, interactions, and practices (Epstein, 1990).

The literature reveals several causes for the problem. There is a frequent rejection of the achievement ethic stressed in school, vis-a-vis the family need for survival in the home; the discrepancy between reality at home and the goal of future success taught at school (Stronge, et. al., 1987). In addition, there is an absence of working class role models in many minority neighborhoods to encourage young people to strive for success in school and work (Wilson, 1987).

The interrelations between three variables which are indicative of a child with unique needs are: cultural diversity (racial, ethnic, and language different from the dominant culture), socioeconomic deprivation, and geographical isolation; all of which contribute either individually or collectively to the acquisition of skills necessary for success in school (Baldwin, 1991).

The economically disadvantaged and/or minority family and community may be educationally lacking, but not necessarily socially deficient. These families may be

too poor to provide an educationally stimulating environment for their children, making their experiences incompatible with skills needed for success in the majority culture school community, such as, limited language dialogue or when a language other than English is spoken. This is an educational deficiency, not a social deficiency (Natriello, McDill et. al., 1990).

Teachers and other school personnel frequently view low income students quite different from the way they are viewed by their parents. Information is usually not solicited from the family, and the schools' perception of the child is viewed as more important than the parent's. There is very little collaboration between the two (Casanova, 1988). The parent then becomes more doubtful about their own ability to get involved in the educational process, and therefore these parents further relinquish their role or any ownership in the educational planning and support for their child.

Many schools leave it up to the families to decide how the family will become involved in their children's education, taking a more or less laissez-faire attitude (Epstein, 1990). This leaves the ownership up to the parent for becoming involved with the school. When conception of what families should be doing, as perceived by the school, does not mesh with what is in reality happening then educators attribute this failure to parents irresponsibility and/or lack of interest (Wade & Baker, 1990).

In many communities the adults and institutions in children's lives are pulling in opposite directions. Even though schools may stress the importance of parents as the child's first and most important teacher the parents are excluded from exchanges with schools (Edwards & Young, 1992). Meetings are scheduled during the parents working hours and/or there is very little opportunity to observe in the school, or to participate in other school activities, thus demonstrating a lack of sensitivity by the schools to the variations in school families and their needs. Many school services are viewed by the school only from the perspective of the school and not from the perspective of the family. In other words, it is viewed only by what the school feels is needed and not from the reality of what the family is able to provide as a resource either monetarily or in quality time. Thus the school frequently tends to be all controlling by working in isolation from the family, the culture, and the community itself (Stevens & Price, 1992). The role of the school cannot be that of the dictator, making assumptions without taking into consideration many family situations. In other words, the parent or family cannot be asked or expected to give something which it does not have. The family needs to be viewed as a resource and not as an audience (Stevens & Price, 1992), playing a passive role.

When schools and families are viewed as separate spheres of influence teachers never contact parents unless there is a behavior or learning problem. On the other side,

minority parents only contact the school if their child is unhappy, for fear their child will be disciplined if the parent interferes (Epstein, 1990). The chance for communication then becomes centered around a confrontational arena, which is not conducive to a long term partnership of great accomplishments. This permits the two separate spheres to find fault with each other. The child then becomes the ultimate loser because the two spheres of influence do not operate with one common goal or vision.

Schools have taken on the responsibility of education by delegation, just like any other municipal service (Seeley, 1989). Many parents often perceive this as a signal that they do not have to be involved. As long as the community of parents, citizens, and schools themselves operate under this premise or mind set the barriers to effectively developing successful educational programs for minority students will be filled with roadblocks (Seeley, 1989).

Preschool programs such as Head Start have from the onset promoted strong comprehensive services to students and an active involvement with their families (Lombardi, 1990). This type of support has not been continued in public schools, and this may contribute to the alienation felt by many minority families. Without the support and help of continued and sustained efforts of the educational and social progress of disadvantaged students and their families there will be no sustained impact on the lives of these students (Council for Economic Development, 1989).

CHAPTER III
ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES AND EVALUATION INSTRUMENTS

The following goals and outcomes were projected for this practicum:

Goals and Expectations

The goal is that the parent school partnership with minority and/or economically disadvantaged families will improve.

Expected Outcomes

Outcome One

That the organization of a parent resource center in the public housing community, for workshops and a parent library, will help parents to build self confidence in their own ability to access the school and community resources.

Outcome Two

That the parents will, in fact, increase their contact with the school.

Outcome Three

That there will be increased leadership from teachers to involve parents with the school.

Measurement of Outcomes

Outcome one will be evaluated by using the post parent questionnaire. If 50% of thirty or more parents expected to be surveyed indicate any increase in their level of confidence, over that at the beginning of the practicum implementation, about accessing school and community resources, by answering yes to any two of the three questions dealing with confidence (i.e., one, two, or seven), the project outcome will be considered a success.

Outcome two will be evaluated by a parent kept log. If 50% of thirty or more participating parents register in their log at least two parent initiated contacts with the teacher or the school during the school year the project outcome will be considered a success.

Outcome three will be evaluated by using a teacher pre-questionnaire and a teacher post questionnaire. If 30% of the participating teachers and staff indicate they made five or more attempts to involve minority and/or economically disadvantaged families in a parent school partnership, the project will be considered a success.

Mechanism for Recording Unexpected Events

The writer will keep a log for recording events during the practicum. The opportunity to work with different agencies in the community, such as, Head Start which is not part of the school system, and the public school affords the opportunity to coordinate a cooperative effort for building a strong parent-school partnership in the public housing community. This affords everyone the chance to do some problem solving in order to adjust to unforeseen changes which are bound to happen along the way. This will be an excellent opportunity to grow.

CHAPTER IV SOLUTION STRATEGY

Discussion and Evaluation of Possible Solutions

The literature revealed that schools should institute policies and practices to support family involvement because the parents play such a critical role in the success of their child's education (National Commission on Children, 1991). By strengthening and supporting families as part of an intervention process schools can enable parents to become more confident and competent in their own abilities. The parent then can become a decision maker and improve his/her skills for accessing other networks of support at the school and in the community at large (Gurainick, 1991).

Epstein, of the Johns Hopkins Educational Center for Research on Effective Schooling for Disadvantaged Students, recommended schools design and test more effective ways of providing clear communications to the home and to those in the home whom the school has tried to reach (Brandt, 1989). School communication strategies for working with families must be diverse. It has been important to keep in mind the many variables (i.e., level of literacy, language preferred for reading or writing, and parents' level of comfort for being involved with their

child's education) which interferes with clear communication (D'Angelo & Adler, 1991). Emphasis on communication skills which are sensitive to the parents' interest and abilities, such as their reading and writing skills, was strongly recommended (Lazzari and Kilgore, 1989). This helps families to be more comfortable about communicating with the school.

James Comer (1981), of Yale University who has been working with schools to change the way they serve poor and minority students, has stood for the belief that effective schools must include parents in various roles in school life, with particular emphasis on fostering teachers, schools and family relationships which have been recognized by other authorities (Natriello, McDill, & Pallas, 1990). By pulling these people together to work in partnership, rather than separate units, the school and family worked together more effectively .

The Institute for Responsive Education developed a project entitled "Schools Reaching Out". Its purpose was to redesign and expand the scope of parent involvement, and to create a broader definition of parent, (i.e., the use of family as a more realistic term with the intended purpose of initiating efforts to reach the hard to reach families at the school and in their community) (Davies,1991).

Epstein's (1990) findings defined five major types of parent involvement needed in order to have a comprehensive program for parent and school connections:

Type 1: The basic obligations of parenting, to wit: responsibility for children's health and safety; parenting and child-rearing skills to prepare children for school; supervision, discipline, and guidance; and home conditions that support learning.

Type 2: The basic obligation of schools to communicate with the home, such as, school programs, progress reports, memos, notices and conferences.

Type 3: The involvement of parents at school as volunteers, supporters, and spectators.

Type 4: Parent involvement in activities to help their child at home to be successful at school, referring to either parent initiated, child initiated or teacher initiated request for help on skills needed for success in school. Epstein in particular developed a program called (TIPS) Teachers Involve Parents in Schoolwork (Epstein, 1987).

Type 5: Parent involvement in school decision making, such as Parent Teacher Associations and committees at the school or in the community.

A sixth type of involvement, credited to Joyce Epstein, but not listed by her, was collaboration and exchanges between schools and community organizations, agencies, and businesses (Davies, 1991).

In order to initiate a comprehensive program for connecting parents and schools in the six areas Epstein (1990) recommends the following:

Type 1: Schools improve the selection of times for workshops and their topics, and provide information about child development and expectations.

Type 2: Schools improve communications to the home, explain report cards, come up with different ideas regarding informing parents about school programs, and solicit input from the families regarding their needs from the school.

Type 3: Schools improve how they welcome all parents to the building, train volunteers, and look at new ways to utilize volunteers.

Type 4: Schools improve the ways they communicate ideas for helping children at home, by being sensitive to the limited resources available in the homes of some students.

Type 5: Most schools could improve the way they utilize the strengths of their parents.

The sixth type of parent involvement for a comprehensive program was for most schools to improve their efforts to help families utilize social services and community resources outside of the school (Davies,1991).

The three common strands running through most parent school partnership programs were: providing success for all children; serving the whole child; and sharing responsibility for the child's social, emotional, physical and academic development with the family, school, community agencies, and institutions (Davies, 1991). The school has been the one constant in students' lives. It has therefore been important that the school be the anchor of support for helping families utilize the various services which affect the whole child. Teachers and administrators have played important roles in "including and excluding parents" from their children's education. Thus, efforts at the state level should be placed on building teacher and administrator capabilities in this area (Epstein, 1987).

Parents are more apt to become involved in their child's education if they "perceive" the school as wanting their involvement (Dauber & Epstein, 1991). It has been very important to welcome input and support from parents rather than telling them what they need to do to "fit in" with the school. A parent center, offering a variety of services which builds on the strengths of families in urban populations, would contribute substantially to the direct involvement of parents and the school (Davies, 1991).

In addition, other ideas that were explored were collaborating with Chapter I Family Support Services and Head Start Family Services to do parent workshops and other programs in the community. This was addressed more

realistically after reviewing the parent questionnaires. As a result more information was available about what parents would like to have from the school, rather than relying totally on what educators perceived as what the parents needed.

In order for teachers to take a greater leadership role in involving minority and/or economically disadvantaged families in the parent school partnership teachers needed to have time available to meet in the community with the parent of their students. Therefore, arrangements were made through the school to provide time away from the classroom for teachers to go into the community for parent workshops and conferences.

In order to be more sensitive to families with limited educational skills, a user friendly parent handbook was developed as a resource for parents. This handbook contained information about the school staff, the school district-at-large, how to initiate various contacts at the school and community for support and help, and a format for parent/teacher conferences.

There was collaboration with another school district program to develop a mobile parent resource center for use in the public housing community. This mobile center could provide social service organization staff people, hands on activities for parents to make educational games and projects for use with their children, and other language

appropriate materials about school and community services.

In addition, it was important to make presentations at professional conferences and teacher professional days. This provided the opportunity to inform other educators, social service agencies, and families about the efforts to strengthen the parent-school partnership with minority or economically disadvantaged families.

Description Of Selected Solution

The most challenging part of this practicum was to coordinate the services of the various agencies in the community. Heretofore these agencies have operated as autonomous or semi-autonomous individual services to the community. It becomes a question of not only turf, but power as well.

An invitation to participate in the parent/school partnership programs was extended to parents living in the public housing community, who have children who attend Head Start and/or whose children attended the Head Start Center the previous year, and who were in the kindergarten program at two public schools located outside of their neighborhood. These programs were held through out the school year, both in the community and in the public school, in order for the parents to learn more about the school, to share the families' expectations of school for their child's education, and for parents to learn how to help

at home for their child or children to be successful in school. The parents were requested to fill out a questionnaire regarding their knowledge about the school system and to share their expectations of the school.

Workshop programs were developed based on the input from the parent questionnaire. The information about available school resources (i.e., guidance counselor, librarian, teachers, volunteer coordinator) at their child's school was disseminated through handouts. Skills about how to initiate a parent conference at the school and/or telephone conferences with their child's teacher, were role played in the workshops.

Meetings were held during the school year in the families' community to familiarize parents with the services of the school district and community, and about how to best access these services. There were other requests on the information collected on the questionnaire and from recommendations by other agencies.

The organization of the satellite parent resource center in the public housing community was coordinated by a committee made up of representatives from Head Start Family Involvement, Chapter I, Family Services, Early Intervention Programs, and parents. The parent resource center was available for workshops and a parent library, visits from a mobile parent resource center, and provided space for parents/teacher conferences and/or meetings.

The workshops and parent library were available to other families in the community.

A user friendly parent handbook was developed to provide easy access to school and community resources for use throughout their child's school years. It was important to include information about the public school in language sensitive to minority and/or economically disadvantaged families, regarding such communications as permission forms for testing, exceptional education programs, school forms, etc. In addition, the handbook indicated how to request information from the school, provided a place to list all parent conferences (i.e., phone and school conference dates), included a format for questions which parents can ask their child's teacher, guidance counselor and/or the principal during a conference.

The importance of developing a greater awareness among school personnel, who were working with these families in the two schools, cannot be overlooked. In developing a parent school partnership with families, school personnel were given a questionnaire for input regarding their expectations of parents and the school's responsibility. The information from the parent questionnaire was shared with school staff so as to help them better plan for working with the families.

Teacher training workshops were conducted to emphasize the importance of the teacher taking the lead in developing a strong school/parent connection. The basis

for the training workshops were the parent school connection research, as well as information received from the parent questionnaire. In order to familiarize teachers and principals about more sensitive parent/school communications, and about how to help parents work with their children at home, a teacher handbook was developed to address the specifics of how to build a school/parent partnership when working with these hard to reach families.

This project succeeded because the families involved in this project were able to gain a better understanding of the programs and services. The support from the school was there to encourage a strong parent school partnership, and families could feel confident in their own abilities to play a strong role in the education of their child.

The project was designed to include recommendations from research findings (Epstein 1990, 1991, Davies 1991, and others). The collaboration with Head Start, Chapter I, Early Childhood Programs, and the County Interagency Council provided support from the community. The school superintendent was supportive of this project because it was another resource for a district wide intervention and support program targeting economically disadvantaged students from kindergarten through twelfth grade. The following solution strategy was selected:

The writer worked in partnership with Chapter I, which was piloting a three week program for students from

the public housing district who attended Head Start the previous school year and who entered kindergarten for the 1992-93 school year. The writer and or/parent resource representative from Chapter I conducted informal workshops with families to get acquainted and discuss plans for contact throughout the coming school year.

A parent survey was conducted regarding parents awareness of the school and their expectations of the school for their child. A parent visit to the school was coordinated in order to provide parents with the opportunity to meet some of the school staff and visit their child's classroom.

A committee made up of the following: Head Start Family Coordinator, Chapter I Family Coordinator, parents, teachers, and various member of the Interagency Council, was organized to develop a parent resource center in the public housing community. In this way the parent resource center committee gathered input from various organizations working with families in the public housing community in order to more appropriately address their needs.

The user friendly parent handbook and teacher handbook committees were made up of individuals employed by educational and community organizations who work with minority and/or economically disadvantaged families. These individuals have worked with families on a regular basis and are committed to making the school and

community resources more accessible to families. In this way parents could become more competent and confident in their decision-making roles, and improve their ability to be involved in formal and informal networks of groups and community agencies.

Arrangements were made for scheduled visits for the mobile parent resource center to park at the Head Start Center in the public housing area. This mobile center was designed to have special activities for families and a lot of information for supporting families.

There was communication with parents of children in this pilot group through out the school year to inform them about school activities, events at the parent resource center, ideas for helping their child succeed in school, and about free or low cost activities held in the larger community and which are accessible by public transportation.

A meeting with kindergarten teachers, principals, guidance counselors, and school social workers was held to plan strategies for initiating better communications between the school and the home. The data from the parent questionnaires was reviewed in order to better plan the appropriate communication strategies. The information collected throughout the school year provided schools in the district with data enabling them to better meet the needs of minority and/or economically disadvantaged

families and to successfully build a strong parent/school connection.

Report of Action Taken

A summary of the actions taken, in implementing the plans and strategies designed to accomplish the goals and objectives of the practicum, was as follows:

Week 1:

This week was devoted to meeting with the Chapter I Director to coordinate and review the three week transition program for Head Start students entering two elementary schools. There was a class of fourteen students in each of the schools. Each classroom was staffed with a public school kindergarten teacher, a Head Start teacher and a Parent Coordinator employed by Chapter I. The Director of Chapter I first reviewed the draft of the parent pre-questionnaire (Appendix A) and the teacher questionnaire (Appendix B) and gave approval for the Parent Coordinator to work with the parents to complete the pre-questionnaire.

The Director of Chapter I also requested the writer get approval for the parent questionnaire from both the Area Superintendent and the Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction. The writer then scheduled these meetings. It was important for everyone to be aware

of the project, just in case there were any questions at a later date.

Week 2:

The writer met with the Area Superintendent to provide an overview of the project and was given approval to proceed.

The writer then met with the Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction to present an overview of the project and obtain approval for the questionnaires. This official was very pleased with the project, but requested the writer arrange a meeting with the Evaluation Department to get final approval on the questionnaires.

The writer then scheduled a meeting with the Director of Evaluation.

Two workshops were also planned with the Chapter 1 Parent Coordinator. The workshops were designed to familiarize parents with the various programs offered by the public school and to work on the parent questionnaire.

Week 3:

The writer met with the Director of Evaluation. He reviewed the questionnaires and approved their distribution. The writer did not allow enough time for getting through the various levels of bureaucratic approval.

This meeting concluded all approvals necessary to implement a new project in the school district.

Meetings were held with school principals and staff to provide an overview of the project and to distribute the teacher pre-questionnaire.

The first parent workshop was held in the public housing community to give an overview of the public school and to work on the parent questionnaires. This was very helpful and allowed for assistance on the questionnaires as needed. The parents who did not attend the workshop were contacted individually, but only 13 of the 30 parents returned the survey.

Weeks 4-5:

The writer contacted the parent handbook committee and a meeting was held in order to look at the various informational materials available from the school district and social service agencies in the community. In addition, it was decided to divide the handbook into various sections, such as general information, contacting the school, parent teacher conferences, parenting ideas, and special programs offered by the school district such as Chapter I, Exceptional Education Services, and Adult Education.

Completed teacher and parent questionnaires were reviewed by Head Start Family Services, Head Start Parent Involvement, Chapter I, and kindergarten personnel. Strategies were planned for communicating and involving

families during the school year. The parent questionnaire indicated parents wanted to help their child with school work at home. The top three areas requested were reading, math, and writing story skills. The most requested workshops were as follows:

How children grow and develop at my child's age.

How to best help my child with school work.

How to help with enrichment activities at home for my children.

How to help my child develop his/her talents.

How to take advantage of special programs in the community for my family.

How to practice school skills during the summer.

Most of the parent workshop activities were focused around these areas.

Weeks 6-9

The writer met with the Supervisor of Head Start Family Services to get approval for locating a parent resource center in a large second floor empty room at the Head Start Center located in the public housing community. The supervisor was very supportive and suggested that the project utilize different locations in the community until the various levels of the Head Start bureaucracy could be navigated in order to gain final approval for a permanent resource center. In this way the concept of the resource center would be in place and more parents would have the

opportunity to become involved in the project, should there be any delays.

Arrangements were made to meet with the Head Start Center Manager at the selected location and the site based Family Service Coordinator. Both were pleased with the selection of their school for the parent resource center to serve all the families currently enrolled in Head Start and those families who had children in Head Start the previous year and were attending the two pilot elementary schools. The writer was confident that all those directly involved in building the parent/school partnership project were on board. The final approval from the Head Start Director was all that was now needed.

A meeting was scheduled with the Director to approve the concept of the parent resource center to encourage the development of a strong parent school partnership. At the scheduled meeting the Director approved the concept, but requested the writer meet with the Head Start Coordinator of Family Involvement. He felt it was important since the Head Start Family Involvement Program was directly involved with helping parents participate with the school as part of a parent organization and/or volunteering at the school. The Director also voiced some concerns about the space for the resource center on the second floor of the school due to new federal guidelines regarding handicap access to buildings.

The writer attended the meeting with the committee organizing the public school districts mobile parent resource center. At this time the committee had the responsibility for ordering the materials to stock the mobile center. It provided an opportunity for the writer to communicate the needs of the families, as determined from the parent questionnaires. In particular, the type of workshops and support the families indicated they needed from the questionnaires. This helped in ordering materials and supplies for the bus. There was some question about the plans for converting the school bus to the mobile resource center at this time because of various requirements that might cause delays for putting the bus into operation during the next few months. Therefore, scheduling the mobile parent resource center to visit the Head Start Center had to be postponed at this time.

The second parent workshop was presented at the community center. It was difficult to schedule a visit to the school on a single day which most of the parents could attend. Instead it was arranged for the parents to ride the school bus with their child on a day convenient with the parent. The schools were pleased that a majority of the parents did visit their child's school.

Weeks 7-13:

The team for organizing the parent resource center was made up of Head Start representatives including

parents, the Parent Coordinator, the Site Coordinator for Family Services, the Center Manager, the Curriculum Coordinator as well as the Coordinator of the Interagency Council. The reality of utilizing the mobile parent resource center for ideas on the development of the resource center at Head Start did not look good, at this time, because the bus was still not ready. It became apparent that in order to keep on schedule alternative arrangements needed to be made. The team was able to look at some of the materials from the Chapter I Parent Center and gather ideas from their staff.

An unexpected opportunity developed at this time. A Family Literacy Conference was being held in the county so the Resource Center Team was able to take advantage of attending this very worthwhile conference. The information for helping undereducated parents achieve skills and develop talents, and to encourage them to support their children's educational needs, was most beneficial. It would have been helpful for teachers to attend this conference in order to be more sensitive to families with limited reading skills, but there were no funds available to pay for substitutes.

The Handbook Committee continued to progress. The general information was together. It was decided to keep the Parent Handbook in draft form in order that parents, teachers, and staff could make periodic suggestions and

ongoing changes. The exceptional education portion was being finalized with that department.

Weeks 14-22:

At this time there was a continued problem with the actual location of the parent resource center. The Director of Head Start would not approve the second floor room because of the inaccessibility for the handicapped. The first floor had very little space available. The Director suggested a delay of 30 days before meeting again so he could look into some other alternatives.

The Parent Resource Center Team did not let this road block cause too much discouragement. The alternative was to hold parent workshops and meetings at alternative sites. A family fair was organized to let families know about the services programs available for them in the community. Transportation was provided for the families.

Through the support of the Assistant Superintendent for Exceptional Education the writer was able to arrange for a parent services program and for exceptional education students to have a satellite location for their services at the parent resource center when it becomes a reality. Parents from the public housing community have not utilized these services in the past because of their lack of private transportation as there is no public transportation to the location fourteen miles away.

In addition, the parent services program was able to provide a series of workshops for teachers focusing on the development of parent/teacher partnerships. This was a real benefit for teachers, and a help to the writer since the difficulties with putting the resource center itself in place was taking so much time.

In the mean time, a large social service agency in the community offered hand out materials and their video library services for the parent resource center. This was a real surprise and totally unplanned. This is what can happen when agencies and organizations work collaboratively.

The writer contacted the coordinator for the mobile resource center to check on the status of the bus. The remodeling of the bus had to be put out for bid which caused further delays. The coordinator did not think the bus would now be available for this school year. All was not lost, the materials for the bus had arrived in the warehouse, and the writer then proposed the utilization of the materials at the parent resource center. The coordinator thought this was a wonderful idea and was willing to donate their consumable handout materials.

The Director of Head Start recommended the use of the teacher's lounge on the first floor for the resource center. However, this had to be presented to the teachers for approval since the space was used as a teacher's lounge. The Head Start Center Manager was on the Parent Center Resource Team so she met with the teachers and gained

their support for the use of the room in the mornings. The Resource Center was to now become a reality!

The time had finally come to move into the center. The materials, chairs, tables and a cabinet were solicited by the writer and donated by various agencies in the community, public school programs, and books were donated by the Family Literacy Council for a lending library. By this time there was help from a few parents and from the volunteer grandparents at the center. Originally the writer planned to use retired teachers to help with the parent resource center, but this was not successful. Volunteer grandparents took their place. Once the resource signs were displayed through out the school parents were stopping by, when they walked their child to school, to see what was going on. Announcements about the resource center were sent home to families. Teachers began showing support by sending or bringing parents to the resource center, introducing them to the writer, and asking the parents to take part in the resource center.

Arrangements were made to have a reception for the teachers who had given up their lounge, for part of the day, in order to have a place for the parent resource center. The teachers were pleased to have this special attention and to learn more about the resource center. The official opening of the parent resource center was planned by the Parent Resource Center Team. A formal invitation was sent to each

family and a reception was planned by the school parent organization.

Weeks 23-26

The official opening of the Parent Resource Center was held in the evening and was not well attended by parents. Only about 10 parents represented the 290 students attending the Head Start Program, or about 3% of the population, were in attendance. In an effort to increase the number of families participating in the resource center the Parent Resource Center Team reviewed the situation. Invitations had been sent home to families with two follow up written reminders. There was no follow up reminders by telephone. According to the parent questionnaires, most families like to be contacted by phone. However, this was just not possible to do with the limited number of staff available to personally make the contacts. There are very few phones in the building and they are located some distance from the classrooms. Teachers do not have access to these phones during the day while students are in class.

In an attempt to get more parents to the Head Start Parent Resource Center some of the teachers from Head Start recommended a "Family Day" to be held during the school day with a lunch for the children and their families. The teachers and the Family Resource Center Team put

together a plan to bring more families to the Head Start Center.

The writer met with the Parent Handbook Committee to review the materials. The Exceptional Education section was completed and sent to the printer. This was a real tribute to the support from the Assistant Superintendent of the Exceptional Education Department. It would have been impossible to complete this enormous task during this short period of time with all the legalities tied in with P.L. 94-142. The flexibility of using a notebook for parents has been very beneficial because they can include additional information for their own special needs or interests for their family. The Parent Handbook for Exceptional Education can be easily added to the notebook.

The writer was successful in involving a few parents in learning how to run the resource center for themselves. This was a learning process for the parents, but they seemed to gain self confidence on a weekly basis. By participating in this project, Head Start has offered to write letters of recommendations to potential employers for these parent volunteers.

The Parent Resource Center has now become a place to stop off for a visit, and gives the parents an opportunity to share ideas about their particular needs. Originally the writer planned several field trips to other community resources, such as the library and museums. There were two problems with this. First, there was no child care

available for younger children so parents could take these field trips, and secondly funding for transportation was not available. It became apparent that in most cases information and activities would have to take place at the resource center. These families are used to making adjustments when plans have to be changed.

The parents, during a workshop, indicated they wanted to learn more about computers so they could understand what their children were doing in school. Chapter I was contacted and offered to send several computers over to the resource center for parents to use for a month. There was a security problem and the computers could not be left over night. Chapter I offered to have parents attend a computer workshop at their resource center. Some parents had the opportunity to have this hands on experience for a few hours.

There were ongoing workshops for parents. These included accessing the services of the school system, programs designed to help parents understand how to help their child at home. Enrichment activities for parents to use included pragmatic language enrichment through conversations. There were some excellent video tapes available to enhance the workshops.

Weeks 27-31

The Family Resource Center Team held a successful "Family Day" at the Head Start Center. Special emphasis

was placed on the importance of volunteering at the school, and about the information and support available at the parent resource center. There was a lot of enthusiasm for this special day. This was much more successful than the official opening of the parent resource center held in the evening. Approximately 30 families were represented at "Family Day".

At this time the early kindergarten registration was approaching for the 1993-94 school year. The writer worked with Head Start Family Services and the public school system to develop strategies for getting families to register their child early. This permitted the child to be registered while all the necessary physical exams and medical shots were current. In the past this has not been possible because the public school transition team has not been successful in getting parents to register their child this far in advance.

The writer met with the Parent Resource Center Team and brainstormed some ideas about how to get parents to register their children. This presents a real hardship for most families since they do not have private transportation. Public transportation was not readily available to most assigned schools. The Team decided to try to coordinate transportation to the assigned schools. Parents were asked to come to the Family Services Office at Head Start to pick up their packet for registration and then sign up for pooled transportation to one of the schools. The parents who had

private transportation were asked to drive to the school. This was really a collaborative effort to get students registered for school, so new students to public school did not miss any school days at the beginning of the school year. The sign up plan was put into effect and arrangements were made to get families to their respective schools. This was very time consuming and required a lot of effort on the part of the Resource Center Team. This would work much better if a public school team would come to the Head Start Center and register the children right in their community for any school. This was mentioned to the two pilot school principals and they arranged to go into the public housing community to hold registration for families zoned for their schools on two separate evenings. In addition, a near by health center agreed to stay open in order to give the additional measles vaccine that had been added to the list of requirements for entry into kindergarten. This really helped families that could not get the registration completed during the day, or had to spend half the day at a health center taking a number and waiting to get the additional shot for their child. The cooperation from the health center really made this successful.

The writer met with the teachers and school staff to evaluate the final draft of the Teacher/School Handbook. Particular attention was paid to make sure it included

examples of appropriate communication to the home and parent conferences.

Weeks 32-36:

The Parent Handbook from the Department of Exceptional Education arrived from the printer. Several parent workshops were presented by the writer regarding the various exceptional education programs, their rights as parents and the resources available for their child or children if already in exceptional education and or might be in the future. This was most appreciated by the parents, in their efforts to be informed parents and to feel as if they were a part of the team in planning their child's education. The parent/school partnership post questionnaires (Appendix C) were given out at these workshops. Some of the members of the Parent Resource Center Team attended the workshops and shared ideas for continuing the parent resource center.

The writer met with the teachers to distribute the Parent School Partnership Teacher Post Survey (Appendix D) and to review some of the efforts of the project.

Meetings were held with the Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction, the Associate Superintendent for Exceptional Education and the Associate Superintendent for Social Services in order to provide an overview of the project and discuss implications for future planning.

CHAPTER V
RESULTS, DISCUSSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Results

The participation of minority and/or economically disadvantaged families with schools has not been successful in the past. Most of these families feel alienated from the school, the educational jargon and various communications from the school are insensitive to their needs. These families feel uncomfortable with schools in general. The problem is minority and/or economically disadvantaged families are intimidated by the educational bureaucracy, and they do not understand their role in the education of their child or children.

The goal of this practicum was that the parent school partnership with minority and/or economically disadvantaged families would be improved.

Outcome one, the organization of a parent resource center in the public housing community for workshops and a parent library, helped parents to build self confidence in their own ability to access the school and community resources. This outcome was evaluated by using the post parent questionnaire (Appendix C). Of thirty parents surveyed eighteen indicated an increase in their level of confidence, over that at the beginning, of the practicum

implementation, about accessing school and community resources, by answering yes to two of the three questions dealing with confidence (i.e., one, two, or seven). These results accomplished outcome one.

Outcome two, that the parents will, in fact, increase their contact with the school. This outcome was evaluated by a parent kept log. Sixteen respondents indicated at least two parent initiated contacts with the teacher or the school during the school year. These results accomplished outcome two.

Outcome three, that there would be increased leadership from teachers to involve parents with the school. This outcome was evaluated by using a teacher pre-questionnaire and a teacher post questionnaire. Of the seventeen teachers and staff who answered the question about actively seeking out parent participation eight indicated they made five or more attempts to involve minority and/or economically disadvantaged families in a parent school partnership.

Discussion

The organization of the parent resource center in the public housing community was no easy task. In order to plan activities at the resource center a review of the parent pre-questionnaire (13 parents responded out of 30 surveys distributed) indicated the following (Table 2):

Table 2
Responses From Parent School Partnership Survey
Customer-Parent

Question 2

Subjects parents want to know more about: math skills, reading skills
writing story skills.

Question 5

The Top Six Workshop topics parents wanted to hear about:

1st Choice (Tie)

How children grow and develop at my child's age.

How to help my child with school work.

2nd Choice (Tie)

How to help my child develop her/his talents.

How to help with enrichment activities at home for my children.

3rd Choice (Tie)

How to take advantage of special programs in the community for
my family.

How to practice school skills during the summer.

Question 4 The areas which the majority of parents indicated they have
not been involved, or only 1-2 times involved with the school, are:

Visit my child's classroom.

Take my child to a library.

Listen to a story my child wrote.

Go to PTA/PTO meetings.

Talk to my child's teacher on the phone.

Go to special events at

the school.

The results of the surveys were used in planning workshops for parents according to their needs and for addressing areas which parents have not been involved with the school but which would be beneficial to a successful parent school partnership. The ability to focus on the areas parents felt they needed help and addressing areas in which they had not been involved helped to build confidence in their ability to have a successful parent school partnership.

The activities at the parent resource center, although centered around the requests of parents from the survey, remained flexible enough for parents and families to request information and help as needed. As an example, the opportunity to become involved during the spring with the early registration for kindergarten, for the 93-94 school year, was very successful. This brought parents to the resource center who had not visited before. The resource center was able to help parents fill out the proper forms for school registration, and arrange with the nearby health center to provide an additional measles booster shot required for the next school year. By having the proper forms filled out, and the required records(i.e., birth certificate, proof of residency and social security card), the registration went very smoothly. In fact, 87 out of 154 Head Start students were registered for kindergarten or 56% of the students. According to the Head Start Center, in prior years usually only about 25% of the student packets are picked up for early registration. In addition, the two

elementary schools participating in the parent school partnership project sent staff into the public housing community to meet with the families and pick up the completed forms. At this time parents were invited to visit the schools which their child would be attending next year, and to be the guest of the principals for lunch.

Arrangements were made through the resource center for the parents who wanted to visit a school to ride with the writer and one other parent who also had private transportation. Not only did the two public schools participating in this project benefit from the resource center other elementary schools were able to benefit as well. Head Start students from the public housing community are zoned to a number of elementary schools, many as far away as fourteen miles, in order to comply with court ordered busing.

The only disappointment was that many of the parents who took advantage of the help with kindergarten registration did not return to the resource center for workshops or additional visits. However, most picked up the hand out materials about helping their child with school and other brochures about available social service agencies. The Parent Resource Center Committee decided to only give out parent handbooks to those families participating in the workshops, otherwise the handbooks would sit unused on a shelf somewhere.

The parent kept logs of thirty parents participating in the various workshops indicated parents were more confident in their own ability to contact the school. Parents were able to organize their school conferences by "walking through" a format as part of the workshops and discuss various ways to address difficult issues. Parents were encouraged to take a proactive role in working with the school by taking the initiative to request testing, seeking information, and sharing information about their child's abilities in other environments, such as church and family. It was a disappointment that more parents did not participate on a regular basis in the workshops, but this was a lot more than the four or five parents that normally attend the monthly general parent meetings at the Head Start Center.

The efforts to increase the leadership from teachers to involve parents with the school were addressed by first reviewing the results of the teacher pre-questionnaire (Table 3).

Table 3
Indicators About Parent Involvement
Teacher Pre-Questionnaire

Professional Judgement About Parent Involvement:

1. Most parents do not know how to help their children on schoolwork at home.
 2. All parents could learn ways to assist their children on schoolwork at home, if shown how.
 3. Disagrees that parents of children at their school want to be involved more than they are now at most grade levels.
 4. Teachers need in-service education to implement effective parent involvement practices.
 5. Workshops for parents should be developed around:
 - a. Building skills in parenting and understanding their children at each grade level.
 - b. Creating home conditions for learning.
-

Both parents and teachers had a common agreement on the workshop topics, that is, understanding child development at each age or grade level and how to best help their child with school work. Therefore, teachers were encouraged to send home information for parents to help their child with school work. Teacher workshops were focused on sources of support for families and ideas for

facilitating learning at home to support what was being taught or experienced in school.

Information from the parent questionnaires were shared with teachers regarding how schools contact families and how important it was to know what is happening in the school. First of all, the top priority for parents was to be told how their child was doing in school, secondly, for the teacher to contact the parent about their child by phone at least once a month, and third, send home clear notices that could be easily read or understood.

Sharing these priorities with teachers and staff has helped to rethink the type communications used with the minority and/or economically disadvantaged families. Teachers began to look at the information sent home and the lack of sensitivity to these families. The roadblocks for keeping these families disenfranchised with the school were quite obvious. The workshops offered the opportunity to review materials printed by the school district for distribution to families. It is taken for granted by most professional educators that everyone can understand the materials. It then became apparent why the families wanted to be called on the phone. Their reading skills were not sophisticated enough to comprehend much of the written information.

Teachers responded in the pre-questionnaire that they perceived parent involvement in their school as very weak (Appendix A). In addition, teacher's responded that all the

activities under parents' responsibilities were either pretty important or very important. In reality all of these responsibilities could not be addressed at one time but could be broken down into small areas in order to create a better understanding. Equally important was the fact that families with economic problems which cause unstable situations in both housing and food cannot be expected to realistically do all things necessary for their children as perceived by the teachers.

Once teachers understood the problems their efforts to communicate and seek participation with the families on a more personal level increased the parent participation. Some of the parents responded. Many teachers were disappointed that all of their parents did not increase their involvement with the school. Hopefully, there will be a steady improvement, it takes a long time to build trust.

The results of the Parent School Partnership Teacher Post Survey indicate teachers and staff saw an overall improvement in parent involvement with their schools and all respondents indicated an improvement in their own ability to communicate with these families. All respondents indicated that it has been useful to have the parent resource center in the public housing community. When asked to specify at least two events that happened as a result of the parent school partnership project. Some of the comments are listed below:

- *Parents working in the classroom because of better understanding of classroom activities learned at the parent resource center.
- *The resource center was more accessible to supply information about school and community.
- *Helped to get fathers involved with their children.
- *Parents said they like to learn at their child's school too.
- *Extremely positive program helped the school tremendously.

The comprehensive program for connecting parents and schools recommended by Epstein (1990), (Davies, 1991) in Chapter Four have been addressed, in this effort to begin a strong parent school partnership from preschool to kindergarten. The organization of a parent resource center at a Head Start site in the public housing community has been the focus for bringing together the players for building the connection between the parents and schools. The workshops to support parents in initiating contacts with the school, and the leadership role of teachers to involve parents have both contributed to beginning the building of a strong parent school partnership.

Recommendations

Four recommendations seem appropriate at this time. More time should be allowed to coordinate any effort which

calls for collaboration with various agencies. The delays in getting all the players together in order to move forward can require numerous meetings and approvals.

Second, more people are needed to help with questionnaires and surveys. The parents in the questionnaires were helped individually, some wanted to take them home to write their own comments. They were not returned. It needs to be made clear to staff people that the questionnaires are to remain with the agency. The comments could be sent in later on a separate sheet.

Third, try to ensure the funds for implementing the project are not cut. It was very difficult, and personally expensive, to provide materials and supplies throughout the project.

Fourth, take time to enjoy the growth and confidence that parents feel as they begin to have a better understanding of themselves, and begin to take on new responsibilities, rather than be overwhelmed by the families that were not reached. Many of the parents will undoubtedly help other parents and the seeds you planted will grow, long after you have left the garden.

Dissemination

The project has been presented to school administrators in the upper level of the school district. As part of the ProEd Department, presentations will be made at

individual schools during the summer and the next school year.

The preschool agency has recommended the project be presented at their state conference during the coming year.

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Appendix A
Parent School Partnership Pre Questionnaire
Parent Survey

Parent School Partnership Questionnaire
Customer-Parent

Dear Parent or Guardian:

Summer 1992

Our school district is working to improve ways that schools and families can help each other and help all children succeed in school. Your child attended Jordan Park Head Start Center during the school year 1991-1992 and will be attending kindergarten at Tyrone Elementary or Westgate Elementary for the school year 1992-93.

We would like your ideas for developing a stronger parent school partnership right from the beginning. Your answers to the attached survey will be grouped with other families and teachers to help us plan together. There is no need to put your name on any part of the survey.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR HELP.

Sincerely,

This booklet should be answered by the PARENT or GUARDIAN WHO HAS THE MOST CONTACT with the school about your child.

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

| | | |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> mother | <input type="checkbox"/> aunt | <input type="checkbox"/> guardian |
| <input type="checkbox"/> father | <input type="checkbox"/> uncle | <input type="checkbox"/> other relative |
| <input type="checkbox"/> stepmother | <input type="checkbox"/> grandmother | <input type="checkbox"/> other (describe) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> stepfather | <input type="checkbox"/> grandfather | ----- |

HOW MANY CHILDREN from your family will go to this school in August?
Please CIRCLE how many children at this school.....

1 2 3 4 5 or more

What GRADES are they in? CIRCLE ALL of the grades of your children going to this school in the school year 1992- 1993.

Pre-K Kindergarten Grade 1 2 3 4 5 other

Q-1. We would like to know how you feel about school right now?
This will help us plan for the future.

Please CIRCLE one choice for each statement....

YES Means you **AGREE STRONGLY** with the statement.
yes Means you **AGREE A LITTLE** with the statement.
no Means you **DISAGREE A LITTLE** with the statement.
NO Means you **DISAGREE STRONGLY** with the statement.

HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT THESE.....

- a. My child likes to talk about school at home. YES yes no NO
- b. I feel I can help my child in reading. YES yes no NO
- c. I feel I can help my child in math. Yes yes no NO
- d. I could help my child more if the teacher gave me more ideas. Yes yes no NO

Q-2 Some families want more information about what their children are learning in each subject.

CHECK() which SUBJECTS you want to know more about in order to help your child:

| | |
|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| _____ math skills | _____ handwriting |
| _____ reading skills | _____ speaking skills |
| _____ writing story skills | _____ coping with problems |
| _____ science | _____ art |
| _____ music | _____ social studies |

D-3 *Schools contact families in different ways. CIRCLE one choice on each line to tell how important it is for you to know what is happening in the school.

How important is this to you?
 Not A Little Pretty Very
 Important Important Important Important

| | NOT IMP | A LITTLE IMP | PRETTY IMP | VERY IMP |
|---|---------|--------------|------------|----------|
| 1. Tells me how my child is doing in school. | NOT IMP | A LITTLE IMP | PRETTY IMP | VERY IMP |
| 2. Tells me what skills my child needs to learn each year. | NOT IMP | A LITTLE IMP | PRETTY IMP | VERY IMP |
| 3. Explains how to check my child's homework | NOT IMP | A LITTLE IMP | PRETTY IMP | VERY IMP |
| 4. Assigns homework that requires my child to talk with me about things learned in class. | NOT IMP | A LITTLE IMP | PRETTY IMP | VERY IMP |
| 5. Asks me to volunteer for a few hours at the school. | NOT IMP | A LITTLE IMP | PRETTY IMP | VERY IMP |
| 6. Sends home clear notices that can be read easily. | NOT IMP | A LITTLE IMP | PRETTY IMP | VERY IMP |
| 7. Invites me to programs at the school. | NOT IMP | A LITTLE IMP | PRETTY IMP | VERY IMP |
| 8. *Have a parent-teacher conference with me at a location in my neighborhood. | NOT IMP | A LITTLE IMP | PRETTY IMP | VERY IMP |
| 9. * Have a parent-teacher conference with me at the school. | NOT IMP | A LITTLE IMP | PRETTY IMP | VERY IMP |
| 10. *Send home news about activities for my child that can be reached by city bus. | NOT IMP | A LITTLE IMP | PRETTY IMP | VERY IMP |
| 11. Send home news about things happening at school. | NOT IMP | A LITTLE IMP | PRETTY IMP | VERY IMP |
| 12. *The teacher contacts me about my child by phone at least once a month. | NOT IMP | A LITTLE IMP | PRETTY IMP | VERY IMP |

Q-4 Families get involved in different ways at school or at home. Which of the following have you done this year with the child or children?

NEVER DO means you do NOT do this
 NOT YET means you have NOT done this yet this year
 1-2 TIMES means you have done this ONCE or a FEW TIMES this year
 MANY TIMES means you have done this MANY TIMES this year

| | | | | |
|---|----------|---------|-----------|------------|
| a. Talk to my child about school. | NEVER DO | NOT YET | 1-2 TIMES | MANY TIMES |
| b. Visit my child's classroom. | NEVER DO | NOT YET | 1-2 TIMES | MANY TIMES |
| c. Read to my child. | NEVER DO | NOT YET | 1-2 TIMES | MANY TIMES |
| d. Listen to my child read. | NEVER DO | NOT YET | 1-2 TIMES | MANY TIMES |
| e. Listen to a story my child wrote.. | NEVER DO | NOT YET | 1-2 TIMES | MANY TIMES |
| f. Help my child with homework. | NEVER DO | NOT YET | 1-2 TIMES | MANY TIMES |
| g. Practice spelling or other skills before a test. | NEVER DO | NOT YET | 1-2 TIMES | MANY TIMES |
| h. Talk with my child about a TV show. | NEVER DO | NOT YET | 1-2 TIMES | MANY TIMES |
| i. Help my child plan time for homework and chores. | NEVER DO | NOT YET | 1-2 TIMES | MANY TIMES |
| j. Talk with my child's teacher at school. | NEVER DO | NOT YET | 1-2 TIMES | MANY TIMES |
| k. Talk to my child's teacher on the phone. | NEVER DO | NOT YET | 1-2 TIMES | MANY TIMES |
| l. Go to PTA/PTO meetings. | NEVER DO | NOT YET | 1-2 TIMES | MANY TIMES |
| m. Check to see that my child has done homework. | NEVER DO | NOT YET | 1-2 TIMES | MANY TIMES |
| n. Go to special events at the school. | NEVER DO | NOT YET | 1-2 TIMES | MANY TIMES |
| o. Take my child to a library. | NEVER DO | NOT YET | 1-2 TIMES | MANY TIMES |
| p. Tell my child how important school is. | NEVER DO | NOT YET | 1-2 TIMES | MANY TIMES |

Q-5 Some families have asked for WORKSHOPS on topics they want to hear more about. CHECK THE ONES that interest you... or suggest a few...

- How children grow and develop at my child's age.
 How to discipline children.
 How to help with enrichment activities at home for my children.
 Solving school problems and prevent dropping out.
 How to deal with stress.
 Adult education-- programs for me to go back to school.
 Raising children as a single parent.
 After-school programs for my child.
 How to help my child develop her/his talents.
 Helping children take tests.
 How to take advantage of special programs in the community for my family. Example- public library
 How to practice school skills during the summer.
 How to best help my child with school work.

Any others that you want? _____

Q-6. The last questions will help us plan new programs to meet your family's needs.

a. How much time could you spend helping your child with homework on an average night?

Minutes of my time: none 5-10 15-20 25-30 35-45

b. How much time could you spend working with your child if the teacher showed you what to do?

Minutes I could spend: none 5-10 15-20 25-30 35-45

c. Do you have time on weekends to work with your child on projects or homework for school?

yes _____ no _____

d. Do you have transportation to attend conferences, meetings or workshops at the school? _____yes _____no

If yes, when is the best time?

_____morning _____afternoon _____evening

THIS IS THE LAST PAGE----- WE ARE THANKING YOU ALREADY!!!!

WE WOULD LIKE TO HAVE YOUR IDEAS....

What is your greatest concern as a parent?

***What has the school done to involve you with your child/children's education that has helped you the most? Why?**

What is one thing that you or your family could do to help the school your child is attending?

What is the best thing that the school could do this next school year to help you with your child?

Any other ideas or suggestions?

THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR HELPING US!!!!

This survey for School and Family Partnerships was developed by Joyce L. Epstein, Lori J. Connors, and Karen Clark Salinas of Johns Hopkins University Center on Families, Communities, Schools and Children's Learning, Baltimore, Maryland. This survey is allowed to be used without special permission. This survey has been adapted by changing the cover letter and adding questions of local interest to Pinellas County Schools.

* Indicate added or adjusted question of local interest

Appendix B
Parent School Partnership Pre Questionnaire
Teacher Survey

Parent School Partnership Questionnaire
Teacher Survey *

Dear Teacher:

Summer 1992

Our school district is working to improve ways that schools and families can help each other and help all children succeed in school. Some students in your class attended Jordan Park Head Start Center during the school year 1991-1992 and will be attending kindergarten at Tyrone Elementary or Westgate Elementary for the school year 1992-93.

We would like your ideas for developing a stronger parent school partnership right from the beginning. Your answers to the attached survey will be grouped with other families and teachers to help us plan together. There is no need to put your name on any part of the survey.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR HELP.

Sincerely,

Note: In all questions in this booklet, "parent" means the adult in the family who has the most contact with the school about the child.

Feel free to expand your answers in the margins or back page of the booklet.

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

| | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Agree | Strongly Agree |
|--|-------------------|----------|-------|----------------|
| a. Parent involvement is important for a good school. | SD | D | A | SA |
| b. Most parents know how to help their children on schoolwork at home. | SD | D | A | SA |
| c. This school has an active and effective parent organization (e.g., PTA or PTO). | SD | D | A | SA |
| d. Every family has some strengths that could be tapped to increase student success in school. | SD | D | A | SA |
| e. All parents could learn ways to assist their children on schoolwork at home, if shown how. | SD | D | A | SA |
| f. Parent involvement can help teachers be more effective with more students. | SD | D | A | SA |
| g. Teachers should receive recognition for time spent on parent involvement activities. | SD | D | A | SA |
| h. Parents of children at this school want to be involved more than they are now at most grade levels. | SD | D | A | SA |
| i. Teachers do not have the time to involve parents in very useful ways. | SD | D | A | SA |
| j. Teachers need in-service education to implement effective parent involvement practices. | SD | D | A | SA |
| k. Parent involvement is important for student success in school. | SD | D | A | SA |
| l. This school views parents as important partners. | SD | D | A | SA |
| m. This community values education for all students. | SD | D | A | SA |
| n. This school is known for trying new and unusual approaches to improve the school. | SD | D | A | SA |
| o. Mostly when I contact parents, it's about problems or trouble. | SD | D | A | SA |
| p. In this school, teachers play a large part in most decisions. | SD | D | A | SA |
| q. This community supports the school. | SD | D | A | SA |
| r. Compared to other schools, this school has one of the best school climates for teachers, students, and parents. | SD | D | A | SA |

Q-2. Teachers contact their students' families in different ways. Please estimate the percent of your students' families that you contacted this year in these ways:

| Contact | % of my students' families this year |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| memo or letter | ___% |
| telephone | ___% |
| talked with informally at school | ___% |
| scheduled parent-teacher conference | ___% |
| home visit | ___% |
| meeting in the community | ___% |

Q-3. Some teachers involve parents as volunteers at the school building. Please check the ways that you use volunteers in your own classroom and in your school THIS YEAR. (CHECK all that apply in each column.)

- | | |
|---|---|
| a. In my CLASSROOM, volunteers... | b. In our SCHOOL, volunteers... |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I do NOT use classroom volunteers | <input type="checkbox"/> Are NOT USED in the school now |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Listen to children read aloud | <input type="checkbox"/> Monitor halls, cafeteria, or other areas |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Read to the children | <input type="checkbox"/> Work in the library, computer lab, or other area |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Grade papers | <input type="checkbox"/> Teach mini-courses |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tutor children in specific skills | <input type="checkbox"/> Teach enrichment or other lessons |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Help on trips or at parties | <input type="checkbox"/> Lead clubs or activities |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Give talks (e.g., on careers, hobbies, etc.) | <input type="checkbox"/> Check attendance |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other ways (please specify) _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> Work in "parent room" |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Other ways (please specify) _____ |

THIS YEAR, how many volunteers or aides help in your classroom or school?

- c. Number of different volunteers who assist me in an average week = _____.
- d. Do you have paid aides in your classroom? NO YES (how many? _____)
- e. Number of different volunteers who work anywhere in the school in an average week = _____ (approximately)

Q-4. Please estimate the percent of your students' families who did the following THIS YEAR:

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|----|----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|------|
| Attend workshops at school | 0% | 5% | 10% | 25% | 50% | 75% | 90% | 100% |
| Check that their child's homework is done | 0% | 5% | 10% | 25% | 50% | 75% | 90% | 100% |
| Practice schoolwork in the summer | 0% | 5% | 10% | 25% | 50% | 75% | 90% | 100% |
| Attend PTA meetings | 0% | 5% | 10% | 25% | 50% | 75% | 90% | 100% |
| Attend parent-teacher conferences | 0% | 5% | 10% | 25% | 50% | 75% | 90% | 100% |
| Understand: | | | | | | | | |
| ...reading skills at your grade level | 0% | 5% | 10% | 25% | 50% | 75% | 90% | 100% |
| ...writing skills at your grade level | 0% | 5% | 10% | 25% | 50% | 75% | 90% | 100% |
| ...math skills at your grade level | 0% | 5% | 10% | 25% | 50% | 75% | 90% | 100% |

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

| | | |
|-----------------------|------------|---|
| NOT IMPORTANT | => NOT IMP | (Means this IS NOT part of your high school now, and SHOULD NOT BE.) |
| NEEDS TO BE DEVELOPED | => DEV | (Means this IS NOT part of your high school now, but SHOULD BE.) |
| NEEDS TO BE IMPROVED | => IMPRV | (Means this IS part of your high school, but NEEDS TO BE STRENGTHENED.) |
| A STRONG PROGRAM NOW | => STRONG | (Means this IS a STRONG program for most parents AT ALL GRADE LEVELS at your school.) |

| <u>TYPE OF INVOLVEMENT</u> | <u>AT THIS SCHOOL...</u> | | | |
|---|--------------------------|-----|-------|--------|
| a. WORKSHOPS for parents to build skills in PARENTING and understanding their children at each grade level. | NOT IMP | DEV | IMPRV | STRONG |
| b. WORKSHOPS for parents on creating HOME CONDITIONS FOR LEARNING. | NOT IMP | DEV | IMPRV | STRONG |
| c. COMMUNICATIONS from the school to the home that all families can understand and use. | NOT IMP | DEV | IMPRV | STRONG |
| d. COMMUNICATIONS about report cards so that parents understand students' progress and needs. | NOT IMP | DEV | IMPRV | STRONG |
| e. Parent-teacher CONFERENCES with all families. | NOT IMP | DEV | IMPRV | STRONG |
| f. VOLUNTEERS at the school. | NOT IMP | DEV | IMPRV | STRONG |
| g. VOLUNTEERS in classrooms to assist teachers and students. | NOT IMP | DEV | IMPRV | STRONG |
| h. INFORMATION TO PARENTS on how to monitor homework. | NOT IMP | DEV | IMPRV | STRONG |
| i. INFORMATION TO PARENTS on how to help their children with specific skills and subjects. | NOT IMP | DEV | IMPRV | STRONG |
| j. Involvement by families in PTA/PTO leadership, other COMMITTEES, or other decision-making roles. | NOT IMP | DEV | IMPRV | STRONG |
| k. SURVEYING parents each year for their ideas about the school. | NOT IMP | DEV | IMPRV | STRONG |
| l. Programs for after-school activities, recreation, and homework help. | NOT IMP | DEV | IMPRV | STRONG |

Q-6. Teachers choose among many activities to assist their students and families. CIRCLE one choice to tell how important each of these is for you to conduct at your grade level:

| | How important is this practice to you? | | | |
|--|--|-----------------------|---------------------|-------------------|
| | NOT IMPORTANT | A LITTLE IMPORTANT | PRETTY IMPORTANT | VERY IMPORTANT |
| a. Have a conference with each of my students' parents at least once a year. | NOT IMP | A LITTLE IMP | PRETTY IMP | VERY IMP |
| b. Attend evening meetings, performances, and workshops at school. | NOT IMP | A LITTLE IMP | PRETTY IMP | VERY IMP |
| c. Contact parents about their children's problems or failures. | NOT IMP | A LITTLE IMP | PRETTY IMP | VERY IMP |
| d. Inform parents when their children do something well. | NOT IMP | A LITTLE IMP | PRETTY IMP | VERY IMP |
| e. Involve some parents as volunteers in my classroom. | NOT IMP | A LITTLE IMP | PRETTY IMP | VERY IMP |
| f. Inform parents of the skills their children must pass in each subject I teach. | NOT IMP | A LITTLE IMP | PRETTY IMP | VERY IMP |
| g. Inform parents how report card grades are earned in my class. | NOT IMP | A LITTLE IMP | PRETTY IMP | VERY IMP |
| h. Provide specific activities for children and parents to do to improve students' grades. | NOT IMP | A LITTLE IMP | PRETTY IMP | VERY IMP |
| i. Provide ideas for discussing specific TV shows. | NOT IMP | A LITTLE IMP | PRETTY IMP | VERY IMP |
| j. Assign homework that requires children to interact with parents. | NOT IMP | A LITTLE IMP | PRETTY IMP | VERY IMP |
| k. Suggest ways to practice spelling or other skills at home before a test. | NOT IMP | A LITTLE IMP | PRETTY IMP | VERY IMP |
| l. Ask parents to listen to their children read. | NOT IMP | A LITTLE IMP | PRETTY IMP | VERY IMP |
| m. Ask parents to listen to a story or paragraph that their children write. | NOT IMP | A LITTLE IMP | PRETTY IMP | VERY IMP |
| n. Work with other teachers to develop parent involvement activities and materials. | NOT IMP | A LITTLE IMP | PRETTY IMP | VERY IMP |
| o. Work with community members to arrange learning opportunities in my class. | NOT IMP | A LITTLE IMP | PRETTY IMP | VERY IMP |
| p. Work with area businesses for volunteers to improve programs for my students. | NOT IMP | A LITTLE IMP | PRETTY IMP | VERY IMP |
| q. Request information from parents on their children's talents, interests, or needs. | NOT IMP | A LITTLE IMP | PRETTY IMP | VERY IMP |

Q-7. The next questions ask for your professional opinions about the activities that you think should be conducted by the parents of the children you teach. Circle the choice that best describes the importance of these activities at your grade level.

| PARENTS' RESPONSIBILITIES | NOT IMPORTANT | A LITTLE IMPORTANT | PRETTY IMPORTANT | VERY IMPORTANT |
|--|---------------|--------------------|------------------|----------------|
| a. Send children to school ready to learn. | NOT IMP | A LITTLE IMP | PRETTY IMP | VERY IMP |
| b. Teach children to behave well. | NOT IMP | A LITTLE IMP | PRETTY IMP | VERY IMP |
| c. Set up a quiet place and time for studying at home. | NOT IMP | A LITTLE IMP | PRETTY IMP | VERY IMP |
| d. Encourage children to volunteer in class. | NOT IMP | A LITTLE IMP | PRETTY IMP | VERY IMP |
| e. Know what children are expected to learn each year. | NOT IMP | A LITTLE IMP | PRETTY IMP | VERY IMP |
| f. Check that homework is done. | NOT IMP | A LITTLE IMP | PRETTY IMP | VERY IMP |
| g. Talk to children about what they are learning in school. | NOT IMP | A LITTLE IMP | PRETTY IMP | VERY IMP |
| h. Help children practice spelling, vocabulary, or other skills. | NOT IMP | A LITTLE IMP | PRETTY IMP | VERY IMP |
| i. Ask teachers for specific ideas on how to help their children at home with classwork. | NOT IMP | A LITTLE IMP | PRETTY IMP | VERY IMP |
| j. Talk to teachers about problems the children are facing at home. | NOT IMP | A LITTLE IMP | PRETTY IMP | VERY IMP |
| k. Attend assemblies and other special events at the school. | NOT IMP | A LITTLE IMP | PRETTY IMP | VERY IMP |
| l. Take children to places and events in the community. | NOT IMP | A LITTLE IMP | PRETTY IMP | VERY IMP |
| m. Talk to children about the importance of school. | NOT IMP | A LITTLE IMP | PRETTY IMP | VERY IMP |

Q-8. The next question asks how you perceive others' support for parent involvement at your school. Please circle one choice each. How do the following groups or individuals at your school feel about parent involvement at this time?

| | Strong Support | Some Support | Weak Support | No Support |
|-----------------------------------|----------------|--------------|--------------|------------|
| a. You, personally... | STRONG | SOME | WEAK | NONE |
| b. Other teachers... | STRONG | SOME | WEAK | NONE |
| c. The principal... | STRONG | SOME | WEAK | NONE |
| d. Other administrators | STRONG | SOME | WEAK | NONE |
| e. Parents... | STRONG | SOME | WEAK | NONE |
| f. Others in community... | STRONG | SOME | WEAK | NONE |
| g. The school board... | STRONG | SOME | WEAK | NONE |
| h. The district superintendent... | STRONG | SOME | WEAK | NONE |

Q-9. Over the past two years, how has each of the following changed at your school?

| Over the past two years... | A Lot Less | A Little Less | About the Same | A Little More | A lot More |
|---|------------|---------------|----------------|---------------|------------|
| Involvement of fathers or males at school | lot less | little less | the same | little more | lot more |
| Parent-child activities at school | lot less | little less | the same | little more | lot more |
| Homework designed to involve parents | lot less | little less | the same | little more | lot more |
| Principal's recognition of teachers' work on parent involvement | lot less | little less | the same | little more | lot more |
| Support from businesses in the community | lot less | little less | the same | little more | lot more |
| Conflicts with families | lot less | little less | the same | little more | lot more |
| Student motivation to learn | lot less | little less | the same | little more | lot more |
| Student mastery of skills | lot less | little less | the same | little more | lot more |

Q-10. The last questions ask for general information about you, your students, and the classes you teach. This will help us understand how new practices can be developed to meet the needs of particular schools, teachers, and students.

a. What grade(s) do you teach THIS YEAR? (Circle all that apply.)

K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

If you do not teach, give position: _____

b. How many different students do you teach each day, on average?

Number of different students I teach on average day = _____

c. Which best describes your teaching responsibility? (CHECK ONE)

1. I teach several subjects to ONE SELF-CONTAINED CLASS.
2. I teach ONE subject to SEVERAL DIFFERENT CLASSES of students in a departmentalized program.
3. I teach MORE THAN ONE subject to MORE THAN ONE CLASS in a semi-departmental or other arrangement.
4. Other (please describe): _____

d. Check the subject(s) you teach in an average week (PLEASE CHECK ALL THAT APPLY):

- | | | | |
|--|---|--------------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Reading | <input type="checkbox"/> Science | <input type="checkbox"/> Art | <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial Arts |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Language Arts/English | <input type="checkbox"/> Social Studies | <input type="checkbox"/> Music | <input type="checkbox"/> Home Economics |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Math | <input type="checkbox"/> Health | <input type="checkbox"/> Advisory | <input type="checkbox"/> Physical Education |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ | |

Do you work with other teachers on a formal, interdisciplinary team? No Yes

e. About how many of the students you teach participate in:

Chapter I _____% of my students

Special Education _____% of my students

Gifted and Talented _____% of my students

f. How many of the students you teach would you consider: (Total 100%)

Above average in skills for your grade level _____% of my students

Average in skills for your grade level _____% of my students

Below average in skills for your grade level _____% of my students

100%

g. How many years have you been a teacher or administrator in a public or private school?
 _____ Total years in teaching or administration _____ Years in this school

h. About how many hours each week on average do you spend contacting parents?

- None
- Less than one hour
- One hour
- Two hours
- Three or more hours

i. What is your highest education?

- Bachelor's
- Bachelor's + credits
- Master's
- Master's + credits
- Doctorate
- Other (describe) _____

j. How do you describe yourself?

- African American
- Asian American
- Hispanic American
- White
- Other (describe) _____

OPTIONAL: We would value your ideas on the following questions if you can take a few more minutes to help.

a. What is the most successful practice to involve parents that you have used or that you have heard about?

b. In what ways could better partnerships with families help you as a teacher?

c. In what ways could better partnerships with the community help you as teacher?

d. Over the past year or two, how has parent involvement at this school changed (increased? decreased? stayed the same?) Give one or two examples.

e. Do you have any other ideas or comments that you would like to add? (Feel free to add other pages with your comments.)

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR HELP!

Appendix C
Parent School Partnership
Post Questionnaire
Parent Survey

PARENT SCHOOL PARTNERSHIP POST QUESTIONNAIRE
PARENT SURVEY Spring 1993

During the school year we have been working to improve ways that schools and families can help each other and help all children succeed in school. Please answer the following questions to let us know what you think.

- | | | |
|--|-----|----|
| 1. Do you feel more confident in your own ability to communicate with your child's teacher? | YES | NO |
| 2. Do you feel more confident in your own ability to contact other people at the school if you need to? | YES | NO |
| 3. Do you think the parent resource center in your neighborhood has been helpful to you? | YES | NO |
| 4. Has the teacher given you more ideas for helping your child with school skills? | YES | NO |
| 5. Do you feel you know more about how your child is doing in school? | YES | NO |
| 6. Do you feel that you know more about places to take your child in the community that would help your child learn more? Ex. Science Center, Public Library. | YES | NO |
| 7. Do you feel you know more about how to get help from different places if you have a problem? | YES | NO |
| 8. Do you feel you have been part of the "planning team" for your child's education? | YES | NO |

Parent School Partnership Parent Survey
Page 2

Please give us an example of a better experience or event which has happened this year as a result of the workshops and parent resource center?

Please give us any ideas you think might work to improve the parent school partnership next year?

Thanks so much for your help throughout the school year! Working together we can all have better educational programs in our schools!

Appendix D
Parent School Partnership
Post Questionnaire
Teacher Survey

Parent School Partnership
Teacher Post Survey Spring 1993

During this school year you have been working to improve the parent school partnership with minority and/or economically disadvantaged families. Please answer the follow questions to let us know your opinion.

- | | | |
|--|-----|----|
| 1. On the whole do you feel the parent is more confident in their own ability to communicate with the school? | YES | NO |
| 2. Do you think there has been an improvement in parent involvement with this school? If yes, please give an example. | YES | NO |
| 3. Do you have a better understanding about these families and their needs? | YES | NO |
| 4. Do you feel there is an improvement in your own ability to communicate with these families? | YES | NO |
| 5. Do you think it has been useful to have the parent resource center in the public housing community? | YES | NO |
| 6. Do you feel the parent has a better understanding of how to help their child at home to be successful in school? | YES | NO |
| 7. Do you think the parent has a better understanding about talking with their child about what they are learning in school? | YES | NO |
| 8. Do you feel the parent has a better understanding about accessing community resources? Ex. Science Center, Public Library, Social Services. | YES | NO |

**Parent School Partnership
Teacher Post Survey**

9. Do you think there has been an increase in parent initiated contact with the school? YES NO

10. Did you actively seek out the participation of the minority and/or economically disadvantaged families with the school? YES NO
If yes, how many attempts did you make?

11. Were you able get any of these families to volunteer at the school during the year? YES NO
If yes, how many?_____

12. Please specify at least two events that happened as a result of the parent-school partnership project?

A.

B.

We would appreciate any additional comments about ways to continue to improve the parent school partnership.

Thanks so much for your help throughout the school year!