ABSTRACT
        This project was developed and implemented to improve
an open library program by increasing parent involvement. Through
initial surveys, questionnaires, and the author's personal
experience, it was determined that the problems experienced by
parents, teachers, administrators, and students in the open library
program were due to the ineffectiveness of involving parents. By
means of surveys, interviews, research, and meetings with
administrators, staff, parents, and students, the author with the
help of a task committee developed strategies to increase parent
participation in the open library program. All the program objectives
were met with the target group improving dramatically in all areas.
The objectives for the program were: to increase the attitudes of
teachers toward the open library program, increase the number of
students participating in the program, increase the number of parents
reading to children, to have at least 50 percent of the 650 students
read or be read to by parents a minimum of 25 books, to train parents
reading to children in inferencing questioning, to increase parent
volunteerism school-wide. (Appendices include a pre- and post-survey
cover letter and questionnaire to faculty members and parents, a pre-
and post-questionnaire to students, pre- and post-comments by faculty
members, parents and students, library parent reading log,
student/parent sign-in log, reading record form, and an inferencing
questions evaluation form.) (Contains 14 references.) (Author)

Helping Kindergarten - Fifth Grade
Open Library Programs
Develop Strategies For Improving
Parent Staffing
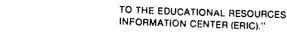
by
Pablo Montanez

A Practicum Report

Submitted to the Faculty of Abraham S. Fischler Center for
the Advancement of Education of NOVA University in partial
fullfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Science.

December/1993

Abstract

Helping Kindergarten - Fifth Grade Open Library Program Develop
Strategies for Improving Parent Staffing.
Montanez, Pablo, 1993.   Practicum Report, Nova University,
Abraham S. Fischler Center for the Advancement of Education.
Descriptors: Parent Participation/School Involvement/Family-School
Relationships/Resource   Centers/School   Libraries/Parent
Associations/School Community Programs/Home and School/Student-
Parent Relationships.

This project was developed and implemented to improve an
open library program by increasing parent involvement. Through
initial surveys, questionnaires and the author's personal experience it
was determined that the problems experienced by parents, teachers,
administrators and students, in the open library program were due to
the ineffectiveness of involving parents.

Through surveys, interviews, research and meetings with
administrators, staff, parents and students, the author with the help of
a task committee, developed strategies to increase parent participation
in the open library program. All of the program objectives were met
with the target group improving dramatically in all areas. The
objectives for the program were: to increase the attitudes of teachers
toward the open library program, increase the number of students
participating in the program, increase the number of parents reading
to children, to have at least 50 percent of the 650 students read or be
read to by parents a minimum of 25 books, to train parents reading
to children in inferencing questioning, to increase parent volunteerism
school-wide. (Appendices include a pre and post-survey cover letter
and questionnaire to faculty members and parents, a pre and post-
questionnaire to students, pre and post comments by faculty members,
parents and students, library parent reading log, student/parent sign-in
log, reading record form, and an inferencing questions evaluation
form.)

Authorship Statement

I hereby testify that this paper and the work it reports are entirely my own. Where it has been necessary to draw from the work of others, published or unpublished, I have acknowledged such work in accordance with accepted scholarly and editorial practice. I give this testimony freely, out of respect for the scholarship of other workers in the field and in the hope that my work, presented here, will earn similar respect.

_____

Pablo Montanez

Document Release

Permission is hereby given to Nova University to distribute copies of this applied research project on request from interested parties. It is my understanding that Nova University will not charge for this dissemination other than to cover the costs of duplicating, handling, and mailing of the materials.

_____

Pablo Montanez

_____

Date

iii

Table of Contents

v

Attachments

CHAPTER I

Purpose

The setting for this project was located in the Southeast Region of the United States in a large rural county which was geographically the fourth largest in the state. The 108 schools in this county included 60 elementary schools, 33 junior high schools and 15 high schools. The target school used in this study was an elementary school, composed of grades kindergarten through five. According to the elementary school's annual report, the 1992 - 1993 enrollment waslisted at 650 students. There were 92 kindergartners, 130 first graders, 90 second graders, 103 third graders, 110 fourth graders and 125 fifth graders. The ethnic breakdown of the student body was 86 percent White, nine percent Afro-American, three percent Hispanic and two percent other.

There were a variety of socio-economic levels represented at this elementary school although most of the students came from middle to upper-middle class families. There were 35 staff members

1

in all: two administrators, 27 teachers and six support teachers. Support services included a part-time psychologist, a part-time Drug Abuse Resistance Education (DARE) officer, an itinerant speech and language pathologist, a nurse and a full-time guidance counselor. The demographic breakdown of the staff was 84 percent White, 14 percent Afro-American and two percent Hispanic. Two staff members held doctoral degrees, three had specialist's degrees, 11 had master's degrees and 19 had bachelor's degrees.

Bus transportation was provided for 76 percent of the student population and free and reduced price lunch was provided for 20 percent of the student population. The pupil-teacher ratio was consistent at 26:1.

The role of this author in the school was that of a Physical Education teacher. The author's schedule consisted of nine 30 minute blocks, serving each student in the school daily. Other responsibilities included 30 minutes of bus duty daily and the school health coordinating responsibilities. The author took on the

challenges of effectively promoting school-wide spirit and pride in coordinating extra-curricular activities for the school such as basketball teams, track teams, jump rope teams, and the walking wellness program.

For the last six years the school had been considered unique in the county for its school-wide accomplishments: "Red Carpet School", "School of Distinction Award" for its commitment, dedication and excellence in education, and the first school in the county to implement Site-Based Decision Making.

The author had observed that over the past three years the number of parents participating in the school's open library program had been dramatically decreasing. The lack of parent involvement in this program was the thrust of this paper.

This school's library was managed throughout the school day by one full-time media specialist and a full-time para-professional. The seating capacity at this facility was limited to 65 persons. The resources consisted of 9,000 volumes (which include 300 parenting

materials), tape recorders, filmstrips, videos, televisions, video cassette recorders, manipulative materials, overheads and computers. The library ran on an open and flexible schedule which allowed students and faculty to check out books and use the resources daily. In an effort to improve parent involvement at this elementary school an open library program was developed four years ago. The program consisted of opening the school library to the public one night a week for a two hour period. The goal of this program was to enhance faculty, parent, student and community involvement in quality, wholesome activities by utilizing school facilities and resources.

Improvements of the open library program through parental involvement for the enhancement of students, faculty, parents and communities had received enthusiastic response from a number of those involved in the school as well as the county educational setting. The most favorable response came from the Area Superintendent of Schools. He was in favor of this program because it met the state's goal of increasing parental involvement in the school setting.

Parent involvement in education has the potential of improving children's academic success. Parents as well as school professionals play an active role in the socialization and education of children. Children have an added advantage in school when parents encourage and support schooling (Epstein, 1984). As education today faces the disintegration of the traditional family and the inabilities to cope with societal problems, the role of the school in dealing with these issues has encouraged the development of programs, spurring parents to become involved in the educational process (Flexman and Inger, 1992).

Parent involvement was suddenly becoming an integral part of the efforts to restore and improve the schools throughout the nation. The strength of having very strong parent involvement programs was that the parent and school connection created an opportunity for the parents to become directly involved in their child's education. The programs should also make resources available to the parents of the community. The quality of parent incorporated programs and the

knowledge of alternative ways of viewing parenting situations can assist parents in communications with their children and play an important role in the effectiveness of a child's success. By offering parents opportunities to be involved in a school-wide program, the parents would be able to directly involve themselves in their child's education.

The existing open library program had received negative feedback from teachers and administrators due to its ineffectiveness to involve parents. In the past, on the evening of open library, there was only one person responsible for the whole operation: checking out books, assisting in the library and occasionally reading stories. The open library program was most criticized for "the lack of parent involvement." The problems noted by this researcher with this program include but were not limited to the following:

1. Logistical issues (scheduling, limited time, past failures of communication, work hours and child care needs).

2. Attitudes of educators (blaming parents for children's problems, beliefs that parents don't care).

3. Lack of knowledge or skills (poor skills of parents, educational background).

4. Not always reaching out to the parents who are least likely to be involved in a program of this nature.

5. Attitudes of parents (powerless, social economic acceptance, lack of understanding of school system).

6. Transportation, language barriers, lack of advertising and materials.

In order to determine exactly what factors caused the decrease in parent involvement during the open library program the author formed a committee consisting of four teachers, one media specialist, two administrators and six parents who were instrumental in creating new strategies to increase parent involvement. The demographic breakdown of the parents on the committee consisted of one Hispanic male, one Afro-American female, and four White females.

The first task of the committee was to create a questionnaire which was sent to all faculty members, parents and students dealing with the program during the first week of the 1993-1994 school year. The surveys were designed to collect information and offered a

section for a brief written evaluation of the open library program.

The author distributed 37 pre-survey questionnaires and a cover letter (Appendices A: 56 and B: 59) to the faculty. Thirty-five surveys were collected. Ninety-five percent of the faculty responded to the survey. From the 35 teachers who responded, 67 percent felt that the previous program did not effectively advertise opportunities for parent involvement. One hundred percent of the responding faculty felt that implementing new strategies in the open library such as family workshops, guest readers and activities would increase the total number of parents involved. Forty percent of the teachers said that they did not attend or assist in the program. Several teachers stated that they were not being paid to come in and work overtime. There were others who stated "I have a conflict on Tuesdays," "I don't have a sitter for my son," "I have a second job," "I am a single parent and also take a night course." Of the faculty's responses returned, an overwhelming majority felt that an increase in parent involvement would be beneficial to the school and most importantly

to a child's educational process. Additional faculty comments can be found in Appendix C: 62.

Two administrators were interviewed by the author and they both agreed that the previous open library program lacked parent involvement and expressed their concerns on the importance of addressing this need (Byrd, 1993 and Wright, 1993). The administrators concurred that a program of this magnitude would only be effective if parents, teachers and community members shared in the decisions and responsibilities. The two administrators also agreed that they did not have the time to correct the problem but welcomed the author's proposal for involvement and implementation of the revised open library program. One principal enthusiastically commented, "It's exciting to see someone take charge of the program with the kind of enthusiasm that you have! I know the program will be very successful."

The author distributed 400 pre-survey questionnaires and cover letters to parents (Appendices D: 64 and E: 67). Two hundred

seventy surveys were collected, representing a 67 percent response rate. One possible reason for the low response was due to the fact that multiple surveys were sent home to several families where more than one child attended the school. From the 67 percent that responded, 151 of the parents stated that over the past year they had never attended the open library program. Surprisingly, 76 of these same 151 parents said that they would be willing to volunteer for open library if they were asked. An overwhelming 96 percent of the parents who responded felt that their involvement in the open library program would enhance their child's education.

Several of the parents commented that the reason they had not attended open library was the lack of child-care for younger children who were not in school. Others stated "the school needs to advertise the program better," and "provide more family oriented activities". Additional parent comments can be found in Appendix F: 70.

The author randomly interviewed 30 students (Appendix G: 72). A systematic sampling technique was used to select the 30 students.

Every twenty-second name from a list of 650 students, beginning with student number seven was selected for the interview. This sampling was taken during the first week of school. Thirty-six percent of the students interviewed stated that over the past year they did not attend the open library program. Surprisingly, 46 percent of the students responded that they have talked to their parents about attending the open library program together. The most common reason given by the students for not attending the open library program was "my parents are too busy to bring me." Additional student comments can be found in Appendix H: 75.

During the past school year there were no parents reading to children during the open library program. There should have been at least 60 parents involved in reading to children during the open library program. There was a discrepancy of 60 parents who should be reading to children during the open library program. There was a need to implement strategies to increase the number of parent readers to 60 parents.

The mean rating of the teachers' attitudes from the open library survey was 4.6 on a scale with one being lowest and seven being the highest. The teachers should have reported at the end of the project a mean attitude rating of at least 6.0 on the survey. There was a discrepancy of at least 1.4 in the rating of the teachers' attitudes. There was a need to increase the rating of the teachers' attitude by at least 1.4 so as to close the gap by the end of the project.

From the data obtained from last year's open library attendance logs, 27 percent of the elementary students participated in the open library program. There should have been at least 50 percent of all students participating in the open library program. There was a discrepancy of 23 percent of students who should have been participating in the program. There was a need to implement new strategies to increase the student participation by 23 percent in the open library program.

From the data obtained from last year's school-wide volunteer log, 15 percent of all parents were volunteering or were involved in

school-wide activities. There should have been at least 40 percent of all parents volunteering or involved in school-wide activities. There was a discrepancy of 25 percent of parents who should have been volunteering or involved in school-wide activities. There was a need to increase parent volunteerism or involvement in school-wide activities to a 40 percent level.

Prior to this project's implementation, none of the students in the elementary school had read or had been read the required minimum of 25 books for the school's goal to qualify for the School of Distinction Award. Fifty percent of all students should have read or been read the required minimum of 25 books for the School of Distinction Award before the completion of this project. There was a discrepancy of 50 percent of students who should have read or have been read the required minimum of 25 books. There was a need to increase the students who had read or had been read their required minimum of 25 books to 50 percent.

The outcome objectives for this project were implemented in a

12-week period and were designed to result in an improved open library program through an increase of parent involvement. There were several goals for this project. The goals consisted of increasing parent involvement, improving attitudes among faculty members towards the program, increasing the number of students participating, increasing school-wide parent volunteerism and increasing parent and student reading school-wide.

Parent involvement in education, both at home and at school, could be an important factor in improving children's academic success and school effectiveness. Parents and educators play an active role in the socialization and education of leaders. Establishing an organizational partnership between parents and educators would act as the foundation for a wide range of effective opportunities such as parent awareness of educational issues and available resources. Most importantly, the direct involvement in an effective open library program could help determine the success of children in the educational process. Improving attitudes that educators have towards

parents of all educational levels and students at all achievement levels could also be beneficial in establishing programs that link the school and the home. Participation in an open library program could give students greater enrichment in critical thinking processes in terms of contact and conversation with parents asking inference questions.

Increasing the number of parent volunteers school-wide is necessary for parent and school connections and would create an opportunity for family-school partnerships. Working together on innovative ways to enhance the development of children would be the key to creating a family-friendly school. A family-friendly school that offers programs that center around reading aloud may effectively enhance a child's intellectual, social and cognitive development (Portes, Dunham and Kidwell, 1988).

During the 12-week open library program, 60 parents would be involved in reading to children as measured by a library parent reading log (Appendix I:77).

As a result of participation in the 12-week open library

program, the attitudes of teachers toward the open library program would be positive as measured by at least 90 percent of the teachers rating the program at least 6.0 on a 7 point scale (Appendix N: 88).

As a result of participation in the 12-week open library program, the number of children participating in the program would reach at least 325 as measured by review of cumulative student/parent sign-in logs at open library functions. Each individual child would only be counted once (Appendix J: 79).

As a result of the revised open library program, an increase in parent volunteer involvement school-wide would occur, and the administration would see a need to continue the revised program for the remainder of the year as measured by verbal consent.

As a result of the 12-week revised open library program, 50 percent of the 650 students would have read the minimum of 25 books required, or would have been read to by parents during the open library night, for the superintendent's goal of "School of Distinction" as measured by the review of reading record forms documenting the

number of books read to children (Appendix K: 81).

As a result of parent reading workshops, the 60 parents reading to children would be trained and encouraged to challenge students with higher levels of critical thinking during inference questioning in the open library program as measured by direct parent observation during reading sessions using an inferencing questions evaluation form (Appendix L: 83).

CHAPTER II

Research and Solution Strategies

Since the primary focus of this project was to increase parent involvement in the open library program, it was necessary to utilize a program that actually required that parents become involved. In the previous open library program, one person was responsible for all of the duties of the program; checking out books, assisting students and occasionally reading stories. In interviewing administrators, librarians, and educators in the district, it was discovered that the majority agreed that the open library programs relied heavily on a few individuals and actually did very little to effectively enhance parent involvement. Some of their suggestions on ways to increase parent involvement included: workshops, improved newsletters, family nights, home visits, computerized messages, volunteer training, community connections, guest readers, advertising in local newspapers, videos, food incentives, and door prizes.

The author had become familiar with school-wide programs

18

over the past six years and had noted that in order to maintain successful school-wide programs, parents needed to become actively involved. Flexman and Inger (1992:16) stated that "parent involvement is most effective when it is comprehensive, well-planned and long lasting." The information being collected centers around the nature of parent involvement and the feasibility of parent involvement strategies to the proposed program.

In light of the concern with the active involvement of parents in the open library program it was necessary to cite research that addressed the effects of direct involvement of parents in the child's education. Warren, Porter and Griswold (1990) investigated the effects of parental practices of reading aloud to preschool children enrolled in child care centers. The parents of three, four, and five year-old children enrolled in the day care centers participated in the study. Survey forms were designed to collect demographic information and data regarding reading aloud to children. The questions asked in the survey focused on the following items:

demographic data, frequency and length of read-aloud sessions, sources of books, read-along time and places, and child's knowledge of well-know characters from children's literature. The results of the surveys indicated that 83.4 percent of the parents read aloud to their children several times a week. More than 89 percent of the parents spent at least 15 minutes per day reading aloud. Also discovered was the fact that 99 percent of the parents reported that all read aloud sessions contained occasional or frequent verbal interaction. The type of literature that was read was also of interest. Parents tended to read primarily from "grocery store" books such as Care Bears, Star Wars, and Smurfs. The unfamiliarity with quality children's literature was perceived as a factor in the child's lack of recognition of classic story book characters. The key findings in the authors' research that correlated with student achievement were the practices of reading aloud to pre-school children and the higher level of critical thinking being exchanged during inference questioning and verbal exchanges.

Portes, Dunham and Kidwell (1988) examined and assessed

mothers' styles of interaction with their children in relation to school

achievement and participation in early age intervention (10 year

study). The subjects were 54 mother/child dyads that were identified

from birth at the time of Project Know-How. Sixty low socio-

economic status (SES) families, in groups of 30 were assigned to

conditions and treatments. The findings indicated that early-age

intervention did not significantly effect student performance. The data

collected for the study consisted of measures obtained from an

interview between mother and child and the child's performance on

the California Test of Basic Skills (CTBS). The measures derived

from the child interaction task were designed to examine parental

interaction style, child rearing patterns, and the child's verbal

participation in public situations. Participatory style of interaction

(PSI) in which both parent and child actively exchanged information

was found to be significantly correlated with student achievement.

This style of interaction was unique, due to the fact that both parent

and child actively exchanged information. The researchers concluded

that the PSI factor could become an instrumental resource in assessing

social class and cultural differences.

Comer (1985) investigated the effects of an early intervention

and prevention program. The subjects consisted of students enrolled

in elementary school (Kindergarten - Fourth Grade). The students

participated in a prevention program called Yale-New Haven

Prevention Project (YNHPP). The four key elements of the school

intervention process were: (1) a management group (student advisory

council), (2) parent participation programs, (3) mental health

programs, and (4) academic (curriculum and staff development)

programs. The parent participation element revealed efforts in three

different areas: decision making roles, assisting classroom teachers

and attending social calendars. In addition, the academic program

centered around student achievement needs, assessed on the Iowa Test

of Basic Skills. The findings of this follow up study indicated

significant increases in the areas of reading, mathematics, staff

attendance and parent participation. The researchers concluded that

long term effects associated with primary intervention schools do have a positive effect on a child's education. The intervention program played a significant role in the child's educational process. The method of intervention which focused on students, school setting and application would be of significant value to future researchers.

Bailey, et al. (1992) investigated the perceptions that professionals have in analyzing the current practices of family involvement in early intervention programs. The study was conducted in four states. In each state the subjects consisted of 180 professionals who voluntarily participated in a workshop centered around family assessment and Individualized Family Service Plans (IFSP). The survey was used to acquire information about the participants' perceptions on current parent participation program operations and identification of obstacles. The results indicated that typical family involvement was assessed at a moderate range of one to five on a 10 point scale. The ideal roles of family reflected a higher degree of family involvement with a range of seven to eight on

a 10 point scale. Four barriers including families, systems, professionals and testings were identified as stumbling blocks in implementing ideal practices in early intervention programs. The author concluded that the study was of limited value universally due to the lack of actual documented practices. However, a few significant findings emerged as a result of this study. The discrepancies between how families were currently involved in early intervention programs and how families should be involved was of great value. The professionals identified reasons for the discrepancies, such as family barriers and system barriers.

Laosa (1982) studied the effects of schooling on parent-child relationship patterns via several specific studies. One study targeted issues regarding ethnic diversity, individual variability within the groups and the educational and occupational justice. There were two hypotheses stated which were to determine whether parent schooling or occupational status had any influences on educationally related features of parent-child relationships. In this study, Chicano

mothers were observed in the homes teaching cognitive-perceptual tasks to their five year old children. By using the Maternal Teaching Observation Technique frequencies of maternal behavior such as modeling, praise, inquiry, visual cue, directive and negative physical control were recorded. The results indicated that among Chicano women, schooling had a significant impact on the way in which mothers interacted with their children. In a preceding study, Laosa (1980 in Laosa, 1982) examined the effects of teaching behaviors of mothers toward their own children in two distinct ethnic groups - Chicanos and non Hispanic Whites. The results revealed significant differences of Chicano and non Hispanic mothers. Chicano mothers used modeling, visual cues, negative physical control as teaching strategies, while the non Hispanic mothers relied more on the inquiry and praise techniques. Another area of interest that Laosa investigated relating to parent schooling was reading and early development of literacy. A correlational study was conducted to investigate the effectiveness of developing readiness skills between lower and highly

schooled Chicano families. Data were derived from home interviews with the mothers while their children were in kindergarten. The data revealed that highly schooled mothers read more to their children and the children acquired more literacy skills than lower schooled parents. In conclusion, Laosa stated that there is a strong correlation between the amount of schooling that a parent receives and how the parent interacts with their children. There are also significant differences in parent teaching behaviors between ethnic groups. The author hopes that present-day group differences in parental behavior will soon disappear and that in the future both groups will attain similar levels of schooling.

Shields, Gordan and Dupree (1983) prepared a study which identified and assessed the effects of low income Black parents' beliefs, knowledge and practices on the achievement of good readers. The perspectives of both the parents and the child were considered, which made this research unique. The procedures used in obtaining data for this study involved an oral interview with parents, a written

questionnaire for parents' responses, and a student oral interview.

Five hypotheses were stated suggesting a difference between the

knowledge, beliefs, and practices between parents of good readers and

those of poor readers. Of the 16 variables identified, only one, parent

knowledge, proved to be statistically significant when associated with

reading levels. There were no variances between the parents' beliefs

of education, significance of discussion, and the need for resources in

the home environment. However, a few significant differences were

assessed in parent practices. These differences consisted of praising

a child, responsibilities given to a child, buying extra curricular

books, and sacrificing time for a child. The research team concluded

that the data presented constituted a high correlation between reading

achievement and parent practices. Low income families with

successful readers attain certain universal practices that foster reading

achievement. By helping parents more appropriately direct their

efforts to these universal practices, poor readers from low income

families can be more successful in reading achievement.

Providing parent involvement in the home is advantageous for student achievement. Leach and Sidall (1990) examined the stigmas associated with different instructional methods for helping children to read. The sample of children was composed of 26 boys and 14 girls with ages ranging from five years three months to six years four months. The children of this sample were diagnosed as children without learning difficulties who were all beginning readers in the middle of their first term. The parents on the other hand, were randomly chosen to participate in parenting training sessions. These parents were selected to be trained in one of four different tutoring methods. The methods that were presented were: (a) hearing reading, (b) paired reading, (c) pause, prompt, praise, and (d) direct instruction. Separate training sessions were held for each tutoring group except the hearing reading group. Reading comprehension before and after the 10 week experimental period was assessed on the Neale Analysis of Reading Ability (1988). The pre-test scores of reading accuracy and comprehension by the groups were not

significantly different. However, an analysis of the post test scores with the pre-test scores showed that the observed differences between the two groups were statistically significant. The researchers therefore concluded that the use of additional instructional strategies included in the direct instruction method and the paired reading tutoring method led to faster progress by the child receiving them than by children whose parents used the hearing reading method.

Dempsey, Bassler and Brissie (1992) investigated the relationships between parent efficacy and parent involvement in school activities. A questionnaire and accompanying letter of introduction were sent to the parents to obtain demographic information, descriptions of parent involvement in educational activities, and perceptions of parent's efficacy or sense of control over their child's educational outcomes.

The parent involvement variables measured through the school questionnaire items were: (1) weekly engaged time in educational activities, (2) volunteer work, and (3) home-based activities such as

telephone contact with teachers and homework assistance. The questionnaire presented to the teachers asked specific questions relating to teachers and their classes such as grade, enrollment, years taught, number of students on free lunches, years at present school, degrees earned, gender and age. When the data were analyzed, three variables of parent involvement and parent efficacy were found to be statistically significant. Teachers' results indicated significant relationships among teacher efficacy, perception of parents' efficacy, teacher reports of parent involvement in homework, educational activities, volunteering, and conferences participation. The research team concluded in their overall findings that parent efficacy was significantly linked to volunteering, educational activities, and telephone calls.

Grolnick and Ryan (1989) prepared a study which assessed the nature of parental influences on children's school related performances. The subjects consisted of children grades three to six and parents and teachers from 20 classrooms at an elementary school

located outside a northeastern city. Letters and consent forms were distributed to parents inviting them to participate in the study. The instruments used in collecting data consisted of questionnaires and parent interviews. The parent interviews focused on the various ways in which parents motivated their children and how parents responded to children's behavior. The interview contained four areas of interest: (1) doing homework, (2) student achievement, (3) cleaning their bedroom, and (4) going to bed on time. After the interviews, the interviewer and observer rated the parents on a 5-point scale associated with the three parenting dimensions: (1) autonomy support, (2) involvement, and (3) structure. The primary focus was to assess the children's styles of behavior change while engaging in various school-related activities such as: (1) doing homework, (2) classwork, and (3) answering difficult questions in class. The ratings were measured through a battery of tests such as (1) the Teacher Classroom Adjustment Rating Scale (T-Cars, Hightowner et al., 1986), which measured children's school difficulties, (2) the Teacher Rating Scale

(8- item questionnaire), which measured the teacher's perception of a child's academic competence, (3) a Standardized Achievement Test, which measured math and reading scores based on the Metropolitan Achievement Test (MAT) and Pupil Educational Progress Test (PEP), and (4) classroom grades, measured by year-ending grades in math and reading. The findings indicated that the three parental dimensions: (1) autonomy support, (2) involvement, and (3) structure, were statistically significant. The researchers concluded that by fostering autonomy in their children, parents will be better prepared for an educational environment that requires independent mastery and self-regulation.

Delgado-Gaitan and Ruiz (1992) examined and assessed the roles that parents play in the academic socialization of Mexican-American children. The study took place in an elementary school located in the small community of Carpinteria, California. The students were distributed among high, middle, and low Spanish reading groups. The methods employed for obtaining data included

developing family profiles, conducting ethnographic interviews, audiotaping parent-child interactions at home and recording behavioral observations. The interviews revealed significant information about the parents' background and motivation for involvement in their child's education. The findings revealed that the level of parental participation was determined in large part by the level of schooling a parent had achieved. The finding is supported by the fact that some families were a little apprehensive about assisting students with homework because they lacked self-confidence in their own literacy skills. The children of parents who participated more actively at school usually read at grade level or above expectation. The authors concluded that parents who were most active as mentors held out specific goals for their children. They interacted frequently with their children at home, both with school and non-school related activities, and learned how to communicate with supportive teachers.

Solution Strategy

The research on parent involvement revealed that parent

involvement was well-suited to a program that involved improving the students' academic success through having parents actively participate in a program. Parent involvement was well suited to this project because it lent easily to the open library program. Aspects of the research indicated that parent involvement achieved positive results as far as improving student achievement through active parent participation. Using parent involvement strategies such as workshops, committees, open lines of communications, learning activities, reading aloud, inference questions, parenting skills, incentives, door prizes, volunteer training, videos, family nights and guest readers as means of improving parent participation in the open library program would enhance student success.

The author interviewed several teachers and administrators who had worked with parent involvement in the open library program in the past. These interviews were helpful in helping to avoid possible problems that would arise. The interviews also provided the author with positive information concerning situations in which those people

interviewed had used the strategies in the past.

The principal at this school supported the author's choice of strategies for this project and felt the strategies would not only enhance the open library program, but would also meet the state's goal of increasing parent involvement in the school setting. The overall support for the new strategies from faculty, parents and community members had increased the enthusiasm for this year's open library program.

CHAPTER III

Method

The project was designed to cover a 12-week period. Following the approval of the practicum project by the school principal and advisor, the author began the implementation of this project by forming a committee that consisted of four teachers, one media specialist, six parents and two administrators. The author and team members then were responsible for tabulating and reviewing the results of the survey that had already been administered for fact finding reasons. Following the review of the survey, the author worked with the team to formulate new strategies which would solve the problem of the lack of parent involvement in the open library program. During the implementation period the author conducted personal interviews to get feedback on the effectiveness of the new strategies.

The implementation began in September, 1993 and was completed in December, 1993. In this chapter all activities, resources

36

and permissions are discussed.

The permission and approval of the Area Superintendent and Principal were granted for the implementation of this project. Parent, student and faculty member permission release forms were sent with pre-survey questionnaires to obtain group data for the open library program.

In order to effectively promote the open library program to faculty, parents, students and community members the author attended the parent/student orientation prior to the start of the school year to discuss the program and to recruit parents. At this time the author had parents sign up to read or to staff the open library program for a specific evening. The author sent home with the students all necessary letters, flyers and schedules to effectively promote the open library's events.

In an effort to increase parent involvement in the open library program, the author implemented suggestions given by faculty and parents via the pre-survey questionnaires in relation to guest speakers,

family activities, workshops and incentives. The author wrote to various sports figures and community members requesting their participation in the program. The author and committee members sought out various donations of food and prize items within the community that were used during the open library nights. The author coordinated a parent/student clay workshop with the school's art teacher and also conducted a parent/student workshop on cartooning. A critical skills training workshop for parents centering around inference questioning was also conducted for parents who had volunteered to read.

The scheduled time for the open library program was set for every Tuesday night from 6:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. The facilities that were used included the library, cafeteria, art room and music room. Computers, tables, books, various art supplies, and audio-visual equipment were used as needed throughout the 12-week open library program. Materials and supplies used during the open library program were funded by cash and merchandise donations from

community members and businesses. All other funding needs were covered by the school's Parent Teachers Association (PTA).

The author continually monitored the participation and attitudes of faculty, parents, students and community members throughout the 12-week open library program. An attendance log was used to record attendance weekly. The data collected from these attendance logs were maintained in a computer data base for future reference. The computer data base was also used to monitor the number of books being checked out during open library program. The author also continually interviewed faculty, parents, students and community members to get feedback about the open library program.

Timeline

Pre-implementation: Formed a committee; distributed pre-survey; interviewed students and administrators, tabulated pre-survey results; assigned phone tree duties; wrote various sports figures; set up data base in computer to record attendance; prepared student/parent sign-in log; sent home flyers, letters, schedules, solicited the business community for prizes that were used for raffles throughout the 12-week program, conducted inferencing questions workshop with parents who had signed up to be readers in group reading sessions.

Week 1   Kicked off program; sent flyer home; sought donations from the community for hotdogs, sodas, and paper products; set up tables for refreshments, new library card sign ups and student/parent sign-in logs; set up public address equipment, recruited and gave job assignments to parent volunteers; welcomed and provided orientation of open library program for attending faculty, parents and students; kept attendance log of students, parents, teachers and community members; coordinated and implemented raffle for prizes; assisted and supervised volunteers with clean up.

Week 2   Celebrity guest reader, Ken Snell, World Record Weight Lifter; reconfirmed attendance with celebrity reader; set up tables for student/parent sign-in and distribution of raffle tickets; arranged reading stations with chairs and easels; selected books from library to be used in the reading groups; supervised parent volunteer reading sessions and encouraged the use of inferencing questions; attended open library; kept attendance log of students, parents, teachers and community members; supervised committee on phone calls to parent volunteers for upcoming events; coordinated and implemented raffle for prizes; assisted and supervised volunteers with clean up.

Week 3   Celebrity guest readers, Mulberry High School Varsity Sports Team Members; reconfirmed attendance with guest readers; set up tables for student/parent sign-in and distribution of raffle tickets; arranged reading stations with chairs and easels; selected books from library to be used in the reading groups; trained high school readers on inference questioning; supervised volunteer reading sessions; attended open library; kept attendance log of students, parents, teachers and community members;

supervised committee on phone calls to parent volunteers for upcoming events; coordinated and implemented raffle for prizes; assisted and supervised volunteers with clean up.

Week 4   Clay workshop; limited workshop to 30 students and their parents; remaining students participated in reading groups led by parent readers; coordinated with art teacher; set up tables for student/parent sign-in and distribution of raffle tickets; arranged reading stations with chairs and easels; selected books from library to be used in the reading groups; supervised volunteer reading sessions and encouraged the use of inferencing questions; kept attendance log of students, parents, teachers and community members; supervised committee on phone calls to parent volunteers for upcoming events; coordinated and implemented raffle for prizes; assisted and supervised volunteers with clean up.

Week 5   Celebrity guest reader, Lyndsey Alley, Mickey Mouse Mouseketeer; reconfirmed attendance with guest reader; set up tables for student/parent sign-in and distribution of raffle tickets; arranged reading stations with chairs and easels, selected books from library to be used in the reading groups; supervised parent volunteer reading sessions and encouraged the use of inferencing questions; attended open library, kept attendance log of students, parents, teachers and community members; supervised committee on phone calls to parent volunteers for upcoming events; coordinated and implemented raffle for prizes; supervised autograph session; assisted and supervised volunteers with clean up.

Week 6   Guest readers, Tampa Bay Lightning Cheerleaders; reconfirmed attendance with guest reader; set up tables for student/parent sign-in and distribution of raffle tickets; arranged reading stations with chairs and easels; selected books from library to be used in the reading groups; trained cheerleaders on the use of inferencing questions; supervised parent volunteer reading sessions and encouraged the use of inferencing questions; attended open library; kept attendance log of students, parents, teachers and community members; supervised committee on phone calls to parent volunteers for upcoming events; coordinated and implemented raffle for prizes; supervised autograph session; assisted and supervised volunteers with clean up.

Week 7   Guest reader, Andy McGaffigan, retired Major League Baseball Player, reconfirmed attendance with guest reader; set up tables for student/parent sign-in and distribution of raffle tickets; arranged reading stations with chairs and easels; selected books from library to be used in the reading groups; supervised parent volunteer reading sessions and encouraged the use of inferencing questions; attended open library; kept attendance log of students, parents, teachers and community members; supervised committee on phone calls to parent volunteers for upcoming events; coordinated and implemented raffle for prizes; assisted and supervised volunteers with clean up.

Week 8   Book fair; distributed flyers; set up tables for student/parent sign-in; attended open library; assisted as needed; promoted event and recruited parents for assisting with fair; assisted with clean up.

Week 9   Celebrity guest reader, Ed Rivera, FOX Television Editing Specialist, reconfirmed attendance with reader; arranged donation and delivery of a large screen television for guest reader's use; set up tables for student/parent sign-in and distribution of raffle tickets; arranged reading stations with chairs and easels; selected books from library to be used in the reading groups; supervised parent volunteer reading sessions and encouraged the use of inferencing questions; attended open library; kept attendance log of students; parents, teachers and community members, supervised committee on phone calls to parent volunteers for upcoming events; coordinated and implemented raffle for prizes; arranged pick up for television, assisted and supervised volunteer clean up.

Week 10   Cartoon workshop; limited participation to 30 students and their parents; remaining students participated in reading groups led by parent readers; gathered materials needed to conduct workshop; arranged for overhead projector and screen; set up tables for student/parent sign-in; arranged reading stations with chairs and easels, selected books from library to be used in the reading groups; conducted cartoon workshop; demonstrated techniques used in creating cartoons characters, kept attendance log of students, parents, teachers and community members; supervised committee on phone calls to parent volunteers for upcoming events; assisted anu supervised volunteers with clean up.

Week 11   Guest reader, Alan Mills, Baltimore Orioles Pitcher; reconfirmed attendance with guest reader; set up tables for student/parent sign-in and distribution of raffle tickets; arranged reading stations with chairs and easels; selected

books from library to be used in the reading groups; supervised parent volunteer reading sessions and encouraged the use of inferencing questions; attended open library; kept attendance log of students, parents; teachers and community members; supervised committee on phone calls to parent volunteers for upcoming events; coordinated and implemented raffle for prizes; assisted and supervised volunteers with clean up.

Week 12   Celebrity guest readers, faculty and parents; reconfirmed attendance with readers; set up tables for student/parent sign-in and distribution of raffle tickets; arranged reading stations with chairs and easels; selected books from library to be used in the reading groups; supervised parent volunteer reading sessions and encouraged the use of inferencing questions; attended open library; kept attendance log of students; parents, teachers and community members; supervised committee on phone calls to parent volunteers for upcoming events; coordinated and implemented raffle for prizes; assisted and supervised volunteers with clean up.

There were a few adjustments made to the program from the original proposal. There was one cancellation by a guest reader who was scheduled for week three. Fortunately, the Mulberry High School Varsity sports members were excited and able to replace the previously scheduled reader.

Due to the significant number of people attending the open

library program each week, the only other change made during the

program was the relocation of the reading groups sessions from the

school's library to the cafeteria. This change provided the necessary

space to accommodate more participants and smaller reading groups.

Post-Implementation: Evaluation of objectives

CHAPTER IV

Results

The evaluation of this practicum project was completed by the author through a faculty and parent post-survey, student library attendance log, library parent reading log, reading record form, inferencing question record form, and personal interviews with administrators. To determine the success of the project the following objectives were individually evaluated.

The first objective was to increase the rating of the attitudes of teachers toward the open library program over the 12-week period. This objective would be considered successful if the teachers rated the open library program at least a 6.0 on a 7.0 point scale. At the completion of the 12-week open library program the author distributed 37 post-survey questionnaires and a cover letter to the faculty. Thirty-one surveys were collected. The attitudes of teachers toward the open library program as reflected on the post-survey questionnaire measured an average of 6.9 on a 7.0 point scale compared to the pre

46

survey which recorded a 4.6 rating. This objective was met.

The second objective was to have a least 50 percent of the 650 students participating in the open library program during the 12-week period. This objective would be considered successful if at least 325 different students participated in the program. As a result of participating in the 12-week open library program, 428 different children of the total school population of 650 participated in the program as measured by a cumulative student/parent library sign-in log. This objective was met. Happily, this number far exceeded the projected objective of 325 children participating in the program.

The third objective was to have 60 parents involved in reading to children during the 12 week period. This objective would be considered successful if at least 60 parents read to children. During the 12-week open library program, 68 parents became involved in reading to children as measured by a library parent reading log. This objective was met.

The fourth objective was that 50 percent of the 650 students

should have read or been read the required minimum of 25 books during the 12-week period. This objective would be considered successful if 325 of the students read of had been read the 25 book minimum. During the 12-week open library program, 81 percent of the 650 students had read or been read by parents the minimum of 25 books as measured by the review of reading record forms of the number of books read. This objective was met. The percentage of students who met the 25 book minimum goal exceeded the expected objective by an overwhelming 31 percent.

The fifth objective was to train parent readers on inferencing questioning techniques over the 12-week period. This objective would be considered successful if 60 parents were trained and encouraged to challenge students with higher levels of critical thinking during reading sessions. During the 12-week open library program, 68 parents read to children and challenged students with higher levels of critical thinking during inference questioning as measured by inferencing questions evaluation forms during reading sessions. Some

examples of inferencing techniques consisted of encouraging students to create their own endings to the stories and covering up the story line and encouraging creative thinking based on the illustrations shown. This objective was met.

The sixth objective was to increase parent volunteerism school-wide over the 12-week period. This objective would be considered successful if 40 percent of all parents volunteered or were involved in school-wide activities. As a result of the revised open library program, 58 percent of all parents were volunteering or were involved in school-wide activities. The school administrator has given consent for the program to continue. This objective was met.

Two administrators were interviewed by the author and they both agreed that the current open library program was very effective in increasing the number of parents who volunteered school-wide (Byrd, 1993 and Wright, 1993). One administrator enthusiastically commented, "The current open library program has had a significant impact on increasing volunteers school-wide. We have seen people

volunteering who haven't volunteered in years."

In addition to the above objectives being met, the following data continue to support the success of the program. From the post-surveys collected from the faculty, 96 percent felt that the current program did effectively advertise opportunities for parent involvement as compared to 67 percent represented in the pre-survey. From information gathered from the student library attendance log, 385 different parents attended the open library program with their child at least once during the 12-week project.

As a result of the revised open library program the media specialist had reported that there had been an average of 1,200 books checked out each Tuesday evening during open library. These books were checked out by the parents and students whose attendance averaged 242 people per event throughout the 12-week program.

The highest attendance recorded during the 12-week program was 385 student and parent participants. This record was set on the fifth week when Lyndsey Alley was the guest reader. Lyndsey's

popularity on the Disney Channel and her local celebrity status were contributing factors to the success of the event. The lowest attendance recorded during the 12-week program was 110 student and parent participants. This record was set on the fourth week when the clay workshop was held. Due to limited space and materials the workshop was made available to only 30 students and their parents with the remaining students participating in reading groups.

The support from the business community was another stepping stone in the program. There were 32 corporate sponsors who donated a variety of items for the weekly raffles which ranged from free pizza coupons to skateboards. The value of the merchandise donated totaled over $1,500 dollars.

Due to the positive feedback from the community and publicity in local newspapers, a neighboring school came and observed the project, made recommendations to their school's administrators, and have implemented a similar project (see attachment).

Verbal comments made throughout the 12-week program by

faculty, parents and students reconfirmed the success of the program.

"It's been great! My first grader set a 20 book minimum goal a week

for herself and usually does it," "What is being done is great! Keep

up the good work," " My kids have never been so excited about

reading before this program started." For additional post-survey

comments regarding the open library program from faculty, parents

and students refer to appendices O: 91, R: 99, and T: 104.

CHAPTER V

Recommendations

The project was successful. The author plans to continue using the strategies implemented throughout the school year in the open library program. The media county coordinator has expressed interest in this project and has asked that the results of the project be available to other librarians throughout the county who are interested in varying their programs.

The program would be a valuable tool particularly to elementary schools who are seeking greater parent involvement. The program would open other doors for improving parent involvement.

This program will be available to any librarian who feels that there is a need to get parents more actively involved in the staffing of their open library program in order to improve the parent involvement. In short, implementation of this project by the target county would have great impact on parent/school relationships.

53

Reference List

Bailey, Donald B. Jr., Virginia Buysse, Rebecca Edmondson, and Tina M. Smith. "Creating Family - Centered Services in Early Intervention: Perceptions of Professionals in Four States." Exceptional Children, February 1992, pp. 298 - 309.

Byrd, Jennings. Personal Interview, August 18, 1993 and December 14, 1993.

Comer, James P., "The Yale - New Haven Primary Project: A Follow-Up Study." Journal of Educational Psychology, Vol. 81, No. 2, 1989, pp. 143 - 154.

Delgado-Gaitan, Concha and Nadeen T. Ruiz. "Parent Mentorship: Socializing Children to School Culture." Educational Foundations, Spring 1992, pp. 45 - 69.

Dempsey, Kathleen V. Hoover., Otto C. Bassler, Jane S. Brissie. "Explorations in Parent-School Relations." Journal of Educational Research, Vol. 85, No. 5, May/June 1992, pp. 287 - 293.

Epstein, Joyce L., "School Policy and Parent Involvement" Educational Horizons, Vol. 62, Winter, 1984, pp. 70 - 72.

Flexman, Erwin, and Morton Inger. "Parents and Schooling in the 1990's." Principal, Vol. 72, November 1992, pp. 16 - 18.

Grolnick, Wendy S., and Richard M. Ryan. "Parent Styles Associated with Children's Self-Regulation and Competence in School." Journal of Educational Psychology, Vol. 81, No. 2, 1989, pp. 143 - 154.

Laosa, Luis M., "The Impact of Parental Schooling on the Parent-Child Relationship." Journal of Educational Psychology, Vol. 74, No. 6, December 1982, pp. 791 - 825.

Leach, David J., Susan W. Siddall. "Parent Involvement in the Teaching of Reading: A Comparison of Hearing, Reading, Paired Reading, Pause, Prompt, Praise and Direct Instruction Methods." British Journal of Educational Psychology, Vol. 60, No. 3, November 1990, pp. 349 - 355.

Portes, Pedro R., Richard M. Dunham and Jeannie S. Kidwell. "Early-Age Intervention and Parent-Child Interaction: Their Relation to Student Academic Achievement." Journal of Research and Development in Education, Vol. 21, No. 4, Summer 1988, pp. 68 - 85.

Shields, Portia H., Jessica G. Gordan, and David Dupree. "Influence of Parent Practices Upon the Reading Achievement of Good and Poor Readers." Journal of Negro Education, Vol. 52, No. 4, 1983, pp. 436 - 445.

Warren, Janet S., Norma Jean Porter, and Dianne L. Griswold. "Parental Practices of Reading Aloud to Preschool Children." Reading Improvement, Vol. 27, No. 1, Spring 1990, pp. 41 - 45.

Wright, Flora. Personal Interview, August 18, 1993 and December 14, 1993.

APPENDIX A

Cover Letter to Faculty Members
for Pre-Survey Questionnaire

APPENDIX A

Cover Letter to Faculty Members
for Pre-Survey Questionnaire

August 16, 1993

Dear 1 ~ ,

I am a student at NOVA University and I seek your help in finishing my Masters Degree in Educational Leadership. Your assistance in gathering group data is greatly appreciated. The group data obtained from this project may be published. No names will appear.

I have attached a survey that I am hoping you will fill out and return to me. Your input will assist me as I develop new strategies to increase parent involvement in our open library program.

Please return the survey to me no later than August 20th. (You can put it in my box.)

I would like to thank you in advance for your help. If you have any questions let me know.

Sincerely,

Coach Montanez

Faculty Permission Release Form

I, _____, give Pablo Montanez permission to

report group data obtained from this project.

$$\overline{\hspace{4cm}} \quad \overline{\hspace{1.5cm}}$$

Signature   Date

APPENDIX B

Faculty Pre-Survey Questionnaire

APPENDIX B

Faculty Pre-Survey Questionnaire

1. During this past year how many times did you volunteer for Open Library Night?

   0   1-3   3-6   7+

2. Would you be willing to serve as a volunteer for Open Library Night if you were asked?

   YES   NO

   If no, please explain why _____

   _____

3. Do you feel that the Open Library Program is effectively advertising opportunities for parent involvement?

   YES   NO

4. Do you believe that the students and their parents use the resources available at the school library effectively, i.e. encyclopedias, maps, parent literature, film strips, etc.?

   YES   NO

5.   Do you feel that implementing new strategies in the open
     library such as family workshops, guest readers and activities
     would increase parent involvement?

                         YES   NO

6.   Do you feel that increased parent involvement in the open
     library program will enhance a child's education?

                         YES   NO

7.   What are your comments about the current open library
     program and its procedures regarding parent involvement?

     _____

     _____

8.   Rate the open library program (1 low   7 high).

               1   2   3   4   5   6   7

APPENDIX C

Additional Comments by Faculty
from Pre-Survey Questionnaire

APPENDIX C

Additional Comments by Faculty
from Pre-Survey Questionnaire

"I wish more (parents) would use the services offered. Addition of activities would help spark interest."

"Although open library is a very good idea, I think it could be greatly improved by scheduling more activities that the parents can become involved in doing."

"The program is good in theory, but we need to develop ways of involving more students and parents."

"Since the funding was not available, the program has gone downhill (Fewer drawing cards to get parents to come out)."

"It started out strong, but has dwindled and I feel we need more activities in open library to return to our previous high. Guest readers and 'read-ins' were great."

"Unless parents are 'asked' to be involved many will not become involved."

"I feel it is a good program and would be even better if we could get more parent participation."

"It's a good program for our community. Maybe workshops on film strips, maps, computers, etc. would be helpful to the parents so that they can use the library as more of a resource than just checking out books."

APPENDIX D

Cover Letter to Parents
for Pre-Survey Questionnaire

APPENDIX D

Cover Letter to Parents
for Pre-Survey Questionnaire

August 23, 1993

Dear Parents,

I am a student at NOVA University and I seek your help in finishing my Masters Degree in Educational Leadership. Your assistance in gathering group data is greatly appreciated. The group data obtained from this project will be included in a final report and may be published. No parent names will appear.

I have enclosed a survey that I am hoping you will fill out and return to me. Please know that your child may be randomly selected to be interviewed regarding his/her ideas on this project. This input will assist me as I develop new strategies to increase parent involvement in our open library program.

Please return the survey no later than August 27th. Feel free to have your child return it to me.

I would like to thank you in advance for your help. If you have any questions I can be reached during school hours at 813-648-3525.

Sincerely,

Coach Montanez

Parent/Child Permission Release Form

I, _____, give Pablo Montanez permission to

report group data obtained from this project.

_____   _____

Signature   Date

APPENDIX E

Parent Pre-Survey Questionnaire

APPENDIX E

Parent Pre-Survey Questionnaire

1. During this past year how many times did you and your child attend open library night?

    0   1-3   3-6   7+

2. Would you be willing to serve as a parent volunteer for open library night if you were asked?

    YES   NO

    If no, please explain why _____

    _____

3. Do you feel that the open library program is effectively advertising opportunities for parent involvement?

    YES   NO

4. Do you and your child use the resources available at the school library, i.e., encyclopedias, maps, parent literature, film strips, etc.?

    YES   NO

5.   Do you feel that implementing new strategies in the open
     library such as family workshops, guest readers and activities
     would increase parent involvement?

                    YES   NO

6.   Do you feel that an increase in your involvement in the open
     library program will enhance your child's education ?

                    YES   NO

7.   What would you do differently to improve your involvement in
     the open library program?

     _____

     _____

     _____

APPENDIX F

Additional Comments by Parents
from Pre-Survey Questionnaire

APPENDIX F

Additional Comments by Parents
from Pre-Survey Questionnaire

"Have never attended or known of the program. My child seems excited about the program and I hope to see more announcements."

"I guess I would send out flyers showing the types of literature offered in your library."

"I don't know much about this program yet, but it sounds great for parent-child involvement in activities together."

"Have it on Thursday night."

"We would look forward to guest readers. We will be bringing our son to open library this year."

"Expand the adult/parent literature. Guest speakers if possible. Family activities is a great idea."

"Have it earlier. My kids are in bed by 8:00 p.m.."

"Have something for the smaller brothers/sisters."

"This is the first time I have seen anything on open library night; and, therefore, my family did not participate during Kindergarten last year. I think it sounds like a wonderful program and look forward to the activities."

"I would come if I could get a baby sitter for my seven month old baby or else be able to bring her, too."

APPENDIX G

Student Interview Pre-Questionnaire

APPENDIX G

Student Interview Pre-Questionnaire

1. During the past year how many times did you attend open library night with one of your parents?

    0   1-3   4-6   7+

2. Do you think your parents would serve as a volunteer(s) for open library night if they were asked?

    YES   NO

    If no, please explain why _____

    _____

    _____

3. Do you ever talk to your parents about attending open library together?

    YES   NO

4. Do you and your parents ever use the resources available at the school library?

    NEVER   SOMETIMES   OFTEN

5.   What could the school do to get you and your parents to come
     to the open library program?

     _____

     _____

     _____

APPENDIX H

Additional Comments by Students
from Interview Pre-Questionnaire

APPENDIX H

Additional Comments by Students
from Interview Pre-Questionnaire

"Have more guest speakers, movies, games, stickers, bookmarkers."

"Have a book trading night."

"I'll come as long as my girlfriend comes."

"I would love to go, but my parents are so busy."

"Have Nintendo night."

"Have a read-a-thon."

"I will be there because my mother signed up already to volunteer."

"Have theme nights; like dinosaurs, baseball cards, sports."

"Give us a t-shirt with the worm design if we read our 25 books."

APPENDIX I

Library Parent Reading Log

APPENDIX I

Library Parent Reading Log

Open Library
Parent Reading Log

Date _____

Guest Speaker/Event _____

1._____

2._____

3._____

4._____

5._____

6._____

7._____

8._____

9._____

10._____

APPENDIX J

Student/Parent Sign-In Log

APPENDIX J

Student/Parent Sign-In Log

Date_____

Parents' Name   Child's Name/Grade

1._____   _____

2._____   _____

3._____   _____

4._____   _____

5._____   _____

6._____   _____

7._____   _____

8._____   _____

9._____   _____

10._____   _____

11._____   _____

12._____   _____

13._____   _____

APPENDIX K

Reading Record Form

APPENDIX K

Reading Record Form

School Name _____

Student's Name _____

Teacher's Name _____ Grade Level _____

Please list the title of the book and have a parent or guardian initial beside the title. The verifies that the book has been read.

Title of Book	Certified Initial

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

7. _____

8. _____

APPENDIX L

Inferencing Questions Evaluation Form

APPENDIX L

Inferencing Questions Evaluation Form

1. Did the reader use any type of inferencing questions?

    YES   or   NO

2. How many times did the reader use the inferencing technique?
    (Indicate by tallying)

3. Were there any interactions between students and readers during
    the allotted time during the reading group session?

    YES   or   NO

APPENDIX M

Cover Letter to Faculty Members
for Post-Survey Questionnaire

APPENDIX M

Cover Letter to Faculty Members
for Post-Survey Questionnaire

December 7, 1993

Dear 1 ~ ,

I am a student at NOVA University and I seek your help in finishing my Masters Degree in Educational Leadership. Your assistance in gathering group data is greatly appreciated. The group data obtained from this project may be published. No names will appear.

I have attached a survey that I am hoping you will fill out and return to me. Your input will assist me as I evaluate the new strategies that have been used over the past 12 weeks to increase parent involvement in our open library program.

Please return the survey to me no later than December 14th. (You can put it in my box.)

I would like to thank you in advance for your help. If you have any questions let me know.

Sincerely,

Coach Montanez

Faculty Permission Release Form

I, _____, give Pablo Montanez permission to

report group data obtained from this project.

                           _____ _____

                                 Signature   Date

APPENDIX N

Faculty Post-Survey Questionnaire

APPENDIX N

Faculty Post-Survey Questionnaire

1. During the past 12 weeks how many times did you volunteer for Open Library Night?

    0   1-3   3-6   7+

2. Did you serve as a volunteer for Open Library Night when you were asked?

    YES   NO

    If no, please explain why _____

    _____

3. Do you feel that the current Open Library Program is effectively advertising opportunities for parent involvement?

    YES   NO

4. Do you believe that the students and their parents use the resources available at the school library effectively, i.e. encyclopedias, maps, parent literature, film strips, etc.?

    YES   NO

5. Do you feel that implementing the new strategies in the open library such as family workshops, guest readers and activities has increased parent involvement?

YES   NO

6. Do you feel that increased parent involvement in the open library program will enhance a child's education?

YES   NO

7. What are your comments about the current open library program and its procedures regarding parent involvement?

_____

_____

8. Rate the open library program (1 low   7 high).

1   2   3   4   5   6   7

APPENDIX O

Additional Comments by Faculty
from Post-Survey Questionnaire

APPENDIX O

Additional Comments from Faculty
from Post-Survey Questionnaire

"It is great to see parents becoming involved in reading to and with their children and being active participants, a needed part in their children's education. The open library program has been an asset to our school."

"I think this program has opened a lot of parents eyes as to the benefits of our library and their involvement."

"I have seen parents there that I had not seen all last year."

"We have seen families at open library that never attend other school functions. This is an increase in participation by families with children serviced by special education programs. This is an important family group to interest in coming out to our program. These parents need to be involved and it is very gratifying to see children reading more. I think all of the parents and children have been highly motivated by the program."

"I hope it continues next year. It is wonderful! Your enthusiasm and hard work made this program a big success."

APPENDIX P

Cover Letter to Parents
for Post-Survey Questionnaire

APPENDIX P

Cover Letter to Parents
for Post-Survey Questionnaire

December 7, 1993

Dear Parents,

I am a student at NOVA University and I seek your help in finishing
my Masters Degree in Educational Leadership. Your assistance in
gathering group data is greatly appreciated. The group data obtained
from this project will be included in a final report and may be
published. No parent names will appear.

I have enclosed a survey that I am hoping you will fill out and return
to me. Please know that your child may be randomly selected to be
interviewed regarding his/her ideas on this project. This input will
assist me as I evaluate the new strategies that have been used over the
past 12 weeks to increase parent involvement in our open library
program.

Please return the survey no later than December 14th. Feel free to
have your child return it to me.

I would like to thank you in advance for your help. If you have any
questions I can be reached during school hours at 813-648-3525.

Sincerely,

Coach Montanez

Parent/Child Permission Release Form

I, _____, give Pablo Montanez permission to
report group data obtained from this project.

_____ _____
                             Signature   Date

APPENDIX Q

Parent Post-Survey Questionnaire

APPENDIX Q

Parent Post-Survey Questionnaire

1. During this past 12 weeks how many times did you and your child attend open library night?

   | 0 | 1-3 | 3-6 | 7+ |

2. Did you serve as a parent volunteer or guest reader for the open library night during the last 12 weeks?

   YES   NO

   If no, please explain why _____

   _____

3. Do you feel that the open library program is effectively advertising opportunities for parent involvement?

   YES   NO

4. Do you and your child use the resources available at the school library, i.e., encyclopedias, maps, parent literature, film strips, etc.?

   YES   NO

5. Do you feel that implementing new strategies in the open library such as family workshops, guest readers and activities has increased parent involvement?

    YES   NO

6. Do you feel that an increase in your involvement in the open library program will enhance your child's education ?

    YES   NO

7. What would you do differently to improve your involvement in the open library program? Additional comments?

    _____

    _____

    _____

APPENDIX R

Additional Comments from Parents
from Post-Survey Questionnaire

APPENDIX R

Additional Comments by Parents
from Post-Survey Questionnaire

"What a great job you are doing! Keep it up."

"It's a great opportunity for the students and parents to work together and being involved with the school."

"This program not only encourages parent involvement in the school but allows the parents to feel more comfortable being here and feel more a part of the school (family-friendly school)."

"I'm impressed with the creative use of local personalities as an incentive to get parents involved."

"Excellent program! A suggestion not a criticism is to have a place somewhere else for the parents to visit while the kids listen to the stories."

"It's very good to me. I saw people in the school work very hard. It must have good results."

APPENDIX S

Student Interview Post-Questionnaire

APPENDIX S

Student Interview Post-Questionnaire

1. During the past 12 weeks how many times did you attend open library night with one of your parents?

        0   1-3   4-6   7+

2. Did your parents serve as a volunteer(s) for open library night during the past 12 weeks?

              YES   NO

   If no, please explain why _____

   _____

   _____

3. Did you ever talk to your parents about attending open library together?

              YES   NO

4. Did you and your parents ever use the resources available at the school library during the past 12 weeks?

          NEVER   SOMETIMES   OFTEN

5. What did the school do to get you and your parents to come to the open library program?

_____

_____

_____

APPENDIX T

Additional Comments by Students
from Interview Post-Questionnaire

APPENDIX T

Additional Comments by Students
from Interview Post-Questionnaire

"The cartoon workshop and guest readers were a lot of fun."

"It was nice that the guest readers were trying to reach our school goal of reading 100,000 books for the year."

"The Tampa Bay Lightning Cheerleaders were awesome! My dad liked them a lot!."

"It was a great way to meet new people and read a lot of books."

"The hot dogs and sodas were tasty."

Attachments

Sikes, Highland City elementaries promoting family reading nights

LYNN DUKE

Jennings Byrd knows how hard it is for some parents to get through their "things to do" list every day or every week. So he's found a way at Sikes Elementary School in Lakeland to help parents consolidate at least two important things on most of their lists: spending time with their children and encouraging them to read.

Every Tuesday night for the past three years, from 6:30 to 8, parents and students are welcome in Sikes' library, to browse, to skim and to check out books.

After a successful first year, interest dropped off last year, but Byrd is encouraged by 1993's rebound.

"Last night was tremendous," Byrd said, referring to Tuesday. "I think we had 350 people registered."

Byrd attributes this year's success to a couple of things. Physical education teacher **Pablo Montanez** has established a network of community sponsors which provide everything from food to door prizes. Montanez has also set up a speaker/reader program, where interesting people from the community come in, chat with the kids and then read to them.

Last Tuesday's big draw was four cheerleaders from the Tampa Bay Lightning hockey team.

"They did some cheers and they talked to the students about the importance of reading and then they broke into small groups and read to the children," Byrd said.

Byrd has also made the program more accessible to parents and students who don't live near the school and have no transportation.

A school bus makes a run from Old Highway 60, down Shepherd Road, Coronet Road and Ewell Road before arriving at the school and reverses the route at 8 p.m.

"We realized we were not reaching some people who live farther out, so we asked for a bus," Byrd said.

Open library night serves a second purpose, too. Since parents have a safe, convenient place to leave their kids, Byrd has begun scheduling the school's Quality

Improvement Committee meetings on those nights.

In the future, parent-teacher conferences may be set up then also to accommodate parents who can't make it during the day.

Still, the main focus of Tuesday night is the library and improving the reading skills.

"It's one of our biggest promotions for getting parents more involved with school and their student's reading," Byrd said.

And Byrd is not alone in luring parents and students to school with access to the library.

Donovan Jones, principal at Highland City Elementary, started a similar program last year as part of the Highland City Wildcats' Paws to Read program.

Highland City's library is open the first Tuesday of each month and Jones said he consistently has 50 to 75 parents attend.

"We have kids who are coming in each week with a list of books they've read and many books are ones mom or dad checked out for them," Jones said.

The program is especially helpful, at both schools, for families who might not have the time or means to get to the public library and can't always find the extra money to build a home library.

Like Sikes, Highland City also lines up a guest reader for its open library sessions.

Past readers have included Polk Schools Superintendent **John Stewart**, Santa Claus and the Great Pumpkin.

Last year Highland City scheduled its PTA meetings on open library nights to take advantage of the free child care. But this year the schedule has been changed.

Both Sikes and Highland City use parent and teacher volunteers to staff the library and help parents and children find appropriate books.

To: Mrs. Underwood/Mrs. Morrison

From: Ms. Moore/Mrs. Ridings

Date: November 2, 1993

Subject: Sikes Library Program

Approximately five years ago, Sikes Elementary School received
a grant to establish an evening library program. The grant
monies paid for two teachers to operate the evening program,
for parenting workshops, art workshops, guest visitors, and a
parenting library. Initially, there was no librarian involve-
ment in the program. It was organized by a parent committee.
When the grant monies were depleted in the 1992-93 academic
school year, the program, naturally, underwent changes. The
first change was in personnel; now included in the evening
program was the current librarian, Ms. Pam Baker.

The extra programs continued, and attendance was generally
from thirty to one hundred participants until the current
school year. Coach Montanez requested the librarian's
cooperation with his practicum on parent involvement.

Coach formulated his program during the summer and planned
for a number of high visibility programs to garner widespread
parental involvement. For opening night, Coach solicited
franks, rolls, and drinks from local vendors for an opening
day barbeque. The opening night was highly successful with
well over two hundred participants. On another evening,
Mulberry football coaches and the football players read to
the students. The Tampa Bay Lightening Cheerleaders, Lindsey
Allen, and Alan Mills have all been guest readers.

To encourage students who might not normally participate, the
County offers a bus service to seven stops in neighborhoods
where students and parents might have limited access.

Publicity is extremely important at Sikes. The Coach has an
infectious personality and is a great motivational person.
The librarian also offers a warm, inviting, and attractively
arranged media center to foster reading. Posters are displayed
prominently throughout the school, including the P.E. field.
The Coach daily reminds the students of the next library night
and the special guest readers. The school's marquee is also
effectively utilized. Drawings and door prizes are held during
the evening program. The prizes are donated by local merchants.

The library's facilities are very similar to ours; our school seems to have more seating availability because of the layout. Sikes provides the seating accommodations for its programs by utilizing the auditorium which is almost adjacent to the media center. In addition, there are two classrooms which are separated from the auditorium by sliding doors. For a large gathering, the doors are opened, and a huge space is created to accommodate over four hundred visitors. The guest reader will generally speak to the audience as a group, the drawings will be held, or other announcements, then the participants can select story-reading clusters. A cluster will be led by a guest reader or a parent who has received some training in reading and inferencing skills. The readers will circulate from cluster to cluster to avoid excess movement. The parents and children are free to visit the media center to check out books whenever they choose. Sign-in sheets are used to assess the success of each program.

For the future, Coach and Ms. Baker plan to organize a parent committee that will essentially operate the program. They also envision more parent and teacher involvement.

CARLTON PALMORE'S LIBRARY PROGRAM

From the visit to Sikes, a number of factors will have to be considered. In order to develop a viable program, the goals of the program will have to be formulated. Then methods to achieve those goals will have to be devised. A committee will have to be instituted to formulate these goals and to develop strategies. This committee should include teachers and have an administrator assigned to it. The key to our success as the Sikes program has demonstrated is ORGANIZATION.