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Successful Approaches to Encourage Family Involvement in a School Division Located in Southeastern Virginia with Varying Income Levels

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Successful Approaches to Encourage Family Involvement in a School Division Located in
Southeastern Virginia with Varying Income Levels

A Project Presented to
the Faculty of the
College of Education
James Madison University

in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Bachelor of Science

by Katelyn Elizabeth Montague

December 2014

Accepted by the faculty of the Department of Interdisciplinary Liberal Studies, James Madison University, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Bachelor of Science.

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Abstract

The purpose of this project was to identify successful approaches that teachers use to encourage involvement of all families. Following a review of professional and research literature, a survey of Pre-kindergarten through fifth grade teachers was distributed in a school division located in southeastern Virginia with varying income levels.

The findings in this survey suggested that participating teachers encouraged family involvement by inviting families into the classroom and explaining to them how they could help their children at home. The teachers utilized weekly communication in various forms such as printed material, electronic formats, and classroom websites. Teachers were also flexible in modifying their teaching methods and routines for extremely involved families and those of diverse cultures, beliefs, thinking, actions, and home environments. While potential barriers existed, such as uninterested families and the lack of increase in overall family involvement, the elementary school teachers in the school division of interest attempted to overcome those obstacles through communication and flexibility. They also relied on effective family involvement programs to bring families into the school. These programs encouraged the communication that was imperative for increased family involvement.

Based on this research, education does not only exist within the walls of a school, but follows the children into their homes. Thus, a home-school connection is an important factor in children's education, making successful family involvement strategies crucial for academic achievement. For children to be the most successful, the three corners of an educational triangle consisting of families, teachers, and students must be connected at all times.

Introduction

The classroom is empty and quiet as the elementary school teacher rushes to finish last minute lesson preparations before the busloads of students arrive, signaling the start of a new school day. After ensuring that she has all necessary materials for the day's activities, she quickly sits down at her computer to review her calendar. Today she has two parent-teacher conferences: one in her classroom during the class's scheduled lunchtime and the other at the local Barnes and Noble at 8:00 p.m. She emails the first parent a reminder about the conference scheduled at lunchtime and leaves a voicemail on the second parent's cell phone about the meeting that evening. It is far enough into the school year that she has gotten to know her students' families. She is aware of the barriers that may prevent them from becoming involved in their children's education. However, understanding how important family involvement is to student academic achievement, she has made herself very flexible with communications and interactions with families. She has made the families aware that she is willing to meet them morning or night at various locations and communicate with them via their preferred device in order to ensure their involvement.

She looks at the clock and realizes it is time to meet her students on the bus ramp. After counting 23 children in a straight line, she leads them back into the classroom. The students carry out their morning routine of moving their attendance markers, emptying the contents of their backpacks into their desks, hanging their jackets up in their cubbies, and quietly finding their assigned spot on the carpet for morning meeting. The teacher notices one child sluggishly performing the routine while his classmates happily go through the motions. She notes his behavior in the spiral notebook she sends home with him each day for his mother's initials. These actions are usual for this student. The teacher knows his home environment is not stable

and his mother, who works two jobs in order to provide for her family as a single parent, is unable to be very involved in her son's education. She also does not enforce a strict bedtime or create a home environment where school is valued, resulting in the student coming to school tired and uninterested.

Regardless of these barriers, the teacher will not give up on this student or his hard-to-reach family. She has learned a lot about his home life through his past teachers and the limited communication with his mother via the spiral notebook. Since the notebook acts as the only form of communication available between teacher and parent, the teacher accepts this form of involvement while encouraging the mother to contact her if she is in need of any assistance or resources that the school could provide. She also frequently reminds her of the flexible availability she offers which she hopes will one day lead to a face-to-face conversation discussing the importance of the student's education and how the mother can partner in it despite her lack of time and resources. She is determined to create a positive relationship with this parent.

Importance of Home-School Relationships

Developing strong, positive relationships with students' families should be a teacher's first priority. Such relationships increase the likelihood that concepts covered in class will be revisited at home, benefitting children by increasing their knowledge and understanding of the material (Darling, 2005). Resi J. Ditzel (2000), master teacher and author of *Great Beginnings*, views parents as not only children's guardians, but as partners in their education. However, the type and frequency of family involvement differs among students. Some families are actively involved in their children's classroom, whereas others leave the children solely responsible for their schoolwork. These two extreme levels of involvement, as well as all levels in between,

undoubtedly affect a child's academic achievement (Coleman & McNeese, 2009; Lueder, 2011). Studies indicate that race, parental education, and household composition are factors significantly related to the level of family involvement. Thus, it is the responsibility of teachers to gain an understanding of the factors affecting their students' ability to learn and then to find ways to give appropriate support (Olender, Elias, & Mastroleo, 2010).

Definition of Family Involvement

Since family structure differs from child to child, the term family involvement was preferred over parental involvement in this project. When a teacher attempts to build positive relationships with families, it is imperative for him or her to be flexible and accepting of a wide variety of families. Therefore, in order to set an example for such flexibility and to acknowledge the fact that children live in diverse family configurations, in this project the term family describes family structures of all shapes and sizes, including parents, siblings, extended relatives, close friends, and the like. In an academic setting, family involvement requires effort from all parties including teachers, families, and children. For the purposes of this paper, constructive family involvement refers to positive communication between teachers and families, families expressing interest and putting value in education, children receiving help at home, families setting high, but realistic, expectations for children, teachers providing educational at-home experiences for children and families, and teachers communicating regularly with families (Prior & Gerard, 2007).

Purpose of the Study

Considering the different levels of family involvement and various demographics within a region, the purpose of this project was to identify successful approaches that teachers use to encourage involvement of all families based on evidence gathered from a school division located

in southeastern Virginia with varying income levels. The first objective of this project was to review, examine, and analyze the academic literature regarding involvement approaches that effectively engage families of different races/ethnicities, parental education levels, socioeconomic status, and family composition. The second objective involved reviewing research literature and identifying involvement approaches that promote academic achievement for students from diverse family demographics. The third objective was to identify approaches that those classroom teachers use to encourage optimal levels of family involvement. The final objective comprised the development of a plan for involving families in their children's education based on information and approaches found in academic literature and information provided by the real-world teachers.

Research Questions

To address these objectives, this study investigated five research questions. The first and primary question was: What approaches do teachers in the school division of interest use with their students and their families in order to increase both family involvement and student academic achievement? Answers to the following four questions provide the information necessary to satisfy the primary question. In what ways do a teacher's various communication methods with families affect family involvement? In what ways does a teacher's flexibility, in terms of his or her thinking, actions, and beliefs, affect family involvement? What are potential barriers teachers may need to overcome regarding family involvement? What types/aspects of family involvement affect student achievement?

Literature Review

The most valuable and desired benefit of family involvement is student academic achievement (Johannes & Roach, 1999; Rapp & Duncan, 2012). This positive correlation holds across race, gender, and economic backgrounds (Englund, Luckner, Whaley, & Egeland, 2004; Jeynes, 2011). The impact of family involvement is even greater in a diverse country such as the United States. Definitions of family involvement include, but are not limited to, attendance at school functions (Coleman & McNeese, 2009), parent communication with children about school-related issues, and the development of academic expectations for children (Englund et al., 2004). It is the responsibility of all involved parties, including parents, teachers, administrators, and students, to actively invest in connecting the home and school environments.

Besides student achievement, family involvement also leads to several other benefits including improved school behavior, increased academic motivation, decreased dropout rates (Olender et al., 2010), higher achievement scores across the curriculum, higher goals beyond grade school (Coleman & McNeese, 2009), increased attendance, school satisfaction, motivation, and confidence, as well as better social adaptation (Şad & Gürbüzürk, 2013). Gains made due to family involvement occur not only in students, but also in their families and teachers. Families feel a sense of empowerment when invested in their child's education because they are such major contributors to the learning process. Family involvement also leads to families having greater security in knowing their children are in good hands when at school (Olender et al., 2010). According to a report by the Safe and Responsive Schools Project, family involvement can consequently lead to home environments that encourage learning while improving communication between the home and school (Dessoiff, 2009). Furthermore, teachers face reduced disciplinary problems, increased time to resolve issues, a lessened sense of isolation

(Olender et al., 2010), a greater sense of classroom and school value, greater job satisfaction (Li & Hung, 2012), and improved morale (Iowa State Dept. of Education, 1994).

However, family involvement is complicated when death or divorce splits families. Even if single parents make every effort to be involved with their children, in many cases the lack of a second parent negatively affects how much homework assistance and verbal support children receive, hindering the overall family-teacher relationship. Teachers often do not accommodate these overburdened families when scheduling conferences and activities or assigning homework, reducing the chance of building the necessary home-school connection (Jeynes, 2011). Since compromises are an essential part of forming any relationship, teachers must be flexible and account for families' time constraints, financial problems, and marital status when planning events and offering support (Olender et al., 2010).

To accomplish such a task, teachers must encourage participation across three levels of family involvement: general family support of school activities, family involvement in daily school events, and family involvement in decision-making processes (Olender et al., 2010). The first level involves families assisting children with homework and attending school events such as conferences, PTA/PTO meetings, open houses, school concerts, and fundraisers. The second level comprises families that enter the classroom by chaperoning field trips, assisting with math or reading activities, volunteering in the office or library, or helping teachers with lesson preparations. The third level includes families that are a part of school governance committees or hiring teams (Olender et al., 2010). While the difference in the time and effort required in the three levels is evident, teachers should show their appreciation of all families regardless of the level of involvement they can realistically fit into their schedules. The recognition of commitment towards their child's education will encourage continued family involvement as

well as enhance student academic achievement. Furthermore, six approaches found throughout available literature regarding family involvement can assist with successful production and implementation of the necessary strong, positive, and effective home-school relationships. The following sections describe these approaches.

Approach: Understand Parent Partner Roles and Extend Them into School Life

Being involved in a child's education requires families to wear many hats and focus on four specific roles throughout the child's life: Nurturer, Communicator, Teacher, and Supporter (Lueder, 2011). Each of these roles carries important responsibilities. Teachers can build on these roles by establishing supportive relationships and by providing assistance and resources that help families fulfill their responsibilities. First, families play the Nurturer Role, requiring them to make a safe, appropriate environment available to the child as he or she grows physically, psychologically, and emotionally (Lueder, 2011). Responsibilities of an effective Nurturer include establishing a daily family routine, making school supplies and necessary equipment available, and ensuring medical examinations and vaccinations are up-to-date. Additionally, families need to regulate the use of television, internet, telephones, and video games while also scheduling and monitoring daily homework times (Lueder, 2011).

Second, families play the role of Communicator by establishing and maintaining two-way communication between themselves and their children as well as between themselves and the school. Such communication should include discussions of the children's successes and problems, ways to support the children, and their academic progress (Lueder, 2011). While partnering in children's education, families take on the Teacher Role, requiring them to assist with their children's intellectual, emotional, and social development. Such involvement can be accomplished by making sure children read at home, working with them on problem solving and

reasoning skills, coordinating classroom work with learning activities at home, and exposing their children to differing cultures, careers, experiences, and events (Lueder, 2011). Another responsibility of the family is to play the Supporter Role in a child's life by being actively supportive of learning activities at school and the school's curriculum. To accomplish this task, families can attend school functions such as concerts, plays, and assemblies; participate in open houses, PTA/PTO programs, and booster clubs; and chaperone field trips (Lueder, 2011).

While not all families have the time or resources to participate actively in these roles, teachers use them as a starting point to understand the responsibilities that families have in the lives of children. Both families and teachers can then take this knowledge and recognize how those roles extend into school life. Once teachers gain this understanding, they can begin to build relationships with families that are based on a shared appreciation for what can be done together to enhance children's academic performances.

Approach: Integrate Education into the Lifestyles of All Families

In addition to understanding the roles that families are responsible for playing in their children's lives and then extending them into the classroom, teachers need to be aware of potential barriers between the family and the school when encouraging involvement. Barriers can be psychological and include apprehension, fear, and alienation, resulting in intimidated families who think of the school as unapproachable and threatening (Iowa State Dept. of Education, 1994; Lueder, 2011). Such negative thoughts of the school lead parents to feel disconnected, resulting in them not asking for or accepting school assistance. The distance between the family and the teacher can widen if family members have experienced failure in school themselves because feelings about school tend to be rooted in past encounters. Educational failure can lead families to distrust the school, avoid the environment altogether, and

assume that their child will also fail, further contributing to an increased sense of alienation due to their self-defeating outlook (Lueder, 2011).

Additionally, barriers to family involvement can include structural obstacles such as time, distance, and lack of childcare (Iowa State Dept. of Education, 1994; Lueder 2011). In this case, families feel they cannot find more time, resources, or energy to be involved in school activities because of their busy schedules and personal problems. These barriers can cause families to be unsupportive, hostile, irresponsible, and abusive (Hornby, 2000). Strategies that can allow teachers to overcome the previously mentioned barriers include being flexible when scheduling meetings, personally welcoming parents, writing a parent handbook (Iowa State Dept. of Education, 1994), learning acceptable ways to address families, embracing nontraditional family structures, and conducting regular interactions with families (LaRocque, Kleiman, & Darling, 2011). Teachers need to strive to understand and support all families in order to integrate education into their lifestyles, regardless of barriers. Once the importance of education is recognized, the establishment of true, functional partnerships that share a common goal of educating children is possible (Lueder, 2011).

Approach: Use Partnership Intervention Strategies – The Big Cs

In order to overcome the previously mentioned barriers between schools and families, build collaborative, positive relationships, coordinate needed services and resources, and educate families about the Parent Partner Roles, teachers should consider using the partnership intervention strategies known as The Big Cs (Lueder, 2011). The Big Cs are connecting, communicating, coordinating, and coaching.

The connecting function prepares teachers to reach out to families by creating an inviting classroom/school environment. In the connecting phase, it is also important for teachers to

overcome the previously mentioned barriers that might prevent such collaborative relationships from forming as well as to initiate two-way communication between themselves and families. Taking the time to connect with families is effective because, as the child's first teachers, family members can provide knowledge about the child to their teachers (Kyle & McIntyre, 2000). These valuable personal insights assist teachers in developing their teaching style and in building a caring community among children and their families (Kyle & McIntyre, 2000). Strategies that a teacher/school can use to implement this approach include welcome signs, labelled parent parking spaces, office manners, school maps, teacher-made posters describing themselves, school directories, and new family tours (Lueder, 2011).

The communicating function establishes the two-way communication flow between the teachers/school and families that teachers initiated in the connecting phase. Throughout this phase, teachers continue to build positive family-teacher relationships and begin to increase family awareness of the programs and activities that the school has to offer (Lueder, 2011). Research states that increased family involvement is a direct result of better communication, showing the effectiveness of this function (Johannes & Roach, 1999). Best practices for this function include communicating in writing, via the telephone and internet, as well as face-to-face. When communicating in writing, teachers and schools should produce welcoming letters, positive notes, weekly folders, weekly assignment sheets, progress reports, report cards, and parent policy handbooks. These handbooks should state school rules, visiting and volunteer opportunities, telephone numbers of school personnel, and grade-level learning goals and objectives. In terms of communication via the telephone and internet technology, teachers can establish a voicemail system allowing families to call and leave messages. They can also provide an email address to families, create a website for important information, and furnish the

number for a school-wide homework hotline. Lastly, during face-to-face communication, teachers should schedule parent-teacher conferences. In doing so, they should inform the family of the purpose of the meeting, invite the child to attend, suggest that families prepare questions in advance, and send home a list of potential meeting topics. To prepare for the conference, teachers should organize a folder with student work samples. After the meeting, they should follow up with a phone call or send a note home (Lueder, 2011).

The purpose of the coordinating function is to increase family awareness of the services and resources offered by the school and surrounding community. It is also important for teachers to know what the available resources are and how to make appropriate connections with them. Best practices for implementing the coordinating function are to develop a directory of the services and resources provided by the school and community and place it on the website available to all families. Teachers can also schedule informational family meetings and create a parent and community volunteer Service and Resource Committee to spread the word of available supplies and assistance (Lueder, 2011). Research confirms that coordinating events, programs, and communication effectively improves family involvement, family knowledge, and home-school collaboration. These benefits are a result of increased family participation in children's education (Akkok, 1999).

The coaching function enhances families' abilities to participate in the Parent Partner Roles as well as their general sense of knowledge and skills. Parental training has proven to be extremely effective because it results in positive academic and social outcomes for children (Akkok, 1999; Coleman & McNeese, 2009). Students who have families who are knowledgeable about the effects of involvement tend to be better prepared for the educational process (Akkok, 1999). To accomplish these tasks, teachers can schedule or simply announce

parental education workshops and classes, form or suggest family support groups, provide translators for functions in which some attendees may not speak English, and provide family recognition in order to sustain attendance and involvement (Lueder, 2011). These strategies can provide a framework for teachers who strive to encourage family involvement in their classrooms and to educate families on the importance of their support.

Approach: Maintain the Outcomes of The Big Cs

The most important result of The Big Cs is developing a positive relationship with families. Teachers need to capitalize on this outcome by ensuring long-lived home-school connections. They must realize that relationships rely a great deal on the personalities involved. It is imperative for teachers to understand both their own perspectives as well as the families' perspectives, respect individual differences, and listen to families' thoughts. In order to reduce negativity when communicating with families, teachers need to stay calm and assess difficult situations objectively, provide facts, be likeable, avoid taking things personally, and avoid making assumptions (Norris, 2011). Strategies to be proactive include listening carefully to families, becoming interested in families, finding common goals and interests, and making families feel important (Olender et al., 2010).

Teachers should also be aware of personal biases or concerns that may negatively affect the creation of collaborative relationships. These issues include personal interests or concerns of convenience that may overshadow student needs, emotions that cause them to take offense at a family concern or complaint, and rigidity with procedures and program flexibility (Olender et al., 2010). Understanding what can hinder a positive relationship between home and school results in teachers who can profit from effective connections consistently.

Approach: Utilize both One-way and Two-way Communication

One-way communication from teachers to families is an effective method to promote interaction. Teachers can engage in such communication through newsletters, school-to-home notebooks, emails, and literacy bags (Graham-Clay, 2005). However, when teachers communicate in this form, it is a good strategy to keep the information concise and accurate so that families will comprehend the message easily. Not burying families with information and educational lingo is an important rule to remember so families do not become overwhelmed (Olender et al., 2010).

Engaging in two-way communication through direct dialogue is another approach to take when interacting with families. The most common types of this communication are phone calls and parent-teacher conferences. Experienced teachers recommend occasionally calling families with good news in order to promote positive relationships. By doing this, families will also be more willing to assist teachers when concerns arise (Graham-Clay, 2005; Love, 1996). In terms of parent-teacher conferences, teachers need to plan ahead of time and begin the meeting with a friendly comment in order to lay the foundation for positive communication (Graham-Clay, 2005; Love, 1996).

Another strategy that aids in effective two-way communication is to concentrate on listening. Teachers who listen attentively to parents without immediately evaluating and judging their comments gain the ability to understand a different point of view (Garcia, 1975). Separating oneself from personal biases and focusing on the thoughts of others leads to learning and increased awareness. In fact, research states that simply listening is its own form of communication (Garcia, 1975). Teachers should adopt this method when interacting with families who are expressing concerns, problems, and ideas.

Approach: Emphasize Involvement that Most Effectively Increases Student Achievement

When strategizing how to encourage family involvement, teachers should focus on what the research has to say about family involvement approaches that lead to increased student achievement. Activities that play a significant role in student performance include family expectations, family reading, family communication about school, checking homework, parental style, and family attendance (Fan & Chen, 1999; Jeynes, 2011).

Keeping these specific family involvement behaviors in mind, an important insight is that the most effective types of family involvement are the most understated aspects of family support. Thus, family expectations and parental style exhibited a stronger correlation to academic success than did family attendance at school functions and checking homework. This finding is thought to occur because family expectations and parental style have the ability to create an educationally-oriented environment for the child at home, helping the child to understand that he or she has both support and educational responsibilities (Fan & Chen, 1999; Jeynes, 2011).

Teachers should consider these findings when deciding which family involvement types they are most strongly encouraging. They should also plan to educate families of such knowledge and highlight the importance of establishing high expectations at home. Teachers' efforts in encouraging family involvement should be stimulated by the finding that involvement programs, which urge family support in education, positively link to student academic achievement and are one of the solutions to reducing the achievement gap between genders and races (Jeynes, 2011). Thus, teachers' seemingly endless endeavors when strategizing their communication and flexibility with families, while accommodating for potential barriers result in necessary and valuable effects on their students' lives and achievements.

Research Design

This chapter explains the research design and specific methodology used by this study to determine successful approaches that teachers in the school division of interest use with their students and their families in order to increase both family involvement and student academic achievement.

Procedures

The study was conducted through a survey available to the school division's Pre-kindergarten through fifth grade teachers. Qualtrics, an online survey tool, administered the survey questions. The survey instrument was original work, but research related to family involvement in schools was used in the development of the questions. Many of the sources had family involvement issues and strategies listed and these lists were used to inform the response options on the survey.

First, the school division's Supervisor of Student Enrollment gave permission to implement the survey. Upon division approval, each elementary school principal was contacted via email in order to maximize the likelihood that teachers would complete the survey. These emails contained an explanation of the study's purpose and a request for his or her help in recruiting faculty members to participate in the survey. Additionally, the survey's URL, Site Letter of Permission, cover letter, and information about the survey's open and close window dates were included in the emails.

Once the survey window opened, principals who chose to participate emailed all faculty members with the URL, cover letter, survey open and close window information, and a note that invited and encouraged them to participate. The survey was available on Qualtrics for a four-week period. During this time, teachers were able to complete it.

Participants

The school division of interest comprised 28 elementary schools with approximately 1,100 teachers. Of those 28 schools, 13 schools' principals responded to my initial email. Twelve principals responded by saying that they wanted to participate in my research while one principal said she did not want her teachers to be involved. Of the remaining 15 principals who did not reply to the email, it was unknown whether or not they ignored the request or forwarded the survey's URL to their faculty members. The survey received 181 teacher responses, approximately 16% of the school division's elementary teachers.

Data Collection and Analysis

Once the survey closed, I analyzed the data using Qualtrics. This software allowed for data reporting based on the patterns and frequencies of the responses. Qualtrics also permitted the use of filters that narrowed the results depending on the answers to specific questions. To ensure confidentiality, the collected data from the web-based survey were only saved on Qualtrics, which was password protected. Furthermore, survey respondents provided no names, addresses, or other identifying information. The data were deleted from Qualtrics upon the study's completion.

Reporting Practices

The audiences reached in the report of the study, published through James Madison University's Honors Program, were families, experienced teachers, future teachers, school administrators, and/or those who were simply interested in family involvement approaches and how they affect a student's academic achievement. Survey participants received a summary of the research findings upon request.

Results

The purpose of this project was to identify successful approaches that teachers use to encourage involvement of all families based on evidence gathered from a school division located in southeastern Virginia with varying income levels. Since levels of family involvement and demographics vary across school districts, I chose to focus on one school division characterized for having a wide-range of diversity in terms of races/ethnicities, parental education levels, socioeconomic status, and family composition.

To address this purpose, the study investigated the following primary research question:

- 1) What approaches do teachers in the school division of interest use with their students and their families in order to increase both family involvement and student academic achievement?

Answers to the following four questions provide the information necessary to satisfy the primary question. The secondary research questions include:

- 1) In what ways does a teacher's communication with families using various methods affect family involvement?
- 2) In what ways does a teacher's flexibility, in terms of his or her thinking, actions, and beliefs, affect family involvement?
- 3) What are potential barriers teachers may need to overcome regarding family involvement?
- 4) What types/aspects of family involvement affect student achievement?

The Qualtrics survey was created in a way that aligned certain survey questions with specific research questions. The following table displays these parallels. The full survey is in Appendix A.

Table 1

Display of Parallels between Research Questions and Survey Questions

Research Questions	Related Survey Question Number
What are strategies that Chesapeake Public School teachers use with their students and their families in order to increase both family involvement and student academic achievement?	7, 8, 12
In what ways does a teacher’s communication with families using various methods affect family involvement?	9, 10, 11
In what ways does a teacher’s flexibility affect family involvement?	14, 15, 16
What are potential barriers teachers may need to overcome regarding family involvement?	13, 17, 18
What types/aspects of family involvement affect student achievement?	19, 20, 21

Demographics

In order to obtain knowledge about the research sample, the first six questions of the survey asked participating elementary school teachers to give information about themselves. These questions sought data regarding their highest level of education, languages they could speak, their race/ethnicity, the total number of years they taught in the school division of interest, the grade level they currently taught, and all grade levels taught throughout their career.

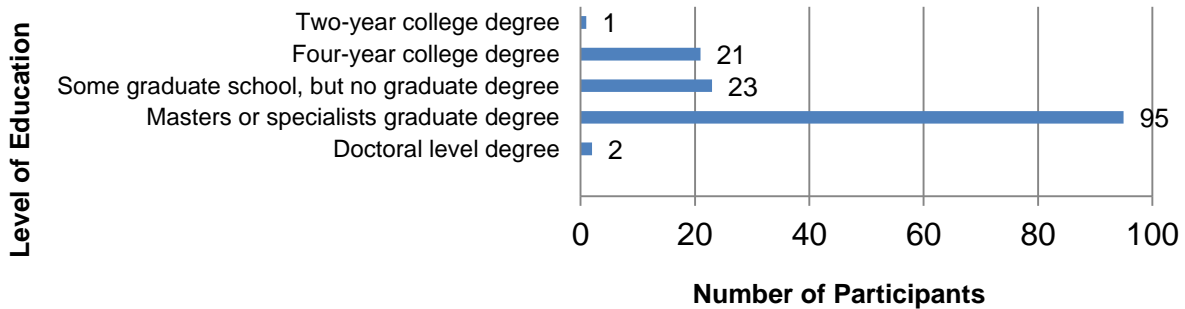


Figure 1. Highest level of education of responding teachers.

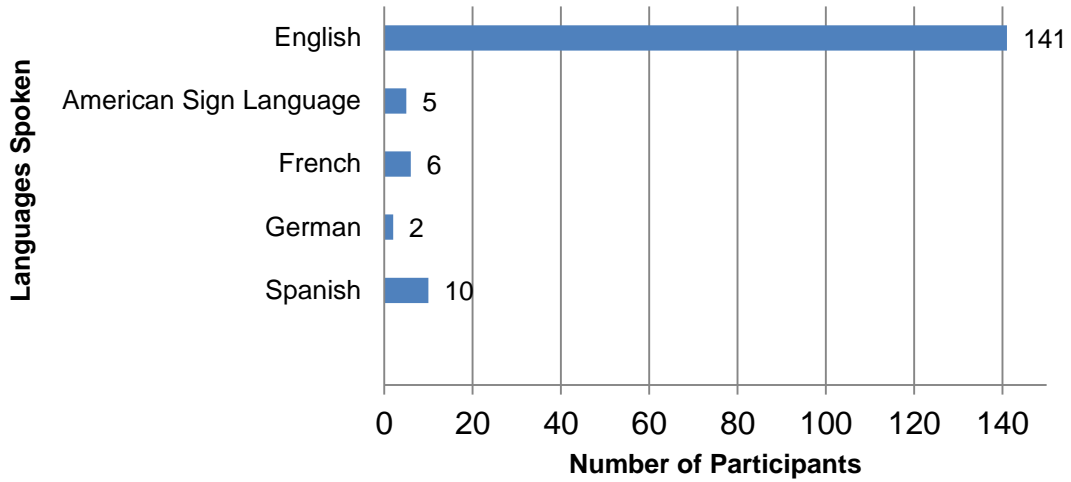


Figure 2. Languages spoken by responding teachers.

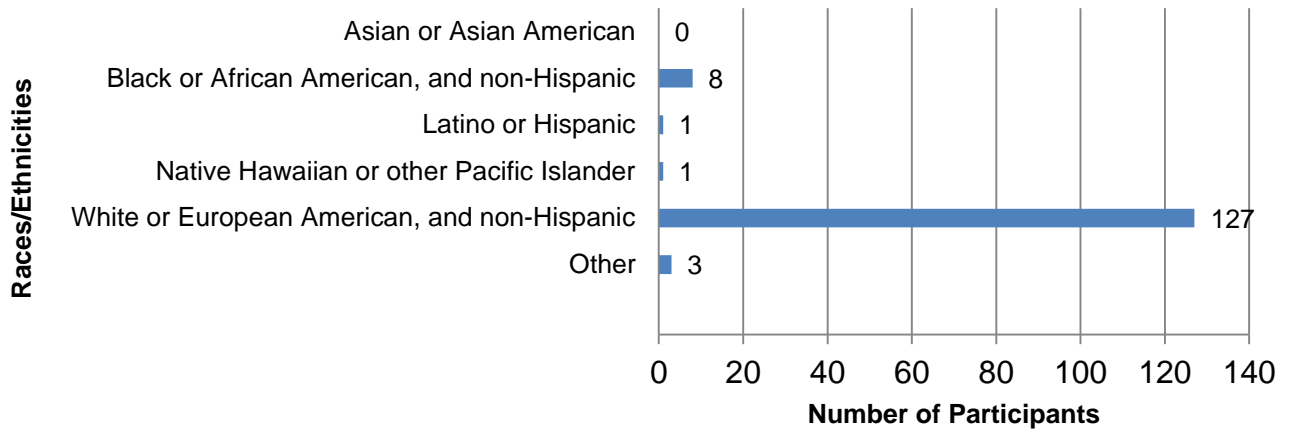


Figure 3. Races/ethnicities of responding teachers.

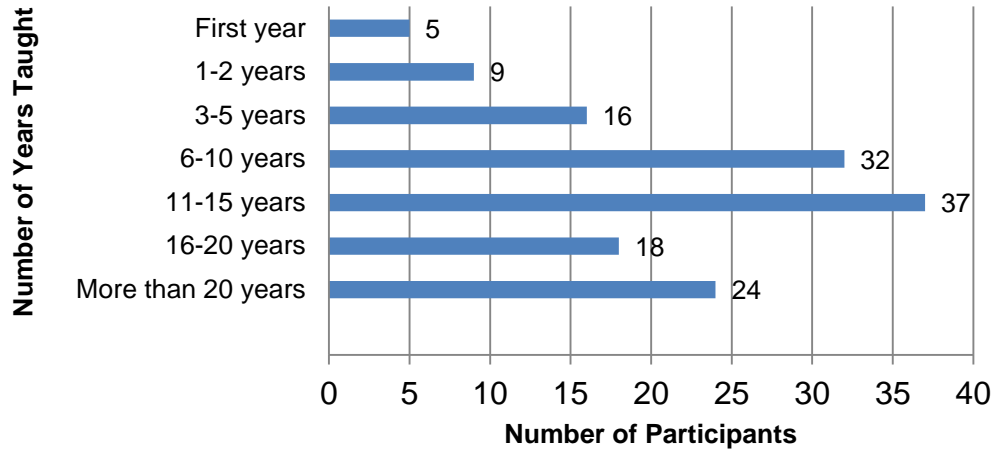


Figure 4. Number of years taught in the school division of interest by responding teachers.

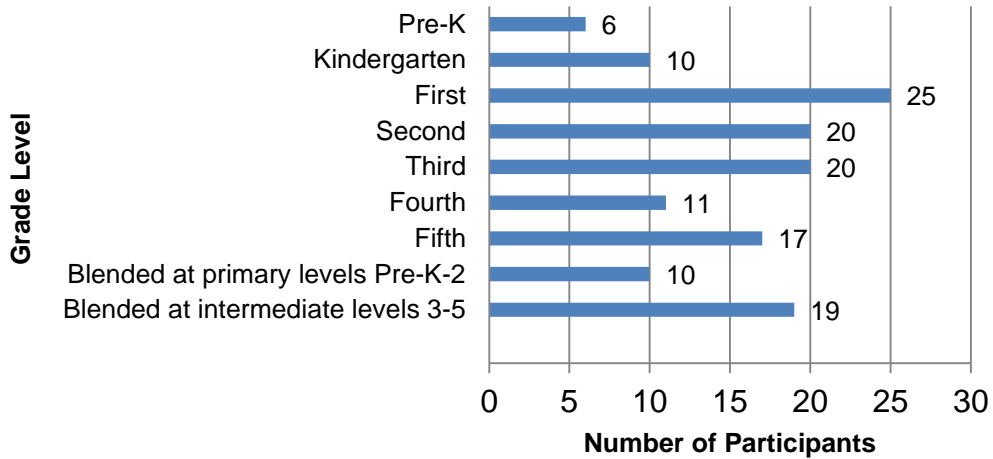


Figure 5. Current grade levels taught by responding teachers.

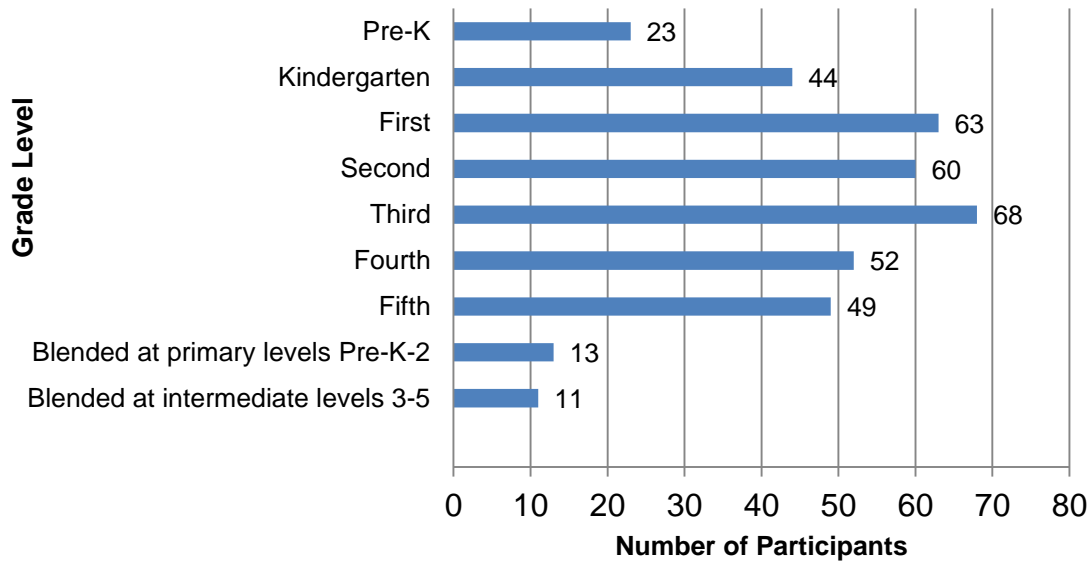


Figure 6. All grade levels taught by responding teachers.

Figure 1 presents the highest level of education obtained by the teachers who participated in the survey. Of the participating elementary school teachers, 67% obtained a master's or specialist degree and 21% of the teachers earned a four-year-college degree. Therefore, the vast majority of the research sample was well educated in their field. This high number of teachers holding advanced degrees is probably because teacher licensure typically requires both the completion of a bachelor's and master's degree. Furthermore, Figure 2 illustrates that 100% of participating teachers spoke English while 7% of them were also fluent in Spanish, 4% could speak French, and 1% were able to communicate in German. Figure 3 displays the race/ethnic diversity of the participating elementary school teachers. Of the participating teachers, 91% classified themselves as white or European American, and non-Hispanic. Very few identified as African American, Native Hawaiian, and Latino or Hispanic. Furthermore, 2% of teachers said they considered themselves to be Other and wrote in that they were either diverse Caucasian or American Indian.

Figure 4 provides knowledge regarding the experience of the respondents. Considering more experienced teachers had additional time to gain an understanding of the level of family involvement in the region, it was beneficial to the study to find out how long the majority of the respondents taught in the school division of interest. A combined 79% of the participating elementary school teachers taught for at least 6-10 years when taking the survey. This high percentage speaks to the experience that teachers have had in working with families over time.

Figures 5 and 6 display information about the grade levels the teachers currently taught and what grade levels they had taught in the past. The results show that a slight majority of the teachers were currently teaching first grade with second and third grade following closely behind. Pre-K teachers, at 6%, were the least represented in this study. Teachers who claimed they were currently teaching grades blended at primary levels or blended at intermediate levels specified that they were K-3 reading specialists, 1-5 physical education teachers, K-2 reading teachers, K-5 guidance teachers, 4-5 special education teachers, K-5 technology teachers, 3-5 music teachers, and 3-5 teachers of autistic students. Figure 6 illustrates that the participating teachers had the most experience in grades 1-3 with grades 4-5 and kindergarten following closely behind. Few teachers had experience in the blended grades.

Primary Research Question

The study's primary research question investigated strategies that elementary school teachers in the school division of interest used with their students and their families in order to increase both family involvement and student academic achievement. Question 7 in the survey asked participating teachers in what ways they established respected and productive relationships with families of all children. The most frequently chosen answers were greeting families with a smile, holding parent/teacher conferences, letting families know how they could help their child, thanking families/showing appreciation, inviting families to social events at the school, listening to families, and asking questions about the child. Other suggestions that participating teachers submitted which were not included in the answer options were requesting that parents help for certain art projects or activities, communicating frequently via email, sending weekly newsletters home, allowing parents to contact them via telephone, making volunteer opportunities at the school well-known, inviting parents to read aloud to the class, asking parents to offer tutoring and additional assistance in the classroom, and making regular home visits.

Question 8 asked participating teachers about successful strategies they used to encourage families to be involved in the classroom. Of all teachers responding to this question, 91% said they recommended reading with the child daily. Other frequently chosen answers were communicating with families frequently, distributing assignment planners to students, assigning homework that encouraged families to be involved, arranging events and activities that brought families into the school, holding meetings at times that were more convenient for families, and offering incentives for students who encouraged their families' involvement such as homework passes and prizes. Additionally, 6% of the respondents offered their own strategies which included having parent helpers and volunteer sign-ups, family events outside of school such as

movie days and picnics, Doughnuts for Dad days, Muffins for Mom days, and listing thank yous in newsletters to make participation public.

The last survey question directly relating to the primary research question, Question 12, asked participating teachers what ways family and community members were encouraged to volunteer in their schools/classrooms. The most frequently chosen answers were by being field trip chaperones, being classroom parents, attending school open houses, donating classroom materials, and participating in fundraising events. Other answers selected by more than 50% of participating teachers were by being social event chaperones, being classroom readers, and volunteering for extracurricular activities. Furthermore, 8% of the research sample submitted an additional way that family and community members were encouraged to be involved. Their responses included volunteering for Picture Day, attending family fitness nights, run/walk club, and field days, assisting with materials sent home from school, and assisting with class parties.

Each of these questions provided information about what strategies real-world elementary school teachers found successful in improving student achievement when encouraging family involvement. From the results, it was found that elementary school teachers within the school division of interest provided many opportunities for families to be involved in their children's classrooms and also made great efforts to communicate with families frequently using various methods. According to their responses, it was apparent that the elementary school teachers who participated in this study were aware of the benefits of family involvement on student academic achievement.

Secondary Research Question: Teacher's Communication

In this study, four secondary questions assisted in answering the primary question. The first secondary question asked in what ways a teacher's communication methods affected family involvement. Three questions in the survey were associated with this secondary research question.

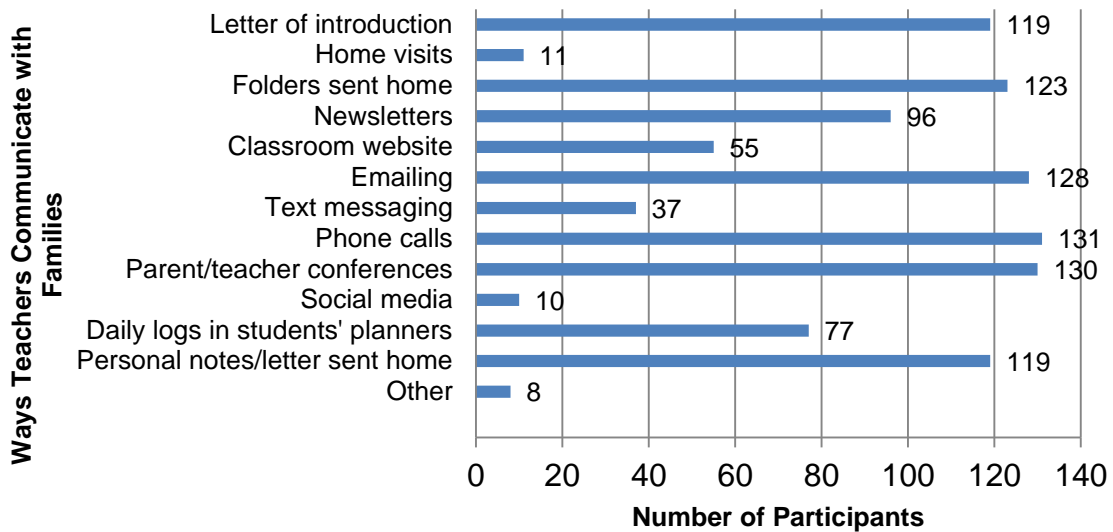


Figure 7. Ways responding teachers communicated with families.

Figure 7 depicts the results to Question 9 in the survey, which asked about ways the participating teachers communicated with families. The answers that made up the majority of the responses included emailing families, calling families, conducting face-to-face parent/teacher conferences, sending folders home with students' work, and sending personal notes/letters home with students. Of the respondents, 6% submitted additional ways they communicated with families including sending home a monthly calendar, organizing communication logs, sending a daily journal home, and using behavior logs. From these responses, teachers interacted with their students' families using various forms of communication rather than choosing one form to

use throughout the year. Considering the vast number of ways they offered communication with families, it was apparent that the participating teachers realized the importance of keeping families updated and included in their children's education so they could assist the teacher both at home and in the classroom.

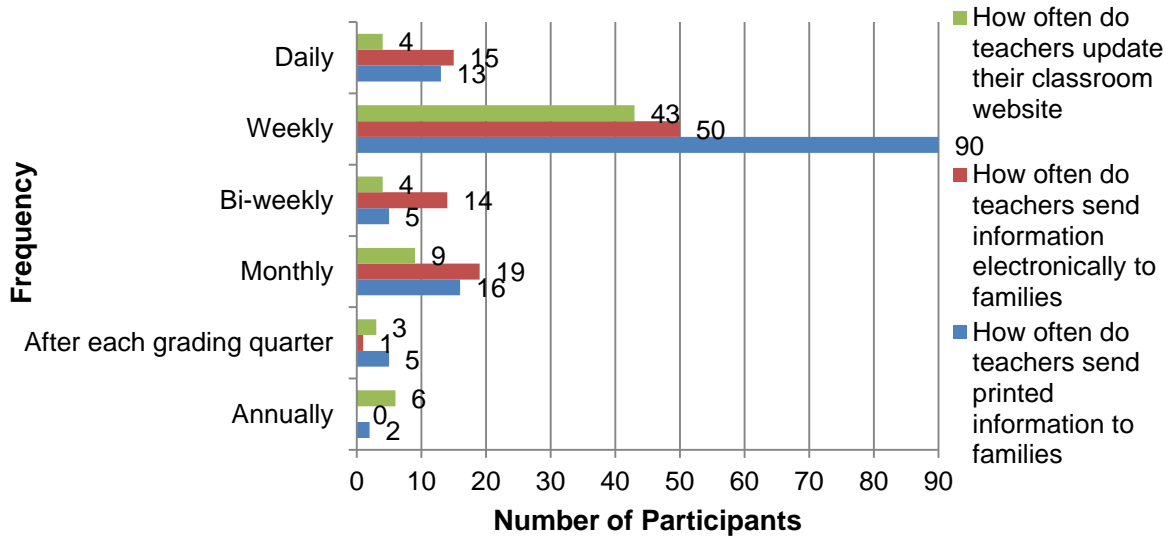


Figure 8. Frequency of responding teachers who communicated with families.

Figure 8, which was related to Question 10 in the survey, shows how often the participating teachers sent information home to families using various forms of communication. Teachers typically sent information home weekly in electronic form through email, physical form sent home with students, or via the classroom website. It seemed that elementary school teachers in this school division strive to keep families informed on a regular basis so that families knew when to expect updates and knew what was going on in the classroom and at the school.

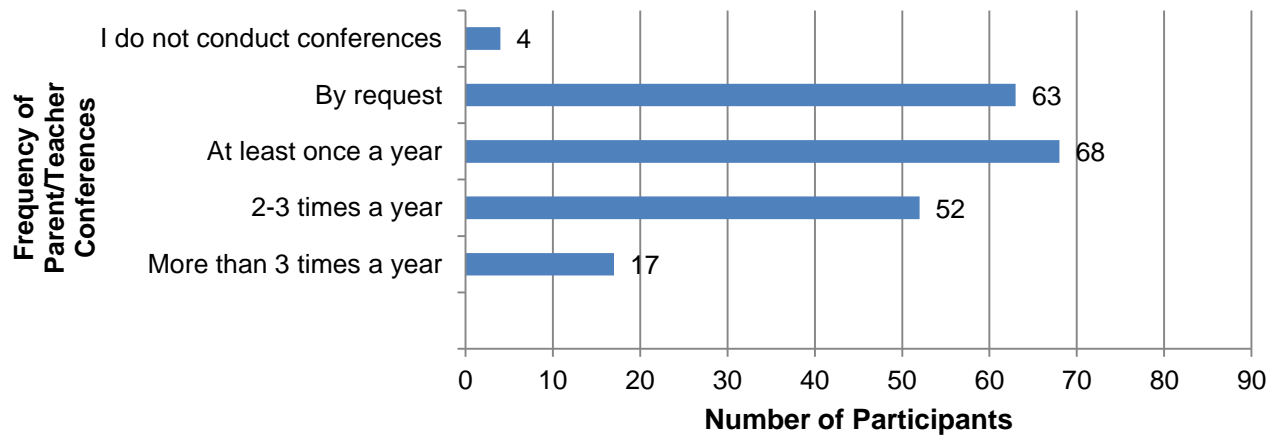


Figure 9. Frequency of responding teachers who conducted parent/teacher conferences.

Figure 9 illustrates how often the responding teachers conducted parent/teacher conferences, another form of communication. From the results, it seemed that most elementary school teachers in the school division of interest met with families in conferences at least once a year while also offering these meetings by request. Considering meeting face-to-face with families more than three times a year occurred at a low rate and these teachers tended to communicate with families on a weekly basis, it was apparent that parent/teacher conferences were not the main source of communication between elementary school teachers and families in the school division of interest.

Secondary Research Question: Teacher's Flexibility

The second secondary question asked is what ways a teacher's flexibility affected family involvement. Three questions in the survey were associated with this secondary research question.

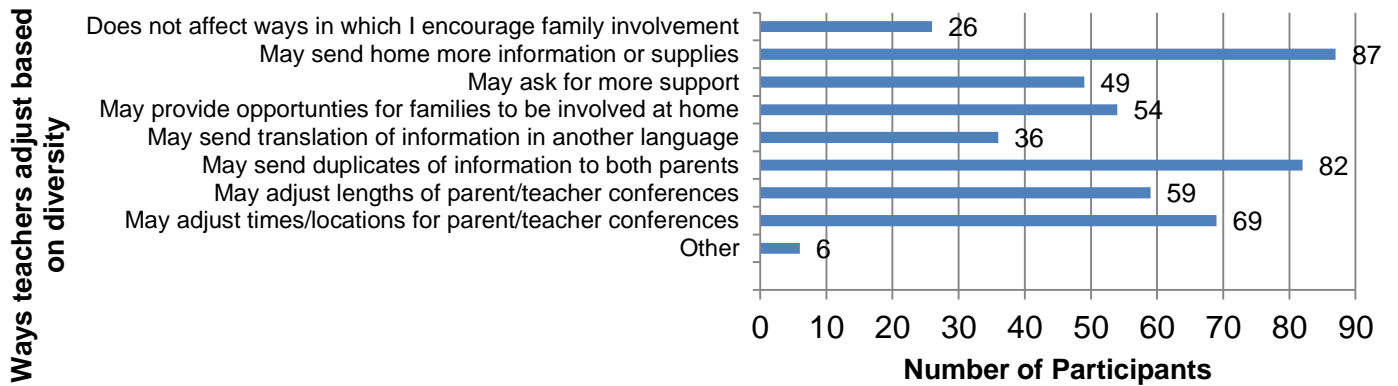


Figure 10. Ways responding teachers adjusted their practices based on families' economic, cultural, and linguistic diversity.

Figure 10 reflects how the participating teachers' knowledge of their students' economic, cultural, and linguistic diversity affected ways in which they encouraged family involvement. This question related to the research question regarding teachers' flexibility because teachers must adapt their teaching methods and routines to the beliefs, actions, thinking, and home environments of those in their classrooms. The majority of the participating elementary school teachers agreed that they may send home more information or supplies, send duplicates of information to both parents, or adjust times/locations for parent/teacher conferences depending on the diversity of their students. The respondents said they were least likely to ask for more support or send home translations of information in another language. The limited flexibility in this area may exist because teachers do not have access to translation services within the

school/division, the number of students learning English may be low, there may be a lack of familiarity of resources, or a lack of willingness/time to reach out to these diverse families. Of the respondents, 4% submitted their own answers for this question. These teachers said that such diversity may lead them to adjust their method of communication, offer opportunities for cultural presentations, and offer training for families to learn how to help their children. Additionally, 19% of elementary school teachers in the school division of interest responded to this question by saying such diversity does not affect ways in which they encourage family involvement.

The vast majority of participating teachers were flexible when it came to adjusting their routines because of diversity found in their classrooms. Thus, it was obvious that most of the respondents to this survey were aware of the importance of accommodating diverse families in an effort to encourage their involvement. Ways in which teachers adapted to these changes differed, but the understanding of the importance of flexibility was recognized.

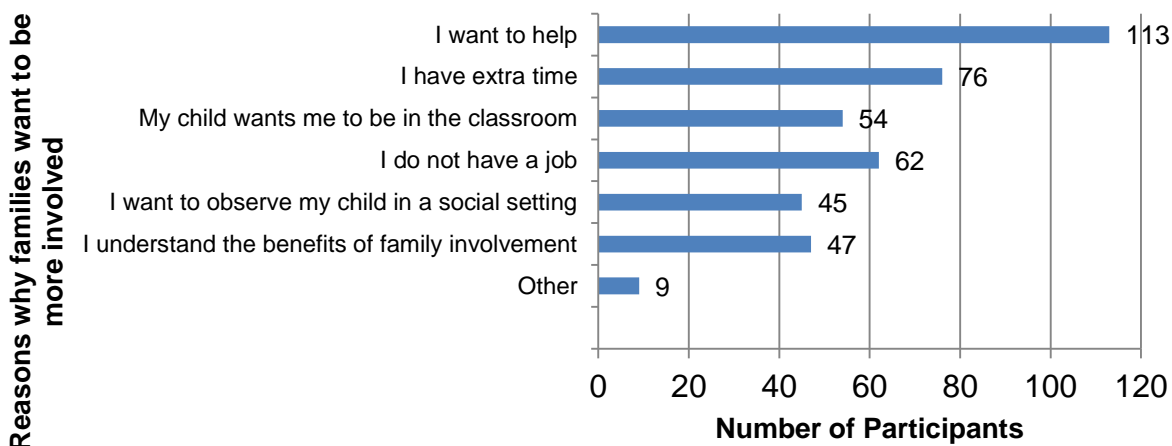


Figure 11. Reasons that families provided responding teachers for being more involved.

Teachers must be flexible by providing opportunities in the classroom for families that want to be extremely involved. Figure 11 represents the findings found in Question 15 of the survey that asked reasons that families provided for being more involved in their child's education. The majority of participating teachers stated that most involved families say they want to help or that they have extra time. Families are least likely to say that they want to observe their child in a social setting or that they understand the benefits of family involvement. Furthermore, 7% of the participating teachers offered their own examples of comments families made. These additional statements included families saying they used to be a teacher, they know how hard the job of teaching is and want to help, and they love children and want to set a positive example. One teacher simply stated that the reason some families were more involved was because they were nosy.

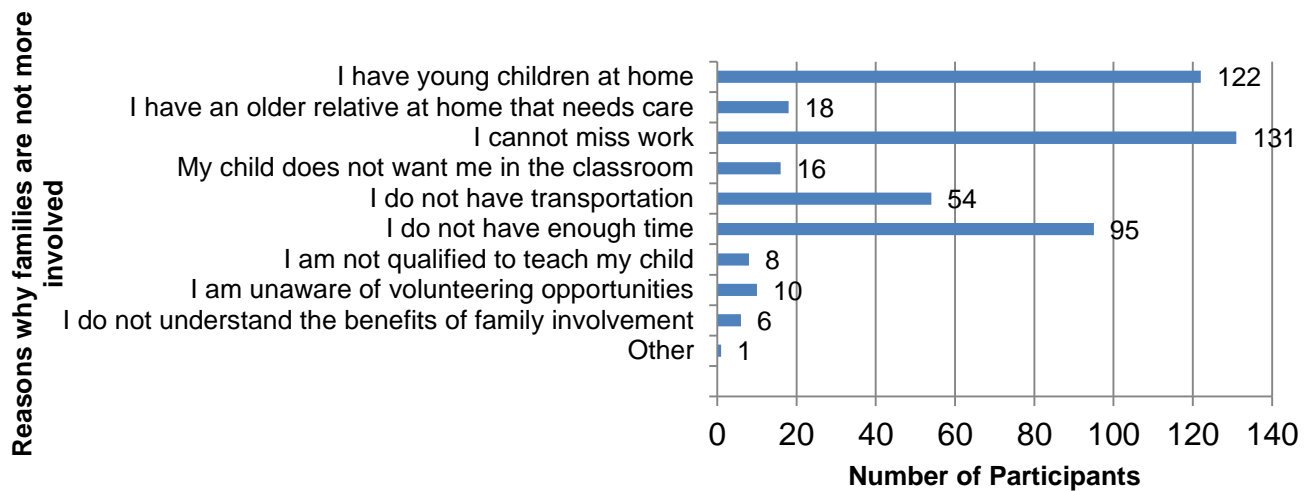


Figure 12. Reasons that families provided to responding teachers for not being more involved.

Teachers must be flexible when accommodating and encouraging families who do not want to be involved. Question 16 asked participating teachers reasons that families provided for not being more involved. The majority responded that families most often say they have young children at home, they cannot miss work, or they do not have enough time. According to this survey question, families are least likely to say they are not more involved because they are not qualified/trained to teach their child academic subjects, are unaware of volunteering opportunities, or do not understand the benefits of family involvement. One teacher shared that the families in his/her classroom had not given reasons why they were not more involved. The fact that very few families said they were not more involved because they were unaware of volunteer opportunities emphasized the effectiveness of the frequent communication and flexibility that the participating teachers used when interacting with diverse families.

Secondary Research Question: Potential Barriers

The third secondary question asked about potential barriers teachers may need to overcome regarding family involvement. Three questions in the survey were associated with this secondary research question.

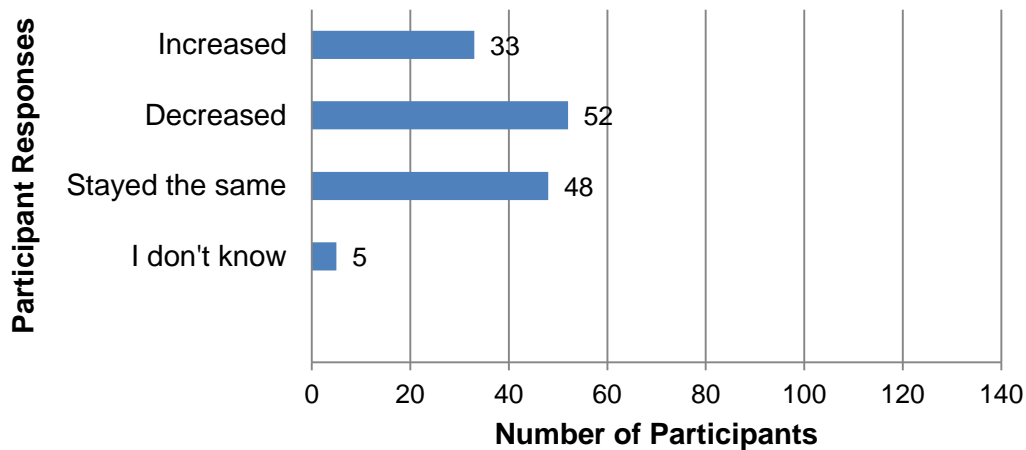


Figure 13. The opinion of responding teachers about the status of family involvement.

Figure 13 presents information about whether or not participating teachers thought family involvement in their classrooms had increased or decreased since they began teaching. Of the respondents, 38% said that family involvement had decreased, 35% said that it had stayed the same, 24% said it had increased, and 4% said they did not know. From this figure, it is clear that 73% of responding teachers believed that family involvement had either decreased or stayed the same during their career, which acted as a potential barrier to teachers who were attempting to encourage family involvement in their classrooms.

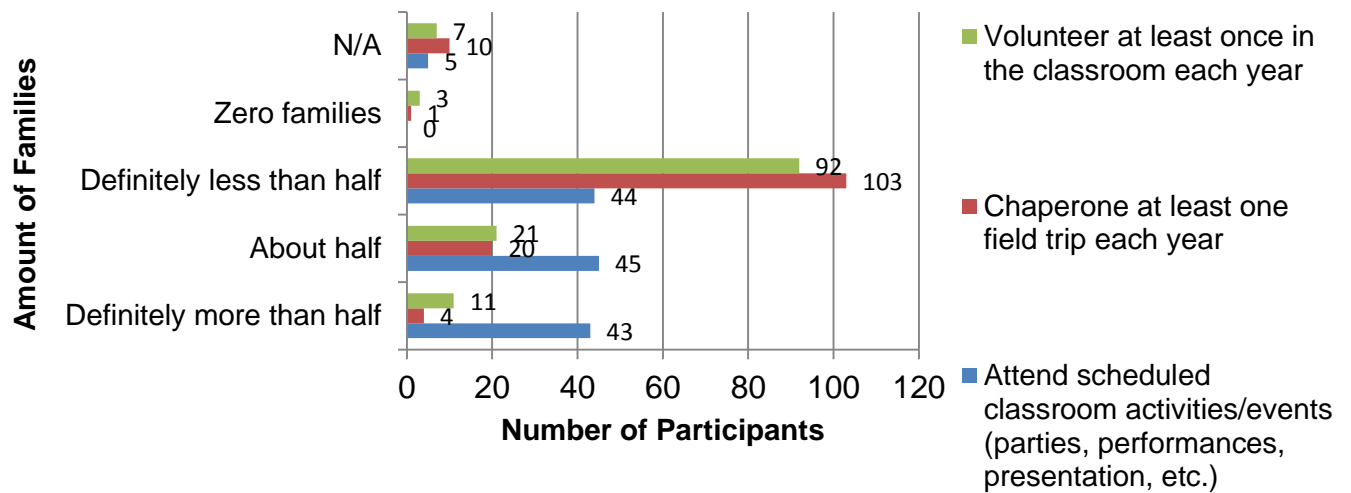


Figure 14. How many families came into the classroom according to responding teachers.

Figure 14 displays information about how many families volunteered at least once in the classroom, chaperoned at least one field trip, or attended scheduled classroom activities/events such as parties, performances, and presentations each year. This figure dramatically indicates that, regarding volunteering in the classroom and chaperoning field trips, definitely less than half of families were involved. Furthermore, according to the participating teachers, about 50% of families attended scheduled classroom activities/events. Having less than half of families participate in these activities posed a potential barrier to participating teachers establishing strong family involvement because the majority of families reported to teachers that they were too busy, uninterested, or felt excluded from the majority.

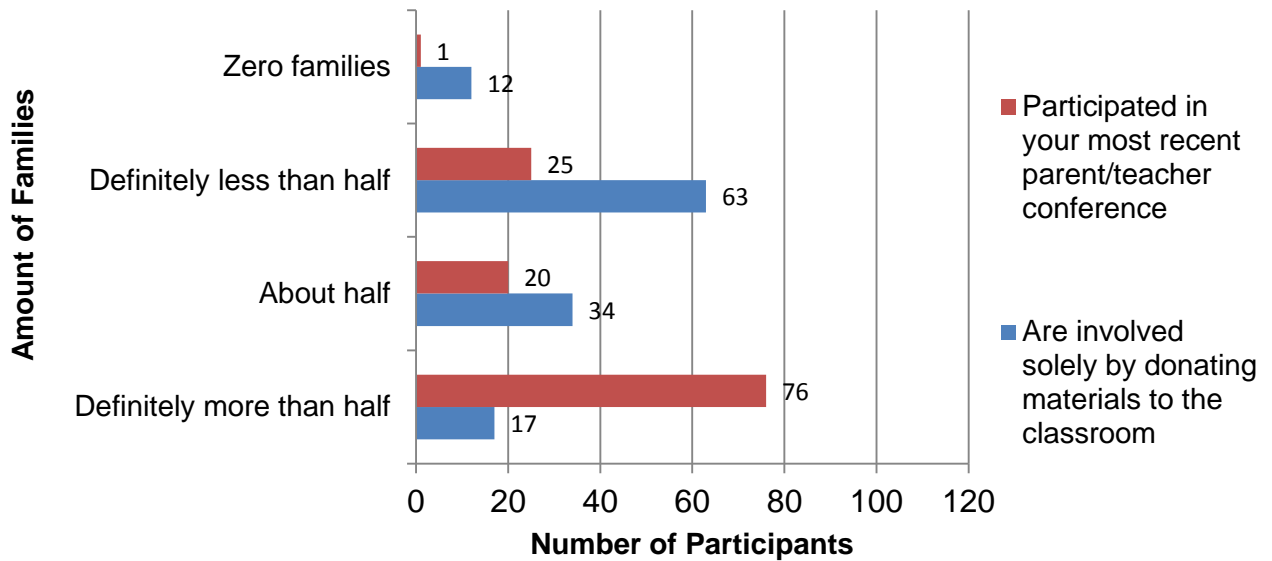


Figure 15. How many families were involved in certain aspects of the school according to responding teachers.

Question 18 in the survey asked approximately how many families participated in the teacher’s parent/teacher conferences and how many families were involved solely by donating materials to the classroom. The figure showed a clear indication that definitely more than half of families attended parent/teacher conferences while definitely less than half of families were involved solely by donating any number of materials to the classroom. Based on the findings reported in Figures 13 and 14, the information in Figure 15 suggested that a number of families entered the classroom solely for parent/teacher conferences. These results also reflected the participating teachers’ impressions that family involvement was not increasing.

Secondary Research Question: Types/Aspects of Family Involvement

The fourth secondary question asked what types/aspects of family involvement affected student achievement. Three questions in the survey were associated with this secondary research question.

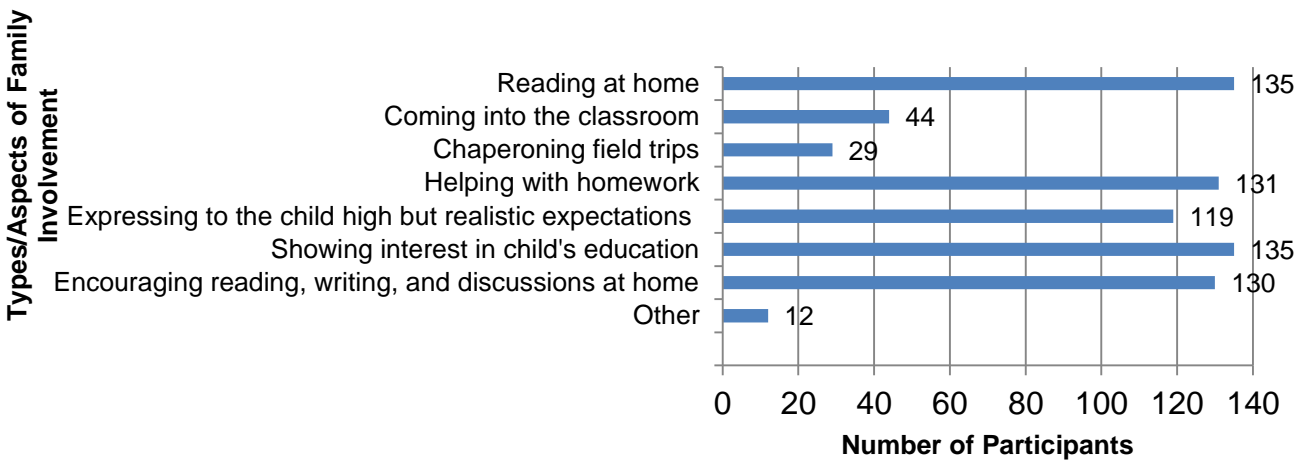


Figure 16. Types/aspects of family involvement that were associated with student academic achievement according to responding teachers.

Figure 16 depicts the results of Question 19. In this question, participating teachers stated the types/aspects of family involvement that were associated with academic achievement. Of the respondents, 97% selected reading at home and showing interest in the child's education as key elements towards a student's academic achievement. A majority of participating teachers also selected helping with homework, encouraging reading, writing, and discussions at home, and expressing to the child high, but realistic, expectations for achievement. The choices respondents chose the least were coming into the classroom and chaperoning field trips. Furthermore, 9% of participating teachers submitted their own responses to the question. Their answers included taking children to museums, communicating regularly with the teacher,

listening to the child, providing child remediation for difficult skills, speaking with the child to expand his or her vocabulary, and being a good role model.

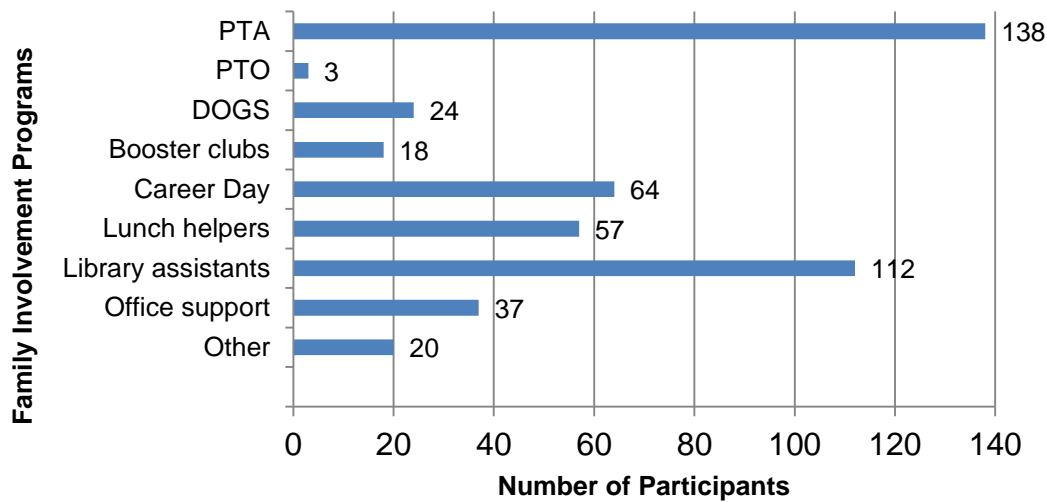


Figure 17. Family involvement programs available at schools according to responding teachers.

Figure 17 is directly associated with Question 20 on the survey which asked what family programs were available at the participating teachers' schools. Parent Teacher Association (PTA) was available at 99% of their schools. Other popular programs were library assistants, Career Day, and lunch helpers. A minority of the schools in the school division of interest had Parent Teacher Organization (PTO), Dads of Great Students (DOGS), booster clubs, and office support. Of the respondents, 14% submitted their own responses to this question. Their answers included high school helpers, book buddies, Student Council Association, classroom volunteers, enrichment clubs, classroom readers, and Parent Involvement Committees.

The last question of the survey, Question 21, asked participating teachers if they thought such family involvement programs worked. The majority of respondents classified PTA as working well while 31 participating teachers said it was only somewhat effective. The remaining programs including PTO, DOGS, booster clubs, Career Day, library assistants, and office support, all followed the same pattern in that the majority of respondents thought they

worked well and a minority of respondents thought they were somewhat helpful or not effective. The only program that the majority stated was only somewhat helpful in promoting student academic achievement was lunch helpers.

The findings in this survey suggested that participating teachers encouraged family involvement by inviting families into the classroom and explaining to them how they could help their children at home. The teachers utilized weekly communication in various forms such as printed material, electronic formats, and classroom websites. Teachers were also flexible in modifying their teaching methods and routines for extremely involved families and those of diverse cultures, beliefs, thinking, actions, and home environments. While potential barriers existed such as uninterested families and the seemingly lack of increase in overall family involvement, the elementary school teachers in the school division of interest attempted to overcome them through communication and flexibility. They also relied on effective family involvement programs to bring families into the school. These programs encouraged the communication that was imperative for increased family involvement.

Discussion

Implications

The final objective of this study was to develop a plan for involving families in their children's education based on the information and approaches found in academic literature and provided by real-world teachers. Considering these two sources of information, teachers can successfully encourage family involvement in the following ways. After laying a foundation grounded in positive relationships, they can encourage participation of all families regardless of whether it is through general family support of school activities, involvement in daily school activities, or involvement in decision-making processes (Olender et al., 2010). When first establishing such respectful relationships, real-world teachers suggest greeting families with a smile, making volunteer opportunities well-known, making regular home visits, holding parent/teacher conferences, letting families know how they could help their child, thanking families/showing appreciation, inviting families to social events at the school, listening to families, and asking questions about the child.

By creating these positive relationships, teachers and families gain the ability to assist each other in fulfilling the roles of Nurturer, Communicator, Teacher, and Supporter since both parties contribute to the children's growth and progress. (Lueder, 2011). Partnering with families in this way allows teachers to learn about the family dynamics found in their classrooms. Real-world teachers suggest modifying ways to encourage family involvement based on such diversity. To attend to the needs of all families, teachers can send home more information or supplies, send duplicates of information to both parents, adjust the times/locations of parent/teacher conferences, alter their method of communication with families, offer

opportunities for cultural presentations, and offer training for families to learn how to help their children.

By working with families, teachers can address potential barriers that prevent families' involvement in their children's educations. These barriers include time, distance, lack of childcare, apprehension, fear, and alienation. In order to support all families and their differences, teachers must be flexible. Such flexibility can be shown when scheduling meetings with families, offering various methods of communication, and sending special information home with students. Teachers can also avoid potential barriers by using Partnership Intervention Strategies such as connecting, communicating, coordinating, and coaching families to both build and strengthen a home-school connection. In order to connect with families, teachers can create an inviting classroom/school environment. Teachers can communicate with families through welcoming letters, positive notes, weekly folders, weekly assignment sheets, progress reports, parent policy handbooks, newsletters, emails, communication logs, journals, behavior logs, and parent/teacher conferences. Experienced teachers typically communicated with families in various ways weekly in order to keep families included and knowledgeable about classroom happenings.

Lastly, teachers can encourage family involvement by emphasizing involvement that most effectively increases student academic achievement. To do this, teachers can recommend families reading with their children at home, showing interest in their children's education, expressing to the children high, but realistic, expectations for achievement, listening to the children, speaking with the children to expand their vocabulary, and being a good role model. In addition, experienced teachers believed that family involvement programs, such as Parent Teacher Association (PTA) and library assistants, were effective in increasing family

involvement. Thus, teachers can encourage family involvement through membership in school-wide programs.

Overall, the study found that successful strategies that teachers can use to encourage family involvement revolve around teachers avoiding potential barriers by being flexible in their teaching methods and routines in order to include diverse families, communicating with all families weekly using various methods, and emphasizing types of family involvement that are most likely to increase student academic achievement.

Limitations

There are a few limitations to this study regarding the research sample and the Qualtrics survey. First, respondents were all from one school division located in southeastern Virginia. Thus, the results may not be generalizable to all school divisions. Furthermore, when contacting the schools' principals to gain their permission for teachers to participate in the survey, roughly half of them responded to the initial request. Twelve of 28 principals said they were interested in participating in the study and they forwarded the survey information to their teachers. The other half did not respond as to whether or not they forwarded the survey information to their teachers and, thus, an exact number of participating schools remained unclear.

The results of the Qualtrics survey found that approximately 40 participating teachers opened the survey and started it, but did not finish it. Therefore, the number of respondents for each question varied. This irregularity caused the percentages of each question's results to be drawn from different respondent pools. Lastly, considering the school division of interest was a large area, it would have been beneficial to know in which schools the participating teachers taught. Knowing this information would have allowed for further analysis of family involvement strategies used in particular sections of the school district that differ demographically. However,

gaining this knowledge of specific teachers was restricted because it was identifiable information.

Conclusion

This study revealed many successful strategies that teachers used to encourage family involvement. It also became clear how imperative it is for teachers to establish positive relationships with families in order to assist children's academic achievement in the best way possible. Teachers need families' support when educating their children and children need their families help to carry education into the home environment. Education does not only exist within the walls of a school, but follows the children into their homes. Thus, a home-school connection is an important factor in a child's education. With the assistance of determined teachers and caring families, students have the opportunity to gain a strong foundation in academics that is encouraged by high expectations from those involved. For children to be the most successful, the three corners of an educational triangle consisting of families, teachers, and students must be connected at all times.

Appendix A: Full Survey

1) What is your highest level of education?

- Two-year college degree
- Four-year college degree
- Some graduate school, but no graduate degree
- Masters or specialists graduate degree
- Doctoral level degree

2) Which languages do you speak? Please check all that apply.

- English
- American Sign Language
- Arabic
- Czech
- Danish
- French
- German
- Italian
- Lithuanian
- Mandarin
- Norwegian
- Polish
- Portuguese
- Russian
- Spanish
- Swedish
- Ukrainian
- Other (Please specify) _____

3) How would you describe your own race or ethnicity?

- Asian or Asian American
- Black or African American, and non-Hispanic
- Latino or Hispanic
- Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander
- White or European American, and non-Hispanic
- Other (Please specify) _____

4) How many years have you taught in Chesapeake Public Schools?

- This is my first year
- 1 – 2 years
- 3 – 5 years
- 6 – 10 years
- 11 – 15 years
- 16 – 20 years
- More than 20 years

5) What grade level are you currently teaching?

- Pre-K
- Kindergarten
- First
- Second
- Third
- Fourth
- Fifth
- Blended at primary levels PreK-2 (Please specify) _____
- Blended at intermediate levels 3-5 (Please specify) _____

6) What grade levels have you taught? Please check all that apply.

- Pre-K
- Kindergarten
- First
- Second
- Third
- Fourth
- Fifth
- Blended at primary levels PreK-2 (Please specify) _____
- Blended at intermediate levels 3-5 (Please specify) _____

7) In what ways do you establish respectful and productive relationships with families of all children? Please check all that apply.

- Greet families with smile
- Learn family members' names
- State the intention to partner with families and request their support
- Ask questions about the child
- Send home student information forms to acquire basic background information
- Send out family surveys
- Contact families regularly with good news
- Establish an open-door policy
- Hold parent/teacher conferences
- Seek a translator when necessary
- Listen to families
- Let families know how they can help their child
- Provide families with resources
- Include families in instructional decision making
- Thank families/show appreciation
- Invite families to social events at the school
- Other (Please specify) _____

8) What successful strategies have you used to encourage families to be involved in your classroom? Please check all that apply.

- Host orientations
- Link family engagement to improved student learning
- Offer training session for families on how to help their child at home
- Recommend reading with child daily
- Distribute assignment planners to students
- Assign homework that encourages families to be involved
- Arrange events and activities that bring families into the school
- Conduct surveys to determine family and student academic need
- Communicate with families frequently, using various methods
- Encourage students to invite families
- Post pictures of volunteers with their children on a bulletin board or online site to motivate others
- Emphasize that all family members can participate
- Hold meetings at locations that are more convenient for families
- Hold meetings at times that are more convenient for families
- Offer incentives for students who encourage their families' involvement (Homework passes, prizes, etc.)
- Offer incentives for attending meetings (Gift certificates, household items, etc.)
- Provide translators for meetings, orientations, etc. when necessary
- Send home take-home learning kits of basic supplies
- Other (Please specify) _____

9) In what ways do you communicate with families? Please check all that apply.

- Letter of introduction before the school year begins
- Home visits
- Folders sent home with students' work
- Newsletters
- Classroom website
- Emailing
- Text messaging
- Phone calls
- Face-to-face parent/teacher conferences
- Social Media
- Daily logs in students' planners
- Personal notes/letters sent home with students
- Other (Please specify) _____

10) Approximately how often do you...

	N/A	Daily	Weekly	Bi-weekly	Monthly	After each grading quarter	Annually
Update your classroom website	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Send information electronically to families	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Send printed information to families	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

11) How often do you conduct parent/teacher conferences? Please check all that apply.

- I do not conduct parent/teacher conferences
- By request
- At least once a year
- 2-3 times a year
- More than 3 times a year

12) In what ways are families or community members encouraged to volunteer in your school/classroom? Please check all that apply.

- Fields trip chaperones
- Social event chaperones
- Classroom readers
- Center/lab helpers
- Tutors
- Classroom parents
- PTA members
- Library assistants
- Classroom speakers (Present career/special expertise, etc.)
- Volunteers for extra-curricular activities
- Attend board meetings
- Attend school open houses
- Participate in fundraising events
- Donate classroom materials
- Other (Please specify) _____

13) Has family involvement in your classroom increased or decreased since you began teaching?

- Increased
- Decreased
- Stayed the same
- I don't know

14) How does knowledge of your students' economic, cultural, and linguistic diversity affect ways in which you encourage family involvement? Please check all that apply.

- It does not affect ways in which I encourage family involvement
- I may send home more information or supplies
- I may ask for more support
- I may provide opportunities for families to be involved at home
- I may send translation of information in another language
- I may send duplicates of information to both parents
- I may adjust the lengths of parent/teacher conferences
- I may adjust times/locations for parent/teacher conferences
- Other (Please specify) _____

15) According to families, what are some reasons that are provided for being more involved? Please check all that apply.

- I want to help
- I have extra time
- My child wants me to be in the classroom
- I do not have a job
- I want to observe my child in a social setting
- I understand the benefits of family involvement
- Other (Please specify) _____

16) According to families, what are some reasons that are provided for **NOT** being more involved? Please check all that apply.

- I have young children at home
- I have an older parent/relative at home that needs care
- I cannot miss work
- My child does not want me in the classroom
- I do not have transportation
- I do not have enough time
- I am not qualified/trained to teach my child academic subjects
- I am unaware of volunteering opportunities
- I do not understand the benefits of family involvement
- Other (Please specify) _____

17) Typically, how many families...

	N/A	Zero families	Definitely less than half	About half	Definitely more than half
Volunteer at least once in the classroom each year	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Chaperone at least one field trip each year	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Attend scheduled classroom activities/events (parties, performances, presentations, etc.)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

18) Approximately how many families...

	N/A	Zero families	Definitely less than half	About half	Definitely more than half
Participated in parent/teacher conferences	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Are involved solely by donating materials to the classroom	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

19) From your experience, what types/aspects of family involvement are associated with academic achievement? Please check all that apply.

- Reading at home
- Coming into the classroom
- Chaperoning field trips
- Helping with homework
- Expressing to the child high, but realistic, expectations for achievement
- Showing interest in child's education
- Encouraging reading, writing, and discussions at home
- Other (Please specify) _____

20) What family involvement programs are available at your school? Please check all that apply.

- PTA (Parent Teacher Association)
- PTO (Parent Teacher Organization)
- DOGS (Dads of Great Students)
- Booster clubs
- Career Day
- Lunch helpers
- Library assistants
- Office support
- Other (Please specify) _____

21) In your opinion, do family involvement programs work?

	Don't have this program	Not effective	Somewhat helpful	Works well	I don't know
PTA	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
PTO	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
DOGS	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Booster clubs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Career Day	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Lunch Helpers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Library assistants	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Office support	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

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