Parent Perspectives on Developing Effective Family–School Partnerships in Hawai'i

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Abstract

Family–school partnerships have been shown to improve academic and social outcomes for children, yet there have been challenges in developing effective partnerships with diverse families. This phenomenological study examined perspectives of immigrant and local parents with regards to family–school partnerships in Hawai'i to provide insights regarding these challenges in this unique context. Results demonstrated that parents valued the relational aspect of family–school partnerships and believed that education for their children was important. Beyond supporting children's learning, participants wanted to understand their children's experiences in school and to participate in building a school community. They identified the importance of the principal's role in affording effective partnerships and discussed cultural mismatches with educators that created barriers for their participation. This study adds to the literature by examining parent perspectives in the context of the complexity of family, school, and community attributes in Hawai'i, including the voices of diverse families that reflect the increasing diversity of schools.

Key Words: family, school, community partnerships, Hawai'i, culturally diverse families, parent perspectives, family, cultures, multiculturalism, diversity

Introduction

Family and school partnerships have been shown to improve academic and social outcomes for children (Carlson & Christenson, 2005; Henderson &

Mapp, 2002; Serpell & Mashburn, 2012). In recognition of these results, laws regarding the inclusion of families in their children's education have required school systems to address family communication, participation, and engagement for all children in schools since 2001 with the No Child Left Behind Act (Crosnoe, 2015) and reiterated in the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) of 2015. Many schools have developed procedures to engage families, and these programs are often evaluated based on "frequency of contact," a structural model that emphasizes events such as home visits, tutoring, or conferences (Moorman Kim et al., 2012; Serpell & Mashburn, 2012).

However, family engagement often goes well beyond event attendance. In fact, counting how often parents participate in specific events such as parent–teacher conferences or fundraising activities can contribute to the pervasive "parents as problems" deficit narrative in schools when parents fall short of school expectations (Baquedano-López, Alexander, & Hernandez, 2013). Because of the traditional focus on the frequency of contact, the relational aspects of family and school partnerships such as developing a welcoming atmosphere, a sense of school community, or nurturing relationships between teachers and parents often receive less attention (Crosnoe, 2015; Moorman Kim et al., 2012) than the structural aspects such as event attendance. In addition, parent perspectives of partnerships with educators are often overlooked as the school's agenda frequently takes priority.

In view of our desire to include both structural and relational aspects of family–school partnerships, we use Moorman Kim and Sheridan's (2015) definition that identifies two core features: "(1) parents and educators are mutually engaged in the educational process, and (2) efforts are aimed at supporting children's learning and positive development" (p. 2). Reschly and Christenson (2012) discussed the importance of developing congruence in messages and actions between schools and homes around the education of children; partnerships with this aim "are a means of increasing cultural and social capital for all families and youth" (p. 67). For educators to be able to integrate relational elements to develop congruence and enhance family–school partnerships, there must be a deeper understanding of the needs and perspectives of families. This study addresses this gap in the literature by examining parents' perceptions about family–school relationships.

This study was conducted in Hawai'i, a state with one school district encompassing rural and urban schools, a multicultural setting with no ethnic majority, an indigenous Hawaiian population, large immigrant and migrant populations, and many families who use multiple home languages (Welch, 2011). Hawai'i's geographic diversity results in a non-homogenous population that includes ethnic, socioeconomic, and racial differences in single schools,

as well as isolation of some schools on outlying islands. As such, strategies for effective family and school partnerships in Hawai'i may be somewhat different than those in other states. A lack of literature regarding family and school partnerships in Hawai'i and in other locations with heterogeneous families highlights the need for this study. Because U.S. schools are becoming more diverse (Hernandez, Denton, Macartney, & Blanchard, 2011), the perceptions of parents in Hawai'i about these partnerships can inform educators who work with a mix of indigenous, immigrant, poor, migrant, and multilingual, as well as middle-class and White families, in a variety of locations and circumstances.

In the following sections, we discuss the theoretical perspectives that frame the study, including previous research on models of family–school partnerships. This includes changing ideas about these partnerships, their benefits to educators and families, and how increasing diversity among families affects schools' efforts to develop effective partnerships.

Family–School Partnerships

Multiple theories and conceptual models are considered in recent research on family–school partnerships (Yamauchi, Ponte, Ratliffe, & Traynor, 2017), including those relating to organization and allocation of responsibilities (Epstein, 2011), psychological aspects of family participation (Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2005), ecological and contextual relationships (Bronfenbrenner, 1989; Reschly & Christenson, 2012), and attributes such as social and cultural capital (Coleman, 1994; Lareau, 1987). Newer conceptual models have extended the complexity and reach by integrating psychological and social attributes into contextual elements and demonstrating how these mediate how educators and families can work together to educate children (Dearing, Sibley, & Nguyen, 2015). In the following sections, we discuss recent conceptual models of family–school partnerships, describe the benefits of family–school partnerships, and focus on how diversity plays a role in family–school relationships.

Theoretical Perspective

This study employs a sociocultural perspective, positing that including families' socioculturally informed ways of understanding into these relationships extends family members' and educators' knowledge and skills and supports positive relationships between families and schools. Vygotsky wrote that it is through dialogic activity with more knowledgeable people that individuals learn through co-construction of meaning (Vygotsky, 1978). In addition, learning occurs in a social and cultural context. Family–school partnerships are made up of people who talk to each other, who learn from and about each

other, and who work together to plan and implement educational activities for children. This co-construction of meaning occurs through mutual interaction; it is an outcome of the relational aspect of partnerships among stakeholders and is essential to its success.

Families with the most difficulty participating in their children's education are often those who come from cultures that are different from mainstream American culture, such as immigrant families, those from low socioeconomic strata, and those who speak a language other than English in the home (Turney & Kao, 2009). In a review of family–school partnerships with Latino families, Poza, Brooks, and Valdez (2014) concluded that

> the wide gulf between schools and immigrant Latino families…must be bridged through some combination of enhancing school personnel's understanding of the cultural practices and parenting styles in which families engage and training parents to adopt particular behaviors or beliefs in line with those of the school (p. 123).

These are important steps; however, educators and family members need to work together to create real change. Individual actions to change teachers or parents can be subsumed under a larger agenda of developing relationships where people can talk together about problems and solutions while developing mutual respect and understanding. In order for relationships to flourish, it is important that educators and family members welcome and include each other and work together to include the cultures of children and families in all aspects of school (Daniel, 2011).

Models of Family, School, and Community Partnerships

Family–school partnerships have been conceptualized in ways that have changed over time. Epstein's (1995) seminal conceptual model where families, schools, and communities overlap in their responsibilities to educate children can be compared to more complex, dynamic models where the systems of interactions are mediated by parent, child, and teacher attributes such as social capital, knowledge, attitudes, motivations, and community affordances (Dearing et al., 2015). In Dearing, Sibley, and Nguyen's Family–School–Community Systems Model of Family Engagement, the social capital of families, educators, and the community provide important contextual mediation for family engagement and for children's learning. Social capital also mediates parent and teacher attributes as well as community affordances, which then affect children's academic achievement, learning, and motivation. This model includes proximal forces such as parents directly helping children learn and more distal forces such as family engagement in school and community influences. It models the interactions of the different systems of communities, families, and schools.

Moorman Kim and Sheridan (2015) proposed a meta-model that embeds and integrates the structural elements of these partnerships, such as specific activities and practices, in the context of relational elements—graphically, a circle of structural elements enclosed within a larger sphere of relational context. They proposed that

> an integrated partnership approach is intentional in its focus on helping children achieve specific learning and developmental goals. As such, the goals are jointly established and determined around mutual…priorities. The partnership unfolds as a process that is culturally sensitive,…developmentally responsive…and strengths-based.…At the same time, it incorporates structural features or strategies grounded in research that facilitate children's learning, behavior, or social–emotional development (Moorman Kim & Sheridan, 2015, pp. 7–8).

Teachers often do not look beyond the structural elements, and they may expect parents to take the most responsibility to engage by attending and participating in events at the school. It is only when educators mature in their understandings of parent–teacher partnerships that they begin to realize that the teacher and the school have important responsibilities to develop and sustain these relationships (Traynor, 2016).

Changing ideas and language relating to family–school partnerships reflects evolving ways of thinking about these relationships. In the next section, we discuss how these changing ideas have affected the design and implementation of partnership strategies over time.

Relationships Between Families and Schools

As the roles of families and communities in supporting student success have evolved in the field of education, language describing relationships between families and schools has also evolved. Traditional views of family–school partnerships tended to focus on parents rather than families, positioned the school as having the primary responsibility for educating children, and situated the locus of action at the school, so that the school was the entity determining the nature of the parental participation. Educators took initiative in developing activities, meetings, and plans in which parents could participate (Miller, Lines, Sullivan, & Hermanutz, 2013).

The Every Child Succeeds Act (ESSA), authorized in 2015, changed the terminology used by the U.S. Department of Education from *parent involvement* to *parent and family engagement,* reflecting some key changes in thinking. Henderson and Mapp (2002) called for using the term "family" rather than "parent" to recognize all family members and to focus on the idea of relationships, particularly on the need for mutual trust. Engagement implies active and

mutual participation from family members and educators. These relationships are deemed important not only in the school context, but also in the community environment surrounding the school and its families. The most commonly used term in current literature, however, is "family–school partnerships." This term reflects both the reciprocal nature of the relationships and also the shared responsibility for educating children.

Benefits of Family–School Partnerships

It has been known for several decades that parental participation leads to children who fare better in life from both social and academic standpoints (U.S. Department of Education, 1994). The ESSA requires Title I schools to create plans to engage family members and to have "regular two-way, meaningful communication between family members and school staff, and, to the extent practicable, in a language that family members can understand" (Henderson, 2015, p. 5). Family–school partnerships should go well beyond communication, however, in order to develop congruence between home and school in messages, interactions, and activities around education. Evidence from a research synthesis on the effects of teachers' efforts to involve families indicates that, as a result of these efforts, students show a number of improved outcomes, including more accurate diagnosis of students' educational placements in classes, reduced numbers of negative behavior reports, and higher achievement scores on reading and math tests (Henderson & Mapp, 2002).

As well as potential benefits for students, engaging parents in children's education has positive implications for teachers; strong, positive relationships with parents play a key role in retaining teachers (Allensworth, Ponisciak, & Mazzeo, 2009). Teachers have identified family engagement as one of the most important strategies for education reform (Hart Research & Associates, 2009), and new teachers identified engaging families as the number one area where they need more preparation (MetLife, 2005).

Families can also benefit from becoming engaged in their children's education. Practical considerations are important, like meeting their children's friends and their families, getting to know school personnel, and learning about transition points and how to support their children's education in the present and for the future. Family members can also learn leadership and collaboration skills (Bolivar & Chrispeels, 2011; Price-Mitchell, 2009) and can become empowered through social interaction opportunities that arise through their engagement (Delgado-Gaitán, 1992). The extent and types of these benefits may depend on the model of participation used by schools. The current study, through examining parents' perspectives, illuminates how participants perceived interactions with their children's schools and how they may have benefitted through these interactions.

Diverse Families and Family–School Partnerships

Given the findings of these studies and the experiences of parents and educators, the notion of parental involvement in public schools has gained national momentum (Crosnoe, 2015). However, the benefits of family–school partnership policies have not been equally extended to minority communities (Yull, Blitz, Thompson, & Murray, 2014). Parents of minority students tend to take part less in the school community than mainstream parents, both in participation in activities and representation on school committees (Bakker, Denessen, & Brus-Laeven, 2007; Epstein, 1995). In addition, school staff is often not prepared to interact with minority parents, and as a result, teachers' and parents' notions about parental involvement are often narrow and confined to activities like attending parent–teacher conferences, volunteering for classroom activities, fundraising, and helping with homework (Crosnoe, 2015; Lareau, 1994). This limited view can lead to negative judgments about parents by teachers, perpetuating a cycle of discrimination and low expectations (Baquedano-López et al., 2013).

Contrary to this "deficit" perspective in which parents of minority children are assumed to be disinterested in their children's education, researchers have found that parents of minority students hold positive views about education and support their children's development of academic skills such as literacy (Delgado-Gaitán, 1992; Joshi, Eberly, & Konzal, 2005; Poza et al., 2014; Ratliffe, 2010; Valdés, 1996). However, researchers have identified several factors that tend to prevent immigrant families' involvement in their children's education, such as their discomfort with the English language, unfamiliarity with the U.S. educational system, and misaligned views regarding the teacher's and parents' roles in children's education (Soutullo, Sanders-Smith, & Navia, 2016; Suarez-Orozco, Suarez-Orozco, & Todorova, 2008; Turney & Kao, 2009). In addition, school climate, including factors such as the size of the school and perceived safety and respect for families, can affect how families participate (Goldkind & Farmer, 2013). Finally, teachers' own biases can limit their interactions with families and their abilities to recognize the many ways in which families support students to succeed in and outside of school (Poza et al., 2014).

Hawai‘i's Unique Multiculturalism

In Hawai‘i, all families are immigrants to the islands except those who are Native Hawaiians. There is no majority ethnicity in the state (United States Census Bureau, 2010). The category of Asian and Pacific Island ethnicities is the largest in the schools (Williams, Blank, Toye, & Petermann, 2007), but that designation is broad and includes a range of students and their families

from eastern Asia, those from Micronesian islands, and Native Hawaiians, each very different from the others. Immigrants may be first, second, third, or higher in generation and have diverse experiences in education and acculturation (Marks & Pieloch, 2015; Ratliffe, 2011, 2013). In 2011, Native Hawaiians comprised almost 28% of K–12 students, those from China 3.4%, Filipino students were 23%, Japanese 9.3%, and White students 14.1% of the public school population (Kamehameha Schools, 2014). White students may be temporary residents, such as those from military families, or they may have been in the islands for multiple generations. Native Hawaiian students and their families may experience the institutionalized effects of colonialism that can result in lower educational performance and other negative effects (Benham & Heck, 1998).

Students and their families who are new to Hawai'i need to acculturate to the local culture and values (Talmy, 2010). Hawai'i's "Local" culture evolved from the late 1800s when people from different countries came to work on the plantations and developed and used the Hawaiian Creole language, called Pidgin, to communicate with each other (McDermott, 1980). McDermott (1980) made the point that

> there has been a remarkable degree of blending among them. Various groups have adapted to and become a part of the American scene. Yet, at the same time, they have managed to retain much of their original identity and culture and through it make unexpected and modifying contributions to the total society. The result has been the evolution of a new and unusual community…[where]…the component groups interact with…continuing effect upon one another (p. 1).

Okamura (1994) declared that, "There are no Asian Americans in Hawai'i" (p. 163), instead asserting that people were either "Local" or "not Local." "Local," a widely accepted designation, implies a "sociopolitically constructed panethnic formation…composed primarily of…non-White groups that usually trace their entrance to the islands to the plantation era—namely those of Chinese, Japanese, Okinawan, Filipino, and Korean descent" (Labrador, 2009, pp. 289-291). "Local" culture includes practices and perspectives gleaned from each group individually in addition to those developed through these many groups interacting among themselves (Maretski, 1974). Some examples include the importance and centrality of family over the individual, the *omayagi* practice of Japanese gift giving (no one goes to another's home without bringing a gift), the practice of removing shoes before entering a house, and the wide appeal of foods from Asia and Hawai'i such as rice, spam, ramen, kalua pig, laulau, and "plate lunch"—a large plate of food, usually taken to go, that

includes macaroni salad, rice, and meat. The Hawaiian Creole language is specifically representative of "Local" culture.

Inequities exist in Hawai'i. White, or "haole" people, are a minority in the state and may be discriminated against socially in some communities, although they are often privileged in institutional contexts such as schools because the culture of schools often matches more closely the culture of White residents (Bradley & McKelvey, 2007). New immigrants, such as those from the islands of Micronesia, also face social and institutional discrimination because of their outsider status and lack of knowledge about the U.S. school system (Ratliffe, 2011). The revitalization of Hawaiian culture has improved the social standing of Native Hawaiians; however, they still face institutional racism because of the effects of colonialism and the poor match of their culture with schools in particular (Benham & Heck, 1998). A higher percentage of Native Hawaiian students face suspension, expulsion, disciplinary action, and school failure than those in other groups (Kamehameha Schools, 2014).

Native Hawaiian families who are experiencing a renaissance of Hawaiian language and culture have advocated for separate Hawaiian language immersion schools, which the Hawai'i Department of Education has worked with them to provide. Some of these schools are embedded in public schools, and some are freestanding. Families in these schools have reported higher engagement in their children's schools, especially in decision-making, than in English-language schools, and they also reported that the relationships between teachers and families are family-like (Yamauchi, Lau-Smith, & Luning, 2008). This is likely due to the higher congruence of culture between schools and homes in the immersion schools.

Including Diverse Students and Families

Efforts have been made to identify effective teaching methods for children from Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Island ethnicities (Tepper, 1992; Tharp & Gallimore, 1988) and to introduce new teachers to these strategies and to the cultures of their students (Ceppi, 1997; Thigpen, 2011). Group and collaborative work, student-centered models, concurrent activity settings, teaching through conversation, teaching in natural settings, and other types of responsive and assisted teaching have been found to be effective (Tharp, Estrada, Dalton, & Yamauchi, 2000; Tharp & Gallimore, 1988).

Families with diverse cultural backgrounds tend to participate differently in family, school, and community partnerships (Huntsinger & Jose, 2009); for example, European American parents volunteered more in schools, while Chinese immigrant parents focused their energies on teaching their children at home. Since schools are often modeled on the European American framework because of federal mandates and historical precedent (Bradley & McKelvey,

2007), methods to engage families may need to be adjusted for those with different backgrounds. It is important for schools to consider the needs of all of the families they serve when developing plans for family, school, and community partnerships. The multicultural population in Hawai'i is unique because each person is part of his or her own culture as well as the Local culture. In this way, there can be diversity and conformity in different degrees at the same time in social and institutional contexts.

Family, school, and community partnerships have been shown to have multiple benefits for children, schools, and families. All stakeholders are important in the work of supporting and promoting children's social and academic development, and effective school leadership is essential in establishing positive partnerships and communities (Van Voorhis & Sheldon, 2004). This research contributes a parent perspective to the literature on family, school, and community partnerships and focuses on the unique diversity of public schools in Hawai'i, which include a range of indigenous, immigrant, poor, migrant, and multilingual, as well as middle-class and White families. Families of all ethnic groups are included in order to address the range and depth of diversity.

Method

This qualitative study used a phenomenological approach to explore the lived experiences of parents related to their interactions with their children's schools. Phenomenology arises from an interpretive framework of constructivism and is associated with the combined subjective experiences of several people related to specific phenomena (Creswell, 2013). In this case, the phenomena were participants' experiences of family, school, and community partnerships with their children's schools. We chose to focus on a broad array of participants' experiences related to family–school partnerships, and for this reason we believed that phenomenology was a more fitting method than other approaches. Moustakas (1994) identified the challenge of phenomenology as "explicat[ing] the phenomenon in terms of its constituents and possible meanings, thus discerning the features of consciousness and arriving at an understanding of the essences of the experience" (p. 49).

Participants

We focused on the experiences of parents who had children in elementary schools, since parent–school partnerships can vary at different school levels and young children can benefit substantially from parental participation as they begin their school careers (Serpell & Mashburn, 2012). The sample included a convenience sample of 12 parents (3 fathers, 9 mothers) who reported that they were involved with their children's schooling and who were from

different families. These individuals were identified through personal contacts of the authors and through a snowball sampling from other participants. We recruited participants from a range of socioeconomic, ethnic, and linguistic backgrounds, although all spoke conversational English. All participants were living on the island of O'ahu in the state of Hawai'i, and they had children attending 12 different public elementary schools. The purpose of recruiting a range of participants was to assess a cross-section of parent perceptions from a sample that included parents from local, indigenous, and immigrant families with children attending public schools in 12 different communities across the island of O'ahu. Our sample more heavily represented immigrant parents than other groups. We believed that, since this group was often targeted as a "problem" (Crosnoe, 2015), their overrepresentation could help us to see important issues affecting them. In addition, the immigrant families were a diverse sample representing different countries of origin from Asia, South America, and the Pacific. See Table 1 for demographic data of the participants. To ensure confidentiality, we changed all names to pseudonyms.

Procedures

The study met all university IRB review board requirements and was approved. We contacted each participant to schedule hour-long interviews that occurred at places and times convenient for them, at their home or at the university. All participants signed informed consent forms and were apprised of their rights as research subjects. All of the interviews were conducted by the first author and used a semi-structured approach, allowing family members to discuss issues and respond to follow up questions. The interview questions addressed how family members defined family engagement, how they participated in their children's education, what they found more and less useful or engaging with the schools, barriers they encountered, and what was important to them in interacting with their children's schools (see Appendix for interview questions). While we asked parents questions that caused them to report and reflect on their experiences of family–school partnerships, we followed up with questions that addressed their feelings and perceptions about these experiences.

Because this study was part of a larger project that was developing online modules for preservice teacher education about family, school, and community partnerships, we asked participants for permission to videotape their interviews. We explained that we hoped to later identify a few video excerpts and obtain participants' specific permission to use them to illustrate points in the educational modules. The modules did not reference the study, and participants' identities were kept confidential. All participants agreed to videotaping, and interviews were later transcribed in full.

Table 1. Participant Demographic Data

Name	Age	Sex	# of Children (ages in yrs)	Origin	Occupation	Yrs of Education	Years in U.S.
Aini	35	F	2 (8, 6)	Immigrant Indonesia	Retail, Student	14	11
Binh	35	M	2 (8, 3)	Immigrant Vietnam	Graduate Student	18	10
Ivynn	43	F	3 (14, 10, 6)	Immigrant Chuuk	Graduate Student	17	24
Jo	42	F	2 (5, 3)	Local White	Business	19	n/a
Lee	40	M	2 (5, 2)	Local Hawaiian	College Instructor	18	n/a
Leilani	48	F	3 (13, 10, 6)	Local Hawaiian	College Professor	20	n/a
Lupe	40	F	2 (7, 5)	Immigrant Venezuela	Home-maker	12	15
Maile	39	F	4 (18, 16, 14, 12)	Local Hawaiian	Teacher	18	n/a
Maite	32	F	1 (8)	Immigrant Colombia	Retail	12	6
Min	45	F	1 (8)	Local Korean	Retail	16	42
Paul	32	M	2 (6, 3)	Immigrant Chuuk	Graduate Student	19	9
Tracy	37	F	1 (6)	Local White	College Lecturer	20	n/a

Data Analysis

We used grounded theory methods to analyze the data (Creswell, 2013). Both authors read and analyzed each transcript for emerging themes and organized, discussed, reorganized, and agreed upon themes (Merriam, 2009). Once open categories were identified, they were grouped into topic areas in order to reduce the number of themes. These were further organized around categories such as parent understanding, motivation or causation, stakeholder roles, and culture in order to identify an axial paradigm and then were selectively coded to examine how they interrelated (Creswell, 2013). The original number of codes was over 50, and the final grouping resulted in four major and

12 descriptive subthemes. Together, these codes constructed a theory or understanding of parent perspectives of family–school partnerships in Hawaiʻi.

When disagreement occurred, the researchers discussed the issues until they reached consensus. This allowed data to be seen from multiple perspectives to support internal validity. Comparing themes across the transcripts and identifying similarities and differences among the respondents helped to clarify larger topics and subtopics within themes (Merriam, 2009). Both authors coded the transcripts and identified examples to explore and explain parent perspectives.

In order to increase internal validity, the researchers examined their own biases and bracketed their own experiences to the extent possible so as to minimize influence on data analysis (Merriam, 2009). The first author, a White woman had lived in Hawaiʻi for over 30 years, had one adult child who had attended Hawaiʻi public schools. The second author, an immigrant to the U.S. from Europe and a second language speaker, had two children in Hawaiʻi public schools during the study.

Results

Four major themes emerged. The first theme encompasses parents' understandings of family–school partnerships and includes subthemes of definitions of family–school partnerships, their importance, activities included, barriers to effective partnerships, and perceptions of partnerships' effects on academic success. The second theme describes principals as gatekeepers. The third addresses the relational aspect of partnerships. It includes subthemes of parent–school communication, working together to support learning at home, understanding children's experiences in the classroom, and building community at school. The final theme addresses cultural issues in family partnerships. Subthemes include addressing children's moral and social–emotional development, the development of relationships between home and school, and differences in approaches to language and culture. Quotes have been slightly edited to enhance clarity, flow, and readability, while being sensitive to the meaning the speakers intended (Oliver, Serovich, & Mason, 2005).

What Are Family–School Partnerships?

Participants had differing ideas of what family–school partnerships might look like or how to define it. Most defined it through the activities in which they participated. Participants had opinions on the types of activities they liked and those they found less useful, as well as barriers to their own participation. Although they defined partnerships in terms of activities, many parents linked partnerships to the academic achievement of their children and focused on the

importance of building community in the school. The numbers of respondents in each category are included in parentheses in the text below.

Definitions of Family Partnerships

All parents listed specific activities as part of a definition of family partnerships, and four emphasized partnering with the teacher around academics to ensure their children learned. Of the 10 parents who defined this concept, eight included the relational element of development of and participation in the school community, including its vision for educating their children. Reflecting on these ideas, Min, an Asian American immigrant mother, defined family partnerships as when

> [Parents] felt like a part of the community of the school, including teachers, and had an understanding of the school's vision and share[d] that and tried to support that, and there was some sort of collaboration or dialogue between parents and the staff about shared values in what they [were] trying to get across.

Importance of Family Partnerships

All of the participants expressed that family engagement in their children's school was very important to them. Reasons included fostering communication with the teacher (*n* = 6), working together to support children's education (*n* = 4), helping children connect their home and school worlds (*n* = 3), and so that parents could be informed of what goes on in school (*n* = 3). Other parents reported that they were involved because they wanted their children to know they were important in the parents' lives and to help them develop confidence (*n* = 4), and that partnerships can help parents learn what is expected from them by the school (*n* = 2). Participants also expressed that it was important that teachers learn about what parents could contribute to the classroom (*n* = 1) and that the whole school community be developed through partnership activities (*n* = 1).

Types of Activities

The activities that parents reported included helping the school to do specific tasks like fundraising (*n* = 8), helping with cleaning or campus beautification (*n* = 4), and chaperoning field trips (*n* = 5). Others discussed classroom-based activities such as observing or helping with reading, teaching certain tasks, or helping with homework (*n* = 10). Others listed whole school events such as May Day, spring programs, and helping with fun fairs (*n* = 7). Seven parents mentioned volunteering at the school in general, and six mentioned participating in school cultural activities.

Parents reported enjoying activities where they got to know other parents (*n* = 8), those where they were allowed into the classroom (*n* = 10), and whole school activities such as awards presentations, assemblies, fairs, and workshops (*n* = 7) because of the opportunity to meet and develop relationships with others in the school community. Of the eight parents who mentioned fundraising, half of them disliked expectations that they fundraise for the school. They expressed that this was often a form of parent engagement that was distancing rather than building community. Maile, a Hawaiian parent of four boys, said, "I don't participate in any selling of stuff. I just donate the money.…That would be definitely one that I think is a waste of my time." Another parent said that fundraising was a means for parents who could not come to the school during the day to be involved.

Only two participants reported being involved with administrative or decision-making activities in their children's schools. One father helped with parent-initiated grant writing to fund a robotics program. This parent discussed his frustration at being excluded from decisions on how to allocate certain funds within the school. A different parent reported feeling frustrated at the difficulty she and her husband experienced trying to donate money toward a new playground at their daughter's school.

Barriers to Family Partnerships

Participants noted multiple barriers to family participation including issues related to the family, the school, the principal, or the teacher. Many participants had limited English skills and knowledge of American schools. Parents noted restrictions on their availability due to work schedules (*n* = 5) or general lack of time (*n* = 2), and one noted that family health issues kept her from participating. As Aini, an Indonesian mother, said, "I would love to be on a school bus on every field trip or every fun fair and stuff like that. But again, I still have to work to live, to support my children…my family."

Binh and Paul, both immigrant fathers, discussed the difficulties around time with which low-income families contend. Binh said, "A lot of parents are working class parents: they're taxi drivers, they're doing nails, they're doing all sort of things, and they do not have time to contribute anything." Paul talked about families providing for themselves and about their priorities:

> We're newcomers here, so one job is not enough to provide the necessities for the kids, and you're talking about being homeless, and you're talking about other supplies like food, electric bills, and all these other things. I think we're talking about the hierarchy of needs. You need to have security before you can actually have somebody be focused on what they need to learn, and we actually go through that, some of those challenges.

Six participants mentioned a lack of opportunity to participate in the school, including a limited range of opportunities for parents to contribute to the classroom itself. Min, who immigrated to Hawai'i with her parents when she was three years old, said, "There should be some sort of desire for the school to want you to be there, want you, you know, to find out about these things." At her son's school, she identified a feeling of, "We're doing our own thing; we will let you know when you can come in." She continued, "I don't think that's a very good way to get families to really want to help the school succeed and be invested in it.…There is a lot of mistrust."

Another barrier was difficulty being understood or in understanding written or oral communications from the school (n = 5). Parents listed issues such as feeling negatively judged by the teacher (n = 2), being asked to do menial tasks like filing (n = 1), and a lack of receptivity or kindness from the teacher (n = 3) as reasons for a lack of opportunity. Other barriers included a resistance by a teacher to communicate by email (n = 1), a lack of knowledge of expectations of parents (n = 1), and poor reciprocal communication between parent and teacher (n = 1). Lack of confidence in their own academic skills was another barrier to participation that parents mentioned. Aini, a parent from Indonesia, discussed her lack of confidence in her English skills: "As a second language person, and I haven't gotten any degree or academic experience in this country…so doing homework, even basic math for first grade or [with] my first daughter in third grade, is quite challenging for me." The fact that school expectations for parents are different in the U.S. than in their home countries can confuse or intimidate immigrant parents. Discussing his fellow immigrants, Paul said, "So sometimes it's not that they don't want to [be] involved [in] it, [it's] like they don't know how to do these things."

Supporting Children's Learning

All families saw family–school collaboration as important to support children's learning. Ivynn, an immigrant parent, characterized children as "living in two worlds." She saw school and home as separate, and said, "There is a need for both school and home to work together, so that learning is consistent." This emphasis on learning was shared by all 12 parents and included strategies such as being familiar with the content of their children's lessons as well as knowledge of school expectations. Parents recognized their responsibilities to support classroom learning at home and said they relied on communications from teachers to help them be successful.

Three parents specifically mentioned wanting more differentiation of instruction. Ivynn, an immigrant parent from Chuuk discussed what happened with her son's previous teacher who was not willing or able to differentiate instruction for him. Her son was required to repeat kindergarten, and Ivynn

believed that it was because the school was too slow to accommodate his needs. She felt strongly that it was not her son who failed; it was the school that failed:

> His first teacher, she…just didn't want to adjust with anybody, and I don't think she is a good teacher.…We all have different learning styles, and our system is too bad because it's all standardized, and I think that's why we need to think outside the box most of the time, because you will have students that will not just go with the whole, you know, and my son happened to be one of them.

Binh, a graduate student from Vietnam, discussed his son's need for academic instruction beyond his grade level. He requested differentiated instruction, and the principal and teachers accommodated his son's needs by enrolling him in a creative writing class, providing extracurricular materials, and providing a wealth of afterschool opportunities. Binh also supplemented his son's education at home. He felt that he could not dictate the school curriculum, but he could supplement it at home by working with his son.

Principals as Gatekeepers

Although questions were not asked about the role of principals in family–school partnerships, a majority of family members (*n* = 7) mentioned principals in their interviews. Most felt that the principal had an important role in facilitating relationships between families and educators, both in setting up the participation culture of the school and as being facilitators or gatekeepers of family engagement.

Parents often described principals as establishing a certain culture or tone in the school and indicated this is what they responded to as parents. Jo, a White parent of a kindergartener, reflected on her daughter's principal and her role in creating a positive atmosphere:

> [The principal] is great. She is really engaged. She is happy and positive and loves the kids, loves coming to work every day. I think her leadership sets the tone, and the faculty really loves her. See, you got happy teachers, and I think that really makes a big difference. They feel supported.

Maite, a Latina parent, discussed how a new principal changed the climate at her son's school: "He is closer to the kids. He goes to the classroom in the morning, and says, 'Good morning, how are you?' Before, it was kind of more like [a] cold relationship between the principal and the parents."

Six parents expressed that when the school climate was positive, friendly, and close, it was more appealing for them to participate in campus activities and interact with teachers and staff. A negative environment can dampen the climate for parents at the school. Ivynn, a Chuukese mother, spoke about a

problem she had with her kindergarten-aged son and her efforts to resolve it. "It was just difficult to talk to the principal.…She is very smart and intelligent, but she just can't connect with her heart." The principal restricted her from visiting her child's classroom. On the basis of this experience, Ivynn stopped participating in events at the school because she did not feel welcomed. She eventually moved her son to a different school.

Several participants thought that the principals were the ones determining opportunities for family partnerships. For instance, Binh, who had a second-grade son, developed a positive relationship with his son's principal, yet he recognized the power that she had to allow or disallow certain kinds of parental involvement. He stated, "If the school creates that culture, people can be engaged, but if the principals just say that, 'Ohhh, parents do not know anything, they do not have time,' then they themselves create a barrier for the parents to step in."

Maite, a Latina parent, had been involved with a group of parents trying to start a garden program at her son's school. The original principal was initially reluctant to consider the idea, and although the garden became a reality, its use was restricted. When a new principal started at the school, he was more open to parent ideas. Maite said,

> This principal…tries to support the parents to get really good education for the kids. So we are more happy now, with this new principal than before.…He is more open, he is more like, "We can do it."

Building Community in Family Partnerships

All parents felt that building the school community was important. Specifically, they discussed parent–teacher communication ($n = 12$), working together to support children's learning at home and school ($n = 10$), working together at the classroom level so they could understand children's experiences in school ($n = 6$), and participating in opportunities to build community ($n = 7$). Tracy, a White parent of a first grader, emphasized congruence between home and school: "I think it's really important for [my child] to see that there's not a large disconnection between school and home, that there is a relationship."

Parent–Teacher Communication

All participants discussed communication between parents and teachers. Four mentioned their appreciation that teachers were available via email. Forms of paper communication mentioned included memos, volunteering forms, tablets, planners, composition books, "Thursday envelopes," and progress reports. One parent also mentioned that his child's teacher had her own classroom website in addition to the school's website, where parents could

check for homework and look at what the children were doing and learning week to week. Lupe, a Latina immigrant parent, emphasized the importance of this communication to her, saying,

> I really enjoy what my daughter's teacher is doing this year to inform me every single day what they have to do—at the end of the week, what they did, and what they are planning to do. It really makes me feel more involved with my kid's education.

Beyond thoroughness of communication, two family members expressed that the way the teacher interacted with them was critical in making them feel respected and welcomed. Ivynn, who had experienced negative interactions with teachers in the past, said,

> [If] I forget to sign the book, then [the current teacher] would remind me with a smiley face.…So when I see that, I can feel the heart. This person, she doesn't want to disrespect you; she doesn't want to make you feel like you are dumb or stupid.

Understanding Children's Experiences

Eight family members expressed that they wanted to understand their children's experiences in school, both academic and social. Min said, "I'm really more interested in what's actually, the reality of life on campus, so I can see what's going on, see what needs support, see, just have a much more clearer understanding of what's going on day to day." Being engaged with their children's schools gave parents a greater connection on which to build their own relationships with their children. For example, Jo, the parent of both a kindergartner and a preschooler, said that it was important for her to be "active in their lives or almost like an active observer, try to help guide them but understand what their day is like and talk to them about it." Parents wanted opportunities to spend time at school to meet their children's school friends and connect with their social experiences in school. Three parents remarked that the events schools held on campus for families helped them to get a sense of their children's experiences in school. Jo, who volunteered in her school's gardening program, relished the opportunity to be on campus and in the classrooms teaching the children. She said, "Working in the gardening program, you get to come into the classroom during the regular day. You see the classroom in action—not just you drop off or pick up or events."

Building the School Community

The third subtheme that parents expressed was the importance of developing and participating in the school community ($n = 7$). Leilani, a part-Hawaiian mother, reported,

So I see the families becoming close to one another. The same parents that I saw in the gingerbread house-making first-grade activity, I saw them for chaperoning, and saw them in another location. I think it's nice that there is a continuum of family engagement activities so you form friendships and you develop…bonds.

Lupe, a mother of two girls, noted that, for her, it was more important to be part of the community than knowing how to reinforce what her children learned in school. Other family members expressed that when their children saw them at the school, it reinforced their children's sense that they and their parents and teachers shared the same community. Paul, the Chuukese father of a first-grade daughter, enjoyed the scheduled parent coffee hours at the school. After parents had a chance to talk, their children joined them for lunch. He said, "And you get to see the friends that they enrolled with and meet the parents. So, it's more like having the ability to build a community sense beyond what they learn in the classroom. It's wonderful."

Maite, parent of a second grader, recalled her favorite activity of preparing for the school fun fair. She enjoyed it "because the same staff, parents, and even students are very involved together.…So it's the whole family, the school family working together towards a common goal. I think it's the best kind of activity, because more people are involved."

Maite also enjoyed school-planned evening family activities: "Like a spaghetti night, movie night, is the time when we can spend time with our kids and meet with their friends and their parents. We can say, 'Hi! I am John's mom,' 'I'm Cindy's mom,' and so we can meet each other." These informal opportunities to develop relationships provided Maite with her own engaging activities with other adults, and she was able to feel positive about the school community.

Family Perspectives About the Role of Culture in Family–School Partnerships

Six participants shared their experiences facing a mismatch between their linguistic and cultural perspectives and those of the school. The role of the school in the children's moral development ($n = 6$), the development of relationships between school personnel and family members ($n = 10$), and the differences in approaches to language and culture ($n = 8$) emerged as areas where there was sometimes a disconnect between home and school. One immigrant mother summarized the importance of attending to culture for children: "I think the child can do even better in school if they have their home culture with them. Because then they are sure of who they are."

Moral and Socioemotional Development of Children

Three immigrant and one Native Hawaiian mother mentioned differences between their own experiences in school and the American education their children were experiencing. Aini, an Indonesian mother, stated, "My parents' engagement [in] my young life at school was more…towards moral values. But here what I see is more academic values." She expressed that it was important to her to know not only "how far they go on their scores on their math and reading but as well as the moral issue."

Six parents wanted to be sure that their children were supported emotionally and socially, not only academically. Lee, a Hawaiian father of a kindergartener said, "it's…more than just curriculum and making sure she finishes her one-plus-one, two-plus-two things, but also the other dynamics…for the well-roundedness, for her personally as a student as well as a person." Most parents expressed caring about the kind of person their child was becoming and were concerned that schools often emphasized academics to the exclusion of the development of social and other skills. Jo echoed this emphasis: "They're little kids, so…there's also the socialization component that you want to make sure is going well." When children are unhappy at school, it can reflect academic or social stress. Parents wanted their children to be well-rounded individuals.

Relationship Building Among Educators, Teachers, and Students

Two parents expressed that a lack of warmth or welcoming from teachers at the school was a serious obstacle in building relationships among families and school community members. Lupe, a parent from Latin America, felt that relationships between parents and teachers and between teachers and students were warmer in her home country. She observed a teacher resisting a hug from a first grader and felt a distance from the teacher. She expressed her experience as, "You are there; I am here. 'Hi, hi.' 'Bye, bye.'" In reflecting on this, she said, "I think if the relationship becomes more close, probably parents can be more engaged with the school."

Cultural and Linguistic Mismatches Between Home and School

Six parents expressed the importance of consideration for language differences. Paul, a Chuukese father, gave an anecdote about a linguistic challenge he encountered when he worked for a short time as an educational cultural liaison at a school. Parents from his home country were not showing up for scheduled parent–teacher meetings. Nor were these parents responding to written notes, notices, or letters:

> So, one day, I actually go with one of the teachers…one of the students is failing and [the teacher] wants to know what's happening. We went there, and [the student] is actually, [the] grandson [of the woman we

spoke with]. She doesn't speak English, so she doesn't even understand anything that we sent her. Well, no wonder why she never came to any of these meetings.

Eight participants noted that cultural considerations also matter. Paul, who grew up on a small island in Micronesia, compared the roles of his own parents to expectations of parents currently in the U.S. "My parents made sure that I understood my role in my own education.…If I want to send my son to learn how to build a canoe, everything is totally up to the builder; I can't get involved." He went on to explain that if parents tried to interfere with how the canoe builder was teaching their son, the builder would return the boy to the parents and end the apprenticeship. This attitude toward learning extended to the school. Academics belonged in the realm of the teachers.

Four parents said that they felt like outsiders or observers at their children's schools. They indicated that giving them a legitimate role on campus can help them feel like part of the community and can help them understand and interpret what their children tell them about school when they come home each day.

When culture was emphasized at school, parents felt more included. Leilani, a Hawaiian parent of three girls, shared about how her children's school encouraged parents to share about their cultures. Each child in the class was allowed one week when their families could come to the school as often as they liked to teach something or share about their cultures. She recalled, "I came in, and I taught a lesson. I read a story about poi, made poi mochi, let the kids taste poi, because that's a part of our culture, and talked about the food pyramid."

Aini found her child's classroom's culture day very rewarding for building community in the classroom and among the parents. She noted that

Children brought projects from home where they studied about family background or what type of food their family eats, traditional clothing, and stuff like that.…It's really wonderful how kids from all over the place, from so many backgrounds and ethnicities, can work together and show how proud they are, and happy to say "I'm not different. I'm special. I'm same as you are."

Discussion

This study examined 12 elementary school parents' perspectives of family–school partnerships in Hawai'i. The school communities of Hawai'i are unique compared to those in other areas of the U.S. due to the combination of indigenous Hawaiian families, a high proportion of new immigrants from Asia and the Pacific, a lack of ethnic majority for any single group, and a "Local" culture that developed over generations of immigrant plantation workers.

Findings emphasized that all parents found their children's education important, a result that is consistent with other research (Beauregard, Petrakos, & Dupont, 2014; Delgado-Gaitán, 1992; Valdés, 1996). This is not surprising since many immigrant families in Hawai‘i and elsewhere report that they immigrated for improved educational opportunities (Beauregard et al., 2014; Ratliffe, 2010).

Sociocultural theory provides a context for the relational aspects of school and family partnerships that parents felt strongly about. Family members wanted to support their children's learning, understand their children's experiences at school, and participate in and assist in developing the school community. Their complaints were generally about lack of opportunities to develop relationships with teachers and principals, and their descriptions of positive attributes about family–school partnerships included feeling welcomed, respected, and that they belonged in the school community. These results comport with those found by other researchers who talked with Latino and other minority parents (Beauregard et al., 2014; Delgado-Gaitán, 1992; Poza et al., 2014). Parents in this study reported that schools were creative in finding ways to include multiple cultures such as culture days, invitations to families to present aspects of their cultures to the school community, and home visits to meet family members on their own ground.

Parents reported the most value in activities that built community among children, educators, and parents. These included classroom, school, and community-based activities and the development of relationships within and among people in different groups. They also valued a welcoming atmosphere and invitations to participate directly in classroom activities so they could learn about their children's experiences at school. This is consistent with other research which found that invitations for involvement promoted parent self-efficacy and motivation to participate in their children's education (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1997; Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2005). In the current study, many parents appreciated being invited into their children's classrooms to get an insider's view of their children's daily activities. When the school climate was positive, friendly, and close, parents felt invited to participate in campus activities and interact with teachers and staff. Giving parents an authentic role on campus can help them feel like part of the community and can help them understand and interpret what their children tell them about school when they come home each day (Auerbach, 2010, 2011). In addition to providing opportunities, schools may need to teach parents how to help in the classroom, chaperone the field trip, or become an active member of the PTA (Suarez-Orozco et al., 2008). This is especially true in Hawai‘i where many indigenous and immigrant parents had school experiences that differed substantially from those their children experience (Benham & Heck, 1998; Ratliffe, 2011).

Relational aspects of parental involvement are among the least researched. Instead, schools tend to emphasize structural components such as meetings and attendance at events. As Moorman Kim et al. (2012) reported in their review of research about family–school partnerships, relational elements are far less likely to be emphasized than structural elements. They found that one of the least common relational components was creating a welcoming school environment, which was among the most important aspects identified by parents in this study. This finding points to a fundamental mismatch between what families want and what schools and researchers tend to emphasize. Indigenous and immigrant families in Hawaiʻi tend to come from cultures that value family and community relationships over individual needs (Benham & Heck, 1998; Ratliffe, 2013). Therefore, in Hawaiʻi, the relational components of family and school relationships are particularly important.

The role of principals in family–school partnerships also has not often been emphasized in the literature (Auerbach, 2009); yet, many parents in this study found principals to be key to setting the tone or culture of the school relating to family participation. Parents perceived that principals played a role in the facilitation of their participation or the creation of barriers to such engagement. It is possible that parents believe principals hold power and authority in the school due to their position; regardless, principals need to recognize the direct and indirect effects of their actions and attitudes about family participation on the climate of the school and the effects of school climate on the participation of families. Other research has found the leadership of principals to be important in establishing effective partnership programs (Habegger, 2008). One study of 320 schools in 27 states found strong correlations between principal leadership and effective partnership programs (Van Voorhis & Sheldon, 2004).

Communication, listed as one of six types of parent involvement by Epstein (2001), was foundational for most parents, including how they learned about school activities and opportunities and developed relationships with teachers and staff. Parents mentioned a range of communication strategies from in-person contact with teachers to newsletters, "Thursday envelopes," flyers, emails, and websites. Parents appreciated quick responses to their inquiries from teachers, and they also paid attention to the quality of the responses. Research has shown that lack of parental English language skills can interfere with communication, relationship building, and participation with their children's schools (Suarez-Orozco et al., 2008). In a community like Hawaiʻi where many parents are not native English speakers, efforts need to be made to include all languages in schools so that parents feel welcomed and are able to participate.

Not only is lack of English language skills a barrier, but the parents' perceptions of the quality of their language skills may also deter their efforts to

communicate with the school (Fuligni & Fuligni, 2007). This finding emphasizes the importance of schools and classroom teachers developing appropriate and timely mechanisms to communicate with parents and the importance of mutual respect in these communications. Providing communications in languages that parents can understand is also essential to developing and maintaining relationships and in providing opportunities for families who have a home language other than English to be contributing and capable members of the school community (Turney & Kao, 2009).

Increasing numbers of families in the U.S. are described as immigrant, poor, and minority (Perreira, Kiang, & Potochnick, 2013). These statuses often create barriers for parents to be engaged in their children's education (Suarez-Orozco et al., 2008). This study found, similar to others, that self-perceptions of weak English language skills, lack of knowledge about school expectations, and different views about the roles of teachers and parents can impede parent participation in schools (Beauregard et al., 2014). Since wealthier parents often have greater access to schools than those who are less affluent (Turney & Kao, 2009), programs to teach parents from minority groups how to support their children's education, such as the Sundays Project (Ratliffe, 2015) or the PIQE Project (Chrispeels & Rivero, 2001), have been shown to be effective.

Finally, more multidimensional models of family and school partnerships that include interrelationships among systems can be helpful in assessing barriers and designing effective programs. From both the sociocultural and the ecological approaches, the cultural and social context of families and schools matter. As Holloway and Kunesh (2015) pointed out, "In the sociocultural framework, parents are seen as using the cultural tools at their disposal to attain their goals and to solve the problems presented by the ecological conditions of their lives" (p. 2). Dearing et al.'s (2015) Family–School–Community Systems Model of Family Engagement demonstrates how attributes such as teacher, parent, and child skills, knowledge, attitudes, and affordances might interact to affect family engagement in their children's education, and, ultimately, child academic achievement. As the particular circumstances of each child's life changes, his or her parents, siblings, teachers, and friends will all be affected, and the outcomes will be unique to those individual conditions. It is important to be aware of these relationships and of how different factors can affect outcomes.

Limitations

The participants in this study were chosen by their willingness to participate rather than random selection, and they may not represent the entire population in Hawai'i or the U.S. In addition, the participants who volunteered were

relatively highly educated and included some educators, which may have affected their responses. This study was not intended to be generalizable to a larger population. However, a qualitative study can illuminate parent perspectives in ways that a quantitative study often cannot by providing perspective and depth through thick, rich description (Merriam, 2009).

Another limitation is that participants may have responded to questions in socially desirable ways. Since the interviewer was a university faculty member in education, participants may have skewed their responses to indicate that they thought family–school partnerships were important.

Future Directions for Research

More research needs to be done to assess the relationships between structural and relational aspects of family–school partnerships. Although this and other studies demonstrate that relational elements need to be in place in order for structural elements to be successful, it is not yet clear which relational elements are most necessary. Are different relational elements more important for some groups? In addition, the interactions among specific factors in the ecological systems around children, families, and schools need further exploration. How do these systems affect each other? Which elements in the systems are most important to promote better partnerships? Further study is also needed on the effect of principal leadership on teacher attitudes and implementation of strategies to engage parents in learning and to improve relationships with families. The development of the school community could be further explored, including defining it, assessing its strengths, and identifying appropriate strategies for its development.

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Appendix. Family Perspectives Interview Questions

1. How do you define or describe family engagement or family partnerships in schools?
2. What is the importance of family engagement in schools?
3. What kind of family engagement activities have you participated in?
4. What kind of support did you receive to participate in these activities?
5. What kind of barriers have you faced regarding engaging in school activities?
6. Of the family engagement activities happening at your child's school, which ones do you like and appreciate and why?
7. Of the family engagement activities happening at your child's school, which ones do you think are less useful or effective and why?
8. Is there anything else you can think of to tell me about family engagement or partnerships?