Family Programs for Academic Learning

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Outside school time is by far the largest segment of the student's waking life; it constitutes a potentially powerful influence on the small portion of time spent in school as well as an enormous extramural resource. For this reason, policy makers have experimented with parent-education programs during the past two decades. Educators, however, cannot implement such programs in a vacuum. The cooperation of parents as well as teacher and students is essential. Hence the term "parent partnerships" is often used. This article reviews research on parent involvement, with a focus on families of poverty, and provides descriptions of major program models.

Need for Parent Participation

The National Commission for Excellence in Education's *A Nation at Risk* (1983) identified parents as children's first and most influential teachers. The commission emphasized that parents play important roles in fostering children's inquisitiveness, creativity, and self-confidence. The National Commission, moreover, pointed out that the achievement of U. S. students was, by international standards, mediocre at best. Data on the mathematics achievement of the top five percent of students in affluent countries showed American students in last place. Achievement scores in science showed American high school students below Europe and Japan and tied with those in third-world countries (Walberg, 1989).

In an important paper on American, Japanese, and Taiwanese elementary mathematics classes, Stevenson, Lee, and Stigler (1986) showed some of the reasons for poor American rankings. IQ tests revealed that all three groups were equally able at the start of schooling. Each year, however, Asian students drew further ahead in achievement. A small achievement

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advantage at the end of the first grade grew ever larger so that by fifth grade, the worst Asian class exceeded the best American class. The Asian students had a more rigorous curriculum and worked at a faster pace; they studied more at school and, with their parents' encouragement, at home. In the U.S., parents more often attributed success to luck or ability; but in Asia, parents cited hard work as the key.

A U.S. Department of Education (1987) study also shows that Japanese students work intensively and extensively on academic tasks both inside and outside school. The numbers of hours spent in class, on homework, and at special evening tutoring schools, as well as the number of school days per year, are all substantially higher than in the U.S. Observations in Japan indicate that time spent in class and in outside study is also used more efficiently. Japanese students may be getting twice as much study time as our own; and a Japanese high school diploma may be roughly equivalent in total study time to an American baccalaureate. Educators and parents, however, can influence these time allocations, especially if they cooperate with one another.

The Matthew Effect

Students who are slow initially in school often continue at a slower rate; those who start ahead often gain at a faster rate, which results in what has been called the "Matthew effect," or the academically rich getting richer, originally noted in the *Bible* (Matthew 25:29, New King James Version: "For to everyone who has, more will be given, and he will have abundance; but from him who does not have, even what he has will be taken away.") This effect characterizes socioeconomic advantages in child development, school learning, and communication among adults (Walberg & Tsai, 1983), as well as the development of reading comprehension and verbal literacy (Stanovitch, 1987).

Ironically, although improved instructional programs may benefit all students, they may confer greater advantages on those who are initially advantaged. For this reason, the first six years of life and the "curriculum of the home" are decisive influences on academic achievement (Walberg, 1984; U.S. Department of Education, 1986). This "Matthew effect" of the educationally rich getting richer has been observed in many U.S. studies (Walberg & Tsai, 1983), and its pervasiveness is one reason educators and policy makers are expanding the number and scope of parent-partnership programs before and during the school years.

Family Trends

Changes in families bode ill for youth and provide all the more reason to strengthen home-school ties. During the century from 1860 to 1960, for example, the divorce rate in the United States held between thirty to thirty-five per thousand marriages. After 1960, however, non-marital cohabiting relations rose dramatically, and divorces increased to unprecedented levels. At current rates, about one-third of all American children will see the dissolution of their parents' marriage. The percentage of working mothers, moreover, rose from thirty-two percent in 1960 to fifty-six percent in 1981 (Cherlin, 1980). In view of such dramatic changes, educators feel called upon to help families provide constructive academic stimulation for their children.

Declining parental time investments in children may account in part for poor academic and job readiness. In a report for the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, Coleman and Husen (1985) discussed three historical phases of family development that correspond to phases of economic development. In the subsistence phase, the family relies on children for work, and schools must free them and extend their opportunities. In the industrial phase, the goals of family and school converge to advance the child's development. In post-industrial affluence, however, childrearing may be an impediment to adult pursuits, and parents expect schools and other agencies to invest the time and energy in children's development. Any given society may have a mixture of educators and parents with these views or behaviors, which may cause various conflicts and misunderstandings, including those among generations.

In any case, Coleman (1987) persuasively argued that socioeconomically disadvantaged families can especially benefit from parent-education programs because they lack financial and psychological resources to help their children. They are short on "social capital," "the norms, the social networks, and the relationships between adults and children that are of value for the child's growing up. Social capital exists within the family, but also outside the family, in the community" (Coleman, 1987, p. 36). This point of view was consistent with psychological and educational theories that hold that coordinated school-home programs are likely to extend learning time and multiply effects (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Laosa & Henderson, 1991; Walberg, 1984).

Thus, programs can aid and encourage parents to provide their children with affection, guidance, habit-formation, and a consistent and constructive value system (Redding, 1991). Such programs go beyond academic psychological approaches (Walberg, 1984) to set norms for such parents characterized as "ready but alienated," "willing but frustrated," and "able but disengaged" (Redding, 1991, p. 152). They respond to research suggesting that parents find little reward in meeting teachers in conventional

schools (Johnson, 1991).

Increased Benefit for Poor Families

Poverty may be found among all ethnic groups and geographic areas of the U.S. Recently, about fifty percent of black children lived in poverty, as did forty-four percent of white children of non-Hispanic origin. About nine percent of poor children live in inner-city ghettos, twenty-eight percent reside in suburbs, and forty-four percent of poor children are in rural locations (Scott-Jones, 1991).

Of critical concern are childrearing practices that inner-city, minority families use to motivate their children. Scott-Jones (1991) cited the students' family environment among the causes for the disproportionate placement of minority students in special education programs. However, competent black children who were reared in poverty had involved parents who actively acknowledged and supported their children's interests and goals (Garmezy, 1985). Competent, resilient children (identified by their ability to cope adequately with adult-life situations) had better parental relationships; their parents were more supportive of their goals; and they provided a clearly defined system of sanctions (Werner & Smith, 1982).

An early example of what can be done was begun in one of Chicago's most economically-depressed neighborhoods. Educators and parents developed an exemplary early parent-education program for grades one to six called "Operation Higher Achievement" at the Grant School in Chicago's near west side (Walberg, Bole, & Waxman, 1980). A joint school staff-parent steering committee at Grant initially formulated seven program goals such as "increasing parents' awareness of the reading process" and "improving parent-school-community relations." Seven ten-member staff-parent committees met periodically to plan and guide the accomplishment of each goal. The goals were based on a parent survey that showed that they wanted closer school-parent cooperation, stricter school discipline, and more educational activities conducted in the school and community for their children.

The committees wrote staff-parent-child agreements to be followed during the school year. The district superintendent, the principal, and teachers signed contracts for educational services to be provided to each child. The parents pledged such things as: providing a quiet, well-lit place for study each day; informing themselves about and encouraging the child's progress; and cooperating with teachers on matters of school work, discipline, and attendance. The children also signed improvement pledges. Small business merchants in the community raised funds to support book exchange fairs and other school activities. Evaluation of this program showed that the otherwise low-achieving, inner-city children can make

normal middle-class progress in school (one year of achievement test gain in one chronological year).

Although parent-teacher interventions targeted on achievement goals may show the greatest learning effects, Williams (1983), at the Southwest Education Development Laboratory in Austin, Texas, described other constructive roles for parents in school programs. These roles include the following: audience for the child's work; home tutor; co-learner with the child; school-program supporter; advocate before school board members and other officials; school committee member; and paid school-staff worker. Although parents view their participation in some of these roles more favorably than do teachers and principals, all parties agree that there should be more parent involvement than now exists (Epstein, 1986).

The nation, moreover, can ill-afford to let any of these prospectively more productive agents remain a silent partner in improving educational productivity. Teacher training institutions could help by incorporating into teacher education programs information on family characteristics, the family impact on children's development, and ways to develop home-school relationships (Scott-Jones, 1991; Williams, 1991).

Partnership Models

Five categories of parent involvement emerged from Epstein's (1986) surveys of teachers, principals, parents, and students. The five categories include: (1) basic obligations of parents; (2) basic obligations of schools; (3) parent involvement at school; (4) parent involvement in learning activities at home; and (5) parent involvement in school governance and advocacy. Table 1 outlines sixteen specific strategies principals and teachers employ to involve parents.

Table 1. Sixteen Strategies to Involve Parents

1. Ask parents to read to their children regularly or listen to the child-ren read aloud.
2. Loan books, workbooks, and other materials to parents.
3. Ask parents to take their children to the library.
4. Ask parents to get their children to talk about what they did that day in class.
5. Give an assignment that requires children to ask their parents questions.
6. Ask parents to watch a specific television program with their child-ren and discuss the show.
7. Suggest ways for parents to include their children in any of their own educationally enriching activities.
8. Suggest how parents might use home material and activities to stimulate their children's interest in reading, math, and other subjects.
9. Send home suggestions for games or group activities related to children's schoolwork that can be played by a parent, child, and siblings.
10. Establish a formal agreement whereby parents supervise and assist children in completing homework tasks.
11. Establish a formal agreement whereby parents provide rewards and/or penalties based on the children's performance at school.
12. Ask parents to come to observe the classroom for part of the day.
13. Explain to parents certain techniques for teaching, for making learning materials, and planning lessons.
14. Give a questionnaire to parents so they can evaluate their children's progress or provide some other form of feedback.
15. Ask parents to sign homework to ensure its completion.
16. Ask parents to provide spelling practice, math drills, and practice activities, or to help with workbook assignments.

Note: Adapted from Epstein (1986).

As Epstein (1986) indicates, teachers report positive responses, across parents' educational backgrounds, to involving them in home-learning activities. Ninety percent of parents in Epstein's samples reported helping their children with homework occasionally, most with no direction from the child's teacher. Parents, however, participated more actively and had more positive attitudes when they received directions from teachers. Teachers believe that parent involvement promotes reading achievement gains, and more positive student attitudes toward and willingness to complete homework assignments.

Another report on teacher opinions shows that they believe the most successful parent-partnership programs emphasize either home visits, reading with children, or parents as tutors (Epstein & Becker, 1982). Each deserves discussion to show what kinds of programs are being tried. Those discussed below have been chosen because they illustrate diverse approaches, have been reported on in writing (though not necessarily in scholarly journals), and have at least some minimum evaluation.

The Home Visitation Component

Programs with a home visiting component appear to benefit participants and may eliminate the "wash out" effect—the dissipation of gains over time. At follow-up, achievement scores of treatment and control groups are comparable. In some programs, teachers visited homes and established communication with parents that continued throughout the year (Epstein, 1987). Three model programs will be discussed.

Home-Oriented Preschool Education

Gotts (1979) studied rural, lower-middle class West Virginia parents and their 600 three- to five-year old children who participated in the Home Oriented Preschool Education Program (HOPE). The program set out to prepare preschool children to participate successfully in school by increasing verbal interaction in the classroom and by reducing instances of extreme shyness, grade retention, and poor performance on standardized achievement tests. HOPE participants were selected from the geographically designated areas and randomly assigned to a treatment or a control group. As children left the program to enter school, the investigators repeated the same sample selection procedures to add subjects.

The HOPE intervention consisted of three components: (1) daily television lessons and follow-up home activities for the three- to five-year olds with companion parent guides that helped the parents understand what the child was learning on television; (2) weekly home visits by local, trained paraprofessionals who showed parents how to teach their children, listened to parents' concerns, and referred them to local health and social service agencies as needed; and (3) weekly half-day group experiences for children in a mobile classroom led by a teacher and an aide.

The daily television program, "Around the Bend," provided experiences to promote the child's cognitive development such as verbalizing answers, performing actions, and following directions. The central character, Miss Patty, provided a positive role model. About eighty percent of the parents and their children viewed selections from the more than 500 half-hour segments archived at Marshall University, Huntington, West Virginia.

The evaluation of HOPE indicated the TV program component effectively fostered the participants' active attending, responding, and cognitive development.

The home visitors, paraprofessionals with high school and some college, were chosen on the basis of two criteria: (1) their ability to relate to young children and their parents; and (2) recommendations by local school principals. They were provided continuous in-service training to enable them to conduct the weekly home visits, deliver the program materials, discuss developmental learning activities for the child, document program implementation and participants' reactions, and counsel or make referrals on child-care, nutrition, and health problems.

The "classroom on wheels" was staffed with one teacher and an aide who conducted eight half-day classes for fifteen children per session. Each child attended the portable classroom one half-day a week. The classroom component had three goals: (1) to reinforce the developmental activities provided by the TV component; (2) to provide a group socialization process; and (3) to provide the child experience with an alternate, non-family caretaker so as to reduce the child's potential separation anxiety upon entrance to regular school. The majority of parents were cooperative and committed to the program. The home visitor served as a role model and teacher to the parent.

Gotts (1981) reported positive cognitive effects for the treatment groups receiving home visits as measured on the Appalachia Preschool Test (APT), which measured children's early conceptual development, and the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test. The effects of HOPE on childhood curiosity (defined as the length of time up to fifteen minutes the child interacted with a mechanical instrument) emerged more significant for boys than girls; treatment children receiving home visits acted more curious than those in the control group. The treatment groups receiving home visits also demonstrated the most positive social interaction. Videotapes of groups of four children playing with a train indicated the treatment group initiated more constructive statements, was the most enthusiastic, and least inclined to withdraw from the activity compared with the control group.

The treatment groups' achievement (measured by report card grades) at grades one and two was significantly higher than the control group. Grade retention was significantly higher between grades one and nine for children who did not receive home visits. Grade retention, which was at the twenty-five percent level for the control group, was reduced to five percent by the home visits. The School Behavior Checklist indicated home-visited children were significantly more organized, and exhibited fewer symptoms of depression. The investigator ranked children's scores on the basis of coping ability: seventy-two percent of home-visited and sixty percent of controls were categorized as coping well.

At the completing of the pilot phase the investigators concluded that the HOPE delivery system could be operated by public schools with the direct involvement of the Appalachia Educational Laboratory. HOPE became part of a national demonstration project called "Home Starts." Replication studies were done in Virginia, Alabama, Tennessee, Ohio, and another part of West Virginia. Results of follow-up studies will determine the long-term effects of the intervention.

Home Instruction Program for Preschool Youngsters

Lombard (1981) reported the results of a controlled study of the Home Instruction Program for Preschool Youngsters for four- to six-year old rural children in Israel. Instructors showed mothers how to teach their children language skills, problem solving, and perceptual discrimination using highly structured materials. Weekly meetings alternated between home visits and group meetings. The weekly meetings emphasized teaching the mother specific activities for home instruction through role-playing. The first-year assessments indicated positive effects based on results of the Frostig Test of Visual Perception, the Goodenough Draw-a-Man Test, and the Columbia Test of Mental Maturity.

Parental Empowerment Program

The Parental Empowerment Program (Cochran & Henderson, 1986) involved 225 New York families and their three-year old children. The two-year intervention had two strategies. First, home activity visits by paraprofessionals were based on the assumption that parents are the experts concerning their own children. The home visits reinforced and enriched parent-child activities and provided information about child development. Second, the paraprofessionals brought neighborhood families together to share information in mutual support groups. The program positively influenced the number of home-school communications made by parents, and expanded the families' social support. Children who had been in the pre-kindergarten intervention had better first-grade report card grades in reading, language, mathematics, and science than a control group.

The Reading Component

Parent programs focusing on reading appear to have helped elementary school children. Two in the United Kingdom and one in the United States are notable.

Paired Reading

Morgan (1979) studied a Paired Reading-Parental Tuition Program designed for children with reading deficits. Paired reading, based on behavioral learning theory, involves the parent and child in simultaneous oral reading which provides the child with a reading model. In a second phase, the parent and child alternate reading aloud, and the parent provides praise and reinforcement. Morgan's experiment proceeded at home during daily quarter-hour sessions with weekly thirty-minute monitoring sessions. All subjects made gains in reading achievement. Bushell and Robson (1982) replicated the study with parents of seven-to eleven-year old children.

Haringey Reading Project

Hewison and Tizard (1982) reported on the Haringey Reading Project carried out by researchers from the London University Institute of Education who collaborated with teachers and parents at six multi-ethnic inner-London schools with poor reading scores. Parents helped their children read at home three times a week from material sent home. The children (aged seven to eleven years) who received help from their parents attained reading scores far superior to the reading scores of the control group.

Parents in Action

The Parents in Action Program (PIA) started in Alice, Texas, in 1970. Alice's population of 35,000 includes seven elementary schools, one junior high school, and one high school. The goals of PIA are: to bring school and community together; to reinforce children's education in reading and mathematics; and to recruit and train parents in ways that support existing programs dealing with language development, mathematics, and reading.

The program activities include the following:

- Parents view preschool TV programs to help students in the Alice Independent School District.
- Workshops train parents in reading and mathematics methods used in their schools.
- Orientation sessions are conducted for parents of preschoolers.
- Parents participate daily in the preschool program.
- Parents are trained to use mathematics and reading materials developed by parents in previous years.
- Activities are closely tied to school management systems.
- Parents participate in activity councils.

Initially, a PIA program operated at each school. The program focused on teaching parents crafts such as basket weaving which parents taught their children at home. PIA was administered from a Central Parent Involvement Center, with the emphasis shifted to an academic focus for the elementary school component.

Parents are recruited by letter, and the program is widely publicized in the local *Community Builder* and the *Alice Echo*, a newspaper whose editors are on staff at the central offices of the Alice Independent School District. Introductory, one-hour workshops are conducted on an ongoing basis for parents new to the district. Information regarding school policies and PIA operation and participation are provided. Migrant and immigrant parents are provided information on social security and welfare systems.

The director of PIA conducts annual workshops for Alice teachers. The teachers develop the PIA curriculum materials to complement, reinforce, and provide enrichment to the academic curriculum. Daily ninety-minute workshops were then conducted for up to twenty parents (predominately mothers) throughout the school year. The director of PIA, aided by a central office staff as needed, assists the parents in constructing games and activities based on the teachers' curriculum prototypes. Parents use this as an opportunity to demonstrate their artistry and creativity. For example, parents of primary-level students made alphabet cards illustrated with Speedy Gonzalez comic strip characters. Parents of beginning readers made "Dracula" sight-word vocabulary cards. The basic materials for these and other PIA workshops are purchased with Chapter 1 funds.

To expand the net of participation, the director of PIA scheduled neighborhood workshops in local churches during evening hours for working parents. This strategy succeeded in involving reluctant parents (who for some reason refused to attend sessions conducted at the local center).

The junior high school and high school PIA component aimed at averting students' school-related discipline problems. PIA staff procured the names and telephone numbers of students exhibiting absenteeism, poor grades, or symptoms of drug or alcohol abuse. The director contacted parents individually and provided family counseling in the students' homes. The family viewed the film "Parents in Action" which provides strategies for improving family communications.

Since Alice is a poor district, lack of consistent financial support presents an obstacle to PIA's continued success. Recent cuts in state funding forced the director to reduce his staff from twenty to about twelve. The district vetoed fund raising, but the director obtained the local bank's executive conference room for PIA use during off hours. PIA televises an annual award ceremony from the bank conference room.

The director cited a number of benefits from PIA, including gains in

reading and mathematics on state tests and better cooperation among parents, teachers, and principals. Moreover, twelve former aides in the program became certified teachers. The continued support of the central office staff, which consists of the superintendent, assistant superintendent, counselors, administrators, and special education staff, was crucial to the future of PIA. They provided assistance in recruiting parents to the program, planning curricula prototypes, and conducting daily workshops.

The Tutorial Component

U.S. teachers cite parental encouragement and supervision of learning activities at home as particularly helpful to successful school learning, but information is lacking about the kinds of parent tutoring or supervisory skills that are most appropriate (Epstein, 1987). Data on three parent-as-tutor programs, however, provide evidence of program effectiveness for preschool and elementary school students.

Parents-as-Tutors Home Learning Program

Working from the Home School Institute (in Washington, D.C.), Dorothy Rich (1979) developed home learning "recipes" for elementary school students and their parents. Her Parents-as-Tutors Home Learning Program was piloted in four classes of inner city and suburban first graders and their parents. The participants had eight bi-weekly experiences. For example, to help children gain the sense of discipline necessary to remain motivated, parents and children practiced the "no-nag writing system" (Rich, 1988). Families observed five minutes of silence daily. During this time family members wrote notes to one another such as, "Please pass the toast" and "May I have my lunch money?" Reminder notes were posted around the house (e.g., in the kitchen or on a child's pillow). The program showed positive gains in reading.

Mother-as-Teacher Programs

Waksman (1979) studied forty-eight three- to five-year olds and their mothers who were partners in the Mother-as-Teacher Program in Ontario, Canada, which included a three-week training program and a home visiting component. The parents carried out twenty-two activities with their children over a twenty-week period. Positive results were found on the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test, the Metropolitan Readiness Test, and teacher observations of child behavior.

Jungnitz (1983) reported a longer study in the U.K. of one year's duration. Parents taught their children school subjects at home. Weekly home visits by school personnel provided supervision and counseling for the families.

The program participants, two- and three-year olds, developed significantly in reading, mathematics, language, and motor skills.

Arkansas Parents: Partners in Learning Experiences

In 1981, the Baker Elementary School in Bentonville, Arkansas, implemented the Arkansas Parents: Partners in Learning Experiences (APPLE). Coordinated by the school counselor, APPLE helps parents learn to work with schools and their children. This statewide project, mandated and funded by the Arkansas legislature, provides training for project counselors and disseminates the training manuals and materials published by the Arkansas Department of Education. Act 37, one of thirty-three acts passed by the Arkansas Legislature in 1983, addressed the issue of educational reform in the state, and provided for an increase in student achievement through direct parent involvement in teaching basic skills to their children.

Act 37 directed the Arkansas Department of Education to develop and implement a structured program for training parents as teachers. It required the following program components: courses for parents to be offered by educational television; materials and study guides to accompany the courses; identification of teachers skilled in working with parents to conduct instructional sessions; resource speakers, films, and supplementary materials; and training for parents to implement the program.

An APPLE administrator conducts the statewide training program at Little Rock, and local coordinators attend a six-hour training workshop which emphasizes the following: developing parent-school partnerships; implementing parent involvement programs; maintaining parent involvement in the academic growth of their children; and identifying strategies designed to help parents enhance their children's academic skills in reading, language, and mathematics. The full-time APPLE counselors are former masters-level teachers, or persons holding administrator or counselor certificates.

As an example of the way the program was implemented, the school staff attempted to recruit all 600 of the third and fourth graders. Formal letters were dispatched to the parents of each Baker student announcing upcoming APPLE workshops for parents. Follow-up letters and telephone calls concluded each recruitment cycle.

Ten parent workshops were conducted in the 1987-88 school year, with twenty-five parents participating in each workshop. Typically, each parent participated in four sessions (or workshops) out of the total of ten. The parent participation rate for the current year is seventy-five to 100 parents. In 1985-86, fourteen parents participated. The target was 100% parent participation.

Each of the ten parent workshop sessions was two hours in length, with optional day and evening sessions. The project had an academic focus, providing parents training in assisting their child in reading, language, mathematics, and study skills. Training in each subject area was offered separately. The program emphasized communication skills between children and their parents with the objective of improving parenting skills.

The workshops were based on the APPLE training manual published by the Arkansas Department of Education and provided for Project APPLE. The manual contains workshop materials for each subject area mentioned previously, information on each topic, instructions for presentation, and activity sheets with duplicating sheets for dissemination to workshop participants. The authors advocate several presentation methods: lecture, question and answer with script included, and videotape.

Parents provided reactions to the workshops, indicating they preferred workshops conducted in a lecture format to those using videotapes. Parents liked having the opportunity to pose questions to the lecturer and exchange ideas with other parents. Time was a crucial factor for parents; some found workshops scheduled during daytime inconvenient. As a result, the program coordinator organized a Thursday evening session. Outcomes of the APPLE project included: Baker's student achievement improved; parents became more involved and interested in their children's school; parent involvement reinforced the children's school learning; parent/child communication improved. In the long run, it was expected that the project would reduce student discipline problems.

The APPLE Project was keenly supported by the principal and school administrative staff, who attended the parent workshops. Baker teachers expressed appreciation for the program, but did not support the project by attending the workshops. Limited parent participation impeded the success of the project; only about twenty percent of Baker parents were involved.

The School Community

In the late 1980s, the Academic Development Institute (ADI) had educated more than 10,000 Chicago-area parents on how to help their children. Although the programs were successful in helping parents and children, the board of directors was concerned about Matthew effects, reaching difficult-to-serve families, better integration of the program into the mainstream of the school, and sustaining and multiplying its effects.

With Chicago's extraordinary school-restructuring plan allowing for

parental governance of distinctive schools and extensive voluntary choice, the time seemed propitious for a new approach. Under grants from the MacArthur Foundation, ADI created the Alliance for Achievement in which 33 schools cooperated as development-demonstration sites to build a "school community" to unite the school's constituencies to deepen and expand the scope of learning (Redding, 1991).

With advice from James Coleman, Ralph Tyler, and Herbert Walberg, ADI helped each school to carry out the steps to a school community out-lined in Table 2. The aim was to develop a common and distinctive view of each school's purpose among educators and parents, identify four top-priority values of the school community, and enact systematic efforts to carry them out. This program represented a new order, a distinct and promising effort to at once establish and maintain systematic cooperative efforts of parents and educators, while encouraging lasting educational reforms.

ADI's blueprint for building a school community based on locally-defined educational values, Alliance for Achievement, was adopted by the Laboratory for Student Success (LSS) at Temple University in 1995. After further field testing in schools served by LSS (a regional educationl laboratory for the mid-Atlantic states), Alliance for Achievement became a component of Community for Learning, a nationally-validated model for comprehensive school reform based on the pioneering work of Margaret C. Wang.

Table 2. Steps to a School Community

Representation
- Establish a school council of the principal, four parents, and two teachers
- Develop a constitution for the school community

Value Base
- Adopt four school community values
- Restate the values as goals for all student

- Develop school community expectations for all teachers, parents, and students

Communication

- Prepare first School Community Report
- Integrate values and expectations into two-way, school-home communication

Education

- Offer education programs for teachers, introduce expectations, continue meetings, share suggestions
- Offer education programs for parents including a short course on each value and related expectations

Common Experience

- Plan a common experience (program, curricular component, activity, or event) for each value

Association

- Plan an association, a bringing together of people, for each value. Make one association intra-generational, one involving families and educators, and one involving college students and/or older generation

Note: Adapted from Redding (1991, pp. 154-155).

Conclusion and Implications

Synthesis of educational and psychological research in ordinary schools shows that improving the amount and quality of instruction can result in substantially more effective academic learning (Fraser et al., 1987). But since children spend about eighty-seven percent of their waking hours outside school, parent involvement is a second key to improvement. The effects of home interventions on learning are plausible and reasonable and consistent. Synthesis of research on short-term intervention programs show moderate and sometimes large positive effects on children's learning. The effects might be even larger if home-intervention programs were to be more systematic and sustained.

Parents view their participation in partnership programs more favorably than do teachers and principals, but all parties agree that there should be more parent involvement (Epstein, 1987). The nation, moreover, can ill afford to let any of these potentially more productive agents remain as silent partners in solving the national crisis in educational productivity.

Thus, while ongoing local evaluation and further research are in order, there seems little reason to hesitate in implementing more widely and systematically programs featuring home visiting, parent reading, parent tutoring, and other partnership programs that have been sporadically evaluated. Program features that prove effective for inner-city, minority

families and children of poverty include positive parental support of children's goals, a clearly defined system of sanctions, and commitment to parental obligations to ensure children's school success. These and other more specific practices discussed in this review can now be recommended.

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