

Parental Involvement Strategies Implemented by Selected Virginia School Districts

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## ABSTRACT

This descriptive study explored Latino parental involvement strategies implemented in selected Virginia school districts. Randomly selected teachers from elementary, middle, and high schools whose student population is 10% or greater Latino were surveyed. Exploratory data analysis was utilized to examine the perceptions and opinions of selected teachers on the involvement of Latino parents in selected schools. Implications of the research findings are discussed and future research topics are recommended.

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CHAPTER ONE  
INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

*Parental Involvement Strategies Implemented by Principals in Selected Virginia Schools*

*When schools build partnerships with families that respond to their concerns, honor their contributions, and share power, they succeed in sustaining connections that are aimed at improving student achievement. (Family Strengthening Policy Center) (p. 5)*

The reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (2001) (ESEA), also known as the No Child Left Behind Act (2001) (NCLB) requires schools to actively involve parents in the education of their children. NCLB not only requires that parents participate in the education of their children; they must also participate as informed and empowered decision makers in the education of their children. This presents a challenge for schools as to how to involve parents in the schooling process in ways that affirm and empower parents and benefit the entire school community.

Statement of the Problem

The importance of parental involvement in the education of their children is not a new concept to public schools. In fact, research has shown that parents play a key role in the academic achievement of their children (Barrera, 2002; Blazer, 2005; Cassity & Harris, 2000; Cotton & Winkelund, 2001; Epstein, 1987; 2000; and Tinkler, 2002). In addition, there is considerable evidence that parental involvement leads to a plethora of benefits for the student, their families, as well as the total school. These benefits occur regardless of the language that they speak, the socioeconomic status, racial, or ethnic/racial background or the parents' educational level (Boethal, 2003; Cassity et al., 2000; and Henderson & Mapp, 2002). What is relatively new to public schools, regarding parental involvement, is the way in which schools are required by law to involve parents, including Latino parents, in their children's education. Schools must create meaningful parental involvement activities that engage parents in educational decision-making, in leadership roles, and in school governance. Allen (2005) argues that such an engagement signals a movement away from the century-old factory model school that rarely invites parents in their school.

Unfortunately, the lack of Latino parental involvement in schools is often viewed by many teachers as a lack of interest (Chavkin & Williams, 1987; Quiocho & Daoud, 2006; and Tinkler, 2002). Many teachers and administrators misread the reserve, non-confrontational, non-involvement of Latino parents as uncaring and not valuing their children's education (Chavkin & Williams, 1987). De Gaetano (2007) stated many school personnel talk about wanting an increase in parental involvement in schools. On the other hand, De Gaetano reported, "Many teachers express what they perceive as a lack of caring, particularly by parents of poor and Latino children" (p. 146). De Gaetano also stated, "Many teachers, including some Latino teachers, throw up their hands and exclaim, "We really try, but they (parents) just don't care" (p. 146). Furthermore, some schools believe parents who have not been educated in the United States, or who speak only Spanish, lack the ability to support their children in their education (Gaitan, 2004). These assumptions and misconceptions often translate into barriers that hinder Latino parent involvement. However, research examining Latino parental involvement has shown Latino parents do care about their children's education and want to take a participatory role in their children's education but barriers often hinder their successful participation (Ramirez, 2003; Scribner; Torrez, 2004; and Young, & Pedroza, 1999).

### Significance of the Study

Research suggests a growing achievement gap between Latino students and their white student counterparts (Tinkler, 2002). Tinkler also reported Latino students are more than twice as likely to be undereducated than all other student ethnic groups combined. Latino students also have the highest dropout rate among students attending U.S. schools (Tinkler, 2002). There are many causes for the low academic achievement and high dropout rates among this student population. Some of the causes include: unprepared teachers (Padron, Waxman & Rivera, 2001), inappropriate teaching (Noguera, 2002; Padron, Waxman & Rivera, 2001), low expectations (Lara & Pande, 2001; Tinkler, 2002), isolation within their schools (Lara & Pande, 2001), and the lack of Latino parental involvement (Cotton & Wikelund, 1989; Olivas, 2004; Tinkler 2002).

Amidst these critical educational issues for Latino students is the evidence that links parental involvement and academic achievement. Moreno and Lopez (1999) stated that parental involvement has been identified as one of several factors that promote students' academic success. In fact, Cassity and Harris (2000) reported parental involvement leads to improved student achievement, better school attendance, better social skills, improved behavior, reduced

dropout rate, higher grades and test scores, enrollment in higher level programs, and attendance in postsecondary education program. Sheldon and Epstein (2002) examined the efforts of school officials to draw on family and community resources to create and maintain safe schools and a school climate focused on learning. These researchers found schools that improved the quality of their partnership programs reported fewer students in need of discipline. Sheldon et al. argued, “Creating more connections and greater cooperation among the school, family, and community contexts may be one way for schools to improve student behavior and school discipline” (p. 4). Epstein (1995) argues that the main reason for creating school, family, and community partnerships is to help all students succeed in school and later in life. Epstein reported the following benefits of school and family community partnerships: improved school programs and school climate, families receive services and support, increased parent skills and leadership abilities, families connecting with other families in the school and in the community, and teachers receiving assistance and support.

Although many Latinos have high aspirations for their children and want to participate in their children’s schooling, there are barriers that hinder their involvement in their children’s education (Quiocho & Daoud, 2006; Ramirez, 2003; Sosa, 1996; and Tinkler, 2002). Some of these barriers include: teacher expectations, school environment, logistics, lack of social capital, language barrier, Latino family culture, and cultural mismatch between home and school, scheduling of school activities, education level of the parent, and economics. Many of these barriers will be discussed in detail in Chapter Two. It is important for school personnel to be aware of these barriers. Only then can school personnel begin to explore and implement strategies to eliminate these barriers. Glanz (2006) argued that the principal plays an important role in facilitating meaningful parental involvement strategies that will eliminate barriers to parental involvement. Eliminating these barriers will improve the total school environment and help parents understand the importance of their involvement.

### *Theoretical Base/Relationship to Prior Knowledge*

This study is guided by two theoretical frameworks. The two theoretical frameworks are Joyce Epstein’s (2004) classification of six types of parental involvement and social and cultural capital. The first theoretical framework is based on Joyce Epstein’s classification of six types of parental involvement. Epstein’s theory of “overlapping sphere of influence” recognizes three major contexts in which children grow: the family, the school, and the community. In this model

of school, family and community, the focus is primarily on the student. Students are the main actors in their education, development, and success at school (Epstein, 1995). Epstein argued, “School, family, and community cannot alone produce successful students. Rather partnership activities may be designed to engage, guide, energize, and motivate students to produce their own success” (p. 2). Epstein believes that families and schools share the responsibility for the children in their care, and the efforts of school, family and community partnerships must be conducted collaboratively. Epstein (1995) argues, “If students feel cared for and encouraged to work hard, they are more likely to do their best to learn to read, write, calculate, develop other skills and talents, and remain in school” (p. 2).

Epstein’s (2004) framework defines the six types of parental involvement practices. This framework can be utilized as a guide to help educators develop comprehensive family-school partnerships.

#### *Epstein’s 6 Essential Components of Parental Involvement*

1. *Parenting*: Assists families with parenting skills, family support, understanding child and adolescent development, and setting home conditions that support learning at each age and grade level. Assists schools in understanding families’ backgrounds, cultures, and goals for students.
2. *Communicating*: Communicate with families about school programs and student progress. Create meaningful two-way communication channels between school and home.
3. *Volunteering*: Improving recruiting, training, and schedules to involve families. Enable volunteers to work with volunteers who support students and the school.
4. *Learning at Home*: Involving parents in learning activities at home including homework, goal setting, and other curricular activities and decisions. Encourage teachers to design homework that enables students to share and discuss interesting tasks with family members.
5. *Decision Making*: Involving families as participants in school decisions, governance and advocacy activities through school councils or improvement teams, committees, and parent organizations.
6. *Collaborating with the Community*: Coordinating resources and services for families, students, and with school community groups, including businesses,

agencies, cultural and civic organizations, and colleges or universities. Providing services for families and family outreach activities. Enable all to contribute services to the community.

### *Social and Cultural Capital*

Many children of immigrants are at a disadvantage with respect to cultural and social capital. Latino parents have little knowledge of how U.S. schools operate. They have limited knowledge of the school practices and behaviors rewarded by teachers and schools as well as their rights with respect to educational issues (Arbiaga, 2003; Rueda, Monzo, & Arzubiaga, 2003).

Social capital can be produced through various kinds of social relations (Pong, Hao, & Gardner, 2005). Parent-child interaction and communication are home-based social capital. Parental involvement in school, such as in parent teacher associations (PTA), facilitates parents' relationships with teachers and other adults in the school. Pong et al. reported these types of social relationships in the family and in the school increase the social capital available to a child. Rueda et al. (2003) defined social capital as multiple sources of social resources. It is the network of people who can provide other forms of capital including economic and cultural capital. In other words, a person with an extensive network of friends, family, and other contacts has greater social capital than someone with few family and friends from which to gain access to information, assistance, and other resources. McNeal (1999) stated that parental involvement can be conceptualized as a form of social capital. Parental involvement can be thought of as involving a relationship between the parent and the child, the teacher, or another parent

McNeal (1999) also stated parents that have various levels of physical capital, human capital, and cultural capital to invest in the children. Cultural capital, on the other hand, helps to understand ways in which to embrace and include parents from culturally diverse backgrounds in comprehensive programs of school, family, and community partnerships (Bohon & Macpherson, 2005; and Rueda, Monzo, & Arbiaga, 2003). Rueda et al. reported that immigrant families, particularly those from low SES backgrounds and speakers of languages other than English, are at a disadvantage with respect to cultural and social capital. This is due to their lack knowledge of the U.S. educational system, its function, practices, and behaviors rewarded by teachers and schools. Immigrant parents are also unaware of their rights with respect to educational issues. Kao (2007) argued that recent immigrant parents are less useful than more seasoned immigrants

in their knowledge of how school systems work and the importance of parent-teacher relationships.

### Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine the types of parental involvement strategies implemented in selected Virginia school districts as it relates to Latino parents.

### Assumptions

1. All survey participants responded honestly and objectively.
2. Variables under consideration are independent of each other.

### Limitations of this Study

Gay and Airasian (2000) defined limitations as —an aspect of a study which the researcher knows may negatively affect the results or generalizability of the results, but over which he or she has no control (p. 625). This study has the following limitations:

1. This study was limited to the perceptions of teachers of selected elementary, middle, and high schools in 2 school districts in Virginia.
2. The perceptions of Latino parents, principals and other school personnel were not included in this study.
3. Participants in this study were randomly selected. A stratified sampling procedure might have provided a better representation of participants of all ethnicities in the selected school districts.
4. The participants in this study were drawn from two of twelve identified school districts in Virginia in 2007-2008 whose student population was at least 10% Latino. Not all elementary, middle, and high schools in the selected school districts were asked to participate.
5. The perceptions of parental involvement elementary, middle, and high school teachers were explored in this study. The perceptions of Latino parents of selected schools were not included.
6. The Likert scale in the parental involvement teacher survey did not include an “I Don’t Know” option. Some respondents might have “Agreed” or “Strongly Agreed” when in fact the availability of an “I Don’t Know” option might have been a more accurate choice.



7. A Likert scale of *Agree*, *Strongly Agree*, *Disagree*, and *Strongly Disagree* was designed for this study. However, a survey of Yes/No options might have yielded a higher rate of return of the surveys for this study.
8. Questions 10, 32, 33, 34, 37, 57, in the survey were excluded from analysis to eliminate redundancy of data.

### Delimitations of the Study

The researcher imposed the following delimitations on this study:

1. The school districts selected were in Virginia.
2. The elementary, middle, and high schools selected were schools having at least 10% or more Latino students.
3. The teachers surveyed were randomly selected.
4. The sample population of this study was one hundred fifteen teachers.

Therefore, the generalizability of this study is limited to the 2 school districts participating in this study.

### Research Question

The following research questions serve as a general guide to facilitate the exploration of the research problem and the research questions:

1. What Latino parental involvement strategies are school districts implementing in selected Virginia elementary, middle, and high schools?

### Definition of Terms

*Immigrant children:* Immigrant children are foreign-born and have migrated to the United States. They have at least one immigrant parent.

*Latinos/Hispanics:* The *Latino* population of the United States is a highly heterogeneous population that defies easy generalization (Suarez-Orozco and Paez, 2002). They are the segment of the U.S. population that traces its descent to the Spanish-speaking, Caribbean, and Latin American worlds (Suarez-Orozco and Paez, 2002). Latinos are from many countries as varied as Mexico, Columbia, Central and South America, and the Dominican Republic. Latinos are among the oldest Americans. Some Latinos settled in the Southwest, spoke Spanish and made the Southwest their home long before there was a United States (Suarez-Orozco and Paez, 2002). Latinos are also among the newest Americans as two thirds of all Latinos in the United States are

either immigrants or the children of immigrants (Suarez-Orozco and Paez, 2002). The term Latino emphasizes the populations' link to Hispania or Spain (Suarez-Orozco and Paez, 2002). The term Latino has meaning only in reference to the U.S. experience. Outside the United States, Latinos are referred to as Mexicans, Cubans, Puerto Ricans, etc. (Suarez-Orozco and Paez, 2002). The Pew Hispanic Center (2005) utilizes the following definitions of the first, second and third-and-higher generations of Latinos:

*First generation:* Born outside the United States, its territories or possessions. Can be naturalized U.S. citizens, legal immigrants or undocumented immigrants. Also referred to as “foreign born” and “immigrants.”

*Second generation:* Born in the United States with at least one foreign-born parent and is a U.S. citizen by birth.

*Third-and-higher generations:* Born in the United States with both parents also born in the United States and is also born in the U. S.

The terms “Hispanic” and “Latino” are used interchangeably. However, in this report, the term Latino is used.

#### Overview of the Dissertation

This study is divided into five chapters: The Introduction; Review of the Literature; Methodology; the Study Findings; Analysis of the Findings, Implications, Conclusions, and Recommendations for Future Research.

## CHAPTER TWO

### REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

This chapter is an examination of literature related to the parental involvement of Latino parents in public schools. To accomplish the review of the literature of Latino parental involvement, computerized database searches of PSYCHINFO, ERIC, and Dissertation Abstracts International were conducted. Search terms included, but were not limited to, parental involvement, Latino parental involvement, parent participation, and Latino parents. References located in texts, book chapters, journal articles, opinion papers, Latino organizations such as La Raza and the Hispanic Pew Center, were obtained from computerized database searches. These references led to the identification of additional sources.

#### *Latino Student Demographic Trends*

Forty-two percent of public school students were considered to be of a racial or ethnic minority group in 2003. This represents an increase of 20% since 1972 (National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES) 2003-2008). In comparison, the percentage of public school students representing White subgroups decreased from 78% to 58%. The Latino immigrant student population represents the fastest growing segment of the nation's school population. Latino immigrant students are attending U.S. schools in unprecedented numbers. This increase can be explained in part by the increased percentage of students who are children of immigrants, foreign-born and U.S.-born (Perez, 2001). Perez (2001) reported that Latinos are a relatively young population that has had a major impact on U.S. school systems.

In 2001 there were 8.4 million Latino children enrolled in grades K-12, accounting for 16% of all students. In 2003 Latino students represented 19% of public school enrollment, up from 6% in 1972. The proportion of public school students who represented the Black subgroup, or who were members of other minority groups, increased less over this same period than the proportion of Latino immigrant students. The Latino immigrant student enrollment surpassed the Black student enrollment for the first time in 2005 (NCES, 2003-2008). Schools in the United States will continue to experience a growing Latino enrollment (Pew Hispanic Center, 2005). The Latino population of students ages 5 to 19 is projected to grow from 11 million to 16 million by the year 2020. Twenty-four percent of Latino immigrant students ages 5 to 19 are projected to represent the public school population (Pew Hispanic Center, 2005).

Over the past 15 years there have been changes in both the demographics and infrastructure of public schools (Fry, 2007). Fry also reported that school enrollment (public and private) reached about 50 million students. The total number of public schools has increased by more than 13,000 since 1988-89. At the same time, high levels of immigration have resulted in considerable growth in minority student populations while White public school enrollments have declined since 1993 (Fry, 2007). To accommodate growing enrollments many school districts have opened new schools (Fry, 2007).

These sharp patterns in the growth of immigrant students are not restricted to historically southwest regional states such as Texas and Florida. The increase in the Latino immigrant student population is occurring all over the country. Reyes & Valencia (1993) reported that the metropolitan areas of New York, New Jersey, Miami, Fort Lauderdale, and Chicago now have substantial concentrations of Latino students. More recently, projected increases in the Latino immigrant student population have occurred in the south (Torres, 2001; Wainer, 2004). Torres (2001) reported that Latinos are increasingly moving to states such as Alabama, South Carolina, North Carolina, Georgia, Mississippi, Louisiana, Tennessee, Oklahoma, Kentucky, Arkansas, Florida, and Virginia where the booming economy provides work and better opportunities for Latino families. It is projected that by 2025, the Latino population in these states will at least double, thus changing the delivery outcomes of education and school practices in these areas of the country (Torres, 2001).

Although parental involvement has varied constructs, research has shown the importance of parental involvement. In fact, a host of researchers reported parental involvement leads to improved student achievement (Delgado-Gaitan, 2001; Epstein, 2002; Henderson, Mapp, Johnson, & Davies, 2007; Scribner; Ramirez, 2003; Tinkler, 2002; & Torrez, 2004; and Young, and Pedroza, 1999). In a study of high performing schools, predominantly students of Latino descent, Scribner et al. (1999) found that differences in family structure, culture, ethnic background, social class, age, and gender are a number of the factors that account for some of the varied constructs of parental involvement. These authors reported the “what” of parental involvement depends on who you ask; professional staff or family members (p.36). Scribner’s study revealed two distinct perceptions of parent involvement. First, the teachers interpreted parental involvement as participation in school activities such as meetings, workshops, and governance activities. Second, the teachers also viewed parental involvement as parents working

as teacher's aides, tutors, and school advocates. Scribner et al. (1999) also interviewed groups of Latino parents. The Latino parents in their study had different perceptions of their involvement in the educational process. These parents felt that activities such as checking homework, reading to their children and listening to them read, obtaining tutorial assistance, providing nurturance, instilling cultural values, talking with their children, and sending them to school well-fed, clean, and rested were important to their children's success in school. The parents were not only concerned with the academic achievement but also with nurturing, instilling values of respect, honor, cooperation, and good behavior at school. Delgado-Gaitan (2004) conducted a study in a Latino community. She found that 98% of the teachers in her study viewed parental involvement to be very important, but most teachers believed that parents were not working with their children at home.

In the research synthesis *Diversity: School, Family, & Community Connections*, Boethel (2003) addressed diversity as it relates to student achievement, school, family, and community connections. Synthesizing 64 studies, Boethel (2003) cited seven broad findings that summarized the overall knowledge base relative to school connections among minority parents and low-income student populations. The findings are as follows:

- “1. No matter what their race/ethnicity, culture, or income, most families have high aspirations and concerns for their children's success. However, there are limited findings as to whether minority and low-income families' high aspirations for their children have a positive impact on student achievement;
2. Families from racial, ethnic, and cultural minorities are actively involved in their children's schooling. Although, their involvement may vary somewhat from those of the White, mainstream U.S. families. The extent and types of involvement among low-income families may be linked to poverty and economic stressors;
3. Families and school staff report the extent of parental involvement and the schools' outreach tend to be inconsistent with schools with larger minority populations. The reasons for these inconsistencies are not clear;
4. Research studies have identified barriers to minority and low-income parental involvement in their children's schooling; barriers that schools can often help to overcome. These barriers include contextual factors (time constraints, child care needs, and transportation), language differences, cultural beliefs about the role of

- families in their children's schooling; families lack of knowledge and understanding of U.S. educational processes, and issues of exclusion and discrimination;
5. Research findings are limited and inconsistent regarding the extent that increased parental involvement is linked to improved academic achievement, particularly among minority and low-income student populations;
  6. The research-base is thin appear to be promising in strengthening family, school, and community connections among minority and low-income student populations.
  7. In seeking to close the achievement gap, it is necessary to address the among family, school, and community.” (p. 25)

#### *Mandates and Policies Affecting Latino Parental Involvement*

The literature on parental involvement states that parental involvement efforts have been focused on connecting parents to schools by introducing them to the school facility and the school's faculty and staff (Blazer, 2005). However, there are evolving laws and legislation that require schools to develop effective partnerships with parents while meeting specific legal requirements for notification and options for parental decision-making. While implementing parental involvement programs, activities, and procedures, states, local education agencies (LEA) and schools may not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or age. This is consistent with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), and the Age Discrimination Act of 1975.

The Goals 2000: Educate America Act (PL 103-227) was signed into law on March 31, 1994. The Act provides resources to states and communities to ensure that all students reach their full potential. It is based on the premise that students will reach higher levels of achievement when more is expected of them. Goals 2000 established a framework to help identify academic standards, to measure student progress, and to provide the support that students may need to meet the standards. The Act codified in law the six original education goals concerning school readiness, school completion, student academic achievement, leadership in math and science, adult literacy, and safe and drug-free schools. It added two new goals encouraging teacher professional development and parental participation.

The No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) of 2001, Title I, Part A is legislation designed to help close the achievement gap between disadvantaged and minority students and their peers.

Parental involvement has been a centerpiece of Title I. However, for the first time in the history of the ESEA, it has a specific statutory definition. The statute defines parental involvement as: “the participation of parents in regular, two-way and meaningful communication involving student academic learning and other school activities” (No Child Left Behind Act, 2001).

### *Benefits of Parental Involvement*

Henderson et al. (2007) argues that it is important to understand that families who send their children to school every day want their children to succeed in school and in life. Therefore, one can conclude that establishing effective and meaningful parent-school partnerships can benefit parents and their children. More important, meaningful two-way parent-school partnerships can benefit the entire school community (Henderson et al., 2007).

### *Student Benefits*

In *A New Wave of Evidence*, Henderson and Mapp (2002) conducted a research synthesis of studies that provided evidence of positive relationships between family involvement and student achievement. Henderson et al. reported the following benefits of parental involvement:

- “1. Higher grade point averages and scores on standardized tests;
2. Enrollment in more challenging and academic programs;
3. More classes and credits earned;
4. Better attendance;
5. Improved behavior at home and at school;
6. Better social skills and adaptation to school;
7. Awareness of own progress and of actions needed to maintain or improve grades;
8. Informed decisions about courses and programs;
9. Positive attitude towards schoolwork;
10. Homework completion;
11. Self-concept of ability as a learner;
12. Awareness of representation of families in school decisions.” (p.24)

A study conducted by Love, Kisker, Ross, and Schochet (2001) of the Mathematica Policy Research, Inc. involving 3,000 children and their families enrolled in an Early Head Start program (EHS) found significant benefits for the parents involved in the program. A major finding of this study was that by 2 years of age the children in the study were functioning better

across cognitive, language, and social-emotional developmental measures. In fact, the children were reported to have larger vocabularies and were able to use more grammatically correct sentences at age 2. In addition, the mothers' in the study were reported having been able to create more structure in their children's day and showed an increased knowledge of infant-toddler development and developmental milestones.

Although most family-school partnership programs appeared to be aimed at families with younger children, from birth through kindergarten, Epstein, Clark, Salinas, and Sanders (1997) conducted a family-school partnership study in 80 Baltimore, Maryland elementary schools. The results of the study revealed that in schools with highly rated partnership programs, students made small but significant gains in writing and math, compared to schools with lower-rated programs. They also found that attendance improved in the more highly rated school partnership programs. Another study conducted by Epstein, Simon, and Salinas (1997) examined what effects a program, involving families in their children's learning at home, had on their older middle school aged children. These researchers implemented the "Teachers Involving Parents in Schoolwork" (TIPS) writing program. After the implementation of this interactive homework program in two middle schools in Baltimore, Maryland, the researchers found parent involvement in the TIPS program had increased 8th grade students' scores in writing.

Each of the above studies indicates that programs and interventions that engage families in supporting their children's learning at home are linked to higher student achievement (Cotton & Wiklund, 2001). In addition, early childhood, pre-school, and kindergarten programs that train parents to work with their children at home tend to yield significant and positive results (Love et. al.; 2001). Also, programs such as weekly homework assignments in which students engage their parents, yield improved grades for elementary and middle school students (Epstein, Simon, & Salinas, 1997).

### *Parent Benefits*

*Epstein's Framework of Six Types of Involvement* (2004) stated that each type of involvement includes different practices of partnership and challenges that must be addressed in order to involve all families. Epstein (1997) also stated that each type of involvement requires redefinition of some basic principles and each type leads to different results for students, families, and teachers. Epstein (1997) cited several benefits for parents and teachers:

- “1. Feelings of support from school and other parents;



2. Understanding of and confidence about parenting, child adolescent development, and changes in home conditions for learning as children proceed through school;
3. Awareness of own and others' challenges of parenting;
4. Understanding of school programs and policies;
5. Interactions with teachers and ease of communication with school and teachers;
6. Increased comfort in school;
7. Understanding of instructional programs.”

### *Teacher Benefits*

- “1. Understanding of student diversity;
2. Understanding families' backgrounds, cultures, concerns, goals, needs, and views of their children;
3. Readiness to involve families in new ways, including those not volunteering at school;
4. Better design of homework assignments;
5. Respect for family time;
6. Knowledgeable, helpful referrals of children and families to needed services.”

### *Parental Involvement in Middle and High Schools*

Adolescence is a time of rapid changes. Adolescents, ages 11-17, experience puberty, develop abstract thinking abilities, and transition out of middle school and into high school. Adolescents are at greater risk of dropping out of school, arrest, drug use, and psychological disorders than other age groups (Kreider, 2007). To be successful in school and in life, Kreider (2007) argued that adolescents need trusting and caring relationships. They also need opportunities to form their own identities, engage in autonomous self-expression, and take part in challenging experiences that will develop their competence and self-esteem (Kreider, 2007). Adolescents desire independence and time with their peers, while continuing to rely on guidance from parents and other adults (Kreider, 2007). Although parental involvement remains important during the adolescent years, unfortunately, family involvement in education tends to decrease at the middle and secondary levels (Kreider). In fact, parental involvement is greater at the pre-school and elementary levels than at middle and high school (Cotton and Wikelund, 2001).

Cotton and Wikelund (2001) report that there are differences in the incidences and types of parental involvement as students move through the upper elementary and secondary grades. They point out that parents become less involved as their children grow older for various reasons. Some of the reasons why parents are less involved at the middle and high school levels include: son's or daughter's schools being larger and farther from home, secondary schools having a more sophisticated curriculum, students having several teachers, and students beginning to develop a sense of independence and a sense of separation from their parents. For these reasons the kinds of parental involvement engaged in by parents of younger students are no longer relevant or useful (Cotton et al., 2001). Therefore, the research on parental participation with older students often takes on a different form of participation. Parents monitoring homework, helping students make postsecondary plans and selecting courses that support these plans and parent attendance at school-sponsored activities are some forms of parental participation at the secondary level (Cotton et al., 2001).

The participation of parents of middle school and high school students has many positive benefits. These benefits include: the ability of parents to monitor their adolescent's academic and social progress, parents being able to acquire information needed to make decisions about their adolescent's academic future, developing positive relationships with school staff, successful transitioning from middle to high school for the students, and high school completion for students (Kreider, 2007). Parental involvement at all levels, including the secondary level, remains an important factor in increased student achievement. According to Cotton et al., the earlier parents are involved in a child's educational process, the more powerful the benefits.

As part of a synthesis of outcome-based empirical research considered representative of adolescents' positive growth and development, Kreider (2007) examined the family involvement processes of adolescence related to educational success. Kreider reported that if these processes are in place during middle and high school years, adolescents will be better prepared for smooth transitions to college and other postsecondary settings. The three family involvement processes are as follows: *Parenting, Home-School Relationships, and Responsibility for Learning*.

*Parenting* is the family involvement process consisting of parents' attitudes, values, and practices of raising adolescents. Kreider (2007) reported warm, responsive parenting in adolescence is related to school success and positive social and emotional outcomes. In addition, Kreider reported adolescents with supportive parents exhibit higher rates of self-reliance, identity

formation, school performance, and positive career-planning aspirations. Furthermore, adolescents who share trusting relationships with their parents have higher grade point averages (GPAs) and are more likely to disclose information to their parents that will keep them out of trouble (Kreider, 2007). Adolescents benefit when supportive and mature relationships with parents begin in the middle school years. (Kreider, 2007).

*Home-School Relationships* are the formal and informal connections between the family and the school and are as important for adolescents as they are for younger children (Kreider, 2007). Kreider reported that home-school relationships include: communication with teachers and school personnel, attending school events, volunteering at school, and participating in parent-teacher organizations and leadership groups. Kreider also stated that the extent to which parents attend and volunteer at school functions, for example, has a positive impact on adolescent academic achievement. Unique to middle and high school is the parental participation in college outreach programs. When parents attend school meetings that provide information about the college entrance process, SAT preparation, financial aid for college, and course placements, parents begin to imagine their children as college students (Kreider, 2007). Parents begin to feel more comfortable in the school environment and begin to build support groups with other parents to scaffold their children's college preparation (Kreider, 2007). Furthermore, such participation may also increase parents' familiarity with college preparation requirements and the parent becomes engaged in navigating the school and college preparation system (Kreider, 2007).

*Responsibility for Learning* is an aspect of parenting that places emphasis on homework management, educational expectations, and encouragement for college (Kreider, 2007). However, parents are less likely to be directly involved in the homework content of middle and high school students as compared to younger children (Kreider, 2007). Also in the process of responsibility for learning, parental expectations improve student outcomes (Kreider, 2007). Kreider stated that parents' high expectations for achievement influences high school seniors' academic achievement, high school credit completion, and enrollment in extracurricular and academic high school programs. Specifically, when adolescents perceive that their parents have high educational goals, Kreider reported that these students are more interested in school, have greater academic self-regulation, and higher goal pursuits. Kreider also found that parent discussions with adolescents about educational issues were associated with the likelihood of

enrolling in college. However, according to Kreider, the degree of benefit differed by ethnic/racial groups, as well as by immigration generational status. Kreider reported that high achieving, low-income Latino college students reported their parents provided them with encouragement and motivation, and conveyed the idea that valuing education was a way out of poverty.

### *Parental Involvement and the Principal's Role*

The creation of an inviting school climate for parental involvement is grounded in strong school principal leadership (Hoover-Dempsey, Walker, Sandler, Whetsel, Green, Wilkins, & Closson, 2005). In fact, the school principal's role is vital in the planning and organizing the engagement of all parents both at school and at home (Glanz, 2006). It is the responsibility of the principal to foster strong partnerships among families, teachers, and students (Blazer, 2005). Principals set the tone for the school, provide an atmosphere of collaboration among partners, and help teachers and parents gain the skills to work together effectively for student success (Blazer, 2005).

Hoover-Dempsey et al. (2005) suggests the more committed, visible, and active principals are in supporting parent-teacher relationships, the more likely it is that schools will develop strong programs of parent and community involvement. Effective principals understand this fact and do not leave parental participation to chance. Glanz (2006) argued effective principals organize efforts to offer parents educational opportunities in order that they might serve as effective educators at home. Glanz stated, "In the era of heightened accountability for student achievement, the principal's responsibility to do anything and everything to boost student achievement is more important than ever" (p.17).

Glanz (2006) cited 10 parent engagement strategies for school principals. They are as follows:

- “1. Articulate a commitment to parental involvement;
2. Develop a strategic plan that addresses parental involvement at school;
3. Welcome parents at every opportunity (signs and posters in the school reflect a welcoming message;
4. Develop a close interpersonal relationship with parents and the PTA;
5. Provide ongoing, meaningful workshops for parents on varied topics of interest to both the school and parents;

6. Invite parents to join in-school committees (e.g.- curriculum);
7. Encourage shared decision-making experiences with parents on a host of relevant school-related issues;
8. Monitor parental involvement at home;
9. Survey parents' attitudes on a regular basis;
10. Provide on-going communication.” (p.16)

In *Family Involvement: The Home-School Partnership*, Blazer (2005) cited several actions that principals can take to promote successful family-school partnerships. These actions are as follows:

- “1. Express a vision that addresses their belief about family-school relationships. Express what you expect the staff to do for and with parents, what you expect parents to do for and with staff, and how families can be involved in the day-to-day aspects of their children's education.
2. Let teachers, staff, and the community know that your school is a partnership school. Provide leaders that create a climate where school staff understands that families are important and that they must be respectful and supportive of them. Develop a strong partnership by encouraging family participation and providing a welcoming school climate.
3. Let all students know how important their families are to the school and to the students' progress and success. The way in which the principal interacts with the students and the things children tell their families about the principal can greatly affect families' perceptions and their relationships with the school.
4. Build networks for families and teachers by bringing them together in atypical settings. When families, teachers, and community members gather and network together, they are more likely to develop different and stronger relationships with each other.
5. Provide opportunities for families to speak directly with school leadership and teachers in order to receive information about the school and their children's educational progress directly. Forums for communication include: presentations, roundtable discussions, and parent grade level lunches.

6. Work with other principals and district administrators to arrange professional development, share ideas, solve problems, and improve community partnerships.”  
(p.13)

The No Child Left Behind Act of (2001) encourages schools and district leaders to expand parent involvement efforts beyond traditional school open houses, fundraising and parent-teacher conferences. Parents should be considered part of a team that includes teachers, school and district officials, and community members (Blazer, 2005).

School administrators and educators face barriers to creating effective parent partnerships (National Association of Elementary School Principals, 2001) (NAESP). Many principals report they lack the resources, time, money, staff, and know-how to make parent partnerships work (NAESP, 2001).

The National Association of Elementary Schools Principals (2001) addressed a key finding as a result of a *School Leadership* survey administered to teachers, parents, and students. As a result, a publication entitled, *Leading Learning Communities: Standards for What Principals Should Know and Be Able to Do*, was created. Standard six of this publication is a guide that outlines strategies for school principals in creating school cultures that encourage community ownership of schools’ work, shared leadership, and decision-making (NAESP, 2001). This guide also provides strategies that principals can use to encourage parents to become meaningfully involved in schools and their children’s learning. Strategies that would ensure students and families are connected to the community services that they need are also provided in the guide. In 2004, NAESP partnered with MetLife Foundation to fund a pilot a program that would help principals engage families and create shared responsibilities for students and school success. Twelve principals received small grants to implement a family engagement project. The project revealed a clear focus, and dedication, that schools, parents, and community members can build relationships and take action to improve learning (NAESP, 2001). School principals reported several lessons learned from this project. Some of the lessons learned were as follows:

- “1. Principal leadership doesn’t stop at the school door. Find opportunities to support parents and students throughout the community.
2. Make parent engagement a priority. Realize that substantive parent engagement requires resources. Be prepared to dedicate staff, time, and energy to the cause,

3. Tap into your knowledge base. Consider how your experiences relate to those of parents and how your personal lessons can help others overcome their barriers.
4. Relationships are a two-way street. Think about how groups and individuals benefit from strong relationships with the school, and use those benefits to market your idea.
5. Put a new spin on an established program. Look for ways to improve existing parent programs.
6. Relationships matter. Before people can work together effectively, they should know and trust one another.
7. Sometimes things that cost very little yield a significant impact.” (p.2)

### *Latino Family Culture*

Family-based research has given little attention to the variations in culturally based parenting practices (Guilamo-Ramos, Dittus, Jaccard, Johansson, Bouris, & Acosta, 2007). Parental involvement in education is crucial to a student’s academic achievement. While administrators recognize the importance of forging stronger relationships between the classroom and Latino homes, they may not have the understanding of the Latino community as it relates to the skills needed to foster parental involvement (Guilamo-Ramos, et. al., 2007). Chrispeels and Rivero (2001) reported that many teachers’ perceptions that Latino families do not care about their children’s education are often derived from misunderstandings of actions by these families such as not questioning teachers or administrators about the quality of education their son or daughter may be receiving or trusting the schools to do what is best for their children. Chrispeels et al. (2001) argued differing perceptions of a parent’s role and place in school and their children’s education can vary across cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds. Misunderstandings that some school personnel form towards Latino parents often stem from an unfamiliarity with the family traditions of the Latino families, particularly low-income and less acculturated parents (Chrispeels et al., 2001).

In understanding how the role of Latino culture influences the understanding of parenting practices of Latino families, Guilamo-Ramos et al. (2007) uniquely integrates four Latino cultural constructs of *familismo*, *respecto*, *personalismo*, and *simpatia* with the gender roles of *machismo* and *marianismo*. Guilamo et al. defines culture as a “system of meaning” or a common cognitive orientation that is a set of values, beliefs, and practices shared by an

identifiable social group. Similar to Guilamo-Ramos et al.(2007), Coll et al. (1996) stated that adaptive culture involves a social system defined by a set of goals, values, and attitudes that differs from the dominant culture.

The term *familismo* represents Latino attitudes, beliefs, values, norms that assist them in the formulation of personal and family decision-making and parenting practices. *Familismo* refers to the attachment, loyalty, and reciprocity that characterize relationships among members of the nuclear Latino family and among extended family, including other significant individuals who play a key role in the raising of children. Latino culture emphasizes the importance of the family's well-being rather than pursuing individual goals-family first, individual second. Perreira, Chapman, and Stein (2006) agree that *familismo*, to Latino families, refers to feelings of loyalty to and solidarity towards members of the family as well as the notion of the family as an extension of self. Importantly and traditionally, the mother accepts the responsibility as the primary source of care for the entire family (Guilamo-Ramos et al., 2007).

Within the Latino family, the construct of *simpatia* emphasizes harmony and the avoidance of controversy and conflict. To Latino families, *simpatia* means politeness, agreeable, respect for others, and positive interpersonal relations. Guilamo-Ramos et al. (2007) agrees that a low-conflict relation with their adolescent children is an important practice within Latino families. *Personalismo* is similar to *familismo* and *simpatia* in that the emphasis is on personal character and inner qualities. Social relationships that are warm, trusting, and respectful form the foundation for interpersonal connectedness and cooperation. Furthermore, *personalismo* denotes a preference for people within the same ethnic group. Whether based on age or position, the term *respeto* has been used to describe the importance of adherence to authority (Guilamo-Ramos et al., 2007). Latino parents traditionally place a high value on their children's behavior associated with respect such as demonstrating respect and responsibility towards elders. Pong, Hao, and Gardner (2005) report Latino parents are said to be strict and traditionally make unilateral decisions affecting their children, particularly their adolescents, rather than engage their adolescents in a democratic decision-making process. They expect their adolescents to conform to parental guidelines and assist parents and siblings.

Latino *machismo* and *marianismo* have been gender-role constructs that denote male dominance within the family and female submissiveness. *Marianismo* is derived from the devotion shown to the Virgin Mary who represents humility and virtue which is also required of



the female in the family. For some Latinas, the importance of motherhood is culturally sanctioned as a rewarding role for the females within the family (Guilamo-Ramos et al., 2007). *Machismo* refers to a host of attitudes that represent the leadership or decision-making role that men individually and collectively assume in the home and the community. Positive (confident, responsible, personable) and negative (aloof, risk taking, aggressive) connotations have been used to characterize *machismo*. The differentiation of male and female responsibilities pervades the way in which the construct of *machismo* and *marianismo* influence Latino parenting in the literature.

### *Types of Latino Parental Involvement*

Inspired by Epstein's six topologies of parental involvement, Armandina Garza (2004) family-involvement coordinator for the National Council of LARAZA (NCLR), identified 6 different types of Latino parent engagement opportunities that schools and community based organizations can promote (Osterling, 2004). Garza's 6 types of Latino parental involvement roles are as follows:

- “1. *Parent as a Leader* - Involves leadership and advocacy skills; shared power between the school and the parent.
2. *Parent as a Collaborator* - The parent participates in school-wide decision-making.
3. *Parent as a Teacher* - The parent is an academic partner and supports learning.
4. *Parent as a Supporter* - The parent attends cultural and athletic events.
5. *Parent as a Parent* - Parenting skills/social-emotional support.
6. Serves schools as needed.” (p. 272 )

### *Barriers to Latino Parental Involvement*

Implementing school-home partnerships often creates obstacles for school personnel. Sanders and Harvey (2002) reported that lack of time, lack of teacher participation due to burnout, and lack of community partners, territorialism, information sharing, lack of focus, and professional turf are some of the barriers that hinder the implementation of effective and meaningful parental involvement strategies. Therefore, some of the well intended parental involvement strategies often fail (Sanders et al., 2002). Cassity and Harris (2000) believe that understanding why parents of Latino students are reluctant to become involved in the education of their children is the first step toward overcoming barriers and building meaningful home-

school relationships. The next section discussed some of the barriers that Latino parents face that hinder their participation.

### *Unfamiliarity with U. S. School Systems*

Latino parents are uncertain of their role in U.S. schools (Sosa, 1997). Sosa (1997) reported that Latino parents who have been educated in other countries view educators with high regard and defer to their experience/professional development with questions regarding their own child's best interest. Some under-educated, low-income Latino parents often view U.S. schools as a vast and intimidating system and sometimes will shy away from the complex school procedures, organizational patterns, and rules/regulations. In addition, some Latino parents view the U.S. school system as a bureaucracy governed by educated, non-Latinos whom they as parents have no right to question (Pappas, 1997). Pappas believes that teachers are the experts when it comes to educating their children. Bermudez and Marquez (1996) reported many minority families, including Latino families, are unfamiliar with the mainstream culture of U.S. schools versus schools in their home country. They also lack an understanding of home-school partnership expectations from the school system. Sosa reported that while Latino parents may understand the importance of homework, they may not realize the academic importance of everyday activities such as children talking to adult members of the family, reading and writing for fun, playing board games, or participating in sports.

A study conducted by Azmitia, Cooper, Garcia, Ittel, Johnason, Lopez, Martinez, Chavez, and Rivera (1994) examined how low-income Mexican-American children's and adolescents' everyday learning activities in the home and parents' aspirations for their children's future are key elements in home-school relationships. The parents interviewed reported being dissatisfied with their ability to carry out home involvement activities. Azmitia et al. (1994) reported Latino parents could not provide direct help with their children's homework because of their limited schooling or English. However, the parent participants reported they helped their children at home by checking with them to see that they had completed the assigned homework or by enlisting the help of an older sibling.

### *Lack of Trust*

Bermudez and Marquez (1996) pointed out that many Latino parents view schools as an incomprehensible system. These researchers also stated many Latino parents' lack of trust in the

school system often results in apprehension and a misunderstanding of perceived intentions of each party. The lack of involvement that results from mistrust and apprehension is often perceived by schools as a lack of concern for children's education (Bermudez & Marquez, 1996). Bermudez and Marquez argued that these parents are not apathetic or hard to reach but simply need to know their roles, rights, and responsibilities as it relates to the education of their children.

### *School Environment*

For most Latino parents and their children, the school is the first institutional contact in the United States (Perreira, Chapman, & Stein, 2006). However, many Latino parents do not know that they have the right to ask about their children's education and that their involvement positively impacts their children's education (Perriera et al., 2006; & Quezada, 2003). Furthermore, partnering with the school is not a tradition in the Latino culture (Quezada, 2003; Osterling & Garza, 2004). As a matter of fact, Osterling and Garza reported that in some Latino American countries parental advocacy, as it is practiced in the U.S., is not only discouraged but is disrespectful. According to Perriera and Quezada, Latino parents have a high regard for educators and treat them as professionals that should be left alone to do their jobs. However, school personnel have expressed concern about the poor record of involving Latino parents in school activities (Sosa, 1996). Some educators believe many Latino students enter school without the necessary prerequisite knowledge and skills to be successful (Garcia & Guerra, 2004). Furthermore, Garcia and Guerra reported Latino parents often do not understand the importance of being an advocate for their children. Osterling and Garza (2004) stated Latino parents want to become educational advocates and community leaders. The problem is that many Latino parents have beliefs and expectations that are different from those held by the school (Sosa, 1997). These differences in beliefs and expectations are often examples of barriers that hinder their Latino parent participation. Therefore, they are reluctant to become involved in meaningful home-school partnerships (Quiocho & Daoud, 2006).

Many Latino students and their families come to the U.S. with rose-colored glasses hoping for a better life and a good education for their children. Unfortunately, many have little social capital. Having limited exposure to people who can inform them, they lack resources and have little understanding of how to navigate the U.S. school system (Bohn & Macpherson, 2005). Latino parents lack the knowledge of how to navigate the school system in order to obtain

the best educational opportunities possible for their children (Bohn & Macpherson, 2005). For example, some parents do not know that they must enroll their children in school and often do not possess the necessary documents for enrollment. Although not all Latino parents confront barriers that hinder their involvement in school activities, they are important factors for many Latino parents (Quezada, 2003).

### *Relationships Between Parents and Teachers*

Latino parents feel teachers wait too long before reporting a problem with their children and they only hear from teachers when there is bad news (Blazer, 2005). Blazer reported that many parents felt that they did not have ongoing and easy access to their children's teachers. Parents also felt teachers often blamed parents when children had problems at school. Furthermore, Blazer (2005) reported some parents felt unwelcome at school, believed that schools didn't value their input, thought communication was a one-way system with parents, and felt they had few opportunities to share their ideas with the school. Blazer (2005) also reported teachers felt disrespected when parents challenged their authority and questioned their decisions. Blazer also stated that teachers felt not all parents sent their children to school ready to learn and wanted parents to follow through more with academic and disciplinary recommendations they had made to parents.

### *Differing Expectations of Parent-Teacher Roles*

Immigrant parents hold different beliefs about the roles of teachers and parents than those assumed at school. Antunez (2000) noted:

In some cultures, such as many Latinos, teaming with the school is not a tradition.

Education has been historically perceived as the responsibility of the schools and parent intervention is viewed as interference with what trained professionals are supposed to do. (p.3)

Families from such cultures believe that their role is to raise respectful, well-behaved human beings, and leave the academic instruction to the schools (LARASA, 1997). Valdes (1996) reported that Latinos define their places, roles, and responsibilities in their children's education as to meet the basic obligations and provide support. Latino families see their essential role as ensuring that their children have food, clothing and shelter, and that they are socialized into the norms and expectations of the family. Chrispeels and Rivero (2001) stated Latino

parents express their support for the school by attending open houses, parent-teacher conferences, festivals and fund-raising events that involve their children (Chrispeels et al., 2001). Chrispeels and Rivero stated Latino parents do not necessarily see it as their place to initiate communication and contact with the school staff or to volunteer in the classroom.

### *Past Educational Experiences*

Many Latino parents have dropped out of the very school system that is now educating their children (Pappas, 1997). For these Latino parents, school is not the symbol of hope and opportunity but is the site of their failure (Pappas, 1997). While Latino parents want their children to do well, they may not want to subject themselves to renewed feelings of inadequacy. Latino parents often feel that teachers may judge their children's potential in terms of their own failure (Pappas, 1997).

The way parents and other family members are received the first time they come to school can set the tone for the duration of their relationship (Blazer, 2005). These prior experiences with the school also impact how parents trust school staff members and become involved in their children's schooling. Many parents have had negative school experiences and do not want to get involved or they feel unsure of the value of their contribution (Blazer, 2005). For example, Perreira, Chapman, and Stein (2006) reported the parent participants in their study reported negative experiences with their children's school when Spanish-English interpreters were not available, when school administrators or teachers did not explain requirements for successful completion of a grade, and when their children's peers communicated negative stereotypes about Latino immigrants. Bermudez and Marquez (1996) reported these negative experiences of home-school interactions are often reinforced when schools communicate with parents sharing bad news about their children.

### *Communication*

Bermudez and Marquez (1996) examined the effectiveness of a parent involvement program developed as a four-way collaborative effort among an institution of higher education, an urban school district, parents, and the business community. Bermudez and Marquez stated the parent participants reported the inability to understand the language of U.S. schools was a major deterrent to parental involvement for them. Bermudez et al. pointed out parents of high school students, for example, indicated they want to help their children but their inability to understand

the language of the assignments had kept them from trying. Pappas (1997) argued when schools do not provide someone who speaks Spanish, parents were forced to rely on their children to translate for them, resulting in poor communication between the parent and the school. Younger children are too immature to translate appropriately and older children may intentionally mislead both their parents and school personnel to avoid blame, punishment, or embarrassment (Pappas, 1997).

In a study conducted by Perreira, Chapman, and Stein (2006), the authors identified ways in which Latino parents with adolescents cope with their new environment and how that environment shaped their parenting practices. As parents in this study discussed their acculturation experiences, they focused on challenges of learning a new language and building relationships with Americans. In order to help their children navigate their new schools, parents expressed a need to overcome the language barrier (Perreira et al., 2006). Without the ability to speak English, the parents expressed feelings of helplessness, alienation, and the inability to advocate on behalf of their children (Pereira et al., 2006). They also expressed the need to have Spanish-English interpreters available when visiting their children's school. Unfortunately, as children became more efficient in the new language, Latino students often resent their parents' inability to speak English and would become embarrassed (Perreira et al., 2006).

Tornatzky, Cutler and Lee (2002) identified types of communications between Latino parents and schools and other sources of information that allowed the Latino parents to gain college knowledge. In their study they reported language barriers as the major obstacle to increasing college knowledge among Latino parents with students aspiring to attend college. These researchers stated common to all college knowledge sources and channels of communication vehicles, English is the language of choice thus Latino parents with limited English skills were at a disadvantage (Tornatzky et al., 2002).

### *Logistical Barriers*

Logistical barriers include time, money, safety, transportation, and child care concerns (Tinkler 2002; Osterling & Garza, 2004). Time to participate in school activities for Latino parents was often problematic since both parents worked. Latino parents often work several miles away from home and worked long hours at low-paying jobs in order to provide the bare essentials for their families (Tinkler, 2002). This can create additional stress for Latino parents (Tinkler, 2002). Tinkler also reported school activities held at night hindered Latino parental

participation. Nightly school activities, depending upon the location of the school, presented safety concerns, particularly in the absence of transportation (Tinkler, 2002). Sosa (1997) reported another logistical problem for Latino parents. She stated that many Latino families who are new to the community lacked close trusting friends. Many Latino families no longer had extended families of uncles, aunts, grandparents, etc. to support them with childcare.

#### *Latino Parents' Acculturation and Educational Level*

A study conducted by Moreno and Lopez (1999) examined 158 Latina mothers' acculturation and education levels as it relates to various socio-cultural, personal, and contextual factors related to the mothers' level of parental involvement. Interestingly, Moreno and Lopez concluded, Latina mothers' with at least a high school education or greater, who were less acculturated, had the greatest level of self-efficacy with regard to their involvement in their children's education.

#### Literature Review Summary

This chapter reviewed the literature on parental involvement in general, as well as parental involvement for Latino parents. The influx of Latino students has changed the demographics of schools creating concern for Latino student achievement (Torres, 2001). As the Latino demographics continue to grow, it is important for schools to reach out to Latino parents and find creative ways to include them in meaningful two-way involvement in their children's education.

Further, this chapter has reviewed the multifaceted construct of parental involvement. The literature on this important topic has cited consistent evidence that families influence student achievement and that parental involvement benefits both students and their parents. Therefore, meaningful and sustained school-family relationships can be enjoyed by the total school environment (Epstein, J., & Salinas, K. C., 2004; and Henderson & Mapp, 2007). Additionally, the school principal has an important role in parental involvement (Glanz, 2006). Glanz reported that the school principal is the catalyst in the planning and the organization of meaningful and sustained school-family relationships. Unfortunately, Latino parental involvement is limited by a mismatch in their sense of place in their child's education (Chrispeels et al., 2001).

Finally, this chapter has presented the various barriers that hinder the successful involvement of Latino parents in their children's education. Throughout the literature, both

school principals and teachers have reported misconceptions of Latino parents' lack of involvement and the uncaring attitudes of Latino parents. Yet researchers report that Latino parents do care and want to be involved, but they often are not sure how to be involved (Osterling & Garza, 2004). They trust that schools will do what is best for their children. Overall, barriers in the school environment, barriers of communication, misconceptions, logistics, and the parents' level of education must be addressed and overcome in order to create successful and meaningful parental involvement programs. Furthermore, understanding the culture of Latino families, their values, beliefs, and traditions influences the creation of effective school-family relationships. Sincere, legitimate, and committed efforts to involve all parents in school-related activities translate into trusting and collaborative school-family partnerships (Glanz, 2006).



## CHAPTER THREE

### METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this chapter is to describe the procedure used to obtain the perceptions and insights of selected elementary, middle, and high school teachers on the parental involvement strategies implemented in their school division and to gather baseline data for future research (Gay & Airasian, 2000). Specifically, this study details the research design, sample participants, instrumentation, data collection, and exploratory and descriptive data analysis used in this study.

#### Research Questions

The over-all guiding question for this study was as follows:

1. What Latino parental involvement strategies are school districts implementing in selected Virginia elementary, middle, and high schools?

#### Study Participants and Sampling Procedures

Annually, the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) collects statistics on the number of students enrolled in its public schools on September 30<sup>th</sup>. VDOE prepares a report derived from the data submitted by each school district in Virginia. Student counts are reported by grade assignment and ethnicity. Excluded from the September 30<sup>th</sup> count are special education preschool students, pupils in hospitals, clinics or detention homes, and local programs such as vocational and alternative education centers). Based on the 2007-2008 report, set criteria were utilized in the selection of the schools to participate. In order to be selected for participation, a school district had to enroll less than 80,000 students. The individual schools considered for participation had to have a student population also comprised of at least 10% Latino.

The list of all Virginia school districts was retrieved from *Virginia Department of Education's, Data and Reports, Virginia Education Statistics, and Student Data, Virginia Department of Education's Student Membership by Ethnicity, September 30, 2007-2008*, which yielded 12 school districts that met the set criteria. Two school districts from the aforementioned list of school districts that met the set criteria agreed to participate. The *Virginia Department of Education's Data and Reports: 2007-2008 Fall Membership, School Summaries and by*

*Ethnicity, Grade and Gender*, was used to identify elementary, middle, and high schools having a Latino student population of at least 10% . A list of teachers assigned to individual schools was obtained from the school’s website. Teachers were randomly selected and asked to participate in the study.

### Instrumentation

Following a review of the literature, it was determined that a survey specifically related to the Latino parent involvement in a U. S. educational system was not available. However, there were several instruments available that addressed parental involvement in general. The data collected in instruments designed by Epstein appeared to be best aligned with the purpose of this study was selected for implementation. Epstein’s 6 parental involvement constructs of (1) *Parenting* (2) *Communicating* (3) *Volunteering* (4) *Learning at Home*, (5) *Decision-making and* (6) *Collaboration with the Community* provided a framework for the design of the study. A 62 question survey was designed to ascertain the current Latino parent involvement strategies implemented by selected elementary, middle, and high schools as reported by teachers of the selected schools. The survey was comprised of forty-six parental questions relative to parental involvement, 6 questions concerning *Teacher Demographics*, including the teacher’s age, gender, ethnicity, current grade level, years of teaching experience, and years in education and 1 question relative to the teachers’ parental involvement training. Also, *School Procedures*, and *School Characteristics* sections were added to the survey to gain insight into the schools’ practices and procedures as they relate to Latino parental involvement. Seven survey questions were eliminated from the data, yielding a total of 53 questions to be analyzed and interpreted for this study.

Elementary, middle, and high school teachers were asked to answer survey questions utilizing the following ratings:

- 1 Strongly Agree;
- 2 Agree;
- 3 Disagree;
- 4 Strongly Disagree.

A neutral or undecided choice in the Likert scale was not offered to the survey participants causing the participants to either agree or disagree with each question.

Initially, a total of 352 surveys were mailed electronically to individual elementary, middle, and high school teachers and/or electronically mailed to the school division's central office personnel and then forwarded to the selected teachers. The participants were requested to complete and return the survey via an electronic link within one week. Subsequently, in an effort to increase the rate of returned surveys, a second letter was sent to all selected survey teachers, both non-respondent and respondent. The letter thanked those teachers who had completed and returned the survey, and those who had not done so were encouraged to respond. In order to avoid returned emails, the letter was sent directly as an attachment, via email, to the principals of selected schools. The principals were asked to forward the letter and survey to selected teachers. The principals were also provided pertinent information about the study and the requested data for response was extended for two additional weeks. A total of 137 surveys (n=137) were returned, yielding a return rate of 39%, slightly below the expected return rate of 40%. Incomplete surveys were excluded from analysis, resulting in survey data for 115 respondents (n=115).

#### Content Validity

Prior to the analysis of the research question, the current literature on parental involvement was reviewed. Parental involvement studies as they relate to Latino parents, is very limited. However, those parental involvement surveys and questionnaires in general utilized by various school districts were reviewed and adaptation for use in this study. Based on the examination of the literature reviewed, the constructs of Epstein (2004) was selected, adapted, and employed. The 6 constructs designed by Epstein became the basis for the teacher participant survey instrument. The survey instrument was reviewed by various teachers and colleagues. The survey contained 46 questions under the Epstein's constructs of *Parenting, Communicating, Volunteering, Learning at Home, Decision-Making, and Collaborating with the Community*. Additional questions regarding *School Practices and Procedures, School Characteristics, and Teacher Training* on parental involvement were added to the survey to gain insight into the school's practices and procedures, characteristics, and teacher training on parental involvement strategies that focused on Latino parents.

## Assurance of Confidentiality

All participants, the individual teachers who formed the study respondents were assured of confidentiality. Prior to completing the survey, each teacher was asked to read a letter sent to them electronically that described the purpose of the study and their anticipated involvement. The participant's initial completion of the survey indicated agreement to the condition for participation, and of the letter a consent form approval also was obtained from the Institutional Review Board (IRB), of Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, prior to administration of the survey. (APPENDIX A)

## Data Analysis

Data analysis was based primarily on the premise that no single data source is likely to be bias-free or to be a completely accurate representation of reality. The researcher utilized SurveyMonkey and JMP-a statistical package developed by the SAS Institute Inc. Teacher survey data (quantitative) were collected via SurveyMonkey and were exported, classified, organized, and summarized utilizing the JMP statistical package. Exploratory and descriptive data analysis was utilized to explore the Latino parental involvement strategies being implemented in selected Virginia elementary and secondary schools. Descriptive data provided by the respondents were presented in 53 tables.

A Chi-square ( $\chi^2$ ), a nonparametric statistical test, compares the observed and expected frequency occurrences of one or more nominal values (Rozell, 1999). For survey questions eight through fifty-three, a Chi-square test of significance was conducted to measure and analyze differences in the survey participants' responses (Creighton and Glenn, 2008). Specifically, the  $\chi^2$  test was conducted to determine if a statistically significant difference existed between the observed frequencies ( $f_o$ ) (actual responses of the participants) and expected frequencies ( $f_e$ ) (a theoretical number of responses that is expected would fall into each category) or if the difference between the two variables was due to chance (Fathery, 2008). Due to low cell frequency counts, the frequencies of *Strongly Disagree* and *Disagree and Agree*, and *Strongly Agree*, were combined in order to conduct an  $\chi^2$  statistic.

The findings of this study are reported in Chapter 4. The survey participants' open-ended comments were also analyzed and reported.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### FINDINGS AND RESULTS

Presented in chapter 4 are the findings and the results of this study. Discussed in section 1 of this chapter is a review of the study. Reported in section 2 of this chapter is the survey participants' demographic description data and the data related to the 6 constructs of parental involvement, including the guiding research question. Included in section 3 of this chapter is a presentation of the discussion and summary of results, highlighting the major findings.

#### Review of the Study

There is extensive literature about parental involvement in general; however, the parental involvement literature specifically related to Latino parents is very limited. It is evident from the review of the literature that parental involvement plays an important role in student achievement, including students who are Latino. Not only does parental involvement play an important role in student achievement, parental involvement benefits the total school environment (Warner, 1991). This study examined the parental involvement strategies implemented in selected middle and high schools in two Virginia school districts during 2007-2008.

#### Research Methodology

To accomplish this investigation of parental involvement related specifically to Latino parents, the following guiding question was addressed:

1. What Latino parental involvement strategies are school districts implementing in selected Virginia elementary, middle, and high schools?

Utilizing Epstein's (2000) parental involvement constructs of, *1) Parenting*, *2) Communicating*, *3) Volunteering*, *4) Learning at Home*, *5) Decision-Making*, and *6) Collaborating with the Community*, a survey of parental involvement, specifically related to Latino parents, was developed to examine selected teacher perceptions of these parental involvement constructs. Also, in order to gain a more in-depth understanding of the teachers' perceptions of their schools' characteristics, daily operations, and the teacher participants' parental involvement training, 3 additional sections of *School Characteristics*, *School Procedures*, and *Teacher Training* were added to the survey.

After receiving approval from Virginia Tech's Institutional Review Board (IRB)

(see Appendix A), the teacher survey was transmitted to 352 elementary, middle, and high school teachers via electronic mail. After one week, a follow-up letter was sent to the teacher participants via the selected schools' principals that urged the participants to complete the survey and to thank those participants who had completed and returned the survey.

An anticipated survey rate of return of 40% was projected. However, after an additional two-week extension to complete and return the survey, a total of 137 surveys were received, yielding a 39% rate of return. The data from a final total of one hundred and fifteen (n=115) survey participants were analyzed and interpreted for this study.

Survey data were posted and collected via SurveyMonkey. These data were exported, classified, organized, and summarized into a JMP statistical package. Data were reported in percentages of participants' responses. Exploratory and descriptive data analyses were utilized to examine the parental involvement strategies that were perceived by selected teachers.

Specifically, descriptive data of frequency distributions and cross tabulations revealed sufficient information necessary for analysis and interpretation and to answer the research question. In addition, Chi-square tests of significance ( $\chi^2$ ) were utilized to determine if a statistically significant difference existed between combined observed/actual frequencies and expected frequencies and/or if the revealed differences between the combined observed and expected frequencies were due to chance or other unexplained factors. Incomplete surveys or non-responses were excluded from analysis. The results of the survey are reported in the next section of this chapter.

### Survey Results

Elementary, middle, and high school teacher participants (n=115) were surveyed. The results reported in this section are the participants' reported demographics based on their responses to the questions under Epstein's (2004) 6 constructs of *Parenting, Communication, Volunteering, Learning at Home, Decision-Making, and Collaborating with the Community*. These data as they relate to the research question also were reported and analyzed.

### Survey Participants

The school districts selected had a Latino student population of least 10%. The participants of this study drawn from the selected school districts included randomly selected

teachers from elementary, middle, and high schools whose Latino student population also was at least 10% during the 2007-2008 school year.

The group of questions contained in the survey, questions 1 through 7, described the demographics of the survey participants pursuant to gender, age, ethnicity, years of teaching, level of education obtained, and grade currently teaching. The survey participants were also asked whether or not they had received professional development/training relative to parental involvement provided by their school districts and a summary of their responses is presented in Table 7. Also, presented in tables 1 through 7, are the participants' responses to personal and professional questions concerning their training.

*Participants' Demographics*

Table 1 is a descriptive analysis of the respondents by gender and the responses to survey question number two: **What is your gender?** Eighty-nine survey respondents were female (77%) and 26 survey respondents (23%) were male.

Table 1  
*Gender Frequencies*

Gender	N	%
Female	89	77.0
Male	26	23.0
Total number of responses	115	

Presented in Table 2 is a summary of the participant's response to the question: **What is your ethnicity?** One hundred-two (88.7%) respondents identified themselves as Caucasian, 5 (4.3%) claimed Asian descent, 2 (1.7%) classified themselves as African-American, another 2 (1.7%) indicated that they were Hispanic, and 1 (0.9%) respondent identified them self as Native American. A summary of their responses is presented in Table 2. 3 (2.6%) respondents did not answer this question.

Table 2

*Ethnicity Frequencies*

Race/Ethnicity	N	%
African-American	2	1.7
Asian	5	4.3
Caucasian	102	88.7
Hispanic	2	1.7
Native-American	1	0.9
Not Cited	3	2.6
Total number of responses	115	

Displayed in Table 3 is a summary of the participants' response to the question: ***What is your age?*** The respondents' ages ranged from 20-69. The largest age group of the survey respondents was 20-29 (28.9%) followed by age group 30-39 (26.3%), 50-59 (21.9%), 40-49 (19.3%), and age group 60-69 (3.5%). One respondent did not answer this question.

Table 3

*Age Frequencies*

Age	N	%
20-29	33	28.9
30-39	30	26.3
40-49	22	19.3
50-59	25	21.9
60-69	4	3.5
Total number of responses	114	

Note: One survey participant did not respond to this question.

Presented in Table 4 is a summary of the participants' responses to the question: ***How many years have you been teaching?*** The years of teaching experience reported by the respondents ranged between 1-16 plus years. The largest reported group in the years of teaching



category was 6-10 years. Thirty-three respondents (29%) reported teaching for 6-10 years. The second largest reported group for years of teaching experience was 11-15 years. Twenty-seven respondents (23%) reported teaching between 11-15 years. Twenty-five respondents (22%) reported having 16 plus years of teaching. Twenty-four respondents (21%) reported having 3-5 years of teaching and 6 respondents (0.5%) reported having 1-2 years of teaching.

Table 4

*Years of Teaching Frequencies*

Years of Teaching	N	%
1-2	6	.05
3-5	24	21.0
6-10	33	29.0
11-15	27	23.0
16 +	25	22.0
Total number of responses	115	

Displayed in Table 5 is a summary of the participants' responses to the survey question: ***What is your level of education?*** Sixty-seven (58.3%) respondents reported having a master's degree and 45 respondents (39.1%) reported having a bachelor's degree. Three respondents (2.6%) reported had earned a doctoral degree.

Table 5

*Education Level Frequencies*

Education	N	%
Bachelor's Degree	45	39.1
Master's Degree	67	58.3
Doctorate Degree	3	2.6
Total number of responses	115	

Table 6 represents the participants' responses to the survey question: *What grade level are you currently teaching?* Grade levels were grouped into the following categories:

1) elementary, Pre-K through grades 5, 2) middle school, grades 6 through 8, 3) high school, grades 9 through 12, and 4) specialist (literacy specialists, instructional technology teacher, gifted and talented teacher, ESOL teachers, and fine arts teachers). The largest grade category reported was specialist. Twenty survey respondents (17.4%) reported themselves specialist.

At the elementary level, Pre-K through grade 5, the largest grade level category reported by survey respondents was grade 4. Six respondents (5.2%) reported teaching grade 4. The second largest grade level reported at the elementary level was grade 3. Four respondents (3.5%) reported teaching grade 3 followed by three respondents (2.6%) who reported teaching kindergarten, 3 respondents (2.6%) reported teaching grade 2, and three respondents (2.6%) reported teaching grade 5. Two respondents (1.7%) reported teaching pre-kindergarten and 2 respondents (1.7%) reported teaching grade 1.

At the middle school level, the largest grade level category was grade 8. There were nineteen respondents (16.5%) respondents who reported teaching grade 8. The second largest grade level category reported was grade 7. There were eighteen respondents (15.7%) who reported teaching grade 7 followed by grade 6 with thirteen respondents (11.3%).

At the high school level, grades 9 through 12, the largest grade level category reported was grade 12. There were 9 (7.8%) respondents who reported teaching grade 12. The second largest grade level category was grade 10. There were 5 respondents (4.3%) who reported teaching grade 10 followed by grade 9 (3.5%) and grade 11 (3.5%). A closer examination of the data revealed that most of the participants in this study were middle school grade level teachers. Table 6 is a summary of responses.

Table 6

*Grade Level Currently Teaching Frequencies*

Elementary			Secondary			Specialist		
	N	%		N	%		N	%
Pre-Kgn	2	1.7	Grade 6	13	11.3	Specialist	20	17.4
Kgn.	3	2.6	Grade 7	18	15.7			
Grade 1	2	1.7	Grade 8	19	16.5			
Grade 2	3	2.6	Grade 9	4	3.5			
Grade 3	4	3.5	Grade 10	5	4.3			
Grade 4	6	5.2	Grade 11	4	3.5			
Grade 5	3	2.6	Grade 12	9	7.8			

Presented in Table 7 is a summary of the participants' responses to the survey question: *Have you had training in parental involvement?* Eighty-four respondents (73%) reported that they had not received training related to parental involvement. Thirty-one respondents (27%) reported they had parental involvement training.

Table 7

*Parental Involvement Training/Professional Development Frequencies*

	N	%
No	84	73.0
Yes	31	27.0
Total number of responses	115	

*School Practices, Procedures, and Characteristics*

This section is a summary of the responses to the survey questions regarding the participants' *School Procedures, Practices, and Characteristics*. These questions added to the survey were designed to examine the daily practices, characteristics, and school governance practices as reported by the survey participants.

*Orientation to School Practices and Procedures*

Table 8 is a summary of the participants’ responses to the survey question: ***Latino Parents and Students are Oriented to the Schools Practices and Procedures.*** A total of sixty-five respondents (56.5%) *Agreed* and 7 respondents (6.1%) *Strongly Agreed* that parents were orientated to school practices and procedures. When combining the responses, a total of seventy-two respondents (72.6%) *Strongly Agreed* or *Agreed* that parents are orientated to schools’ practices and procedures. Thirty-six respondents (31.3%) *Disagreed* that their school district encouraged the schools provide to orientation to school practices and procedures for parents and 7 respondents (6.1%) *Strongly Disagreed*. When the responses of *Disagree* or *Strongly Disagree* were combined, forty-three respondents (37.4%) *Disagreed* that their school district encouraged schools to orient parents to schools practices and procedures.

Table 8

*Latino Parents are Oriented to School Practices and Procedures Frequencies*

	N	fo	fe	x <sup>2</sup>	df
Strongly Disagreed	7	6.1	4.56	0.331	3
Disagreed	36	31.3	32.83		
Agreed	65	56.5	54.96		
Strongly Agreed	7	6.1	7.63		
Total number of responses	115				

A chi-square ( $x^2$ ) test was conducted to examine the difference between the participants’ observed frequencies and the expected frequencies relative to the question: ***Latino Parents are Oriented to School Practices and Procedures.*** With an alpha level of .05, there was no statistically significant difference between the observed frequencies and the expected frequencies,  $x^2(3, 115) = 0.331, p = >.05$ .

*Written Parental Involvement Policy*

Displayed in Table 9 is a summary of the participants’ responses to the survey question: ***My School District has a Written Parental Involvement Policy.*** Most respondents *Agreed* that their school district had a written Parental Involvement Policy. Sixty-four of the respondents

(55.7%) *Agreed* and 6 respondents (5.2%) *Strongly Agreed*. In total, seventy respondents (60.9%) *Agreed* or *Strongly Agreed* that their school district had a written Parental Involvement policy, while forty-four respondents (38.3 %) *Disagreed*. One respondent (0.9) *Strongly Disagreed*. Thus forty-five (39.2%) either *Disagreed* or *Strongly Disagreed* that their school district had published a Parental Involvement policy.

Table 9

*Written Parental Involvement Policy Frequencies*

	N	<i>fo</i>	<i>fe</i>	<i>x</i> <sup>2</sup>	<i>df</i>
Strongly Disagreed	1	0.9	2.73	.202	3
Disagreed	44	38.3	42.22		
Agreed	64	55.7	65.73		
Strongly Agreed	6	5.2	4.26		
Total number of responses	15				

A chi-square test (*x*<sup>2</sup>) was conducted to examine the difference between the observed frequencies and the expected frequencies relative to the question: ***My school District has a Written Parental Involvement Policy.*** With an alpha level of .05, there was no statistically significant difference between the observed frequencies expected frequencies  $x^2(3, 115) = .202$ ,  $p = >.05$

Table 10 represents the survey participants’ responses to the survey question: ***My School District Encourages an Early Warning Procedure for Parents When Their Student was Failing.*** In a closer review of the data, sixty-three respondents (54.8%) *Agreed* and forty-seven respondents (40.9%) *Strongly Agreed*. Five respondents (0.4%) *Disagreed*. None of the survey respondents *Strongly Disagreed*.

Table 10

*Early Warning of Student Failure Procedure Frequencies*

	N	<i>fo</i>	<i>fe</i>	$x^2$	<i>df</i>
Strongly Disagree	-	-	0.17	.122	3
Disagree	5	0.4	2.95		
Agree	63	54.8	54.97		
Strongly Disagree	47	40.9	40.72		
Total number of responses	115				

A chi-square test ( $x^2$ ) was conducted to examine the difference in the observed frequencies and the expected frequencies relative to the question: ***My School District Encourages an Early Warning Procedure for Parents When Their Student is Failing.*** With an alpha level of .05, there was no statistically significant difference between the observed frequencies and the expected frequencies,  $x^2(3, 115) = .122, p = >.05$ .

Presented in Table 11 is a summary of the participants' responses to the survey question: ***My School District Encourages the Use of Early Warning Procedures Where Teachers Consult with Parents Promptly When a Student is Experiencing Social Behavior Problems.*** Sixty-three respondents (54.8%) *Agreed* and thirty-nine respondents (33.9%) *Strongly Agreed*. When the responses of *Agree* or *Strongly Agree* were combined, a total of one-hundred-two respondents (88.7%) *Agreed* that their school district encouraged the use of early warning procedures where teachers consult with parents promptly when a student is experiencing social *Behavior Problems*. In contrast, 10 respondents (8.7%) *Disagreed* and 3 respondents (2.6%) *Strongly Disagreed*.

Table 11

*Early Warning Procedures for Parents When a Student is Experiencing Social Behavior Problems*

	N	<i>fo</i>	<i>fe</i>	$x^2$	<i>df</i>
Strongly Disagreed	3	2.6	5.34	0.017	3
Disagreed	10	8.7	7.46		
Agreed	63	54.8	58.54		
Strongly Agreed	39	33.9	43.46		
Total number of responses	115				

A chi-square test ( $x^2$ ) was conducted to examine the difference between the observed frequencies and the expected frequencies to the question: ***My School District Encourages Early Warning Procedures for Parents When a Student is Experiencing Social Behavior Problems.*** With an alpha level of .05, there was no statistically significant difference between the observed frequencies and expected frequencies,  $x^2(3, 115) = 0.017, p = >.05$ .

Displayed in Table 12 is a summary of the participants' responses to the survey question: ***My School District as Established Procedures for Addressing Parent Concerns.*** Sixty-four respondents (55.7%) *Agreed* and thirty respondents (26.1%) *Strongly Agreed*. In total, ninety-four respondents (81.8%) either *Agreed* or *Strongly Agreed* that their school district has established procedures for addressing parent concerns. In contrast, nineteen respondents (16.5%) *Disagreed* and 2 respondents (1.7%) *Strongly Disagreed*.

Table 12

*Procedures for Addressing Parent Concerns*

	N	<i>fo</i>	<i>fe</i>	$x^2$	<i>df</i>
Strongly Disagreed	2	1.7	5.84	0.051	3
Disagreed	19	16.5	15.16		
Agreed	64	55.7	67.84		
Strongly Agreed	30	26.1	26.16		
Total	115				

A chi-square test ( $x^2$ ) was conducted to examine the difference in the observed frequencies and the expected frequencies to the question: ***My School District Has Established Procedures for Addressing Parent Concerns***. With an alpha level of .05, there was no statistically significant difference between the observed frequencies and the expected frequencies,  $x^2 (3, 115) = 0.051, p = >.05$ .

*School Characteristics*

Displayed in Table 13 is a summary of the participants’ responses to the survey question: ***In My School District the Schools’ Office Personnel Greet Parents in Person or on the Telephone in a Friendly and Courteous Manner***. Fifty-three respondents (51%) *Agreed* and forty-three respondents (41.3%) *Strongly Agreed*. When the responses of *Agree* or *Strongly Agree* were combined, ninety-six respondents (92.3%) *Agreed* that their school’s office personnel greet parents in person or on the telephone in a friendly and courteous manner. Eight respondents (7.7%) *Disagreed*. None of the respondents of the respondents *Strongly Disagreed*. Eleven of the respondents did not answer this question.

Table 13

*School Personnel Greets Parents in a Friendly and Courteous Manner*

	N	<i>fo</i>	<i>fe</i>	$x^2$	<i>df</i>
Strongly Disagreed	-		3.18	0.014	3
Disagreed	8	7.7	4.49		
Agreed	53	51.0	54.18		
Strongly Agreed	43	41.3	38.11		
Total number of responses	104				

Note: Eleven participants did not respond to this question.

A chi-square test ( $x^2$ ) was conducted to examine the difference in the observed frequencies and the expected frequencies for the question: ***In My School District the Schools’ Office Personnel All Greet Parents in Person or on the Telephone in a Friendly and Courteous Manner***. With an alpha level of .05, there was no statistically significant difference between the observed frequencies and the expected frequencies,  $x^2 (3,104) = 0.014, p = >.05$



Presented in Table 14 is a summary of the participants' responses to the survey question: ***In My School District Posts Signs Warmly Welcome Parents and Visitors***. Fifty-six respondents (53.8%) *Agreed* and thirty-three respondents (31.7%) *Strongly Agreed*. When the responses of Agree or Strongly Agree were combined, eighty-nine respondents (85.5%) *Agreed* that their school district posted warm and welcoming signs for parents and visitors. Fourteen respondents (13.5%) *Disagreed*. None of the respondents *Strongly Disagreed*. Twelve respondents did not answer this question.

Table 14  
*Posts Warm and Welcoming Signs for Parents and Visitors*

	N	fo	fe	$x^2$	df
Strongly Disagreed	-	-	4.32	0.006	3
Disagreed	14	13.5	9.17		
Agreed	56	53.8	58.12		
Strongly Agreed	33	31.7	27.37		
Total number of responses	103				

Note: Twelve participants did not respond to these questions.

A chi-square test ( $x^2$ ) was conducted to examine the difference between the observed frequencies and the expected frequencies for the survey question: ***In My School District Posted Signs Warmly Welcome Parents and Visitors***. With an alpha level of .05, there was no statistically significant difference between the observed frequencies and the expected frequencies,  $x^2(3, 103) = 0.006, p = >.05$

Displayed in Table 15 is a summary of the participants' responses to the survey question: ***My School District Encourages Written/Posted Directions for Parents or Visitors to Find Their way Around the School***. Sixty respondents (57.1%) *Agreed* and twenty-five respondents (24%) *Strongly Agreed*. When the response of the Agree or Strongly Agree were combined, eighty-five respondents (81.1%) *Agreed* that their school district encouraged written/posted directions for parents around the school. Sixteen respondents (15.4%) *Disagreed* and 3 respondents (2.9%) *Strongly Disagreed*. Eleven respondents did not answer this question.

Table 15

*Provides Written/Posted Directions for Parents and Visitors to Find Their Way Around the School*

	N	<i>fo</i>	<i>fe</i>	$x^2$	<i>df</i>
Strongly Disagreed	3	2.9	5.32	0.194	3
Disagreed	16	15.4	13.34		
Agreed	60	57.1	59.15		
Strongly Disagreed	25	24.0	21.94		
Total number of responses	104				

Note: Eleven participants did not respond to this question.

A chi-square test ( $x^2$ ) was conducted to examine the difference between the observed frequencies and the expected frequencies to the question: ***My School District Encourages Written/Posted Directions for Parents or Visitors to Find Their Way Around the School.*** With an alpha level of .05, there was no statistically significant difference between the observed frequencies and the expected frequencies,  $x^2 (3, 104) = 0.194, p = >.05$

#### *Parental Involvement Constructs*

The next section of this chapter presents the survey participants' responses to Epstein's (2004), 6 Parental Involvement constructs of 1) *Parenting*, 2) *Communication*, 3) *Volunteering*, 4) *Learning at Home*, 5) *Decision-Making*, and 6) *Collaborating with the Community*. Epstein defines the first construct of *Parenting* as assisting parents with parenting skills, family support, understanding child and adolescent development, and setting home conditions to support learning at each age and grade level. Additional questions were added to this section.

#### *Parenting Construct*

Presented in Table 16 is a summary of the participants' responses to the survey question: ***My School District Offers Workshops/Training for Parents on Child and Adolescent Development.*** Fifty-eight respondents (52.7%) *Agreed* that their school district provided child and adolescent development training for parents and twelve respondents (10.9%) *Strongly Agreed*. When the responses of *Agree* or *Strongly Agree* were combined, seventy respondents

(63.6%) *Agreed* that their school district provided workshops/training for parents on understanding child and adolescent development. Thirty-five respondents (31.6%) *Disagreed* and 5 respondents (4.5%) *Strongly Disagreed*. Five respondents did not answer this question.

Table 16

*Offers Workshops for Parents on Child and Adolescent Development*

	N	<i>fo</i>	<i>fe</i>	$x^2$	<i>df</i>
Strongly Disagreed	5	4.5	5.57	0.535	3
Disagreed	35	31.6	30.52		
Agreed	58	52.7	53.77		
Strongly Agreed	12	10.9	9.82		
Total number of responses	110				

Note: Five participants did not respond to the question.

A chi-square test ( $x^2$ ) was conducted to examine the difference between the observed frequencies and expected frequencies relative to the question: ***My School District Offers Workshops/Training for Parents on Child and Adolescent Development.*** With an alpha level of .05, there was no statistically significant difference between the observed frequencies and the expected frequencies,  $x^2 (3, 110) = 0.535, p = >.05$ .

Displayed in Table 17 is a summary of the participants' responses to the survey question: ***My School District Provides Information to Parents on Developing Home Conditions or Environments that Support Learning.*** Sixty-three respondents (57.3%) *Agreed* and thirteen respondents (11.8%) *Strongly Agreed*. When the responses of *Agree* or *Strongly Agree* were combined, seventy-six (69.1%) either *Agreed* or *Strongly Agreed* their school district provided information to parents on developing home conditions or environments that support student learning. Twenty-eight respondents (25.5%) *Disagreed* and 6 respondents (5.5%) *Strongly Agreed*. Five respondents did not answer this question.

Table 17

*Provides Information to Parents on Developing Home Conditions or Environments that Support Learning*

	N	<i>fo</i>	<i>fe</i>	$x^2$	<i>df</i>
Strongly Disagreed	6	5.5	5.35	0.933	3
Disagreed	28	25.5	25.64		
Agreed	63	57.3	57.15		
Strongly Agreed	13	11.8	11.94		
Total number of responses	110				

Note: Five participants did not respond to the question.

A chi-square test ( $x^2$ ) was performed to examine the difference between the observed frequencies and the expected results relative for the question: ***My School District Provides Information to Parents on Developing Home Conditions or Environments that Support Learning.*** With an alpha level of .05, there was no statistically significant difference between the observed frequencies and the expected frequencies,  $x^2(3, 110) = .933, p = >.05$

Table 18 represents the survey participants' responses to the survey question: ***My School District Helps Parents Understand Topics (state standards, state and local assessments, etc.) That Help Them Become Equal Partners with Teachers in Improving Their Children's Academic Achievement.*** Sixty-nine respondents (62.7%) *Agreed* and thirteen respondents (11.8%) *Strongly Agreed*. Twenty-five of the respondents (22.7%) *Disagreed* and three respondents (2.7%) *Strongly Disagreed* that their school district helped parents to understand topics that would help parents to become partners in improving their students' academic achievement. Five respondents did not answer this question.

Table 18

*Helps Parents Understand Topics that Would Help Them Become Partners in Improving Student Academic Achievement*

	N	<i>fo</i>	<i>fe</i>	$x^2$	<i>df</i>
Strongly Disagree	3	2.7	3.68	.516	3
Disagree	25	22.7	21.61		
Agree	69	62.7	63.68		
Strongly Agree	13	11.8	10.81		
Total number of response	110				

Note: Five participants did not respond to the question.

A chi-square test ( $x^2$ ) was conducted to examine the difference between the observed difference and the expected frequencies relative to the question: ***My School District Helps Parents Understand Topics that Would Help Them Become Partners in Improving Student Academic Achievement.*** With an alpha level of .05, there was no statistically significant difference between the observed and expected frequencies,  $x^2$  (3, N=110) = .516,  $p = >.05$ .

Table 19 represents the participants' responses to the survey question: ***My School District Sponsored Home Neighborhood Meetings to Help Families Understand the U.S. School System.*** Thirty-three respondents (30%) *Agreed* and 2 respondents (2%) *Strongly Agreed*. When the responses of *Agree* or *Strongly Agree* were combined, thirty-five respondents (32%) *Agreed* that their school district sponsored neighborhood meetings to help families understand the U.S. school system. In contrast, eleven respondents (10%) *Disagreed* and sixty-four respondents ((58.2%) *Strongly Disagreed*. When the responses of *Disagree* or *Strongly Disagree* were combined, seventy-five respondents (68.2%) *Disagreed* that their school district did not sponsor neighborhood meetings for to help families to understand the U.S. school system. Five respondents did not answer this question.

Table 19

*Help Families Understand U.S. School System Frequencies*

	N	<i>fo</i>	<i>fe</i>	$x^2$	<i>df</i>
Strongly Disagreed	64	58.2	40.97	8.02	3
Disagreed	11	10.0	19.22		
Agreed	33	30.0	27.22		
Strongly Agreed2	2.0	12.77			
Total number of responses	110				

Note: Five participants did not respond to the question.

A chi-square test ( $x^2$ ) was performed to examine the difference between the observed frequencies and the expected frequencies to the question: ***My School District Sponsors Home Neighborhood Meetings to Help Families Understand the U.S. School System.*** With an alpha level of .05, there was a statistically significant difference between the observed frequency and the expected frequencies,  $x^2 (3, N=110) = 8.02, p < .05$ .

Table 20 represents the participants' responses to the survey question: ***My School District Provides Parenting Training for parents of All Ethnic Groups.*** Forty-six of the respondents (41.8%) *Agreed* and 10 respondents (9.1%) *Strongly Agreed*. When the responses of *Agreed* or *Strongly Agreed* were combined, fifty-six respondents (50.9%) *Agreed* that their school district provided parent training for parents of all ethnic groups. Forty-seven of the respondents (42.7%) *Disagreed* and 6 respondents (5.5%) *Strongly Disagreed*. Thus fifty-three respondents (48.2%) either *Disagreed* or *Strongly Disagreed* that their school district provided parent training for parents of all ethnic groups. Six respondents did not answer this question.

Table 20

*Provided Parent Training for Parents of All Ethnic Groups*

	N	<i>fo</i>	<i>fe</i>	$x^2$	<i>df</i>
Strongly Disagreed	6	5.5	7.1	0.362	3
Disagreed	47	42.7	43.4		
Agreed	46	41.8	41.09		
Strongly Agreed	10	9.1	7.49		
Total number of responses	109				

Note: Six participants did not respond to the question.

A chi-square test ( $x^2$ ) was conducted to examine the difference between the observed and the expected frequencies in the question: ***Provided Parent Training for Parents of All Ethnic Groups***. With an alpha level of .05, there was no statistically significant difference between the observed frequencies and expected frequencies,  $x^2(3, N=109) = 0.362, = p = >.05$  Table 21 is a summary of the participants' responses relative to the question: ***My School District Encouraged Extended Family Members to Support Students in Their Education***.

Sixty-three respondents (57.3%) *Agreed* and 9 respondents ((8.2%) *Strongly Agreed*. When the responses of *Agree* or *Strongly Agree* were combined, seventy-two respondents (65.5%) *Agreed* that their school district encouraged extended family members to support students in their education. Thirty-five respondents (31.8%) who responded to the same question *Disagreed* and 3 respondents (2.7%) *Strongly Disagreed*. Five respondents did not answer this question.

Table 21

*Use of Extended Family Members to Help Support Students in Their Education*

	N	<i>fo</i>	<i>fe</i>	$x^2$	<i>df</i>
Strongly Disagreed	3	2.7	3.76	0.474	3
Disagreed	35	31.8	30.78		
Agreed	63	57.3	58.36		
Strongly Agreed	9	8.2	7.13		
Total Number of responses	110				

Note: Five participants did not respond to this question.

A chi-square test ( $x^2$ ) was conducted to examine the difference in the observed frequencies and the expected frequencies relative to the question: ***My School District Encourages Extended Family Members to Support Students in their Education***. With an alpha level of .05, there was no statistically significant difference between the observed frequencies and the expected frequencies,  $x^2$  (3, N=110) = .474,  $p = >.05$

*Communication*

In the second construct of *Communication* the respondents were asked 6 questions related to the school districts' method of communication with their parents. Table 22 represents the participants' responses to the survey question: ***My school District Provides Written Communication in the Language of the Parents***. Sixty-four respondents (59.3%) *Agreed* and fourteen respondents (13%) *Strongly Agreed*. When the responses of *Agreed* or *Strongly Agreed* were combined, seventy-eight (72.3%) of the respondents *Agreed* that their school district provided written communication in the language of the parent. Twenty-nine respondents (26.9%) *Disagreed* and 1 respondent ((0.9%) *Strongly Disagreed*. Seven respondents did not answer this question.



Table 22

*Provides Communication in the Language of the Parents*

	N	<i>f<sub>o</sub></i>	<i>f<sub>e</sub></i>	<i>x</i> <sup>2</sup>	<i>df</i>
Strongly Disagreed	1	0.9	3.86	0.055	3
Disagreed	29	26.9	23.93		
Agreed	64	59.3	62.26		
Strongly Agreed	14	13.0	10.03		
Total Number of responses	108				

Note: Seven participants did not respond to this question.

A chi-square test ( $x^2$ ) was conducted to examine the difference between the observed frequencies and the expected frequencies to the question: ***My School District Provides Written Communication in the Language of the Parents***. There was no statistically significant difference between the observed frequencies and expected frequencies,  $x^2 (3, N=108) = 0.055$ ,  $p = >.05$

Displayed in Table 23 is a summary of the participants' to the survey question: ***My School District Provided Translators for Parents' Important Conferences and Meetings***. Sixty-eight respondents (63%) *Agreed* and thirty-seven respondents (34%) *Strongly Agreed*. When the responses of *Agree* or *Strongly Agree* were combined, one-hundred-five respondents (97%) *Agreed* that their school district provided translators. Three respondents (0.3%) *Disagreed*. No respondents *Strongly Disagreed*. Seven respondents did not answer this question.

Table 23

*Provides Translators for Parents' Important Meetings and Conferences*

	N	<i>fo</i>	<i>fe</i>	$x^2$	<i>df</i>
Strongly Disagreed	0	-	0.195	0.452	3
Disagreed	3	0.3	0.104		
Agreed	68	63.0	63.1		
Strongly Agreed	37	34.0	33.89		
Total number of responses	108				

Note: Seven participants did not respond to this question.

A chi-square test ( $x^2$ ) was conducted to examine the difference in the observed frequencies and the expected frequencies relative to the question: ***My School District Provides Translators for Parents' Important Meetings and Conferences.*** With an alpha level of .05, there was no statistically significant difference between the observed frequencies and the expected frequencies,  $x^2 (3, N=108) = 0.452, p = >.05$ .

A summary of the participants' responses regarding the survey question: ***My School District Holds Formal Parent/Teacher Conferences with Every Parent At Least Once Per Year*** is presented in Table 24. Twenty-nine respondents (26.9%) *Agreed* and twenty-three respondents (21.3%) *Strongly Agreed*. In total, fifty-two respondents (48.2%) *Agreed* that their school district held conferences with every parent at least once per year. In contrast, forty-five respondents (41.7%) *Disagreed* and eleven respondents (10%) *Strongly Disagreed*. When the responses of *Disagree* or *Strongly Disagree* were combined, fifty-six respondents (51.7%) *Disagreed* that their school district holds conferences with every parent at least once per year. Seven respondents did not answer this question.

Table 24

*Holds Formal Parent/Teacher Conferences with Every Parent Once Per Year*

	N	<i>fo</i>	<i>fe</i>	$x^2$	<i>df</i>
Strongly Disagreed	11	10.0	16.19	0.007	3
Disagreed	45	41.7	35.50		
Agreed	29	26.9	33.09		
Strongly Agreed	23	21.3	15.10		
Total number of responses	108				

Note: Seven participants did not respond to this question.

A chi-square test of ( $x^2$ ) was conducted to examine the difference between the observed frequencies and the expected frequencies to the question: ***My School District Holds Conferences with Every Parent Once Per Year***. With an alpha level of .05, there was no statistically significant difference between observed frequencies and the expected frequencies,  $x^2$  (3, N=108) = 0.007,  $p = >.05$

Table 25 represents the participants' responses relative to the survey question: ***My School District Conducts Annual Survey for Families to Share Information about Their Satisfaction with School Programs and with Their Involvement at School and at Home***. Fifty-three respondents (49.1%) *Agreed* and twenty-eight respondents (25.9%) *Strongly Agreed*. When the responses of *Agree* or *Strongly Agree* were combined, eighty-one respondents (75%) *Agreed* that their school district conducted an annual survey for families about their satisfaction with school programs and with their involvement at school or at home. Twenty-three respondents (21.3%) *Disagreed* and 4 respondents (3.7%) *Strongly Disagreed*. Seven respondents did not answer this question.

Table 25

*Conducts Annual Survey for Families to Share Information About Their Satisfaction with School Programs and Their Involvement at School and at Home*

	N	<i>fo</i>	<i>fe</i>	$x^2$	<i>df</i>
Strongly Disagreed	4	3.7	7.4	0.061	3
Disagreed	23	21.3	17.60		
Agreed	53	49.1	52.8		
Strongly Agreed	28	25.9	22.20		
Total number of responses	108				

Note: Seven participants did not respond to this question.

A chi-square test ( $x^2$ ) was performed to examine the difference between the observed frequencies and the expected frequencies to the survey question: ***My School District Conducted an Annual Survey of Parent Satisfaction with School Programs and Their Involvement at School and at Home.*** With an alpha level of .05, there was no statistically significant difference between the observed frequencies and the expected frequencies,  $x^2 (3, N=108) = 0.061, p = >.05$ .

Table 26 represents the participants' responses relative to the survey question: ***My School District Encourages Teachers to Communicate with Parents Frequently About Their Curriculum, Assessments, Expectations for Homework, Grading Procedures, and How Parents Can Help.*** Fifty-four respondents (50%) *Agreed* and forty-nine respondents (45.4%) *Strongly Agreed*. In total, one hundred and three respondents (95.4%) *Agreed* that their school district encouraged teachers to communicate with parents frequently about their curriculum, assessments, expectations for homework, grading procedures, and how parents can help. In contrast, 4 respondents (3.7%) *Disagreed* and 1 respondent (0.9%) *Strongly Disagreed*. Seven respondents did not answer this question.

Table 26

*School District Encourages Communication with Parents about Curriculum, Homework, Assessments, Expectations for Homework and Grading Procedures and How Parents Can Help*

	N	fo	fe	$x^2$	df
Strongly Disagreed	1	0.9	2.12	0.240	3
Disagreed	4	3.7	2.47		
Agreed	54	50.0	51.22		
Strongly Agreed	49	45.4	44.17		
Total number of responses	108				

Note: Seven participants did not respond to this question.

A chi-square test ( $x^2$ ) was conducted to examine the difference in the observed frequencies and the expected results to the survey question: ***My School District Encouraged Schools to Communicate with Parents about Curriculum, Homework, and Grading Procedures and How Parents Can Help.*** With an alpha level of .05, there was no statically significant difference in the observed frequencies and the expected frequencies,  $x^2$  (3, N=108) = 0.240,  $p = >.05$ .

Presented in Table 27 is a summary of the participants' responses to the survey question: ***My School District Encourages Teachers to Meet Outside School Hours with Parents who Have Jobs and Cannot Meet During the School Day.*** Fifty-nine respondents (54.6%) *Agreed* and nine respondents (8.3%) *Strongly Agreed*. When the responses of Agree and Strongly Agree were combined, sixty-eight respondents (62.9%) *Agreed* that that their school district encouraged teachers to meet outside school hours with parents who have jobs and were unable to meet during the school day. Thirty-six respondents (33%) *Disagreed* and 4 respondents (0.4%) *Strongly Disagreed*. Seven respondents did not answer this question.

Table 27

*School District Encourages Teachers to Meet with Parents Outside School Hours With Parents who Have Jobs and Cannot Meet During the School Day*

	N	<i>fo</i>	<i>fe</i>	$x^2$	<i>df</i>
Strongly Disagreed	4	0.4	3.01	0.050	3
Disagreed	36	33.0	30.38		
Agreed	59	54.6	57.21		
Strongly Agreed	9	8.3	5.68		
Total number of responses	108				

Note: Seven participants did not respond to this question.

A chi-square test ( $x^2$ ) was performed to examine the difference in the observed frequencies and the expected frequencies to the question: ***My School District Encourages Teachers to Meet with Parents Outside of School Hours and Cannot Meet During the School Day.*** With an alpha level of .05, there was no statistically significant difference between the observed frequencies and the expected frequencies,  $x^2(3, N=108) = 0.050, p = >.05$ .

### *Volunteering*

The next construct is *Volunteering*. The questions under the *Volunteering* construct sought to examine the strategies that the school district utilized to improve recruitment and train parents as well as the scheduling of activities that involve parents. Table 28 presents the participants' responses relative to the survey question: ***My School District Reduced Barriers to Parent Participation (i.e. child care, work schedules, etc.).*** Fifty respondents (46.3%) *Agreed* and 6 respondents (5.6%) *Strongly Agreed*. When the responses of *Agree* or *Strongly Agree* were combined, fifty-six respondents (51.9%) *Agreed* that their school district *Reduced Barriers to Parent Participation*. In contrast, forty-seven respondents (43.5%) *Disagreed* and 5 respondents (4.6%) *Strongly Disagreed*. When the responses of *Disagree* or *Strongly Disagreed* were combined, fifty-two respondents (48.1%) *Disagreed* that their school district reduced barriers to parent participation. Seven respondents did not answer this question.

Table 28

*My School District Reduces Barriers to Parent Participation*

	N	<i>fo</i>	<i>fe</i>	$x^2$	<i>df</i>
Strongly Disagreed	5	4.6	4.9	0.840	3
Disagreed	47	43.5	43.19		
Agreed	50	46.3	46.60		
Strongly Agreed	6	5.6	5.29		
Total number of responses	108				

Note: Seven participants did not respond to this question.

A chi-square test of ( $x^2$ ) was performed to examine the difference between the observed frequencies and the expected frequencies relative to the question: ***My School District participants' responses to whether or not their school district Reduces Barriers to Parent Participation (child care, work schedules, etc).*** With an alpha level of .05, there was no statistically significant difference between the observed and expected frequencies,  $x^2$  (3, N=108) = 0.840,  $p = >.05$ .

Table 29 represents the participants' responses to the survey question: ***My School District Recognized Their Volunteers for Their Time and Efforts.*** Sixty respondents (55.6%) *Agreed* and thirty-eight respondents (35.2%) *Strongly Agreed*. When the responses of *Agree* or *Strongly Agree* were combined, ninety-eight respondents (90.8%) *Agreed* that their school district Recognized Their Volunteers for Their Time and Efforts. Nine respondents (8.3%) *Disagreed* and 1 respondent (0.9%) *Strongly Disagreed*. Seven respondents did not answer this question.

Table 29

*Recognizes their Volunteers for their Time and Efforts*

	N	<i>fo</i>	<i>fe</i>	$x^2$	<i>df</i>
Strongly Disagreed	1	0.9	3.32	0.806	3
Disagreed	9	8.3	5.87		
Agreed	60	55.6	58.02		
Strongly Agreed	38	35.2	32.77		
Total number of responses	108				

Note: Seven participants did not respond to this question.

A chi-square test ( $x^2$ ) was conducted to examine the difference between the observed frequencies and the expected frequencies to the question: ***My School District Recognized Volunteers for their Time and Efforts.*** With an alpha level of .05, there was no statistically significant difference between the observed frequencies and the expected frequencies,  $x^2(3, N=108) = 0.806, p = >.05$

Displayed in Table 30 is a summary of the participants' responses to the survey question: ***My School district Schedules School Events at Different Times During the Day and Evening So That All Families Can Attend Some Activities Throughout the School Year.*** Sixty-six respondents (63%) *Agreed* and eighteen respondents (16.7%) *Strongly Agreed*. When the responses of *Agree* or *Strongly Agree* were combined, eighty-four respondents (79.7%) *Agreed* that their school district scheduled school events at different times during the day and evening so that all families were able to attend some activities throughout the school year. In contrast, twenty-two respondents (20.4%) *Disagreed* and none of the respondents *Strongly Disagreed*. Nine of the respondents did not answer this question.



Table 30

*Schedules School Events at Different Times During the Day and Evening So That All Families Can Attend Some Activities Throughout the School Year*

	N	<i>fo</i>	<i>fe</i>	$x^2$	<i>df</i>
Strongly Disagreed	0	-	3.4	0.023	3
Disagreed	22	20.4	16.99		
Agreed	66	63.0	66.40		
Strongly Agreed	18	16.7	13.29		
Total number of responses	106				

Note: Nine participants did not respond to this question.

A chi-square test ( $x^2$ ) was conducted to examine the difference between the observed frequencies and the expected frequencies to the question: ***My School District Schedules School Events at Different Times***. With an alpha level of .05, there was no statistically significant difference between the observed frequencies and the expected frequencies,  $x^2$  (3, N=106) = 0.023,  $p = >.05$ .

#### *Learning at Home*

*The Learning at Home* construct asked the survey participants questions about how parents were involved in learning activities at home, including homework, goal setting, and other curricular activities. Presented in Table 31 is a summary of the participants' responses to the survey question: ***My School District Provides Information to Families on How to Discuss and Monitor School Work at Home***. Seventy-eight of the respondents (72%) *Agreed* and 10 respondents (9.3%) *Strongly Agreed*. When the responses of *Agree* or *Strongly Agree* were combined, eighty-eight respondents (81.3%) *Agreed* that their school district provided information on how to discuss and monitor school work at home. Seventeen respondents (16.7%) *Disagreed* and 3 respondents (2.8%) *Strongly Disagreed*. Seven respondents did not answer this question.

Table 31

*Provides Information on How to Discuss and Monitor School Work at Home*

	N	<i>fo</i>	<i>fe</i>	$x^2$	<i>df</i>
Strongly Disagreed	3	2.8	2.34	0.722	3
Disagreed	17	16.7	17.15		
Agreed	78	72.0	71.54		
Strongly Agreed	10	9.3	9.75		
Total number of responses	108				

Note: Seven participants did not respond to this question.

A chi-square test ( $x^2$ ) was performed to examine the difference between the observed frequencies and the expected frequencies relative to the question: ***My School District Provided Information on How to Discuss and Monitor School Work at Home.*** With an alpha level of .05, there was no statistically significant difference between the observed frequencies and the expected frequencies,  $x^2$  (3, N=108) = 0.722,  $p = >.05$ .

Table 32 represents the participants' responses relative to whether or not their school district provided information to families on required skills in all subject areas. Sixty-two respondents (57.4%) *Agreed* and 17 respondents (15.7%) *Strongly Agreed*. When the responses of *Agree* or *Strongly Agree* were combined, seventy-nine respondents (73.1%) *Agreed* that their school district provided information to families on required skills in all subject areas. In contrast, twenty-six respondents (24.1%) *Disagreed* and 3 respondents (2.8%) *Strongly Disagreed*. Seven respondents did not answer this question.

Table 32

*Provides Information to Families on Required Skills in All Subject Areas*

	N	<i>fo</i>	<i>fe</i>	$x^2$	<i>df</i>
Strongly Disagreed	3	2.8	4.97	0.206	3
Disagreed	26	24.1	21.92		
Agreed	62	57.4	59.57		
Strongly Agreed	17	15.7	13.52		
Total number of responses	108				

Note: Seven participants did not respond to this question.

A chi-square test ( $x^2$ ) was performed to examine the difference between the observed and expected frequencies to the survey question: ***My School District Provides Information to Families on Required Skills in All Subjects.*** With an alpha level of .05, there was no statistically significant difference between the observed frequencies and the expected frequencies,  $x^2$  (3, N=108) = 0.206,  $p = >.05$ .

Table 33 represents the survey participants' responses relative to the survey question: ***My School District Emphasized to Parents the Importance of Reading at Home.*** Fifty-seven respondents (52.8%) *Agreed* and thirty-five respondents (32.4%) *Strongly Agreed*. When the responses of *Agree* or *Strongly Agree* were combined, ninety-two respondents (85.2%) *Agreed* that their school district had emphasized to parents the importance of reading at home. In contrast, fifteen respondents (13.9%) *Disagreed* and 1 respondent (0.9%) *Strongly Disagreed*. Seven respondents did not answer this question.

Table 33

*Emphasized the Importance of Reading at Home*

	N	<i>fo</i>	<i>fe</i>	$x^2$	<i>df</i>
Strongly Disagreed	1	0.9	4.92	0.015	3
Disagreed	15	13.9	9.76		
Agreed	57	52.8	56.82		
Strongly Agreed	35	32.4	28.37		
Total number of responses	108				

Note: Seven participants did not respond to this question.

A chi-square test ( $x^2$ ) was performed to examine the difference between the observed frequencies and the expected frequencies to the survey question: ***My School District Emphasized the Importance of Reading at Home***. With an alpha level of .05, there was no statistically significant difference between the observed and expected frequencies,  $x^2(3, N=108) = 0.015$ ,  $p = >.0-5$ .

Displayed in Table 34 is a summary of the participants' responses relative to the survey question: ***My School district Encourages Schools to Schedule Regular Interactive Homework Activities that Requires Students to Demonstrate and Discuss What They are Learning with Family Members***. Forty-six respondents (42.6%) *Agreed* and 10 respondents (9.3%) *Strongly Agreed*. When the responses of *Agree* or *Strongly Agree* were combined, fifty-six respondents (51.9) *Agreed* that their school district encouraged schools to schedule regular interactive homework activities that required students to demonstrate and discuss what they had learning with a family member. Forty-five respondents (41.7%) *Disagreed* and 7 respondents (6.5%) *Strongly Disagreed*. Thus, fifty-two respondents (48.2%) either *Disagreed* or *Strongly Disagreed* that their school district encouraged schools to schedule regular interactive homework activities that required students to demonstrate and discuss what they had learning with a family member. Seven respondents did not answer this question.

Table 34

*Schools Schedule Regular Interactive Homework Activities that Requires Students to Demonstrate and Discuss What They are Learning with Family Members.*

	N	<i>fo</i>	<i>fe</i>	$x^2$	<i>df</i>
Strongly Disagreed	7	6.5	7.6	0.544	3
Disagreed	45	41.7	40.59		
Agreed	46	42.6	43.70		
Strongly Agreed	10	9.3	8.19		
Total number of responses	108				

Note: Seven participants did not respond to this question.

A chi-square test ( $x^2$ ) was conducted to examine the difference between the observed frequencies and the expected frequencies of the participants' responses to the question: ***My School District Encourages School to Schedule Regular Interactive Homework Activities That Require Students to Demonstrate and Discuss What They are Learning with a Family Member.*** With a alpha level of .05, there was no statistically significant difference between the observed frequencies and the expected frequencies,  $x^2$  (3 N=108) = 0.544,  $p = >.05$ .

Table 35 represents the participants' responses relative to the survey question: ***My School District Encourages Schools to Assist Families in Helping Students Set Goals, Courses and Programs.*** Sixty-six respondents (61.1%) *Agreed* and sixteen respondents (14.8%) *Strongly Agreed*. When the responses of *Agree* or *Strongly Agree*, eighty-two respondents (75.9%) *Agreed* that their school district encouraged schools to *Assist Families in Helping Students Set Goals and Select Courses and Programs*. Twenty-three respondents (21.3%) that *Disagreed* that their school district encouraged schools to assist families in helping students set goals, courses and programs. Three respondents *Strongly Disagreed*. Seven respondents did not answer this question.

Table 35

*Encourages Schools to Assist Families in Helping Students Select Goals, Courses, and Programs*

	N	<i>fo</i>	<i>fe</i>	$x^2$	<i>df</i>
Strongly Disagreed	3	2.8	4.24	0.375	3
Disagreed	23	21.3	19.85		
Agreed	66	61.1	62.54		
Strongly Agreed	16	14.8	13.35		
Total number of responses	108				

Note: Seven participants did not respond to this question.

A chi-square test ( $x^2$ ) was conducted to examine the difference between the observed frequencies and the expected frequencies of the participants' responses to the question: ***My School District Encouraged Schools to Assist Families in Helping Students Select Goals, Academic Programs and Courses.*** With an alpha of .05, there was no statistically significant difference between the observed and the expected frequencies,  $x^2 (3, N=108) = 0.375, p = >.05$ .

*Decision-Making*

*The Decision-Making* construct involves families in governance and decision-making that affects children and families. Table 36 is a summary of the participants' responses relative to the survey question: ***My School District Encourages Schools to Have an Active PTA/PTO that Reached Out to All Racial and Socioeconomic Parent Groups.*** Fifty-five respondents (51.4%) *Agreed* and forty respondents (37.4%) *Strongly Agreed*. When the responses of *Agree* or *Strongly Agree* were combined, ninety-five respondents (88.8%) *Agreed* that their school district encouraged schools to have an active PTA/PTO that reached out to all racial and socioeconomic parent groups. Twelve respondents (11.2%) *Disagreed*. None of the respondents *Strongly Disagreed*. Eight respondents did not answer this question.

Table 36

*Encourages Schools to Have an Active PTA/PTO that Reaches Out to Parents of All Racial and Socioeconomic Parent Groups*

	N	fo	fe	x <sup>2</sup>	df
Strongly Disagreed	-	-	4.18	0.006	3
Disagreed	12	11.2	7.01		
Agreed	55	51.4	55.58		
Strongly Agreed	40	37.4	33.21		
<i>Total number of responses</i>	<i>107</i>				

Note: Eight participants did not respond to this question.

A chi-square test( $x^2$ ) was conducted to examine the difference between the observed frequencies and the expected frequencies in the participants' responses to the question: ***My School District Encourages Schools to Have an Active PTO/PTA that Reaches Out to Parents of All Racial and Socioeconomic Parent Groups***. With an alpha level of .05, there was no statistically significant difference between the observed frequencies and the expected frequencies,  $x^2(3, N=107) = 0.006, p = >.05$

Table 37 is a summary of the participants' responses to the survey question: ***My School District Encourages Schools to Include Parents From All Racial and Socioeconomic Backgrounds to Serve on Committees Such as, the Advisory Council, School Improvement Teams and Other School Committees***. Sixty-two respondents (57.9%) *Agreed* and thirty respondents (28%) *Strongly Agreed* that their School district *Encouraged Schools to Include Parents from All Racial and Socioeconomic Backgrounds to Serve on School Committees*. When the responses of *Agree* or *Strongly Agree* were combined, ninety-two respondents (85.9%) *Agreed* that their school district encouraged schools to include parents from all racial and socioeconomic backgrounds to serve on school committees. In contrast, fifteen respondents (14%) *Disagreed*. No respondents *Strongly Disagreed*. Eight respondents did not answer this question.

Table 37

*Schools Encouraged to Include Parents from All Racial and Socioeconomic Backgrounds on the School's Advisory Council, School Improvement Teams, and Other School Committees*

	N	fo	fe	$x^2$	df
Strongly Disagreed	-	-	3.92	0.011	3
Disagreed	15	14.0	10.07		
Agreed	62	57.9	61.82		
Strongly Agreed	30	28.0	24.07		
Total number of responses	107				

Note: Eight participants did not respond to this question.

A chi-square test ( $x^2$ ) was conducted to examine the difference between the observed frequencies and the expected frequencies in the participants' responses to the question: ***My School District Encourages Schools to Include Parents from All racial and Socioeconomic Backgrounds on the School's Advisory Council, School Improvement Teams, and Other Committees.*** With an alpha level of .05, there was no statistically significant difference between the observed frequencies and the expected frequencies,  $x^2 (3, N=107) = 0.011, p = >.05$ .

Presented in Table 38 is a summary of the participants' responses relative to the survey question: ***My School District Encourages Schools to Contact Parents Who are Less Involved to Solicit Their Ideas.*** Forty-five respondents (42.1%) *Agreed* and 5 respondents (4.7%) *Strongly Agreed*. When the responses of *Agree* or *Strongly Agree* were combined, fifty respondents (46.8%) *Agreed* that their school district *Encouraged Schools to Solicit the Ideas from Parents Who Were Less Involved*. Fifty respondents (46.7%) *Disagreed* and 7 respondents (6.5%) *Strongly Disagreed*. Thus, fifty-seven respondents (53.2%) either *Disagreed* or *Strongly Disagreed* that their school district encouraged schools to solicit the ideas from parents who were less involved. Eight respondents did not answer this question.



Table 38

*Schools Encourages Schools to Contact Parents who are Less Involved to Solicit Their Ideas*

	N	<i>fo</i>	<i>fe</i>	$x^2$	<i>df</i>
Strongly Disagreed	7	6.5	5.95	0.729	3
Disagreed	50	46.7	47.24		
Agreed	45	42.1	41.55		
Strongly Agreed	5	4.7	5.24		
Total number of responses	107				

Note: Eight participants did not respond to this question.

A chi-square test ( $x^2$ ) was performed to examine the difference between the observed frequencies and the expected frequencies in the participants responses to the question: ***My School District Encourages Schools to Contact Parents who are Less Involved to Solicit Ideas***. With an alpha level of .05, there was no statistically significant difference between the observed frequencies and the expected frequencies,  $x^2 (3, N=107) = 0.729, p = >.05$ .

Presented in Table 39 is a summary of the participants' responses to the survey question: ***My School District Encourages Schools to Create Parent Networks That Linked All Families with Parent Representatives***. Fifty-two respondents (48.6%) *Agreed* and 8 respondents (7.5%) *Strongly Agreed*. When the responses of *Agree* or *Strongly Agree* were combined, sixty respondents (56.1) *Agreed* that their school district encouraged schools to create parent networks that linked all families with parent representatives. In contrast, forty-one respondents (38%) *Disagreed* and 6 respondents (5.6%) *Strongly Disagreed*. Thus, forty-seven respondents (43.6%) *Disagreed* or *Strongly Disagreed* that their school encouraged schools to create parent networks that linked all families with parent representatives. Eight respondents did not answer this question.

Table 39

*Encourages Schools to Create Parent Networks That Link All Families with Parent Representatives*

	N	<i>fo</i>	<i>fe</i>	$x^2$	<i>df</i>
Strongly Disagreed	6	5.6	5.72	0.940	3
Disagreed	41	38.0	37.87		
Agreed	52	48.6	48.72		
Strongly Agreed	8	7.5	7.37		
Total number of responses	107				

Note: Eight participants did not respond to this question.

A chi-square test ( $x^2$ ) was conducted to examine the difference between the observed frequencies and the expected frequencies relative to the survey question: ***My School District Encourages Schools to Create Parent Networks That Link All Families with Parent Representatives***. With an alpha level of .05, there was no statistically significant difference between the observed frequencies and the expected frequencies,  $x^2 (3, N=107) = 0.940, p = >.05$ .

Table 40 represents the participants' responses to the survey question: ***My School District Encourages Schools to Involve Latino Parents in College Preparation Decisions for Their Children***. Sixty-eight respondents (63.6%) *Agreed* and 7 respondents (6.5%) *Strongly Agreed*. When the responses of *Agree* or *Strongly Agreed* were combined seventy-five respondents (70.1%) *Agreed* that their school district encouraged schools to involve Latino parents in college preparation decisions for their students. Twenty-nine respondents (27.1%) *Disagreed* and 3 *Strongly Disagreed*. Eight respondents did not answer this question.

Table 40

*Encourages Schools to Involve Latino Parents in College Preparation Decisions*

	N	<i>fo</i>	<i>fe</i>	$x^2$	<i>df</i>
Strongly Disagreed	3	2.8	2.78	0.989	3
Disagreed	29	27.1	27.11		
Agreed	68	63.6	63.58		
Strongly Agreed	7	6.5	6.51		
Total number of responses	107				

Note: Eight respondents did not respond to this question.

A chi-square test ( $x^2$ ) was performed to examine the difference between the observed frequencies and the expected frequencies relative to the question: ***My School District Encouraged Schools to Involve Latino Parents in College Preparation Decisions.*** With an alpha level of .05, there was no statistically significant difference between the observed frequencies and the expected frequencies,  $x^2$  (3, N=107) = 0.989,  $p = >.05$ .

Presented in Table 41 is a summary of the participants' responses relative to the survey question: ***My School District Encourages Schools to Offer Latino Parents Leadership Roles on School Governance Committees.*** Fifty-three respondents (49.5%) *Agreed* and 3 respondents (2.8%) *Strongly Agreed*. In total, fifty-six respondents (52.3%) *Agreed* or *Strongly Agreed* that their school district *Encouraged Schools to Offer Latino Parents Leadership Roles on School Governance Committees*. Forty-seven respondents (43.9%) *Disagreed* and 4 respondents (3.7%) *Strongly Disagreed*. When the responses of *Disagree* or *Strongly Disagree* were combined, fifty-one respondents (47.6%) *Disagreed* that their school district *Encourages Schools to offer Latino parents leadership roles on school governance committees*. Eight respondents did not answer this question.

Table 41

## Encourages Latino Parent Leadership Roles on School Governance Committees

	N	<i>fo</i>	<i>fe</i>	$x^2$	<i>df</i>
Strongly Disagreed	4	3.7	3.40	0.792	3
Disagreed	47	43.9	44.40		
Agreed	53	49.5	48.89		
Strongly Agreed	3	2.8	3.09		
Total number of responses	107				

Note: Eight respondents did not respond to this question.

A chi-square test ( $x^2$ ) was conducted to examine the difference between the observed frequencies and the expected frequencies relative to the survey question: ***My School District Encourages Latino Parent Leadership Roles on School Governance Committees.*** With an alpha level of .05, there was no statistically significant difference between the observed frequencies and the expected frequencies,  $x^2 (3, N=107) = 0.792, p = >.05$ .

*Collaborating with the Community*

The final survey construct of *Collaborating with the Community* involved providing services for families and family outreach activities. Presented in Table 42 is a summary of the participants' responses to the survey question: ***My School District Provides a Resource Directory for Parents and Students with Information on Community Services, Programs, and Agencies.*** Fifty-nine respondents (56.2%) *Agreed* and twenty-nine respondents (27.6%) *Strongly Agreed*. When the responses of *Agreed* or *Strongly Agree* were combined, eighty-eight respondents (83.8%) *Agreed* that their school district provided a resource directory for parents and students with information on community services, programs, and agencies. Fourteen respondents (13.3%) *Disagreed* and 3 respondents (2.9%) *Strongly Disagreed*. Ten respondents did not answer this question.

Table 42

*Provides Resource Directory for Parents and Students with Information on Community Services, Programs, and Agencies*

	N	<i>fo</i>	<i>fe</i>	$x^2$	<i>df</i>
Strongly Disagreed	3	2.9	4.56	0.124	3
Disagreed	14	13.3	10.73		
Agreed	59	56.2	57.76		
Strongly Agreed	29	27.6	25.03		
Total number of responses	105				

Note: Ten participants did not respond to this question.

A chi-square test ( $x^2$ ) was performed to examine the difference between the observed frequencies and the expected frequencies regarding the survey question: ***My School District Provides a Resource Directory for Parents and Students with Information on Community Services, Programs, and Agencies.*** With an alpha level of .05, there was no statistically significant difference between the observed frequencies and the expected frequencies,  $x^2 (3, N=105) = 0.124, p = >.05$ .

Table 43 represents a summary of the participants' responses to the survey question: ***My School District Assists Parents in Locating and Using Community Resources.*** Seventy respondents (66.7%) *Agreed* and sixteen respondents (15.2%) *Strongly Agreed*. When the responses of *Agree or Strongly Agreed* were combined, eighty-six respondents (81.9%) *Agreed* that their school district assists parents in locating and using community resources. In contrast, seventeen respondents (16.2%) *Disagreed* and 2 respondents (1.9%) *Strongly Disagreed* that their school district assisted parents in locating and using community resources. Ten respondents did not answer this question.

Table 43

*Assists Parents in Locating and Using Community Resources*

	N	<i>fo</i>	<i>fe</i>	$x^2$	<i>df</i>
Strongly Disagreed	2	1.9	3.09	0.410	3
Disagreed	17	16.2	14.0		
Agreed	70	66.7	67.89		
Strongly Agreed	16	15.2			
Total number of responses	105				

Note: Ten participants did not respond to this question.

A chi-square test ( $x^2$ ) was conducted to examine the difference between the observed frequencies and the expected frequencies relative to the survey question: ***My School District Encourages Schools to Assist Parents in Locating and Using Community Resources.*** With an alpha level of .05, there was no statistically significant difference between the observed frequencies and the expected frequencies,  $x^2 (3, N=105) = 0.410, p = >.05$ .

Table 44 represents the participants' responses regarding the survey question: ***My School District Encouraged Schools to Work with Local Businesses, Libraries, Parks, Museums, and Other Organizations on Programs to Enhance Student's Skills and Overall Learning.*** Fifty-seven respondents (54.3%) *Agreed* and twenty-four respondents (22.9%) *Strongly Agreed*. When the responses of *Agreed* or *Strongly Agreed* were combined, eighty-one respondents (77.2%) *Agreed* that their school district encourages schools to work with local businesses, libraries, parks, museums, and other organizations on developing programs to enhance student's skills and overall learning. Twenty-one respondents (20%) *Disagreed* and 3 respondents (2.9%) *Strongly Disagreed*. Ten respondents did not answer this question.

Table 44

*Encourages Schools to Work with Local Businesses and Organizations on Programs to Enhance Students' Skills and Overall Learning*

	N	<i>fo</i>	<i>fe</i>	$x^2$	<i>df</i>
Strongly Disagreed	3	2.9	5.90	0.102	3
Disagreed	21	20.0	16.99		
Agreed	57	54.3	57.30		
Strongly Agreed	24	22.9	19.89		
Total number of responses	105				

Note: Ten participants did not respond to this question.

A chi-square test ( $x^2$ ) was conducted to examine the difference between the observed frequencies and the expected frequencies relative to the question: ***My School District Worked with Local Businesses and Organizations on Developing Programs to Enhance Student Learning.*** With an alpha level of .05, there was no statistically significant difference between the observed frequencies and the expected frequencies,  $x^2 (3, N=105) = 0.102, p = >.05$ .

Presented in Table 45 is a summary of the participants' responses relative to the survey question: ***My School District Encourages the Opening of School Buildings for Community Use After School Hours.*** Sixty-two respondents (59%) *Agreed* and thirty-five respondents (33.3%) *Strongly Agreed*. When the responses of *Agree* or *Strongly Agree* were combined, ninety-seven respondents (92.3%) *Agreed* that their school district encouraged the opening of school buildings after school hours. Eight respondents (7.6%) *Disagreed*. None of the respondents *Strongly Disagreed*. Ten respondents did not answer this question.

Table 45

*Encourages the Opening of School Buildings After School Hours*

	N	<i>fo</i>	<i>fe</i>	$x^2$	<i>df</i>
Strongly Disagreed	-	-	2.53	0.042	3
Disagreed	8	7.6	7.6		
Agreed	62	59.0	61.53		
Strongly Agreed	35	33.3	30.76		
Total number of responses	105				

Note: Ten survey participants did not respond to this question.

A chi-square test of ( $x^2$ ) was conducted to examine the difference between the observed frequencies and the expected frequencies relative to the question: ***My School District Encourages the Opening of School Building After School Hours.*** With an alpha level of .05, there was no statistically significant difference between the observed frequencies and the expected frequencies,  $x^2 (3, N=105) = 0.042, p = >.05$ .

Displayed in Table 46 is a summary of the participants' responses relative to the survey question: ***My School District Offers After School Programs for Students with Support from Community Businesses, Other Agencies, and Volunteers.*** Sixty-two respondents (59%) *Agreed* and twenty-one respondents (20%) *Strongly Agreed*. In contrast, twenty-two respondents (21%) *Disagreed*. None of the respondents *Strongly Disagreed*. Thirteen respondents did not answer this question.



Table 46

*Offers After School Programs for Students with Support From Community Businesses, Other Agencies and Volunteers*

	N	<i>fo</i>	<i>fe</i>	$x^2$	<i>df</i>
Strongly Disagreed	-	-	4.20	0.009	3
Disagreed	22	21.0	16.80		
Agreed	59	59.0	63.20		
Strongly Agreed	21	20.0	15.80		
Total number of response	102				

Note: Thirteen participants did not respond to this question.

A chi-square test ( $x^2$ ) was conducted to examine the difference between the observed frequencies and the expected frequencies to the survey question: ***My School District Offered After School Programs with Community Support***. With an alpha level of .05, there was no statistically significant difference between the observed frequencies and the expected frequencies,  $x^2 (3, N=102) = 0.009, p = >.05$ .

Presented in Table 47 is a summary of the participants' responses relative to the survey question: ***My School District Informed Parents of Community Programs for Students Such as Mentoring and Tutoring***. Sixty-seven respondents (63.8%) *Agreed* and twenty-seven respondents (25.7%) *Strongly Agreed*. When the responses of *Agree* or *Strongly Agree* were combined, ninety-four respondents (89.5%) *Agreed* that their school district informed parents of community programs for students, such as mentoring and tutoring. Eight respondents (7.6%) *Disagreed* and 3 respondents (2.9%) *Strongly Disagreed*. Ten respondents did not answer this question.

Table 47

*Informs Parents of Community Programs for Students Such as Mentoring and Tutoring*

	N	<i>fo</i>	<i>fe</i>	$x^2$	<i>df</i>
Strongly Disagreed	3	2.9	3.02	0.929	3
Disagreed	8	7.6	7.47		
Agreed	67	63.8	63.92		
Strongly Agreed	27	26.0	25.87		
Total number of responses	105				

Note: Ten participants did not respond to this question.

A chi-square test ( $x^2$ ) was performed to examine the difference between the observed frequencies and the expected frequencies in the participants' responses to the question: ***My School District Informs Parents of Community Programs Such as Mentoring and Tutoring.*** With an alpha level of .05, there was no statistically significant difference between the observed frequencies and the expected frequencies,  $x^2$  (3, N=105) = 0.929,  $p > .05$ .

Displayed in Table 48 is a summary of the participants' responses concerning the survey question: ***My School District Assures Equity of Opportunities for Students and Families to Participate in Community Programs or to Obtain Services.*** Seventy-four respondents (71.2%) *Agreed* and nineteen respondents (18.3%) *Strongly Agreed*. When the responses of *Agree* or *Strongly Agree* were combined, ninety-three respondents (89.5%) *Agreed* that their school district assures equity of opportunities for students and families to participate in community programs or to obtain services. Nine respondents (8.7%) *Disagreed* and 2 respondents (1.9%) *Strongly Disagreed*. Eleven respondents did not answer this question.

Table 48

*Assures Equity of Opportunities for Students and Families to Participate in Community Programs or to Obtain Services*

	N	<i>fo</i>	<i>fe</i>	$x^2$	<i>df</i>
Strongly Disagreed	2	1.9	2.13	0.850	3
Disagreed	9	8.7	8.46		
Agreed	74	71.2	71.46		
Strongly Agreed	19	18.3	18.06		
Total number of responses	104				

Note: Eleven participants did not respond to this question.

A chi-square test ( $x^2$ ) was conducted to examine the difference between the observed frequencies and the expected frequencies in the participants' responses to the question: ***My School District Assures Equity of Opportunities for Students and Families to Participate in Community Programs or to Obtain Services.*** With an alpha level of .05, there was no statistically significant difference between observed frequencies and the expected frequencies,  $x^2(3, N=104) = 0.850, p = > .05$ .

### *Teacher Training*

In order to gain an understanding of the of parental involvement training that survey participants received, the participants were asked to respond to 5 five questions regarding parental involvement teacher training. Table 49 represents the participants' responses to the survey question: ***My School District Provides In-service Training and Other Opportunities to Help Teachers Communicate and Collaborate with Parents.*** Fifty-three respondents (51.5%) *Agreed* and twelve respondents (11.7%) *Strongly Agreed*. When the responses of *Agreed* or *Strongly Agreed*, sixty-five respondents (63.2%) *Agreed* that that their school district provided in-service to help teachers communicate and collaborate with parents. In contrast, twenty-six respondents (25.2%) *Disagreed* and twelve (11.7%) *Strongly Disagreed*. Thus thirty-eight respondents either *Disagreed* or *Strongly Disagreed* that their school district provides in-service training and other opportunities to help teachers communicate and collaborate with parents. Twelve respondents did not answer this question.

Table 49

*Provides In-Service Training and Other Opportunities to Help Teachers Communicate and Collaborate with Parents*

	N	<i>fo</i>	<i>fe</i>	$x^2$	<i>df</i>
Strongly Disagreed	12	11.7	8.62	0.132	3
Disagreed	26	25.2	28.27		
Agreed	53	51.5	48.42		
Strongly Agreed	12	11.7	14.77		
Total number of responses	103				

Note: Twelve participants did not respond to this question.

A chi-square test ( $x^2$ ) was performed to examine the difference between the observed frequencies and the expected frequencies in the participants' responses to the question: ***My School District Provides In-Service Training and Other Opportunities to Help Teachers Communicate and Collaborate with Parents.*** With an alpha level of .05, there was no statistically significant difference between the observed frequencies and the expected frequencies,  $x^2(3, N=103) = 0.132, p = >.05$ .

Presented in Table 50 is a summary of the participants' responses relative to the survey question: ***My School District Provides Training for Teachers on How to Involve Latino Parents.*** Forty-five respondents (43.7%) *Agreed* and 5 respondents (4.9%) *Strongly Agreed*. When the responses of *Agreed* or *Strongly Agreed* were combined, fifty respondents (48.6%) *Agreed* that their school district provided training for teachers on how to involve Latino parents. Forty-eight respondents (46.6%) *Disagreed* and 5 respondents (4.9%) *Strongly Disagreed*. Thus, fifty-three respondents (51.5%) either *Disagreed* or *Strongly Disagreed* that their school district provided training for teachers on how to involve Latino parents. Twelve respondents did not answer this question.

Table 50

*Provides Training on How to Involve Latino Parents*

	N	<i>fo</i>	<i>fe</i>	$x^2$	<i>df</i>
Strongly Disagreed	5	4.9	5.04	0.922	3
Disagreed	48	46.6	46.45		
Agreed	45	43.7	43.84		
Strongly Agreed	5	4.9	4.75		
Total number of responses	103				

Note: Twelve participants did not respond to this question.

A chi-square test ( $x^2$ ) was performed to examine the difference between the observed frequencies and the expected frequencies to the question: ***My School District Provides Training on How to Involve Latino Parents***. With an alpha level of .05, there was no statistically significant difference between the observed frequencies and the expected frequencies,  $x^2$  (3, N=103) = 0.922,  $p = >.05$ .

Displayed in Table 51 is a summary of the participants' responses relative to the survey question: ***My School District Utilizes Parents as Trainers in Staff Development***. Twenty-nine respondents (28.2%) *Agreed* and 1 respondent (1.0%) *Strongly Agreed*. When the responses of *Agree* or *Strongly Agree* were combined, thirty respondents (29.2%) *Agreed* that their school district utilized parents as trainers in staff development. Fifty-nine respondents (57.3%) *Disagreed* and fourteen respondents (13.6%) *Strongly Disagreed* that their school district utilized parents as trainers in staff development. When combining the responses of *Disagree* or *Strongly Disagree*, seventy-three respondents (70.9%) *Disagreed* that their school district utilized parents as trainers in staff development. Twelve respondents did not answer this question.

Table 51

*Utilizes Parents as Trainers in Staff Development*

	N	<i>fo</i>	<i>fe</i>	$x^2$	<i>df</i>
Strongly Disagreed	14	13.6	10.34	0.042	3
Disagreed	59	57.3	60.55		
Agreed	29	28.2	29.94		
Strongly Agreed	1	1.0	4.25		
Total number of responses	103				

Note: Twelve participants did not respond to this question.

A chi-square test ( $x^2$ ) was conducted to examine the difference between observed frequencies and the expected frequencies in the participants' responses to the question: ***My School District Utilized Parents as Trainers in Staff Development***. With an alpha level of .05, there was no statistically significant difference in the observed frequencies and the expected frequencies,  $x^2(3, N=103) = 0.042, p = >.05$ .

Presented in Table 52 is a summary of the participants' responses concerning the survey question: ***My School District Provides Teacher Training on Parental Involvement Best Practices Strategies***. Fifty-eight respondents (56.3%) *Agreed* and 7 respondents (6.8%) *Strongly Agreed*. When the responses of *Agree* or *Strongly Agree* were combined, sixty-five respondents (63.1%) *Agreed* that their school district provided teacher training on parental involvement best practices strategies. Twenty-nine respondents (28.2%) *Disagreed* and 9 respondents (8.7%) *Strongly Disagreed*. When the responses of *Disagreed* or *Strongly Disagreed* were combined, thirty-eight respondents (36.9%) *Disagreed* that their school district provided teacher training on parental involvement best practices. Twelve respondents did not answer this question.

Table 52

*Provides Teacher Training on Parental Involvement Best Practices*

	N	<i>fo</i>	<i>fe</i>	$x^2$	<i>df</i>
Strongly Disagreed	9	8.7	5.71	0.872	3
Disagreed	29	28.2	31.18		
Agreed	58	56.3	53.33		
Strongly Agreed	7	6.8	9.78		
Total number of responses	103				

Note: Twelve participants did not respond to this question.

A chi-square test ( $x^2$ ) was conducted to examine the difference between the observed frequencies and the expected frequencies to the question: ***My School District Provides Teacher Training on Parental Best Practices.*** With an alpha level of .05, there was no statistically significant difference between the observed frequencies and the expected frequencies,  $x^2 (3, N=103) = 0.872, p = >.05$ .

Table 53 represents the participants' responses relative to the survey question: ***My School District Provides Training for Teachers on Understanding the Role that Culture Plays in Parental Involvement.*** Sixty-four respondents (62.1%) *Agreed* and 6 respondents (5.8%) *Strongly Agreed*. When the responses of *Agree* or *Strongly Disagree* were combined, seventy respondents (67.9%) *Agreed* that their school district *Provided Training for Teachers on Understanding the Role that Culture Plays in Parental Involvement*. In contrast, twenty-seven respondents (26.2%) *Disagreed* and 6 respondents (5.8%) *Strongly Disagreed*. When the responses of *Disagree* or *Strongly Disagree* were combined, thirty-three respondents (32%) *Disagreed* that their school district provided training for teachers on understanding the role that culture plays in parental involvement. Twelve respondents did not answer this question.

Table 53

Provides Training for Teachers on Understanding the Role that Culture Plays in Parental Involvement

	N	<i>fo</i>	<i>fe</i>	$x^2$	<i>df</i>
Strongly Disagreed	6	5.8	3.71	0.162	3
Disagreed	27	26.2	26.20		
Agreed	64	62.1	60.01		
Strongly Agreed	6	5.8	7.88		
Total number of responses	103				

Note: Twelve participants did not respond to this question.

A chi-square test ( $x^2$ ) was performed to examine the difference between the observed frequencies and the expected frequencies to the question: ***My School District Provided Training for Teachers on Understanding the Role that Culture Plays in Parental Involvement.*** With an alpha level of .05, there was no statistically significant difference between the observed frequencies and the expected frequencies,  $x^2 (3, N=103) = 0.162, p = >. 05$ .

Data Analysis Summary

The data analysis of Epstein’s 6 Parental Involvement constructs of 1) *Parenting*, 2) *Communication*, 3) *Volunteering*, 4) *Learning at Home*, 5) *Decision-Making*, and 6) *Collaborating with the Community*, offers several key findings and answers the research question of this study. In addition, the data collected from three additional constructs, *School Procedures*, *School Characteristics*, and *Teacher Training* are also integrated in the analysis and provides a basis for the rich interpretation and understanding of the *Parental Involvement Strategies Implemented in Selected Virginia Schools*.

*Study Participants*

There were 2 school districts that agreed to participate in this study. In 2007-2008, school A had a total student population of 54,003 and 13% of the students enrolled were Latino. School B had a total student population of 2,760 and 11% of the students enrolled were Latino. Most of the participants in this study were female (77%) and Caucasian (88.7%). Many of the



participants were between the ages of 20-29 (28.9%) and 30-39 (26.3%) followed by those participants between the ages of 50-59 (21.9%). Most participants were middle school grade level teachers (43.5%) who had between 6-10 (29%) and 11-15 (23%) years of teaching experience. Most of the participants had a master's degree (68%). The distribution of the respondents revealed that most were from the larger school district, School A.

### *Parental Involvement Strategies*

The research question for this study was, What Latino parental involvement strategies are school districts implementing in selected Virginia elementary, middle, and high schools?

The data revealed that there were 19 out of 46 (41 %) strategies received a rating of 80% or better. There are 19 out of 46 (41%) strategies are being implemented in elementary, middle, and high schools in selected Virginia school districts. (see Figure 1)

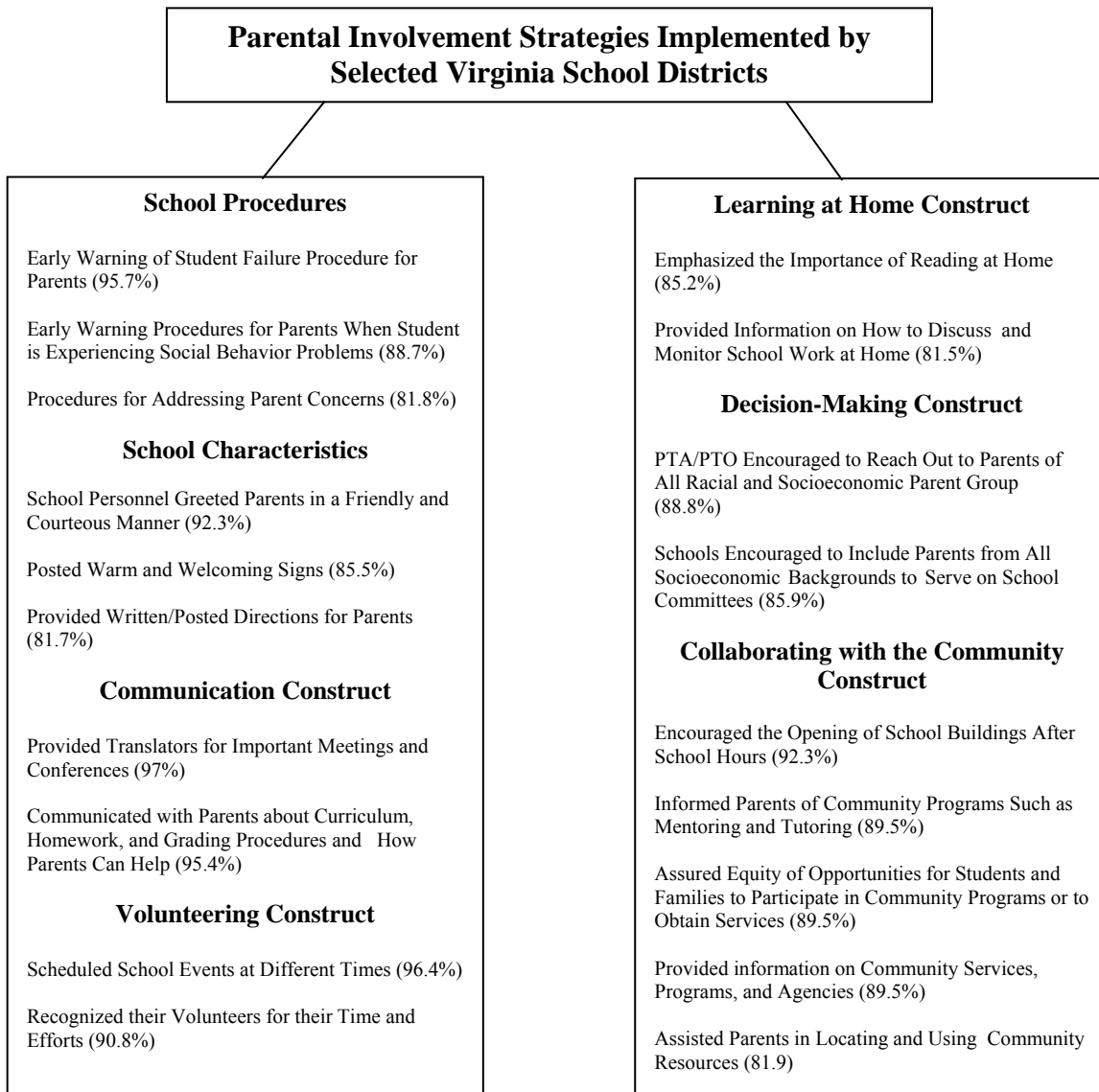


Figure 1. Parental involvement strategies implemented in selected Virginia school districts.

The strategies that received ratings between 90-97% are the strategies being implemented very well in the school district's in this study. There were 7 out of 46 (15%) parental involvement strategies received a rating of 90% or better. Those strategies that received 80% or better are the strategies being implemented well in the selected school districts.

### *Parental Involvement Teacher Training*

In order to determine whether or not the participants in this study understood the importance of parental involvement in improving student achievement, in general, the participants were asked to respond to whether or not they had been provided training relative to how to involve parents in the overall school program. The participants' responses relative to parental involvement training revealed that some teachers (27%) reported they had been trained. However, most teachers (73%) reported they had not received training. This construct received the lowest ratings among the 6 Parental Involvement constructs.. Furthermore, in an examination of the *Parental Involvement Teacher Training* construct, the data revealed that 5 out of 5 strategies under this construct received ratings below 80%. Although the parental involvement teacher training construct received the lowest ratings overall, the highest rated strategies were, *Provides Training for Teachers on Understanding the Role that Culture Plays in Parental Involvement* (67.9%) followed by *Provides In-Service Training for Teachers on Communicating and Collaborating with Parents* (63.2%). The lowest rated strategies under Parental Involvement Teacher Training, were, *Provides Training on How to Involve Latino Parents* (48.6%) followed by *Utilizes Parents as Trainers in Staff Development* (29.2%). These data are indicative the need for professional development in parental involvement for teachers in order to develop strong and effective home-school relations with Latino parents.

### *School Practices and Procedures*

The *School Practices and Procedures* construct examined the respondents' perceptions of their school's practices and procedures. Three out of 5 strategies received ratings above 80%. These strategies were: *Early Warnings of Student Failure Procedures for Parents* (95.7%), *Early Warning Procedures for Parents When Students were Experiencing Social and Behavioral Problems and Procedures for Addressing Parent Concerns* (81.8%), in general. The strategies that received the lower ratings were: *Written Parental Involvement Policy* (60.9) and *Orientation to School Practices and Procedures* (62.6%).

### *Parenting*

The *Parenting* construct consists of assisting families with parenting skills, family support, understanding child and adolescent development, and setting home conditions that

support learning at each age and grade level. In addition, this construct involves assisting schools in understanding families' backgrounds, cultures, and goals for their students.

There were 6 parental involvement strategies relative to the *Parenting* construct. Each of the strategies received ratings below 80%. The ratings ranged between 32% and 74.5%. *Helps Parents Understand Topics that Help them Become Partners with Teachers in Improving Student Academic Achievement* received a rating of (74.5%). The lowest rated strategy was *Sponsoring Home Neighborhood Meetings to Help Families Understand the U. S. School System* (32%).

The *Communication* construct involves communicating with families about school programs and student progress. Communication facilitates the meaningful two-way communication channels between school and home.

Six strategies comprised the *Communication* construct. The strategy ratings ranged between (48.2%) and (97%). Two out of 6 strategies received ratings of 80% or better. Those strategies were as follows: *Provided Translators for Important Meetings and Conferences* (97%) and *Communicating with Parents about Curriculum, Homework, and Grading Procedures and How Parents Can Help* (95.4%). The strategy that received the lowest rating was, *Holds Conferences with Every Parent Once Per Year* (48.2%).

### *Volunteering*

The *Volunteering* construct is comprised of improving recruiting, training, and scheduling in order to involve families. It also involves enabling educators to work with parent volunteers who support students and the school. The *Volunteering* construct contains 3 parental involvement strategies. Two out of 3 of the strategies received ratings of 80% or better. Those 2 strategies were as follows: *Scheduled School Events at Different Times* (96.4%) and *Recognized their Volunteers for their Time and Efforts* (90.8%). Most participants' (96.4%) reported that their school districts *Scheduled School Events at Different Times*. However, 62.9% of the participants reported that *Teachers are Encouraged to Meet with Parents Outside School Hours*. In contrast, the participants reported that their school districts' *Reduced Barriers to Parent Participation* (51.9%). The scheduling of school events is reported in the research as a barrier to parent participation (Tinkler, 2002). Therefore, caution was used in the interpretation of these 3 strategies. A more in depth examination of the 3 strategies of *Scheduling Events at Different*

*Times* (96.4%), *Teachers are Encouraged to Meet with Parents Outside School Hours* (62.9%) and *Reduced Barriers to Parent Participation* (51.9%) is recommended.

### *Learning at Home*

The *Learning at Home* construct entails engaging parents in learning activities at home including homework, goal setting, and other curricular activities and decisions. This construct also involves encouraging teachers to design homework that enables students to share and discuss interesting tasks with family members.

There were 5 parental involvement strategies relative to *Learning at Home*. Two of the 5 strategies received high ratings. *Emphasizing Reading and Home* (85.2) followed by *Providing Information on How to Discuss and Monitor School Work at Home* (81.4%). The strategy that received the lowest rating was *Encouraged Interactive Homework* (51.9%).

### *Decision-Making*

The construct of *Decision-Making* engages families as participants in school decisions, governance and advocacy activities through school councils or improvement teams, committees, and parent organizations. There were 6 *Decision-Making* parental involvement strategies. Two out of 6 strategies received ratings of 80% or better. The strategies, *PTA/PTO is Encouraged to Reach Out to Parents of All Racial and Socioeconomic Parent Groups* received a rating of 88.8% and *Encouraged Schools to Include Parents from All Socioeconomic Backgrounds to Serve on School Committees* received a rating of 85.9%. The strategy that received the lowest rating was *Schools Encouraged to Solicit Ideas of Parents Less Involved* (46.8%). Caution is used with the interpretation of these ratings as Latino parents are among those parents who are less involved. In an open-ended comment made by one of the respondents is as follows:

*The PTOs tend to be socioeconomically privileged and forget that not all parents have the same resources and opportunities. PTOs are now 'going green' and posting only on the internet. What about the kids who can't access the internet?*

One can conclude that the PTOs in the school districts' in this study are reaching out to some parents and some parents have been asked to serve on school committees but may not have solicited the ideas, services, and talents of parents less involved, specifically Latino parents.

### *Collaborating with the Community*

The *Collaborating with the Community* construct is comprised of coordinating resources and services for families, students with school community groups. This construct also recommends that schools collaborate with businesses, agencies, cultural and civic organizations, and colleges or universities. In addition, this construct recommends services for families and family outreach activities. There were 5 out of 7 strategies that received ratings above 80%. The strategies that received high ratings were as follows: 1) *Encouraged the Opening of School Buildings After School Hours* (92.3%), 2) *Informed Parents of Community Programs Such as Mentoring and Tutoring* (89.5%), 3) *Assured Equity of Opportunities for Students and Families to Participate in Community Programs or to Obtain Services* (89.5%), 4) *Provided Information on Community Services, Programs, and Agencies* (83.8%), and 5) *Assisted Parents in Locating and Using Community Resources* (81.9%). The 2 strategies that were below 80% were: *Offered After School Programs with Community Support* (79%) and *Worked with Local Businesses and Organizations on Developing Programs to Enhance Student Learning* (77.2%). The strategies in the *Collaborating with the Community* construct received the highest ratings, in general, and are being implemented most in the selected school districts.

The  $\chi^2$  test revealed that there was no statistically significance between the observed/actual frequencies and the expected/theoretical frequencies of 45 out of 46 parental involvement strategies. The strategy that was found to be statistically significant was: ***My School District Sponsors Home Neighborhood Meetings to Help Families Understand the U. S. School System.***

### Discussion

When families and school form partnerships, everyone benefits (Antunez, 2000) and when home- school partnerships are formed, schools work better, families become closer, and ultimately students improve academically. Antunez stated that often language and/or culture barriers prevent Latino parents from feeling confident in their ability to collaborate with schools and assist in their student's academic achievement. Tinkler, 2002; Ramirez, 2003; and Quiocho & Daoud, 2006 all agree that there are barriers that hinder the involvement of some parents, particularly Latino parents.

### *Strategies being Implemented in Selected School Districts*

A key finding in this study is that the selected school districts are addressing some of the barriers that hinder parent participation at their student's school. The school districts' understand that this is the first step towards creating effective, positive, and trusting home-school relations (Cassity and Harris, 2000). For example, the data revealed that the school districts in this study have schools that are parent friendly, warm, and welcoming. The respondents (92.3%) reported that their schools greeted parents in a friendly and courteous manner. The respondents also reported that their school districts have implemented strategies that address parents overall concerns relative to student's achievement and behaviors.

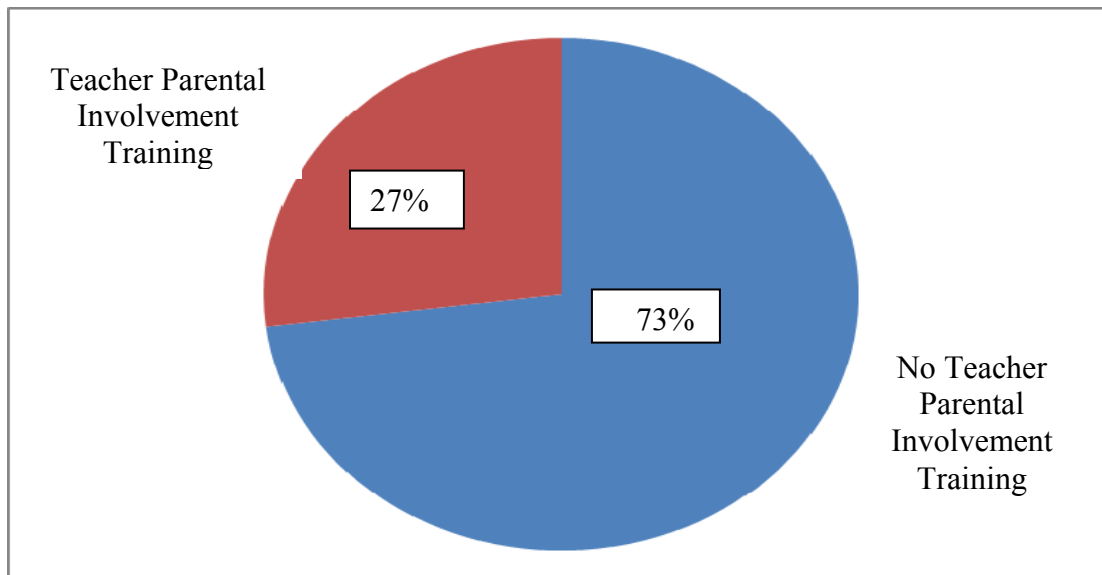
An important factor in developing a school environment that is warm, caring, and receptive to parents is communication (Scribner, et. al, 1999). Latino parents, particularly those new to the U. S., often have language barriers that prevent their involvement in schools. Bermudez & Marquez 1996; Antunez, 2000. Perreira, Chapman, and Stein (2006) all agree that without the ability to speak English, Latino parents feel of helpless, alienation, and the inability to advocate on behalf of their children. The school districts (97%) in this study reported that their school district provided translators for parents in important meetings. They understand that implementing the strategy of providing translators for Latino parents has numerous benefits. Providing a translator for parents, 1) enables parents to overcome language barriers, 2) provides a vehicle for Latino parents to advocate for the students, 3) they gain knowledge and information that assists them in navigating the school system, 4) parents overall concerns can be addressed and 5) schools and parents begin to bridge the communication gap between home and school (Tornatzky, Cutler & Lee, 2002).

*Collaborating with the Community* strategies implemented by selected school districts received the highest ratings. The data revealed that the school districts in this study had implemented strategies that encouraged schools to inform parents of community programs , services and agencies. The implementation of this strategy mirrors the research of Osterling & Garza (2004) who stated that community-based organizations represent an “untapped, source of leadership and opportunities to encourage and strengthen Latino parental involvement in American schools” (p. 270). He also stated that Latino community-based organizations, specifically, can serve a critical role in assisting and supplementing the schools Parents Teachers Associations/Organizations (PTA/PTO). The literature points out that Latinos value family

loyalty and share a sense of community; therefore, as Osterling et. al., suggests tapping into Latino community-based organizations is a viable strategy that can be utilized to build and strengthen relations between schools and Latino parents.

### *Teacher and Parent Training*

Another important finding is that both parents and teacher training in parental involvement were two areas that need to be addressed. Eighty-four participants (73%) in this study reported that they had been provided parental involvement training (see Figure 2).



*Figure 2.* Teacher participants' parental involvement training.

Several variables highlighted in the data might have influenced the lack of parental involvement training for teachers. In an open-ended response from a principal reflected the lack of parental involvement training among the participants. Her comment was as follows:

*A large number of these teachers are first year teachers. They might have felt uncomfortable completing the survey. At least 50% of our staff has only been here two years.*

Not having participated in parental involvement training activities or professional development may also have influenced the participants' responses to survey the questions. In fact, the following comments of some respondents indicated that many participants did not have



a clear understanding of parental involvement. Some of the respondents' comments were as follows:

*I am assuming that our school system has this policy-but has never been exposed to the knowledge of many questions*

*I am not certain that every school in the county brings parents into the school in the evening to help them understand the system and show ways they can help their children and volunteer.*

*I'm uncomfortable answering questions where I have absolutely no idea how to answer what programs my school system has in place to handle parental concerns.*

*It is possible that some of the services are provided even though I am not aware of them.*

These comments support the research described by (Shartrand, Weiss, Kreider, & Lopez, 1997). These researchers reported the existence of a discrepancy between teacher pre-service preparation on family involvement and the types of family involvement activities that teachers are expected to perform at school. They also reported that school success in promoting family involvement depends on teachers and principals who possess the knowledge, attitudes, and skills to work with families. Shartrand et al. (1997) also noted that the lack of teacher training raises another barrier to effective parental involvement. They argued that teachers need concrete skills, knowledge, and positive attitudes about parental involvement in order to implement and carry out effective home-school involvement activities.

Parent training is another area that needs to be addressed. The data indicates that the participants' (32%) in this study disagreed that their school district helped families understand the U. S. school system. Sosa (1997) stated that Latino parents want to acquire the skills and confidence that allows them to contribute as equals but lack the "know how" or the knowledge of how to navigate U. S. school systems (Delgado-Gaitan, 2004). Through training opportunities and deliberate attempts to reach out to Latino parents may acquire the skills necessary to advocate for their students and will transition from being less involved to more involved parents in U. S. schools.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### IMPLICATIONS AND CONCLUSION

This chapter includes a summary of the findings, the researcher's interpretation of the findings, and a discussion of the implications of the study. This chapter is divided into three sections. In the first section presents a summary of the purpose and methodology of the study. The second section presents the conclusions based on the findings pertaining to the research question. The third section, the researcher expands on data and presents the implications of the study, and suggests future research in the area of Latino parental involvement.

#### Purpose and Methodology Summary

The purpose of this study was to gain a more in-depth understanding of parental involvement, particularly as it relates to the parental involvement strategies for Latino parents implemented by selected Virginia school districts. There is extensive research in the area of parental involvement in general, however the research on Latino parent involvement in public schools is very limited. In spite of the limited research on Latino parental involvement, proponents of parental involvement have concluded that parental involvement contributes to student success (Delgado-Gaitan, 2001; Epstein, 2002; Henderson, Mapp, Johnson, & Davies, 2007; Ramirez, 2003; Scribner, Young, and Pedroza, 1999; Tinkler, 2002; & Torrez, 2004).

The population for this study was drawn from two Virginia school districts that have elementary, middle, and high schools whose student populations is comprised of 10% Latino. A survey was created utilizing SurveyMonkey, a web based survey developer. The one hundred thirty-seven (n=137) teacher participants completed and returned the survey, yielding a return rate of 39%. SurveyMonkey and JMP statistical software package (2005) was utilized to report categorical information about the teachers' perceptions about the parental involvement strategies implemented in their school district for Latino parents.

Descriptive research permitted the researcher to classify, organize, and summarize the data utilized for reporting demographic data about the teacher participants, their perceptions about parental involvement strategies implemented in their school district. The data is presented in the form of tables and includes frequencies and descriptive analysis of responses and comments from the survey participants. These data have provided valuable insight into this topic.

### *Research Question*

The research question in this study is: *What Latino Parental involvement strategies are school districts implementing in selected Virginia elementary, middle, and high schools?*

Nineteen of the parental involvement strategies received ratings between 97% and 81.5% (Figure 1). Nine of the strategies received ratings of 90% or better and twenty-seven of the strategies received ratings below 80%. The constructs that received the highest ratings were: *Collaborating with the Community, School Practices and Procedures, and School Characteristics*. The findings of this study indicate that these strategies are the strategies under these 3 constructs are being implemented with frequency by the selected school districts. (see Figure 1).

### Implications for Practice

#### *Parental Involvement Training*

A major finding that was drawn from the data analysis was that the respondents were not familiar with parental involvement, in general, they were not familiar with the parental involvement practices that their school district had established, or both. In fact, the lack of knowledge of parental involvement may have influenced the way in which the teacher participants responded to this study's survey questions. In other words, those respondents who lacked the background knowledge of parental involvement may have responded positively by selecting *Agree* to a survey question oppose to *selecting Disagree* as an "Undecided or Neutral" option in the survey was not available. Also, having limited knowledge of parental involvement may be the reason why some participants expressed a need to have an "*I Don't Know*" option in the survey. The following statements support this finding:

*There needs to be a category of don't know, I could not complete this survey honestly because I did not know the answers to most of the questions.*

*I also felt that I needed an I don't know selection. I really started clicking on agree to many answers because I an assuming that our school system has this policy - but have never been exposed to the knowledge of many questions...but selecting I disagree would not fit the bill...so I chose I agree.*

*I would have liked the option of "do not know" for some of the questions because it is possible that some of the services are provided even though I am not aware of them.*

*I do not know if some of the information is available... I think possibly to next time add a place for if we do not know the information... so it does not interfere with your stats.*

Due to the fact that the “neutral or undecided” option was not available, the respondents had to agree or disagree. Thus some respondents may have leaned towards the positive and agreed when in fact, they were unfamiliar with a particular survey question or questions. Some respondents may have decided not to respond at all to unfamiliar survey questions. The fact that 73% of the respondents reported that they had not received parental involvement training also supports this finding. It also and suggests that school districts’ need to consider offering parental involvement training opportunities, particularly those focused on Latino parents. These training opportunities should focus on identifying and examining the attitudes of various school personnel relative to parental involvement, particularly Latino parental involvement. It is also important that teacher training give direction to the important role that culture plays in parental involvement. Overall, training opportunities that broaden teacher understanding of the impact of parental involvement on student learning is vital. This finding also supports the fact that teachers who have not had training in working with parents often overlook the opportunity to get Latino parents involved (Tinkler, 2002). However, although the data in this study reveals a need for teacher training in parental involvement, training for all school personnel is a recommended practice for all school personnel as parental involvement training may strengthen relationships between parents and schools overall.

As student populations in U. S. schools become increasingly ethnically diverse, teachers and parents will likely come from different cultural and economic backgrounds which may cause conflicting values and beliefs (Shartrand et al., 1997). Therefore, teachers need to be sensitive to the cultural and contextual factors unique to their individual school communities (NAESP, 2001). School districts need to move beyond the typical parental involvement and provide all school personnel, particularly teachers, with the innovative training that will allow them to develop the skills necessary that will allow them to work effectively with all families, including Latino families. When families of diverse backgrounds are involved at school, teachers become more aware of the cultural and community issues, in turn they are more likely to engage and

reach out to parents in meaningful ways NAESP (2001). In spite of the fact that many perspective teacher hires enter the teaching profession with limited knowledge of successful parental involvement strategies it is recommended that a series of parental involvement topics be integrated into the teacher professional development activities throughout the school year. Also, parent involvement teacher training should be incorporated into the new teacher orientation program. Parental Involvement topics for teacher training might include but is not limited to the following:

- The school district's position on parental involvement,
- Examination of differences in the definitions of parental involvement between school and home;
- An orientation which includes the family as an integral part of teaching the young child (Shartrand et al., 1997);
- Understanding of changing family patterns and their societal implications (Shartrand et al., 1997);
- Knowledge of cultural differences in children, families, and communities (Shartrand et al., 1997);
- Barriers to Latino parent involvement (aware of parental skill levels, time constraints, and work schedules, scheduling of events, etc).
- Latino family culture including the extended family,
- The role that culture plays in parental involvement,
- Literacy programs in the home,
- Interactive homework activities( activities that require students to share with family
- How to engage Latino families in meaningful home learning activities
- Establish a continuous communication process with parents in order that parental involvements at different levels can be achieved.

Equally important is the premise that research indicates that many teacher education programs do not adequately train teachers to create positive family partnerships that result in student success and improved schools (Shartrand, Weiss, Kreider, & Lopez, 1997). Although, more institutions of higher education are beginning to incorporate family involvement into teacher preparation coursework (Carter, 2003), teacher education programs need to offer

prospective teacher substantial training in involvement of all families, including parents who are less involved.

### *Parent Training*

*Parent Training* is an integral part in the development of an effective parental involvement program. Latino parents want to be engaged at their children's education but many have challenges that prevent their participation. Many may not know that they are expected to be involved at school (Osterling et. al., 2004) as many Latino parents leave the education of their children to the schools. In addition, many recent immigrants or Latino families with different cultural backgrounds from those U. S born parents have different perceptions of their role in their children's education. They do want to be involved but often the lack knowledge of the English language, they have work schedules that often does not allow them to attend school events, school event schedules, they fear safety issues while attending school events, they lack transportation, child care, and a host of other barriers that prevent their involvement at school. Partnering with schools is a collaborative two-way effort between both Latino parents and the schools their children attend. Schools must reach beyond the traditional parental involvement activities and develop creative activities that involve parents who are less involved, particularly Latino parents. The following outreach activities/strategies should be considered when trying to create an effective parental program for Latino parents:

- Develop monthly/quarterly community/neighborhood meetings that focus on “*Understanding and Navigating U.S. Schools*”;
- Develop a series of videos for viewing at home (highlighting important aspects of the school system);
- Enlist and train community and faith-based organizations to help disseminate important student information (NCLB, high stakes assessments, School report cards, Pre-school programs, special education programming process, selecting colleges for student with disabilities, and their rights as parents);
- Partner with the Latino community and faith-based organizations to establish ESL classes for parents;
- Recruit and train parent leaders to train other parents;
- Establish and support father parent groups;

- Provide activities related to Latino culture (i.e. Parent/teacher soccer and baseball games);
- Establish a *Parent Satellite Resource Center* operated by parent volunteers. Make available computers, parent materials, parenting books, videos, VCR and DVD players available, information about community resource
- Recruit and train Parent Liaisons;
- Parent Literacy Activity Night;
- Math Night;
- Providing important information about adolescent development (peer pressure, family communication strategies, physical and emotional changes in teens,
- How to help students with homework;
- Substance Abuse;
- Gang Awareness;
- Community Health Seminars (include topics such as teen depression, attention deficit disorders, obesity, etc.);
- Develop Parent Focus Groups to solicit their ideas, interests, and concerns;
- PTA/PTO Fall Fiesta (Boulder Valley Schools);
- Informational meetings on graduation requirements and courses needed for acceptance into college;
- Offer informational session on high school programs specialty such as Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate Program, SAT and ACT college tests, dual enrollment options for students;
- College Knowledge Activities (selecting a college, including financial aid planning and the college application process; locating and applying for scholarships, preparing a resume, college life;
- Orientation sessions (from middle to high school) for students and parents;
- Provide "Fact Cards" for parents with school name, address, phone number, name of principal, school secretary, school nurse, PTA president-perhaps a refrigerator magnet;
- Conduct home visits.

Latino *Parent Training* activities can be informal or structured activities but the school districts' efforts must be deliberate in implementing involvement strategies that increase Latino parent participation thus improving student achievement.

The parental involvement strategy of *Understanding the U. S. School System* received a rating of 32%. There was also a statistically significant difference between the observed frequencies and the expected frequencies in the participants' responses. This finding is aligned with the social and cultural capital theory utilized to guide this study. Coleman (1988) stated that social capital is the means by which a parent can promote their child's achievement and educational attainment. Many Latino parents lack cultural capital-the knowledge skills, education, advantages, and skills that a person gains from experiences that give them a higher status in society (Coleman, 1988). Many Latino parents have little knowledge of the U. S. school system-how it operates, how they are governed, and how to navigate the system to help their children access information that would prepare them for college, how to help with homework, how to obtain various resources and programs available to students, etc. Latino parents need to understand that school personnel expect all parents to take an active role in the education of their children if their students are to be successful. Perhaps this expectation can be realized with appropriate Latino parent training.

#### *Parental Involvement Policy*

Although teachers may not be familiar with school policies, seventy respondents (60.9%) reported that their school district did not have a written parental involvement policy. One can conclude that there is a need for a written parental involvement. The policy, particularly a parental involvement policy, should be one that is familiar to all school personnel. In addition, it should be designed to provide a framework that would guide practice and expresses the school districts' beliefs about parental involvement (Chrispeels, 1991). Furthermore, a written policy would commit the school districts to certain goals and actions (Henderson et. al., 2007). Henderson et. al., 2007, stated the following regarding parental involvement:

*A parental involvement policy commits school districts'' to certain goals and actions. A written family involvement policy describes effective partnerships between the schools and its families, and lays out how and when that will happen and who will do what (p. 314).*



Furthermore, NCLB, Title 1, Part A, Section 118 states the following relative to parental involvement:

*A written parental involvement policy shall be developed jointly with, agreed upon with, and distributed to parents of participating children.*

Parents as well as the community need to be familiar with that policy. Given the knowledge and skills of working effectively with families, teachers are more likely to apply their new skills in schools that promote broad family involvement policies (Shartrand, Weiss, Kreider, & Lopez, 1997).

### Recommendations for Future Research

The findings from this study suggest the following recommendations for future research:

1. Replication of this study surveying all teachers, administrators, and counselors in all schools in the school districts in this study as the sample size in this study is not a true representation of the teachers' perceptions of parental involvement.
2. Replication of this study utilizing mixed methods of gathering data. Surveying and conducting interviews with school personnel on reoccurring themes in this study. The school counselors are often times more directly involved with parents. Data collected from each group should provide a more in depth and perhaps different perceptions of Latino parental involvement.
3. Creating Latino parent focus groups and replicating this study utilizing similar questions in order to gain Latino parents perceptions of what they perceive as parental involvement. Compare the parent responses with teachers and other school personnel. A comparison study of the Latino parents perceptions with those of the schools.
4. Conduct a study of the successful strategies utilized by Latino parents who are frequently involved in their children's education and have students doing well in public schools.
5. Conduct a comparison study sampling parents of different ethnic groups such as Asians and African Americans parents to determine whether or not their perceptions of parental involvement are similar or different to those of Latino parents.

6. Replicate this study, examining Latino parental involvement perceptions of teachers and parents, on a larger scale soliciting the participation of school districts nationwide, particularly those school districts with large Latino student populations.
7. Replicate this study, examining the perceptions of parental involvement, of middle and high school Latino students.

### Conclusions

Parental involvement is a multifaceted phenomenon. Parental involvement activities can be structured or informal. They can also be in home activities or school activities. In order for schools to develop effective home-school programs, school districts must reach beyond the traditional home school activities and create activities that are innovative and implemented deliberately, particularly for Latino parents.

This study examined the parental involvement strategies implemented by selected Virginia school districts as it relates to Latino parents. There were 7 out of 46 strategies that received a rating of 90% or better as the researcher believes that a rating of 90% or better translates into effectiveness in the implementation of the strategies for Latino parents.

A major finding in this study is the lack of teacher and parent training which may account for the low rated strategies overall. In order for schools to establish collaborative, two-way parental involvement partnerships, it is recommended that all school personnel take into account the students' culture, values, customs, and background of Latino parents and students. In addition, the school districts should integrate parental involvement topics in their professional development activities for teachers and into the new teacher training/induction programs.

Finally, all parents, regardless of class, ethnicity, gender, race, ability/disability, or religious orientation, have a rich culture that deserves to be honored, respected, and cultivated. Valuing their background is the basis of a climate that welcomes and invites all parents to be involved in their student's schools (Orozco, 2008). Orozco stated that parental involvement is a two-way process where parents are knowledgeable of and participates in the events and activities in their student's education and educators understand, embrace, and seek input from the communicates from which the students come.

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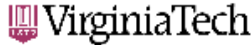


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APPENDIX A  
HUMAN SUBJECTS APPROVAL LETTER




Office of Research Compliance  
Institutional Review Board  
2000 Kraft Drive, Suite 2000 (0497)  
Blacksburg, Virginia 24061  
540/231-4991 Fax 540/231-0959  
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[www.irb.vt.edu](http://www.irb.vt.edu)

FVA00000572 expires 1/20/2010  
IRB # is IRB00000667

DATE: May 7, 2008

MEMORANDUM

TO: Richard G. Salmon  
Evelyn Astwood

FROM: David M. Moore 

Approval date: 5/7/2008  
Continuing Review Due Date: 4/22/2009  
Expiration Date: 5/8/2009

SUBJECT: IRB Expedited Approval: "Parental Involvement Strategies Implemented by Selected Virginia School Districts", IRB # 08-292

This memo is regarding the above-mentioned protocol. The proposed research is eligible for expedited review according to the specifications authorized by 45 CFR 46.110 and 21 CFR 56.110. As Chair of the Virginia Tech Institutional Review Board, I have granted approval to the study for a period of 12 months, effective May 7, 2008.

As an investigator of human subjects, your responsibilities include the following:

1. Report promptly proposed changes in previously approved human subject research activities to the IRB, including changes to your study forms, procedures and investigators, regardless of how minor. The proposed changes must not be initiated without IRB review and approval, except where necessary to eliminate apparent immediate hazards to the subjects.
2. Report promptly to the IRB any injuries or other unanticipated or adverse events involving risks or harms to human research subjects or others.
3. Report promptly to the IRB of the study's closing (i.e., data collecting and data analysis complete at Virginia Tech). If the study is to continue past the expiration date (listed above), investigators must submit a request for continuing review prior to the continuing review due date (listed above). It is the researcher's responsibility to obtain re-approval from the IRB before the study's expiration date.
4. If re-approval is not obtained (unless the study has been reported to the IRB as closed) prior to the expiration date, all activities involving human subjects and data analysis must cease immediately, except where necessary to eliminate apparent immediate hazards to the subjects.

**Important:**

If you are conducting federally funded non-exempt research, please send the applicable OSP/grant proposal to the IRB office, once available. OSP funds may not be released until the IRB has compared and found consistent the proposal and related IRB application.

cc: File

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VIRGINIA POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE UNIVERSITY AND STATE UNIVERSITY  
An equal opportunity, affirmative action institution

APPENDIX B

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT STRATEGIES IMPLEMENTED BY SELECTED VIRGINIA  
SCHOOL DIVISION

Principal Investigator: Dr. Richard Salmon, Professor, School of Education  
Educational Leadership and Policy Studies

**Co-Investigator: Evelyn Marie Astwood, Doctoral Candidate**

Educational Leadership and Policy Studies  
Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University  
Blacksburg, Virginia 24061

**October 3, 2008**

Teachers,

I am a doctoral candidate conducting a study entitled, **Parental Involvement Strategies Implemented by Selected Virginia School Districts**. The purpose of this study is to examine the types and frequency of parental strategies implemented by elementary, middle, and high schools in your school division. I would like to invite you to participate in this research study via a survey. **However, your participation is voluntary and strictly confidential.**

The purpose of the survey is to solicit the perceptions of parental involvement among elementary, middle, and high teachers in three Virginia school divisions. The school divisions and/or schools selected to participate in this study met the criteria of having a student population of at least 10% Latino according to the data reported to the Virginia Department of Education. The teachers invited to participate in this study have been randomly selected.

The 62 question survey will be sent to you electronically. Once you receive the survey, please answer each question on each page of the survey. You will not be able to proceed through the each page of the survey until each question on each page of the survey has been answered. You may submit the survey once you have completed it entirely. You will have approximately one week from the time the survey is sent to you to complete and submit the survey. Your prompt and honest responses are greatly appreciated. **The survey will be closed Monday, October 13, 2008.**

**Completion of this survey indicates (1) you agree to participate in this study, (2) you acknowledge that your participation in this survey is voluntary, (3) you understand that you will not be compensated for completing this survey, and (3) there is no promise or guarantee of benefits for completing the survey.**

Thank you for participating in this survey.

Evelyn Astwood  
Doctoral Candidate

APPENDIX C  
PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT SURVEY

**Parental Involvement Strategies Implemented by Selected Virginia  
School Districts**

**TEACHER DEMOGRAPHICS:**

1. Please list the name of your school district.

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2. What is your gender?

<input type="radio"/> Male	<input type="radio"/> Female
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3. What is your age?

<input type="radio"/> 20-29	<input type="radio"/> 30-39	<input type="radio"/> 40-49	<input type="radio"/> 50-59	<input type="radio"/> 60-69
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4. What is your ethnicity?

<input type="radio"/> African American <input type="radio"/> Asian <input type="radio"/> Caucasian <input type="radio"/> Hispanic <input type="radio"/> Not Cited (please specify):
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5. How many years have you been teaching?

<input type="radio"/> 1-2	<input type="radio"/> 3-5	<input type="radio"/> 6-10	<input type="radio"/> 11-15	<input type="radio"/> 16+
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6. What is your level of education?

<input type="radio"/> Bachelor's Degree	<input type="radio"/> Master's Degree	<input type="radio"/> Doctorate Degree
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7. What grades are you currently teaching?

<input type="radio"/> Pre-Kgn. <input type="radio"/> Kindergarten <input type="radio"/> Grade One <input type="radio"/> Grade 2 <input type="radio"/> Grade 3	<input type="radio"/> Grade 4 <input type="radio"/> Grade 5 <input type="radio"/> Grade 6 <input type="radio"/> Grade 7 <input type="radio"/> Grade 8	<input type="radio"/> Grade 9 <input type="radio"/> Grade 10 <input type="radio"/> Grade 11 <input type="radio"/> Grade 12 <input type="radio"/> Specialist
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8. Have you had training in parental involvement?

<input type="radio"/> Yes	<input type="radio"/> No
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## SCHOOL PROCEDURES

Practices, procedures, and governance of the schools and school districts.

9. Latino parents and students are oriented to the schools' practices and procedures.

10. My school district encourages schools to have clearly written school-family partnerships that are clearly visible and understandable.

11. My school district has parent programs that are reassessed periodically, with participation of parents, teachers, and volunteers to ensure that the program is meeting the needs of the school.

12. My school district has a written parental involvement policy.

13. My school district encourages an early warning procedure where teachers consult with parents promptly if a student is falling behind.

14. My school district encourages the use of early warning procedures where teachers consult with parents promptly when a student is experiencing social behavior problems.

15. My school district has established procedures for addressing parent concerns.

**PARENTING:**

Helping families establish home environments to support students.

16. My school district offers workshops to parents on child or adolescent development.

17. My school district provides information to parents on developing home conditions or environments that support learning.

18. My school district encourages extended family members to support students in their education.

19. My school district helps parents understand topics (state standards, state and local assessments, etc.) that help them become equal partners with teachers in improving their children's academic achievement.

20. My school district sponsors home neighborhood meetings to help families understand U.S school systems.

21. My school district has school personnel that respects the different cultures represented in the student population.



22. My school district provides parenting training for parents of all ethnic groups.

**COMMUNICATION:**

Designing effective forms of school-to-home and home-to school communication about school programs and student progress.

23. My school district provides written communication in the language of the parents.

24. My school district provides translators for parents' important conferences and meetings.

25. My school district holds formal parent/teacher conferences with every parent at least once a year.

26. My school district conducts an annual survey for families to share information about their satisfaction with school programs and with their involvement at school and at home.

27. My school district encourages teachers to communicate with parents frequently about their curriculum, assessments, expectations for homework, grading procedures, and how parents can help.

28. My school district encourages teachers to meet outside school hours with parents who have jobs and cannot meet during the school day.

## **VOLUNTEERING:**

Supporting school goals and student learning or development.

- 29.** My school district encourages all schools to conduct an annual survey to identify interests, talents, and availability of parent volunteers in order to match their skills/talents with school and classroom.

- 30.** My school district reduces barriers to parent participation (e.g., childcare, work schedule, etc.)

- 31.** My school district recognizes volunteers for their time and efforts.

- 32.** My school district encourages volunteers to be involved in a variety of ways (e.g. assisting in the classroom, giving talks to other parents, leading activities, etc.)

- 33.** My school district recruits volunteers widely so that all volunteers know that their time and talents are welcome.

- 34.** My school district schedules school events at different times during the day and evening so that all families can attend some activities throughout the school year.

**LEARNING AT HOME:**

Providing information and ideas to families about how to help students at home with homework and other curriculum-related activities, decisions, and planning.

- 35. My school district provides information to families on how to discuss and monitor school work at home.

- 36. My school district provides information to families on required skills in all subject areas.

- 37. My school district provides ongoing and specific information to parents on how to assist students with skills that they need to improve.

- 38. My school district makes parents aware of the importance of reading at home and asks parents to read with their children.

- 39. My school district encourages schools to schedule regular interactive homework activities that require students to demonstrate and discuss what they are learning with a family member.

- 40. My school district encourages schools to assist families in helping students set academic goals, select courses, and programs.

**DECISION MAKING:**

Including parents in school decisions and developing parent leaders and representatives.

- 41.** My school district encourages schools to have an active PTA/PTO that reaches out to all racial and socioeconomic parent groups.

- 42.** My school district encourages schools to include parents from all racial and socioeconomic backgrounds on the school’s advisory council, improvement team, and other school committees.

- 43.** My school district encourages schools to contact parents who are less involved to solicit their ideas.

- 44.** My school district encourages schools to create parent networks that link all families with parent representatives.

- 45.** My school district encourages schools to involve Latino parents in college preparation decisions for their children.

- 46.** My school district encourages schools to offer Latino parents leadership roles on school governance committees.

**COLLABORATING with the COMMUNITY:**

Identify and integrating resources and services from the community to strengthen school programs, family practices, and student learning.

- 47. My school district provides a resource directory for parents and students with Information on community services, programs, and agencies.

- 48. My school district assists parents in locating and using community resources.

- 49. My school district encourages schools to work with local businesses, libraries, parks, museums, and other organizations on programs to enhance students' skills and overall learning.

- 50. My school district encourages the opening of school buildings for community use after school hours.

- 51. My school district offers after school programs for students with support from the community, businesses, agencies, and volunteers.

- 52. My school district informs parents of community programs for students, such as mentoring and tutoring.

**SCHOOL CHARACTERISITICS:**

- 53. In my school district the schools' office personnel all greets parents in person or on the telephone in a friendly and courteous manner.

54. In my school district posted signs warmly welcome parents and visitors.

55. My school district provides directions (written/posted) for parents and visitors to find their way around the school.

56. My school district assures equity of opportunities for students and families to participate in community programs or to obtain services.

57. My school district encourages schools to host regular social events where parents and school staff can get to know each other.

**TEACHER TRAINING:**

58. The school district provides in-service training and other opportunities to help teachers communicate and collaborate with parents.

59. My school district provides training for teacher on how to involve Latino parents.

60. My school district utilizes parents as trainers in staff development.

61. My school district provides teacher training on parental involvement best practice strategies.

**62.** My school district provides training for teachers on understanding the role that culture plays in parental involvement.

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