INCREASING PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT
IN A KINDERGARTEN CLASS

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Abstract

Twenty-three A.M. kindergarten students and family members in a rural Midwest school participated in the study. The purpose of the study was to determine and implement strategies that increased parental involvement in a kindergarten class. The method used to increase parental involvement was the Family Unit Networking with Themes which was developed by the teacher/researcher. Volunteering efforts made by the parents were successfully increased. In addition, there were also increases in contacts between the parents and the teacher/researcher. Family Unit Networking with Themes proved to be a satisfactory method of increasing parental involvement in a kindergarten classroom.
Acknowledgments

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Chapter 1

Statement of the Problem

The purpose of this project was to determine and implement strategies that increased parental involvement in a kindergarten class. The research questions were: 1. How did the review of literature define parental involvement? 2. What were the benefits of parental involvement? 3. What strategies or methods did the review of literature indicate that increased parental involvement in their child’s education? 4. Did parental involvement increase with the use of Family Unit Networking with Themes?

Justification

This project provided the researcher with the current strategies for involving parents in their child’s education. The researcher identified strategies that produced the most parental involvement at the kindergarten level. The researcher believed that by implementing the Family Unit Networking with Themes the overall achievement would be enhanced. The increased interactions between home and school are apt to produce a positive experience for parents, students, and educator. Epstein (1995) suggested that an improved parental view of the school and classroom would improve student attitudes in the classroom. The researcher believed student learning outcomes would be enhanced through the interactions that would occur between the home and school. This project provided the researcher with information to develop and implement a method to increase parental involvement at the kindergarten level.

Definition of Terms

- **Contact**: Interaction between parent and teacher researcher.
- **Family Unit Networking with Themes**: A structured form listing options designed around the parents’ family schedule and abilities enabling the family to participate
in monthly theme activities. The researcher developed the structured form based on strategies found in the research.

- **Kindergarten**: First formal year of public education in half-day everyday setting. Ages range between five and six years old.

- **Parental involvement**: Any adult who has a meaningful relationship with the child and is aware of school activities, desire to participate in their field of expertise, and will enable the child to be prepared for these activities.

- **Strategies**: Methods used by the researcher to contact the parents and to cause communication to occur between the parent and teacher.

### Limitations and Appropriate Use of Results

The researcher involved a half-day everyday kindergarten class from a small college-town location in northwest Ohio. The small size of the group used for the project may have influenced the results and therefore, the results may not be applicable to classes with more children. Time was limited to a four-week period and the duration of the project may have contributed to the results.
Chapter II: Review of the Literature

Parental involvement was a major issue since Goals 2000: Educate America Act included the importance of this avenue to enhance education in Title IV section of the act. Goals 2000 was an act passed by Congress in 1994 to provide a national framework to improve the educational programs of the country. Fager and Brewster (1999) stated that the United States Department of Education’s research from the last thirty years indicated that greater family involvement in children’s learning was a strategy that increased student accomplishment and was a positive step for students. It was a concept that both educators and family members embraced.

The purpose of this project was to determine and implement strategies that increased parental involvement in a kindergarten class. The questions that guided the project were: 1. How did the review of literature define parental involvement? 2. What were the benefits of parental involvement? 3. What strategies or methods did the review of literature indicate that increased parental involvement in their child’s education? 4. Did parental involvement increase with the use of Family Unit Networking with Themes?

Research Question #1: How Did the Review of Literature Define Parental Involvement?

According to Fager & Brewster (1999), parental involvement was defined as active participation of the children’s family member(s) in his/her education. They stated that the involvement did not necessarily have to be direct involvement. These authors believed that not all parents have the same skills, so the action might be more of a behind-the-scene approach. Parental involvement was defined as all activities that parents do to advance their child’s education. Epstein (1995) stated that schools must recognize and develop all segments of their parent population by recognizing family preferences,
value all roles of volunteers, and include a variety of methods for the parents to become active in their child’s education.

Fager and Brewster (1999) stated that parental involvement, which is so hard to attain, lies between the common ground of the parent’s love for their children and the desire for them to succeed and the educator’s goal of success for their students. The parents needed to be and should be advocates for their children. It was discussed that the teachers had to look at the entire educational picture and include all students when making decisions about parental and school interactions, remembering to stay within school policies in determining how to relate with parents and students. Putting these two demands together could often be frustrating for both the parent and teacher. The forming of partnerships between teachers and parents was one of the best ways to enhance children’s success in education. These partnerships were the ground floor of parental involvement.

According to Epstein (1995), students were the main players in their success and development in education. The role of parental involvement was to guide, stimulate, and encourage students to produce their own successes. She went further and developed a framework of six types of involvement:

**Parenting** - Help all families establish home environments to support children as students.

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

**Volunteering** – Recruit and organize parent help and support.
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.

Decision Making – Include parents in school decisions, developing parent leaders and representatives.

Collaborating with Community – Identify and integrate resources and services from the community to strengthen school programs, family practices, and student learning and development (p. 704).

She believed that the use of the definitions of the six types of involvement could help guide the educators and parents to fully understand what involvement means. In addition, Epstein felt that working together to implement a quality partnership has the potential of providing positive results for students, parents, and teachers.

The review of literature provided a thorough definition of parental involvement. Parental involvement was the active participation of family members in a child’s education. The family member could be involved directly such as volunteering in the classroom or indirectly such as taking the child to the library or helping with homework. The six types of involvement that helped define what parental involvement encompassed were parenting, communicating, volunteering, learning at home, decision making, and collaborating with community.

Research Question #2: What were the benefits of parental involvement?

The review of literature identified many benefits for all participants in parental involvement. Stevenson & Baker (as cited in Rimm-Kaufman & Pianta, 1999) stated that there was comprehensive evidence that illustrated children whose parents get involved in
the school showed higher academic achievement. Epstein (as cited in Rimm-Kaufman & Pianta, 1999) added that such involvement contributed to children’s academic performance, attitudes, and promoted expectations for future success in life. According to Eldridge (2001), family involvement benefited children in the areas of achievement, good-habit formation, and positive attitude for school and life. Goldenberg (as cited in Eldridge, 2001) added that the earlier the parents got involved and kept involved, the bigger the rewards. Parent Teacher Association (as cited in What Research says about Parent Involvement in Children’s Education, 2002) stated that much research on the subject showed that when parents were involved students had higher grades, test scores, and graduation rates. The students tended to have higher motivation and a better overall self-esteem. In addition, the Parent Teacher Association felt that school attendance was high and there were a lower number of school suspensions when parents were involved. There was also a decrease in drug use and violent behavior. Epstein (1995) concluded that there were many positive results for students due to parental involvement. The students had an awareness of how important it was to put school high on their priorities and increased learning skills due to the use of parent volunteers. The student’s self-concept of their ability to learn increased and they realized that home and school life could go hand in hand.

Cotton & Wikelund (1989) found that parent attitudes toward the school improved when they became directly or indirectly involved with their children’s learning. Parents often doubted that their involvement would make any difference, but soon discovered that they made an important contribution at any level. Parents were an important link in the education of their child. Epstein (cited in Eldridge, 2001) concluded
that involved parents felt that it was important to help their children at home and had a better idea of what was being taught and how to support and encourage their child. It was found that involved parents were more likely to positively evaluate the abilities and merits of their child’s teacher. This resulted in positive communication between the teachers and parents. Epstein (1995) indicated that parents involved in their child’s education had a heightened awareness of challenges concerning parenting and felt more supported from the school and other parents. The parents who become involved had a better understanding of the teacher’s job and gained skills in the area of volunteer work. The parents had a feeling of ownership and an awareness of the importance their voice has in school decisions.

Teachers also benefited from parental involvement. Cotton & Wikelund (1989) purposed that school personnel also benefited from increased parental involvement. They stated that school personnel had a better rapport with the parents, which led to parents’ increased eagerness to support schools with their time, resources, and special projects. Epstein (as cited in Eldridge, 2001) reported that a teacher who involved parents in the children’s learning process had a greater understanding of the families’ cultures, awareness of parental interest in helping their children, and a respect for time and abilities of the parents. Teachers could better design homework assignments to match home expectations. There was a heightened awareness of community resources to enhance the curriculum and an appreciation for the use of a parent network for communications (Epstein, 1995).

In summary, all participants benefited from increased parental involvement. The students had higher academic achievement, a positive self-esteem, higher graduation
rates, and a positive attitude toward school. Parents gained skills in volunteering, realized they made a difference in their child’s education, and took ownership in school activities and policies. Teachers also benefited in increased parental involvement by achieving a better understanding of the home environments of their students and an awareness of possibilities for educational enhancement in the community. Practical expectations by the teacher resulted in increased student learning.

*Research Question #3: What strategies or methods did the literature indicate increased parental involvement?*

Cotton & Wikelund (1989) stated that two obstacles needed to be addressed in order to have meaningful parental involvement. The two obstacles were lack of planning and not enough mutual understanding. The most successful parent involvement happened when parents were offered a variety of roles in the context of the program. They believed that the educator should consider all roles to be equally important. The parents should be able to choose from activities that fit into their schedules, preferences, and talents. In addition they stressed the importance of communicating to parents that they are important and that they make a difference in their child’s school career, to teach parents how to model good learning habits, and to develop programs that have parents involved with the instruction.

Hobson (1979) outlined five essentials to parental involvement. These five essentials were:

1. Give the parents the opportunity to share what they believe the role of the school should be to ensure quality education.

2. Be sure the opportunities given to parents to get involved are sensible and important.
3. Continue to reach out to parents in a kind and sensitive manner.

4. Keep the involvement a team approach where parents and teachers are learning from one another.

5. Share the power with the parents to make wise decisions about the children.

She stated that the more involved the parents were the better decision-makers they became.

Williams & Chavkin (as cited in Eldridge, 2001) explained that the first aspect of parental involvement was to have an open and welcoming classroom climate. This helped break down the barriers for those parents who have not had good experiences with school in the past. The barriers could have been formed during their own education or that of an older child. Activities that validated parents’ accomplishments would create a sense of cooperation and connection with the classroom and ultimately have a positive effect on the education of their child. In addition, they believed that the teacher should have parents become involved by sharing a strength of the parents with class. These could include the parent’s hobby, career, or being a surprise parent reader. Parental involvement programs should be tailored to the child’s learning and give the parents clear guidance on how to help their children. Teachers should be sensitive to the unique characteristics of each family and offer varied times and opportunities for parental involvement to occur.

According to Kimberly Moore (2001), getting to know the families was a vital part of providing the best learning atmosphere. Facilitating family bonding could be attained in many ways such as family and grandparent nights, community service projects, and having one family mentor a new family enrolled in the school. The role of
the family mentor would be to answer questions that the new family may have had and help the new family become involved in the school community.

Focusing on the strengths of the family was also important according to Workman & Gage (1997). By the use of communication, community, and collaboration, parental involvement could be increased. They stated that communication must be open, show respect for the parent, and contain a sense of shared accountability to enhance education by working together. The communication should be positive and ongoing throughout the year. Parents needed to feel comfortable in contacting the teacher. The school had a spirit of community where all realized that to educate the children they must work together using everyone’s strengths to enhance the learning process. Collaboration was the key part in the process of working together for the benefit of the child. They believed that teachers and parents start by setting down goals for the children and both work together all year to achieve these goals.

The review of literature indicated that there were many types of strategies and methods that could be used to increase parental involvement. Epstein (as cited in Eldridge, 2001) reported that these included preplanning by the teacher, an understanding by the teacher of the parents’ culture, a respect by the teacher for the parents’ opinions and expectations of education, and opportunities for parents to be involved in meaningful ways that stress the strengths and expertise of the parents. The researcher found that teachers and parents needed to work as teams and have shared power in making decisions for the student. In addition, the classroom environment should be welcoming to parents and other family members and positive communication between educators and parents should continue throughout the year. Additional methods to increase parental
involvement included family and grandparent night, working on projects for the good of the community, or having families mentor newcomers to the school system (Moore, 2001).

**Conclusion**

The review of literature defined parental involvement as the active participation of family members in a child’s education. The level in which a family member is involved may vary between directly involved such as volunteer work and mentoring or indirectly such as doing flash cards at home or taking the child to the library. The six types of involvement include parenting, communicating, volunteering, learning at home, decision making, and collaborating with community. Each type of involvement helps define what parental involvement encompasses (Epstein, 1995).

The research identified that all participants benefited from increased parental involvement. The students tended to have higher academic achievement, positive attitudes toward school, and higher expectations for their future. Students whose parents were involved with their education had higher graduation rates and a positive self-esteem according to Parent Teacher Association (as cited in What Research says about Parent Involvement in Children’s Education, 2002). Students realized that school was vital because the school and their family were working together to shape their educational experience. Parents’ attitudes toward school improved when they became involved and realized that what they contributed did make a difference in their child’s education. Parents gained skills in volunteering and felt confident in helping their child at home. The parents also had a sense of ownership in the school activities and policies.
The review of literature indicated that teachers benefited from parental involvement by achieving greater understanding of the home environments of their students, greater awareness of possibilities for educational enhancement in the community, and empathy with their students in the educational needs of their classroom (Cotton & Wikelund, 1989). Teachers varied the expectations according to the families and backgrounds of the students. Realistic expectations caused greater success in student's learning (Epstein, 1995).

Strategies that increased parental involvement included preplanning by the teacher, an understanding by the teacher of the parents’ culture, a respect by the teacher for the parents’ opinions and expectations of education, and opportunities for parents to be involved in meaningful ways that stress the strengths and expertise of the parents (Cotton & Wikelund, 1989). Parents and teachers need to work as teams and must share power in making decisions for the student.

The classroom environment must be open and welcoming to parents. Family and grandparent night, working together on projects for the good of the community, or having families mentor newcomers are methods of increasing parental involvement (Moore, 2001). Continued positive communication between educators and parents throughout the year provided more opportunities for students to experience success in their school year, self-esteem, and academic achievement. Based on the definition, benefits, and successful models, the teacher/researcher developed a model and program to increase parental involvement.
Chapter III: Methods and Procedures

The purpose of this project was to determine and implement strategies that increased parental involvement in a kindergarten class. The research questions were: 1. How did the review of literature define parental involvement? 2. What were the benefits of parental involvement? 3. What strategies or methods did the review of literature indicate that increased parental involvement in their child’s education? 4. Did parental involvement increase with the use of Family Unit Networking with Themes?

Participants

Twenty-three A.M. kindergarten students and family members participated in the study. The students were enrolled in a heterogeneous classroom in a small college town located in a Midwest state. Eleven children were male and twelve were female. Seven of the participating families were Hispanic, fifteen were Caucasian, and one was African-American. Of the twenty-three families, fourteen were from two parent homes and nine were from single parent homes.

Instruments and Protocols

The Prior to Project Month’s data was used to establish a base line by which to evaluate the success of the Family Unit Networking with Themes as a strategy to increase parental involvement. During Project Month data was collected and conclusions were reached using the two sets of information.

Research Question #4: How did parental involvement increase with the use of Family Unit Networking with Themes?

Data was collected using a variety of data collection techniques to answer research question number four. The instruments and protocol were developed as a result
of the review of literature that indicated that many aspects needed to have a successful parental involvement program. Through the review of literature, it was indicated that the parents needed to be able to choose the activities that fit into their time schedule and talents. The literature also indicated that all involvement was important and needed to be acknowledged for the benefit of the students. These were all part of a parent involvement model developed by the teacher/researcher.

*Daily Contact Log.*

The first data collection technique was a Daily Contact Log to ascertain the actual number and type of contacts between parents and the school. This structured form was developed by the researcher to keep track of the individual parental contacts initiated by the parents or the teacher. The form was located on a clipboard that was kept on the teacher’s desk. After each contact, the student’s name and date were entered on the daily contact log along with checkmarks to indicate the type of contact that was made. The daily contact log had 6 sections that were to be checked. A checkmark went under the correct section to show the type of contact. The sections on the daily contact log included: 1. Family Member Contact (F-Father) (M-Mother) (O-Other), 2. Notes (P-Parent Initiated) (T-Teacher Initiated), 3. Telephone Calls (P-Parent Initiated) (T-Teacher Initiated), 4. Conversations (DP-Drop-Off/ Pick-Up) (O-Other), 5. Volunteer Effort By Parent (S- At School) (H- At Home), 6. Visits (T-Teacher Visit At Home) (P-Parent Visit At School). There was also a comment section where short notes were kept by the teacher/researcher to clarify the essence of the communication. The teacher/researcher kept track of the contacts made prior to the implementation of the project on a Prior to Project Daily Contact Log (see Appendix A for a copy of this form). The same
information was gathered during the implementation of the project on a form entitled During Project Daily Contact Log (see Appendix B for a copy of this form). The instruments were identical.

**Check List.**

Data was also gathered on research question number four through the use of a checklist. The checklist was formulated by the teacher/researcher to gather information pertaining to attendance of the kindergarten students, participation in Show and Tell, and the return rate of weekly homework for a one-month period. The first column listed all the children's names. The second column was used to tally each child's days absent for the month. The third column had numbers one through four listed. The column was to record student participation. The teacher/researcher circled a number each time the child participated in the weekly Show and Tell activity during the month. The fourth column also had number one through four listed. This was to monitor return rate of student homework. The teacher/researcher circled a number each time the child returned the weekly homework activity. The fifth column provided space for researcher comments. A Prior to Project Checklist was used before the implementation of the project (see Appendix C for a copy of this form). The same information was gathered during the implementation of the project on a form entitled During Project Checklist (see Appendix D for a copy of this form). The instruments were identical.

**Student Contact Log.**

A Student Contact Log was developed by the teacher/researcher to identify each contact that occurred between the teacher/researcher and parent of each individual student. The form recorded the identical information that was on the Daily Contact Log
for each student on their individual Student Contact Log. Information for each student was gathered and recorded during the Prior to Project period and also During Project month (see Appendix E for a copy of this log). The Student Contact Log provided a method to check individual students rather than the classroom as a whole.

*Family Unit Networking with Themes Letter.*

The teacher/researcher developed a Family Unit Networking with Themes letter to encourage communication between the parents and educator. The teacher/researcher chose the theme of Dictionary Month to incorporate the aspects indicated from the literature that would enhance parental involvement. The Family Unit Networking with Themes letter began with a short paragraph which introduced Dictionary Month and contained check lists for the parents to choose home activities and school activities. Some of the activities included reading to child at night, or helping the child to find Show and Tell items. Other activities offered opportunities for the parent or person with meaningful relationship to the child to participate in classroom activities such as being a surprise reader or sharing a personal occupation or hobby with the class. The parent or person with meaningful relationship was asked to sign the Family Unit Networking with Themes letter and include telephone number if they had selected activities that required attendance in the classroom (see Appendix F for a copy of this letter).

*Response Chart.*

The data collected by the Family Unit Networking with Themes letter was recorded on a response chart. The chart had a column for the student’s name, and the other columns corresponded with the choices provided on the Family Unit Networking with Themes letter (see Appendix G for a copy of this chart). Choices of the parents or
persons with meaningful relationships were checked in the appropriate column in the response chart.

*Activity List.*

The Activity List was developed by the teacher/researcher to record each parental volunteer for each activity that had been scheduled for Dictionary Month. The first column listed the activities chosen to celebrate Dictionary Month. These activities were art projects, a birthday party for Noah Webster, surprise readers, items for center time, and chaperones for a library trip. Each activity had numbered blanks under them. The blanks were used to fill in the names of the parents under the activities for which they had volunteered. The number of blanks under each activity ranged from three to five (see Appendix H for a copy of this list).

*Dictionary Month Volunteer Note.*

The Dictionary Month Volunteer Note was used to verify the type of involvement each parent or person with meaningful relationship with the student would provide during Dictionary Month. The Dictionary Month Volunteer Note had three sections. The first section was a short letter from the teacher/researcher thanking the parents for offering to volunteer. The second section included four blank lines where the teacher/researcher filled in the type of activity that had been chosen for the parent to accomplish. The third section of the note was a response section for the parent to fill out. It included a yes/no choice to be circled to indicate acceptance of the chosen activity or the desire to decline the activity. The Dictionary Month Volunteer Note also included an additional comment
line for the parent to fill out if they wished and a line for the parent’s signature and the name of the student (see Appendix I for a copy of this note).

Summary

The instruments that were used to gather data were a Daily Contact Log used to record the number and type of contacts between the teacher/researcher and the parents of the students. Another instrument was a Check List on which attendance, participation in show and tell, and the return of finished homework were recorded. A third instrument was the Student Contact Log. The Student Contact Log was an individual record of the number of contacts between the parents of a student and the teacher/researcher. The teacher/researcher developed a Family Unit Networking with Themes letter that was sent home to the parents providing them with opportunities to volunteer for suggested activities and providing opportunity for them to suggest activities in which they excelled. The teacher/researcher developed a Response Chart on which each parent volunteer choice was recorded. The Activity List identified the activities that would be used for the Dictionary Month Theme and listed the parent volunteers that were chosen for each activity. The last instrument and protocol was a Dictionary Month Volunteer Note used to express appreciation to the parents for volunteering, identified the area or areas of their participation, and provided an opportunity for the parent to accept or decline the volunteer activity.

Procedures

Before school started in the fall, an explanation letter of the project was written to the principal (see Appendix J for a copy of the letter). This was done to inform the principal of the projected activities to be accomplished during the Prior to Project Month
and the During the Project Month. The parents or persons with meaningful relationships also received a letter of explanation included in the first Mottashed’s Memo of the year, notifying them that the teacher/researcher was involved in a Master of Arts educational program and would be involving the Kindergarten classes to complete the final goal of enhancing the Kindergarten program (see Appendix K for a copy of the letter).

On the first school day in September, the teacher/researcher began to list on the Prior to Project Daily Contact Log, each contact that was made concerning a student. Communications by the teacher and administration to all parents were not included in the study. Some examples of communications that were not included in the study included all-school mailings, monthly letters from the principal, the weekly note the teacher/researcher wrote to each student informing them of the coming week’s activities, and blurbs from outside organizations such as the Girl Scouts. Notes written by the parents concerning daily operating procedures such as how the children were to get home or who was picking the children up were excluded also.

The teacher/researcher listed a contact when there was communication about the children on an educational or personal matter such as positive or negative behavior in the classroom or a parent or person with meaningful relationship volunteering to help in the educational process. The log entry included the date, name of student, type of contact made, and a short comment about the interaction. At the end of each day, the daily contacts were also recorded on the individual student contact log. Contacts were recorded for interactions that occurred during the week and weekends. At the end of the Prior to Project Month, the teacher/researcher tallied each column on the Prior to Project
Checklist and numbered the amount of contacts make for the month. The Prior to Project Student Contact Logs were also tallied for each student.

The Family Unit Networking with Themes interaction between the teacher/researcher and parents started a week before the beginning of October when the teacher/researcher sent home a copy of the Family Unit Networking with Themes letter entitled *Dictionary Month* with each student. The parents were encouraged to participate in their children's education by volunteering their time to help with the activities planned around the special theme for the month. The parents chose from a list of activities that included opportunities for involvement at home and at school. The parents filled out the forms and returned them to the teacher/researcher by the first of the project month. As the forms returned to school, the teacher/researcher charted each response to the Family Unit Networking with Themes letter on the response chart. The response chart listed the student's names with columns to be checked that matched the involvement activities on the Family Unit Networking with Themes letter.

The teacher/researcher used the lesson plans for the month to make a list of activities that could be done throughout the month by the parent volunteers such as art projects or providing supplies for Noah Webster's birthday party. The teacher/researcher used the response chart to fill in parent's names on the list of activities that needed to be completed for the month. Parents were assigned to at least one activity that they had marked on the Family Unit Networking with Themes letter. The teacher/researcher contacted each parent by a telephone call or a Dictionary Month volunteer note to verify each parent's type of involvement. The teacher/researcher wrote yes or no beside each parent name on the Activity List when the Dictionary Month volunteer note was returned.
If the answer was no, the teacher/researcher used the response chart to ask another parent to complete the activity. During the project month the teacher/researcher referred to the activity list when making weekly lesson plans, have learning center items brought to school on time, sending art projects home to be cut out, and putting the children into groups when going on the fieldtrip.

During the project month, the teacher/researcher kept track of days missed, participation in Show and Tell, and the return rate of the weekly homework assignments on the During Project Checklist. The teacher/researcher also kept track of daily contacts made concerning the students on the During the Project Daily Contact Log. The notes written home, the telephone calls and conversations made concerning the students were all recorded on this form throughout the month. At the end of the month, the teacher/researcher tallied each column on the During Project Checklist, numbered the amount of contacts made for the month, and tallied each student’s individual contact log.

Timeline

Implementation of the parental involvement project began the first day of September and continued through the last calendar day in October. The Prior to Project Checklist and the Prior to Project Contact Log were used to record the needed information in September. The Family Unit Networking with Themes letter was sent home to parents on September 24, 2002. The letters were to be returned to school by October 1, 2002. The During the Project Checklist and the During the Project Contact Log were recorded in the month of October. The Dictionary Volunteer letter was sent home on October 4, 2002. The last day of the project was Thursday, October 31, 2002.

Data Analysis
The teacher/researcher evaluated the data of parental involvement to identify the strategies that were successful in increasing parental involvement by comparing the baseline data from Prior to Project Month to the data obtained During Project Month. The teacher/researcher will use this information to make decision for strategies to be used in the next academic year.

Research Question #4: Did Parental Involvement Increase With the Use of Family Unit Networking with Themes?

In order to analyze the data described in the Procedure and Instruments section, a data and analysis strategy was developed. Parental involvement was the desired outcome of the Family Unit Networking with Themes project. All instances of parental involvement were recorded in the instruments developed by the teacher/researcher. The first instrument used was the Prior to Project Daily Contact Log.

Prior to Project Daily Contact Log.

The teacher/researcher reviewed the Prior to Project Daily Contact Log and a system was developed to analyze parental involvement. The numbers in each column were tallied and the totals were recorded at the bottom of the column. The totals were also put into percentages at the bottom of each column. The comment section was coded blue for operational interactions and red for volunteer interactions. These totals were tallied and the totals were recorded at the bottom of the column.

Prior to Project Check List.

The teacher/researcher reviewed the Prior to Project Check List and tallied the days missed at the bottom of the column, tallied the number of times the student
participated in show and tell at the bottom of the column, and tallied the number of times completed homework was returned at the bottom of the column. The totals were put into percentages at the bottom of each column.

The Prior to Contact Student Log.

The teacher/researcher reviewed the Prior to Contact Student Log and tallied each student once if the parent had made any volunteering contact during the month.

During Project Daily Contact Log.

The teacher/researcher reviewed the During Project Daily Contact Log and a system was developed to analyze parental involvement. The numbers in each column were tallied and the totals were recorded at the bottom of the column. The totals were also put into percentages at the bottom of each column. The comment section was coded blue for operational interactions and red for volunteer interactions. These totals were tallied and the totals were recorded at the bottom of the column.

During Project Check List.

The teacher/researcher reviewed the During Project Check List and tallied the days missed at the bottom of the column, tallied the number of times the student participated in show and tell at the bottom of the column, and tallied the number of times completed homework was returned at the bottom of the column.

During Project Contact Student Log.

The teacher/researcher reviewed the During Project Contact Student Log and tallied each student once if the parent had made any volunteering contact during the month.
The final four areas of analysis were the Family Unit Networking with Themes letter, the Response Chart, the Activity List, and the Dictionary Month Volunteer Note. These protocols were primarily used by the teacher/researcher for the implementation of the Family Unit Networking with Themes Dictionary Month Unit, and were not directly related to the parental involvement outcomes for the study. Therefore, these areas were not categorized or coded by the teacher/researcher for data analysis.

Summary

All student data that was analyzed by the teacher/researcher was directly related to determine the increase of parental involvement with the use of Family Unit Networking with Themes. Parental responses were tallied and put into percentages. The teacher/researcher identified increases and decreases in types of parental involvement by reviewing the analyzed data.
Chapter IV: Results

Introduction

The purpose of this project was to determine and implement strategies that increased parental involvement in a kindergarten classroom when Family Unit Networking with Themes was incorporated in the classroom instructional procedures. The research questions were: 1. How did the review of literature define parental involvement? 2. What were the benefits of parental involvement? 3. What strategies or methods did the review of literature indicate that increased parental involvement in their child’s education? 4. Did parental involvement increase with the use of the Family Unit Networking with Themes?

Through the review of literature, parental involvement was defined as contact between the teacher and parent or any adult who has a meaningful relationship with the child and is aware of school activities. Parental involvement seemed to increase parents’ estimation of a school’s effectiveness, gave parents a sense of ownership in the school, and enabled parents to gain skills in volunteering at school and helping the child at home. The teacher/researcher chose the Family Unit Networking with Themes to be the strategy for this project because it gave parents the ability to choose from the activities the ones that fit into their schedule, preferences, and talents. The theme chosen for the Family Unit Networking was Dictionary Month highlighting the life of Noah Webster and culminating with a birthday party in his honor.

Data Results
In order to answer research question #4: “Did parental involvement increase with the use of Family Unit Networking with Themes,” data was collected and analyzed. The first instrument used by the teacher/researcher to collect the data was the Daily Contact Log.

Comparison of Daily Contact Logs.

For the purpose of this study, the teacher/researcher collected data to be compared as a class unit and not as individual students. The teacher/researcher compared the seven sections of the Daily Contact Log. The first column in the Daily Contact Log was the Family Member Contact. There were 30 communication contacts made during Prior to Project Month. The teacher/researcher found that Prior to Project data showed that 13% of the communication contacts were made by fathers, while 73% of the communication contacts were made by mothers, and 13% of the communication contacts were made by persons with a meaningful relationship with a student. There were 73 communication contacts made During Project Month. The teacher/researcher found that During Project Month, 4% of the communication contacts were made by fathers, 93% of the communication contacts were made by mothers, and 3% of the communication contacts were made by persons with a meaningful relationship with a student.
Figure 1. Percentages of father, mother, or persons with a meaningful relationship with a student contacts during Prior to Project Month compared to percentages of father, mother, or persons with a meaningful relationship with a student contacts During Project Month.

The data indicated that contact between the teacher/researcher and fathers as well as persons with meaningful relationships with a student decreased During Project Month. Although contacts with fathers decreased, contacts with mothers increased During Project Month.

The second section of the Daily Contact Log was the record of parent-initiated or teacher/researcher initiated notes. The teacher/researcher found that Prior to Project data showed that 5 of the 7 notes received were teacher initiated and parent-initiated notes were 2 of the 7 notes received. During Project Month, the teacher-initiated notes were 19 of the 24 notes received and parent-initiated notes were 5 of the 24 notes received.

Figure 2. Parent-initiated notes and teacher-initiated notes received during Prior to Project Month compared to parent-initiated notes and teacher/researcher-initiated note received During Project Month.
The teacher-initiated notes increased during the Project Month when compared to Prior to Project Month. The parent-initiated notes increased during Project Month when compared to Prior to Project Month.

The third section was a record of parent-initiated or teacher/researcher-initiated telephone calls. The teacher/researcher found that Prior to Project data showed that all 9 calls were from the teacher/researcher to the parents. There were no parental calls to the teacher/researcher. During the Project Month 60% of the 9 telephone calls were initiated by the teacher/researcher and 40% of the 9 telephone calls were initiated by the parents.

![Graph](image)

**Figure 3. Percentage of telephone calls initiated by teacher/researcher or parents during Prior to Project Month compared to telephone calls initiated by teacher/researcher or parents During Project Month.**

The data indicated that every telephone call during the Prior to Project Month was initiated by the teacher/researcher. The percentage of telephone calls During Project Month initiated by the teacher/researcher decreased while the percentage of telephone calls initiated by the parents increased.

The fourth section recorded the number of times conversations that were not on the telephone occurred between the teacher/researcher and the parents. Prior to Project Month, 86% of the 15 conversations that were not on the telephone were at drop-off or
pick-up time. The teacher/researcher found that 13% of the 15 conversations that were not on the telephone occurred in the grocery store, church and the mall. During Project Month 100% of the 14 conversations that were not on the telephone occurred during the drop-off or pick-up time.

![Figure 4. Prior to Project Month areas where conversations occurred compared to During Project Month areas where conversations occurred between the teacher/researcher and parents.](image)

Contact at drop off or pick-up time increased During Project Month. Conversations occurring in other areas decreased During Project Month.

The fifth section of the Daily Contact Log recorded volunteer efforts that were made while the parent was at school or projects the parent completed while at home. An example of a volunteer home project would be an art lesson where teacher/researcher would send materials home with the child to have the parent trace and cut out patterns and then send the traced or cut out pieces to school ready for the art lesson. Prior to Project Month, 3 volunteer efforts were tallied. These volunteer efforts were all made while the parents were at school. During Project Month, 24 volunteer efforts were tallied. The teacher/researcher found that 12 parent volunteering efforts occurred at school and 12 parent volunteering efforts occurred while the parent was at home.
Prior to Project Month compared volunteer efforts made at school and volunteer efforts made at home During Project Month.

The volunteer efforts made by parents while they were at home increased During Project Month. The parent volunteering efforts made at school increased with more volunteer efforts made at school During Project Month than during Prior to Project Month.

The sixth section of the Daily Contact Log recorded the visits made by the parents to the classroom and the teacher/researcher to the student’s homes. In both months, there was one parental visit made to the classroom. The teacher/researcher did not make any home visits either month.

The seventh section of the Daily Contact Log was the comment section. In this section, the teacher/researcher analyzed the type of contact made by parents. The two types were operational situations in the kindergarten room and those that were volunteer oriented in nature. Operational contacts between parents and kindergarten teachers consisted of discussions about the student’s behavior or questions about classroom procedure. Volunteer oriented contacts were contacts that dealt with parents participating in the classroom itinerary. Thirty contacts were made between the teacher/researcher and
parents during the Prior to Project Month. Twenty of these contacts were operational contacts. The teacher/researcher found that ten of the contacts were volunteer oriented in nature. There were seventy-three contacts between the teacher/researcher and parents during the Project Month. Sixteen of these contacts were operational in nature, while fifty-seven were volunteer oriented in nature.

![Graph showing operational and volunteer oriented contacts](image)

**Figure 6.** Operational contacts and volunteer oriented contacts during Prior to Project Month compared to operational contacts and volunteer oriented contacts made During Project Month.

Operational contacts decreased During Project Month compared to Prior to Project Month. The volunteer oriented contacts increased During Project Month compared to the Prior to Project Month.

Comparison of Check Lists.

For the purpose of this study, the teacher/researcher collected data to be compared as a class unit and not as individual students. The days the students were present, the times the students participated in Show and Tell, and the times the students completed and returned homework were recorded on the Prior to Project Check List. The teacher/researcher also had the same information available for the During Project Month Check List. The totals for the class for the Prior to Project and for During Project Month
were compared. There were 20 days in the Prior to Project Month, giving the possibility of a total of 480 days for the class. There was 97% attendance in Prior to Project month. There were 24 days During Project Month, making the total of 576 days possible attendance for the class. There was 97% attendance During Project Month also. There were 96 opportunities for the students to participate in Show and Tell during Prior to Project Month. 81% of the class participated in Show and Tell during the Prior to Project Month. There were 96 opportunities to share During Project Month. The teacher/researcher found that 86% of the class participated in Show and Tell During Project Month. There were 96 opportunities to bring homework to class. The teacher/researcher found that 89% of the class returned all homework completed during Prior to Project Month. There were 96 opportunities to bring homework to class During Project Month. The teacher/researcher found that 82% of the class returned all homework completed during the During Project Month.

*Figure 7. Percentage of days present in Prior to Project Month compared to percentage of days present During Project Month.*
The data indicated that attendance was the same in both months. The Show and Tell activities increased during the Project Month. The number of completed homework returned to school decreased during the Project Month.

**Comparison of Student Contact Logs.**

The Student Contact Logs compiled the individual students whose parents had volunteered. The teacher/researcher tallied each student once if the parent had volunteered. There were seven student’s parents out of the class total of twenty-four who
volunteered in the Prior to Project Month. The teacher/researcher found that 29% of the parents volunteered in the Prior to Project Month. There were nineteen student’s parents out of the class total of twenty-four who volunteered During Project month. The teacher/researcher found that 79% of the parents volunteered During Project month.

![Bar graph showing percentage of students whose parents volunteered in Prior to Project Month compared to During Project Month.]

**Figure 10. Percentage of students whose parents volunteered in the Prior to Project Month compared to the percentage of students whose parents volunteered During Project month.**

There was an increase in the number of parents who volunteered with the teacher/researcher During Project Month in comparison to the Prior to Project Month.

**Summary**

Contact between the teacher/researcher and fathers as well as persons with a meaningful relationship with a student decreased During Project Month. Contact with mothers increased During Project Month.

The teacher-initiated notes increased During Project Month when compared to Prior to Project Month. The parent-initiated notes increased During Project Month when compared to Prior to Project Month.
Every telephone call during the Prior to Project Month was initiated by the teacher/researcher. The percentage of telephone calls During Project Month initiated by the teacher/researcher decreased while the percentage of telephone calls initiated by the parents increased.

Contact at drop off or pick-up time increased During Project Month.

Conversations occurring in other areas decreased During Project Month.

The volunteer efforts made by parents while they were at home increased During Project Month. Parent volunteering efforts made at school increased as well.

In the Prior to Project Month there was one parental visit to the classroom. During Project Month there was also one visit to the classroom made by a parent. There were no home visits made by the teacher/researcher on either month.

Operational contacts decreased During Project Month, while volunteer contacts increased During Project Month.

The data indicated that student attendance remained the same during both months studied. There was a small increase in participation in Show and Tell During Project Month, but Homework successfully completed and returned was less During Project Month.

There was an increase in the number of parents making volunteer oriented actions During Project Month compared to the Prior to Project Month.
Chapter V: Discussion

*Introduction*

The purpose of this project was to determine and implement strategies that increased parental involvement in a kindergarten class. The research questions were: #1. How did the review of literature define parental involvement? 2. What were the benefits of parental involvement? 3. What strategies or methods did the review of literature indicate that increased parental involvement in their child’s education? 4. Did parental involvement increase with the use of Family Unit Networking with Themes?

*Discussion*

Daily Contact Logs.

There was a decrease in the number of fathers who made contact with the teacher/researcher During Project month. Upon reviewing the data, the teacher/researcher realized that the volunteer contacts were primarily made by the mothers. Perhaps this was due to the traditional role in our community of mothers helping with the education extras. Another aspect could be that the mothers had more time to become involved in the new volunteer opportunities when given the option to do volunteer efforts at home as well as at school.

The teacher/researcher initiated notes increased During Project Month. This increase may have resulted because the teacher/researcher was communicating two ways with the parents. First, the teacher/researcher wrote a note explaining directions on a volunteer project to be completed by the parent at home and secondly, a thank-you note to express the teacher/researcher’s gratitude for the completed project. The parent-
initiated notes increased during Project Month. This might have been due to the teacher/researcher having more contact with the parents on all levels.

After the review of the data, the teacher/researcher realized that there was an increase in the number of parent-initiated telephone calls during Project Month. This may have occurred because the parents were beginning to assume responsibility for activities that were taking place in the kindergarten classroom. The parents may have also started to feel comfortable contacting the teacher/researcher at school because they were now part of the educational team of their children.

After the review of the data, the teacher/researcher realized that the conversations held with the parents about the student behavior or a volunteer activity were basically held at the drop off or pick up time during both months. Perhaps this occurred because they were convenient times for parents and the teacher/researcher to have communication with each other. The drop off or pick up time might have also been when the information that needed to be exchanged was fresh in the minds of the parents and teacher/researcher.

Family Unit Networking with Themes seemed to have contributed to the increase in the volunteering efforts made by the parents at school and at home. These results could have been because the parents were given the chance to volunteer for specific opportunities that corresponded with the education of their child. The parents may also had volunteered more because they could choose the volunteering effort that fit into their time schedules.

Upon the review of the data, the operational contacts decreased during Project Month. This could have been because the parents of kindergarten children seemed to be apprehensive and had many more operational contacts in the beginning of the school
year. An operational contact included a parent asking the teacher/researcher a question about which door to drop off her son or a behavior issue with a child. Another possible cause for the increase of operational contacts during the Prior to Project Month may have been due to the students not understanding the expected behavior of a kindergarten student and therefore, more contacts were needed with their parents. The reason there was an increase in volunteer oriented contacts during Project Month might have been because the parents were given a list of concrete examples of volunteer opportunities and they chose those opportunities that they felt most comfortable in completing.

Check Lists.

The attendance remained the same during the two study periods. This may be due to children wanting to be at school and the importance of education shown by most parents. Show and Tell participation did show a slight increase. Positive contact between their parents and the teacher/researcher could have been a reason for this increased appreciation of the opportunity to participate in Show and Tell. There was a decrease in the percentage of homework that was completed and returned during the Project Month. The students were excited about school and school-related responsibilities in the beginning of their academic careers. This may have caused the larger percentage of homework completed and returned in the Prior to Project Month. Additionally, the homework became more difficult as the school year progressed, and this may have been an additional factor in the decrease in the percentage of homework completed and returned.
Student Contact Logs.

During the Prior to Project Month, seven parents volunteered. After the Family Unit Networking with Themes was incorporated During Project Month, nineteen parents volunteered. Again, the parents had concrete suggestions for their participation and the desire of the teacher/researcher to increase parental participation was realized. Due to the increased volunteerism and participation of the families of the class, the teacher/researcher believes the project was a success and would be profitable to be included in the curriculum.

The teacher/researcher found that there were also many positive unexpected results. The teacher/researcher had more parental volunteer offers than could be utilized During Project Month. Parents seemed to want to be part of their children's education when given the opportunity. The students in the class seemed to feel more self-confident During Project Month and were eager to participate in Show and Tell. This may be due to the parents being more informed about the expectations for the students and having them prepared for the activity. The parents also seemed to be more confident when they approached the classroom. This confidence could have been the result of gaining self-assurance in their ability to work with the teacher to provide a team effort in the education of their children.

Summary

The purpose of the study was to increase parental involvement in a kindergarten classroom in a small northwest Ohio college town. The method used to increase parental involvement was the Family Unit Networking with Themes. This method was developed by the teacher/researcher after the review of literature.
One instrument that was used to gather data was a Daily Contact Log which was designed to record the number and type of contacts between the teacher/researcher and the parents of the students. Another instrument was a Check List on which the attendance, participation in Show and Tell, and the return of finished homework were recorded. The third instrument used to collect data was the Student Contact Log. The Student Contact Log was an individual record of the number and type of contacts between the parent and the teacher/researcher.

The Prior to Project data was collected during the month of September. The Family Unit Networking with Themes Letter was sent home at the end of September for the parents to fill out and return. The During Project data was then collected during the month of October. All analyzed student data was related to determining if there was an increase of parental involvement with the use of Family Unit Networking with Themes. Parental responses were tallied and put into percentages. The teacher/researcher identified increases and decreases in areas of parental involvement by reviewing the analyzed data.

Contact between the teacher/researcher and fathers as well as persons with a meaningful relationship with a student decreased During Project Month. Contact with mothers increased During Project Month.

The teacher-initiated notes increased During Project Month when compared to Prior to Project Month. The parent-initiated notes increased During Project Month when compared to Prior to Project Month.

Every telephone call during the Prior to Project Month was initiated by the teacher/researcher. The percentage of telephone calls During Project Month initiated by
the teacher/researcher decreased while the percentage of telephone calls initiated by the parents increased.

Contact at drop off or pick-up time increased During Project Month.

Conversations occurring in other areas decreased During Project Month.

The volunteer efforts made by parents while they were at home increased During Project Month. In both months, one parent visited the classroom to watch and observe.

The operational contacts decreased During Project Month, while the volunteer contacts increased During Project Month.

The data indicated that student attendance remained the same during both months studied. There was a small increase in participation in Show and Tell During Project Month, but Homework successfully completed and returned decreased During Project Month. There was an increase in the number of parents who volunteered During Project Month compared to the Prior to Project Month.

Conclusion

The teacher/researcher concluded that the Family Unit Networking with Themes was a successful method to increase parental involvement in the kindergarten classroom. This conclusion was supported by the increase in Show and Tell participation, parent initiated telephone calls, parental volunteering activities done at home, and the increase of volunteer oriented contacts made between the parent and teacher/researcher. The actual number of parents who volunteered to help with the kindergarten activities increased also. The increase of parental involvement made the project valuable for the teacher/researcher.
Recommendations

It was recommended that the teacher/researcher develop a questionnaire for the parents to further discover the areas of expertise that were of interest in the homes of the students. It was also recommended that the study be done later in the year. The students and parents may be more comfortable with the kindergarten routine at that time.

It was recommended that research could focus on increasing the participation of fathers in the classroom environment. It was also recommended that research be done on attaining more parental confidence and familiarity with the school environment before their child’s first day of kindergarten.
References


http://www nwrel org request/march99/index.html


APPENDIX A - PRIOR TO PROJECT DAILY CONTACT LOG
## PRIOR TO PROJECT

### DAILY CONTACT LOG

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1. **FAMILY MEMBER CONTACT** (F - FATHER) (M - MOTHER) (O - OTHER)
2. **NOTES** (P - PARENT INITIATED) (T - TEACHER INITIATED)
3. **TELEPHONE CALLS** (P - PARENT INITIATED) (T - TEACHER INITIATED)
4. **CONVERSATIONS** (DP - DROP-OFF / PICK-UP) (O - OTHER)
5. **VOLUNTEER EFFORT BY PARENT** (S - AT SCHOOL) (H - AT HOME)
6. **VISITS** (T - TEACHER VISIT AT HOME) (P - PARENT VISIT AT SCHOOL)
APPENDIX B – DURING PROJECT DAILY CONTACT LOG
# DURING PROJECT

## DAILY CONTACT LOG

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APPENDIX C – PRIOR TO PROJECT CHECK LIST
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APPENDIX D – DURING PROJECT CHECK LIST
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APPENDIX E – STUDENT CONTACT LOG
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APPENDIX F - FAMILY UNIT NETWORKING WITH THEMES LETTERS
Dear Parents,

During the month of October, we will be celebrating Noah Webster's birthday by declaring October "Dictionary Month." I am in need of volunteers to help with this special theme. You can share your time by helping while you are at home or at school. Please check all the ways that you would like to be involved in your child's education.

**Home Activities**

- Read to child nightly
- Use dictionary at home
- Guide child with homework
- Help find Show and Tell items
- Play games with child
- Take a trip to the library
- * Cut, color, and/or glue items at home for room projects
- * Provide a treat for Noah's birthday party
- * Provide small items for learning centers

**School Activities**

- * Be a surprise reader
- * Be a chaperone for the trip to the library
- * Help with games at the birthday party
- * Share an occupation or hobby with class

Please use this space to suggest another area in which you would like to help.

Additional comments:

(Your name) ___________________________ (Student’s name) ___________________________

Please list your phone number if you marked any item that has a star. I will contact you with the needed details. Thanks!

* ___________________________ ___________________________
  (Phone number) (Best time of day to contact you)

Please return this completed form by the first of October. Thank-you so much for helping make your child’s education a team effort.

Sincerely,

Mrs. Mottashed
APPENDIX G - RESPONSE CHART
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response Chart</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Name</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Read to child nightly</td>
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<tr>
<td>Use dictionary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help w/ homework</td>
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<tr>
<td>Find show &amp; tell items</td>
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<tr>
<td>Play games w/ child</td>
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<tr>
<td>Take child to library</td>
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<tr>
<td>Color-cut items at home for class</td>
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<tr>
<td>Provide treats for class</td>
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<tr>
<td>Provide small items for learning centers</td>
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<tr>
<td>Be a surprise reader</td>
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<tr>
<td>Be a chaperone to the library</td>
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<tr>
<td>Help w/ games at class room party</td>
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<tr>
<td>Share a job-hobby with the class</td>
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<td><strong>Additional comments</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Suggestions</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX H – ACTIVITY LIST
Activity List

Art Projects - 1.  
                      2.  
                      3.  
                      4.  

Noah's birthday party - Treats - 1.  
                                           2.  
                                           Juice boxes -  
                                           Help with games - 1.  
                                                      2.  

Surprise Readers - 1.  
                      2.  
                      3.  

Send in items for center time - 1.  
                                           2.  
                                           3.  
                                           4.  
                                           5.  

Chaperones for library trip - 1.  
                                2.  
                                3.  
                                4.  
                                5.
APPENDIX I – DICTIONARY MONTH VOLUNTEER NOTE
Dictionary Month

Dear ____________________________,

I want to thank you so much for volunteering to help with activities during our special Dictionary Month. I have listed below how I need your assistance. Please let me know if this is fine with you by filling out the bottom section and returning it to school with your child tomorrow.

Thanks!
Mrs. Mottashed

Please circle yes or no.

Yes, I will be able to help with the activities
No, I will not be able to help with the activities.

Additional comments ____________________________________________

(Parent’s name) (Child’s Name)
Dear Mrs. Brugio,

I am writing to inform you that I am working towards a Master of Arts in Education degree, which focuses on increasing parental involvement efforts to increase parental involvement that centers educational experience for the student. I believe that working with parents can be crucial in ensuring a successful educational environment.

APPENDIX J – PRINCIPAL LETTER
Aug. 26, 2002

Dear Mrs. Brugler,

I am presently enrolled at The Defiance College to earn a Master of Arts in Education degree. During the summer, I began researching and writing my final project which focuses on increasing parental involvement in a kindergarten classroom. My goal is to implement methods to increase parental involvement that will provide a better relationship between home and school and a better educational experience for the students.

There are five sections to my action research project. The first and second sections were completed in July, 2002. They consisted of telling why the project was important and researching the subject of parental involvement to gain knowledge on the definition, benefits, and methods of incorporating parental involvement into the classroom. I will start section three on September first by keeping track of each parental contact that I have with the student's family members. I will also be recording the student's attendance, return of homework, and participation in Show and Tell during the month of September. On September 27th, I will send home a parental involvement sign-up sheet for the month of October concerning "Dictionary Month". I will again keep track of each parental contact during October to see if there was an increase in contacts made with parents. I will continue to track attendance, homework, and participation in Show and Tell in October to find out if these aspects of school life were affected by the parental involvement activities. Sections four and five will be completed in November and December. They consist of charting the results and reviewing the findings.

I have included a sample of each form that I intend to use during the course of my action research. Please review the forms and make any suggestions as to how I could improve them. I want to thank you in advance for being supportive of my goal to earn a Masters of Arts in Education degree.

Sincerely,

Marjean Mottashed
APPENDIX K - PARENT LETTER

Dear Parents,

This is to inform you that we are planning to implement a new schedule for our activities. The changes will be effective next week. The new schedule is as follows:

**Monday:**
- Morning: Kindergarten activities
- Afternoon: Gym

**Tuesday:**
- Morning: Kindergarten activities
- Afternoon: Gym

**Wednesday:**
- Morning: Kindergarten activities
- Afternoon: Gym

**Thursday:**
- Morning: Kindergarten activities
- Afternoon: Gym

**Friday:**
- Morning: Kindergarten activities
- Afternoon: Gym

Please make sure to keep your children updated with the new schedule. We will be sending out a schedule sheet all week for them to keep track of their activities.

**Important Notes:**
- Please ensure your children wear appropriate shoes for gym class.
- We will be sending a hocked list of items that will be used in the gym class.

Thank you for your cooperation and support.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Kindergarten Teacher
Mottashed's Memo

September 3, 2002

Dear Parents,

The first week went very well. I am proud of the children for trying so hard. I know this will be a great year. Kindergarten is an exciting time for the children. Please remember to send the children to school well fed so they can be ready to learn.

I’m happy to say that most of the children have returned their green Family Information sheet and the purple computer sheet all filled out. If you have forgotten, please send them to school tomorrow. Be sure to pay the $35.00 book fee as soon as possible.

The first day of each week you will receive a Mottashed’s Memo explaining the activities for the week. If there is any homework for the week, the letter will explain the directions. The homework for this week is attached to this memo. Please have the children cut apart the pictures and follow the given directions. Have fun!

Show and Tell is on Thursday every week. The weekly memo will tell what to bring for that week. The item usually follows the Letter Person we are learning about for the week. This week we met Mr. M. He has a munching mouth. Please have the children bring a small item that starts with the letter M on Thursday for Show and Tell.

Library will be on Thursday each week and gym on Friday. Please have the children wear tennis shoes each Friday. They do not need special gym shoes left at school.

The children are expected to print their names on their papers. Please have the children practice printing their first names using the chart found on the back of this memo. The first letter should be the only letter that is capitalized. Save the chart so you will know how the children will be making each letter.

Clean the children’s book bags out every night. I personally check the big section of each book bag daily. If you send me a note, make sure it is in the big section.

The children brought home a PTO fund raiser kit. We would like to raise money for the school through selling these items, but please do not feel that it is mandatory that the children participate.

The children need to go to the playground as soon as they get to school. Please do not stay on the playground with them or stand and watch from the sides. I know it is hard, but the children need to start talking and playing with their friends. Thanks! A good time for the children to arrive at school is 8:45 a.m. for the morning class and 12:45 p.m. for the afternoon class.

I am presently enrolled at The Defiance College to earn a Master of Arts in Education degree. I will be involving the Kindergarten classes to complete my final project. My goal is to enhance the Kindergarten program through this course work.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me. (Spencer – 419-782-3866) (Home – 419-395-1105)

Sincerely,

Mrs. Mottashed