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ABSTRACT
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current strategies for assisting their children at home. Review of the
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and a lack of understanding of the amount of at-home reading required for the
enhancement of early literacy. A review of solution strategies suggested by
knowledgeable others, combined with an analysis of the problem setting,
resulted in the selection of interventions: a series of parent workshops for
the two targeted classrooms; weekly reading logs; and parent communication
newsletters related to home-school partnerships. Post-intervention data
indicated an increase in at-home reading, an improvement in school/home
communication, and an increase in parent knowledge of at-home reading
strategies. There was also an improvement in parent and student attitudes
toward reading and an increase in parental involvement with students'
literacy experiences. (Contains 37 references and 21 figures of data.
Appendixes contain parent survey, student survey, letter to parents, a
workshop invitation and evaluation form, a newsletter, and more data.)
(Author/RS)

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EFFECTIVE STRATEGIES FOR HOME-SCHOOL
PARTNERSHIPS IN READING

by

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An Action Research Project Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the

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Action Research Project

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This study examines a program for improving home-school relationships concerning literacy development. The targeted population consists of parents and students from one first- and one second-grade classroom in an elementary school in a small Midwestern city. Parent and student interaction and feelings about reading were measured by weekly reading logs and parent and student attitude surveys.

Analysis of probable cause data revealed that parents reported a low level of understanding of current strategies for assisting their children at home. Review of the home-school relationship also revealed insufficient home-school communication and a lack of understanding of the amount of at-home reading required for the enhancement of early literacy.

A review of solution strategies suggested by knowledgeable others, combined with an analysis of the problem setting, resulted in the selection of interventions: a series of parent workshops for the two targeted classrooms; weekly reading logs; and parent communication newsletters related to home-school partnerships.

Post-intervention data indicated an increase in at-home reading, an improvement in school/home communication, and an increase in parent knowledge of at-home reading strategies. There was also an improvement in parent and student attitudes toward reading and an increase in parental involvement with students' literacy experiences.

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CHAPTER 1

PROBLEM STATEMENT AND CONTEXT

Problem Statement

A low level of parental involvement in at-home literacy experiences of primary-age children in the targeted first- and second-grade classrooms affects parent and student attitudes toward reading. Among the problems are inadequate home-school communication, a lack of understanding regarding teacher expectations, a low level of parental confidence when offering at-home assistance, and negative student attitudes toward reading. These problems are evidenced by parent and student surveys, anecdotal records completed by researchers, and individual reading logs.

Immediate Problem Context

The elementary school in this study has a population of 660 students, with 95 % White, 0.6% Black, 2.9% Hispanic, and 1.5% Asian/Pacific Islander. There are 1.7% low-income students at the school, and 2.1% are Limited-English-Proficient (LEP). Out of a perfect attendance rate of 100%, which means that every student attended school every day, this school scored 96.1%. The mobility rate is 6.5% (compared to a district average of 7.0% and a state level of 17.5%), and there are no truancy problems. Average class sizes include 21.8 students (kindergarten), 24.2 students (first grade), and 23.8 students (third grade). The classrooms in the school are heterogeneously grouped and follow the inclusion model. During a typical week, 160 minutes of instruction are devoted to English--which includes all language arts courses (School

Report Card, 2000). Currently, no program is in place at the school directly addressing at-home parental involvement in literacy.

The school, originally built in 1929 with six classrooms and a gymnasium, five teachers, and 96 students, has had six major additions to accommodate population growth: in 1954 (seven classrooms), 1960 (seven classrooms), 1967 (library), 1989 (one classroom, a computer lab, and remodeling), 1993 (four classrooms), and 1999-2000. The current addition is adding four classrooms, a new music and band room, and a second gymnasium/cafeteria. There are a total of 29 classrooms in the sprawling, all-brick building, with over 60 staff members (School Archives, 1924-1999).

A total of 25 classroom teachers are employed at the school, with 96% White and 4% Black, compared to the district average of 99.6% White and 0.4% Black. While the average teaching experience in the district is 12.8 years, at this site it is 15.5 years. Two of the school's teachers are male (8%), and 23 (92%) are female. This compares to the district average of 21.5% male and 78.5% female. The teacher information for the district includes classroom teachers, as well as those specializing in music, art, physical education, and so forth. A total of 254 teachers work in the district, with 41.2% of the instructors holding bachelor's degrees and 58.8% with Master's degrees or above, and the average salary is $49,172. The pupil-teacher ratio in the elementary schools is 19.7:1. The instructional expenditure per pupil in the district is $3,856, and the operating expenditure per pupil is $6,756 (School Report Card, 2000).

The elementary school in the study has an extremely active Parent Teacher Organization (PTO), with approximately 50 parents in attendance at the monthly meetings. Fundraising goals set by the PTO are consistently met. The active parent-volunteer base includes help with a successful after-school enrichment program, and assisting teachers both in and out of the

classroom. Parental involvement focuses on opportunities for volunteerism, not the gathering of pedagogical information for use at home. The school has won the local library-sponsored summer reading program for ten years in a row, and there is a high level of pride among students, faculty, and parents. As far as personal communication with parents, which includes parent-teacher conferences, parental visits to school, school visits to home, telephone conversations, and written correspondence, this school reports 100% contact (School Report Card, 2000).

Community Context

The target elementary school is located in a small town of 18,920, with four elementary schools, one middle school, and one high school. There is a superintendent and four assistant superintendents (curriculum and instruction, finance, special education services, and buildings and transportation), as well as a technology coordinator, a district reading specialist, and a gifted coordinator. A river bisects the downtown area, with this school the only one on the east side of the river. There are no areas in the community that could be considered pockets of poverty; in fact, the town is viewed as being relatively affluent. The median household income is $49,755, with 54.1% of the population earning more than $50,000. The average value of a single-family home is $203,567, up 124% from 1985 (City Economic Report, 1999). The value of the majority of the homes surrounding the target school fall at or below that average, with the preponderance of larger, more expensive homes on the west side of the river. The new homes being built are single family and most are worth over $200,000, with only a handful going up on the east side (Board of Realtors, 2000). Therefore, the population at the targeted elementary school should not change significantly. A fifth elementary school to be constructed on the far-west side of

town in the next two years will absorb some of the students coming from the new homes, as well as easing crowding at the non-targeted elementary schools.

Community support for the schools has always been strong, with every proposed referendum passing when put to the voters. The most recent referendum paid for the addition to the targeted elementary school, as well as additions to the middle and high schools. A local academic foundation is extremely active in fundraising and contributes tens of thousands of dollars every year, for various causes, to the community schools. Currently there is some controversy regarding the low number of personnel and amount of dollars expended for the academically-talented students (top 5%) in the areas of math and language arts, and a parent group formed to make their concerns known, but generally the citizens rank their schools and teachers highly.

<div align="center">Regional or National Context</div>

Cooperation and teamwork are seen as crucial components for success in the workplace, in social and recreational settings, in classrooms at every level of education, and at home, but there is also a need for interconnectedness among these domains. Increasingly, it is becoming clear that teachers and parents must join together as partners in the education of children, making home-school partnerships a reality. The importance of parents in this process should be recognized. Parents have differing ideas as to how to socialize and direct their children and to what extent, and their primary role is to teach and influence their youngsters (Darling, 1999). Because 85 percent of a child's waking hours are spent outside the school setting, home learning and making parents part of the educational process are crucial (Swanborough, 1997).

Congress became involved at the federal level when it included "increased parent involvement in schools" as one of its national education goals in 1994. One of the requirements

as states submitted plans under the Goals 2000: Educate America Act was that they show how they planned to increase parental participation in schools. As part of the Improving America's Schools Act, Title I requires three types of parental involvement strategies be adopted by local schools and districts: the establishment of school-parent collaborative improvement projects; the inclusion of parents in the development of school policies; and the formation of school-parent compacts to raise the academic performance of students (Black, 1998).

Secretary of Education Richard Riley spoke about parental involvement in his speech to the National Press Club on September 7, 1994. He said, "Thirty years of research tells us that the starting point of American Education is parent expectations and parental involvement with their children's education, regardless of their station in life, their income level or their educational background." He based his argument for parental involvement on several studies showing a correlation between such things as success in school and whether or not a parent read to a child (Spring, 1998).

According to Peterson (1989), "Mothers and fathers hold bake sales, supervise field trips, and serve on boards or advisory councils for schools. They attend school concerts, plays, and sporting events. As helpful as these customary forms of parent involvement are, they are far removed from what happens in the classroom. A growing body of research suggests that parents can play a larger role in their children's education" (p. 1). Peterson listed some of the advantages gained when parents played an active role in the educational process (due to the large amount of time children spend at home): the home environment offers one-on-one interaction; the parents know the children more intimately; and there is a familiar and unstructured setting which allows for teachable moments. "Children whose parents are involved in their formal education have many advantages. They have better grades, test scores, long-term academic

achievement, attitudes, and behavior than those with disinterested mothers and fathers," says

Henderson (as cited in Peterson, 1989, p.1).

Parents and teachers can create valuable partnerships by supporting each other's roles and

engaging in joint learning activities, fostering those partnerships through communication and

collaboration (Swick, 1992). A study on parent efficacy (defined as a parent's belief in their

capability of exerting a positive influence on children's school outcomes), conducted by Hoover-

Dempsey, Bassler, and Brissie (1992), found that high-efficacy parents are more likely than low-

efficacy parents to believe their efforts actually resulted in increased academic success for their

child. With that finding in mind, the researchers suggested schools design involvement

approaches that focus specifically on increasing the parents' sense of positive influence in their

children's academic success. For instance, schools could send home specific instructions and

strategies for parents to use when helping children with homework assignments (Hoover-

Dempsey, et al. 1992).

CHAPTER 2

PROBLEM DOCUMENTATION

Problem Evidence

In order to identify and document the low level of parental confidence, understanding, and involvement with their children in the area of reading, as well as negative or hesitant student attitudes toward reading, the researchers developed attitudinal surveys. A Parent Survey (Appendix A) and a Student Survey (Appendix B) were administered in August and September 2000, respectively. Written permission for participation was obtained from the parents (Appendix C), and confidentiality was insured through survey anonymity.

Parent Surveys
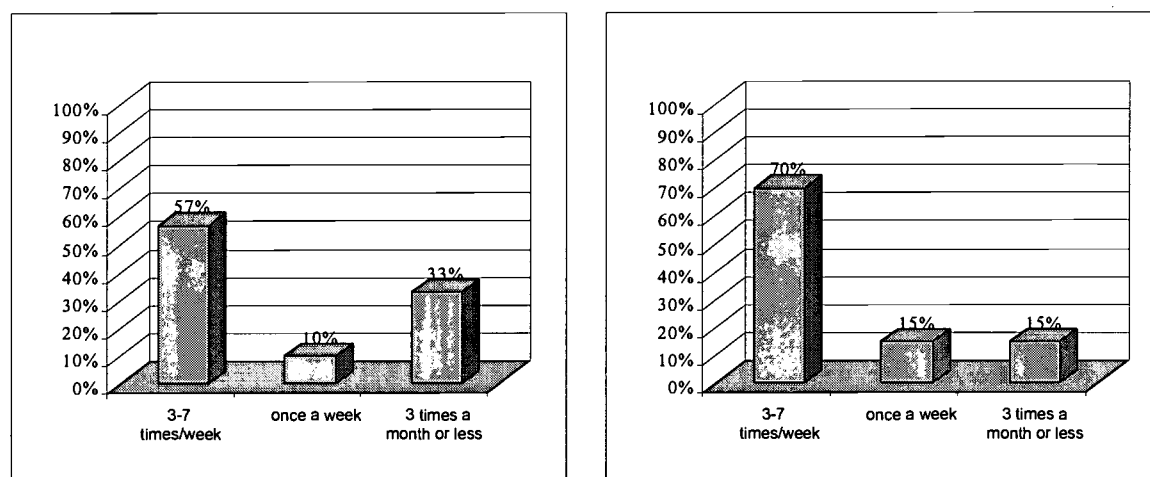
Grade 1   Grade 2
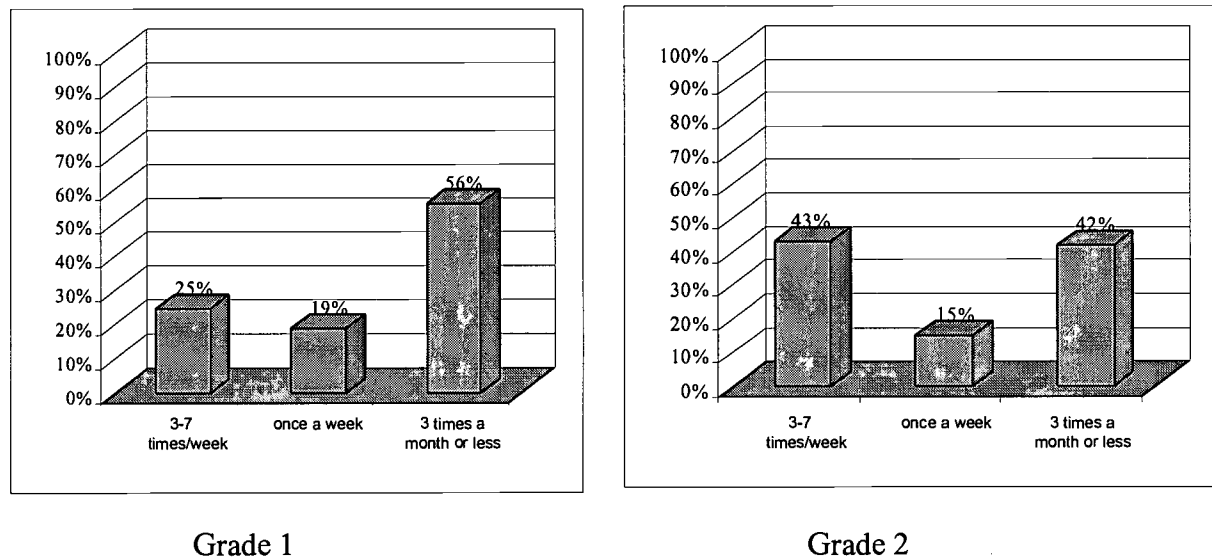
Figure 1. Frequency of children reading aloud to parents

Nearly half of the parents of first grade children reported their children read aloud to them once a week or less, leading researchers to target reading frequency as one of their

intervention goals. It was the researchers' view that these parents perceived reading aloud to be strictly a decoding of text, and not other early-literacy experiences such as recognizing signs and oral interpretation of illustrations.

Although the majority of the parents of second graders indicated their children read aloud to them, close to one third reported the frequency of this activity at once a week or less. The researchers felt the higher number of read-aloud experiences in second grade could be attributed to the higher number of students at this grade level who perceive themselves as readers.

Grade 1   Grade 2

Figure 2. Frequency of children asking to read aloud to parents

The pre-intervention data indicated 75% of first graders asked to read aloud to their parents once a week or less. Again, researchers felt this was due to student and parent perceptions of what constituted the act of reading.

Second grade students, according to the parents, asked to read aloud to them once a week or less. The data, according to the researchers, resulted from the misconception that once a child becomes an independent reader, parents no longer need to read aloud.
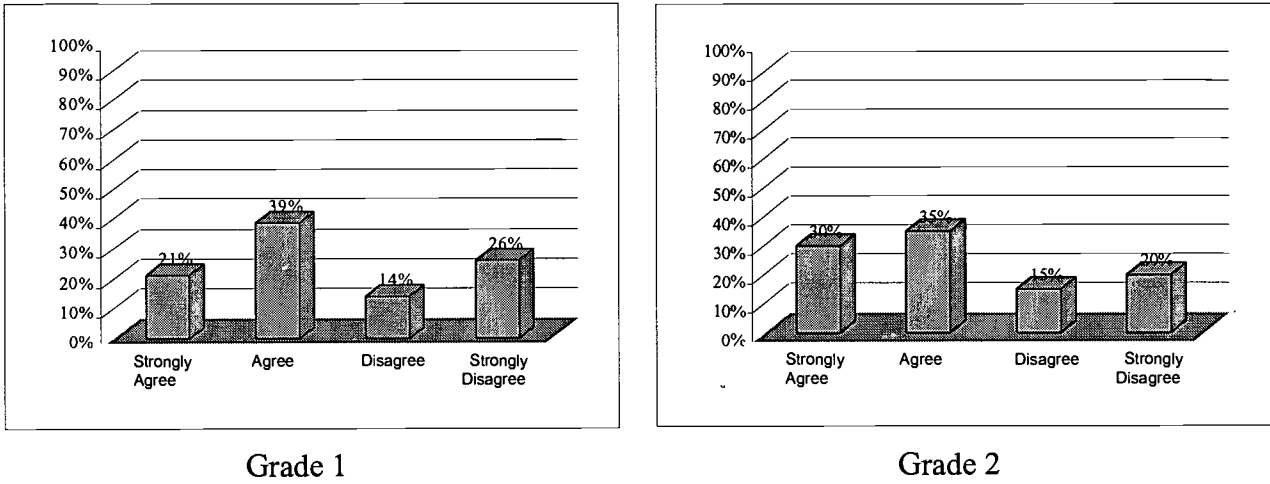
Grade 1   Grade 2

Figure 3. At-home reading strategies

When asked to gauge their level of agreement with the statement "The school has provided me with adequate strategies for use in helping my child at home," the results from parents at both grade levels was similar. Due to the large numbers who disagreed or strongly disagreed, researchers targeted this as an area for focus. Researchers concluded that parents would benefit from and appreciate any help with at-home reading strategies.
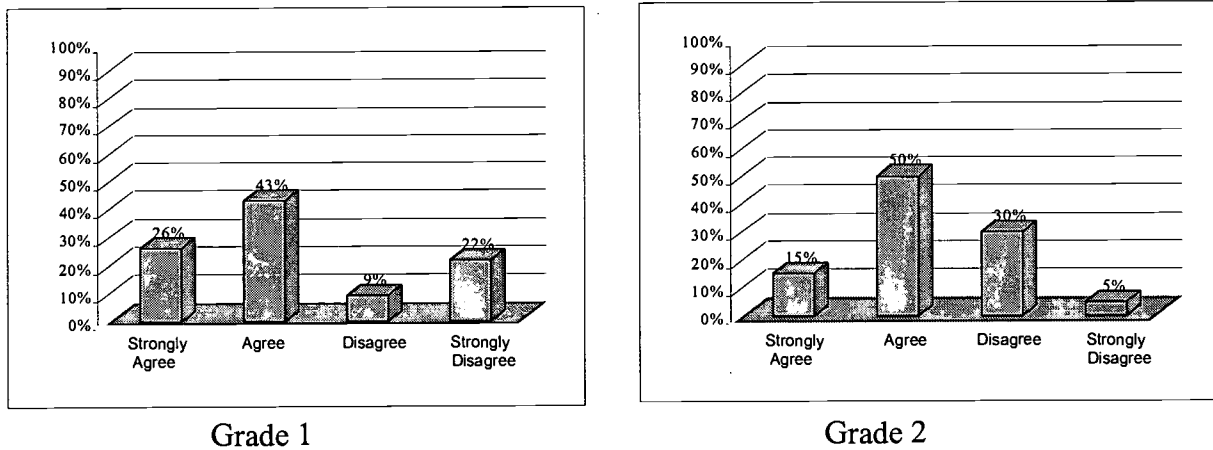

Grade 1   Grade 2

Figure 4. Home-school reading partnerships

While the majority of parents responded affirmatively to the statement "I have experienced a successful collaborative home-school partnership in reading," close to one-third of the parents at each grade level disagreed or strongly disagreed. Researchers felt these negative numbers indicated a weakness in communication from school to home.

Grade 1   Grade 2
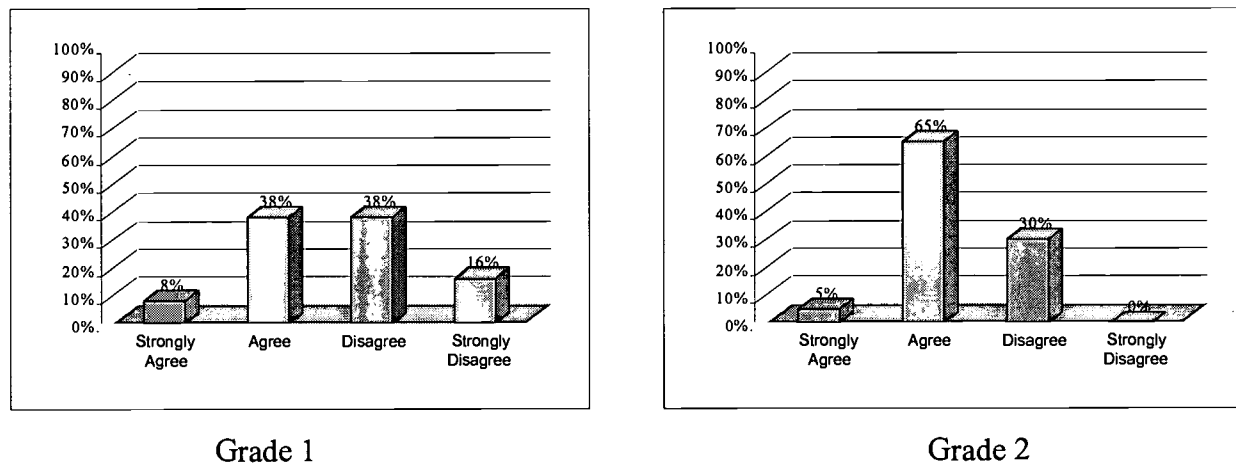
Figure 5. Parent familiarity with reading curriculum

The parents of first grade students expressed 54% disagreement when responding to the statement "I am familiar with my child's reading curriculum." Researchers concluded these parents had simply not been exposed to the reading frameworks. Because the district's curriculum is articulated, the parents of second graders had been introduced to the reading program the previous year and displayed a higher degree of familiarity, with 65% agreeing and 5% strongly agreeing that they had knowledge of the curriculum. It is interesting to note that while 16% of parents of first graders strongly disagreed with the survey statement, none of the parents of second graders expressed that level of negativity.

Student Surveys
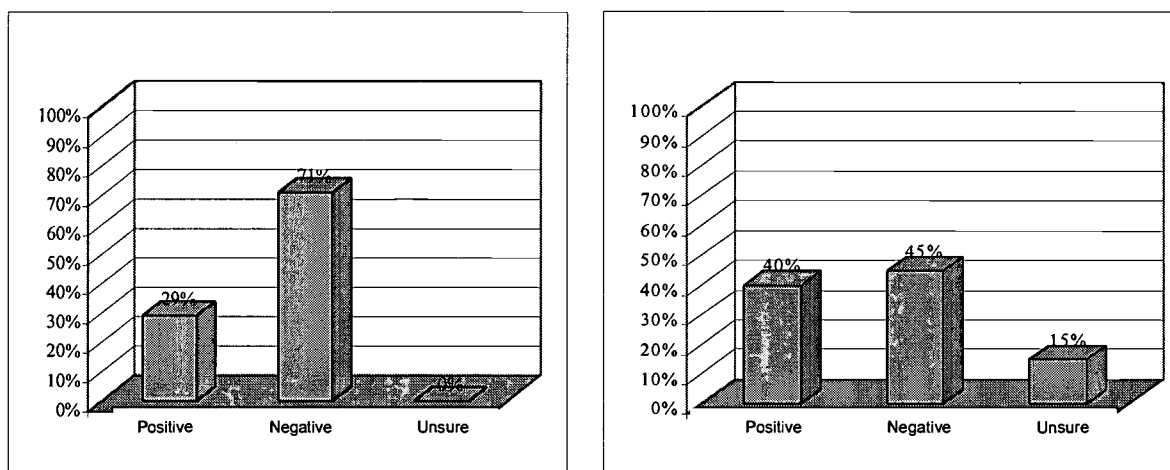
Grade 1   Grade 2
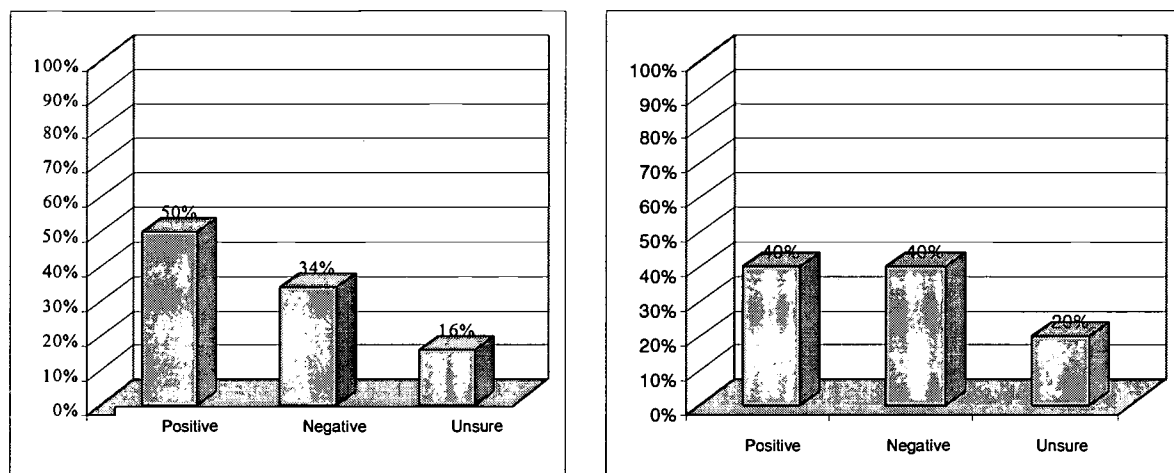
Figure 6. Reading during vacation

The administration of the pre-intervention Student Survey took place shortly after
students returned from summer vacation. When students were asked how they felt about reading
during vacation, the negative response from both grade levels was higher than the positive.

Grade 1   Grade 2

Figure 7. Reading aloud to someone at home

The responses to this question for both grade levels were very similar in all three areas—positive, negative and unsure. One third of the first graders and 40% of the second graders surveyed responded negatively when asked how they felt about reading out loud to someone at home. The researchers feel that this negative attitude can be attributed to the lack of developed skills of beginning readers, as well as the parents' ignorance of effective strategies to use with their children.

<div align="center">Probable Cause</div>

Site Based

Problems evident on the pre-intervention Parent Survey included parents who felt ill-equipped to give meaningful reading assistance to their youngsters at home, uncomfortable with the level of communication between school and home, and unaware of how students' reading experiences in the home enhanced the literacy curriculum. In conversation with parents and students not only were these issues mentioned, it also appeared that there was an insufficient amount of time spent by families in activities involving reading. In addition, children in the targeted community are involved in a large number of extracurricular activities. At the researchers' school site there are many situations where both parents work outside of the home and a large number of single-parent or joint-custody homes (Slagle, December 2000, Personal Communication).

Literature Based

The professional literature clearly supports the survey findings. In a collaborative model problems can stem from the school, the home, or any combination of the two, and can be factually-based or the result of inaccurate perceptions. Among the causes of low literacy levels

are teacher resistance to parental involvement in the schools, poor communication between school and home, a low level of parental confidence in the area of reading, a lack of parental knowledge in the implementation of reading strategies, and an insufficient amount of time spent by parents and children in activities involving reading.

According to the professional literature, one of the probable causes of literacy deficits is negative teacher perceptions of parents--teachers see them as irresponsible, uncaring, and lacking basic skills (Linek, Rasinski, & Harkins, 1997). Another is a lack of teacher training and a low level of desire to involve parents (Baker, Kessler-Sklar, Piotrowski, & Parker, 1999). Teachers list a variety of what they consider to be barriers to building a collaborative literacy team. One of these is a teacher perception that parents have unrealistic expectations of the school's role, as well as an attitude that school is unimportant. Some see apathy in longtime teachers, a lack of responsiveness to parents' concerns, and resentment and suspicion of parents who are involved (Grady, 2000). Another problem cited by researchers is a negative teacher perception of parents' ability to adequately assist their children at home (Linek et al., 1997). Teachers also may be unable to provide parents with timely and individual feedback regarding their childrens' literacy needs (Baker et al., 1999).

Parental attitudes toward increasing school-home communication can range from complacency to combativeness (Cavarretta, 1998). One major parental concern is how effectively teachers communicate with them (Rich, 1998). Brandt, Editor Emeritus of Educational Leadership, admits that as an educator his own communication with parents was often one-sided and therefore disconnected. He believes "educators must reach out to parents…because, with the outcome-based education debacles and their aftermath, our most pressing need is to reestablish public support for the public schools" (p. 26). When parents are

ill at ease when communicating with teachers and administrators, it can lead to

misunderstandings about school programs and policies, a lack of awareness of the progress of

their child, and ineffective responses when there are student problems (Epstein, 1995).

Attempts to encourage parents to work with their children at home can fail when these

parents have poor literacy skills or have adequate skills but are not confident about their ability

to transfer that knowledge (Ward, 1997). In some cases, unless there is educational intervention,

illiteracy may cycle through generations of families (Richards, 1998). Disenfranchised families

may not believe that personal literacy development will help their children become better

readers, improve their family's lives and enable them to overcome their feelings of

powerlessness (Schwartz, 1999).

The low-incidence or misuse of reading strategies at home is clearly tied to a lack of

parental knowledge of their implementation. Some parents attempting to read with their children

make basic mistakes, such as focusing so intently on mechanics that their youngster's motivation

is diminished, punishing or berating their child for making errors, or reading an entire story

simply for the purpose of completion when concentrating on just a portion of it would be more

meaningful (Finn, 1998). In other cases parents take an authoritarian rather than an authoritative

approach, resulting in an unwillingness to listen to and discuss different points of view, give

reasons and explanations when requested, and offer helpful problem-solving questions and

strategies (Hoover-Dempsey et al., 1992). Many parents do not know how to foster and connect

the learning at school with the learning in the home environment (Vopat, 1994). They are unable

to work with their children in ways that support and enhance the school's curriculum (Schwartz,

1999).

Another cause that emerged from the literature was the insufficient amount of time parents and children spend engaging in activities that involve reading. The home environment is one of the most important influences on academic success. Researchers have identified four types of parental at-home engagement that correlate consistently with school performance: parents who discuss school matters with their children, help with homework, assist their child with time management, and read to their children and listen to their children read to them will see this interaction reflected academically (Finn, 1998). Barriers for some parents include a lack of time to spend with their child because of work or other family commitments or ill health (Grady, 2000). Pipher, clinical psychologist and best-selling author of Reviving Ophelia and The Shelter of Each Other: Rebuilding Our Families, states in an interview:

> Although I don't know much about curriculum and how to teach reading and other skills, there are a lot of things hurting children's ability to be academically successful that have nothing to do with school. For example, in our neighborhood, we have neighbors with small children. At any given time of day, I can look in the windows of their houses and see the blue screens from my kitchen. TV is on all the time in many houses. Schools should not be absolved of responsibility, but a lot of things affect children's reading ability besides how kids are taught in schools (Scherer, 1998 p.6.)

Most parents who do not engage in literacy activities and events with their children sometimes feel burdened by other responsibilities, or do not see the value of reading with their youngsters or the connectedness of reading to goals they themselves find important (Padak, Rasinski, & Dawson, 1992).

CHAPTER 3

THE SOLUTION STRATEGY

Literature Review

Research shows us that teachers, parents and students must be active participants in any program providing effective solution strategies for successful literacy. In essence, it is a team effort that will likely fail if any member becomes non-participatory. "Recent thinking has moved beyond a focus on specific parent involvement activities to a more complex conceptualization that acknowledges the role of the school in promoting parent involvement and the bi-directional nature of the school-home relationship" (Baker et al., 1999, p. 367). It is now widely accepted that children are more likely to succeed in school when parents are involved in their education. The concept of family literacy, pioneered in America, was an overwhelming success when implemented in four pilot projects in England. Evidence in one of the English studies showed an improvement in literacy levels of between 10 and 20 percent among children who practiced reading with an adult at home. Overall, students "made big improvements in writing, reading and vocabulary and continued to make progress at least six months after finishing the course, while their parents also boosted their literacy skills and moved on to further study" (Ward, 1997, p. 3). In order to combat the problems associated with literacy, researchers have a variety of suggestions. Making home visits for support and communication purposes, encouraging parental assistance within the classroom, implementing a parent-response journal, conducting workshops to teach reading strategies to parents, writing and distributing a school-to-home newsletter to improve communication, and utilizing a weekly reading log with students are recommended as possible solutions (Epstein, 1995; Linek et al., 1997; Vopat, 1994; Vopat; 1998).

Make Home Visits for Support and Communication Purposes

In California in the fall of 1998, a group of frustrated parents pushed the Sacramento City

Unified School District to pay teachers to make home visits. The district gave nine schools (in

low-income neighborhoods) $20,000 each to pay 153 teachers to make home visits averaging 30

minutes apiece. The following year the district expanded the program to include administrators

and teachers from 13 schools. Three hundred teachers have been trained how to make home

visits in an atmosphere of trust and partnership, and how to put aside stereotypes about low-

income families. (Although test scores did rise in the pilot school district over the course of the

two-year intervention, there is no way to determine how much of that to attribute to curriculum

changes.) The program has been so successful in terms of positive feedback from parents,

teachers and administrators that in October, 1999, Governor Gray Davis signed a bill allocating

$15 million for home visits in school districts across the state (Magagnini, 2000). Home visits

can also be helpful when parents have difficulty coming to the school site, whether the reason is

lack of transportation, a medical condition, or something else. As one part of the Parents as

Educational Partners (PEP) program at Atenville Elementary School in a poor, rural, coal-mining

community in southern West Virginia, the principal and teachers often visit the homes of parents

in this position. Visits are conducted by teachers using release time, the principal, the school's

parent coordinator, and telephone-tree parents, for the purpose of imparting information and

building a bridge of trust and communication. They will also pick up parents and transport them

to school-related events. Evidence of the success of the PEP program was clear. In the 1991-92

school year, when the intervention began, parents volunteered about 2,000 hours, and Atenville

third and sixth graders scored in the 59th and 58th percentiles, respectively, on the Comprehensive

Test of Basic Skills (CTBS). At the end of the 1995-96 school year, parent volunteer hours had

grown to over 7,000, third graders scored in the 71st percentile, and sixth graders scored in the 63rd percentile. Over a three-year period, the number of students participating in an after-school tutoring program increased from 21 to 62 (Funkhouser & Gonzales, 1997). When making home visits, not only can staff members develop relationships with family members that build trust, but this is also a prime opportunity to observe and show parents the many opportunities in everyday life for literacy education. Parents need to be trained to be full partners in their children's education and shown that opportunities for literacy can occur any time and any place. They must learn that there are naturally occurring literacy-activities like storytelling, and activities such as television viewing that can be turned into interactive literacy experiences that promote critical thinking skills (Schwartz, 1999).

Encourage Parental Assistance Within the Classroom

Congress became involved at the federal level when it included "increased parent involvement in schools" as one of its national education goals in 1994. As states submitted plans under the Goals 2000: Educate America Act, one requirement was that they show how they planned to increase parental participation. Pressure for increased parental involvement is also coming from state legislatures, from the school districts themselves, and from parents. Among the places where such assistance brings positive results is within the classroom, with opportunities for volunteerism and programs that would otherwise be unrealized (Black, 1998). The parent who is an educational volunteer can serve as a classroom aide, check the homework and/or tests of students, listen or read to children, and help with technology (Grady, 2000). They can also help with bulletin boards, make games and activities, volunteer to work in the library, type, laminate, or duplicate materials (Simic, 1991). Parents can also come into the classroom to work with their children and write, design, illustrate and produce publications such as family

histories, recipe collections, storybooks, newspapers, and autobiographies (Schwartz, 1999).

Studies have shown that effective parental involvement in the literacy experiences of children,

including within the classroom, results in positive student behavior and attitudes, higher

achievement test scores, long-term academic success, and lower dropout rates (Grady, 2000).

According to a 1992 study of the parents (n=390) of kindergarten through fourth grade children

in a metropolitan public school district, there was a small but significant connection between a

positive ranking on the self-reported parent efficacy portion of the questionnaire and a higher

incidence of at-school volunteering. The parents' average efficacy score of 45.71 (SD = 5.82), in

a scale range of 12 to 60, did not appear to be related to gender, marital status, employment

status, and family income. Classroom volunteerism's link to efficacy in this study may be

"because the decision to volunteer requires some sense that one has educationally relevant skills

that can and will be used effectively. Similarly, the experiences implicit in classroom

volunteering may offer parents new and positive information about their effectiveness with their

own child" (Hoover-Dempsey et al., 1992, p. 291).

<u>Implement a Parent-Response Journal</u>

When implementing an at-home literacy program that includes parent response journals,

often the directions for use are vague and do not give too many specifics (a totally free-response

form of writing). It can be helpful to parents, however, if teachers include suggestions for

talking about the books and using the journals. Teachers may also use classroom literature-

response strategies the children are familiar with from the school setting. (An example would be

not just reading the words, but focusing on the details.) That way the students are more

comfortable being the initial "teachers" when they and their parents use the response journals at

home (Richgels & Wold, 1998). Parent-response journals do not just have to be words written

on a page—they can become scrapbooks, art books, diaries or photo albums. Parents who are uncomfortable with writing should be encouraged to use a different form of communication such as drawing pictures or transcription (Vopat, 1998). Whichever format the parent chooses for using the response journal, it is important for the child to see the parent invested in the process of communication. Children imitate their parents, and the importance of modeling literacy at home cannot be overstated (Vopat, 1994).

Conduct Workshops to Teach Reading Strategies to Parents

Many parents feel they lack the skills to help their children with reading or schoolwork. "Some parents who attempt to read with their youngsters make beginners' mistakes, such as reading an entire story just to get through it when part of a story would suffice; focusing so much on mechanics that their child's motivation is diminished; and taking a punitive attitude when the child makes errors" (Finn, 1998, p. 22). Other parents focus only on the frequency of the read-aloud time with their children and are not aware of other factors which play a crucial role in the success of the at-home literacy experience, such as materials selected, purpose for reading, and strategies used before, during and after reading (Owens, 1993).

In addition, school has changed dramatically over the past few decades and many parents are not familiar with the literacy strategies used in today's revitalized classroom. Cooperative learning, journals, book sharing, publishing, and response groups are new concepts for these parents, and it may be difficult for them to nurture and support these strategies until they understand them (Vopat, 1994). School-sponsored workshops have been highly successful in addressing the needs of all of these parents by helping them to improve their own literacy skills, overcome obstacles to literacy activities in the home, and develop a regular structure for home-based literacy (Finn, 1998). In addition, parents are taught effective instructional techniques

(reading and writing strategies) for use with their children at home (Simic, 1991). Before

scheduling parent literacy workshops, teachers must first be properly trained how to teach

reading effectively at school, as well as how to teach at-home interactive reading strategies to

parents in the workshop format (Ward, 1997). They must respect the life experiences of the

participants (drawing on family interests, concerns, strengths and goals), and learn to

communicate in ways that build parental confidence during the workshops (Schwartz, 1999). The

most successful workshops are those where the parents are involved with "doing," not just

listening to someone else talk about how to do something (Vopat, 1994). The engagement of

parents and teachers in literacy workshops builds a sense of community and encourages an

enthusiasm for learning (Vopat, 1998).

Write and Distribute a Newsletter to Improve Home-School Communication

Communication is a key component of a solid school-home partnership, and in many

cases is the foundation. With effective communication comes positive relationships, more

easily-solved problems, and greater progress for students (National PTA Standards for

Parent/Family Involvement Programs, 1997). The newsletter, a regularly written publication to

impart information or ideas based on classroom experiences, is one of the most common

methods of written communication with parents and can be an indispensable tool in any home-

school literacy partnership (Fuller & Olsen, 1998). Among the topics that can be covered in a

newsletter are the literacy learning goals of the classroom and how these support lifelong

learning, avoiding academic jargon and written in an easily understandable way (Vopat, 1994).

Newsletters may also contain tips for helping literacy improve at home and fun activities to do as

a family (National PTA Standards for Parent/Family Involvement Programs, 1997). It is vital

that teachers include student artwork and articles to further engage the parents. Teachers might

want to think about how to involve parents in planning and writing for the newsletter, so that it becomes less of a one-way communication tool (Fuller & Olsen, 1998).

Utilize a Weekly Reading Log

According to a review of literature published by The Commission on Reading, about half of students read for four minutes or less per day, and the amount of reading students do outside of school has a direct and consistent effect on gains in reading achievement (Anderson, Heibert, Scott & Wilkinson, 1985). Student achievement also increases when parents become involved in the process of learning by connecting with their children at home (National PTA Standards for Parent/Family Involvement Programs, 1997). One way to create a parent-child-teacher literacy team is through the use of a reading log, where students can record the number of minutes they have read, giving parents an awareness tool and teachers a data collection site for goal-setting that involves students and parents (Vopat, 1998). Self-monitoring is one way to induce students to regulate their reading habits, such as how long they read at a time (Cobine, 1995). Students can also include time spent reading with parents in their reading logs. If the parents of each child in this country aged 1 through 9 spent one hour reading with them five days a week, it would amount to 8.7 billion hours a year--the equivalent, if translated into one-on-one time with teachers, of 230 billion dollars in annual education costs (Ballen & Moles, 1994).

After examining the site data and identifying areas for growth, as well as looking at literature-based findings, the research team decided on three strategies for implementing their intervention. These included conducting a series of three workshops to teach reading strategies to parents, writing and distributing a bi-weekly newsletter to improve home-school communication, and utilizing a weekly reading log to keep track of how many minutes students spent reading at home. The effect of the strategies, to be implemented over the course of the

intervention, would be measured using the pre- and post-intervention Parent Survey and Student

Survey, as well as through keeping track of the growth or decline of at-home reading minutes.

Project Objectives and Processes

Parents

As a result of a parent-intervention program in early literacy during the period of August 2000 to January 2001, the participants will display an increased positive attitude toward working with their children in reading as measured by a parent attitude reading survey.

In order to accomplish the terminal objective, the following processes are necessary:

1. Workshops that foster at-home reading strategies will be developed

2. Newsletters that focus on current strategies for at-home assistance with students will be developed.

Students

As a result of a parent intervention program in early literacy during the period of August 2000 to January 2001, the first- and second-grade students from the targeted classrooms will increase their at-home reading minutes (as measured by weekly reading logs), and develop a more positive attitude toward reading (as measured by student attitude reading surveys).

In order to accomplish the terminal objective, the following processes are necessary:

1. Weekly logs that document time spent reading will be recorded by students.

2. Classroom books will be sent home each week to enable students to practice reading strategies.

Project Action Plan

The following is a chronological outline of the action plan to be administered to the first- and second-grade students in the classrooms targeted for our intervention.

I.   Initial Assessments

     A. Parent Survey administered August 31, 2000 (Appendix A)

     B. Student Survey administered week of September 4, 2000 (Appendix B)

II. Three parent workshops

     A. September 14, 2000: Early literacy strategies (Appendix D)

     B. October 12, 2000: Comprehension strategies (Appendix E)

     C. November 16, 2000: Topic: Parent choice (Appendix F)

     D. Qualitative parent evaluation after each workshop (Appendix G)

III. Weekly reading logs (Appendix I)

     A. Introduced at Back-to-School night August 31, 2000

     B. Implemented for 17 weeks

     C. Ongoing assessment

        1. Average minutes read measured weekly

        2. Anecdotal teacher journal entries

IV. Parent Newsletter (Appendix H)

     A. Discussed at Back-to-School night August 31, 2000

     B. Published bi-weekly (9/4, 9/18, 10/2, 10/16, 10/30, 11/20, 12/4, 12/18)

V.   Final Assessments

     A. Student Survey administered the week of January 8, 2001 (Appendix B)

     B. Parent Survey administered the week of January 8, 2001 (Appendix A)

Methods of Assessment

In order to assess the effects of the intervention, a Parent Survey (Appendix A) and a

Student Survey (Appendix B) measuring pre- and post-intervention attitudes will be developed

and given. In addition, a teacher log comparing the number of minutes students spend reading at

the beginning and at the end of the intervention will be part of the assessment process as well as

the teacher journals.

Chapter 4

PROJECT RESULTS

Historical Description of Intervention

The objective of the researchers, to improve home-school communication and increase a

low level of parental involvement in at-home literacy experiences of primary-age children, was

accomplished in a variety of ways. Three parent workshops were offered, bi-weekly class

newsletters were created and sent home, and literacy logs were utilized to increase the amount of

reading done at home. The components of the action plan took place between August 2000 and

January 2001.

A signature granting permission to implement the study was obtained from the

elementary school principal in June 2000. Parents were given details of the research study, and

gave written consent for their children and themselves to participate, at Back-to-School on

August 31, 2000. Parents were told that identical pre- and post-intervention surveys would be

given, and the results analyzed. Verbal and written information on confidentiality and

anonymity was shared at that time. The researchers clearly stated that all data would be

confidential, coded by grade level and month, and then destroyed. Given the nature of the

intervention, it was anticipated there would be minimal risks associated with this study.

At the same Back-to-School night, two parent surveys (Appendix A) were administered

to gather information on at-home literacy and the home-school relationship. Parents first

answered a frequency survey to determine the amount of time they spent with their children on

reading activities. They were then given an attitudinal survey which asked questions about

reading with their children and the role and efficacy of school and educators. On both surveys

parents circled their response to a variety of questions. The data from these surveys was used by

the researchers to plan strategies to increase the frequency of time parents spent engaged in literacy activities with their children at home. The surveys were also used to help researchers recognize areas of weakness in the home-school relationship, and then design and implement tools for improving parental attitudes toward the educational system (curriculum and communication in particular).

Researchers then surveyed the students with a paper-and-pencil test using facial expressions as an evaluative tool (Appendix B). Because the students were just entering either first or second grade, the surveys were administered orally by the classroom teachers. The questions were written in a simple fashion so they could be answered independently by the students. To avoid bias toward the middle, an even number of expressions were offered as possible responses. As a result of the student survey, researchers were able to verify areas in which there was a need to improve students' attitudes towards reading. They then began planning their strategies for intervention.

After examining the data from the parent and student surveys, researchers decided the appropriate interventions would be parent workshops addressing literacy issues, class newsletters created in collaboration with the students, and home-school reading logs to document any changes in the amount of time spent on at-home literacy activities.

The researchers' initial task was to plan the parent workshops to specifically address the areas about which parents seemed most concerned. The three workshops, held between September and November 2000, were titled "Early Literacy Strategies," "Comprehension Strategies," and "Developmental Writing Practices." Newsletters that focused on current strategies for at-home assistance with students were developed. These partially student-generated missives contained reading strategies (including those discussed at the parent

workshops for reinforcement purposes), curriculum information, and photos of classroom activities, as well as important upcoming dates such as workshops. The ten newsletters went home every other week during the intervention (See example in Appendix H).

The results of the student survey were evaluated, and researchers recognized there was a need to improve the children's attitudes toward reading. Based on the data the researchers decided to focus on reading logs as a way to increase the time the children spent reading at home, and to utilize the log as an interactive tool to increase literacy awareness and a positive attitude in parents and students (Appendix I).

First the researchers trained their students on how to fill out the weekly reading logs and impressed upon them the importance of regular reading. They told the students, among other things, that practicing reading was like practicing a sport—it takes regular, daily practice to improve and maintain skills. The teachers provided books for the students to take home and read, and also scheduled trips to the school library so that students could pick out their own books. As the weekly reading logs came back, teachers kept track of growth in the amount of time spent reading.

Presentation and Analysis of Results

Results of the parent and student surveys, when comparing data from the beginning of the intervention and its conclusion reflected a number of areas of improvement. Benefits included an increase in at-home reading minutes, an improvement in home-school communication, an increase in the understanding of at-home strategies for parents to use with their children, and a more positive attitude toward reading on the part of both students and parents. One interesting result was the marked increase in the percentages of how often children read aloud to their parents or asked to do so.
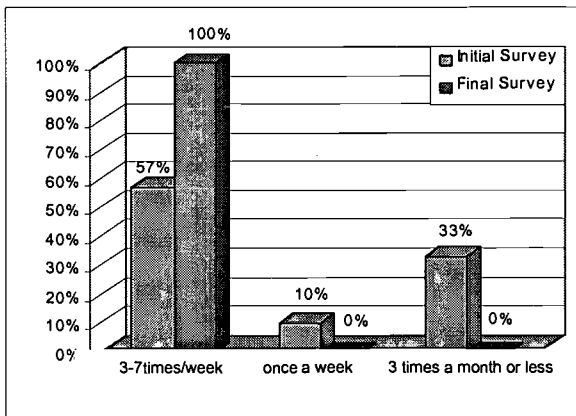
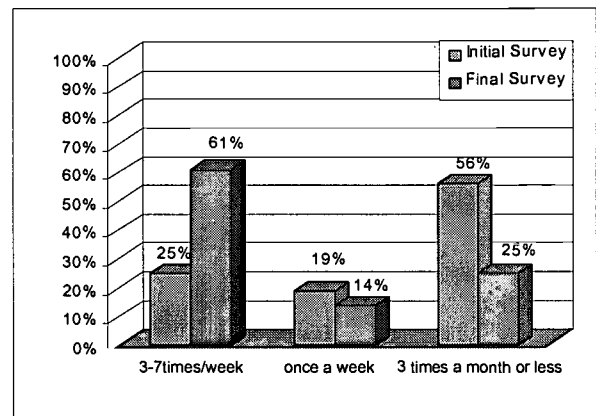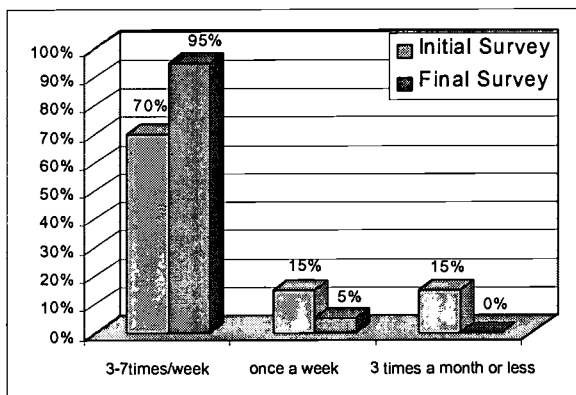Figure 8. First Grade: Frequency of children reading aloud to parents

Figure 9. First Grade: Frequency of children asking to read aloud to parents

In first grade, the percentage of children who read to their parents at least 3-7 times per week increased from 57% to 100% over the course of the intervention. The number of first graders who ask to read to their parents more than doubled, from 25% to 61%. The researchers attributed part of this to the increased independent reading ability of this grade level over the course of a school year.

Figure 10. Second Grade: Frequency of children reading aloud to parents
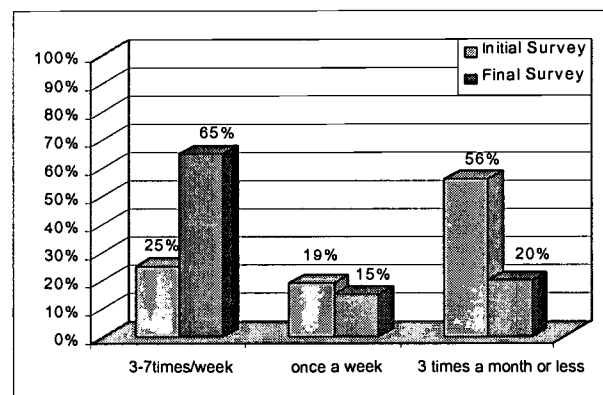
Figure 11. Second Grade: Frequency of children asking to read aloud to parents

The second grade increase was also substantial, with the percentage of children reading to their parents 3-7 times per week increasing from 70% in September to 95% in January. Students asking to read to their parents increased from 43% to 65%. The higher initial percentages compared to first grade, according to the researchers, was indicative of the ability of more of these second graders to read independently.
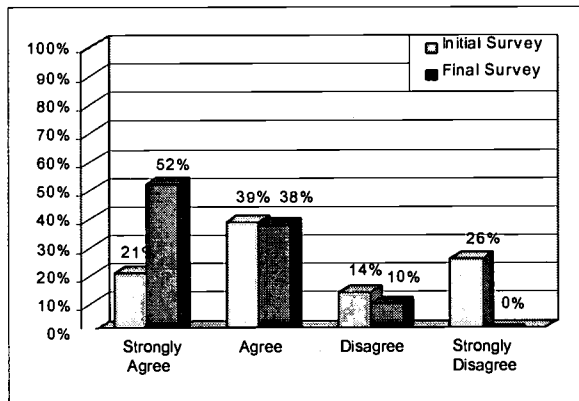
Figure12. First Grade: At-home reading strategies
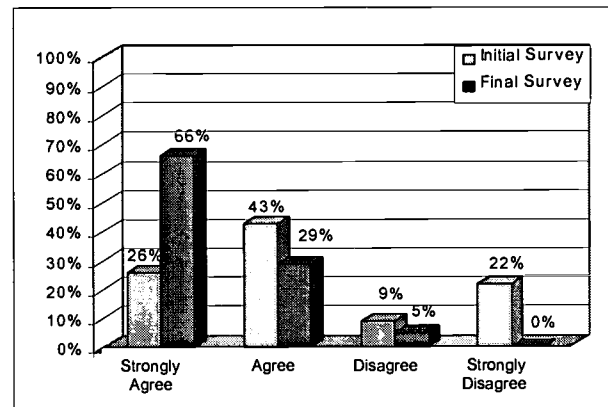
Figure 13. First Grade: Home-school reading partnerships

As an indication of the improved home-school relationship due to newsletters and parent workshops, the data showed clear positive growth. In first grade, the percentage of parents who strongly agreed that the school provided them with adequate strategies increased from 21% pre-intervention to 52% post-intervention. The number of parents who strongly disagreed fell from 26% to 0%. Parents of first graders who strongly agreed they had experienced a successful, collaborative home-school partnership went from 26% to 66%, and those who strongly disagreed decreased from 22% to 0%.
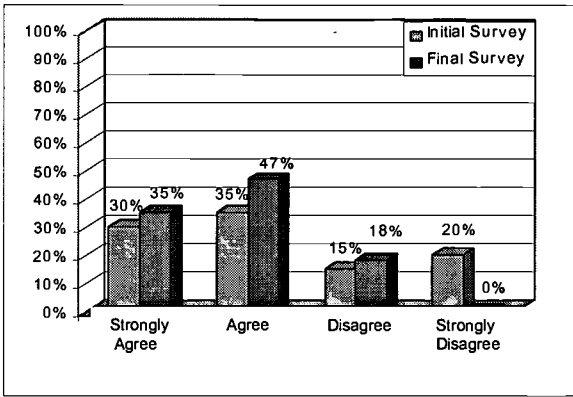
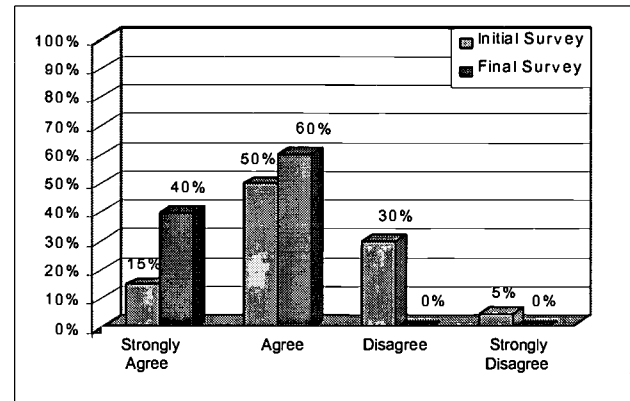Figure 14. Second Grade: At-home reading
strategies

Figure 15. Second Grade: Home-school
reading partnerships

The percentages in second grade were less substantial, but an increase was shown. Pre-intervention, 65% either agreed or strongly agreed that the school had provided them with adequate literacy strategies. That number increased to 82% on the post-intervention survey. The negative responses to that question were nearly halved, from 35% to 18%. As far as the home-school partnership, the results were more significant. Positive results grew from 65% to 100% over the course of the intervention. Negative responses fell from 35% to 0%.
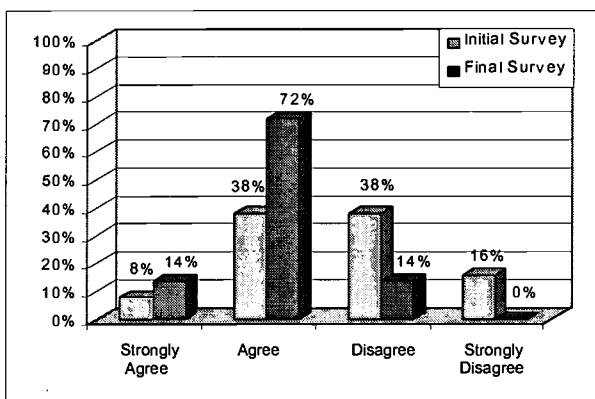
Figure 16. First Grade: Parent familiarity
with reading curriculum
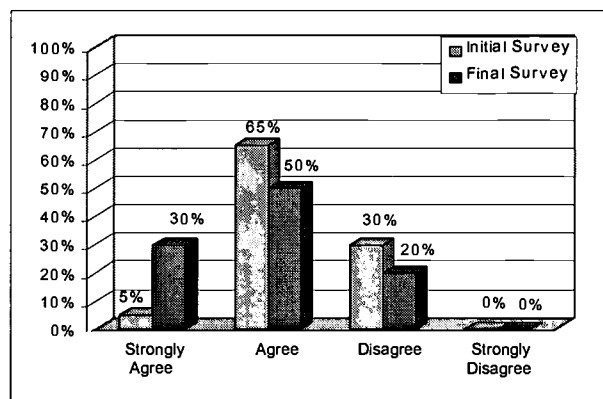
Figure 17. Second Grade: Parent familiarity
with reading curriculum

Familiarity with their child's reading curriculum also improved, according to the parent surveys. On the initial survey of the parents of first graders, less than half (46%) agreed or strongly agreed that they were familiar with the curriculum. Post-intervention, the number had leaped to 86%. Researchers thought this increase was a direct result of the information disseminated through the bi-weekly class newsletters, which specifically targeted curriculum issues. The most remarkable change among the parents of second graders, who had already had a full year's exposure to the school's reading curriculum because their children had completed first grade, was the increase in "Strongly Agree," which rose from 5% in August to 30% in January. This 25% increase could have come from the "Agree" column, which fell 15%, and the "Disagree" column, which decreased 10%.
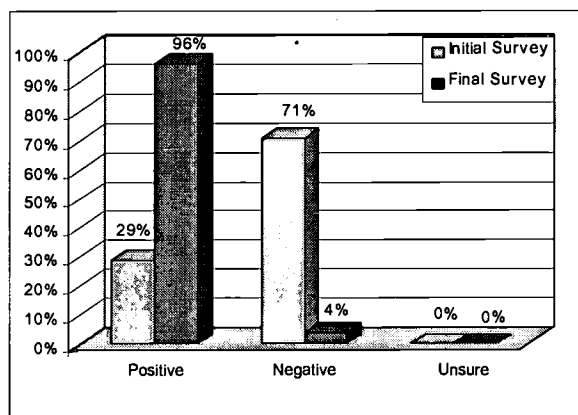

Figure 18. First Grade: Reading during vacations
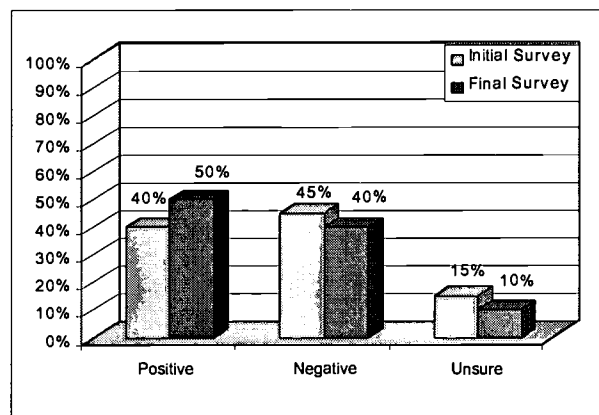

Figure 19. Second Grade: Reading during vacations

As far as the student attitudinal surveys, there was a marked positive increase among first grade students when they were asked in January how they felt about reading during vacation time—nearly all of them (96%) had a positive response. On the pre-intervention survey the opposite had been the case, as 71% indicated negative feelings regarding this topic. Results were less dramatic for second graders, with a slight (10%) increase in positive feelings over the course

of the intervention. Researchers felt the better results in first grade were affected by the students' newly acquired ability to read independently. The administration of both surveys took place just after vacation (summer and winter).
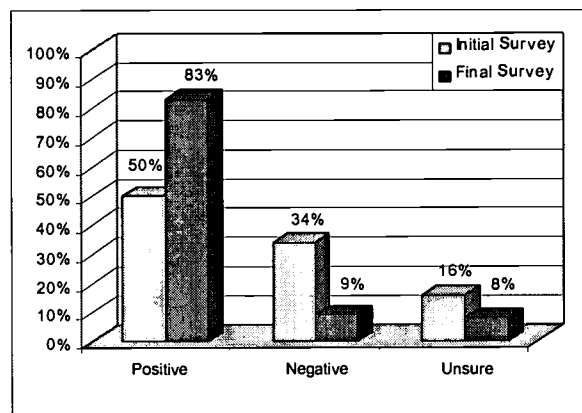
Figure 20. First Grade: Reading aloud to someone at home
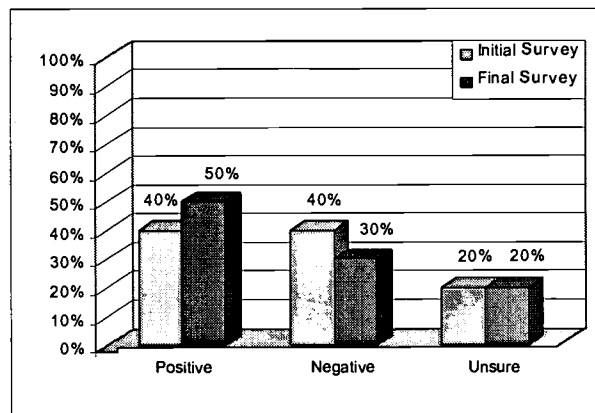
Figure 21. Second Grade: Reading aloud to someone at home

When it came to how they felt about reading aloud at home, the first grade respondents again showed larger gains in positive feelings. Half of them felt good about this aspect of reading in August, compared to 83% in January. As far as second graders, there was a 10% gain in positive responses (and a corresponding 10% decrease in negative responses) on the post-intervention survey. Again, researchers attributed this difference to the acquisition of independent-reading skills in first grade.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Upon reviewing the data and analyzing the results, the researchers concluded there was

an increased positive attitude on the part of both parents and students toward reading. Parents

also improved attitudinally as far as the home-school relationship, particularly in the areas of

communication and curriculum and especially at the first grade level. Researchers felt the

newsletters and parent workshops had a great deal to do with these changes in attitude. Student

attitudes also improved, which the researchers attributed to their acquisition of new literacy

skills, the emphasis teachers placed on the importance of time spent reading both at home and at

school, and the improved attitudes toward literacy on the part of the parents. The effective

relationships that were developed between home and school benefited everyone involved.

The workshops were well attended, with the first one drawing 39 parents and the next

two more than 30 parents each. The workshops helped the adults see the teachers in their

professional roles not just as teachers, but as guides and resources for parents. The workshops

helped parents to know what to expect in their children as young readers. Parents also saw

across-grade-level and across-expertise teachers working as a team to help them and their

children.

There was an overwhelmingly positive response on the Parent Workshop Evaluation

forms (Appendix M), with 85% rating their experience "terrific" and 15% rating it "good."

Among the comments written by parents: "I was not sure how to help my son at home—I was

afraid I would not teach him the same way you did at school, and now I'm more informed"; "I

liked reading to the children and [you] demonstrating how to read to them"; "I liked the idea of

walking through the book and then reading it"; and "I enjoy any new ideas for teaching children

to read." Parents also wrote: "It showed us different ways to approach reading with our child"; "It helped me to learn how to read with my son, as I did not have that as a child with my parents"; and "It was educational and enjoyable and gave me lots of ideas to use while reading with my kids."

Other comments included "You provided a 'hands on' approach on how parents can help develop comprehension in a non-intimidating manner"; "Thanks for the tips on spelling—it makes sense that spelling will get better as reading gets better"; "I learned the strategies for reading comprehension and realized what good readers do"; "I discovered it is okay to look at picture clues"; and "I liked that the workshop taught me how to teach my child, as my son is read to a lot, but we didn't really talk about the book in detail, just very generally." One parent had very specific praise and wrote, "I really enjoyed the story of Thunder Cake. It made me think of my mother and her grandmother. The teacher reading used great voice inflection and was very expressive." Several parents said they thought workshops should be done for kindergarten parents as well.

As far as the newsletters home, the students helping to write them particularly enjoyed these. They liked thinking of eye-catching headlines, and together as a class, each group chose topics for the articles. There was some parental feedback to the newsletter-- not as much as teachers would have liked, but it was all positive and encouraging. The parents especially enjoyed seeing photographs of their children engaged in literacy activities. They felt the newsletters were reader-friendly and informative, as they contained articles about curriculum, specific lessons, important dates, and helpful hints for at-home literacy.

Completion of the reading logs improved as the intervention progressed. Students began reading more often and for more minutes, requesting to take home certain books that piqued their

interest, and taking home many more books in general. Children were also asking to read in class, not waiting to be told it was time, which was the goal of the researchers.

There were several differences noted when the actual intervention was compared to the initial plan. An interactive parent/child workshop was added, and the bi-weekly newsletter and weekly reading logs were continued beyond the time allotted for the research study.

Were the intervention to be implemented again, researchers would put more specific questions on the parent survey and put in questions requiring narrative answers. They would also have an impartial teacher administer the student survey rather than the classroom teacher, so the students would not answer in an attempt to please. The weekly newsletter would contain a teacher's corner to review strategies shared in workshops. The researchers would also make some changes in the workshops, such as providing time for observation of parent-child interaction, adding a guest speaker from the local public library to discuss the importance of obtaining and using a library card, and having written parent feedback after all workshops, not just one. Due to the fact that parents not in the research group requested to attend the literacy workshops, future workshops would be offered to all parents of primary-age students at the school. In addition to the strategies used, researchers plan to create a teacher- and parent-lending library of pedagogical and parenting resources.

Overall, the researchers felt the whole focus on literacy and an effective relationship between home and school raised parental awareness of teacher expectations and provided information about what was developmentally appropriate for first and second graders.

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Appendices

Parent Attitude Reading Survey, Section One

T = Daily   W = Once a week
U = 4-6 times a week   X = 2-3 times a month
V = 2-3 times a week   Y = Once a month
                                 Z = Less than once a month

On average (please circle the most accurate response):

1. How often do you read aloud to your child?

   T   U   V   W   X   Y   Z

2. How often does your child read aloud to you?

   T   U   V   W   X   Y   Z

3. How often do you and your child go the library?

   T   U   V   W   X   Y   Z

4. How often does your child see you reading?

   T   U   V   W   X   Y   Z

5. How often do you encourage your child to read for pleasure?

   T   U   V   W   X   Y   Z

6. How often does your child read for pleasure?

   T   U   V   W   X   Y   Z

7. How often do you discuss books with your child?

   T   U   V   W   X   Y   Z

8. How often does your child ask you to read to them?

   T   U   V   W   X   Y   Z

9. How often does your child ask if they can read to you?

   T   U   V   W   X   Y   Z

10. How often does your child choose reading over another activity?

   T   U   V   W   X   Y   Z

Parent Attitude Reading Survey, Section Two

Please respond to the following statements by circling the appropriate response.

1. I am comfortable helping my child with their reading.

   Strongly agree   *Agree*   *Disagree*   *Strongly disagree*

2. Reading with my child is a pleasant experience.

   Strongly agree   *Agree*   *Disagree*   *Strongly disagree*

3. The school has provided me with adequate strategies for use in helping my child at home.

   Strongly agree   *Agree*   *Disagree*   *Strongly disagree*

4. I am satisfied with the level of home-school communication.

   Strongly agree   *Agree*   *Disagree*   *Strongly disagree*

5. My child's teachers have been accessible and responsive.

   Strongly agree   *Agree*   *Disagree*   *Strongly disagree*

6. Teachers have made clear what my child is expected to learn.

   Strongly agree   *Agree*   *Disagree*   *Strongly disagree*

7. A collaborative partnership between home and school is essential for my child's reading success.

   Strongly agree   *Agree*   *Disagree*   *Strongly disagree*

8. I have experienced a successful, collaborative home-school partnership in reading.

   Strongly agree   *Agree*   *Disagree*   *Strongly disagree*

9. I am familiar with my child's reading curriculum.

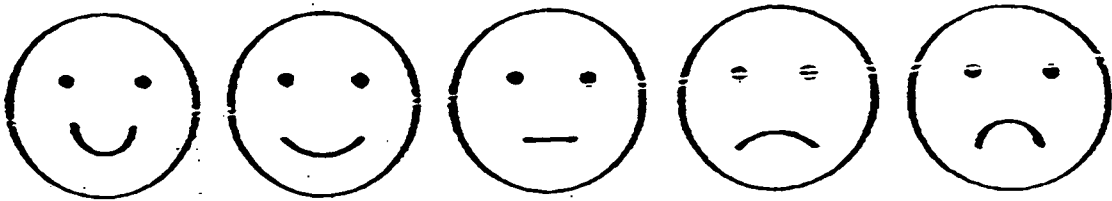   *Strongly agree*   *Agree*   *Disagree*   *Strongly disagree*

10. I am aware of the amount of time my child spends reading.

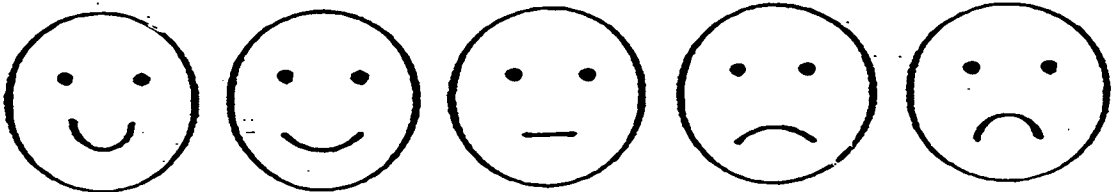   *Strongly agree*   *Agree*   *Disagree*   *Strongly disagree*
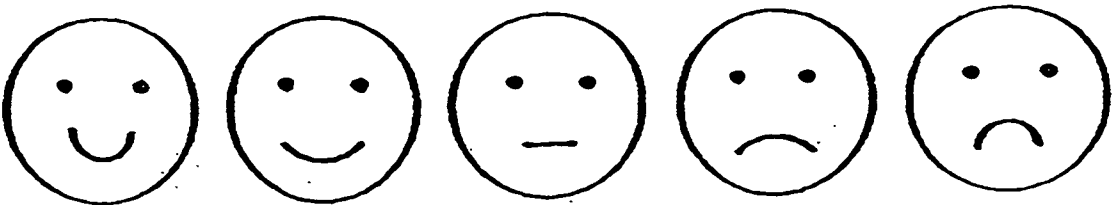
Student Reading Attitude Survey

Date_____

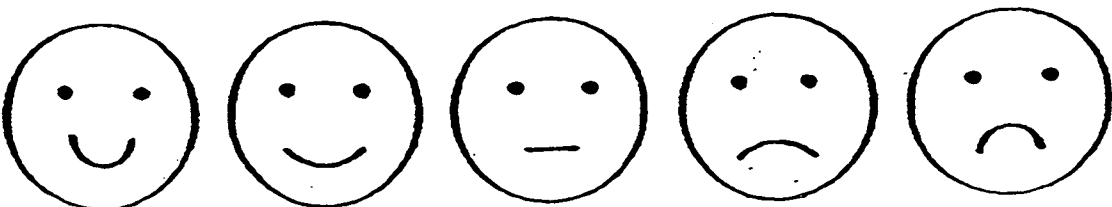1. How important is it to you that you become a good reader?

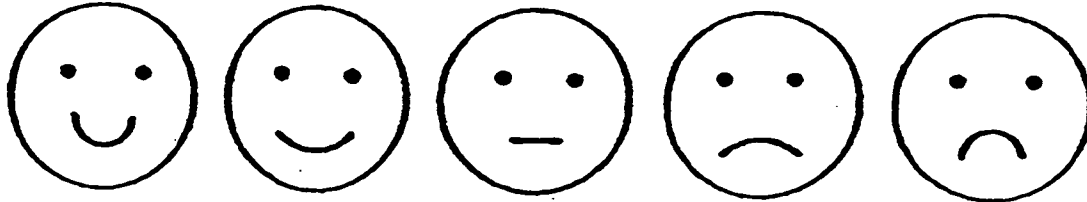2. How do you feel about reading for fun at home?

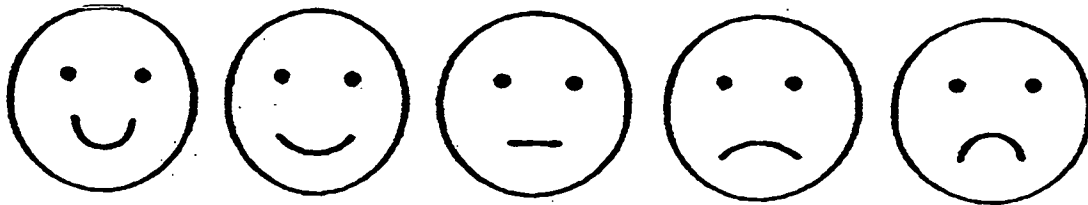3. How do you feel about getting a book as a present?

4. How do you feel about reading during a vacation from school?
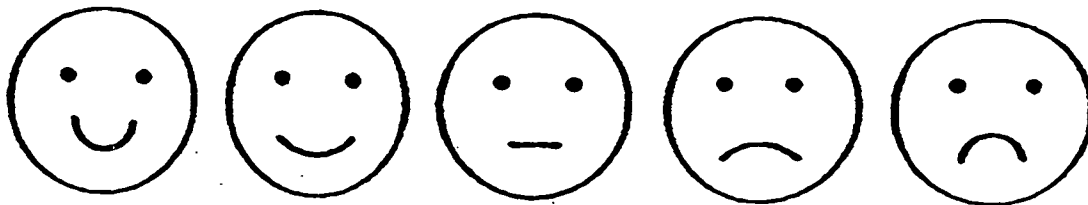
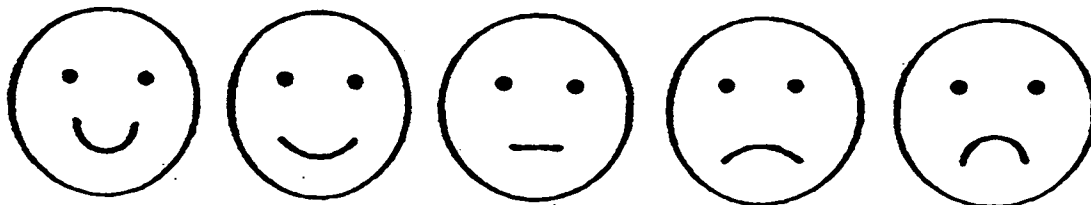5. How do you feel about reading instead of playing when you are home?

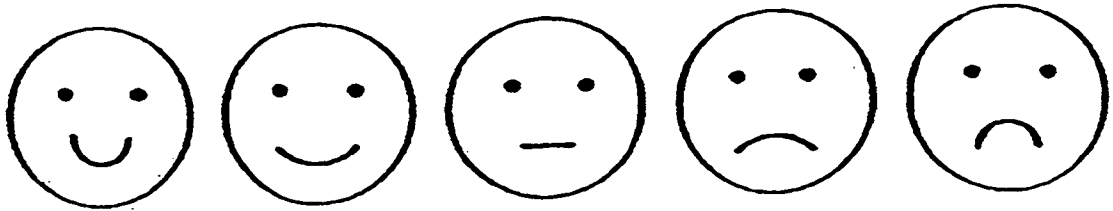6. How do you feel about going to the library?

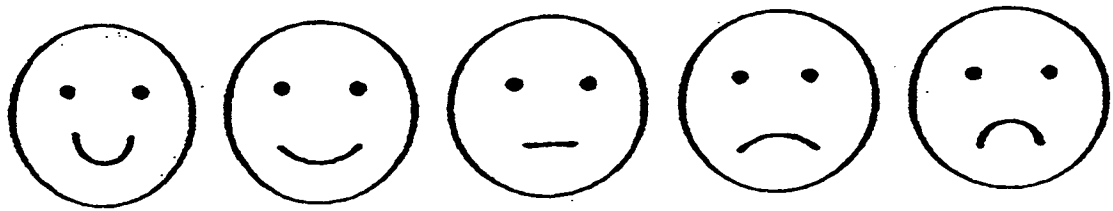7. How do you feel when your parents read you a story?

8. How do you feel about reading for fun at school?

9. How important do you think it is to your parents that you learn to be a good reader?

10. How do you feel about reading out loud to someone at home?

Dear Parents,

We are involved in an action research study through Saint Xavier University to help us learn more about creating a stronger home-school relationship. Research states creating such a partnership is a key component to early literacy. We are writing to inform you of the plans for our project, of which there are several parts:

1. Parent workshops that will enhance parents' understanding of current strategies to assist their children at home.
2. Communication to keep parents informed on various issues through home-school newsletters.
3. Weekly reading logs for you to help your child complete each week. Your child will soon realize that there is a connection to the reading he/she is doing at home, and the reading he/she is doing at school.
4. Surveys we will need to be administer to complete our project. A first survey will be completed by parents at Back to School Night on August 31, 2000 and repeated in January, 2001. This survey will focus on parent opinions on a variety of issues. Another survey will be given to students in September and January to address their attitudes toward reading. <u>All survey results will remain confidential and only be referred to in our final paper as group results.</u>

We would like you to complete and return the attached consent form so we know you have seen this letter and are aware of this action research study we will be working on this year. If you have any questions regarding our project please do not hesitate to call any one of us at 232-0883. If we are unavailable, please leave a message and we will return your call as soon as possible.
Thank you for your support and cooperation.

Sincerely,

Brenda Bevans
Becky Furnish
Ann Ramsey
Stacy Talsma

Consent Forms

I, the parent/legal guardian of the minor child named below, acknowledge that the investigators have explained to me the need for this research, identified the risks involved, and offered to answer any questions I may have about the nature of my child's participation. I freely and voluntarily consent to my child's participation in this study. I understand all information gathered from the student surveys will be completely confidential. I also understand that I may keep a copy of this consent form for my own information.

_____

Name of Minor Participant

_____   _____

Signature of Parent/Legal Guardian   Date

I acknowledge that the investigator has explained to me the need for this research, identified the risks involved, and offered to answer any questions I may have about the nature of my participation. I freely and voluntarily agree to participate in this study. I understand all information gathered during the interview will completely confidential. I also understand that I may keep a copy of this consent form for my own information.

_____   _____

Signature of Voluntary Participant   Date

Workshop Invitation
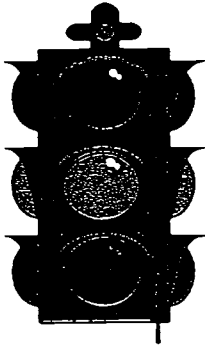
Road to Literacy

Workshop: Early Literacy Stategies-Reading with your child

Date: Thursday, Sept.14

Time: 6:30-7:30 P.M.

Place: Harrison Library

Feel free to bring your child with you, they will take part in a portion of the workshop.
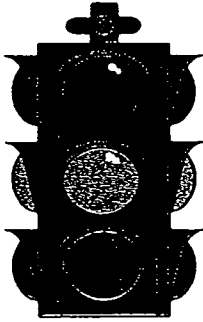
Questions??? Call or send a note .
Mrs. Bevans
Mrs. Furnish
Mrs. Ramsey
Mrs. Talsma

Workshop Invitation

Road to Literacy

Workshop: *Comprehension Strategies*

Date: *Thursday, Oct. 12*

Time: <u>*6:00-7:00 P.M.*</u>

Place: *Harrison Library*

Feel free to bring your child with you, as they will take part in a portion of the workshop. Also, please bring suggestions of possible topics for the third workshop.

❖ <u>*Due to the Fifth Grade Outdoor Education Meeting the workshop will start thirty minutes earlier.*</u>
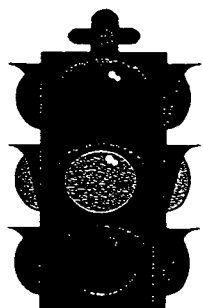
Questions??????? Call or send a note.
Mrs. Bevans
Mrs. Furnish
Mrs. Ramsey
Mrs. Talsma

Workshop Invitation

Road to Literacy

Workshop: Developmental Spelling

Date: Thursday, November 16, 2000

Time: 6:30 7:30

Place: Harrison Library

Please bring your child with you, as they will take part in a portion of the workshop. _Children may wear pajamas, (appropriate ones) and bring a small stuffed animal if they wish._

Questions??????? Call or send a note.
Mrs. Bevans
Mrs. Furnish
Mrs. Ramsey
Mrs. Talsma

Parent Workshop Evaluation

1. What did you like about this workshop?

2. What would you do differently?

3. How would you rate this workshop?

    Poor   Not helpful   OK   Good   Terrific

4. I would attend another workshop?   Yes   No

5. Possible topics:

    a) Developmental spelling
    b) Reading and writing connection
    c) Vocabulary strategies
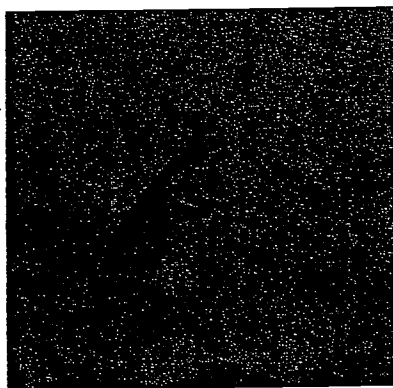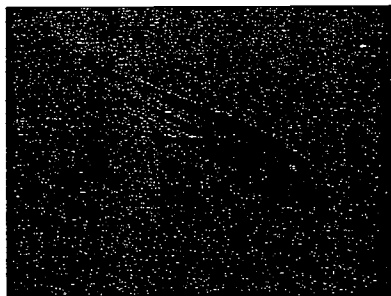   d) Graphic organizers
    e) Other _____

Newsletter

Talsma Team Tribune

Legs, Legs, Legs

This week was fun looking at the tadpoles because they
have grown back legs, and two have front ones. We can see
the webbing and fingers on their back legs. They swim us-
ing their back legs, they don't use their tail as much. Their
back legs are really long and they stretch them out when
they swim. They swim really, really fast. The tails are be-
ginning to get shorter on the ones with four legs. Some-
times they won't let us look at
their faces.

Harrison Street
School

Volume 1,Issue 7

November 17, 2000

Important Dates
☺November 22 1/2 of
  school
☺November 23
  Thanksgiving No
  School
☺November 24 No
  school 1

Candy Campaign

The two candidates in our candy election are 3 Musket-
eers and Kit Kat. We made campaign posters with a buddy, and
buttons on our own. They are colorful and interesting so we can
try and convince the kids in the class to vote for our candy bar.
We listed characteristics like: crunchy, really chocolatey, and
chewy on the posters. We will have campaign speeches on Mon-
day, and also get to eat both candy bars. .On Tuesday, Election
Day, we will vote.

Reading Log

Parents: Please enter the name(s) of the book(s) your child has read in the proper box. Please remember to sign the completed form and return it on Monday.

	Less than	20 minutes	more than
Date_____			
Date_____			
Date_____			
Date_____			
Date_____			

Name_____   Parent Signature _____

Parent Survey Results Part One

Initial Parent Survey Part One - Grade One

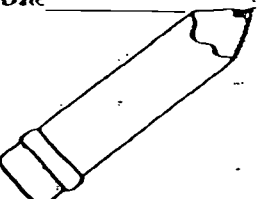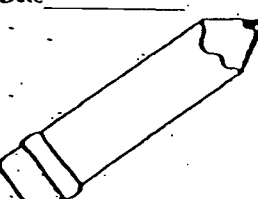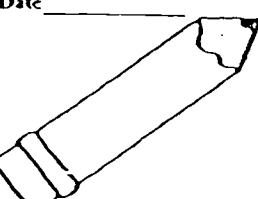|	daily	4-6 week	2-3 week	once a week	2-3 month	once a month	> once a month
How often do you read aloud to you child?	0.29	0.11	0.17	0.10	0.10	0.16	0.07
How often does your child read aloud to you?	0.14	0.10	0.33	0.10	0.19	0.14	0.00
How often does your child go to the library?	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.32	0.41	0.23	0.05
How often does you child see you reading?	0.57	0.22	0.09	0.04	0.08	0.00	0.09
How often do you encourage reading for pleasure?	0.55	0.23	0.00	0.18	0.00	0.00	0.05
How often does your child read for pleasure?	0.24	0.33	0.19	0.10	0.00	0.00	0.14
How often do you discuss books with your child?	0.35	0.26	0.17	0.13	0.04	0.04	0.00
How often does your child ask for you to read to them?	0.55	0.18	0.18	0.09	0.00	0.00	0.00
How often does your child ask to read to you?	0.10	0.10	0.05	0.19	0.19	0.14	0.24
How often does your child choose reading over other activity?	0.10	0.05	0.15	0.30	0.00	0.25	0.15

Final Parent Survey Part One - Grade One

	daily	4-6 week	2-3 week	once a week	2-3 month	once a month	> once a month
How often do you read aloud to you child?	0.48	0.33	0.10	0.10	0.00	0.00	0.00
How often does your child read aloud to you?	0.38	0.48	0.14	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
How often does your child go to the library?	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.24	0.38	0.29	0.10
How often does you child see you reading?	0.57	0.14	0.10	0.14	0.00	0.05	0.00
How often do you encourage reading for pleasure?	0.48	0.14	0.19	0.10	0.05	0.05	0.00
How often does your child read for pleasure?	0.38	0.19	0.14	0.14	0.00	0.00	0.14
How often do you discuss books with your child?	0.33	0.33	0.19	0.10	0.00	0.00	0.05
How often does your child ask for you to read to them?	0.48	0.24	0.10	0.10	0.05	0.00	0.04
How often does your child ask to read to you?	0.14	0.33	0.14	0.14	0.10	0.05	0.10
How often does your child choose reading over other activity?	0.10	0.24	0.19	0.24	0.08	0.05	0.10

Initial Parent Survey Part One - Grade Two

	daily	4-6 week	2-3 week	once a week	2-3 month	once a month	> once a month
How often do you read aloud to you child?	0.42	0.16	0.21	0.11	0.11	0.00	0.00
How often does your child read aloud to you?	0.45	0.13	0.12	0.15	0.10	0.05	0.00
How often does your child go to the library?	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.11	0.33	0.33	0.22
How often does you child see you reading?	0.65	0.10	0.10	0.05	0.05	0.05	0.00
How often do you encourage reading for pleasure?	0.65	0.00	0.15	0.10	0.05	0.00	0.05
How often does your child read for pleasure?	0.25	0.20	0.15	0.20	0.05	0.05	0.10
How often do you discuss books with your child?	0.37	0.21	0.16	0.11	0.05	0.05	0.05
How often does your child ask for you to read to them?	0.32	0.11	0.16	0.21	0.05	0.11	0.05
How often does your child ask to read to you?	0.22	0.10	0.11	0.15	0.11	0.26	0.05
How often does your child choose reading over other activity?	0.00	0.16	0.16	0.32	0.11	0.05	0.21

Final Parent Survey Part One - Grade Two

	daily	4-6 week	2-3 week	once a week	2-3 month	once a month	> once a month
How often do you read aloud to you child?	0.48	0.33	0.10	0.10	0.00	0.00	0.00
How often does your child read aloud to you?	0.38	0.48	0.09	0.05	0.00	0.00	0.00
How often does your child go to the library?	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.24	0.38	0.29	0.10
How often does you child see you reading?	0.57	0.14	0.10	0.14	0.00	0.05	0.00
How often do you encourage reading for pleasure?	0.48	0.14	0.19	0.10	0.05	0.05	0.00
How often does your child read for pleasure?	0.38	0.19	0.14	0.14	0.00	0.00	0.14
How often do you discuss books with your child?	0.33	0.33	0.19	0.10	0.00	0.00	0.05
How often does your child ask for you to read to them?	0.48	0.22	0.10	0.10	0.05	0.00	0.05
How often does your child ask to read to you?	0.14	0.33	0.18	0.15	0.10	0.10	0.00
How often does your child choose reading over other activity?	0.10	0.24	0.19	0.24	0.10	0.05	0.10

Parent Survey Results Part Two

Initial Parent Survey Part Two - Grade One	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I am comfortable helping my child with reading.	0.81	0.19	0.00	0.00
Reading with my child is a pleasant experience.	0.71	0.29	0.04	0.00
The school has provided me with adequate strategies.	0.21	0.39	0.14	0.26
I am satisfied with the level of home-school communication.	0.33	0.57	0.10	0.00
My child's teacher has been accessible and responsive.	0.52	0.47	0.05	0.00
Teachers have made clear what my child is expected to learn.	0.38	0.52	0.10	0.00
A collaborative partnership between home-school is essential.	0.76	0.24	0.00	0.00
I have experienced a successful, collaborative home-school partnership.	0.26	0.43	0.09	0.22
I am familiar with my child's reading curriculum.	0.08	0.38	0.38	0.16
I am aware of the amount of time my child spends reading.	0.38	0.52	0.10	0.00

Final Parent Survey Part Two - Grade One	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I am comfortable helping my child with reading.	0.76	0.24	0.00	0.00
Reading with my child is a pleasant experience.	0.62	0.38	0.00	0.00
The school has provided me with adequate strategies.	0.52	0.38	0.10	0.00
I am satisfied with the level of home-school communication.	0.43	0.48	0.10	0.00
My child's teacher has been accessible and responsive.	0.62	0.38	0.00	0.00
Teachers have made clear what my child is expected to learn.	0.52	0.43	0.05	0.00
A collaborative partnership between home-school is essential.	0.81	0.19	0.00	0.00
I have experienced a successful, collaborative home-school partnership.	0.66	0.29	0.05	0.00
I am familiar with my child's reading curriculum.	0.14	0.71	0.14	0.00
I am aware of the amount of time my child spends reading.	0.67	0.33	0.00	0.00

Initial Parent Survey Part Two - Grade Two	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I am comfortable helping my child with reading.	0.75	0.25	0.00	0.00
Reading with my child is a pleasant experience.	0.50	0.45	0.05	0.00
The school has provided me with adequate strategies.	0.30	0.35	0.15	0.20
I am satisfied with the level of home-school communication.	0.16	0.47	0.26	0.11
My child's teacher has been accessible and responsive.	0.40	0.50	0.05	0.05
Teachers have made clear what my child is expected to learn.	0.05	0.85	0.05	0.05
A collaborative partnership between home-school is essential.	0.85	0.15	0.00	0.00
I have experienced a successful, collaborative home-school partnership.	0.15	0.50	0.30	0.05
I am familiar with my child's reading curriculum.	0.05	0.65	0.30	0.00
I am aware of the amount of time my child spends reading.	0.35	0.60	0.05	0.00

Final Parent Survey Part Two - Grade Two	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I am comfortable helping my child with reading.	0.75	0.05	0.00	0.00
Reading with my child is a pleasant experience.	0.50	0.50	0.00	0.00
The school has provided me with adequate strategies.	0.35	0.47	0.18	0.00
I am satisfied with the level of home-school communication.	0.35	0.65	0.00	0.00
My child's teacher has been accessible and responsive.	0.50	0.50	0.00	0.00
Teachers have made clear what my child is expected to learn.	0.25	0.70	0.05	0.00
A collaborative partnership between home-school is essential.	0.85	0.15	0.00	0.00
I have experienced a successful, collaborative home-school partnership.	0.40	0.60	0.00	0.00
I am familiar with my child's reading curriculum.	0.30	0.50	0.20	0.00
I am aware of the amount of time my child spends reading.	0.50	0.45	0.05	0.00

Student Survey Results

Initial Student Survey Grade One	5	4	3	2	1
How important is it to you that you become a good reader?	0.71	0.17	0.13	0.00	0.00
How do you feel about reading for fun at home?	0.46	0.17	0.25	0.00	0.13
How do you feel about getting a book at a present?	0.46	0.29	0.13	0.04	0.08
How do you feel about reading during vacation?	0.21	0.08	0.00	0.25	0.46
How do you feel about reading instead of playing when you are home?	0.33	0.08	0.29	0.00	0.29
How do you feel about going to the library?	0.83	0.08	0.00	0.08	0.00
How do you feel when your parent reads you a story?	0.54	0.13	0.13	0.04	0.17
How do you feel about reading for fun at school?	0.50	0.21	0.17	0.04	0.08
How important do you think it is to your parents that you learn to be a good reader?	0.75	0.04	0.08	0.04	0.08
How do you feel about reading out loud to someone at home?	0.33	0.17	0.17	0.13	0.21

Final Student Survey Grade One	5	4	3	2	1
How important is it to you that you become a good reader?	0.96	0.04	0.00	0.00	0.00
How do you feel about reading for fun at home?	0.88	0.13	0.00	0.00	0.00
How do you feel about getting a book at a present?	0.88	0.13	0.00	0.00	0.00
How do you feel about reading during vacation?	0.88	0.08	0.04	0.00	0.00
How do you feel about reading instead of playing when you are home?	0.58	0.17	0.21	0.04	0.00
How do you feel about going to the library?	0.96	0.04	0.00	0.00	0.00
How do you feel when your parent reads you a story?	0.88	0.08	0.00	0.00	0.04
How do you feel about reading for fun at school?	0.92	0.08	0.00	0.00	0.00
How important do you think it is to your parents that you learn to be a good reader?	0.96	0.04	0.00	0.00	0.00
How do you feel about reading out loud to someone at home?	0.80	0.03	0.09	0.00	0.08

Initial Student Survey Grade Two	5	4	3	2	1
How important is it to you that you become a good reader?	0.65	0.30	0.05	0.00	0.00
How do you feel about reading for fun at home?	0.40	0.25	0.30	0.00	0.05
How do you feel about getting a book at a present?	0.55	0.10	0.15	0.20	0.00
How do you feel about reading during vacation?	0.30	0.10	0.15	0.10	0.35
How do you feel about reading instead of playing when you are home?	0.10	0.20	0.30	0.10	0.30
How do you feel about going to the library?	0.55	0.15	0.15	0.15	0.00
How do you feel when your parent reads you a story?	0.75	0.10	0.10	0.05	0.00
How do you feel about reading for fun at school?	0.45	0.35	0.15	0.05	0.00
How important do you think it is to your parents that you learn to be a good reader?	0.95	0.00	0.05	0.00	0.00
How do you feel about reading out loud to someone at home?	0.30	0.10	0.20	0.10	0.30

Final Student Survey Grade Two	5	4	3	2	1
How important is it to you that you become a good reader?	0.65	0.20	0.10	0.00	0.05
How do you feel about reading for fun at home?	0.35	0.15	0.30	0.10	0.10
How do you feel about getting a book at a present?	0.50	0.20	0.20	0.10	0.00
How do you feel about reading during vacation?	0.30	0.20	0.10	0.10	0.30
How do you feel about reading instead of playing when you are home?	0.15	0.20	0.25	0.00	0.40
How do you feel about going to the library?	0.65	0.10	0.20	0.05	0.00
How do you feel when your parent reads you a story?	0.65	0.15	0.05	0.05	0.10
How do you feel about reading for fun at school?	0.50	0.10	0.20	0.00	0.20
How important do you think it is to your parents that you learn to be a good reader?	0.90	0.10	0.00	0.00	0.00
How do you feel about reading out loud to someone at home?	0.30	0.20	0.20	0.05	0.25

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