TEACHER PERCEPTIONS OF THE EFFICACY OF PARENT AND COMMUNITY OUTREACH STRATEGIES

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January 27, 2017
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Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to my son and my daddy. To my son, Austin, for continuing to remind me that I will be called “doc” soon. Austin has been a driving force for me to be the best I can be, do the best I can do, and pursue dreams I never thought could come true for 22 years. Austin is the reason I started my education journey 19 years ago. To my daddy, Troy Smith, who has always been my biggest cheerleader and has encouraged me throughout my entire life. My daddy has never failed to ask me how school is going, how much longer until I finish, and always encourages me to keep going. He has never failed to let me know how proud of me he is.
Abstract
The purpose of the study was to look at teachers’ perceptions of the efficacy of parent and community outreach strategies based on Epstein et al.’s (2009) six types of involvement. The population of teachers that were selected to participate in the survey were from three elementary schools, six middle schools, and ten high schools. Four teachers were selected to participate as a follow up to the data collected from the survey. One teacher was selected from an elementary school, one from a middle school, and two were selected from two high schools. To complete the survey, teachers were asked to select the level of effectiveness of 24 parent and community strategies, based on their perception. Teachers were also asked to rank the six types of involvement in order from most effective to least effective. Teachers that participated in the interviews discussed why teachers believe these strategies are effective and what prevents teachers from implementing them all. Survey Monkey was used to analyze data from the online survey. After reviewing the data, the researcher utilized the data to develop and conduct interviews with four teachers. The results of the survey indicated that all 24 examples were perceived as effective by teachers. Data from the interview concluded that although the examples of strategies are effective, teachers lack the time to implement them all. Based on the information from the interviews, teachers should implement strategies that would be the most successful for the parent and student population at a particular school.

Keywords: teachers’ perceptions, parent and community strategies, teachers, and parents
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CHAPTER ONE
Purpose and Organization

Introduction and Background

A child’s success in his or her education is often dependent on the level of support from the parent. Parental support can impact a child’s academic success and mental health. Students who have parents involved in their education are more likely to earn higher grades, take more challenging courses, increase their opportunities of passing academic courses, attend school regularly, have better social skills, graduate, and attend post-secondary education (Editorial Projects, 2004). Parent involvement in the child’s education starts before the child begins school.

There are things parents can do to prepare the child for success before the first day of kindergarten. Having a set schedule the summer before the child goes to school, will help the student become adjusted to the school’s routine. A schedule includes an early bedtime and eating lunch each day at the same time the student will have lunch at school. By implementing a schedule, the child is better prepared for a smoother transition when starting kindergarten (Efird, 2003-2015). As the child becomes older, the involvement of the parent becomes less. In 2000, the administration of the National Assessment of Educational Progress showed that 90 percent of fourth graders were in schools where more than half of the parents participated in parent teacher conferences. For the 8th graders, it was reported the number dropped to 57 percent (Editorial Projects, 2004).
In addition to parents impacting student success, teachers also have an impact on the child’s success. According to Lavoie (2015), educators must recognize they play a vital role in helping develop the child’s social development. Teachers must know that school is the student’s job and they must treat it as such. Lavoie notes that students fall into four categories in the school setting; rejected, isolated, controversial, and popular. Educators have a difficult task when trying to meet the needs of all students. As teachers get to know students, they can use simple strategies to help build their self-esteem. When the teacher notices students are feeling rejected, an attempt can be made to find things the student is interested in or learn about his or her hobbies. Once the teacher discovers student interest, the teacher can plan a lesson that includes activities that relate to his or her interest or hobbies to show public celebration. Teachers must find ways to give the children attention and make them feel they are worth the attention.

**Statement of the Problem**

Although Tennessee has shown academic gains, there is a need for an increased number of students to experience success. A study was designed to provide teachers with an important understanding of students in Tennessee who are considered to be high risk and/or are not successful in education. The study was to understand teachers’ perceptions on parent involvement strategies. The study added to the current knowledge and research that has confirmed parent involvement increases student success.

In 2007 a cohort that included 72,865 students, 10,545 students did not graduate high school with a regular high school diploma (Tennessee Department of Education, 2015). Out of the same cohort, 22,234 students graduated and entered the workforce and have no post-secondary experience to date. Of the 22,234 that entered the workforce, the
data shows that 14,745 of the students earn an average of $9,030 per year. The group has a 16 percent chance of earning higher than minimum wage for the year. From the same 2007 cohort, 40,235 students enrolled in some type of post-secondary education. Within the group, 58 percent were still enrolled in year one. Only 3,514 earned a certificate or degree in three years. A report from Southwest Educational Development Laboratory in 2002, concluded that “when schools, families, and communities work together to support learning, children tend to do better in school, stay in school longer, and like school more” (Research Spotlight, 2015). Olsen and Fuller (2010) determined that students who have parents involved in their education are more likely to make higher grades, pass courses, attend school, do well socially in school, graduate, and most likely pursue further education. Children are likely to perform better in school when the parent(s) discusses school with them, expect the student to do well, and help the student plan for college. Not only does the child benefit when the parent is involved, the parent, the school, and the educators benefit (Olsen & Fuller, 2010).

**Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of the study was to look at teachers’ perceptions of the efficacy of parent and community outreach strategies. Parents and teachers have a direct impact on student achievement. The study provided knowledge on teachers’ perceptions of the effectiveness of community outreach strategies.

When parents are involved, Olsen and Fuller (2010) has determined the student achieves more. This is likely the case for students regardless of his or her ethnic background and socioeconomic status. Benefits for parents include:

- Increase discussion with the child
• Increase confidence in decision making skills
• Gain more knowledge about the child that includes the child’s development
• Understand what the child is learning
• Increase the likeliness of helping the child with what the child is learning
• Perceptions of the school increase
• Become more involved in decisions regarding the child’s education

Benefits for the educator include:

• Increase morale in the school
• Earn greater respect from parents
• Communication increases between the educators and the parent
• Become more aware and have a better understanding of the child’s background
• Increase job satisfaction

Benefits for the school include:

• Establish better relationships in the community
• Support from the community
• Maintain higher quality programs (Olsen, G. & Fuller, M., 2010).

Several groups, policymakers, community leaders, and parents view student learning as the responsibility of the educator (“Parent, Family”, 2008). Activities and events that happen before and after school are just as important as what occurs during school. Parents, educators, and communities must work together to develop parent-community-school partnerships resulting in increased student success.
There is a vast amount of literature related to parent involvement in a child’s education. Literature in the review includes the history of parent involvement, the role of the parent and teacher, parent involvement defined, how parent involvement impacts student success, and the six involvement strategies presented by Epstein, (Epstein et al., 2009); parenting, communicating, volunteering, learning at home, decision making, and collaborating with community.

**Theoretical Foundation**

For students to be successful, parents and teachers must be actively involved with the student. As students become older, parents are likely to become less involved (“Parent, Family”, 2008). Decreased involvement is often due to the parent not knowing how to support the child and what his or her role is. Teachers must understand their role as well. The theoretical framework for the study was the six types of involvement developed by Joyce Epstein (Epstein et al., 2009). The six major types of involvement are parenting, communicating, volunteering, learning at home, decision-making, and collaborating with the community. The involvement strategies help the parents to become involved at school and at home (Epstein & Sainas, 2004).

The involvement strategies developed by Epstein offer a broad range of activities that help to engage parents, teachers, and communities to help meet the needs of students (“Parent, Family”, 2008). Following are descriptions of the six types of involvement (Epstein et al., 2009):

*Type 1, Parenting:* Help all families establish home environments to support students as students.
Type 2, Communicating: Design effective forms of school-to-home and home-to-school communications about school programs and children’s progress.

Type 3, Volunteering: Recruit and organize parent help and support.

Type 4, Learning at home: Provide information and ideas to families about how to help students at home with homework and other curriculum-related activities, decisions, and planning.

Type 5, Decision-Making: Includes parents in school decisions, developing parent leaders and representatives.

Type 6, Collaborating with the community: Identify and integrate resources and services from the community to strengthen school programs, family practices, and student learning and development.

Both the teacher and the parent have an impact on student achievement. The study will enhance teacher understanding of outreach strategies to involve parents and understand how getting parents involved impacts student success.

**Research Questions and Hypothesis**

The research question was what are teachers’ perceptions of the efficacy of parent and community outreach strategies? Why have teachers developed the perceptions?

The researcher’s hypothesis was that teachers’ perceptions of the 24 parent and community outreach examples were that some, but not all, were effective. The hypothesis was based on previous interactions with teachers.

**Limitations**

The limitations of the study were the number of responses to the survey and the principals that sent the survey to teachers. Teachers receive many surveys throughout the
school year. The number of teachers that responded to the survey was 191. Although the researcher received approval to continue with the study in the large school district, some principals chose not forward the survey to teachers. Due to this circumstance, there is no definitive number of teachers that received the survey.

The researcher selected teachers to participate in three elementary schools, six middle schools, and ten high schools. These schools were all in the same school district, which is a large school district in East Tennessee. Sending the survey to the schools selected allowed the researcher to reach a diverse population of teachers and obtain a more accurate sample of data. However, not all schools sent the survey to teachers and not all teachers participated in the survey.

Definition of Terms

Efficacy. The quality of being effective (Efficacy, n.d.).

Parent. A person who gives birth to or raises a child (Parent, n.d.).

Perception. Belief or opinion, often held by many people and based on how things seem (Perception, n.d.).

Success. The achieving of desired results, or someone or something that achieves positive results (Success, n.d.).

Support. To give encouragement and approval to someone or something because you want the person or thing to succeed. To help something or someone in an emotional or practical way (Support, n.d.).

Strategies. A long-range plan for achieving something or reaching a goal, or the skill of making such plans (Strategies, n.d.).

Student. Someone who is learning at a school (Student, n.d.).
Teacher. A person who instructs or trains, especially in a school (Teacher, n.d.).

**Organization of the Document**

In Chapter One, the researcher provides an introduction and background, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, theoretical framework, research questions, limitations and definition of terms. The researcher includes a literature review in Chapter Two. For Chapter Three, the researcher includes an introduction, population, description of instruments, data collection procedures, proposed data analysis, and a summary. The researcher includes an introduction, demographic data, teachers’ perceptions results, semi-structured interviews, interview results, and a conclusion in Chapter Four. An introduction, discussion, summary, and recommendations are included in Chapter Five.
CHAPTER TWO

Literature Review

Introduction

The purpose of the study was to look at teacher perceptions of the efficacy of parent and community outreach strategies. The literature review was organized into sections. The review discussed the history of parent involvement, the parent, the teacher, the 21st century teacher, parent involvement, the effect of parent involvement on a student’s overall success, the theoretical framework, and the six involvement strategies: parenting, communicating, volunteering, learning at home, decision making, and collaborating with the community.

Research has proven that parental involvement in a child’s education has a positive impact on the child’s success (Cotton, & Wikelund, n.d). The more active a parent is in his or her child’s education, by participating in activities such as attending field trips, working with the child at home, helping in the classroom, and actively supporting school activities, the greater the student’s success. Teachers also impact student success (Bennett, 2012). Effective teachers not only improve test scores but also increases the student’s chances to attend college, avoid pregnancy, and earn more money. “When schools, families, and community groups work together to support learning, children tend to do better in school, stay in school longer, and like school more (Research Spotlight, 2015).

History of Parent Involvement

The Elementary and Secondary Education Act, updated in 2002 of the No Child Left Behind Act, focused on holding schools more accountable for student achievement
The Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) was passed in 1965 by President Lyndon Johnson. The law was originally created to provide funds for schools to assist in the cost of educating students who are considered disadvantaged. Over time, the law changed several times to expand the federal role in education. In 2001, George W. Bush signed into law The No Child Left Behind Act (Henderson, 2002). The law was supported and passed through Congress. In 2002, the law went into effect, holding schools accountable for student performance. The NCLB law increased standards for student achievement and used test scores as way to measure student gains.

Holding schools accountable for student achievement means schools must involve parents. To receive Title 1 funds, schools are required to submit a parent involvement policy that parents have helped to write and have agreed to. Section 1118 of the No Child Left Behind Act, outlines parental involvement for schools (Resource to accompany NCLB, 2002). In general, “a local educational agency may receive funds under this part only if such agency implements programs, activities, and procedures for the involvement of parents in programs assisted under this part consistent with this section. Such programs, activities, and procedures shall be planned and implemented with meaningful consultation with parents of participating children” (Resource to accompany NCLB, 2002).

Some of the benefits of The No Child Left Behind Act for students and parents are that it provides support for learners by targeting resources for students at an early age, provides parents with more information regarding the child’s progress, alerts parents to important information at the child’s school, and gives students the option to attend high performing schools (USDOE, 2003). NCLB requires schools receiving Title 1 funds to
include programs and activities that involve parents. The Texas Education Agency identified four topics to incorporate the requirements of the NCLB: written parent involvement policies, written school-parent compact, parent-teacher conferences, and a school improvement plan (Montemayor, 2007).

The Role of the Parent

The role of the parent as it relates to his or her child, evolves as the child grows (The role of parents, 2016). According to the Future of Children, parenting is divided up into the following seven categories:

1. Nurturance: Showing the child love, affection and caring for the child.
2. Discipline: The response from the parent(s) to the child’s behavior(s) that the parent considers appropriate or inappropriate.
3. Teaching: Different ways to convey a message to the child.
4. Language: Talking with the child and conversations between the child and parent.
5. Materials: Things that are provided to the child at home (toys, instruments, drawing materials)
6. Monitoring: Parents being aware of the what the child is doing or participating in. (monitoring what the child watches on television or knowing what the child is doing)
7. Management: Scheduling and completing scheduled events (managing bed time, dinner times, television time, and establishing routines) (School readiness, 2005).

Parents must be a role model for learning, pay attention to what the child loves, know how the child learns, practice together what the child learns at school, read together, connect what the child learns at school to everyday life and to the world,
maintain a schedule, and become a life-long learner with the child (The role of parents, 2016). In addition, Bean (n.d.), outlines the responsibilities of the parents. Parents are responsible for making decisions, teaching the child to function independently, holding the child accountable, supporting the child when he or she is doing well and/or not doing well, and to encourage the child to do his or her best.

**The Role of the Teacher**

In the 1800s, the one-room schoolhouses were managed by anyone who knew a little about math, history, reading, and writing (One-room schoolteachers, 2005). Many teachers had only an eighth grade education level and were teaching students who were only a few years younger than the teacher. Teachers taught grades one through eight (McCarthy, 2016). During that time, most of the teachers were male. However, many of the men became soldiers during the Civil War. As a result, more and more females entered the workforce to become teachers. By 1900, there were more females teaching than there were males (One-room schoolteachers, 2005).

As time passed, teachers were beginning to receive more training and preparation to learn how to teach (One-room schoolteachers, 2005). In 1876, the Normal School was opened to prepare students to become teachers. Teachers spent three, six, or twelve weeks in teacher training classes. In 1909, laws began to pass requiring teachers to receive a license to teach. Now, teachers must complete four years of college at an accredited institution to earn a teaching license.

The logistics of a school day looked different in the 1800s than in present times (One-room schoolteachers, 2005). The teacher’s day began before dawn and teachers either walked or rode a horse to school while the day ended with teacher spending most
nights grading papers. Teachers were paid very little and some of their salaries included room and meals. There was no transportation for students. As a result, many of the schoolhouses were built within walking distance of homes (McCarthy, 2016).

Students attended school from 9 a.m. until 2 p.m. or 4 p.m. and had one hour for recess. Schools were in session for 132 days of the year depending on when students were needed to help at home (McCarthy, 2016). Discipline approaches could include a child standing in the corner or a student being slapped on the hands with a hard ruler (One-room schoolteachers, 2005). Other punishments included detention, loss of recess, suspension, expulsion, or a lashing (McCarthy, 2016).

Teachers not only taught students and maintained discipline in the classroom, but also served as a janitor to keep the school clean, hauled water and firewood for the students, umpired games at recess, and tended to students if they were injured. Students often helped the teacher carry water, pass out slates, or clean the ashes out of the wood stove. Attendance during the early years was only 59 percent (McCarthy, 2016). Many male students did not attend school and the law did not require rural children to attend school. Students worked on the farms instead of attending school (One-room schoolteachers, 2005).

During the early years, teachers had many rules outside of the classroom as well (One-room schoolteachers, 2005). Some of the rules in 1872 included filling lamps and cleaning the chimney. Male teachers would court women once per week and used two evenings in the week to attend church. Women were dismissed if they married or engaged in unseemly conduct (Rules for teachers, 2013). The rules evolved over time. In 1915, teachers could not marry during the term of their contract. He or she could not
dress in bright colors, travel beyond city limits without approval from the chairman of the school board, and had to be home by between the hours of 8 p.m. and 6 a.m. unless attending a school function. Dancing at social events was not allowed for most teachers and church attendance was also expected (One-room schoolteachers, 2005). Teachers were not allowed to marry if they wanted to teach and it was expected the homes be kept clean as well. In the 1930s and 1940s, schoolhouses began adding running water and indoor bathrooms. Things began to change, and in 1967, Iowa closed the last one-room.

**The 21st Century Teacher**

Teachers’ roles continue to change and are becoming much different from the old “show-and-tell” practice (Lanier, 2016). Contemporary teachers deliver instruction in very different ways from their predecessors. In earlier years, teachers sat at a desk and taught students through mostly direct instruction. Today, according to Harrison and Killion, (2007) teachers are a resource provider, an instructional specialist, a classroom supporter, a learning facilitator, a mentor, school leader, data coach, a catalyst for change, and a learner. Teachers are sharing resources to help colleagues, helping other educators implement effective teaching strategies, modeling lessons for other educators, leading professional developments, mentoring new teachers, serving on school committees, using data to drive instruction, working to improve, and learning so he or she can continue to improve. Teachers are participating in ongoing professional development, analyzing and reviewing instruction and assessments, and working to provide a better education for students (Lanier, 2016).

The practices of teachers are also changing (Lanier, 2016). In the past, teachers were typically told what to teach, when to teach it, and how to deliver the content.
Students used to sit still and listen to a standard lesson and take a standard test. Currently, teachers are encouraged to get to know his or her students and create a learning environment that meets the needs of each individual student. Students are active participants in the classroom and assigned roles to give them responsibilities and ownership in the learning process. Teachers serve as a resource for students and are there if students need help (Nola, 2007). When teachers act as a resource, they are guiding students to find the necessary resources to learn the material. In the classroom, the teacher is also a controller, prompter, assessor, organizer, participant, and tutor. Teachers control what students learn and how material is presented to students. As students are learning, the teacher prompts students to participate through suggestions on how to proceed, but provide support during the process. The teacher organizes the activities to support the learning and is a participant with students as they proceed. The teacher will coach students through projects and/or self-directed learning. The teachers are not only teaching, but also counseling students as they grow and mature to help them make better decisions and value contributing to society (Lanier, 2016).

Teachers are working to individualize learning as the teacher-student relationship develop (Lanier, 2016). Many teachers have made a commitment to relating to students who might have dropped out or been forced out of the system. The days of teachers standing in front of a classroom or sitting at a desk are now a thing of the past. Teachers are now focused on engaging students in the learning process and constructing lessons that allow the student to solve real-world problems. According to James (2015), teachers should incorporate elements into his or her practices: make learning meaningful, set students up for success, allow students to take over his or her learning, allow students to
work together, establish positive relationships with students, and promote mastery orientations (James, 2015). Students are now encouraged to demonstrate mastery through other assessments rather than taking a standard test (Lanier, 2016).

Many things are considered classroom materials; pens, pencils, chalkboards, and paper (Svokos, 2015). As the role the teacher plays changes, the classroom is also taking on a new dynamic (Lanier, 2016). Students and teachers now have technology to enhance instruction and learning. Some of the tools that are being used to deliver instruction are digital chalkboards (interactive whiteboards), remote learning (classroom lessons online), e-books (books on an electronic device), computer-based testing (students take test on computers), and educational games (games and student progress online) (Svokos, 2015).

Teachers are no longer distributing information to students. Information is provided to students to help them develop thinking and problem-solving skills. As students work with the information, the teacher spends time working with students one on one or within groups (Lanier, 2016).

As the role of the teacher changes, the structure of the school is changing as well (Lanier, 2016). Schools are looking at ways to provide students with materials they need within the limited amount of time that schools are in operation. Some schools are reorganizing yearly schedules, school days and hours, and some are looking at class scheduling. According to Hopkins (2006), Kelly Johnson recognized that few students work on family farms and questions why schools are still operating on schedules that do not have any educational advantages. Ms. Johnson realized that there are many options for the school calendar to change including four-day school weeks, trimester schedules, year-round school, extending the school day, or delaying start times. One of the most
important ways the organizational structure has changed is with the team teaching concept (Lanier, 2016. Teachers are now working together to create lessons, assessments, and provide instruction to students to meet the needs of all students. The team teaching model is growing teacher strengths, interests, skills, and abilities. Much of the work for this is done outside of the classroom.

The role of the teacher is not only being redefined in the classroom, but also outside of the classroom (Lanier, 2016). Inside the classroom, teachers are focused on methods and strategies to impact student achievement. Outside the classroom, teachers are working with parents, colleagues (professional developments), politicians, community members, employers, and others to determine the skills and knowledge students need when leaving high school. Many teachers spend a large amount of time outside of the classroom to meet his or her students’ needs and also to scaffold the learning for what is needed and expected from America’s children.

**Parent Involvement**

“Success happens when families, students, and educators work together and holistically approach a child’s education, focusing on a child’s academic, social, and emotional needs” (Lathram, 2015). Parent involvement is a loose term (Cotton & Wikeland, 1989). Each family or parent must determine the type and amount of involvement that will have the most positive impact on the student. Involvement can look different for each family, and have different types and levels of support (Cotton & Wikeland, n.d.). When the parent is active and a part of the child’s educational experience, the parent is considered to be involved with the child (McNeal, 2014). Parent involvement is not just asking the child if he or she has homework, or telling the child to
finish homework. Parent involvement means any action taken by the parent that is expected (in theory) to improve performance or behavior of the child.

Parental involvement in the child’s education allows parents to monitor activities in the classroom and the school (Parental involvement, 2013). In addition, involvement from parents provides a support for students. Being involved in a child’s education, can look differently for each family. Some of the ways parents can be involved in his or her child’s school is to join the PTA, get to know the teachers, talk with other parents at the school, attend school board meetings, and become a mentor (Lathram, 2015).

**Parent Involvement Affects Student’s Overall Success**

A research study in 2005 from Gonzalez-DeHass et al. showed that parental involvement directly affects student success (Trung, & Ducreux, 2013). According to Trung and Ducreux, students with parental involvement have better grades, higher test scores, and increased motivation. Parental involvement also helps students to become better at self-regulating and maintaining control, which predicts better attitudes and higher achievement. In addition, parental involvement has been found to improve student behaviors, social competence, relationships with school staff, and relationships amongst the child and the parent. Not only can parent involvement help with relationships among students and teachers, it also helps to build a relationship between teachers and parents. (Trung, & Ducreux, 2013). When parents are more actively involved, students are more likely to demonstrate success. Student success is impacted from the child’s home life and structures in place from the early years (Cotton & Wikelund, n.d.).
Teachers and Parents Working Together

Teachers and parents impact student achievement (Spinks, 2013). As one part of this, teachers and parents must work together to create a sense of community. When looking at how parents and teachers can work together to impact student success, Epstein identified six strategies (Epstein et al., 2009). The six major types of involvement are parenting, communicating, volunteering, learning at home, decision-making, and collaborating with the community. The strategies help parents to become involved at school and at home (Epstein, & Sainas, 2004).

Type 1, parenting: (Epstein, & Salinas, 2004). The strategy aims to teach and support parents with parenting skills, provide support for the families, understand adolescents, and support learning for all ages of learners (Epstein & Salinas, 2004). Parenting assists the school to set goals for students and gain an understanding of the student’s background and heritage.

Type 2, Communicating: (Epstein, & Salinas, 2004). Communication with families about student progress should occur between the parent and the school. Two-way communication develops between the school and the parents.

Type 3, Volunteering: (Epstein, & Salinas, 2004). When schools recruit parents to volunteer at the school, the parent and the teacher become more aware of student’s needs, allowing both groups to work together to support those needs (“Parent, Family”, 2008).

Type 4, Learning at home: (Epstein, & Salinas, 2004). Learning at home, involves families in the child’s academics and occurs when the parent is involved in the
child’s homework and other curricular activities. Teachers are encouraged to give homework that encourages students to discuss the tasks with his or her parent.

Type 5, Decision-Making: (Epstein, & Salinas, 2004). Families should be included in the educational decisions of the child (“Parent, Family”, 2008). Involvement in decision-making involvement can be accomplished through advocacy activities, parent meetings, or a parent organization (Epstein, & Salinas, 2004).

Type 6, Collaborating with the community: (Epstein, & Salinas, 2004). To collaborate with the community, resources and services must be identified (Epstein, 2002). Members of the community can include businesses, agencies, colleges, and other organizations (Epstein, & Salinas, 2004).

Six Types of School-Family-Community Involvement

Parenting

Shute, Hansen, Underwood, & Razzouk, (2011) provided information on several responsibilities that parents have in order to stay involved in their child’s education. At home, the parent can discuss school activities, talk about aspirations and expectations, read with the child, check homework, enforce rules, and make sure the child is supervised. Parental involvement at the school can include contacting school personnel, attending PTO and other meetings, and volunteering at the school. In addition, Cotton and Wiklund (n.d.) mentioned that parents can provide encouragement, arrange a time, and provide an appropriate space for the child to do school work at home, model appropriate behaviors, monitor homework and tutor their child. Outside of the home, parents can become part of the process of planning, developing, and decision-making in the education process for the children in the community. Talking to the child about
education, is crucial. When parents discuss education with their child, they are sending a message that school is important (McNeal, 2014).

**Communicating**

Communication between parents and teachers appears to be rare (Flanagan, 2015). A study conducted by the National Household Education Survey Program (2012), showed that 49 percent of parents who have a child in a public school have been contacted by a teacher, and 59 percent have never received a phone call from a teacher. When parents and schools have positive parent-school communication, the child, the parent, and the teacher all benefit (American Federation of Teachers, 2004). Having a positive parent-teacher relationship, is a contributing factor to the child’s success (The parent-teacher partnership, 2016).

According to Flanagan, (2015), schools should set norms to make communication between parents and teachers easier. Some ways that schools and parents can create effective two-way communication is to conduct parent conferences, make phone calls, send emails, make information available on school websites, send folders home with students for parents to review, and have parent-teacher organization (American Federation of Teachers, 2004). Flanagan (2015) suggests text messaging parents and/or teachers is also an effective form of two-way communication.

The Ohio Department of Education (2016), adopted the research-based strategies, developed by Epstein, to involve parents. Based on the research from Epstein, et al. (2002), the Ohio Department of Education, suggest the following as ways to improve communication between schools and parents:
• “Provide printed information for parents on homework policies and on monitoring and supporting student work at home.

• Send home folders of student work weekly or monthly for parent review and comment.

• Develop electronic grade booklets so families can frequently monitor their children’s progress.

• Communicate school policies clearly to all families in their home language.

• Establish formal mechanisms for families to communicate to administrators and teachers as needed (e.g., direct phone numbers, e-mail addresses, weekly hours for families to call or meet).

• Create a families “suggestion or comment” box (electronic and onsite) for families to anonymously provide their questions, concerns and recommendations.”

The American Federation of Teachers (2004), provides additional strategies to use for two-way communication. Some of the strategies include parent newsletters, open house, curriculum nights, home visits, phone calls, school calendars, school news or information in the local newspaper, “special persons” day, PTA meetings, homework help, field days, notices and other information provided to and available at local businesses, updated websites, parent workshops (determined by needs), and communication that does not focus on mothers and fathers.

Parents, students, and schools all benefit from effective two-way communication (Shiflett, 2016). Students benefit from effective two-way communication in that the student is motivated to learn, behavior issues decrease, attendance increases, and students
have an overall more positive attitude (American Federation of Teachers, 2004). Parents benefit from effective two-way communication by helping to support the child. The parent becomes more confident in his or her ability to help and places more value on his or her involvement. Effective two-way communication also benefits teachers such as learning more about student needs, increased focus on instruction, sharing relevant information about the student, and being better equipped to assist the student academically.

**Volunteering**

Due to the impact parental involvement has on a student, many schools are actively searching for more ways to get parents involved (Meador, 2016). It has been proven time and time again that students are more successful when the parents are involved and emphasize the importance of the child’s education. Schools with higher achievement have more parental involvement. Administrators and teachers report frustration is increasing due to the lack of parental support. The likelihood of having 100 percent parental involvement is slim. However, there are things schools can do to increase the parental involvement at their school (Meador, 2016).

According to Meador (2016), there are several ways schools can increase parental involvement. In order to increase parent involvement, schools need to educate the parents, communicate, have volunteer programs and open house or game nights, and provide parents with home activities. Schools must educate parents on what parental involvement means. Most parents want to be involved, but do not know how to be involved in the child’s education. Meador (2016) continues on to say the school must educate parents not only on what parental involvement is, but the impact the involvement
has on the child. Communication is the key to increasing parental involvement. If the parent is not involved, the teacher must communicate the child’s progress in writing or a phone call to keep the parent informed. The school should provide parent volunteer programs to bring the parents in. Teachers and administrators should invite the parent into the school. Inviting the parent to participate is particularly beneficial for parents who are not typically involved. Ask the parent to read the class a story or do anything they are comfortable with. Schools should invite the parent back and give them more responsibilities each time (Meador, 2016).

Some other suggestions by Meador to get parents involved are to have open house or game nights. Not everyone will attend, but when planning events, think outside the box. Provide door prizes and other incentives to draw parents in. Meador suggested making the events something others will talk about. Making the events meaningful, will help to increase the number of community members involved. Sending home activities with the child that include parents is another way to increase parental involvement. Not all parents will participate, but it is way that the school can provide opportunities for parental involvement (Meador, 2016). One program called TIPS (Teachers Involve Parents in Schoolwork), provides information for parents and teachers on why parental involvement is effective. TIPS is a partnership between the community, family and school. The partnership’s goal is to keep everyone involved in the child’s education (Teachers involve parents in homework, n.d.).

**Learning at Home**

According to Strauss (2013), parents often times feel they have to help their child with the homework. Many parents are not able to help their child with homework. As the
child becomes older, the homework gets more challenging and more often than not, the parent does not remember, know, or understand the material the child is completing. Helping children with their homework (the content) is actually not as beneficial as one may think. A recent study of middle school students found that student outcomes were not as positive when parents were involved with helping their child with homework (Strauss, 2013). According to a study from the Department of Education, fewer parents continue to stay involved with the child’s education, as the child gets older. A report from the U.S. Department of Education cites several reasons for the decline in parental involvement as children age.

“Parents of middle school students often report feeling that children should do homework alone, and that the parents shouldn't try to help if they're not experts in the subject. The structure of many middle schools can also deter parents. Middle schools are larger and more impersonal than most elementary schools, and students may receive instruction from several teachers, meaning parents no longer have one contact in the school who knows their child well” (Editorial Projects, 2004).

Although many parents may not be able to help the child with the content of homework (USDOE, 2003), parents can be involved in other ways. Some suggestions for parents helping with homework are to set a regular time for homework, choose a place, remove distractions, provide supplies and resources, set a good example, and be interested and interesting. Walker, Hoover-Dempsy, Whetsel and Green (2004) suggested before planning for homework each school year, the parent can communicate with the teacher to determine the expectations for homework. In addition, the parent may want to
ask any questions in regards to homework to set up a structure that fits the family and the child. When planning a time for homework, the child’s schedule and the parent’s schedule must be considered. It is recommended to set a time that works well for the child and the parent (Walker, Hoover-Dempsey, Whetsel, & Green, 2004). Scheduling a time, will allow the child to complete his or her homework and plan other activities accordingly (USDOE, 2003). When choosing a location for the child to complete homework, select a place that is well lit and quiet. The child may want to decorate his or her homework area to help make homework more pleasant. Removing distractions means to turn off the television, no loud music, and other interruptions that may interfere with the child completing his or her homework.

In addition, it is recommended that the child not make or receive calls from friends unless it is in regard to homework (USDOE, 2003). Walker (2004) suggested that parents monitor and provide feedback while students are working on homework. Monitoring may include being available to the student to help with directions, answering questions, being aware of the child’s state of mind, or offering positive feedback (Walker et al., 2004). In order for students to be able to complete their homework, they will need supplies and resources (USDOE, 2003). Parents should make sure they are providing whatever supplies are needed for the child to complete homework (pens, paper, calculator, internet access). If the resources needed for the child to complete their homework are not available in the home, the parent can take the child to the local library.

The Department of Education (2003) gives other ways and examples that the parent can be involved with homework. To set a good example, the parent can read books, talk about the importance of the impacts of learning will have as an adult, and
discuss some of the tasks the parent performs at work. When doing these things, the parent is identifying the importance of education. Parents must show the child they are interested in what their child is doing. When students are working on homework, parents can ask them what they are doing and have them explain the material. Discussing homework will reinforce to the child the parent is interested in what they are doing in school. Walker (2004) says parents can help students with homework by providing feedback on their homework performance. When parents monitor the child’s performance, they become aware of the student’s capabilities. The parent can offer strategies when performance is poor and reinforce efforts when student performance is good. By doing so, parents can help build the child’s self-confidence when they know what they are capable of doing (Walker et al., 2004).

**Parenting 101: Tips and Tricks for Parents**

WBIR, in Knoxville Tennessee, aired a news segment for parents to help kids with homework (Wilhoit & Haynes, 2016). The news anchors noted that homework is challenging in most households and provided the following tips for parents with younger children to help make homework fun:

- Make homework like a game. Take subjects and make it into a type of playtime. Examples: flash cards, spelling bee that can be fun in specific subjects.
- Have a caddy full of school supplies: glue, crayons, pencils and whatever supplies the child needs.
- Provide them with a healthy snack when the student gets home from school: Some carbs, fruits, and/or vegetables.
• Provide a cool environment. An example of this is for parents to replace a chair with a yoga ball as a chair for the child to work on homework. Another idea is to make a fort for the child to complete homework in. It does not matter that the environment is cool, what matters is that the child completes his or her homework.

• Make sure there are good smells and sounds when doing homework. Play some light music without words in the background and make sure the child has good seating.

• Turn off the television during homework time.

• Take breaks every 10 to 15 minutes. Let the child run outside, do jumping jacks or something to burn energy during the homework breaks.

• Research recommends reward the child with a goodie basket, allow them to pick dinner, or add five minutes of screen time.

• Provide them with a reward when they do what they are asked to do.

Homework tips were also provided to parents with older children. The following are ways that parents with older children can support the child when working on homework:

• Ensure the child has access to a computer and the internet if it is needed.

• Provide more structure for older students like a desk or an area that is structured for them to work on homework.

• Find a study buddy: (controversial topic) Make sure to find someone who has similar classes, but monitor them working together to make sure they stay on track. A study buddy can also motivate older students to complete his or her homework.
• Allow for 30-minute breaks. During the break, allow the child to shoot basketball, walk around, eat a snack, etc. Monitor the time of the break. If the child takes too long of a break, they will lose focus.

• Focus on the quality of the work and not just the grade the student will make. Do not focus on competing with other classmates.

• Provide the child with a healthy snack after school.

• Remove cell phones. Cell phones cause distractions and interrupt the environment.

• Play a light easy music in background while the child is working on his or her homework.

• Turn the television off during homework time.

These tips and tricks are ways parents of younger and older children can help students with their homework (Haynes, & Wilhoit, 2016).

**Decision-Making**

Hernandez, former teacher, and executive director of Orange County Congregation Community Organization, understands and is committed to being a part of making decisions in schools (Hernandez, 2014). Parents may feel like they have little to no power if they are not involved in making educational decisions for their child (Hunter & McGhee, n.d.). To prevent parents from feeling as though they have no power, most Kentucky schools are required to have a council that is made up of two parents, three teachers, and the principal (Rasmussen, 2016). The council is geared to making decisions that improve student learning. Decisions include instructional practices, discipline and classroom management, and extracurricular programs. The Director of the Division of
School-Based Decision-Making, believes that parents are equal to the teachers and principals when making educational decisions.

To support parents being a part of making decisions in the child’s education, New Mexico recognizes that student success is greater when parents are a part of the decision-making process (Supporting decision making, 2006). When parents are active in the decision-making process, the student, the parent, the teacher, and the administrators all benefit. Student benefits include protection of rights, an awareness that his or her parent has been a part of the decision-making process, and will ultimately benefit from specific policies passed by parent/school committees. Families benefit from being a part of the decision making process by having a voice that affects the child, are informed of school policies, and feel ownership over the child’s school. Teachers and administrators benefit by seeing how parents can contribute, are more likely to accept parental support, and can offer training to parents on decision-making skills. Many emotions can go into the decision-making process (Martin, 2015). To assist parents in making decisions, schools should provide training on how to make decisions (Supporting decision making, 2006).

**Collaborating with the Community**

Parents are more likely to be actively involved in their child’s education when they feel like a part of the school (Nesbit, 2015). According to Nesbit (2015), when parents are a part of the school and actively involved, the teachers feel as though they are appreciated. When there is a sense of strong community, students are more likely to achieve. Schools must work with parents to help make them feel a sense of community within the school. Nesbit gave five ways that schools can build a sense of community: be welcoming, improve communication, honor different cultures, connect families from
different groups, and increase community partnerships. Spinks (2013) found that for people to feel a part of a community, there has to be a psychological justification that brings people together. Spinks (2013) showed there are four factors that have been identified to help people feel like they are part of a community. The four factors are membership, influence, integration of fulfillment of needs, and a shared emotional connection.

When thinking of creating a sense of community through membership and a shared emotional connection, one must consider what the community is going to be about and what experiences others bring (Spinks, 2013). Along the same idea, a parent group at the Central Christian School Parent Teacher Fellowship in Hutchinson, Kansas has “coffee gatherings” hosted at the school. The group offers food to families and has icebreakers to help new parents feel relaxed and get to know one another. The event is a way to help others feel welcome at the school and provide interaction between the school and parents (Nesbit, 2015).

When creating a sense of community, Spinks (2013) pointed out that influence, or a sense of mattering is important. Community members must feel like they have a say in what is going on and what they say matters. Schools must use multiple ways to communicate and provide information to parents. Greenfield Elementary PTO in New Hampshire turned to technology to provide information to parents. The PTO created a website and uses a cloud drive to store and retrieve information. The website is used to provide information to parents and to coordinate volunteers for school events. In addition, school activities and events are posted in the local and regional newspaper. By sharing information, schools are working to improve communication (Nesbit, 2015).
Integrating and fulfilling needs of community members, is a factor identified by Spinks (2013) to create a sense of community. Community members want to feel that their involvement is valued. Some may even want to be rewarded or recognized for being involved. Harrington Elementary PTO in Chelmsford, Massachusetts put together a festival event. Parents were asked to donate their favorite appetizer, set up booths that represented their country, and participate in other ways to display their country or region. By doing so, the school was able to honor different cultures. Teachers were sent formal invitations to the event. Nesbit shares that the outcome was successful and that everyone felt welcomed and many of the teachers participated in the event. When connecting families from different groups, schools must think outside of the box. As an example, Shuksan Middle School many Spanish speaking families. To integrate and fulfill the needs of the community and bring into different cultures, the PTO hosted a hot tamale night. Parents made hot tamales to sell to families as a fund-raiser for the school. The event brought in parent volunteers on a Saturday to make hot tamales for people who had pre-ordered them (Nesbit, 2015).

According to Spinks (2013), a shared emotional connection is a factor to consider when creating a sense of community. When community members go through a crisis together, they share an emotional connection. Berewick Elementary in Charlotte, North Carolina had high percentage of students who received free and reduced lunch. The school used monies received from the Lowe’s Toolbox Grant to increase community partnerships by growing a garden at the outdoor classroom. With the funds, students built and maintained six gardening beds. On Saturdays, community volunteers delivered food
to families in the community. Many of the students who received the food helped to maintain the beds throughout the school year (Nesbit, 2015).

**Summary**

The purpose of the study was to look at teacher perceptions of the efficacy of parent and community outreach strategies. The research in the literature review confirmed that student success is directly impacted by parents. The review discussed six types of involvement strategies for educators and parents. Many parents want to be involved in a child’s education; however, too often the parent does not know how to be involved. It is crucial for parents and teachers to work together and share the responsibility of supporting the child in education. When parents and teachers work together to support the child, the chances of that child being successful increases (Research Spotlight, 2015).
CHAPTER THREE
Research Methodology

Introduction

The purpose of the study was to look at teachers’ perceptions of the effectiveness of parent and community outreach strategies. Both the parent and the teacher impact student success. The research question was:

What are teachers’ perceptions of efficacy of parent and community outreach strategies? Why have teachers developed the perceptions?

This chapter describes the population and sample of participants in the study and provides a description of the instruments used for the study. Research procedures are outlined as well. Finally, data analysis methods are identified to answer the research question.

Population

The population for the study was teachers in selected schools, three elementary schools, six middle schools, and ten high schools, in a large East Tennessee school district. Schools were selected based on convenience, as the researcher is acquainted with several of the principals and teachers. The schools were diverse in population. The demographics for the schools that were selected to participate in the study are included in Table 3.1.
Table 3.1

Demographics of Schools in Study

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<tr>
<th>Grade Level</th>
<th>Number of Students</th>
<th>Number of Teachers</th>
<th>Minority Students</th>
<th>Economically Disadvantaged</th>
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The Online Teacher Perceptions Survey (Appendix A) was administered to teachers once approval was received from committee members, the University Institutional Review Board (IRB) (Appendix B), and the school system administration (Appendix C). The sample of schools selected was chosen using convenience sampling. For this study, convenience sampling was used in order to maximize the number of respondents. The researcher is acquainted with several of the principals and teachers in the schools that were selected to participate. Before sending the survey, the researcher sent an initial email to principals (Appendix D), informing them that their school had been selected to participate in the study. Principals were informed that permission had been requested from central office and surveys would be sent once approval had been received. The researcher is currently employed in the school district that was selected to
participate in this study, which helped to make collecting data from teachers in the schools convenient.

Convenience samples are defined as “choosing a sample based on availability, time, location, or ease of access” (Ary, et al., 2013, p. 674). There are advantages and disadvantages to convenience sampling (Convenience sampling, 2012). The advantages of convenience sampling are: the sampling is easy to carry out, the cost is inexpensive, and the researcher can gather useful data.

**Setting.** The school system that participated in this study is a large school system in East Tennessee. This district serves a population of almost 60,000 students and employs almost 4,000 teachers. There are 50 elementary schools, 14 middle schools, 15 high schools, and 10 special schools in the county.

**Description of Instruments**

The purpose of the study was to look at teachers’ perceptions of the efficacy of parent and community outreach strategies. In order gain understanding of the teachers’ perceptions of the effectiveness of the outreach strategies, the research used a mixed methods approach. The mixed method included a quantitative (survey) and qualitative study (semi-structured interviews). Quantitative research is “research that gathers numeric data through controlled procedures and analyses to answer predetermined questions or test hypothesis” (Ary, et al., 2013, p. 681). Quantitative research is used to examine the relationship between variables (When to use quantitative, n.d.). Qualitative research is more descriptive (What is qualitative, 2016). Qualitative data are used to determine behaviors and perceptions regarding a specific topic. The researcher used quantitative data to analyze the perception of teachers of the efficacy of parent and
community outreach strategies. To determine why teachers have developed the perceptions of the parent and community outreach strategies, the researcher used follow-up semi-structured interviews (qualitative data).

The first research question was what are teachers’ perceptions of the efficacy of parent and teacher community outreach strategies? In order to answer this question, the researcher used a survey to collect data. The survey was quantitative in nature. The original survey was created by Joyce Epstein, (Epstein, et. al, 2009). The researcher sent an email to Dr. Epstein requesting permission to use and adapt the survey (Appendix E). The researcher received approval to use and adapt the survey through a telephone conversation with Dr. Epstein followed by a confirmation email (Appendix F). During the phone conversation, Dr. Epstein and the researcher discussed the purpose of the study and permission was granted to use the survey.

The second research question was why have teachers developed these perceptions? In order to answer this question, the researcher selected and interviewed four teachers. The semi-structured interview was qualitative in nature. The four teachers were chosen to participate in this study based on the level of parent participation at their school. Two of the teachers were employed in schools with a high levels of parent participation and two were employed in schools with low levels of parent participation. The semi-structured interviews were conducted as a follow-up from the data collected through the survey.

Epstein provided several examples of outreach strategies for schools to implement to build relationships between schools, parents, and communities. The researcher selected four examples from each of the six outreach strategies (parenting, communicating,
volunteering, learning at home, decision making, and collaborating with community) defined by Epstein. The quantitative survey consisted of statements that are rated on a Likert-like Scale ranging from highly effective to not effective. The survey also included a not sure option. A quantitative survey was chosen because it “provides a measure of how many people think, feel or behave in a certain way and uses statistical analysis to determine the results” (Sheldon, 2016). The survey also included demographic information and a rating scale of one to six listing the six involvement strategies in order from least important to most important.

To further the depth of the study, the researcher used a semi-structured interview. After the surveys were administered and the results were analyzed, the researcher developed interview questions based on the data collected from the survey. The interview questions were semi-structured based on data analyzed from the results of the survey. Using interviews to collect data allows the researcher to gain insights from the perspective of the participants (McCammon, n.d.). The semi-structured interview can be focused to collect data, but also allows for flexibility of an open-ended interview. Each tool to collect data was based on the discoveries in the professional literature.

The combination of the Likert-scale, ranking system, and interviews provided a degree of triangulation to the data. Triangulation uses “multiple sources of data, multiple observers, and/or multiple methods to collect data” (Ary, et al., 2013, p. 532). Triangulation of data confirms data collected using different instruments or procedures. In addition, triangulation helps to reduce or minimize bias (Kennedy, 2009).
Data Collection Procedures

Once the researcher obtained approval for the survey from the methodologist and school district administrators, the survey was uploaded into Survey Monkey. An email that included the survey link and the approval letter (Appendix C) from the school district was sent to principals (Appendix G). Principals were asked to forward the email, which was the same text as the first page of the survey, to staff members inviting them to participate in the study. The link provided was to the Survey Monkey Website. When teachers selected the link, the Survey Monkey website opened and the first page of the survey was displayed. Participants were introduced to the purpose of the study and provided assurance that information provided remained anonymous. The introductory page provided consent to participate. The second page of the survey explained the procedures, provided context, and defined the six strategies presented by Epstein (2009). Teachers were provided with 24 parent and community examples and were given the option to select not effective, somewhat effective, effective, highly effective, or not sure for each strategy. In an effort to increase the rate of return, the researcher sent a second email asking principals to forward the survey to teachers. This provided teachers with a second opportunity to respond to the survey (Appendix H).

As teachers completed the survey, Survey Monkey calculated the percentages, mean, and standard deviation. The findings from the interviews are included in Chapter 4.

Proposed Data Analysis

The data from the survey were collected through Survey Monkey. The survey was a Likert-type survey that included the following intervals: (1) Not effective, (2) Somewhat Effective, (3) Effective (4) Highly Effective and (5) Not Sure. Once the data
were collected, the researcher analyzed the data in Survey Monkey for the responses in each section of the survey. Survey Monkey calculated the statistical information, including the mean and standard deviation.

Interviews with four teachers were used to discuss the perceptions of teachers on the efficacy of parent and community involvement strategies. To analyze the data, McCammon (n.d.) recommends the researcher look for insights and patterns in the responses of the participants. The research question for the interview data analysis: why have teachers developed the perceptions? The researcher used a semi-structured interview to determine why have these perceptions been developed of the efficacy of parent and community outreach strategies. Data collected from the interviews can be found in Chapter Four. The researcher looked for trends and patterns as it related to teachers’ perceptions.

**Summary**

The purpose of the study was to look at teachers’ perceptions of the efficacy of parent and community outreach strategies. The collection of data was quantitative and qualitative in nature. The researcher used a survey to collect data on teachers’ perceptions of the efficacy of outreach strategies and conducted a survey to look for trends and patterns as to why teachers have developed the perceptions. The procedure was a mixed method of data collection. Chapter Three included the introduction, population, description of instruments, data collection procedures, proposed data analysis and a summary. The results of the study and the analysis of data are presented in Chapter Four.
CHAPTER FOUR

Results of the Data Analysis

Introduction

Parents and teachers working together is the best tip for schools according to Amanda Morin (2016). The mutual sharing of information from both the teacher and the parent helps both sides to better understand the child. The teacher, parent, and student all benefit when parents and teachers work together. The purpose of this study was to look at teachers’ perceptions of the efficacy of parent and community outreach strategies. By examining the perceptions of teachers, schools will have a better understanding of the strategies promote the involvement of parents in a child’s education.

This study examined teachers’ perceptions of the efficacy of parent and community outreach strategies. Teachers in a large school district in East Tennessee were asked to participate in the study by completing a survey through Survey Monkey. The Online Teacher Perceptions Survey (Appendix A) was adapted from Dr. Joyce Epstein (Epstein, et. al, 2009) and administered to teachers.

The survey administered to teachers included 24 parent and community examples, a ranking section, and a demographic section. Teachers indicated the level of effectiveness of 24 examples that were placed within the six types of parent and community involvement strategies (parenting, communicating, volunteering, learning at home, decision-making, and collaborating with the community). Each example was rated using a Likert-type scale, ranging from not effective to highly effective, with the added option of not sure. The Likert-type items were followed by teachers ranking the six parent and community strategies (parenting, communicating, volunteering, learning at
home, decision-making, and collaborating with the community) in order from most effective to least effective. The teacher demographic information collected from the survey included gender, age, level of education, number of years taught, and the grade level currently taught.

**Demographic Data**

The *Online Teacher Perception Survey* was emailed to three elementary schools, six middle schools, and ten high schools. Because the survey was anonymous, there was no definitive number of teachers that received the survey. The number of teachers that responded to the online survey was 191.

The demographics section was included at the bottom of the survey. The first item in the demographics section was for participants to select their gender (Table 4.1). The total number of female participants in the study was 139 (73%). The total number of male participants in the study was 52 (27%).

Table 4.1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant Gender</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Participants then selected their age range from the following: 20-29, 30-39, 40-49, 50-59, and over 60 (Table 4.2). There were 20 participants between the ages of 20-29 (11%), 51 between the ages of 30-39 (27%), 58 between the ages of 40-49 were (30%), 48 between the ages of 50-59 (25%), and 14 of the participants were 60 or older (7%).
In the next section, participants selected their level of education (Table 4.3).

There were 47 participants that have earned a Bachelor’s degree (25%), 94 participants have earned a Master’s degree (49%), 15 participants have earned a Master’s degree plus 30 graduate hours (8%), 30 participants have earned an Education Specialist Degree (16%), and 5 participants have earned a Doctorate degree (2%).

Table 4.3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant Level of Education</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor’s</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master’s</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master’s plus 30</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education Specialist</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctorate</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Participants then selected the number of years taught (Table 4.4). Of the participants, 23 had 0-3 years teaching experience (12%), 49 participants had 4-10 of teaching experience (26%), 35 participants had 11-15 years teaching experience (18%), 30 participants had 16-20 years teaching experience (16%), and 54 participants had been teaching 20 years or longer (28%).

Table 4.2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant Age</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age Range</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-29</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-39</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40-49</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-59</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60 or Older</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The final demographic response was the grade level currently taught (Table 4.5).

The total number of participants who taught grades K-5 was 35 (18%), 55 taught grades 6-8 (29%), and 101 taught grades 9-12 (53%).

This study included two research questions. Research question 1 was: What are teachers’ perceptions of the efficacy of parent and community outreach strategies?

Research question two was: Why have teachers developed these perceptions? To answer question one, teachers were provided with four examples of each type of parent and community involvement strategy (parenting, communicating, volunteering, learning at home, decision making, and collaborating with community), totaling 24 examples. For each example within a strategy, teachers selected from the following responses: not effective, somewhat effective, effective, highly effective, or not sure.

**Teachers’ Perceptions Results**

The first parent and community involvement strategy focused on parenting.

Within the parenting strategy, there were four parenting examples. Teachers selected
their perception of the level of effectiveness of each example as effective, somewhat effective, effective, highly effective, or not sure (Table 4.6).

Table 4.6

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teachers’ Perceptions of Parenting Strategy</th>
<th>Not Effective</th>
<th>Somewhat Effective</th>
<th>Effective</th>
<th>Highly Effective</th>
<th>Not Sure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conduct workshops or provide information for parents on child development</td>
<td>10.99%</td>
<td>34.03%</td>
<td>34.03%</td>
<td>12.04%</td>
<td>8.90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide information, training, and assistance to all families who want it or who need it</td>
<td>2.09%</td>
<td>26.70%</td>
<td>45.03%</td>
<td>22.51%</td>
<td>3.66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Produce information for families that is clear, usable, and linked to children's success in school</td>
<td>2.09%</td>
<td>24.61%</td>
<td>47.12%</td>
<td>24.61%</td>
<td>1.57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sponsor home visiting programs or neighborhood meetings to help families understand schools and to help schools understand families</td>
<td>5.24%</td>
<td>21.47%</td>
<td>33.51%</td>
<td>25.65%</td>
<td>14.14%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The first parenting strategy example was to conduct workshops or provide information for parents on child development. The majority (80.1%) of teachers’ perceptions of the effectiveness were overall effective. This was indicated by selections within the range of highly effective, effective, and somewhat effective, which was 153 of the 191 participants. Of the responses, 10.99 percent (21 of the 191 participants) indicate a perception of this example as not effective. Seventeen of the 191 teachers (8.90%) were not sure of the level of effectiveness of this example. The mean level of effectiveness was 2.74 (SD=1.09), which indicated the majority of participants perceived this example as effective.
The second parenting strategy example was to provide information, training, and assistance to all families who want it or who need it. Teachers’ perceptions of the effectiveness of this example were effective overall. The percentage of teachers that perceived this example as effective is 94.24 (highly effective, effective, and somewhat effective), which was indicated by 180 of the 191 participants. Four of 191 teachers perceive this example as not effective (2.09%). Of the responses, 3.66 percent (7 of 191) of teachers were not sure of the level of effectiveness of this example. The mean effective level was 2.99 (SD=.85), which indicated that the majority of teachers’ perceived this example effective.

The third parenting strategy example was to produce information for families that is clear, usable, and linked to children's success in school. Teachers’ perceptions of the effectiveness of this example were effective overall. The percentage of teachers that perceived this example as effective was 96.34 (highly effective, effective, and somewhat effective), which was 184 of the 191 participants. Only 2.09 percent (4 of 191) of teachers perceive this example as not effective. Of the responses 1.57 percent (3 of 191) of teachers were not sure of the level of effectiveness of this example. The mean level of effectiveness was 2.99 (SD=.80), which indicated that most teachers’ perceptions of this example were effective.

The last parenting strategy example was to sponsor home visiting programs or neighborhood meetings to help families understand schools and to help schools understand families. Teachers’ perceptions of the effectiveness of this example were overall effective. The percentage of teachers that perceived this example as effective was 80.64 (highly effective, effective, and somewhat effective), which was 154 of the 191
participants. The percentage of teachers that perceived this example as not effective was 5.24, which included 10 of the 191 participants. The responses to this example indicated that 14.14 percent (27 of 191) of teachers were not sure of the level of effectiveness. The mean effective level was 3.22 (SD=1.09), which indicated that most teachers’ perceptions of this example were effective.

The second parent and community involvement strategy focused on communicating. Within the communicating strategy, there were four communicating examples. Teachers were asked to rate each example effectiveness as effective, somewhat effective, effective, highly effective, or not sure (Table 4.7).

Table 4.7

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teachers’ Perceptions of Communicating Strategy</th>
<th>Not Effective</th>
<th>Somewhat Effective</th>
<th>Effective</th>
<th>Highly Effective</th>
<th>Not Sure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conduct a formal conference with every parent at least once a year</td>
<td>8.38%</td>
<td>25.65%</td>
<td>37.17%</td>
<td>25.65%</td>
<td>3.14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Establish clear two-way channels for communications from home to school and from school to home</td>
<td>2.09%</td>
<td>13.61%</td>
<td>37.70%</td>
<td>46.60%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Send home folders of student work weekly or monthly for parent review and comment</td>
<td>12.04%</td>
<td>37.70%</td>
<td>25.65%</td>
<td>20.42%</td>
<td>4.19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Produce a regular school newsletter with up-to-date information about the school, special events, organizations, meetings, and parenting tips</td>
<td>7.33%</td>
<td>37.70%</td>
<td>36.13%</td>
<td>17.28%</td>
<td>1.57%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The first example of a communicating strategy was to conduct a formal conference with every parent at least once a year. Teachers’ perceptions of the
effectiveness of this example were overall effective. The percentage of teachers that perceived the strategy as effective was 88.47 (highly effective, effective, and somewhat effective), which was selected by 169 of the 191 participants. Of the responses, 8.38 percent (16 of the 191 participants) indicated a perception of this example as not effective. Responses from 3.14 percent of teachers (6 of 191) reflected that respondents were not sure of the level of effectiveness of this example. The mean level of effectiveness was 2.90 (SD=.98), which indicated the majority of participants perceive this example as effective.

The second example of a communicating strategy was the effectiveness to establish clear two-way channels for communications from home to school and from school to home. Teachers’ perceptions of this example were overall effective. The percentage of teachers that perceived the strategy as effective is 97.91 (highly effective, effective, and somewhat effective), which was indicated by 187 of the 191 participants. Of the responses, 2.09 percent (4 of the 191 participants) indicated a perception of this example as not effective. There were no responses (0 of 191) from teachers that were not sure of the level of effectiveness of this example. The mean level of effectiveness was 3.29 (SD=.78), which indicated the majority of participants perceived this example as effective.

The third example of a communicating strategy was the effectiveness to send home folders of student work weekly or monthly for parent review and comment. Teachers’ perceptions of this example were overall effective. The percentage of teachers that perceived the strategy as effective was 83.77 (highly effective, effective, and somewhat effective), which included 160 of the 191 participants. Of the responses, 12.04
percent (23 of the 191 participants) indicated a perception of this example as not effective. There were 4.19 percent of teachers (8 of 191) who were not sure of the level of effectiveness of this example. The mean level of effectiveness was 2.67 (SD=1.06), which indicated the majority of participants perceived this example as effective.

The last example of a communicating strategy was to produce a regular school newsletter with up-to-date information about the school, special events, organizations, meetings, and parenting tips. Teachers’ perceptions of the effectiveness of this example were overall effective. The percentage of teachers that perceived the strategy as effective was 83.77 (highly effective, effective, and somewhat effective), which was indicated by 174 of the 191 participants. Of the responses, 7.33 percent (14 of the 191 participants) indicated a perception of this example as not effective. There were 1.57 percent of teachers (3 of 191) who were not sure of the level of effectiveness of this example. The mean level of effectiveness was 2.68 (SD=.90), which indicated the majority of participants perceived this example as effective.

The third parent and community involvement strategy focused on volunteering. Within the volunteering strategy, there were four volunteering examples. Teachers were asked to rate each example effectiveness as effective, somewhat effective, effective, highly effective, or not sure (Table 4.8).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Examples</th>
<th>Not Effective</th>
<th>Somewhat Effective</th>
<th>Effective</th>
<th>Highly Effective</th>
<th>Not Sure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Provide a parent/family room for volunteers and family members to work, meet, and access resources about parenting, childcare, tutoring, and other things that affect their children</td>
<td>7.33%</td>
<td>31.41%</td>
<td>31.41%</td>
<td>17.28%</td>
<td>12.57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create flexible volunteering and school event schedules, enabling parents who work to participate</td>
<td>2.09%</td>
<td>26.18%</td>
<td>40.84%</td>
<td>25.65%</td>
<td>5.24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recognize volunteers for their time and effort</td>
<td>3.66%</td>
<td>13.09%</td>
<td>46.07%</td>
<td>35.08%</td>
<td>2.09%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encourage families and the community to be involved with the school in a variety of ways (assisting in classroom, giving talks, monitoring halls, leading activities, etc.)</td>
<td>4.71%</td>
<td>21.47%</td>
<td>42.93%</td>
<td>27.75%</td>
<td>3.14%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The first example of a volunteering strategy was to provide a parent/family room for volunteers and family members to work, meet, and access resources about parenting, childcare, tutoring, and other things that affect their children. Teachers’ perceptions of the effectiveness of this example were overall effective. The percentage of teachers that perceive the strategy as effective was 80.1 (highly effective, effective, and somewhat effective), which was 123 of the 191 participants. Of the responses, 7.33 percent (14 of the 191 participants) indicated a perception of this example as not effective. There were 12.57 percent of teachers (24 of 191) who were not sure of the level of effectiveness of
this example. The mean level of effectiveness was 2.96 (SD=1.13), which indicated the majority of participants perceived this example as effective.

The second example of a volunteering strategy was to create flexible volunteering and school event schedules, enabling parents who work to participate. Teachers’ perceptions of the effectiveness of this example were overall effective. The percentage of teachers that perceived the strategy as effective was 92.67 (highly effective, effective, and somewhat effective), which included 177 of the 191 participants. Of the responses, 2.09 percent (4 of the 191 participants) indicated a perception of this example as not effective. There were 5.24 percent of teachers (10 of 191) who were not sure of the level of effectiveness of this example. The mean level of effectiveness was 3.06 (SD=.09), which indicated the majority of participants perceived this example as effective.

The third example of a volunteering strategy was to recognize volunteers for their time and effort. Teachers’ perceptions of this example were overall effective. The percentage of teachers that perceived the strategy as effective is 94.24 (highly effective, effective, and somewhat effective), which was 180 of the 191 participants. Of the responses, 3.66 percent (7 of the 191 participants) indicated a perception of this example as not effective. There were 2.09 percent of teachers (4 of 191) who were not sure of the level of effectiveness of this example. The mean level of effectiveness was 3.19 (SD=.82), which indicated the majority of participants perceived this example as effective.

The last example of a volunteering strategy was to encourage families and the community to be involved with the school in a variety of ways (assisting in classroom, giving talks, monitoring halls, leading activities, etc.). Teachers’ perceptions of the
effectiveness of this example were overall effective. The percentage of teachers that perceived the strategy as effective was 92.15 (highly effective, effective, and somewhat effective), which was 176 of the 191 participants. Of the responses, 4.71 percent (9 of the 191 participants) indicated a perception of this example as not effective. There were 3.14 percent of teachers (6 of 191) who were not sure of the level of effectiveness of this example. The mean level of effectiveness was 3.03 (SD=.90), which indicated the majority of participants perceived this example as effective.

The fourth parent and community involvement strategy focused on learning at home. Within the learning at home strategy, there were four learning at home examples. Teachers were asked to rate each example effectiveness as effective, somewhat effective, effective, highly effective, or not sure (Table 4.9).

Table 4.9

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teachers’ Perceptions of Learning at Home Strategy</th>
<th>Not Effective</th>
<th>Somewhat Effective</th>
<th>Effective</th>
<th>Highly Effective</th>
<th>Not Sure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Provide information to families on how to monitor and discuss schoolwork at home</td>
<td>5.76%</td>
<td>36.65%</td>
<td>40.31%</td>
<td>15.18%</td>
<td>2.09%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide ongoing and specific information to parents on how to assist students with skills that they need to improve</td>
<td>4.71%</td>
<td>30.89%</td>
<td>41.88%</td>
<td>19.90%</td>
<td>2.62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make parents aware of the importance of reading with their child at home</td>
<td>6.28%</td>
<td>33.51%</td>
<td>26.70%</td>
<td>32.46%</td>
<td>1.05%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schedule regular interactive homework that requires students to demonstrate what they are learning with a family member</td>
<td>12.04%</td>
<td>34.55%</td>
<td>31.41%</td>
<td>14.66%</td>
<td>7.33%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The first learning at home example was to provide information to families on how to monitor and discuss schoolwork at home. Teachers’ perceptions of the effectiveness of this example were overall effective. The percentage of teachers that perceived the strategy as effective is 92.14 (highly effective, effective, and somewhat effective), which was 176 of the 191 participants. Of the responses, 5.76 percent (11 of the 191 participants) indicated a perception of this example as not effective. There were 2.09 percent of teachers (4 of 191) who were not sure of the level of effectiveness of this example. The mean level of effectiveness was 2.71 (SD=.87), which indicated the majority of participants perceived this example as effective.

The second learning at home example was to provide ongoing and specific information to parents on how to assist students with skills that they need to improve. Teachers’ perceptions of the effectiveness of this example were overall effective. The percentage of teachers that perceived the strategy as effective was 92.67 (highly effective, effective, and somewhat effective), which included 177 of the 191 participants. Of the responses, 4.71 percent (9 of the 191 participants) indicated a perception of this example as not effective. There were 2.62 percent of teachers (5 of 191) who were not sure of the level of effectiveness of this example. The mean level of effectiveness was 2.85 (SD=.88), which indicated the majority of participants perceived this example as effective.

The third learning at home example was to make parents aware of the importance of reading with their child at home. Teachers’ perceptions of the effectiveness of this example were overall effective. The percentage of teachers that perceived the strategy as effective was 92.67 (highly effective, effective, and somewhat effective), which was
indicated by 177 of the 191 participants. Of the responses, 6.28 percent (12 of the 191 participants) indicate a perception of this example as not effective. There were 1.05 percent of teachers (2 of 191) who were not sure of the level of effectiveness of this example. The mean level of effectiveness was 2.88 (SD=.97), which indicated the majority of participants perceived this example as effective.

The last learning at home example was to schedule regular interactive homework that requires students to demonstrate what they are learning with a family member. Teachers’ perceptions of the effectiveness of this example were overall effective. The percentage of teachers that perceive the strategy as effective was 80.62 (highly effective, effective, and somewhat effective), which was indicated by 154 of the 191 participants. Of the responses, 12.04 percent (23 of the 191 participants) indicate a perception of this example as not effective. There were 7.33 percent of teachers (14 of 191) who were not sure of the level of effectiveness of this example. The mean level of effectiveness was 2.71 (SD=1.09), which indicated the majority of participants perceived this example as effective.

The fifth parent and community involvement strategy focused on decision-making. Within the decision-making strategy, there were four decision-making examples. Teachers were asked to rate each example effectiveness as effective, somewhat effective, effective, highly effective, or not sure (Table 4.10).
Table 4.10

**Teachers’ Perceptions of Decision-Making Strategy**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Examples</th>
<th>Not Effective</th>
<th>Somewhat Effective</th>
<th>Effective</th>
<th>Highly Effective</th>
<th>Not Sure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Have an active PTA, PTO, or other parent organization</td>
<td>2.62%</td>
<td>26.70%</td>
<td>37.70%</td>
<td>32.46%</td>
<td>.52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have parents represented on district-level advisory council and committees</td>
<td>5.76%</td>
<td>24.08%</td>
<td>42.41%</td>
<td>17.80%</td>
<td>9.95%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop ways to link all families with parent organizations</td>
<td>6.28%</td>
<td>22.51%</td>
<td>42.41%</td>
<td>19.37%</td>
<td>9.42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Involve parents in revising the school/district curricula</td>
<td>23.04%</td>
<td>28.80%</td>
<td>24.08%</td>
<td>12.04%</td>
<td>12.04%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The first example of the decision-making strategy was to have an active PTA, PTO, or other parent organization. Teachers’ perceptions of this example were overall effective. The percentage of teachers that perceived the strategy as effective is 96.86 (highly effective, effective, and somewhat effective), which was 185 of the 191 participants. Of the responses, 2.62 percent (5 of the 191 participants) indicated a perception of this example as not effective. One teacher (.52%) was not sure of the level of effectiveness for this example. The mean level of effectiveness was 3.02 (SD=.85), which indicated the majority of participants perceived this example as effective.

The second example of a decision-making strategy was to have parents represented on district-level advisory council and committees. Teachers’ perceptions of the effectiveness of this example were overall effective. The percentage of teachers that perceived the strategy as effective is 84.29 (highly effective, effective, and somewhat effective), which was 161 of the 191 participants. Of the responses, 5.76 percent (11 of
the 191 participants) indicated a perception of this example as not effective. There were 9.95 percent of teachers (19 of 191) who were not sure of the level of effectiveness of this example. The mean level of effectiveness was 3.02 (SD=1.02), which indicated the majority of participants perceived this example as effective.

The third example of a decision-making strategy was to develop ways to link all families with parent organizations. Teachers’ perceptions of the effectiveness of this example were overall effective. The percentage of teachers that perceived the strategy as effective was 82.72 (highly effective, effective, and somewhat effective), which was 161 of the 191 participants. Of the responses, 6.28 percent (12 of the 191 participants) indicated a perception of this example as not effective. There were 9.42 percent of teachers (18 of 191) who were not sure of the level of effectiveness of this example. The mean level of effectiveness was 3.03 (SD=1.02), which indicated the majority of participants perceived this example as effective.

The last example of a decision-making strategy was to involve parents in revising the school/district curricula. Teachers’ perceptions of the effectiveness were overall effective, but the data indicated this example is less effective than all previous examples. The percentage of teachers that perceived the strategy as effective is 64.92 (highly effective, effective, and somewhat effective), which included 124 of the 191 participants. Of the responses, 23.04 percent (44 of the 191 participants) indicated a perception of this example as not effective. There were 12.04 percent of teachers 23 of 191) who were not sure of the level of effectiveness of this example. The mean level of effectiveness was 2.61 (SD=1.29), which indicated the majority of participants perceive this example as effective.
The sixth parent and community involvement strategy focused on collaborating with the community. Within the collaborating with the community strategy, there were four collaborating with the community examples. Teachers were asked to rate each example effectiveness as effective, somewhat effective, effective, highly effective, or not sure (Table 4.11).

### Table 4.11

**Teachers’ Perceptions of Collaborating with Community Strategy**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Examples</th>
<th>Not Effective</th>
<th>Somewhat Effective</th>
<th>Effective</th>
<th>Highly Effective</th>
<th>Not Sure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Provide a community resource directory for parents and students with information on community services, programs, and agencies</td>
<td>2.09%</td>
<td>30.89%</td>
<td>43.46%</td>
<td>16.75%</td>
<td>6.81%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work with local businesses, industries, and community organizations on programs to enhance student skills and learning</td>
<td>1.57%</td>
<td>19.90%</td>
<td>45.55%</td>
<td>29.32%</td>
<td>3.66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offer after-school programs for students with support from community businesses, agencies, and volunteers</td>
<td>2.62%</td>
<td>18.32%</td>
<td>39.27%</td>
<td>34.55%</td>
<td>5.24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utilize community resources, such as businesses, libraries, parks, and museums to enhance the learning environment</td>
<td>2.62%</td>
<td>19.37%</td>
<td>41.88%</td>
<td>32.46%</td>
<td>3.66%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The first collaborating with the community example was to provide a community resource directory for parents and students with information on community services, programs, and agencies. Teachers’ perceptions of the effectiveness this example were
overall effective. The percentage of teachers that perceive the strategy as effective was 91.1 (highly effective, effective, and somewhat effective), which was 174 of the 191 participants. Of the responses, 2.09 percent (4 of the 191 participants) indicated a perception of this example as not effective. There were 6.81 percent of teachers (13 of 191) who were not sure of the level of effectiveness of this example. The mean level of effectiveness was 2.95 (SD=.91), which indicated the majority of participants perceived this example as effective.

The second collaborating with the community example was to work with local businesses, industries, and community organizations on programs to enhance student skills and learning. Teachers’ perceptions of the effectiveness of this example were overall effective. The percentage of teachers that perceived the strategy as effective was 94.77 (highly effective, effective, and somewhat effective), which included 181 of the 191 participants. Of the responses, 1.57 percent (3 of the 191 participants) indicated a perception of this example as not effective. There were 3.66 percent of teachers (7 of 191) who were not sure of the level of effectiveness of this example. The mean level of effectiveness was 3.14 (SD=.83), which indicated the majority of participants perceived this example as effective.

The third collaborating with the community example was to offer after-school programs for students with support from community businesses, agencies, and volunteers. Teachers’ perceptions of the effectiveness of this example were overall effective. The percentage of teachers that perceive the strategy as effective was 92.14 (highly effective, effective, and somewhat effective), which was 176 of the 191 participants. Of the responses, 2.62 percent (5 of the 191 participants) indicated a
perception of this example as not effective. There were 5.24 percent of teachers (10 of 191) who were not sure of the level of effectiveness of this example. The mean level of effectiveness was 3.21 (SD=.89), which indicated the majority of participants perceived this example as effective.

The last example of the collaborating with the community was to utilize community resources, such as businesses, libraries, parks, and museums to enhance the learning environment. Teachers’ perceptions of the effectiveness of this example were overall effective. The percentage of teachers that perceive the strategy as effective was 93.71 (highly effective, effective, and somewhat effective), which included 179 of the 191 participants. Of the responses, 2.62 percent (5 of the 191 participants) indicated a perception of this example as not effective. There were 3.66 percent of teachers (7 of 191) who were not sure of the level of effectiveness of this example. The mean level of effectiveness was 3.15 (SD=.86), which indicated the majority of participants perceived this example as effective.

After participants finished selecting the level of effectiveness for each strategy, each participant ranked the six strategies (parenting, communicating, volunteering, learning at home, decision-making, and collaborating with the community) in order from the most effective to the least effective (Table 4.12).
Table 4.12

*Teachers’ Perceptions of Strategies*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parenting</td>
<td>49.74%</td>
<td>18.32%</td>
<td>6.28%</td>
<td>8.90%</td>
<td>7.85%</td>
<td>8.90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communicating</td>
<td>28.80%</td>
<td>37.70%</td>
<td>18.32%</td>
<td>8.90%</td>
<td>3.14%</td>
<td>3.14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning at Home</td>
<td>4.71%</td>
<td>17.28%</td>
<td>29.32%</td>
<td>18.85%</td>
<td>15.18%</td>
<td>14.66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decision-Making</td>
<td>3.66%</td>
<td>7.33%</td>
<td>16.75%</td>
<td>23.56%</td>
<td>22.51%</td>
<td>26.18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaborating with the Community</td>
<td>9.95%</td>
<td>9.42%</td>
<td>17.70%</td>
<td>16.23%</td>
<td>25.13%</td>
<td>21.47%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Of the six strategies, parenting was ranked as the most effective strategy. The percentage of teachers that perceived parenting as the most effective strategy was 49.74 percent, which included 95 of the 191 participants. The mean level of this strategy being ranked the most effective was 2.34 (SD=1.71). Communicating ranked as the second most effective strategy among 28.80 percent of the participants (55 of 191), with a mean of 2.29 (SD=1.24). Collaborating with the community was ranked third among 9.95 percent of the participants (19 of 191), with a mean of 4.02 (SD=1.60). Learning at home was ranked as the fourth most effective strategy among 4.71 percent of participants (9 of 191), with a mean of 3.66 (SD=1.43). Participants (7 of 191) ranked decision-making as the fifth most effective strategy, with a mean of 4.32 (SD=1.40). The strategy that teachers perceived as the least effective was volunteering. The percentage of teachers that perceive volunteering as the least effective strategy was 3.14%, which was indicated by six of the 191 participants. This strategy had a mean of 4.37 (SD=1.40).
Semi-Structured Interviews

In order to answer research question two, why have teachers developed these perceptions, the researcher conducted semi-structured interviews. After teachers completed the survey, the researcher analyzed the data to develop questions for the semi-structured interviews. Four teachers were selected to participate in the interviews. Teachers were selected based on the years of experience, grade level taught, schools employed at, and levels of parent involvement. One teacher was selected from an elementary school with high parent involvement. A second teacher was selected from a middle school with low parent involvement. The third and fourth teachers were selected from two different high schools, one with a high level of parent involvement and one with a low level of parent involvement. Each of the interviewees self-identified the school of employment as either high or low parent involvement.

For each interview, teachers were provided with the list of 24 examples from the Online Teacher Perceptions Survey (Appendix A). The 24 examples were:

1. Conduct workshops or provide information for parents on child development.

2. Provide information, training, and assistance to all families who want it or who need it.

3. Produce information for families that is clear, usable, and linked to children's success in school.

4. Sponsor home visiting programs or neighborhood meetings to help families understand schools and to help schools understand families.

5. Conduct a formal conference with every parent at least once a year.
6. Establish clear two-way channels for communications from home to school and from school to home.

7. Send home folders of student work weekly or monthly for parent review and comment.

8. Produce a regular school newsletter with up-to-date information about the school, special events, organizations, meetings, and parenting tips.

9. Provide a parent/family room for volunteers and family members to work, meet, and access resources about parenting, childcare, tutoring, and other things that affect their children.

10. Create flexible volunteering and school event schedules, enabling parents who work to participate.

11. Recognize volunteers for their time and effort.

12. Encourage families and the community to be involved with the school in a variety of ways (assisting in classroom, giving talks, monitoring halls, leading activities, etc.).

13. Provide information to families on how to monitor and discuss schoolwork at home.

14. Provide ongoing and specific information to parents on how to assist students with skills that they need to improve.

15. Make parents aware of the importance of reading with their child at home.

16. Schedule regular interactive homework that requires students to demonstrate what they are learning with a family member.

17. Have an active PTA, PTO, or other parent organization.
18. Have parents represented on district-level advisory council and committees.

19. Develop ways to link all families with parent organizations.

20. Involve parents in revising the school/district curricula.

21. Provide a community resource directory for parents and students with information on community services, programs, and agencies.

22. Work with local businesses, industries, and community organizations on programs to enhance student skills and learning.

23. Offer after-school programs for students with support from community businesses, agencies, and volunteers.

24. Utilize community resources, such as businesses, libraries, parks, and museums to enhance the learning environment.

Each of the four teachers was asked to identify examples currently in use or previously implemented. Once the teachers had identified the strategies implemented and not implemented, the researcher asked why they do or do not use each strategy.

After the researcher recorded the responses, the researcher shared the results of the teachers’ perceptions. The data revealed that teachers who participated in the study perceived all 24 examples as effective. The four teachers were then asked if all 24 examples are perceived to be effective, why is there a gap in implementation? These questions were then followed by a brief discussion. According to the online teacher survey, parenting was perceived as the most effective strategy. Participants were then asked why are only certain examples implemented if teachers have perceived parenting as the most effective strategy?
Interview Results

Teacher 1

Teacher 1 was from an elementary school with high parent involvement (self-identified). This teacher has 17 years of experience. Teacher 1 has provided instruction for grades Pre-K-, Kindergarten, and first grade students and holds a Bachelor’s degree. Teacher 1 has served in two school systems in two states.

Teacher 1 has worked in schools with low and high levels of parent involvement. This teacher believed the 24 examples are overall effective and has implemented all of the examples over a period of time. However, Teacher 1 believed there was a gap among teachers not using these examples because “they only work when parents want to be a part of the child’s education” (Teacher 1, personal communication, December 12, 2016). Teacher 1 believes that when parents want to be involved, then they will be. Socio-economic status, parent(s) education level, and family class played a role in the level of parent involvement according to Teacher 1.

The parenting strategy was perceived the most effective according to the teacher online survey. Teacher 1 implemented only one example of the four parenting examples. When Teacher 1 was asked why only one of the four are implemented, the response was “Parents are students’ first teachers. The parents at my school know what students need to be successful. The parents at my school know how to be parents. Parents want to know what is going on at school and the different areas help is needed.” (Teacher 1, personal communication, December 12, 2016).
Teacher 2

Teacher 2 was from a middle school with low parent involvement (self-identified). This teacher has 15 years of experience and has provided instruction for grades K-8, except 2nd grade. Teacher 2 holds an Education Specialist degree and has served in four counties in two states.

“Use what works to help you connect to parents and students,” according to Teacher 2 (Teacher 2, personal communication, December 13, 2016). Teacher 2 did not believe there was enough time to implement all the strategies, even though each one has been perceived as effective. Teacher 2 believed time was one of the biggest factors in implementing some of these into practice.

Teacher 3

Teacher 3 was employed in a high school with low parent involvement (self-identified). This teacher has 33 years of experience and holds an Education Specialist. Teacher 3 was a former engineer. This teacher has provided instruction for students in grades 9-12. Teacher 3 has served in one school system.

Knowing your parents is important, according to Teacher 3 (Teacher 3, personal communication, December 15, 2016). Involving parents is important, but Teacher 3 believed that you have to have the right person to be able to connect to the parents at each school. Teacher 3 did not perceive every example as beneficial for every school. This teacher worked in a school that received Title One funds. Because of funds received, this school was required to implement all of the parenting and community outreach strategies. “The strategies are beneficial, but not all work for every school. For example, what works
for School A might not work for School B.” This teacher believed the same is true for parents. What works for one might not work the other.

**Teacher 4**

Teacher 4 was employed in a high school with high parent involvement (self-identified). This teacher has 13 years of experience and holds an Education Specialist degree. Teacher 4 has provided instruction for students in grades 8-12, and has served in five school systems in four states.

In addition to teacher knowledge of students, teacher knowledge of parents is also important as well, according to Teacher 4 (Teacher 4, personal communication, December 13, 2016). Teacher 4 believed that schools and teachers should adapt what they do to meet the needs of teachers and students. When the teacher knows the parents, the teacher will be able to implement strategies that will be effective to help the student be successful. Teacher 4 believes schools should implement strategies that are beneficial for their parent and student population.

Each teacher was asked a set of questions, and follow-up questions were developed based on teacher responses. The responses to each question are below:

**What examples do you use?**

*Teacher 1*: 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 22, and 24.

*Teacher 2*: 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 10, 11, 12, 14, 15, 16, 17, 23, and 24.

*Teacher 3*: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, and 24.

*Teacher 4*: 5, 6, 8, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 19, and 23.
Why do you use them?

Teacher 1: “Because they work” (Teacher 1, personal communication, December 12, 2016).

Teacher 2: “To make connections with parents and student. Also to help the student be successful” (Teacher 2, personal communication, December 13, 2016).

Teacher 3: “My school was a Title One school. We were required to use all of these because of the funding” (Teacher 3, personal communication, December 15, 2016).

Teacher 4: “I believe the examples I use help to make the students more successful. They are also quicker to implement than some of the others” (Teacher 4, personal communication, December 13, 2016).

Why do you not use the other examples?

Teacher 1: “The examples are not needed at my school. For example: we do not have an after school program for kids because our parents pick their kids up right after school. Our attendance is high, so home visits are not needed” (Teacher 1, personal communication, December 12, 2016).

Teacher 2: “Some of the examples were more about community and stakeholders, which did not pertain to my classroom. I try to start small and work my way out to the stakeholders, but I never have enough time. I have the desire, just not enough time” (Teacher 2, personal communication, December 13, 2016).

Teacher 3: “We used them all because we were required to. Some worked, some didn’t work” (Teacher 3, personal communication, December 15, 2016).

Teacher 4: “Some of the strategies seem like they are more of a school strategy instead of teacher strategy. Each strategy used by teachers needs to be specific to their
parents and to their students. Teachers must know their parents to know which strategies are the most effective” (Teacher 4, personal communication, December 13, 2016).

**Why do you believe there is a gap among teachers on implementing the examples?**

*Teacher 1:* “I believe there is a gap because of my school population and parent participation. My school has high levels of parent involvement. Most of the parents are educated, make a decent living, and understand what students’ needs are in school” (Teacher 1, personal communication, December 12, 2016).

*Teacher 2:* “Teachers prioritize and some of these examples do not make the to-do list. Teachers work to balance time. To get stakeholders involved, teachers stay after school. If you are already staying after school for events, then there is no time to stay after to meet with the community too. Basically, there is a gap due to conflicts of time or ability to communicate on a regular basis” (Teacher 2, personal communication, December 13, 2016).

*Teacher 3:* “Teachers may believe these strategies work, but they don’t want to put the time and effort into implementing them. These strategies might be effective, but you have to have the right person implementing them for parents have to feel comfortable. Take the education jargon out, and speak to parents in layman’s terms” (Teacher 3, personal communication, December 15, 2016).

*Teacher 4:* “Teachers might not know about some of these examples. Even if they know about them, there is not enough time to implement them all” (Teacher 4, personal communication, December 13, 2016).
Parenting was perceived as the most effective strategy. Why do you implement fewer examples within the parenting strategy?

Teacher 1: “Because parents are already involved at my school. My parents know what it takes to help their child be successful. They know how to be involved and want me to communicate what is going on at school and with their child. You are only going to have parents involved if they want to be” (Teacher 1, personal communication, December 12, 2016).

Teacher 2: “I never had time to do it all. I implemented the ones that worked and worked quick” (Teacher 2, personal communication, December 13, 2016).

Teacher 3: “We use them all at my school” (Teacher 3, personal communication, December 14, 2016).

Teacher 4: “Because it depends on what works for the parents at your school. Parents at my school know how to parent. They do not need my help as much in that areas as they do in other areas” (Teacher 4, personal communication, December 13, 2016).

After analyzing the interviews, there were some common themes from teachers. The four teachers believe that strategies should be implemented based on what is effective for a particular school and population. Time is limited and it is not possible to implement all of the strategies. Teachers must know the student and parent population. To help students be successful, the four teachers believe that all teachers should use strategies that will meet student and parent specific needs.
Summary

This study examined teachers’ perceptions of the efficacy of parent and community outreach strategies. In this study, data were collected from teachers in three elementary schools, six middle schools, and ten high schools in a large school district in East Tennessee. There were two research questions for this study. Research question one was: What are teachers’ perceptions of the efficacy of parent and community outreach strategies? To answer research question one, data were collected from teachers using an online survey. The results of the survey were that teachers perceived all 24 parent and community outreach examples as effective. Research question two was: Why have teachers developed these perceptions? Data were collected from four teachers in a semi-structured interview. The results of the interview indicated teachers do not believe there is enough time to implement all 24 examples. The four teachers also believe that strategies should be implemented that will meet the needs of the parent and student population at a particular school. The combination of the Likert-scale, ranking system, and interviews provided a degree of triangulation to the data. There were 191 teachers who participated in the online survey and four teachers who were interviewed.

This chapter presented the data collected from the survey and interviews. Chapter Five provides a summary of the study, a discussion of the research findings, and recommendations for future research.
CHAPTER FIVE

Conclusions, Implications, Recommendations

Introduction

The purpose of the study was to examine teachers’ perceptions of the efficacy of parent and community outreach strategies. This study examined teachers’ perceptions of 24 parent and community outreach examples. This study was based on the framework of Dr. Joyce Epstein, who developed six parent and community outreach strategies: parenting, communicating, volunteering, learning at home, decision-making, and collaborating with the community. In addition to selecting the level of effectiveness of each example, teachers ranked these six parent and community outreach strategies in order from the most effective to the least effective. To further the understanding of teachers’ perceptions of the 24 examples, the researcher interviewed four teachers from four different schools.

There were two research questions guiding this study. Research question 1 was: What are teachers’ perceptions of the efficacy of parent and community outreach strategies? Research question 2 was: Why have teachers developed these perceptions? Teachers from a large school district in East Tennessee participated in this study. To answer research question 1, teachers completed an online survey (Appendix A) consisting of 24 family and community outreach examples, a ranking section of the six parent and community outreach strategies, and a demographic section. The data from the survey were analyzed using the Survey Monkey Website. To answer research question 2, the researcher selected four teachers from four different schools to participate in a semi-
structured interview. Data from each interview were analyzed by the researcher. The researcher focused on patterns and common themes.

**Discussion of Conclusions**

The researcher’s hypothesis was that teachers’ perceptions of the 24 parent and community outreach examples were that some, but not all, were effective. The hypothesis was based on previous interactions with teachers. Parent involvement in a child’s education has a direct impact on student achievement and social development. In order for teachers and parents to fully impact the whole child, educators must look at ways to involve the parent in the child’s education. Teachers, principals, parents, students, and society as a whole benefit when educators and parents work together to increase student success. Implementing strategies to help involve more parents in the child’s education has a lasting impact on the child.

Research from this study indicated that when parents are involved in the child’s education, the child’s chances of being successful as a student and as an adult increase. When parents are involved, discipline issues decrease, while test scores, attendance, and student achievement increases. If teachers and other educators want to ensure that this occurs, they must discover and implement the strategies that will work for their student and parent population. This study provided teachers with 24 examples that can be used to involve parents. All of the examples were perceived as effective. However, teachers must find the time to implement strategies that will involve more parents to ensure student success. Based on the results of the online teacher survey, 90 percent of the participants perceived the following examples as effective:
- Provide information, training, and assistance to all families who want it or who need it (94.24%)
- Produce information for families that is clear, usable, and linked to children's success in school (96.34%)
- Establish clear two-way channels for communications from home to school and from school to home (97.91%)
- Create flexible volunteering and school event schedules, enabling parents who work to participate (92.67%)
- Recognize volunteers for their time and effort (94.24%)
- Encourage families and the community to be involved with the school in a variety of ways (assisting in classroom, giving talks, monitoring halls, leading activities, etc.) (92.15%)
- Provide information to families on how to monitor and discuss schoolwork at home (92.14%)
- Provide ongoing and specific information to parents on how to assist students with skills that they need to improve (92.67%)
- Make parents aware of the importance of reading with their child at home (92.67%).
- Have an active PTA, PTO, or other parent organization (96.86%)
- Provide a community resource directory for parents and students with information on community services, programs, and agencies (91.1%)
- Work with local businesses, industries, and community organizations on programs to enhance student skills and learning (94.77%)
• Offer after-school programs for students with support from community businesses, agencies, and volunteers (92.14%)

• Utilize community resources, such as businesses, libraries, parks, and museums to enhance the learning environment (93.71%)

Over 90 percent of the participants perceived the above strategies as effective. These strategies should be considered when teachers and other educators are searching for avenues to involve parents. This information is useful for teachers and other educators to begin the process of involving parents more in the child’s education.

Summary

Based on data from the Online Teacher Perceptions Survey, the results indicated that all of the 24 examples were effective. Although the data shows that all examples were effective, the four teachers that participated believe that each school should implement strategies that impact student success. These four teachers agree there is a limited amount of time and it would be difficult to implement all 24 examples.

Parenting was ranked as the most effective strategy by 49.74 percent of teachers. Teacher 1 and Teacher 4 have implemented few of these strategies. The reasoning behind not implementing more parenting examples was the high levels of parent participation in the schools. Collaborating with the community was ranked as the most effective by only 9.95 percent of teachers. However, over 90 percent of teachers perceived all four of the examples as effective.

The population sample for this study included teachers three elementary schools, six middle schools, and ten high schools in a large East Tennessee school district. Of the teachers that received the online survey, 191 chose to participate in the study. More
females participated than males in the study, 139 of 191 (72.77%), and 58 of the 191 participants ranged in ages from 40-49 (30.37%). Most teachers in this study, 49.21%, hold a Master’s degree, 94 of the 191. Of the 191 participants, 54 of them have been teaching for 20 years or longer.

In addition to completing the online teacher survey, four teachers were selected to participate in a semi-structured interview. The teachers were selected based on the current place of employment and the grade levels taught. One teacher was selected from an elementary school, one from a middle school, and two from different high schools. The teachers self-identified the school as having high or low levels of parent involvement. Each of the four teachers have a diverse background in education and have provided instruction to students for ten years or longer.

**Recommendations**

This study focused on teacher perceptions of 24 parent and community outreach examples. There are many other examples that can be implemented by teachers to increase parent involvement in a child’s education. Parent involvement is a necessity for student success. Teachers and other educators must focus on implementing strategies that would be effective and directly impact the student and parent population at their specific place of employment. To further the study of increasing parent involvement, researchers could:

- Focus on parent involvement at the elementary, middle, and high school levels.
- Determine why there is more parent involvement in the lower grade levels versus the higher grade levels.
• Study the six strategies in elementary, middle, and high school levels and compare which strategies would be more effective for the different grade levels.

• Expand study to include parents’ perceptions of the six parent and community strategies.

• Explore the different examples and strategies to determine which ones are the most beneficial for the school’s student and parent population.

• Look at perceptions of teachers with fewer years of experience in comparison to a veteran teacher.

• Analyze specific strategies for students who are considered homeless, in foster care, or ESL/ELL sub categories.

Parent involvement increases a child’s mental health and overall success. In this study, 191 participants perceived the 24 examples provided in the online survey as effective. Teachers must analyze these strategies and implement ones that will be effective for their student and parent population. Parents and teachers can and must work together to help increase a student’s success. When a parent is involved in a child’s education, discipline issues decrease and overall achievement increases. It is imperative for teachers to implement effective strategies that will help parents become and stay involved in their child’s education.
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http://thecommunitymanager.com


Teachers involve parents in schoolwork. *National Network of Partnership Schools.*

www.csos.jhu.edu


Appendices
Appendix A

Online Teacher Perceptions Survey
Teacher Perceptions of the Efficacy of Outreach Strategies

Survey Information

My name is Michelle Keaton and I am a doctoral student at Carson Newman University on the Administrative Leadership Program. As part of requirements for completing the doctoral program, I am currently conducting a research study about the perceptions of teachers regarding the efficacy of parent and community outreach strategies.

This survey is designed to look at teacher perceptions of the efficacy of parent and community outreach strategies. When answering the questions, please keep in mind this is based on your perception as an educator.

There is no risk to this survey that will affect participants. Your responses will be completely anonymous and will be used only as part of this study. The researcher will store the data for the study and will be the only person with access to the data.

If you have questions about the study or procedures, you may contact the researcher, Michelle Keaton at mkeaton@cn.edu.

Your participation in this study is voluntary, and you may decline to participate without penalty. Providing answers to the survey constitutes your consent to participate. If you wish to participate, please click the next button to begin the survey.

Thank you. Your participation is very much appreciated.

Teacher Perceptions of the Efficacy of Outreach Strategies

Survey Instructions

There are six strategies that have been identified by Dr. Joyce Epstein as models for parent involvement: Parenting, Communicating, Volunteering, Learning at Home, Decision-Making, and Collaborating with the Community. Select the level of effectiveness for each strategy.

*1. Parenting: Help all families establish home environments to support students as students.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conduct workshops or provide information for parents on child development</th>
<th>Not Effective</th>
<th>Somewhat Effective</th>
<th>Effective</th>
<th>Highly Effective</th>
<th>Not Sure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Provide information, training, and assistance to all families who want it or who need it</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Produce information for families that is clear, usable, and linked to children’s success in school</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sponsor home visiting programs or neighborhood meetings to help families understand schools and to help schools understand families</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*2. Communicating: Design effective forms of school-to-home and home-to-school communications about school programs and children’s progress.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conduct a formal conference with every parent at least once a year</th>
<th>Not Effective</th>
<th>Somewhat Effective</th>
<th>Effective</th>
<th>Highly Effective</th>
<th>Not Sure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Establish clear two-way channels for communications from home to school and from school to home</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Send home folders of student work weekly or monthly for parent review and comment</td>
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<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
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<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Produce a regular school newsletter with up-to-date information about the school, special events, organizations, meetings, and parent tips</td>
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<td>○</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
### 3. Volunteering: Recruit and organize parent help and support.

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<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Not Effective</th>
<th>Somewhat Effective</th>
<th>Effective</th>
<th>Highly Effective</th>
<th>Not Sure</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Provide a parent/family room for volunteers and family members to work, interact, and access resources about parenting, childcare, tutoring, and other things that affect their children</td>
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<tr>
<td>Create flexible volunteering and school event schedules, enabling parents who work to participate</td>
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<tr>
<td>Recognize volunteers for their time and effort</td>
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<tr>
<td>Encourage families and the community to be involved with the school in a variety of ways (assisting in classrooms, giving talks, monitoring halls, leading activities, etc.)</td>
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### 4. Learning at Home: Provide information and ideas to families about how to help students at home with homework and other curriculum-related activities, decisions, and planning.

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<tr>
<th>Action</th>
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<th>Highly Effective</th>
<th>Not Sure</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Provide information to families on how to monitor and discuss schoolwork at home</td>
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<tr>
<td>Provide ongoing and specific information to parents on how to assist students with skills they need to improve</td>
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<tr>
<td>Make parents aware of the importance of reading with their child at home</td>
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<td>Schedule regular interactive homework that requires students to demonstrate what they are learning with a family member</td>
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### 5. Decision-Making: Includes parents in school decisions, developing parent leaders and representatives.

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<tr>
<th>Action</th>
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<th>Somewhat Effective</th>
<th>Effective</th>
<th>Highly Effective</th>
<th>Not Sure</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Have an active PTA, PTO, or other parent organization</td>
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<td>Have parents represented on district-level advisory council and committees</td>
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<td>Develop ways to link all families with parent organizations</td>
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<td>Involve parents in revising the school/district curricula</td>
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</table>
6. Collaborating with the Community: Identify and integrate resources and services for the community to strengthen school programs, family practices, and student learning and development.

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<tr>
<th>Not Effective</th>
<th>Somewhat Effective</th>
<th>Effective</th>
<th>Highly Effective</th>
<th>Not Sure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Provide a community resource directory for parents and students with information on community services, programs, and agencies</td>
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<tr>
<td>Work with local businesses, industries, and community organizations on programs to enhance student skills and learning</td>
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<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offer after-school programs for students with support from community businesses, agencies, and volunteers</td>
<td>○</td>
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<tr>
<td>Utilize community resources, such as businesses, libraries, parks, and museums to enhance the learning environment</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

7. Please rank the following involvement strategies in order from 1 to 6, with 1 being the most effective to 6 being the least effective.

1. Parenting
2. Communicating
3. Volunteering
4. Learning at Home
5. Decision Making
6. Collaborating with the Community

8. Select your gender
- Male
- Female

9. Select your age
- 20-29
- 30-39
- 40-49
- 50-59
- 60+

10. Select your highest level of education
- Bachelor's Degree
- Master's Degree
- Master's plus 30
- Educational Specialist (Ed.S.)
- Doctorate Degree
* 11. Select the number of years you have been teaching
- 0-3
- 4-10
- 11-15
- 16-20
- 25+

* 12. Select the current grade level you teach
- K-5
- 6-8
- 9-12
Appendix B

Institutional Review Board Approval
CARSON-NEWMAN UNIVERSITY
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD COMMITTEE

REQUEST FOR REVIEW OF PROJECT/THESIS/DISSERTATION RESEARCH INVOLVING HUMAN SUBJECTS

I. IDENTIFICATION OF PROJECT/THESIS/DISSERTATION (hereafter called PROJECT)
   A. Project principal investigator:
      Complete Name   Michelle Leigh Keaton
      Telephone Number 865-679-9435
      Street Address or C-N Box 7411 Beavers Bend Lane
      City, State, Zip Corryton, TN 37721
      Email Address mlkeaton@cn.edu
      (must be official C-N email address [username@cn.edu])
   B. Project co-principal investigator:
      Complete Name   N/A
      Telephone Number  N/A
      Street Address or C-N Box N/A
      City, State, Zip  N/A
      Email Address    N/A
   C. Chair/Advisor of the Project Committee:
      Chair/Advisor Name: Dr. Patricia Murphree, Ed.D. Associate Professor of Education, Carson Newman University
      Department/Discipline: Education
   D. Committee Members (if applicable):
      Committee Members: Dr. P. Mark Taylor and Dr. Christy Walker
   E. Project type identification: Dissertation
   F. Title of project: Teacher Perceptions of Outreach Strategies
   G. Start date: Upon IRB Approval
   H. Estimated completion date: April 1, 2017
   I. External funding (if any):
      1. Grant/contract submission deadline: N/A
      2. Funding Agency: N/A
      3. Sponsor ID number (if known) N/A
      4. C-N Proposal number (if known) N/A

II. TYPE OF REVIEW REQUESTED: (select all that apply)
   A. ☐ Full review (more than minimal risk involved)
   B. ☒ Short review (minimal risk project)
   C. ☐ Exemption review (may qualify under federal guidelines for categories of studies exempt from coverage)
   D. ☐ Investigational Drug: Brochure available? Yes ☐ No ☐
   E. ☐ Re-Evaluation (the study has been temporarily inactive)
III. DESCRIPTION AND SOURCE OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS
A. Human subjects (select all that apply)
   ☐ Inpatients  ☒ Volunteers  ☐ Pregnant Women
   ☐ Outpatients  ☐ Fetuses  ☐ Mentally Incompetent
   ☐ Minors  ☐ Prisoners  ☐ Elderly Population
B. Compensation to Human Subjects: N/A
C. Type of Project/Procedure to be used (please select the most applicable):
   1. ☐ Medical-Therapeutic (evaluation of drugs, treatment protocol, surgical procedure, etc):
   2. ☐ Medical-Non-Therapeutic (physiological studies, Laboratory analysis of blood or body substance):
   3. ☐ Investigation drug (drug study protocol):
   4. ☐ Radioactive materials:
      Name: Click here to enter text.
      Subcommittee on radioactive materials approval date: Click here to enter text.
   5. ☐ Psychosocial-Manipulative (response to stressful stimuli, hypnosis, etc.)
   6. ☒ Psychosocial-Non-Manipulative (evaluation of subject Response to educational material, attitude, survey, etc.)
   7. ☐ Study involving confidential material without human participation (chart review, etc.)
   8. ☒ Other (please specify): Study involving teacher perceptions
D. Source of subjects/participants: Teachers in Knox County
E. Number of estimated participants: 100
F. Relationship between researcher/participant: None

IV. METHODS AND PROCEDURES:
Clearly and concisely describe in non-technical language the data collection and experimental research methods used in this project. This section should be consistent in every detail with the descriptions provided to participants in the consent form or procedure. Include non-technical descriptions of stresses to participants, experimental manipulations, tests or measures, surveys, interviews, observations, photography, video, and audio recordings. Clearly distinguish between control and experimental/treatment participant groups.

Subjects will receive a link to a survey that includes a demographic section, a list of community outreach strategies with a scale ranging from not effective to highly effective, and a list of parent and community outreach strategies to rank in order of importance. This link will be sent via email to teachers, upon approval from the principal. The email will explain the purpose of the study and disclosure information. In addition to a survey, the researcher will interview four teachers.
All participants will be advised their participation is voluntary and all of their responses will be anonymous. Clicking the link to the survey indicated consent to participate. Participating in the interview will provide consent to participate in the study. The researcher will ensure the interviewees their names will not be mentioned in the study. The researcher is the only person who can access the data.

V. SPECIFIC RISKS/PROTECTION MEASURES:
Specify all potential risk to participants. Estimate the nature and amount of potential risk, stress, or discomfort and assess its seriousness. Describe precautions you will take to reduce risk and assess the effectiveness of these protective measures. If appropriate, include a description of the means you will use to assist or treat participants who may incur injury from one or more of the risk identified in this section. Permit sufficient detail to permit reviewers, who may not be familiar with your area of study, to evaluate any specific risk to the participants of this research.

Include methods and provisions by which you will address the issue of anonymity of confidentiality of data. Note that anonymity (protecting the identity of the subject/participant) is only possible if the investigator cannot discover the participant’s identity from data collected. In either case, describe how you will maintain the confidentiality of the participant’s data. Identify any security measures you have for protecting the data and identify to whom access is given. If thesis committee members or others will review or help with analysis of data, address the steps that you will take to ensure subject’s anonymity and confidentiality.

There is minimal risk in this project. All subjects will remain anonymous. The researcher is the only person who will have access to the information gathered.

VI BENEFITS:
Evaluate the reasonableness of the risk stated in section II in relation to the anticipated benefits, if any, to the participants and/or society. If the risks are minimal, please state that the risks are minimal and include a statement of anticipated benefits.

Note that in most research projects, the only relevant benefits are those that contribute to generalizable knowledge in a field of research. In these cases, participant benefits are incidental. Please do not inflate the significance of incidental benefits in this form or in your informed consent procedures.

Payment for participation in research, if any, is an incentive for participation and should be included in this section.
Today’s student, parent, and teacher is very different from several years ago. Educators are charged with more demands and parents are feeling more and more isolated from the schools. In order for student’s to be successful, parents and teachers must work together to help the child succeed. This research is an attempt to examine the perceptions of teachers on the efficacy on parent and community outreach strategies. This research can be used by educators to involve parents more in a child’s academics.

VII METHODS FOR OBTAINING “INFORMED CONSENT” FROM PARTICIPANTS:
Please state the methods you will use to legally obtain effective informed consent, assent, or permission from participants or their legally authorized representatives. Clearly describe how you will seek consent from participants in a manner that allows them sufficient opportunity to consider participation and that minimizes the possibility of coercion or undue influence. Indicate that the language used in your informed consent procedure is understandable to your participants or their legally authorized representatives. Attach a copy of your informed consent document as an appendix to the completed IRB.

Principals will send an email to their staff that details the purpose for the survey, and notes that participation is voluntary. The participants will also be informed that all responses will remain anonymous. The introduction will also state that the researcher will be the only person with access to the data that is collected. A statement preceding the link to the survey will indicate that selecting the link to complete the survey indicates that the participant is providing informed consent. For the interview participants, the researcher will ask four teachers to participate in the study. Permission will be granted from the participant by participating in the interview.

VIII RESPONSIBILITY OF THE PRINCIPAL/CO-PRINCIPAL
You must enter the following information verbatim in Section VIII.

By compliance with the policies established by the IRB Committee, the principal investigator(s) subscribe to the principles stated in “The Belmont Report” and standards of professional ethics in all research, development, and related activities involving human participants under the auspices of Carson-Newman College. The principal investigator(s) further agree that:

1. Approval will be obtained from the IRB Committee prior to instituting any change in this research project.
2. Development of any unexpected risk will be immediately reported to the IRB Committee.
3. An annual review and progress report will be completed and submitted when requested by the IRB Committee.

4. Signed informed consent documents will be kept for the duration of the project and for at least three years thereafter at a location approved by the IRB Committee.

IX. SIGNATURES – must be on a separate page; provide two (2) copies: one (1) electronically submitted with full request and one (1) original paper copy sent to university IRB committee chair

When you submit this application for review please note that all signatures must be original. As your application moves through the review process, you should prepare two identical applications, both of which contain original signatures. As primary investigator, you should keep one copy and submit the other application with original signatures for review.
IX. SIGNATURES – must be on a separate page; provide two (2) copies: one (1) electronically submitted with full request and one (1) original paper copy sent to university IRB committee chair

When you submit this application for review please note that all signatures must be original. As your application moves through the review process, you should prepare two identical applications, both of which contain original signatures. As primary investigator, you should keep one copy and submit the other application with original signatures for review.

Project Principal Investigator: Michelle Keaton:

Signature: ___________________________________________ 10-21-16
(Date)

Project Co-Principal Investigator: Click here to enter text.: 

Signature: ___________________________________________ (Date)

Project Committee Chair: Click here to enter text.

Signature: ___________________________________________ (Date)

PROGRAM/DEPARTMENTAL REVIEW AND APPROVAL

NOTE: This is needed if the program or department requires a review.

I have read and reviewed this research application and recommend its approval.

Director/Chair/Research Committee Chair: Click here to enter text.

Signature: ________________________________ Patricia G. Murphree
(Date)

UNIVERSITY IRB COMMITTEE REVIEW AND APPROVAL

The IRB Committee has read and reviewed this application for research and approves the application.

IRB Committee Chair: Gregory A. Casalnuovo, PhD

Signature: ___________________________________________ (Date)

Approved: April, 2010; Revised: August, 2015
From: Greg Casalenuovo
Sent: Monday, October 24, 2016 9:16 AM
To: Patricia Murphree
Subject: RE: Approval Form

Your IRB request has been approved

In His service,

Gregory A. Casalenuovo, PhD, APRN, FNP-BC
Associate Professor, Nursing
Carson-Newman University
C-N Box 71883
Jefferson City, TN 37760

Office: Pedersen #1

Phones: (865) 471-3236, office; (865) 471-4574, fax

God put a million, million doors in the world for his love to walk through, one of those doors is you – Jason Gray
Appendix C

School System Approval to Conduct Study
November 14, 2016

Michelle Keaton
7411 Beavers Bend Lane
Corryton, TN 37721

Michelle Keaton:

You are granted permission in to contact appropriate building-level administrators concerning the conduction of your proposed research study: *Teacher perceptions of the efficacy of parent and community outreach strategies.* Final approval of this research study taking place within the [redacted] system is contingent upon acceptance by the principal(s) at the site(s) where the study will be conducted. Include a copy of this permission form when seeking approval from the principal(s).

In all research studies, names of individuals, groups, or schools may not appear in the text of the study unless specific permission has been granted through this office. The principal researcher is required to furnish this office with one copy of the completed research document.

Good luck with your study. Contact me at 865-594-1735 if you need further assistance or clarification of the research policies of [redacted]

Sincerely,

[redacted]

Director
Research and Evaluation

Project Number: 161714
Appendix D

Initial Email Sent to Principals
Good morning. I hope you are doing well and having a great school year so far. Currently I am a teacher at (name of school) and a student in the Ed.D. Administration program at Carson Newman University. I am close to finishing my degree, but I need your help.

I am conducting a study on teacher perceptions of the efficacy of parent and community outreach strategies. I have selected your school to participate in this study. I have sent all of the necessary paperwork to (Name) for approval to continue the study. I just wanted to give you a heads up that I will be sending the survey along with the approval to you soon. If you wouldn't mind, I am asking that you forward the survey to your teachers for them to complete.

I really appreciate your help with this. I should be able to send the surveys the week of November 15.

Thank you in advance!

Michelle Keaton (formerly Calfee)
Appendix E

Email to Dr. Epstein Requesting Permission to Use Survey
Dr. Epstein:

Good afternoon. I am currently a student in the Ed.D. program at Carson Newman University in Knoxville Tennessee. I am looking to do a study on the perception of teachers of the efficacy of parent and community outreach strategies. To gather data, I would like to use the survey on pages 324-329 from the School, family, and community partnerships: Your handbook for action, third edition. I believe this survey is exactly what I need to gather the data for this study.

I am emailing you to seek your permission to use this survey in my study. I would be grateful to receive your permission for this. If you are willing to grant me permission, could you please send a letter (via email) granting this permission please?

Thank you for your time. I hope to hear from you soon. If you need to contact me via phone, my number is 865-679-9435.

Michelle Keaton, Ed.D. Student

In addition to this email, Dr. Epstein and I spoke on the phone to discuss my topic and how her survey would be useful in my study. Dr. Epstein agreed that the chosen survey would be useful to determine teacher perceptions of effective involvement strategies. Dr. Epstein approved and granted permission for me to use the survey for my study.
Appendix F

Approval to Use Survey from Dr. Epstein
To: Michelle Keaton
From: Joyce Epstein
Re: Permission

Thank you for your note. I am glad to know of your interest in research on school, family, and community partnerships.

This letter is to give you permission to use, adapt, and translate as needed our inventory, Measure of School, Family, and Community Partnerships, on pp. 324-329 of our handbook. I understand that the inventory will be used in your study of the perception of teachers of the efficacy of parent and community outreach strategies at Carson Newman University in Knoxville Tennessee.

All that we require is that you include a full reference to the original work in your reports and bibliographies. The full reference is:


Best of luck with your study.

Joyce L. Epstein, Ph.D.
Director, Center on School, Family, and Community Partnerships and National Network of Partnership Schools (NNPS)
Research Professor of Education and Sociology
2701 North Charles Street, Suite 300
Baltimore, MD 21218

Phone: (410) 516-8807
Fax: (410) 516-8890
Email: jepstein@jhu.edu
Web: www.partnershipschools.org
Appendix G

Email to Principals to Distribute Surveys to Teachers
Dear Principals:

I have received permission from (contact name) to continue with my study. There will be an additional email that includes the approval attachment. Could you please forward the following message to your teachers?

My name is Michelle Keaton and I am a doctoral student at Carson Newman University in the Administrative Leadership Program. As part of the requirements for completing the doctoral program, I am currently conducting a research study about the perceptions of teachers regarding the efficacy of parent and community outreach strategies.

This survey is designed to look at teacher perceptions of the efficacy of parent and community outreach strategies. When answering the questions, please keep in mind this is based on your perception as an educator.

There is no risk to this survey that will affect participants. Your responses will be completely anonymous and will be used only as part of this study. The researcher will store the data for the study and will be the only person with access to the data.

If you have questions about the study or procedures, you may contact the researcher, Michelle Keaton at mlkeaton@cn.edu.

Your participation in this study is voluntary, and you may decline to participate without penalty. Providing answers to the survey constitutes your consent to participate. If you wish to participate, please click the link to begin the survey https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/VPKCDCW.

I greatly appreciate your help with this.

Michelle Keaton
Appendix H

Email to Principals to Increase Rate of Return
Dear Principals:

I hope each of you had a restful and joyous Thanksgiving. Thank you for passing along my survey to teachers. I am planning to close the survey next Friday, December 2, 2016. In an effort to increase my rate of return, I wanted to send the survey one more time to give others a chance to fill it out. I understand everyone is busy and there are lots of things going on right now. I am grateful to each of you for taking time to help me with this.

I would appreciate it if you could forward the following message to your staff:

Dear Teachers:

Thank you to each of you who took time to fill out my survey. I am very grateful for you taking time to do so. I am planning to close the survey Friday, December 2, 2016. The survey takes about five to seven minutes to fill out. If you could please fill it out before December 2, 2016, I would greatly appreciate it.

Thank you in advance for your time.

Michelle Keaton

https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/VPKCDCW