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A STUDY ON PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT:  
GETTING PARENTS GOING

by  
Lois W. Lantz

A Master's Thesis

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the  
Master of Arts Degree in The Graduate School  
of Rowan University in Educational Leadership  
May, 1998

Approved by

Professor

Date Approved

April 25, 1998

## Abstract

Lois W. Lantz

A Study on Parental Involvement:  
Getting Parents Going  
1998  
Dr. Ronald Capasso  
School Administration

The purpose of the study was to investigate whether kindergarten and first grade parents would be more inclined to be actively involved in their children's educational endeavors if provided with workshops and training sessions that would make them more knowledgeable and comfortable in the academic setting. Specifically, the study addressed the following areas: (1) would there be an increase of parental participation in the workshop and training sessions, (2) would more parents be inclined to become active educational partners, and (3) would student achievement increase.

To investigate these areas of the study, a sample of eighty (80) parents of kindergarten and first students in eight elementary schools were studied. Parents' accounts of their involvement in their children's education were gathered as part of the study. Participants were asked to respond to structured open-ended questions which allowed them to describe in their own words about their involvement. Principals and teachers perceptions of parental involvement was also considered in the study. They also responded to a series of open-ended questions and several questions that were answered with a Yes or No response.

Conclusions suggest that children have a significant advantage when their parents are directly involved in the learning process. The study also revealed that programs for parents must be comprehensive, well planned and long lasting.

## Mini-Abstract

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who rejuvenates me. Thanks, my love.

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who always encouraged me to dream.

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To my sister, Carolyn W. Pollard,  
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and

to educators  
around the world and throughout history.

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## **Chapter 1**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **Focus of the Study**

Discussions of parental involvement in the schools have been going on for a long time. Sadly, these discussions among educators often left out the parents entirely and, in fact, were often about how to keep parents out of the process. Teachers and administrators clearly sent out this message, "We are the professionals. Drop your children off at the schoolhouse door and stay away while we do our work." This approach, however, will not work any longer. Today's schools are under siege and teachers and administrators realize that we need all of the help we can get. Especially, the help that parents can provide.

Most parents and families want to provide the best education and future for their children. However, despite their interest and good intentions, some parents are unaware of how to become more actively involved, others feel uncomfortable and unwelcome in their children's schools, others are prevented from becoming involved because of conflicts between work and school schedules. Schools often send mixed messages to parents, such as scheduling parent-teacher conferences during the day and not during evening hours or on the weekend, sending report cards or standardized test results that read like IRS instructions or sending out important reminders at the last possible minute.

Many schools only want parents to do what they want them to do - help with homework, come to school activities, bake goodies for cake sales, and raise money. If

schools want real parental involvement, they need to start treating parents as true partners-partners who have their own needs as well as their own expertise to contribute to the growth and development of children. Involving parents does not mean that educators should tell them what they are going to do. It means taking parents seriously enough to respect their point of view and to truly involve them. Parental involvement on many different levels needs to be recognized and valued.

Educators of the 90's are facing many obstacles in assuring that students are successful in their classrooms. More and more students are coming to school with academic, behavior, and motivational problems. These problems are often magnified, and more difficult to solve, because of a lack of parental support. This is not a regional or economic problem: It faces many districts throughout the nation.

Why is parental support so important? Parents are the most important people in a child's life. They provide a child's fundamental needs: love, affection, support, and approval. Because parents are number one in importance in a child's life, they are also number one in the ability to influence and motivate their children. As educators, we need their influence and motivation to help students overcome academic, behavior and motivational problems. With "parents on board" the road to success will be a much easier climb for everyone on the educational ladder - students, parents and educators.

Educators must develop strategies to communicate clearly and precisely with the parents and the public. This communication will make it possible for parents to be aware of and understand what their children are doing in school and to establish a positive on-going relationship with the school and teachers.

Parents of the 90's are a diverse group - single mothers, single fathers, stepmothers, stepfathers, newly arrived immigrants, the affluent, the middle class and the ever increasing number of poverty-level parents. Many of these are parents of "at risk" children. They want to help, but do not know how. Parental involvement is paramount to the success of the educational program.

## **Problem Statement and Product Outcome Statements**

Kindergarten and first grade parents involvement in their children's education will increase, as a result of participating in workshops and training sessions that will enable them to assist in the learning process at school and in the home.

For leadership development, the intern will be able to improve leadership abilities in the area of communication and group process skills.

For organizational change, the school district will support and conduct workshops and training sessions to increase parent involvement in the educational endeavors of their children.

## **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study is to investigate whether kindergarten and first grade parents will be more inclined to be actively involved in their children's educational endeavors if provided with workshops and training sessions that will make them more knowledgeable and comfortable in the academic setting. Although parental involvement is mandated by Title 1 (Improving America's School Act) it is essential to future planning that it's effectiveness be measured. In order to help the parents in the Atlantic City school district realize the importance of their effectiveness on the academic achievement of their children, it is imperative that they understand the necessity of their involvement.

This study will attempt to show the correlation between parental involvement and academic achievement. The study will address the following areas: (1) will there be an increase of parental participation in the workshop and training sessions, (2) will more parents be inclined to become active educational partners, and (3) will student achievement increase.

## **Definitions**

The following terms will be used in this study and will be referred to as such throughout the thesis. The coordinator, a Title 1 teacher in the district, will be identified as the intern in this study.

**Parent** - adult caretaker (mother, father, legal guardian) with whom student resides.

**Parental Involvement** - a collaborative effort involving families, schools, community and religious groups and employers.

**Workshops or Training Session** - informative educational sessions provided by district personnel to help parents assist in the educational endeavors of their children

## **Limitations of the Study**

The proposal submitted by the intern involved a proposed configuration of K-7 elementary schools. However, since after submission of the proposal the district has been reorganized by residential attendance zones with eight (8) grades K-4 schools, one (1) Pre-K school, and one (1) grades 5-8 school. Due to reorganization, many parents are upset because students have to attend new schools. Parents are uncomfortable with this change because they believe that the previous school of their choice (1) non-familiarity with staff members (2) many believe that the previous school of their choice was a better educational institution and, (3) their freedom of school choice has been taken without their voices heard.

The intern expects successful implementation of the program however, because of the parents (Kindergarten parents) that are the focus of the study. However, a possible limitation could be lack of participation due to discomfort involving language, literacy and cultural barriers.

## **Setting of the Study**

Atlantic City, located in Atlantic County, is a city that is in the midst of transition. Slowly, boarded up tenements are being torn down to make way for new developments and glittery casinos. Demolition crews, construction workers, engineers, architects and environmentalist work side by side to tear down the old and build the new. Within the last year a new Convention Center, bus station, and a thermal plant have been built within a three block radius. The city has also built a new firehouse and the police station is almost complete.

Located in southern New Jersey, Atlantic City covers an area of just over 11 square miles. Original inhabitants of the area, the Lenni Lenape tribe, were slowly replaced with European settlements. The area that survived as fishing villages, soon gained more financial stability with tourist trade from the Philadelphia and New York urban areas. Best known for Miss America, Monopoly, its sandy beaches, boardwalk and salt water taffy, Atlantic City is now a major commercial area known for its casino industry.

The current year round residents, has dropped to approximately 38,000 in comparison to a post war high of 60,000. With the increased casino industry, demographics of the city continue to change quickly as new immigrant groups move into the city. Currently the population is 45.9% black, 31.7% white, 14.1% Hispanic, 3% Asian/Pacific Islander and 8% representing other cultures. There are over 17 different languages spoken in this culturally diverse population.

The city's population is made up of the following age groups: under 5 years-8%; 5-18 years (school age) - 15%; 18-64 years - 58 %; and over 65 - 19% with the median age being 34.7 years. The median family income is \$27,804. Approximately 9,000 persons are classified as living below the poverty line.

As the casino industry continues to grow, over 30 million visitors are drawn to the city. Even though the casino industry has provided a strong financial base for the city, this enormous industry has not proven to be the salvation for a better city for the residents.

Most residents who are employed by the casinos hold low paying jobs. The management positions are held by people that live outside the city. Currently there is a push for housing that is considered above the low and moderate level of housing. Many students of the district live in crowded living quarters. The working hours of the industry make it difficult for some parents to nurture and prepare students for adjusting to the school climate.

Casino gambling has made some direct contribution to schools. The casinos offer programs such as stress management for staff members, human resources to both the staff and students of the schools, needed equipment and materials, sponsorship for Award and Honor dinners, shadowing, tutoring and mentoring for students, tickets for special events and many other programs to stress the importance of achievement for students. All of the schools in the district are partners with a casino or some other business within or surrounding the city. In addition to businesses various agencies also provide a variety of services to the district.

The city's government is the mayor council form. Our mayor, the honorable Jim Whelan is a former swimming instructor on leave from Atlantic City Public Schools. Several council person also have some direct or indirect tie to the district (former teacher, married to a teacher, parents are educators). This connection between city government and the school community can well serve the school's agenda when related to education. Historically, the Atlantic City Public School system and city government has had a good relationship. The defeat of the budget was really a wake-up call for the district. Previously, we have not had a problem with the budget because it has always passed. The district did not campaign and as a result of many recent problems, the citizens sent the district a voice of dissatisfaction.

### **Atlantic City Public Schools**

The Atlantic City Public Schools system evolved in 1858. The current reorganization of district includes one "State of the Arts' high school (9-12) including

students from the neighboring communities of Brigantine, Ventnor, Margate and Longport; one middle school (5-8); and nine elementary schools (Pre-K-4). The total enrollment as of October 15, 1997 is 7,221 students. A culturally rich district, the student population is 9.15% White; 57.57% Black; 26.40% Hispanic; American Indian/Alaskan .14%; and 6.74 Asian/Pacific Islander. In contrast, the make-up of the professional staff is 54% White; 38% Black; 7% Hispanic; and 1% Asian.

The district has been a district in turmoil since the middle 1990's. Controversy has included over the issue of the high school not servicing all students in the same manner. Indictments for corruption have also occurred. These controversies have led to an uncomfortable, non cohesive relationship between the State Department of Education and the district.

The Level II External Monitoring Report and Educational Audit has been the single most influence on the district. Some of the findings listed were:

- Programs and changes that were not fully thought out prior to implementation.

The programs are often not staffed sufficiently to make them work and achieve the intended solutions. Indications are that programs are thought to be not developed, implemented or evaluated in terms of quality and results, as measured by student learning outcomes.

- Lack of professional development for staff.

There was an insufficient buy in, planning and preparation for staff members who were required to implement and sustain the programs successfully, due to lack of understanding, support and the necessary levels of competency.

- Inadequate use of quantitative and qualitative data.

There has been an incomplete use of data to help plan, problem solve, and

make good decisions related to educational improvements required of the district.

- Lack of clarity of job responsibilities.

There appears to be a lack of clarity identifying job responsibilities, accountability for those in managerial positions. For example, the role of the supervisor is not clear and varies. Their involvement in too many fragmented duties distract them from fully supporting the instructional program.

This report and several other occurrences ultimately led to change of the top managerial positions (superintendent, assistant superintendent, board secretary ). At the same time this occurred an investigation by the county led to the arrest and conviction of other district employees. All of these events have made a major impact on the overall moral of district employees. There is still a feeling of distrust and disappointment among employees of the district. The district has hired a new superintendent and addressed many issues outlined by reports conducted since we have been in Level II monitoring. There is still a very strained relationship with the district, the county and the state.

Despite the cloud that constantly hangs over the district, many children of the district have positive experiences daily. Parents work hard to assure that their lives are filled with positive interactions.

Parents hands are often tied with the strain of life's problems and misfortunes. They try to help their children prepare to face the problems of every day living, but are often not prepared to sufficiently support their children's educational endeavors due to lack of communication skills, literacy and social problems such as drug addiction, alcohol, physically and mentally abusive homes and economic deprivation.

## **Importance of the Study**

Traditionally, parents involvement in their child's education is minimal. Most of the time the parent's involvement in the school is on a voluntary basis which may include classroom aide, office aide, playground monitor, trip chaperone, fundraising or some other manner. While the parent welcomes these opportunities, this approach does not lead to the satisfying the needs of parents to feel that s/he is part of the educational process.

The proposed parental involvement program for parents of kindergarten students is designed to not only address the district's concern about lack of parental involvement, but will also provide the opportunity to help parents assist in the learning process at home and in the school.

This intern's goal is that parents will benefit by gaining self-confidence and self-esteem skills and that students will benefit academically. The anticipated long term goal is that the district's test scores will improve.

## **Organization of the Study**

This study will be further investigated in subsequent chapters of this thesis. Chapter two will review research and literature related to and supportive of parental involvement. Chapter three and four will describe the design of the study. The development of the project, instruments used, samples, sampling techniques, data analysis, data analysis and the project findings will be outlined. Chapter five will discuss the conclusions found, observations and recommendations that hopefully will be implemented into a district parental program.

## **Chapter 2**

### **Review of the Literature**

Many scholars, researchers, government leaders, and philosophers have written in recent years about the relationship between parents and schools. There is no doubt that parent involvement has become a fashionable and important topic; it is now a part of nearly every new reform proposal or report and has a spot in nearly every conference and speech touching on school reform in some way.

The importance of parent involvement in schools is not a new idea. As Davies (1987) has reminded us, the "questions and conflict about parent and community relationships to schools began in this country when schools began" (p. 147). Over the past two decades numerous surveys have indicated that parents are concerned with their children's education and want to become involved in meaningful ways. Research has demonstrated that children have a significant advantage when their parents are directly involved in the learning process. Parents are a valuable resource for increasing the quality of our educational system. The responsibility for creating meaningful parent involvement programs rests on school administrators and teachers.

Review of the literature indicates widespread endorsement of home involvement. Various categories of home involvement in schooling have been formulated (Anderson, 1983; Conoley, 1987; Davies, 1987; Epstein, 1987, 1988; Jackson and Cooper, 1989; Loven, 1978). For example, Epstein, (1988) described five types of parent-school involvement: 1) the basic obligations of parenting (responsibility for children's safety,

supervision, discipline, guidance, and learning at home); 2) the basic obligation of schools to communicate with the home; 3) the involvement of parents at school as volunteers, supporters, and spectators at school events and students performances; 4) parent involvement in learning activities at home; and 5) parent involvement in school decision making, governance, and advocacy. A sixth kind of connection is under investigation for its contribution to school/family relations: collaboration and exchanges between schools and community organization, agencies, and businesses. Epstein emphasizes the concept of overlapping spheres of influence and responsibility.

Davies (1987) has identified four types of parent-school involvement and extends the nature and scope of home involvement as follows: 1) coproduction or partnership (individual and collective activities in school or at home that contribute to school efforts to teach more effectively, such as tutoring programs, homework hotlines, parent education); 2) decision making (ranging from parent participation in decisions about the child to involvement in system planning, such as setting policies, assessing schools and deciding about budgeting, curriculum, and personnel); 3) citizen advocacy, (e.g., case, class, political advocacy; citizen organizations to build public support for schools); and 4) parent choice, (involvement in selecting the child's school).

Jackson and Cooper (1989) also extended the conceptualization of types of involvement by adding two categories to Epstein's five. The sixth type, parent decision making, expands Davies category of "parent choice" to a broader consumer role (e.g., parent awareness of the marketplace of available education choices to make the feasible arrangements to ensure their child's success). Their seventh category, parent community networks, attempts to cover a variety of involvement's related to using "the unique culture of the local parent community to help all parties concerned" (p. 264). In this category, they include schools as places for parents to congregate and solve problems, activities that improve parents' skills, schooling that builds on parents cultural traditions, and networking relevant to parent agendas.

Dorothy Rich's (1985) Home and School Institute sponsors projects in several school districts that assist parents in fostering children's learning at home. David Seeley (1981) has made important contributions to redefining parent involvement to encompass a wide range of family/school/community/learner partnerships.

The "family support" movement has several well-known advocates at major university research centers, including Edward Zigler and Sharon Lynn Kagan of the Bush Center in Child Development and Social Policy at Yale, Heather Weiss (1988) of the Family Research Project at Harvard, and Moncrieff Cochran (1987) and his colleagues at Cornell. Family support programs, aimed at strengthening all aspects of the child's development, stress parent education at home and help parents connect with natural support systems.

Each of the scholars and projects mentioned above is distinctive. But the commonalties outweigh the differences and add up to a new definition of what has been usually been called "parent involvement". Three common themes are of central importance: 1) Providing success for all children. All children can learn and can achieve school success. None should be labeled as likely failures because of the social, economic, or racial characteristics of their families or communities. 2) Serving the whole child. Social, emotional, physical, and academic growth and development are inextricably linked. To foster cognitive and academic development, all other facets of development, all other facets of development must also be addressed by schools, by families, and by other institutions that affect the child. 3) Sharing responsibilities. The social, emotional, physical, and academic development of the child is a shared and overlapping responsibility of the school, the family, and other community agencies and institutions. In order to promote the social and academic development of children, the key institutions must change their practices and their relationships with one another.

While looking at parental involvement, one must also address possible barriers that may be encountered. Research on barriers has focused on the participation of special

subgroups such as parents from lower socioeconomic and ethnic minority backgrounds and parents of special education students. The result is that a variety of familial, cultural, racial, job, social class, communication and school personnel attitude factors have been implicated (e.g., Becker & Epstein, 1982; Comer, 1988; Epstein, 1986; Epstein & Becker, 1982). However, because the studies are correlational, casual relationships have not been established.

Some obstacles to involvement are due to neglect, others to political or professional barriers that keep parents out of the way, still others to emotional barriers felt by parents themselves. Finally, some are due to ignorance, lack of awareness, and misunderstandings. Many low income parents have low self-esteem and, consequently, feel insecure about their ability to be involved in their child's education - either at home or school. Davies (1988) states that many of these parents have low expectations for themselves and their children, though they almost uniformly express strong interest in their children's education. Michelle Sarkes (1989) says some feel discouraged by what they consider to be personal failures.

Many parents harbor negative feelings toward school, seeing themselves as pawns, not partners, in public education. Some parents have developed a resistance to authority, often as the result of frustrations or concerns about previous educational experiences provided to their child. Thus they may be suspicious of parent education programs. Ascher (1987) says that parents of poor and minority children are often suspicious of school for teaching subjects whose importance they don't understand, or, more commonly, for "cheating their children of the same quality of education that they believe middle-class children receive."

Many low income parents, as well as those from other cultures, see teachers as authority figures and leave it to the school to educate their children. Annette Lareau (1987) found that parents with low socioeconomic status, who also lack educational skills,

separated themselves from their children's education. These parents perceived education as the teacher's job, not the parents'.

Economic hardship and unemployment can affect both adults and children. Many poor parents or parents who find themselves unemployed suffer from depression. P. David Kurtz (1988) says "Depressed parents, tend to be harsh and intolerant of their children, demand independence before their children are ready and emotionally withdrawn from their children." Children whose parents are emotionally unavailable experience rejection, insecurity, and possible social development lags that may influence their adjustment to school.

A number of school practices have discouraged or completely blocked parent participation, says the National School Boards Association (Amundson, 1988): "First, although most school officials say they want parent participation, in practice they offer parents only limited opportunities for involvement." Parents can't be effectively involved with schools if educators continue to view their participation as desirable but not necessary. It is the difference between looking at parents as extras and looking at them as partners.

Both teachers and parents have stereotyped images of each other, says Zigler (1987), that stem from childhood experiences and guide their views about schooling. Teachers, for instance, report that they feel uncomfortable about how to involve parents and still maintain their role as experts. At the root of conflict between teachers and parents is their often differing views on parent involvement. A 1985 survey conducted by the National PTA, cited in the National School Boards Association report (Amundson, 1988), found that about three fourths of the parents surveyed said they were interested in attending classes and workshops with teachers and principals, as well as serving as advocates for their school in meetings with the school board or on advisory committees. School administrators, however, said they did not want parents participating as advocates.

Teachers seem to see parents' role as minimally supportive, traditional and perhaps passive, say Diana T. Slaughter and Valerie Shahariw Kuehne (1988). Parents expressed

interest in more active roles- in being colearners with their children, functioning as advocates, and participating in decision-making.

Communication between schools and parents with low socioeconomic status is primarily negative, focused largely on academic and behavioral problems of children. Research indicates that most teachers don't contact parents unless there is a problem. Many teachers also overestimate the number of contacts they have with parents, whether negative or positive. Many demands compete for teachers' and principals' time. Teachers who are also parents have some of the same time problems that other working parents do. Schools may give lip service to reaching at-risk families, but to actually do so may require release time for teachers as well as employing parent coordinators. In addition, there may be a lack of access to appropriate family involvement materials. Finally, lack of sufficient funding for family involvement programs is an ongoing problem at all levels of the educational system.

Partnership with at-risk families is impossible without collaboration, both within the school and outside it. Schools alone can't provide all the services that at-risk families need, such as parenting education, counseling, health care, housing and so forth. The school staff also need to function in a collaborative way with one another in order for real change to occur, believes Krasnow (1990). It is too much to ask a single teacher to do it alone, just as it is asking too much for schools to provide all the help and resources that at-risk students and families need.

We know now that the community and schools must work together to achieve successful parent involvement programs for at-risk families.

During the past decade, at many schools around the nation, something new has been added: a great range of activities and programs that are only indirectly "educational" in the conventional sense. Direct services are provided to parents that include home visiting services, job counseling and training, health clinics, substance abuse treatment, support

and discussion groups, resource and referral centers for family social services, and before-and-after programs for children of working parents.

All of these services focus on preventing social and emotional problems and on making life safer and happier for children and less stressful for their parents. Even though political battles occasionally occur over whether family is a legitimate role for the schools, these programs are no longer isolated phenomena. In New Jersey alone, the State Office of Child Care Development identified 587 before-or-after school programs in 1989. Of these, 142 were held in school buildings, and 64 were sponsored by school boards (Saul, 1990).

These programs are seen as educationally beneficial, even though they were created to relieve the stress of parents. What happens before and after school, in the home, neighborhood and the community, affects a child's learning. In the short run, family resource and support programs help parents promote their children's development; in the long run, they give parents the confidence and capabilities to become directly involved with their child's formal schooling. The positive effects are especially important for children considered "at risk" (Henderson, 1990). For teachers, the benefits are apparent: Children with fewer physical, emotional, and social problems are easier to teach and deal with in the classroom.

Because of many social changes, we can no longer easily maintain the traditional division of responsibility between the homes the developer of educational attitudes and behaviors and the school as the supplier of skills and tools (Coleman and Hoffer, 1987). The time when parents' only link to school was to attend the once-a-year parent-teacher conference is over, not only because family life has changed but also because schools need and require parents' support. While there is a greater parent involvement now, however, it can too easily become taken participation on the periphery of schooling, with one-way communication from school to home. Even in some school district with school-based management, where parent involvement is genuine and communication is two-way, parents are not always seen (and do not see themselves) as colleagues, but rather as watchdogs.

While this outlook may make the schools more accountable to the parents, it keeps barriers in place between school and home.

The problem may be one of mutual mistrust and misunderstanding. Based on a survey of parents of 1,269 students in 82 first, third, and fifth grade classrooms in Maryland, Joyce Epstein, of John Hopkins University, concluded that the differences in whether parents believe they should help or can help are shaped by what the school and the teachers do. For example, if teachers want parents to think that they should help, teachers must demonstrate this with an active program of parent involvement in learning activities at home. If teachers want parents to feel confident that they can help, teachers and administrators must organize and conduct workshops for parents on how to help. The study also revealed that teachers who involved parents in learning activities at home were viewed by parents as better teachers (Epstein, 1986).

Clearly, parents and schools must be partners in education. Parents have a stake in how schools are run and how and what their children are learning, and schools need educable children from homes that support the school's program. While a variety of parent education efforts and many forms of direct parental involvement in the schools exist, a few general principles apply to each of them:

- Involving parents in their children's education improves student achievement and behavior, but parent involvement is most effective when it is comprehensive, well planned, and long lasting.
- Parent involvement should be developmental and preventive, an integral part of a school improvement or restructuring strategy, rather than a remedial intervention.

- The benefits of parent involvement are not confined to early childhood or elementary grades. There are strong positive effects from involving parents continuously through high school.
- Parents do not have to be well-educated themselves in order to help.
- Children from low income and minority families have the most to gain when schools involve parents.

Parent involvement is not an educational panacea. For children to be better educated and for schools to reform, many other things also have to happen. We need to find the right way to educate children for a changing economic world. We need to reassert the place of education in developing values and civil behavior. And parents, or their substitutes may have to raise their children, who are, more than ever, on their own. To achieve better school systems, we to re-create families and communities that are now seriously disorganized, in new forms that the changing times demand and for all social classes. Schools, in turn, have to become flexible enough to restructure and innovate and change old models and practices long proved ineffective even if this means radical change in governance, curriculum, and professional training. Parental involvement is a tool for these changes because it is a mechanism that links society, schools, and homes.

## **Chapter 3**

### **Design of Study**

#### **Description of Research Design**

Teachers and parents are partners in one of our most important undertakings: the education of our children. The empowered educator realizes that much of her/his strength is based upon her/his knowledge of teaching, people, learning, and the complexities involved in all of these important issues. Assuring the cooperation of the parents of the students is equally important as assuring the cooperation of the students. Both teachers and parents want the best for the children that they share; therefore, it is important that both partners respect and support one another. One of the best ways to facilitate this is for both parties to show one another that they share the goals and understandings.

Evidence indicated a lack of steady parental involvement that remained steady throughout the education of children within our district. Therefore, a plan was developed to increase parental involvement that would remain intact from grades kindergarten through twelve. Realizing that it was impossible to reach the huge volume of parents in the entire district, the focus of this study concentrated on reaching parents of kindergarten and first grade students.

The study involved 27 kindergarten classes and 27 first grade classes within eight elementary schools in the Atlantic City School system.

In preparation for implementation of this study the intern collected the following data from the district data center: 1) a list of every kindergarten and first grade child enrolled in the district, 2) the name, address, and phone number of the parent/guardian, and 3) the child's school and teacher's name. This information was cross-referenced with each school to assure that each child was actually enrolled and assigned to the school and teacher designated. This also provided the intern with factual information that was key to making the first contact with the parents involved in the study.

### **Research Design**

The intern contacted each elementary principal to obtain permission to present the concept of the workshops and training sessions on Open House night at each school. During the presentation, surveys (see Appendix A) were distributed to seek input from parents as to what type of training they were interested in receiving. After presenting the objective of the survey at each school, this intern, a Title 1 teacher and the Reading Recovery teachers reviewed the surveys and found that the parents responses were very general. The committee reviewed the Core Curriculum standards, Brigance test and MAT7 results, and interviews with Kindergarten teachers. After analysis of these results, several workshops and training sessions were designed to meet the goals and objective of each. The workshops were presented monthly.

Letters of invitation in Spanish and English to monthly meetings were mailed to the parents of Kindergarten and first grade students. The dates of the meetings were also advertised on TV 13, the high school access channel, WTTH radio station, and community bulletin boards in each elementary school. The foreign language supervisor attended as many meetings as possible to serve as an interpreter. When he was unable to attend several parents volunteered to interpret for the presenters. Parents were offered free transportation. The sessions were held in the morning and at night to assure each parent the opportunity to

attend. Activities were provided at the night meetings for children while their parents participated in the workshops. A light snack was also provided for each meeting.

The workshops and training sessions were guided by specific agendas (see Appendix B) and they focused on a different topic each month. They included homework assignments for parents to try with their children. The sessions always included hands-on activities and an opportunity for each parent to share their successes and failures of previous workshop activities at the end of each meeting.

The first training session was held on September 23, 1997. The Reading Recovery teachers presented Beginning Reading and Writing Strategies. The focus of this session was to assist the parents with understanding early literacy acquisition and the basis of the development of the reading process. This session also stressed the importance of oral language acquisition, the immersion of the child within a print rich environment, and the components of Brian Cambourne's Condition of Learning. The presenters discussed the stages of the development of the reader: the emergent, early and fluent readers. Parents were given various suggestions which they could use with their children at home such as making continuous text books, making alphabet books, and locating sight words within text. Small continuous textbooks, Keep Books, were distributed to each parent in attendance. These books presented patterned text which were supported by pictures which would be very supportive for the children. The parents were also given an opportunity to ask questions which they felt were necessary for their children oral and reading development. A bilingual teacher served as interpreter for both sessions of this workshop at Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. School Complex.

Practical Math Techniques and What To Expect at a Parent Teacher Conference was presented on October 14, 1997 at the Texas Avenue School. A district basic skills teacher and this intern were the presenters. The math component consisted of tips on incorporating math in daily life of young children. A packet designed for the parents included suggestions hands-on activities. Some of the concepts presented included activities to meet the place

value needs of youngsters, logic and number sense, graphing, making comparisons, money, matching shapes, number words, patterning, and writing numbers. Parents were divided into groups to try out some of the activities. Practical suggestions for involving the entire family were also included. The second part of this workshop was practical tips to plan for the parent teacher conference. Parents were presented with tips on what to do before, during and after the conference. Some of the key points to consider before the conference were to talk with your child to find out likes, dislikes and feelings; any academic concerns; problems at home; peer relations, discipline, homework policy, and any other concerns about the school. Parents were also assured that an interpreter would be present if needed. During the conference parents were encouraged to discuss concerns, make notes for future reference, to ask for suggestions on how to help their child at home, and to assure the teacher of their continued support. After the conference parents were told to discuss with their child what happened at the conference, share positive comments and to let their child know that they are proud. They were also told to keep in touch with the teacher and to follow up any suggestions made by the teacher. They were encouraged to call or visit the classroom teacher whenever there were questions, concerns or to provide an extra pair of hands. A question and answer session followed the sessions and it was a real plus to have the bilingual supervisor interpret for us.

On November 11, 1997 the Beginning Reading and Writing Strategies, Part 2 workshop for kindergarten parents was presented. During this workshop the emphasis was placed on attending to concepts about print with stress placed on the development of the writing skills through the use of learning letters and words. The parents were given several suggestions of ways to assist their children. These suggestions included ways to assist the children with remembering the alphabet (through words, movement, and visual forms), the development of basic sight high-frequency words and a word wall which will enable the children to be able to assess this words easily, various suggestions which could incorporate interactive writing through shared experiences between parents and children,

the use of magnetic letters to understand the process of constructing words, matching upper and lower case letters by using letter tiles, and the importance of the children's name to understand concepts such as first and last. The morning and evening session was hosted by Uptown School Complex.

The Atlantic City Public Library hosted the December meeting. The youth services librarian was the presenter. The librarian stressed the importance of reading, early reading literature was introduced and key tips for oral reading and storytelling was provided. She also reemphasized the same beginning skills that parents were familiar with because of the first training session. The librarian was impressed. Information was given about various program in the library and parents were encouraged to allow their children to participate in the summer reading program. Library applications were completed and following a question and answer period, a grand tour ended this session.

### **Population Sample**

The subjects of this study were the parents of 683 Kindergarten students and 659 first grade students in the Atlantic City elementary schools. This population included 59.79% Black, 31.37% Hispanic, 3.2% White, 0.44% American Indian/Alaskan, 5.15% Asian/Pacific Islander Kindergarten parents and 62.29% Black, 29.71% Hispanic, 3.17% White, and 4.83% Asian/Pacific Islander first grade parents.

### **Data Collection Approach**

A mandated district evaluation sheet was used to evaluate each workshop or training session (see Appendix C). A survey was administered to administrators and teachers to determine their perception of parental involvement (see Appendix D). This survey served as a guideline in planning workshops and training sessions. The same survey was administered in February to determine administrators and teachers perception of the workshops and training sessions.

## **Data Collection Analysis**

Data collection will be based on results of the surveys, attendance records, evaluation sheets. Data will also be sought from building principals to find out if parental involvement of this study group increased, decreased or remained consistent.

## **Chapter 4**

### **Presentation of the Research Findings**

The focus of this study was to investigate whether kindergarten and first grade parents would be more inclined to become actively involved in their children's educational endeavors if provided with workshops and training sessions that would make them more comfortable and knowledgeable in the academic setting. Specifically, the study addressed the following areas: 1) would there be an increase of parental participation in the workshop and training sessions, 2) would more parents be inclined to become active educational partners, and 3) would student achievement increase.

#### **Method**

To address these question, a sample of 80 parents of kindergarten and first grade students, in eight elementary schools were studied. Parents' accounts of their thinking, apprehensions, strategies and activities related to their involvement in their children's education were gathered as part of this study. Participants were asked to respond to structured series of open-ended questions which allowed them to describe in their own words about their involvement. Principals and teachers perceptions of parental involvement was also considered in the study. They also responded to a series of open-ended questions and several questions that were answered with a Yes or No response.

## Parental Statistical Analysis

Table 1 summarizes the actual number of surveys distributed and returned by the parents of kindergarten and first grade parents in the Atlantic City Public School District.

Two hundred twelve (212) surveys were distributed at Open House Nights and during the first workshop. The total number of one hundred twenty-nine (129) surveys were returned with overall rate of sixty-one percent (61%). The lowest percent of school return rate was thirty-three percent (33%) and the highest return rate was eighty-one percent (81%).

**TABLE 1**  
**Number of Parent Surveys**  
**Distributed and Returned - Reported by School Name**

<b>School</b>	<b>Distributed</b>	<b>Total Returned</b>	<b>Percent Returned</b>
M.L. King	29	18	62%
New Jersey	21	17	81%
Indiana	46	35	76%
Brighton	24	15	63%
Uptown	34	13	38%
Chelsea	14	6	43%
Richmond	15	5	33%
Texas	29	20	69%
<b>Total</b>	212	129	61%

## Parent Survey Summary

The results of the study was divided into two parts: (1) analysis of the effectiveness of parental workshops and (2) analysis of principals and teachers perceptions of the effectiveness of the workshops. The survey asked parent respondents to repond to:

**Survey Item 1:** *What has been the most effective means of communication between you and your child's school? Check only one.*

\_\_\_\_\_telephone calss

\_\_\_\_\_letters

\_\_\_\_\_home visit

\_\_\_\_\_school visit

Parents felt that communication between the school and home is very important. Thirty percent (30%) of parents indicated that the most effective means of communication is via telephone. They indicated that a phone call suggests the importance of an issue. Twenty percent (20%) of parents felt that the second most effective means of communication is the school visit. Indications suggest that they like visiting the school but did not feel comfortable in knowing what to do or how to help once they get there. Eleven percent (11%) of the parents surveyed were most comfortable receiving communication through the mail. However, they did want communication written in the language they speak. Only one percent (1%) preferred a home visit.

**Survey Item 2:** *What can schools do to promote two-way communication between schools and families?*

The survey provided the following suggestions to promote two-way communication between schools and families: 1) a parent newsletter that includes school events, school menus, suggestions for helping at home, report card distribution dates and a monthly school calendar; 2) establishment of a homework hotline that would explain exactly what is to be done for homework assignments; 3) workshop and training sessions that would include activities for children, activities include crafts, story hour, pajama party; 4) home school reading club; 5) making use of the school's TV station by having phone-in

sessions with the superintendent, teachers, community services, etc.; and 6) a family fun day.

**Survey Item 3:** *What can parents do to promote two-way communication between the school and their family?*

Parents felt that they could promote two-way communication between the school and their families by: 1) inviting teachers to volunteer in community centers; 2) becoming more visible in the schools; 3) becoming active participants in the Parent Advisory Council; and 4) becoming more visible at Board of Education meetings.

**Survey Item 4:** *I would like the following change(s) to occur at my school to help make parent involvement an integral part of the school program:*

Changes that parents would like to occur in the schools to help parent involvement become an integral part of the school program includes: 1) training that would prepare them to become knowledgeable part of school planning ; 2) input into curriculum planning; and 3) training that would help them understand strategies, techniques and methods that students are being taught.

**Survey Item 5:** *How do you rank your relationship with your child's school?*

_____Unsatisfactory	_____Highly Unsatisfactory
_____Opinion Not Yet Formed	_____Satisfactory
_____Highly Unsatisfactory	

Parents ranked their relationship with their child's school in the following percents. Ten percent (10%) ranked the relationship as highly satisfactory, thirty-two percent (32%) as satisfactory, five percent as highly unsatisfactory and fifteen percent (15%) ranked the relationship as unsatisfactory.

**Survey Item 6:** *As a participant in the workshops and training sessions, are you \_\_\_\_\_more comfortable volunteering in school*

\_\_\_\_\_ *more comfortable with your srelationship with the school, but not ready to  
volunteer*

\_\_\_\_\_ *not comfortable in the school setting*

As a result of the training sessions and workshops sixty percent (60%) of the parents indicated that they felt comfortable volunteering in the school, twenty-four percent (24%) of the parents were more comfortable with their school relationship, but not ready to volunteer at this point, twelve percent (12%) were still not comfortable in the school setting and four percent (4%) did not respond to this question.

### **Prinicpal/Teacher Statistical Analysis**

Table 2 summarizes the number of principals and teachers surveyed by building in the district. Surveys were distributed to seven (7) principals and fifty-two (52) kindergarten and first grade teachers. The total number of forty-eight (48) surveys were returned with an overall rate of seventy-two (72%) percent. The lowest percent of school return rate was forty percent (40%) and the highest return rate was one hundred percent (100%).

**Table 2**  
**Number of Principal/Teacher Surveys**  
**Distributed and Returned - Reported by School Name**

<b>School</b>	<b>Distributed Principal/Teacher</b>	<b>Total Returned</b>	<b>Percent Returned</b>
M. L. King	8	5	63%
New Jersey	10	4	40%
Indiana	13	7	54%
Brighton	8	6	75%
Uptown	12	9	75%
Chelsea	2	2	100%
Richmond	7	5	71%
Texas	7	6	86%
No School Identification Given	-	4	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>72%</b>

## Principal/Teacher Survey Summary

Principals and teachers responded affirmatively to the parent workshops presented this year. An analysis of the perceptions to the workshops and training sessions is as follows:

**Survey Item 1:** *Was the procedure for distribution of information and advertisement of paren workshops and training sessions for Kindergarten parents s atisfactory? Yes No If not, what changes could be made?*

They felt that the procedure for distribution of information and advertisement for the parent workshops and training sessions was satisfactory. Even though they all responded Yes changes suggested included distributing surveys through the classroom teachers which could possibly lead to more surveys returned.

**Survey Item 2:** *Did you encounter problems with the mechanics of how the workshops were set up? (Day and Evening sessions, etc.) If so, what and how could this be prevenbted/improved?*

The surveys indicated that no problems were encountered with the mechanics of how the workshops were set up. Principals and teachers felt that holding day and evening sessions provided the opportunity for all parents to attend. The only other suggestion was to hold workshops and training sessions on Saturday morning.

A one hundred percent (100%) response of Yes was given for **Survey Item 3**, *"Did the facilitators follow the building policies?"*; **Survey Item 4**, *"Were they courteous, pleasant and professional "*, **Survey Item 5**, *"Would you like to hold another series of workshops at your school? "* and **Survey Item 6:** *Are there any additional ways you feel your school could help accomplish the district's goals regarding parental involvement?*

Suggestions for additional ways the school can help the district accomplish the goals regarding parental involvement included: 1) more involvement of parents in decision-

making process, 2) stress value of parents as stakeholders in their child's future, and 3) emphasize value of parents viewpoint and their meaningful contributions.

**Survey Item 7:** *Are there any other comments, feedback or suggestions you would like to share with us?*

Comments, feedback and suggestions shared included the comment, "This needed program was on target." Teachers and principals also suggested that surveys should be sent out at the end of the year to plan next year's agendas. It was also suggested that community agencies be included as presenters.

**Survey Item 8:** *Are there suggestions for workshops ideas or topics you would like to see presented in the future for parental workshops?*

Ideas and topics teachers and principals would like to see presented for future workshops were abundant. They included the following: discipline techniques, parent training for 4MAT (learning styles and brain research), make it-take it workshops, how to cope with stress, establishing room mothers/fathers for each classroom, how to prepare financially for college, parent committees to attend Board of Education meetings, development of a book on how to contact public agencies quickly, how to help your child at home, how to help the special needs child, and establishing scholarships for each elementary school for high school graduates.

All of the suggestions and feedback from the principals and teachers will be considered for the parental involvement program. Further input will be continually sought from this group. The surveys gave indication that principals and teachers felt that this program was valuable and should be continued.

Of the parents who were surveyed, twenty (20) attended every workshop and training session. Report card grades of these parents' children indicate that they are successfully achieving academically. The true measure of achievement will be measured by the spring standardized achievement test.

Parental involvement is pivotal in a child's education. Parents, principals, teachers and all those involved in educating a child are genuinely concerned. When families, schools, and communities work together in partnership, students hear that school is important. They perceive that caring people in all three environments are investing time and resources to help them succeed. A successful parental involvement program must include commitment, collaboration, and communication among these key players.

## **Chapter 5**

### **Conclusions, Implications and Recommendations**

This study attempted to determine whether workshops and training sessions provided for parents of kindergarten and first grade students would influence them to become active educational partners and make them more comfortable in the academic setting. This study also attempted to determine if there was a significant increase in parental participation. The study also investigated whether student achievement increased. This chapter will summarize the study.

#### **Conclusions**

Parental involvement is a continuous process for schools. Parents are willing and interested in becoming involved in their child's education. This study revealed that even though workshops and training sessions are in place, parents will participate only when they are comfortable in the school setting. Parents want training. They want to understand strategies, methods and techniques that their children are being taught. Parents want to know how to input into planning and they want training to prepare them for this task. Even though over half of the parents surveyed indicated that they felt more comfortable volunteering, they are not volunteering. This indicates that it will take more than workshops and training sessions to increase parental involvement. Building positive teacher-parent partnerships is essential for the education of children. Communication between parents and teachers is vital in directing the child's learning and development.

Conclusions suggest that 1) all families care about their children, want them to succeed, and are eager to obtain better information from the school so as to remain good partners in their child's education; 2) all teachers and administrators want to involve families , but are not sure how to build positive and productive programs, and 3) all children want their families to be knowledgeable partners in their education.

## **Implications**

The findings of the study agrees with the literature. Findings indicate that children have a significant advantage when their parents are directly involved in the learning process. The report card grades of the students whose parents attended these workshops and training sessions are indicators that the workshops and training sessions were assets to helping parents assist their children academically. The study also revealed that the program for parents must be comprehensive, well planned and long lasting. An indicator of this fact was that parents actually called when January's meeting had to be canceled.

The conclusions also reveal that the potential of a parent involvement program will be enhanced if it is treated as an integrated strategy with distinct features. These features could include: 1) a means of attracting family members to the school; 2) a means of reaching families at home; and 3) a way of engaging educators in improving curriculum and instruction through the creation of new kinds of connections with parents and other community resources.

Increasing parental involvement is a never ending process. Schools need to actively seek ways for parents, teachers and administrators to participate in planning, decision making and governance. The above mentioned features will help all stakeholders move toward the ideal embodied in the old African saying: "The whole village educates the child."

## **Leadership**

The intern was evaluated using a Likert type scaled survey. Evaluations were completed by three (3) supervisors, one (1) Title one teacher, one (1) Human Resource secretary, two (2) Reading Recovery teachers, and the field mentor. All items listed under leadership behavior, communication and group processes were rated Strongly Agree. In organizational management, the areas of collaborative strategic planning, capitalizing on the findings of research, and uses of the latest technology for effective management were rated Somewhat Agree. These are the areas that the intern will continue to refine.

The intern has grown throughout the internship. Opportunity has allowed the intern to improve writing skills and keep abreast of the latest educational trends in education through current research. Time management skills improved because of the need to keep track of all phases of the projects and to assure that everything was completed by the deadlines. A true understanding of purchasing and selecting appropriate parental materials was developed. The intern developed a much needed program that provided staff and student development in critical and higher order thinking skills.

The intern felt that the most important development for leadership involved the full impact of understanding the importance of parental involvement in the educational development for children. It is most important to involve parents and impress upon them the importance of having parents truly becoming a stakeholder in the educational process. The intern knows that parental involvement will be a high priority when accepting a position as an educational leader. Presentation skills were refined because when working with parents, all information presented must meet the realms of the complete audience. Parents come from many walks of life and their comfort level must always be considered. The intern truly values the opportunity to develop a program for parents. The biggest change that will be made next year will be to change any reference to parent training,

instead all programs will be called Building Leadership Capacity for Parents. Hopefully, the change of words will influence parents to participate.

## **Change**

The workshops and training sessions were fully supported by the district. Schools were supportive and acceptable to making this intern welcome in each building where the workshops were held. Parents who attended felt that the workshops and training sessions were beneficial and meaningful. Twenty of those parents attended each workshop or sessions and their children's report cards indicate that they are academically successful. Collectively, there has been no significant increase of parental involvement in the schools. However, there is a noted increase in attendance at the Parent Action Council meetings at Texas Avenue school. Texas Avenue also has the largest number of parent volunteers.

The organization benefited from the internship program in many ways. A successful, continuous program for parental involvement was developed. The district will benefit because parents who were involved understands the importance of becoming a stakeholder in the educational process. Training was provided for parents in calculators, basic computer skills, testing techniques, selecting books for the home, and many other areas. As a result of these programs, parents have grown educationally which in turn they will turnkey to their children and possibly others. The district will benefit because the children of these parents will come to school better prepared. Parents were also more involved in the decision making process in the district this past year, which also benefits the district. Parents have also been provided with the opportunity to attend other leadership programs outside of the district. In return these parents return to the district and turnkeys the information to other parents. Leadership capacity building has been at its best.

## **Recommendations for Further Study**

Based on the conclusions and implications of the study, the following are recommendations for further study:

1. A study could be conducted to strategize ways to involve parents in school - many don't know how to become involved or feel intimidated because they haven't been involved in school since they were students themselves.
2. A study could be conducted to establish methods to enhance two-way communication between parents and the school. Communication is one of the biggest challenges- and one of the most important components of parental involvement.
3. The parent survey could be distributed at the end of the school year to plan next year's parental involvement program.
4. Family learning centers could be established in schools, community centers, and churches. Programs which would assist parents with helping their children academically could be provided at these centers. This environment may be more comfortable for some parents.
5. The district's outreach for parental involvement programs could be broadened. For example, parent teacher conferences could be held during day and evening hours, early start programs for students whose parents must report to work before the school day begins, or workshops and training sessions scheduled for parents during the weekend.

6. A home visitor program could be initiated to make contact with families who have little or no contact with the school. This program could provide information to families about the school's expectations, curriculum, rules and requirements. Home visitors could also find out the needs and concerns of these parents and convey this information to the school.

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## Appendix A Parent Survey

**ATLANTIC CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS**  
**Office of Curriculum and Instruction**  
**1809 Pacific Avenue**  
**Atlantic City, New Jersey 08401**

**Parent Survey**

1. What have been the most effective means of communication between you and your child's school. Check only one.

<input type="checkbox"/> telephone calls	<input type="checkbox"/> letters
<input type="checkbox"/> home visit	<input type="checkbox"/> school visit

2. What can schools do to promote two-way communication between schools and families?

3. What can parents do to promote two-way communication between the school and their family?

4. I would like the following change(s) to occur at my school to help make parent involvement an integral part of the school program:

5. How do you rank your relationship with your child's school

<input type="checkbox"/> Unsatisfactory
<input type="checkbox"/> Highly Unsatisfactory
<input type="checkbox"/> Opinion Not Yet Formed
<input type="checkbox"/> Satisfactory
<input type="checkbox"/> Highly Satisfactory

6. As a participant in the training and workshop sessions, are you
- |  |
|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> more comfortable volunteering in school   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> more comfortable with your relationship with the school, but not ready to volunteer |
| <input type="checkbox"/> not comfortable in the school setting   |

## Appendix B Agendas

**ATLANTIC CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
Office of Curriculum and Instruction  
1809 Pacific Avenue  
Atlantic City, New Jersey 08401**

**Title 1 and Reading Recovery  
presents  
"The Beginning Reader and Writer"  
(a workshop for parents of Kindergarten students)**

**September 23, 1997  
9:30 A.M. and 7:00 P.M.**

**Welcome**

**Overview of Workshop**

**"The Beginning Reader and Writer"  
Presenters: Bruce W. Williams and Anne Bastianelli**

- A. Becoming a Reader and Writer**
- B. Ideas for Home**
- C. Keep Books**

**Evaluation**

**Questions and Answers**

**Future Meetings**

**Chat/Chew**

**ATLANTIC CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
Office of Curriculum and Instruction  
1809 Pacific Avenue  
Atlantic City, New Jersey 08401**

**Title 1  
presents  
"Practical Math Techniques and The Parent Teacher Conference"  
(a workshop for parents of Kindergarten students)**

**October 14, 1997  
8:30 A.M. and 7:00 P.M.**

**Welcome**

**Warm-Up Activity**

**Overview of Workshop**

**"Practical Math Techniques"  
Presenter: Rochelle Seldon  
A. Friendly Math  
B. Problem Solving  
C. Ideas for Home**

**"What To Expect at a Parent Teacher Conference"  
Presenter: Lois W. Lantz  
A. Before the Conference  
B. During the Conference  
C. After the Conference**

**Cooperative Group Activities**

**Questions, Answers and Evaluation**

**Next Meeting  
November 5, 1997, Uptown School Complex, 9:30 a.m. & 7:00 p.m.**

**Chat/Chew**

**A child educated only at school is an uneducated child.  
-George Santayana**

**ATLANTIC CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
Office of Curriculum and Instruction  
1809 Pacific Avenue  
Atlantic City, New Jersey 08401**

**Title 1 and Reading Recovery  
presents  
"Beginning Reading and Writing Strategies, II"  
(a workshop for parents of Kindergarten students)**

**November 11, 1997  
9:30 A.M. and 7:00 P.M.**

**Welcome**

**Warm-Up Activity**

**Workshop Overview**

**Presenters: Anne Bastianelli and Bruce Williams**

- A. How to Help Your Child with Letter and Word Work**
- B. How to Support Your Child in their Early Reading Efforts**
- C. Celebrate their Successes!**
- D. Using Keep Books to Support their Early Literacy**

**Questions/Answers**

**Survey**

**Evaluation**

**Chat/Chew**

**Learning isn't a means to an end; it is an end in itself.  
-Robert Heinlein**

**ATLANTIC CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
Office of Curriculum and Instruction  
1809 Pacific Avenue  
Atlantic City, New Jersey 08401**

**The Public Library: "Your Child's New Best Friend"  
(a workshop for parents of Kindergarten students)  
Atlantic City Public Library**

**December 3, 1997  
10:00 A.M.**

**Agenda**

Chat and Chew

Welcome

Introduction of Speaker  
Mrs. Connie Swanson, Youth Services Librarian

Topics of Discussion

The Importance of Reading

Beginning Reading Skills

Summer Reading Program

Let's Apply Now! (Applications for Library)

Questions/Answers

A Tour of the Library

Appendix C  
Evaluation Sheet

**ATLANTIC CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS**  
**Office of Curriculum and Instruction**  
**1809 Pacific Avenue**  
**Atlantic City, New Jersey 08401**

**Workshop Evaluation**

Title of Workshop:  
 Workshop Presenters:  
 Date and Location of Workshop:  
 Workshop Objective:

**Directions:** On a scale of 1 to 5 using the key below, please give a rated response to statements 1-6.

1=Strongly Disagree		2=Disagree		3=No Opinion		
4=Agree				5=Strongly Agree		
1.	The purpose of the workshop was clear. Comments and Suggestions:	1	2	3	4	5
2.	The workshop materials were appropriate. Comments and Suggestions:	1	2	3	4	5
3.	The workshop's presentation area was comfortable and appropriate. Comments and Suggestions:	1	2	3	4	5
4.	The presenter(s) was knowledgeable and well prepared. Comments and Suggestions:	1	2	3	4	5
5.	The subject matter of the workshop was relevant and timely.	1	2	3	4	5
6.	The goals and objectives of the workshop were accomplished. Comments and Suggestions:	1	2	3	4	5

**Directions:** Please select the one phrase that best describes you.

7. As a result of this workshop, I plan to:  
 a. find out more on the topic  
 b. apply newly required information  
 c. share information with colleagues  
 d. do nothing  
 e. other (please specify)
8. On a scale of 1 (the lowest) to 10 (the highest), what overall rating would you assign this workshop? 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Appendix D  
Principal/Teacher Survey

**Atlantic City Public Schools**  
**Principal/Teacher Perception of Parent Workshops Survey**  
**Lois W. Lantz**

1. Was the procedure for distribution of information and advertisement of parent workshops and training sessions for Kindergarten parents satisfactory?     **Yes**    **No**  
If not, what changes could be made?
  
2. Did you encounter problems with the mechanics of how the workshops were set up? (Day and Evening Sessions, etc.) If so, what and how could this be prevented/improved?
  
3. Did the facilitators follow the building policies?    **Yes**    **No**
  
4. Were they courteous, pleasant and professional?   **Yes**    **No**
  
5. Would you like to hold another series of workshops at your school?     **Yes**    **No**
  
6. Are there any additional ways you feel your school could help accomplish the district's goals regarding parental involvement?
  
7. Are there any other comments, feedback, or suggestions you would like to share with us?
  
8. Are there suggestions for workshop ideas or topics you would like to see presented in the future for parental workshops?

Thank you for your cooperation.

### **Biographical Data**

Name	Lois W. Lantz
Date and Place of Birth	August 7, 1945 Isle of Wight Co., Virginia
High School	Westside High Smithfield, Virginia
Undergrate Degree, Major, Institution	Bachelor of Science Elementary Education Saint Paul's College Lawrenceville, Virginia
Graduate Degree, Major, Institution	Master of Arts School Administration Rowan University Glassboro, New Jersey
Present Occupation, Place of Employment, Position	Teacher Coordinator, Title 1 Atlantic City Public Schools Atlantic City, New Jersey