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Teachers' efforts to recruit parents into the classroom as volunteers

Jones, Shari, M.A.

The University of Arizona, 1994
TEACHERS’ EFFORTS TO RECRUIT PARENTS INTO THE CLASSROOM AS VOLUNTEERS

by

Shari Jones

A Thesis Submitted to the Faculty of the
DEPARTMENT OF TEACHING AND TEACHER EDUCATION
In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements For the Degree of
MASTER OF ARTS
In the Graduate College
THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA

1994
STATEMENT BY AUTHOR

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APPROVAL BY THESIS DIRECTOR

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Alice S. Paul
Associate Professor of Education
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To Brianna - The sunshine of my life.

Your ever-present smile and radiant, inner-beauty have been an inspiration.
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ABSTRACT

This study looked at parent involvement from the teachers' point of view. A survey of 73 teachers in one geographical area of a small city was undertaken to find out if teachers attempt to recruit parents as volunteers, how they recruit them, and the tasks that parent volunteers do. A comparison was made between primary grade teachers and intermediate grade teachers as well as between bilingual and non-bilingual teachers. The results indicate that most of the teachers involved in the study do attempt to recruit parent volunteers, they tend to use similar techniques, and they involve parents in a variety of tasks. A few differences were found between bilingual and non-bilingual teachers but the greatest surprise was that there were so few differences found between primary and intermediate level teachers.
CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

Statement of the Problem

Historically, parents have always been involved in the education of their children. As far back as the first century B.C., parents were expected to take an active role in their children's education. Between the seventeenth century and the nineteenth century new ideas about education and the importance of the home in education became popular.

More recently, since the 1960s, parent involvement in education has been increasing. Parents' roles in education have evolved and developed. As our society has changed so has the nature of parent involvement. Even though parent involvement has grown, many parents, for whatever reasons, still do not participate in the education of their children.

Both home and school have a tremendous impact on child development. School practices can determine if the home and school work cooperatively. If the home and school work together with a common understanding and goal (the good of the child) then everyone will benefit from that positive interaction.

Children today live in a complex and changing world. Our society is not static; it is fluid and multifaceted. Students come from different types of homes, different families, and have different lifestyles. The diversity among students is truly incredible.
Teachers today have a more complex job than their predecessors. Teachers are responsible not only for teaching their students, but they are also expected to fill a variety of roles and perform a variety of duties. These roles and duties are related to education but go well beyond the job description of "teacher". Some of these include playing the role of social worker and referring a student for counseling, playing the role of curriculum specialist and recommending educational materials to parents, and playing the role of nurse and providing a hug and a band-aid to a minor wound.

Teachers' jobs have become so complex and immense that many teachers welcome any sort of help or aid that they can get. Surprisingly, there are some teachers who do not want any help at all. Some of the reasons why teachers do not want help in the classroom are explored later in this study.

**Purpose of the Study**

This study looked at one aspect of providing teachers with help in the classroom--parent participation in the classroom. This study attempted to shed some light on teacher's efforts to recruit parents into the classroom as volunteers. It is hoped that the information obtained here will provide teachers with ideas on how to improve their level of parent involvement in the classroom.

Three principle questions guided this study:

1. Do elementary school teachers attempt to recruit parents as school volunteers?
2. What do teachers do to recruit parents as school volunteers?
3. What do parents do as school volunteers?

Many teachers assume that primary grade teachers (K-3) have more parent involvement than intermediate grade teachers (4-6). In order to substantiate this belief, a comparison was made between primary and intermediate teachers on certain issues pertaining to parent involvement. Additionally, a comparison was made between bilingual and non-bilingual classroom teachers to discover if any differences could be found.

Assumptions of the Study

This study has three important underlying assumptions. These assumptions are:

1. The questionnaire is an appropriate instrument to use for gathering data on parent involvement in the classroom.
2. All subjects understood the questions asked in the questionnaire.
3. All subjects answered the questionnaire honestly.

Definitions of Parent Involvement

There are numerous definitions of parent involvement. “Of all education issues, parent involvement is one of the vaguest and most shifting in its meanings. Parent involvement may easily mean quite different things to different people” (Ascher, 1988, p. 109). Even within each definition there are varying levels of parent involvement.

Parents may act simply as observers of the educational process. They may actually observe in the school or they may observe at home.
through their children or even through information obtained from the media.

Parents may be involved with their children at home by helping with homework and other school-related activities, such as organizing materials for the teacher, telephoning other parents, helping with a fundraising activity, etc. Becker and Epstein (1982) studied the techniques that teachers use to get parents involved in their children’s education and found that almost all parents were involved in some way with their children at home. Parent involvement at home appears to be the most prevalent.

Parents may volunteer in the school or classroom in a variety of capacities. They may help in the school library, computer lab, or office. They may help in their child’s classroom by doing clerical work or organizing materials. They may work directly with the students as an unpaid teacher’s aide, read a story to the class, teach an art lesson, etc. They may volunteer on a weekly basis or help only once a year.

Parents may act as advocates or policymakers and become involved on a political level. Some may simply become involved with the school’s PTA or PTO while others may become school board members or join other policymaking committees.

For the purpose of this study, parent involvement is defined as parents who volunteer and actively participate directly in the school or classroom. These parents are involved in a variety of tasks but the common element is that they are physically present at the school.
Limitations of the Study

This study looked at elementary schools located in a specific geographic area of a mid-sized urban city. Generalizations of the results of this study to other geographic areas may not be valid.

The sample size of bilingual teachers was not particularly large (20 teachers out of a total of 73). The bilingual teachers that were surveyed for this study may not be representative of all bilingual teachers.
CHAPTER 2
REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

In 1989 the National Governors’ Association issued a report stating

"We have learned what it takes to make a positive, permanent difference in the lives of young children. The most essential elements are responsible parents and a healthy, nurturing home life. Unfortunately, these elements are absent for many children and often must be supplemented by services and programs." The report concludes that attaining universal school readiness will require new programs which "expand parent education and support, and strengthen parental responsibility and involvement." (Cited in Moore, 1990, p. 1)

Most parents have hopes and dreams for their children. The definition of hopes and dreams will differ for each parent, but teachers should not discourage parents from becoming involved in the schools because they believe that some parents do not care about their children. In a study by Williams (1984) a survey of parents revealed that a majority of parents felt that they should be responsible for getting involved in their child’s education.

Williams and Stallworth (1982) found that educators generally have a positive attitude toward parents and toward the idea of involving them in education. Butler, Henderson, Gifford, and McWilliams (1992) found that an overview of research on parent involvement indicates that a major difference between good schools and great schools is the level and quality of parent involvement.
Parent involvement is actually a partnership between the educator and the parent. Both have much to gain through mutual cooperation. Research has shown that parent involvement is beneficial to all parties involved—children, parents, teachers, and schools. Unfortunately, there are some barriers to parent involvement which may inhibit parent involvement from becoming more prevalent in the schools.

History of Parent Involvement

Parents have long been involved in the education of their children; long before schools ever existed parents and families were responsible for rearing their young. The earliest humans taught their young the essentials of survival through modeling and guidance.

Written records indicate that the first schools emerged in Egypt during the Middle Kingdom, 3787-1580 B.C. Formal education flourished in Greece in the sixth century B.C. Both Plato (427-347 B.C.) and Aristotle (384-323 B.C.) agreed that children should be educated; they thought that children were society’s link to the future. In Roman society there were no formal schools; the mother educated her children and the father participated in educating his sons.

During the Middle Ages (400-1400 A.D.) children were viewed as little adults and were considered to be low priorities. The family was responsible for teaching the children basic skills and the Church took care of any formal education. As society’s views about childhood began to change so did their views about education.
By the seventeenth century new ideas about the importance of the home in education had emerged. Rousseau (1712-1778) and Pestalozzi (1747-1827) were influential as the first modern theorists to stress the important role of parents in a child's education.

Parent involvement in the nineteenth century consisted of informal education (usually religious) and training children within the family. With the introduction of kindergartens in the mid-1800s came the tradition of parent involvement in education (Berger, 1991).

As the public education system developed in the late 1800s, so did parent involvement. The Parent Teacher Association (PTA) was organized in 1897 when it was first “recognized that the parent must be involved in the children’s education to support the teaching of the school” (Butler et al., 1992, p. 1).

In the 1900s the public education system has continued to evolve and parent involvement has continued to flourish. Parent education programs began to emerge in the 1920s and 1930s. In the 1940s the prevailing child rearing practices changed dramatically and a lot of emphasis was placed on the emotional and social health of children. Emphasis was also placed on the family and in the 1950s a lot of doctors and psychologists (such as Benjamin Spock, Jean Piaget, Erik Erikson, etc.) promoted their views on the development of the child.

As the population grew, there was a consolidation of the schools and some children had to travel long distances from their homes to school. This led to parents becoming less involved with the schools. The 1950s also brought the beginning of the civil rights movement. It was during
this time that people began to question the education system and to challenge the inequities that existed within it.

In the 1960s the Head Start program was established. Head Start was the first federally funded program that recognized parents as the child's first and most influential teacher. By encouraging parent involvement the Head Start program gave parents a sense of empowerment. The Follow Through Program was also a federally funded program that focused on parent involvement. It was established in 1967 "to sustain and expand upon the gains made by children in Head Start or similar preschool programs" (Olmsted, 1991, p. 222).

In 1966 James S. Coleman produced the landmark Equality of Educational Opportunity Report which stated that family environment was more strongly related to student achievement in school than any other variable. This report added much emphasis to the importance of the role of the parents in their children’s education (Coleman, Campbell, Hobson, McPartland & Mood, 1966 cited in Berger, 1991).

During the 1970s many federally funded programs required that parents take an active role in their children’s education and become involved with them. Evidence of the impact of parent involvement grew steadily in the 1970s. Bronfenbrenner (1974) reviewed the research and found that significant levels of parent involvement contributed to the success of early childhood programs (cited in Butler et al., 1992).

Parent involvement in the 1980s and 1990s has been impacted by the country’s poor economy, high motility rates, crime and violence, drug abuse, health care issues, child care issues, and a variety of other factors.
In spite of the attacks on our current education system, education was viewed as a way out of poverty and as a solution to the other problems that plague our society. Social programs were intertwined with education and parent education programs such as STEP (Systematic Training for Effective Parenting) and PET (Parent Effectiveness Training) were offered to parents by schools, hospitals, and social agencies (Berger, 1991). Parents started to become involved in the schools as a way to help reduce drug use, alcohol use, and the crime rate among our youth.

There was actually tremendous growth in parent participation as schools responded to the need for parent involvement and developed successful programs to encourage more parents to become involved in the education of their children.

It seems that as the necessity for more parent involvement arises, more parents are becoming interested in the education system. Schools must continue to encourage parents to get involved and stay involved. Carlson (1991) found that in case after case, when programs encouraged or mandated parents to become involved with their children’s education, parents and their children profited. It is hoped that as their interest increases more parents will become involved in the education of their children.

**Benefits to the Child**

Children benefit tremendously from parent involvement in the schools. Both teachers and parents are essential to the success of children; there should be a partnership between the home and the schools in order to
support the developing child. Numerous studies have shown that children whose parents are involved in their schooling show advanced academic achievement and cognitive development (Andrews et al., 1982; Henderson 1981; and Herman & Yeh, 1980, cited in Becher, 1986).

Although Reynolds (1991) disputes previous findings that parent involvement has a "significant influence on academic outcomes" (p. 442), he found that studies with low-income and minority children suggest that parent involvement is related to achievement. In a synthesis of 50 studies, Henderson (1987) confirmed the correlation between parent involvement and student achievement (cited in Butler et al., 1992).

Parental involvement may be critical in preventing or remedying educational and developmental problems (Becher, 1986). Davies (1988) has provided substantial research linking parent involvement to child development and to the academic and social success of children in school. Parents who are involved in their child’s education tend to be more actively supportive; those children (whose parents are actively supportive) tend to be more successful in school (Berger, 1991).

Parents who are involved at school become more familiar with their child’s formal education and are better able to reinforce the principles and concepts at home (Herman & Yeh, 1980). The more parents understand and support what teachers do, the more they can help their children.

In addition, parent involvement strengthens the bond between the parent and the child; children know that their parents value them and their education. The relationship between the child and parent has shown improvement when parents show an interest and become actively involved
in their children’s education (Becher, 1986) and this is beneficial to both the child and the parent.

**Benefits to Parents**

Parents who become involved in the schools benefit in numerous ways. Many parents develop positive attitudes about themselves and gain a sense of adequacy and self-worth. This increased self-confidence often leads them to become involved in the political process of the school (Davies, 1988).

Parents who become involved in the schools may become motivated to resume their own education (Davies, 1988) and often enroll in programs to enhance their personal development (Herman & Yeh, 1980). Through parent involvement, parents gain a greater understanding of child development and the educational process. They become better teachers of their children at home and they use more positive forms of reinforcement in dealing with their children.

These parents experience strengthened social networks. As they help to gather community support for educational programs, they tend to become more active in other community activities (Becher, 1986).

Becher also found that parents who are involved in their children’s education are usually more supportive of the schools and have feelings of ownership. Parents gain a sense of empowerment and may be motivated to participate in the political process of education. “Increased political support and the willingness to pay taxes to support the schools are important by-products of parent involvement” (Davies, 1988, p. 3).
Finally, parents usually become more positive about school and school personnel (Herman & Yeh, 1980) and as the school personnel get to know parents they treat those parents with greater respect (Berger, 1991).

**Benefits to the Schools**

Parents can offer valuable insight to teachers on their child’s individual needs; when parents are involved in the schools teachers learn more about students’ needs and about their home environments. Teachers benefit from knowing as much as possible about their students.

Parents who are involved in the schools tend to have more positive views of teachers. It is detrimental for parents (and the public) to have negative views of teachers and schools. In a time when the public schools are being criticized for almost everything that they do, this positive feeling that parents have can serve to boost the morale of teachers.

Teachers may be reluctant to encourage parents to volunteer. Epstein and Dauber (1991) have done extensive research on parent involvement and they have found that teachers discover that their lives are made easier if they get the help and support of parents. This seems to make a lot of sense and so it is difficult to imagine why so many teachers would reject and discourage parent involvement.

In addition, schools benefit from parent involvement in practical ways. Parents provide valuable resources for school operations in terms of volunteer time and other free services that they render (Herman & Yeh, 1980).
Barriers to Parent Involvement

In an extensive study by Williams (1984) it was found that a majority of teachers, parents, and principals believed that parent involvement is both important and necessary. Williams’ findings agreed with the earlier findings of Stallworth (1982) in his study of teachers and administrators. In that study, teachers and administrators agreed that more parent involvement in education was desirable. If this is true then why don’t all classrooms have a high level of parent involvement? The reason is that there are a number of barriers to parent involvement in the schools.

Some parents may be physically unable to go to the school. Some may not want to go due to negative past experiences. Some simply don’t feel comfortable there.

More often the reasons for a lack of parent involvement are due to the school. The bureaucracy of the school may discourage parent involvement. Parents can easily tell if they are welcome at the school; if there is an unfriendly atmosphere at the school then parents may be reluctant to spend time there volunteering.

Sometimes a lack of parent involvement is due to a lack of communication between the teacher and parents. It is ultimately the teacher’s responsibility to communicate with the parents. In a study by Moore (1990) of the National Black Child Development Institute it was found that the lack of proper teacher training in communicating with parents was a major barrier to parent involvement. Without proper
training or resources most teachers were unable to promote and nurture positive parent-teacher partnerships.

This is reminiscent of the findings of a 1982 study by Williams and Stallworth. In that study one of the goals was “to develop specific guidelines for training teachers to work with parents in the schools” (p. 4). In their survey of teachers, principals, and teacher educators all groups agreed that teachers should be required to be trained to work with parents.

In her review Becher (1986) found that teachers are usually the major barrier to parent involvement. Teachers may be reluctant to encourage parent involvement because they are not sure how to involve parents and still maintain their role as “specialized experts.” She found that some of their concerns are that parent involvement activities take too much planning time, having parents in the classroom is disruptive, parents may use non-standard English or demonstrate other undesirable characteristics, parents may be overly critical, they may share confidential information, and they may not keep their volunteer commitments.

However, Epstein and Dauber (1991) reported that in a study of the attitudes and practices of inner-city teachers, most teachers had “strong, positive attitudes about parent involvement” (p. 304).

Being a minority, belonging to a certain social class, and being a single parent can be barriers to parent involvement. Davies (1988) found that parents who have the most contact with the schools tend to be those in the middle to upper income level. Parents with low incomes who are minorities tend to have the least contact with the schools. In fact, researchers have found that the Hispanic culture doesn’t encourage parent

In a 1988 study by Davies of the Institute for Responsive Education, 350 parents and teachers were interviewed to find out about the perspectives of teachers and low-income parents. It was found that

1. Many teachers have a standardized view of the role of parents in education,

2. Many teachers have a “conventional middle-class model of what constitutes good families” (p. 4),

3. Teachers often think of low income and/or low SES “families as being deficient” (p. 4) and “hard-to-reach” (p. 5),

4. Many low income and/or low SES parents have a low opinion of themselves concerning their ability to be involved in their child’s education,

5. Communication between teachers and low SES families is primarily negative, and

6. Almost all of the parents expressed an interest in their child’s education and would like to be more involved.

In sum, it appears from a review of the literature that in spite of a variety of barriers to parent involvement children, parents, teachers, and schools all benefit from the involvement of parents in the classroom. It is essential for teachers and parents to work toward having a relationship
based on mutual cooperation. It is essential if we expect there to be a partnership between educators and parents.
CHAPTER 3
METHODOLOGY

This chapter will describe (a) the sample, (b) materials, (c) procedure of data collection, and (d) analysis of the data.

Sample/Subjects

This study was focused on a particular geographical area (the central west side area of Tucson, Arizona). Therefore the subjects were selected based on the criteria that they worked in schools located in that particular area.

Four elementary schools in a large school district were selected due to their geographical location. The four schools have a large minority student population. The average total student minority population of the four schools is 75.64%. All certified staff who work at the schools were asked to participate in the study.

Table 1 shows the distribution of teachers who participated in this study. A total of 73 teachers completed the survey. School #1 returned 28 surveys (85%), School #2 returned 23 surveys (100%), School #3 returned 8 surveys (35%), and School #4 returned 14 surveys (56%).

Of the total of 73 surveys that were returned, 20 teachers classified themselves as bilingual teachers (27.4%). Thirty six teachers (49.3%) work with primary level students (grades K-3) and 37 teachers (50.7%) work with intermediate level students (grades 4-6).
Table 1  
**Distribution of Participating Subjects**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Code</th>
<th>Certified Staff</th>
<th>Surveys Completed</th>
<th>Response Rate</th>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>104</strong></td>
<td><strong>73</strong></td>
<td><strong>70%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Materials**

The investigator developed a four-page questionnaire designed to answer the principle questions of the study. The questionnaire was designed so that other, secondary, questions could be addressed. A copy of the questionnaire can be examined in Appendix A.

The principal of each school was asked to participate and each agreed to do so. The investigator explained the purpose of the study and provided each principal with a copy of the questionnaire.

Each principal called an after-school faculty meeting and the investigator administered the survey to all faculty members present (except at School #3). Each principal agreed to give a survey to the certified staff members who were not present at the faculty meeting, but only the principal of School #2 followed through. The investigator was
not present at School #3 when the questionnaire was administered. The principal of School #3 administered the survey to her certified staff members.

The purpose and intent of the study was explained to the teachers prior to distribution of the questionnaires. Teachers were encouraged to ask questions if they did not understand certain items on the questionnaire but none did so.

In order to maintain confidentiality, a large envelope was provided for teachers in which to place their completed questionnaires.

Data Analysis

The purpose of this study was to answer questions about parent involvement and to compare bilingual and non-bilingual teachers and primary and intermediate level teachers according to those questions. The three principle questions were:

1. Do elementary school teachers attempt to recruit parents as school volunteers?
2. What do teachers do to recruit parents as school volunteers?
3. What do parents do as school volunteers?

The data were studied collectively and then broken down and compared according to bilingual and non-bilingual teachers and primary and intermediate level teachers.

The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics (frequencies, percentages, and means) to report certain patterns of responses to items on the survey for the total of 73 surveys. This was done to get an overall
picture of the survey responses. Descriptive statistics are also used to describe bilingual and non-bilingual teachers and primary and intermediate level teachers.

Quantitative statistics are used to compare the items on the survey for the primary and intermediate level teachers and for the bilingual and non-bilingual teachers. When appropriate, the Chi Square statistic is employed to determine if statistical significance could be found. When these statistical tests are done, the .05 level of confidence is used. This information was obtained from Downie and Heath (1965).

**Total Responses**

First a total of all of the responses was tabulated to find out the frequencies and percentages of responses. The mean (average) of the total years taught for all of the teachers in the four schools was 12.7 years. 82% (59) of the teachers claim to have parent participation in their classrooms while 18% (13) claim that they don’t have parent participation (one teacher did not respond to that item). Of the teachers responding, 50.7% (37) say that they attempt to recruit all parents, as opposed to only attempting to recruit some or a few parents.

Table 2 shows the frequency of responses to the question of why teachers want to recruit parents into their classrooms. Sixty-eight teachers (93%) believe in developing a partnership between parents and schools, 65 (89%) believe that parents are a good support system, 62 (85%) believe that parents can help with academics, 55 (75%) think their school values and encourages parent participation, 35 (48%) believe that parents can
Table 2  
**Why Teachers Want to Recruit Parents Into Their Classrooms**  
(Total Responses)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th># of Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I believe in developing a partnership between parents and schools</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I believe that parents are a good support system</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents can help with academics</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My school values and encourages parent participation</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents can help with behavior and management</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The parents request it</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The administration expects it</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other teachers expect it</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

help with behavior and management, 27 (37%) say that parents request it, 21 (29%) say their administration expects it, 11 (15%) think that other teachers expect it, and 17 (23%) have other reasons for wanting to recruit parents into their classrooms.

The teachers were asked to rank their responses to the question of why they want to recruit parents as volunteers. They ranked the top three in the following way: (1) I believe in developing a partnership between
parents and schools, (2) I believe that parents are a good support system, and (3) Parents can help with academics (teaching/tutoring). The least important reason for wanting to recruit parents into the classroom was that other teachers expect it.

In response to the particular techniques that teachers use to recruit parents into their classrooms, 5 teachers (7%) don’t do anything (these teachers don’t have parent participation and they don’t want it), 53 (73%) make a verbal request by telephone, 11 (15%) send a written request through the U.S. mail, 55 (75%) send a written request to the parents with the students, 30 (41%) send a written request via a newsletter, 46 (63%) have a sign up sheet at Open House, 11 (15%) wait for parents to request volunteering, and 4 (5%) teachers have other written methods for asking parents to become involved. Table 3 lists the frequency of responses of teachers making verbal requests in person. It shows that most teachers who make verbal requests in person do so at parent teacher conferences (79%) and at Open House (71%).

An overwhelming majority of teachers either use the phrase, “We need you,” “Please help” (70%) or “You are welcome to volunteer” (74%) when asking parents to become involved in their children’s education. This indicates that teachers prefer to be positive when attempting to recruit parents. In fact, not one teacher admitted to using a negative phrase such as, “If you don’t care about your child’s classroom” and only three teachers tried to place the responsibility on the parent and used a phrase like, “It is your responsibility” when making a request for parent participation.
Table 3

Verbal Request in Person (Total Responses)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>When</th>
<th># of Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>At parent/teacher conferences</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At Open House</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At impromptu meetings</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At a Fall parent meeting</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At registration before school begins</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At home visits</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4 describes the activities that teachers involve parents in when they volunteer in the classroom. Almost all of the teachers (93%) that were surveyed have parents help on field trips and at parties. Fifty-three teachers (73%) have parents tutor or teach small groups of children, and 49 teachers (67%) use parents as a resource for a specific activity. Only 10 teachers (14%) ask parents to teach theme lessons and only 17 teachers (23%) ask parents to help with clerical duties outside of the classroom.

Of the teachers that participated in this study, 80.8% (59) think that it is very important to have parent participation in their classroom, 17.8% (13) think that it is somewhat important, and only 1.4% (1) teacher thinks that it is not important to have any parent participation.
Table 4

How Parent Volunteers are Involved (Total Responses)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activities</th>
<th># of Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Field trips and parties</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tutoring/teaching children in small groups</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>As a resource for a specific activity</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents helping at home</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Correcting papers, organizing materials, etc.</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observing classroom</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clerical help outside of the classroom</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telephoning other parents</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching theme lessons</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Primary and Intermediate Level Teachers

Thirty-six primary teachers and 37 intermediate teachers participated in this study. Of the primary teachers 83.3% (30) claim to have parent participation in their classroom while 16.7% (6) claim to have no parent participation. Of the intermediate teachers, 80.6% (29) claim to have parent participation while 19.4% (7) claim to have no parent participation. Fifty percent (18) of the primary teachers attempt to recruit all of their parents while 52.8% (19) of the intermediate teachers attempt to recruit all of their parents.
Table 5 compares primary and intermediate teachers on the basis of why they want to recruit parents into the classroom. As the table shows,

Table 5

**Why Teachers Want to Recruit Parents Into Their Classrooms**

*(Primary and Intermediate)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th># of Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Primary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My school values and encourages parent participation</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents can help with academics</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents can help with behavior and management</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The parents request it</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The administration expects it</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other teachers expect it</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I believe that parents are a good support system</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I believe in developing a partnership between parents and schools</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

** This item shows significance at the .05 level (P<.05).

See Appendix B for the Chi Square contingency table.
there was no significant difference between primary and intermediate teachers on most items concerning their reasons for wanting to recruit parents into their classrooms. Significance was shown on the item stating that the school values and encourages parent participation. More primary than intermediate level teachers responded that that was a reason for them to recruit parents.

When asked to rank their responses to the question of why they want to recruit parents as volunteers both the primary teachers and the intermediate teachers ranked the top three in the following way: (1) I believe in developing a partnership between parents and schools, (2) I believe that parents are a good support system, (3) Parents can help with academics (teaching/tutoring). The least important reason for wanting to recruit parents into the classroom was that other teachers expect it.

Only one primary teacher and four intermediate teachers do not use any techniques to recruit parents into the classroom. Six primary teachers and five intermediate teachers simply wait for parents to request volunteering.

Table 6 shows the frequency of responses of written requests as a technique to recruit parents into the classroom of primary and intermediate teachers. No significant differences were found in any of the responses.

Twenty-four primary teachers (67%) and 29 intermediate teachers (78%) make verbal requests by telephone. Table 7 shows the responses of teachers who make verbal requests of parents in person. Most items are not significantly different. However, there is a significant difference on
Table 6

Written Requests (Primary and Intermediate)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th># of Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Primary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sent home in U.S. mail</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sent home with student</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sent in a newsletter</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sign-up sheet at Open House</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

two items. Intermediate teachers make more verbal requests in person at registration before school begins and at home visits.

On the survey item which asks teachers to identify the type of phrase that they use, 27 primary teachers and 25 intermediate teachers use the phrase, “We need you”, “Please help”. There is no significant difference. However, 32 primary teachers and 22 intermediate teachers use the phrase, “You are welcome to volunteer” and a significant difference is found (See Appendix B). Primary teachers tend to use a more welcoming tone while intermediate teachers prefer to use a plea for help.

In response to how teachers involve parents, a significant difference was found between primary and intermediate teachers with regard to
Table 7
Verbal Request in Person (Primary and Intermediate)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>When</th>
<th># of Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>At Open House</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At registration before school begins</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At a Fall parent meeting</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At parent/teacher conferences</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At impromptu meetings</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At home visits</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

** This item shows significance at the .05 level (P<.05).
See Appendix B for the Chi Square contingency table.

having parents help at home. Results indicated that 66.7% (24) primary teachers ask parents to help at home while only 43.2% (16) intermediate teachers ask them to help at home. Table 8 shows the frequency of responses to how teachers involve parents.

Concerning the question of how important teachers think it is to have parent participation in their classrooms, no significant differences were found. Thirty-one primary (86%) and 28 intermediate teachers (76%) think it is very important, 5 primary (14%) and 8 intermediate
Table 8
How Parent Volunteers are Involved (Primary and Intermediate)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th># of Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Observing classroom</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Correcting papers, organizing materials, etc.</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tutoring/teaching children in small groups</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching theme lessons</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>As a resource for a specific activity</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field trips and parties</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telephoning other parents</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clerical help outside of the classroom</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents helping at home</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

** This item shows significance at the .05 level (P<.05).
See Appendix B for the Chi Square contingency table.

teachers (22%) think it is somewhat important, and only 1 intermediate teacher (3%) thinks it is not important to have parent participation in the classroom.
Bilingual and Non-Bilingual Teachers

Twenty bilingual teachers and 53 non-bilingual teachers participated in this study. Of those responding 94.7% (18) of the bilingual teachers claim to have parent participation in their classroom. Only one bilingual teacher claims to have no parent participation and one bilingual teacher did not respond to the question. Fifty-five percent (11) of the bilingual teachers attempt to recruit all of their parents as compared to 49% (26) of the non-bilingual teachers.

Table 9 shows the frequency of bilingual and non-bilingual teacher responses to the question of why they want to recruit parents into their classrooms. There is a significant difference between the two groups on two items. 90% (48) of the non-bilingual teachers believe that parents can help with academics, but only 70% (14) of the bilingual teachers believe that statement. Only 40% (21) of the non-bilingual teachers state that they want to recruit parents because they can help with behavior and management, but 70% (14) of the bilingual teachers gave that reason for wanting to recruit parents.

When asked to rank their responses to the question of why they want to recruit parents as volunteers bilingual teachers ranked the top three in the following way: (1) I believe in developing a partnership between parents and schools, (2) I believe that parents are a good support system, (3) Parents can help with academics (teaching/tutoring). The least important reason for wanting to recruit parents into the classroom was that other teachers expect it.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th># of Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>My school values and encourages parent participation</strong></td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents can help with academics</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents can help with behavior and management</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The parents request it</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The administration expects it</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other teachers expect it</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I believe that parents are a good support system</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I believe in developing a partnership between parents and schools</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

** This item shows significance at the .05 level (P<.05).
See Appendix B for the Chi Square contingency table.
None of the bilingual teachers said that they don’t use any technique for recruiting parent volunteers and only 15% (3) said that they simply wait for parents to request volunteering. Of the bilingual teachers, 85% (17) use some sort of technique for recruiting parents.

Table 10 shows the frequency of responses of written requests as a technique to recruit parents into the classroom of bilingual and non-bilingual teachers. There is a significant difference between bilingual and non-bilingual teachers with regard to using the U.S. mail to request parents to volunteer. Only 9% (5) of the non-bilingual teachers utilize the

Table 10

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th># of Responses</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bilingual Teachers</td>
<td>Non-Bilingual Teachers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sent home in U.S. mail</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sent home with student</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sent in a newsletter</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sign-up sheet at Open House</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

** This item shows significance at the .05 level (P<.05).
See Appendix B for the Chi Square contingency table.
U.S. mail when requesting parents to volunteer, but 30% (6) of the bilingual teachers use that technique.

Ninety percent (18) of the bilingual teachers and 100% (53) of the non-bilingual teachers make verbal requests by telephone. Table 11 shows the responses of teachers who make verbal requests of parents in person. A significant difference is found between bilingual and non-bilingual teachers.

Table 11

**Verbal Request in Person (Bilingual and Non-Bilingual)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>When</th>
<th># of Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bilingual Teachers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At Open House</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At registration before school begins</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At a Fall parent meeting</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At parent/teacher conferences</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At impromptu meetings</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At home visits</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

** This item shows significance at the .05 level (P<.05).

See Appendix B for the Chi Square contingency table.
teachers on the item concerning home visits. Of the bilingual teachers, 30% (6) make home visits in an attempt to recruit parent volunteers while only 9% (5) of the non-bilingual teachers use that technique.

No significant differences were found between bilingual and non-bilingual teachers concerning the types of phrases that they use when attempting to recruit parent volunteers.

In response to how teachers involve parents, a significant difference was found between bilingual and non-bilingual teachers with regard to having parents tutor and teach small groups of students and having parents help at home. Of the bilingual teachers, 90% (18) ask parents to tutor/teach small groups of children while only 66% (35) of the non-bilingual teachers make that request of parents in the classroom. Eighty percent (16) of the bilingual teachers ask parents to help at home but only 45% (24) of the non-bilingual teachers ask them to help at home. Table 12 shows the frequency of responses to how teachers involve parents.

Concerning the question of how important teachers think it is to have parent participation in their classrooms, a significant difference was found between bilingual and non-bilingual teachers. All (20) of the bilingual teachers think it is very important, but only 74% (39) of the non-bilingual teachers think it is very important. Of the non-bilingual teachers, 25% (13) think it is somewhat important and 1% (1) thinks that it is not important to have any parent participation in the classroom.
Table 12

**How Parent Volunteers Are Involved (Bilingual and Non-Bilingual)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th># of Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bilingual Teachers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observing classroom</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Correcting papers, organizing materials, etc.</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tutoring/teaching children in small groups</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching theme lessons</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>As a resource for a specific activity</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field trips and parties</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telephoning other parents</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clerical help outside of the classroom</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents helping at home</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

** This item shows significance at the .05 level (P<.05).

See Appendix B for the Chi Square contingency table.
Overall, the mean (average) of the total years taught for all of the teachers in the four schools was 12.7 years. That is an indication that most of the teachers who participated in the survey were fairly experienced.

Do elementary school teachers attempt to recruit parents as school volunteers? The data indicates that elementary school teachers do attempt to recruit parents as school volunteers. Overall, 82% of the teachers claim to have parent participation in their classrooms. Results show that 83.3% of the primary teachers and 80.6% of the intermediate teachers have parent participation in their classrooms while 94.7% of the bilingual teachers have parent participation in their classrooms.

Many teachers attempt to recruit all of their parents in an effort to get more parents involved in their classrooms. Overall, 50.7% of the teachers attempt to recruit all parents. Survey responses indicate 50% of the primary teachers, 52.8% of the intermediate teachers, and 55% of the bilingual teachers attempt to recruit all of their parents. Most of the other teachers ask only some or a select few parents to volunteer in their classroom.

An overwhelming majority of teachers believe that it is very important to have parent involvement in their classroom. Overall, 80.8% think that parent participation is very important. Thinking that it is very important to have parent participation in their classroom are 86% of the
primary teachers, 76% of the intermediate teachers, and 100% of the bilingual teachers.

What do teachers do to recruit parents as school volunteers? Teachers have a variety of strategies and techniques for recruiting parents as school volunteers. The most common techniques for bilingual teachers are: using the telephone (90%), sending home a written request with the student (90%), making a verbal request at a parent/teacher conference (85%), and making a verbal request at Open House (80%).

The most common techniques for primary teachers are: making a verbal request at a parent/teacher conference (81%), making a verbal request at Open House (75%), and sending home a written request with the student (75%).

The most common techniques for intermediate teachers are: using the telephone (78%), making a verbal request at a parent/teacher conference (78%), and sending home a written request with the student (76%).

The least used strategy for trying to recruit parents as volunteers is making a verbal request during a home visit. This is understandable since most teachers do not make home visits.

The way that a teacher phrases the request can influence the parent. An overwhelming majority of teachers either use the phrase, "We need you," "Please help" (70%) or "You are welcome to volunteer" (74%) when asking parents to become involved in their children’s education. This indicates that teachers prefer to be positive when attempting to recruit parents. In fact, not one teacher admitted to using a negative
phrase such as, "If you don’t care about your child’s classroom” and only three teachers tried to place the responsibility on the parent and used a phrase like, “It is your responsibility” when making a request for parent participation.

Primary teachers tend to use a more welcoming tone ("You are welcome to volunteer") while intermediate teachers prefer to use a plea for help ("We need you,” “Please help”). Bilingual teachers tend to use both phrases equally.

What do parents do as school volunteers? Parents are involved in the schools in numerous ways. Overall, parents are asked to help with field trips and parties (93%), to tutor/teach children in small groups (73%), and to be a resource for a specific activity (67%). Additionally, bilingual teachers (80%) and primary teachers (67%) ask parents to help at home.

Very few teachers ask parents to teach theme lessons or provide clerical help outside of the classroom.

Teachers made comments at the end of the survey explaining the advantages and disadvantages of parent participation. The comments are listed in Appendix C to provide a greater understanding of teacher’s perceptions and attitudes toward parent participation.
CHAPTER 5
DISCUSSION

Conclusions

The results of this study indicate that teachers want parents to participate in the schools as volunteers, they actively recruit them to volunteer, and they involve them in a variety of activities.

Although a majority of teachers have some parent participation in their classrooms, only about half of the teachers attempt to recruit all of their parents. This is a disturbing figure. If all teachers attempted to recruit all parents, perhaps there would be a lot more parent involvement in the schools.

It was a pleasant surprise to find that most teachers value parent involvement and that intermediate level teachers attempt to recruit and are as successful as primary level teachers. In 1981, Becker and Epstein found that as the child became older, there was a decline in parent involvement and that the parents of first graders were more involved in their children’s education than were the parents of fifth graders. The results of this study contradict that finding. This study found that there was no difference in the amount of parent involvement between primary and intermediate level classrooms.

However, a difference was found in teachers’ beliefs about the importance of parent participation in the classroom. While all of the bilingual teachers believe that parent participation is very important, 86%
of the primary teachers believe that it is very important, and only 76% of the intermediate teachers think that it is very important. This means that 24% of the intermediate teachers either believe that parent participation is only somewhat important or not important at all.

Another important difference that sets the intermediate teachers apart from the other teachers is the finding that they don’t ask parents to help their children at home as much as the bilingual and primary teachers.

**Recommendations**

Research has shown that including parents in the educational process is crucial to the development of their children therefore extra effort must be made to include parents who do not usually become involved in the school. When recruiting certain minority parents it may be advised to know something about their culture first.

Carlson (1991) believes that the schools are not organized to provide teachers with time or resources to spend with parents. She suggests that schools should provide teachers with time to devote to working in the area of parent involvement. If parent involvement helps, there should be some mechanism to allow teachers to reach out to the parents.

In establishing or improving parent involvement programs there are no quick-fixes or panaceas. What works for one teacher may not work for another. New ideas have to be tried out and parent involvement programs must be reassessed regularly and modified accordingly.
The findings presented here are very promising but they suggest the need for conducting additional research on a variety of issues concerning parent involvement. For example, why do only about half of the teachers attempt to recruit all of their parents? What would the effect be if all of the teachers attempted to recruit all of their parents? Why don’t more intermediate level teachers ask parents to help their children at home? Do teachers with more experience have more parent participation? These are just a few of the many questions that can be asked. Answers to these and other questions need to be explored with further research.
APPENDIX A

TEACHER SURVEY

This survey is being done as part of a Master's thesis. The information gathered here will be used to help other educators. The information that you provide will remain confidential. No reference will be made to individuals; the results will yield group data only.

Please mark your answers according to your own experience and mark all that apply.

SCHOOL ___________________________ TOTAL YEARS TAUGHT _____

CURRENT GRADE LEVEL: PRIMARY (K-3) _______
INTERMEDIATE (4-6) _______
OTHER (Please explain):

SPECIAL PROGRAM: BILINGUAL _______
GATE _______
OTHER _______

1. Do you have parent participation within your classroom?

   YES   NO

   Approximately what percentage of parents actively participate in your classroom each year?

   Do you attempt to recruit parents:

   ALL   SOME   A SELECT FEW

   ____ Parents of high performing students
   ____ Parents of behavioral problem students
   ____ Parents known to be dependable
   ____ Other ____________________
2. Why do you want to recruit parents into your classroom? (Check all that apply.)

   ____ My school values and encourages parent participation.
   ____ Parents can help with academics (teaching/tutoring).
   ____ Parents can help with behavior and management.
   ____ The parents request it.
   ____ The administration expects it.
   ____ Other teachers expect it.
   ____ I believe that parents are a good support system.
   ____ I believe in developing a partnership between parents and schools.
   ____ Other ______________________________

3. Please rank the above by placing the number 1 next to the response you feel is most important and so on with the number 9 being placed next to the response you feel is least important.

4. What techniques do you use to recruit parents into your classroom? (Check all that apply.)

   ____ None
   ____ Verbal request by telephone (continued on next page)
___ Verbal request in person

   ___ at Open House (verbal request-not a sign-up sheet)
   ___ at registration before school beings
   ___ at a Fall parent meeting
   ___ at parent/teacher conferences
   ___ at impromptu meetings
   ___ at home visits
   ___ other ________________________________

___ Written request sent home in U. S. mail

___ Written request sent home with student

___ Written request sent in a newsletter

___ Sign-up sheet at Open House

___ I wait for parents to request volunteering

5. Which type of phrase do you use when asking parents to participate in your classroom? (Check all that apply.)

   ___ "We need you," "Please help"

   ___ "You are welcome to volunteer"

   ___ "If you don't care about your child's classroom..."

   ___ "It is your responsibility"

   ___ Other ________________________________
6. How do you involve parents? (Check all that apply.)

- Observing classroom
- Correcting papers, organizing materials, etc.
- Tutoring/teaching children (small groups and individual)
- Teaching theme lessons (whole class)
- As a resource for a specific activity
- Field trips and parties
- Telephoning other parents
- Clerical help outside of the classroom (i.e., library, office, etc.)
- Parents helping at home
- Other __________________________

7. How important do you think it is to have parent participation in your classroom?

- Very important
- Somewhat important
- Not important

8. What are some advantages of having parent participation?

9. What are some disadvantages of having parent participation?

10. Comments:

Thank you for your time.
APPENDIX B

CHI SQUARE TABLES

Table 5

Why Teachers Want to Recruit Parents Into Their Classrooms:

My School Values and Encourages Parent Participation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teachers</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>30 (26.1)</td>
<td>6 (9.9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intermediate</td>
<td>23 (26.9)</td>
<td>14 (10.1)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$X^2 = 4.19$

$df = 1$

$P<.05$
Table 7

Verbal Request in Person: During Home Visits

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teachers</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>1 (5.4)</td>
<td>35 (30.6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intermediate</td>
<td>10 (5.6)</td>
<td>27 (31.4)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$X^2 = 8.3$

df = 1

P<.05

Table 7

Verbal Request in Person: During Registration Before School Begins

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teachers</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>7 (11.3)</td>
<td>29 (24.7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intermediate</td>
<td>16 (11.7)</td>
<td>21 (25.3)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$X^2 = 4.7$

df = 1

P<.05
Table 8

**How Parent Volunteers are Involved: Parents Helping at Home**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teachers</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>24 (19.7)</td>
<td>12 (16.3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intermediate</td>
<td>16 (20.3)</td>
<td>21 (16.7)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$X^2 = 4.1$

$df = 1$

$P < .05$
Table 9

**Why Teachers Want to Recruit Parents Into Their Classrooms:**

**Parents Can Help with Academics**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teachers</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bilingual</td>
<td>14 (17)</td>
<td>6 (3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Bilingual</td>
<td>48 (45)</td>
<td>5 (8)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

X² = 4.855  
df = 1  
P<.05

---

Table 9

**Why Teachers Want to Recruit Parents Into Their Classrooms:**

**Parents Can Help with Behavior and Management**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teachers</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bilingual</td>
<td>14 (9.6)</td>
<td>6 (10.4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Bilingual</td>
<td>21 (25.4)</td>
<td>32 (27.6)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

X² = 5.343  
df = 1  
P<.05
Table 10

**Written Requests: Request Sent Home in U.S. Mail**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teachers</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bilingual</td>
<td>6 (3)</td>
<td>14 (17)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Bilingual</td>
<td>5 (8)</td>
<td>48 (45)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$X^2 = 4.855$

$df = 1$

$P < .05$
Table 11

**Verbal Request in Person: During Home Visits**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teachers</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bilingual</td>
<td>6 (3)</td>
<td>14 (17)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Bilingual</td>
<td>5 (8)</td>
<td>48 (45)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[ X^2 = 4.855 \]
\[ df = 1 \]
\[ P < .05 \]
Table 12

How Parent Volunteers are Involved: Tutoring/Teaching Children

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teachers</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bilingual</td>
<td>18 (14.5)</td>
<td>2 (5.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Bilingual</td>
<td>35 (38.5)</td>
<td>18 (14.5)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$X^2 = 4.24$
$df = 1$
$P<.05$

Table 12

How Parent Volunteers are Involved: Parents Helping at Home

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teachers</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bilingual</td>
<td>16 (11)</td>
<td>4 (9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Bilingual</td>
<td>24 (29)</td>
<td>29 (24)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$X^2 = 6.95$
$df = 1$
$P<.05$
APPENDIX C
SURVEY COMMENTS

The following comments were made by teachers on the last page of the survey. The comments are similar to those found in 1982 by Epstein and Becker. The selected comments are presented here to provide a greater understanding of teacher's perceptions and attitudes toward parent participation.

What are some advantages of having parent participation?
* Parents provide a support system between school and home.
* Parents feel like an important part of the school, thus yielding a positive rapport.
* Parents who are involved create a better relationship between the school and community.
* Develop an important community link.
* School-home communications are enhanced.
* Parent participation develops better communication between parents/community/school.
* It really helps build a good team and positive communication.
* The home-school relationship is strengthened.
* Parents can provide resources.
* Parents provide additional expertise.
* Parents may have more specific knowledge on certain topics.
* More students can receive assistance at one time.
* Enrichment activities can be provided that might otherwise be impossible.
* Parents can help with more individualized group work.
* Parents can work with small groups.
* Teachers can always use an extra hand.
* Students can do more activities with more adults in the classroom.
* Teachers can get a lot more work done.
* Parents can assist their own child.
* Teachers can get more things accomplished.
* It can help ease the work load at school and at home.
* Parents can help individual students.
* They provide extra help with individual students.
* Parents can help students ascend to a higher level and develop critical thinking skills due to the one-on-one attention.
* Parents can free up the teacher to work on a one-to-one basis with students who need extra help.
* The opportunity to do more hands-on activities with parents' guidance instead of seat work.
* The teacher has more time to plan if a parent takes some of the clerical responsibilities.
* Parents provide clerical services.
* Parents help with academics, behavior and management in the classroom, thus tending to the many needs of the individual students.
* Extra supervision can be extremely helpful.
Another adult helps behavior.

Parents help with classroom management.

Parents help with behavior management.

Students become aware that there is cooperation between the parent and the teacher and that they both care.

Parent involvement validates education for children.

Children see that parents value education.

Children value their parent's involvement.

Having parents in the classroom allows for them to see what type of setting, curriculum, and learning environment their child is in.

Parents know what's going on in the classroom.

They become informed and aware of what their child is doing.

Parents have a clearer idea of what really goes on in a classroom.

Parents can observe the real classroom situation and understand how to help their child at home.

Parents know first hand how their own child interacts and behaves in the classroom.

Parents have a better understanding of teacher roles and curriculum.

Parents are supportive if they know what you are doing.

They get to see what actually happens in a classroom such as, behavioral, what kinds of situations occur and how to handle them.

Also, children bringing to school a lot of problems from home.

Also it makes them aware of the school's needs and what improvements need to be made - especially for their children.
Parents need to see the learning process in order to understand what the child and teacher are experiencing.

They see the "realities" of school life.

They are aware of what is going on and aware of what it means to teach.

They see what goes on at school and they can see that the kids need help.

Parents often appreciate the work that the teacher puts in.

Teachers can get the parent's support.

Parents support what I'm doing in the classroom and reinforce or communicate this to children.

Parents can give a teacher support and help get the work done.

They can support teachers when needed.

Students know that parents support their education.

Children see that their parents value the school setting and that their education is important.

Kids see that parents are interested and that school is important.

Visible presence of parents reflects on importance of education.

School is more important to students when they have parent support.

The parents who participate are the most supportive.

They can be supportive resources.

Student academic and social behaviors improve.

Students can receive extra help.

The child will be inclined to be more attentive and cooperative.

Students like their parents to take part in their school life.
* Students perform better.
* Students feel more comfortable and have more role models.
* Students have more role models.
* It builds self-esteem in the child when a parent volunteers.
* It helps the student’s self-esteem.
* The student’s image improves.
* Both student and parent gain a sense of pride.
* Bonding between parent and child.
* Parents are involved in their child’s education.
* Parent participation involves parents in their child’s learning.
* It creates a good atmosphere for faculty and students.
* Transportation is made possible.
* Parents and teachers can share ideas.
* Parents talk to others about the good things happening in class.
* It encourages other parents.
* It keeps the parents informed of their child’s progress.
* They get to see their child in a different environment.
* Parents help their children more.
* They can see how their child responds.

What are some disadvantages of having parent participation?
* Not enough time for training.
* No time for training.
* It takes time to train them.
* I have to train them.
* Teachers may have to train parents and take time to plan for parents in the classroom.
* Some parents need training and more understanding about problems that tend to arise.
* Parents sometimes show up unexpectedly and expect me to have special projects for them.
* I have to have a specific task for them.
* Sometimes parents can be more of a burden than a help.
* Sometimes they cause more trouble than they help.
* They get in the way sometimes.
* Parents may schedule a time with a project and then not show up.
* When they don’t come on a regular schedule - or say they will and you plan for them and they don’t show up.
* When you depend on them to show up and they don’t it makes it difficult to run a smooth program.
* Consistency may be a problem, depending on them to be there when scheduled.
* They are not always dependable.
* Some parents are not dependable.
* They are unreliable.
* Tardiness and absenteeism.
* Parents coming in and expecting to just sit.
* Some parents may become too involved in the class, by trying to decide what should be taught and how.
Occasionally a parent decides that since they are in the classroom weekly they can take over.

Parents may try to control or discipline.

Often, parents have their own ideas which may not support or compliment my objectives or goals.

Sometimes parents want to try to tell you how to do your job.

They may question what I'm doing.

Some parents are very critical.

They interfere with operation of classroom and make suggestions that may not go with teaching style.

Sometimes they disrupt the flow or system you have set up.

Often times, parents may offer advice which is of little or no use.

They may have methods of teaching that are counterproductive.

Parents may not follow what is asked.

Some are not sure how to help students.

They correct papers incorrectly.

Having parents who are not knowledgeable about school norms and environment.

Awkward situations can develop when parents are unclear about classroom discipline and policy.

Parents who tend to give answers rather than have students work it out.

Having an answer given when you want it discovered.

Children sometimes get too dependent on help and don’t use their problem solving skills.
Some parents talk about other parent’s children.
Parents go and discuss problems with other parents.
They might tell something personal (or embarrassing) about another student to other people in the neighborhood.
Parents discussing students outside of the classroom.
Neighborhood gossip can develop.
They might gossip.
They spread confidential information about student (progress, behavior, etc.) to other parents.
Misunderstandings.
Occasional profanity.
I once had a parent show up drunk as a driver for a field trip. I have had several other occasions where a parent has shown up at school either drunk or high.
It’s stressful if the parent shows signs of intoxication.
They may interfere by talking to kids during instruction.
Too much visiting.
Some parents will talk too much.
They sometimes want to talk about only their child during class time.
They only help their own child.
They only help their child.
Some parents don’t work well with other children.
Bringing in small siblings.
Some tend to bring young children with them.
A minor problem is that very young children are often disruptive to student concentration.

Feast and famine - too many at once.

Too many adults can get in the way.

Too many adults can be overwhelming.

Sometimes I feel inhibited in front of parents.

Some parents can't read and write and therefore are not able to help their child.

Some parents are not comfortable working with children.

Children could get out of hand with another adult in the room.

Students sometimes act differently when their parents or other parents are around.

Occasionally parents can be more trouble than the kids.

Sometimes parents don't understand or accept the behavior management rules and consequences; they become emotionally involved. They need to be consistent, structured and support discipline. I spend a lot of time educating parents on the how to... and why.

Children often misbehave when their parent comes.

Sometimes they are abusive to their children.

Some parents don't like to see their child disciplined.

They may not positively manage students.

I can't think of any.

None (3)
Other comments:

* We need more parent involvement in all our schools.
* Parents are an important part of the learning process.
* I think it’s very important. Some years I have a lot of parents and other years none.
* I value having parents involved in their child’s education in any capacity.
* Parents should be involved with their school and teachers must keep constant communication with them. They can be a great help and a great resource in many areas.
* Parents should be involved because only then will they become an active participant in their child’s education.
* What’s taught at school should be reinforced at home.
* Many parents have been very helpful. Only a few had problems.
* Many parents should not be in the classroom so I have not encouraged a lot of involvement.
* Making parents feel needed will hopefully gain positive support for the teacher.
* I love having reliable parent helpers.
* I like to involve the barrio community. I feel it benefits both the parents and students but sometimes it’s a pain in the neck.
* Parent participation in the classroom is crucial for a successful program based on centers utilizing a lot of hands-on experiments to promote the scientific method. Keeping the children on task is very important.
REFERENCES


