Supporting Parents as Literacy Teachers through Collaboration

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Supporting Parents as Literacy Teachers through Collaboration

Learning to read is a challenging quest. Successful early childhood and primary teachers get to see students make great gains in this endeavor each year. Those gains, however, are not isolated to what students experience in the classroom. Children develop early literacy skills in every context of their lives; parents and families play a powerful role in this process. The way in which parents support early literacy skills at home is incredibly important. However, many parents feel unsure of how to support and teach these crucial skills to their children. The goal of this report is to discuss how a partnership focused on early literacy skills between home and school impacts the attitude of parents about supporting and teaching these skills at home.

Review of the Literature

Early Literacy

Teaching children to read is no simple task and involves the development of several sub-skills. According to the National Early Literacy Panel (2008), “There is strong evidence for the importance of alphabet knowledge, phonological awareness, rapid naming tasks, ‘writing or writing name,’ and phonological short term memory as predictors of later reading and writing skills” (p. 78). Others classify early literacy skills into two sub-sets: oral-language skills and written language skills (Sénéchal, LeFevre, Thomas, & Daley, 1998). Each of these variables contribute to the ultimate goal of the child being able to fluently identify printed words and create meaning from those words as well as to communicate their own ideas and thoughts through written language. The importance of developing strong early literacy skills is widely accepted by educators and researchers alike. For example, Sénéchal et al. (1998) found that the reading ability of children at the end of 1st grade was mediated through both their oral- and written-language skills. The reading level of a child in first grade was further found to directly
impact the child’s reading ability at the end of 3rd grade (Sénéchal & LeFevre, 2002), which has been shown to be a major predictor of educational success in 8th grade, 9th grade and into college (Lesnick, George, Smithgall, & Gwynne, 2010). While the extent to which the various sub-skills contribute to the success of the reader in the long term is still in question, the fact that the development of early literacy skills predicts future educational success is well documented.

**The Importance of Parental Involvement**

Early literacy skills are not introduced to children when they walk into their first classroom. The experiences they have had at home in regards to literacy greatly contribute to the experience they will have with literacy in the classroom. For the purpose of this study, the term “parents” and “parental involvement” will be broadly used to mirror the broad use being used by many researchers. This broad use includes parents, guardians and other significant adults or caretakers who may play a role in a child’s life and education. Anderson (1995) found that children began developing perceptions of literacy that matched those held by their parents before they entered formal literacy programs at school. These initial perceptions about literacy greatly impact how students interact with literacy learning at school. Parents truly are a child’s first literacy teacher. That being said, the extent to which they continue to support these skills at home after children begin school is still of great importance.

No educator will deny that parental involvement is important. Of particular importance, when it comes to early literacy skills, is the extent to which parents engage their children in literacy related skills such as reading together (Leseman & de Jong, 1998; Sénéchal & LeFevre, 2002; Sénéchal et al., 1998; Tizard, Schofield, & Hewison, 1982) and directly teaching reading and writing skills such as alphabet knowledge, print concepts, spelling, etc. (Leseman & de Jong, 1998; Sénéchal & LeFevre, 2002; Sénéchal et al., 1998). These experiences that students have at
home contribute to their academic success at school (Sénéchal & LeFevre, 2002). For example, Tizard, Schofield, and Hewison (1982) found that children who receive parental help with reading have higher reading attainment than their peers who don’t receive help.

While educators seem to be in agreement that parental involvement, especially in regards to literacy, is important, the way that teachers involve parents is not as easily agreed upon. Linek, Rasinski, and Harkins (1997) found that many teachers’ views of parental involvement were limited to in-school volunteering and completion of homework. Very few had an understanding of parental involvement that included a partnership between home and school that worked together to support student acquisition of skills. Teachers who did recognize the benefit of at-home involvement in literacy skills often emphasized how this involvement worked to facilitate modeling and motivation rather than contributing directly to the development of the various skills being taught. Moreover, in this same study, it was found that parents wanted to be actively involved in the learning that their children were engaging in (Linek, Rasinski, & Harkins, 1997).

**Program Versus Partnership**

There has been a lot of research completed recently that is concentrated on how to engage parents in early literacy skills at home. Many programs, which encourage home engagement with early literacy skills, have been put in place and researched to determine their effectiveness. For example, Reutzel, Fawson, & Smith (2006) studied the *Words to Go!* Program, a parent involvement program which trained parents in how to support students in “making and breaking” words at home, thus supporting the teaching being accomplished at school. Parents who participated in this program shared that they liked knowing how their children were being taught
at school and being instructed how to support this learning at home; however, the model used did not meet the needs of all students and not all parents found it to be a beneficial use of their time.

Programs allow schools to implement parent involvement across various grade levels, although, the reality is that there is no single early literacy program that will meet the needs of all students. Each student acquires literacy skills differently, requiring different supports and experiences at school and at home. In this regard, there has also been a great deal of research focused on partnerships and collaboration between home and school and its connection to early literacy development.

**Partnering with Parents**

In this study, partnership and collaboration are defined as a relationship in which parents and teachers work together with a focus on dialogue regarding the strengths and weaknesses of individual students. Partnerships between teachers and parents take on different forms. St. George (2010) studied the use of “Collegial Circles,” a model where parents and teachers participated in small group professional development and were able to engage in meaningful dialogue about how each party can support the child’s development of early literacy skills most effectively. The research shows that collaboration that emphasizes dialogue between parents and teachers has been found to be effective for all children, regardless of their initial performance level (Tizard, Schofield, & Hewison, 1982). This kind of collaboration is time consuming and, because of limited hours in a day, a challenge for teachers to maintain, yet the impact it has on student learning is significant.

Research has shown that all children benefit from a partnership between their teacher and parents (Tizard, Schofield, & Hewison, 1982). However, research has not yet explored which is the most effective method or model for partnering with parents. Various studies have explored
the use of journals to communicate observations, questions, and concerns about reading at home and school (Lazar & Weisberg, 1996), small group meetings between parents and teachers (St. George, 2010), and training parents to use evidence-based strategies when engaging in literacy learning at home (Kabuto, 2009; Kupzyk, Daly, & Andersen, 2012; Mitchell & Begeny, 2014; Sim & Berthelsen, 2014). All of these strategies have been shown to positively impact students’ achievement, parent confidence and attitudes about working with their child at home, or both of these crucial factors.

The collaborative use of evidence-based strategies to support student learning at home is one of the more recent trends in research. This model of partnership, which focuses not only on dialogue between parents and teachers but also provides training to parents, has been shown to lead to higher student outcomes (Kupzyk et al., 2012; Mitchell & Begeny, 2014; Sim & Berthelsen, 2014). Paratore (2005) advocates for this kind of partnership when she claims, “Effective classroom teachers help parents to learn about and engage their children in literacy practices that are closely related to success in school” (p. 394). Kupzyk et al. (2012) conducted a study where teachers trained parents to use evidenced-based strategies for oral reading fluency with their students at home and found that the training received by parents was an important factor in student outcomes. They found that high quality training from teachers to parents resulted in higher achievement from students. High-quality training includes time for teachers to model for parents and then provide feedback as parents practice the newly learned strategies (Herold, 2011; Kupzyk et al., 2012).

In addition to providing parents with high-quality training of specific strategies, Paratore & Jordan (2007) assert, “Helping parents to understand why particular practices are important to children is an important first step in encouraging parents to add recommended activities and
interactions into their families’ routines” (p. 696). Kabuto (2009) demonstrated this practice when she conducted a qualitative research project following a family engaged in a family Retrospective Miscue Analysis (RMA) program, a research-based model of understanding the reading process. RMA is a tool that many teachers use when taking running records. Kabuto (2009) found that providing training to parents about this model and how to use it when reading with their children not only changed their perspectives about their child’s abilities, shifting their focus from a deficit-based perspective to a strength-based perspective, but also allowed them to better support their child as a reader. High-quality, intentional training within a collaborative partnership between the parents and teacher provides parents with the knowledge and skills necessary to support their child’s learning at home, which research shows is incredibly important to parents (Lazar & Weisberg, 1996; Linek, Rasinski, & Harkins, 1997; Reutzel, Fawson, & Smith, 2006). Additionally, research has found this kind of relationship between parents and teachers to promote the confidence of those parents and positively increase their attitude when it comes to supporting literacy skills at home, thus increasing the support children receive at home (Sukhram & Hsu, 2012).

**Analysis**

It is agreed upon that early literacy and parental involvement are both crucial factors in the future educational success of children. Furthermore, the research shows that the two are connected, though the depth of the relationship between these two factors and how they interact with one another is still being explored. There are additional questions regarding how the quality of parental involvement comes into play. Further research is needed to determine the full effects of parental involvement on early literacy development and how the quality of parental
involvement affects students’ reading ability. It cannot be denied, however, that the role parents play in a child’s development of reading skills is crucial.

Parents are their child’s first teacher. For better or worse, the way that they engage their child in literacy affects the way that child will engage with literacy in the future. As a teacher, this is an important reality to acknowledge and employ. The way that parents are engaged in collaboration around literacy directly impacts their confidence and understanding of how to support their child’s early literacy development at home. Selecting an approach that supports parents as literacy teachers ultimately facilitates students’ learning in a more holistic manner than instruction in the classroom alone can provide. Moreover, support at home has been shown to have a greater long-term impact than in-school interventions alone (Tizard, Schofield, & Hewison, 1982). Engaging parents in collaboration around the literacy learning that students engage in within the classroom is the most beneficial way to support students when thinking about the long-term impacts of teachers’ actions.

The ultimate goal of a teacher and parent collaboration is to provide a solid support for student growth and achievement. Partnerships between parents and teachers that are focused on collaboration allow parents to bring the wealth of knowledge they possess about their child and their experiences with literacy at home to the table, allowing the teacher to tailor classroom and home support to the needs of that child rather than requiring that parents implement a cookie-cutter program, which may or may not support their child’s development of early literacy skills. The teacher is further able to use this partnership to empower parents with the knowledge and resources necessary to support the unique needs of their child during the hours the child is not in the classroom. Thus, both the teacher and the parent are equals in this partnership as they work
toward supporting the student above all else and the child is fully supported in their individual strengths and needs as a reader.

Multiple approaches to collaborating with parents have been researched from journals to small-group meetings, training videos to regularly scheduled training sessions. In all of the research, the importance of providing a place for meaningful dialogue to take place that centers on student skills and success is emphasized (Lazar & Weisberg, 1996; St. George, 2010; Sukhram & Hsu, 2012). Small group meetings and regularly scheduled trainings were the most successful in terms of participation and satisfaction rates. These models of collaboration have the added benefit of allowing teachers to not only dialogue with parents, but also allow teachers to provide training and individualized feedback to parents in how to support the literacy skills students are currently working on developing in class and how those skills support overall reading ability. Through these partnerships, parents are able to develop the understandings and strategies necessary to support their child’s acquisition of early literacy skills in a confident and knowledgeable manner.

**Conclusions**

In conclusion, parental involvement in teaching and supporting early literacy skills is an incredibly weighty factor in student development of these skills. The way that schools and teachers engage parents in this endeavor has shown to benefit student acquisition of these foundational skills. Parents want to know what their child is learning at school and how they can support this learning at home. Their attitudes toward supporting early literacy skills have been positively affected through meaningful, collaborative partnerships focused on early literacy skill development with their child’s teacher.
Demographic Data for the Proposed Project

Demographic Data

The research site for this proposal is a K-12 non-traditional public school in the Pacific Northwest. Students at the research site attend classes between one and three days a week with further learning at home under the tutelage of their parents. The amount of instruction required weekly for students is predetermined based on grade level, but the way that time is split between home and school is individual to each student depending on the classes in which they are enrolled. Parents are required to meet with a certified teacher regularly to discuss learning being done at home and the teacher determines whether the progress being made is satisfactory or not based on the standards and growth over the course of time. The research site allows parents to choose from ten different programs, each of which has different expectations of students and families. According to school records, 49% of students enrolled at the research site are a part of one of the 5 different K-8, 2-day, non-graded programs which are offered. In these programs, students attend classes for a designated amount of time each week and receive instruction in specific subject areas. Parents are then responsible for providing instruction in the remaining subject areas and supporting the practice of the subjects being taught in class. Parents are further required to meet monthly with the classroom teacher and volunteer in the classroom on a regular rotating basis.

Due to the unique learning experience at the research site, parents make the decision to enroll their students and agree to the parental involvement requirements. Families from within the district are able to enroll without boundary exception and families outside of the research site district are required to obtain a boundary exception to enroll. According to school records, 53% of the 1001 students enrolled have boundary exceptions from various surrounding districts. A
recent parent survey found that the average family travels half-an-hour to school each day they attend with some families traveling as much as two-hours each direction.

**Target Group**

The target group of this research proposal consists of the parents of the students enrolled in the kindergarten 2-day program. The kindergarten program at the research site currently has 49 students in three different class sessions, each of which is taught by the same teacher. Of the 49 students, 2 of them are twins. The 48 families of the 49 kindergarten students are the focus of this study. The parent(s) of the families will be notified of the study and permissions will be collected. All participants and their children will be given pseudonyms.

In 35% of the target group, both parents hold jobs. The remaining 65% of families have one parent who stays at home full time; in every family where this is the case, the mother is the one who is at home full time. In each family, the mother is the person who engages with the classroom teacher most often and most directly. In most cases the mother is also the primary instructor at home. In 8 of the 48 families, the father volunteers in the classroom and/or attends monthly meetings when the mother cannot make the meeting or in addition to the mother. In these situations the father also takes an active role in providing instruction at home, though this may also be the case for other families. Two families have grandparents that are responsible for some of the instruction being provided at home and are actively involved in the classroom on a regular basis. Only one student comes from a single-parent household. In this family, the mother works full time and is the person who volunteers and engages in regular meetings with the classroom teacher. Out of the 48 families enrolled in the kindergarten program, 21 families have experience providing instruction at home either through the research site programs or as an independent homeschool family.
At the school site, there is a high enrollment of Slavic students. In the target group, 5 of the students from 5 different families are Russian and are considered “English Language Limited.” For the parents of these students, Russian is their first language, however, all are fluent in conversational English and 4 of the 5 are fluent in academic English as well. In addition to learning to read in English, 3 of the 5 Russian students enrolled in the kindergarten program are also learning to read in Russian.

**Baseline Data**

As new families come into the research site and begin learning how to instruct their child, many parents fear that they are going to mess up and that their child will not learn what they need to learn. In talking with families, the area of instruction they fear most is reading because they do not remember learning to read and thus are unsure of how to best support their child’s acquisition of early literacy skills. These fears, in regards to supporting reading, are not only present in conversations with parents who are new to the research site but are also an issue for families who have been at the research site for several years but have never been responsible for ensuring that their child is able to read since their older children attended a traditional public school during the years they acquired their early literacy skills.

The parents who have enrolled their children in the kindergarten program at the research site have chosen to take an active role in their child’s education and provide instruction in reading at home. Still, many are not confident in their ability as an early literacy instructor and have limited knowledge regarding early literacy development and content. The research study thus benefits this target group by providing them with a supportive partnership with a certified classroom teacher focused on developing their knowledge and confidence as early literacy teachers.
Proposed Action

Given the review of literature, the unique context of the research site, and the target group of parents, there are several potential solutions to addressing a partnership that positively impacts the attitudes of parents toward teaching early literacy skills. An important factor to keep in mind regarding the research site is that all parents are required to engage in monthly meetings with their child’s teacher as a required element of enrollment. For the purpose of this research plan, three possible solutions will be explored: (1) providing parents with curriculum and resource support, (2) engaging parents in regular, intentional dialogue, and (3) providing parents with the knowledge and skills to teach early literacy skills to their children through training sessions. Any one of these solutions might be implemented individually or they may be implemented in combinations of two or all three together.

Curriculum and Resource Support

One potential option for partnering with parents is to provide them with curriculum and resources to teach their child early literacy skills. Further support would be given monthly to help parents so they feel confident in implementing the curriculum they are using. This is a simple solution to partnering with parents, which requires that the teacher simply have access and knowledge regarding some early literacy curricula and an ability to help parents navigate the curriculum being used. Reutzel, Fawson, and Smith (2006) implemented this kind of support by providing parents with the resources to use at home as a part of the Words to Go! curriculum and found that parents liked having resources provided to them to use with their children at home.

Engaging in Dialogue

A second potential solution to implement when partnering with parents is to establish methods for maintaining an open dialogue between the parents and teacher about the strengths
and weaknesses of each child. The research suggests that intentional dialogue between the teacher and parents has a positive relationship with parent satisfaction regarding the partnership (Lazar & Weisberg, 1996; St. George, 2010; Sukhram & Hsu, 2012). Dialogue could and should provide both the parents and the teacher with the opportunity to express concerns and questions as well as share stories of success and student strengths (Lazar & Weisberg, 1996; St. George, 2010). Methods for dialoguing with parents include in person conversations, much like St. George’s (2010) collegial circles, during monthly partnership meetings. These meetings would provide parents time to dialogue with the teacher as well as with other parents from the focus group. Providing time for parents to engage in dialogue between each other would allow them to support each other in addition to the support provided by the teacher-researcher. Additional forms of communication, like Lazar and Weisberg’s (1996) journals, may be implemented as well.

**Knowledge and Skill Training**

Lastly, a potential solution to positively impacting parent attitudes toward teaching early literacy concepts to their child would be to partner with them by providing them with the knowledge and skills necessary to teach early literacy concepts through teacher-researcher developed training sessions. Training parents to support their children as readers has been shown to have a positive relationship with parents’ attitudes toward reading at home with their children (Sukhram & Hsu, 2012). Training should provide parents with evidenced-based strategies to support their child as a reader, providing them with the same tools that many teachers implement in their classrooms (Kabuto, 2009; Kupzyk, Daly, & Andersen, 2012; Mitchell & Begeny, 2014; Sim & Berthelsen, 2014).
Implementation Model

The chosen actions to implement at the research site are a combination of all three of the strategies described above. Current practice at the research site has teachers meeting monthly with each child’s parents to discuss progress being made in class and at home. Since, at the research site, parents are responsible for teaching and supporting early literacy concepts at home, providing parents with resources and curriculum is already an established practice for the teacher-researcher. This aspect of the partnership will continue; but in order to determine the full impact that the partnership between the parents and teacher can have on parent attitudes, dialogue and training will be integrated into the partnership as well.

Integrating curriculum and resource support with dialogue and training will fit well into the research site’s current expectations of parents. Parents will sign up to meet with the teacher-researcher and 2 or 3 other families for a regularly scheduled monthly partnership meeting, each of which will run between 45-60 minutes in length. Since parents will sign up for a monthly partnership meeting prior to students starting classes, grouping will be based upon parent availability. Each meeting will provide parents with time to dialogue with each other and the teacher-researcher regarding questions, concerns, and celebrations of learning. The sessions will then include a training component. Training concepts will be developed by the teacher and will include training in miscue analysis (Herold, 2011; Kabuto, 2009), book orientation/shared reading (Herold, 2011; Sim & Berthelsen, 2014), and modeling metacognition (Herold, 2011). Additional concepts may be taught, but training will remain flexible to the needs of each individual group based on the needs of the parents and their children. Following every monthly partnership meeting, the teacher-researcher will follow-up with each family through written dialogue.
In addition to attending monthly meetings, parents at the research site are also required to volunteer in their child’s classroom once a month. Parents sign up at the beginning of the year for a monthly rotation. During these classroom partnership days, parents in the focus group will have the opportunity to see the strategies from training sessions being used by the teacher-researcher in the classroom. They will also have the opportunity to practice using them with students in the classroom with the opportunity to receive feedback and support from the teacher-researcher.

**Data Collection and Analysis Methods**

**Triangulation Matrix**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issues to pay attention to when trying to answer the research question:</th>
<th>Data Source #1 (Parent)</th>
<th>Data Source #2 (Teacher)</th>
<th>Data Source #3 (Outsider)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How do parent attitudes change as a result of the partnership?</td>
<td>Parent surveys</td>
<td>Parent interviews</td>
<td>Third party focus groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To what extent are parents engaged in the monthly partnership?</td>
<td>Monthly follow-up reflections completed by parents</td>
<td>Field notes</td>
<td>Parent Attendance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What aspects of the partnership help parents develop positive attitudes toward teaching reading?</td>
<td>Monthly follow-up reflections completed by parents</td>
<td>Field notes</td>
<td>Third party focus groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Parent interviews</td>
<td>Recorded video of monthly meetings</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To determine how a partnership focused on early literacy skills between home and school impacts the attitude of parents about supporting and teaching these skills at home, several factors should be considered. Multiple sources of data will be collected when considering each factor.

**Parent Surveys**

The target group for this research proposal will provide a self-report regarding their attitudes and feelings toward teaching their child to read twice throughout the duration of the
research. To do so, these parents will fill out two parent surveys. Initial Parent Survey (see Appendix A) will be distributed and collected prior to the start of partnership meetings. Final Parent Survey (see Appendix B) will be taken at the end of the research plan. Each survey includes four questions that parents will answer using a Likert scale. Remaining questions will require narrative responses.

Initial survey results and final survey results will be compiled separately. Basic descriptive statistical analysis will be used when looking at and comparing the first four questions of each survey. The narrative responses will be coded to be used in an emerging categories method with the whole body of qualitative data (Efron & Ravid, 2013, p. 173).

Parent Interviews and Focus Groups

At the end of the research project, parents will meet with the teacher-researcher for semi-structured exit interviews (see Appendix C). These interviews will be recorded; thus allowing the teacher-researcher the ability to transcribe and code the conversations. Throughout the interviews, the teacher-researcher will take notes, paying attention to the tone and body language used by the parents being interviewed. These observations will be added to the transcribed interview and coded with the conversation.

The same questions will be used in three small focus groups that will meet at the end of the research project. Each focus group will be made up of 5 randomly selected parent participants. A third party will lead these focus groups. The groups will be recorded, transcribed and then coded by the third party interviewer similarly to the parent interviews.

Monthly Follow-up Reflections

After each monthly partnership meeting, parents will fill out a follow-up reflection form (see Appendix D). The reflection prompts have been designed to provide the teacher-researcher
with narrative reflections from parents regarding the concepts and/or skills covered during the partnership meeting. Responses to these prompts will be compiled in two different ways each month. First, all responses will be compiled and coded to look for emerging categories within the whole body of qualitative data. Then, the reflections will be sorted and analyzed by monthly partnership meeting groups to help determine what skills and concepts to focus on for the next monthly meeting.

**Field Notes**

Field notes will be kept by the teacher-researcher through the research process. Notes will be taken throughout each day on sticky-notes and summarized at the end of the day. Notes may include observations and reflections. Topics that may be included are observations and reflections from partnership meetings, observations and reflections from time parents spend volunteering in the classroom, and observations and reflections from dialogue with parents regarding early literacy concepts.

At the end of each month, the teacher-researcher will code the field notes. These notes will not only support the research as a whole but also act as a tool for the monthly planning of partnership meetings.

**Parent Attendance**

Parent attendance to the monthly partnership meetings will be recorded through the use of a monthly sign-in sheet (see Appendix E). Parents who are unable to attend their meeting will be required to make-up their meeting with the teacher-researcher. Communication between parents and the teacher-researcher regarding parent attendance of monthly partnership meetings will be attached to the monthly sign-in sheet. The sign-in sheets and any attached records of communication will give the teacher-researcher data regarding who regularly attends meetings.
and the reasons used by parents to reschedule meetings. This data will work, together with the recordings of the partnership meetings, to provide a holistic understanding of parent engagement in the monthly meetings.

**Recorded Partnership Meetings**

Three randomly selected partnership groups will be recorded through the research project. Each of the monthly partnership meetings these three groups engage in will be recorded, transcribed, and coded.

**Anticipated Themes**

Both quantitative and qualitative data will be collected throughout the data collection process. The vast majority of that data will be qualitative. The data will work together in an embedded design (Efron & Ravid, 2013, p. 210) with the quantitative Likert scale survey results being embedded within the large body of qualitative data. The data from each qualitative source will be compiled and coded. The teacher-researcher will look at all of the qualitative data for overarching emerging categories. Concept maps will be used to analyze the relationships held between the categories that emerge from the data (Efron & Ravid, 2013, p. 180).

Based on the teacher-researcher’s understanding of the research that has already been done around parent partnerships and the context of the research site, there are several themes that are expected to emerge during the analysis portion of this research. First, the teacher-researcher expects that parents will highly value the partnership they have with the teacher-researcher. It is expected that parents will come in with various expectations of a partnership and that, through the emphasis on resource support, dialogue and training, all parents will find that the partnership meets many of their needs. Additionally, the teacher-researcher expects to find that parent attitudes regarding the parent partnership will be highly positive when their expectations are met.
The teacher-researcher also anticipates that parents’ confidence in the role of teachers will improve as a result of the collaborative partnership they have with the teacher-researcher. The teacher-researcher expects to find that the training parents receive during the monthly partnership meetings will support their increased confidence toward teaching early literacy concepts at home. It is expected that this confidence will support positive attitudes toward parents’ work as teachers of early literacy concepts.

**Ideas for Sharing Findings**

The implications this research proposal could have for the research site are wide-ranging and the teacher-researcher plans to share the findings in several contexts. First of all, the teacher-researcher plans to share the findings with the research site’s school administration. This conversation would allow the teacher-research to explore some of the other contexts in which the research could be used at the school site. Potential opportunities to share the research at the school site include (1) within a professional development presentation for all staff members at the research site, (2) as a part of the required new family orientation all families participate in prior to enrollment at the school, and (3) with parents who already have students enrolled at the research site, including those who are to be a part of the focus group. Both staff and parents at the research site would benefit greatly from understanding the findings of this study due to its potential to change the way that parents and teachers partner together at the research site. In addition to sharing the research findings within the research site, the teacher-researcher plans to prepare a presentation of the research project and findings as a professional development opportunity to share with similar schools around the state.
References


Appendix A

Initial Parent Survey

Name: _______________________________ Date: ______________________

Please rate your agreement for each of the following statements:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I enjoy reading with my child at home</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am excited about teaching my child to read and write</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I feel confident about my ability to teach my child to read and write</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am excited about the prospect of partnering with my child’s teacher</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

How do you feel about being responsible for teaching your child to read and write?

What are your expectations for our partnership this year?

What previous experience do you have teaching early literacy skills?
Please describe a typical reading and or writing experience for your child at home:

Please describe items your child has access to at home that enable him/her to engage in activities related to reading, writing, listening, & speaking:

Please describe items/resources you have access to at home that enable you to instruct your child related to reading, writing, listening, & speaking:
Appendix B

Final Parent Survey

Name: ____________________________________________ Date: ______________________

Please rate your agreement for each of the following statements:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I enjoy reading with my child at home</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am excited about teaching my child to read and write</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I feel confident about my ability to teach my child to read and write</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>I enjoyed partnering with my child’s teacher</td>
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How do you feel about being responsible for teaching your child to read and write?

In what ways, if any, has our partnership this year changed your feelings about teaching your child to read and write?

What aspects of our partnership played a part in changing your feelings?
Appendix C

Questions for Parent Interviews & Focus Groups

1. How did you feel about the prospect of teaching your child to read at the beginning of the year?

2. How have your feelings changed over the course of the year?

3. What experiences and skills have contributed to this change?

4. How do you feel about moving into first grade and continuing to teach your child to read at more advanced levels?

5. How has this partnership supported you throughout this year? Would you change anything about it?
Appendix D

Monthly Partnership Follow-up Reflection

Name: ____________________________________________ Date: ______________________

Did you attend your regularly scheduled meeting, or did you reschedule this month?

Reflecting on our monthly partnership meeting, what were your biggest take away(s)?

How has it impacted your feelings about teaching your child at home?

Do you have any lingering questions/concerns?
Appendix E

Monthly Partnership Meetings Sign-In

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