

The Role of Parental Involvement in Student Success

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Parental involvement has been defined as “any interaction between a parent and child that may contribute to the child’s development or direct parent participation with a child’s school in the interest of the child” (Baker 1997). The most basic reason to involve parents in education is student success. Developing or increasing parental involvement in areas that have positive affects on student success is beneficial to all involved in the learning process (Yan 1999).

Research has long concluded that to in- crease students’ academic success, it is critical that the

parent/family is involved in the process. For educators to increase parental involvement, there must be an understanding of the desired types of parental involvement and their effects on student academic success. Educators must also gain an understanding of how to increase the desired parental involvement. To this end, this work aims to offer increased student success through increased parental involvement.

Overview

Researchers have studied the effects of parent involvement on student achievement. Early studies that focused primarily on students' elementary school years, concluded that increased parent involvement correlated with higher student achievement. Finn, (1998), summarizing studies on parental involvement through the 1970's, notes that a "home curriculum" could predict academic achievement. At the end of the 1980s the Carnegie Corporation released its landmark publication, *Turning Points: Preparing American Youth for the 21st Century* in 1989, which listed "reengaging families in the education of young adolescents," and "connecting schools with communities," as two of its eight recommendations for improving the education of young adolescents. Jackson and Davis in *Turning Points 2000* reaffirmed parental involvement as a

fundamental component of student success.

However, there are several major obstacles that deter parental involvement. There is the increasing complexity of the subject matter, lowered confidence of parents to give proper school advice, and many parents feel that teachers looked down on them for not being as successful as teachers (Cassanova, 1996). Educators must insure that parents and the community feel they are an essential and welcomed partner in the education of all students. This can be accomplished by reducing or eliminating the barriers to increasing parental involvement. It is essential that parental involvement increase in the areas where it positively affects student achievement. The following areas of parental involvement will be focused on because of they have the greatest impact on student achievement: monitoring and supporting school work by parents, home discussions about school courses and activities between student and parents, and parents and students being involved in learning activities at home (Ho 1996).

Increasing parental involvement must start with inviting parents to meet with school officials to discuss the benefits of their involvement with their child's education. Parents must be an integral part of the planning and designing of the program for their involvement in their child's educational process.

Objectives

- To understand the benefits of parental involvement in the academic success of all students
- To identify the types of parental involvement which have the greatest effect on student achievement
- To identify ways to eliminate barriers to parental involvement
- To be able to teach parents how to be successfully involved in their children's education

Activities:

1. Place teachers in groups and have them discuss eliminating "barriers to parental

involvement” (Chart 1).

2. Place teachers in different discussion groups and have them review the types of parental involvement (Chart 2).
3. Place teachers in discussion groups and have them review the Parental Involvement Effects.
4. Place teachers in groups and develop strategies to teach identified parental involvements to parents.

Teacher’s Workshop Evaluation Form

1. The workshop goals were clearly stated.

Agree Disagree Don’t know

2. The presenter was knowledgeable of the subject matter.

Agree Disagree Don’t know

3. The subject matter was relevant to my current position.

Agree Disagree Don’t know

4. The information presented at the workshop will be used in my classroom.

Agree Disagree Don’t know

5. More information about this subject is needed.

Agree

Disagree

Don't know

6. I would recommend this workshop to my coworkers.

Agree

Disagree

Don't know

Chart 1

Barriers to Parental Involvement

1. Mistrust

2. Racial Tension

3. Poverty

4. Language

5. Work

6. Others

Chart 2

Types of Parental Involvement

1. School participation

2. Home supervision

3. Home discussion

4. School communication

5. Collaboration and exchange with the community

Appendix A

Workshop Agenda

Introduction	5 min.
Ice Breaker	10 min
Overview	10 min
Break-out 1(benefits)	15 min
Break-out 2(types)	15 min
Break-out 3(barriers)	15 min
Break-out 4(strategies)	30 min
Group presentations	30 min

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