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Parent Involvement in the Secondary Classroom and its Impact on Student Achievement

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Parent Involvement in the Secondary Classroom and its Impact on Student Achievement

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590 Individual Research
July 18, 2014

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Abstract

Research has demonstrated that parental involvement positively impacts student achievement (Hoang, 2007). However, parent involvement is less common in the high school classroom than in the elementary school classroom. Research has shown that little attention is given to parent involvement in high school compared to elementary school (Shumow, Lyutykh, & Schmidt, 2011). The objective of the research was to investigate effects of parent involvement in the secondary classroom and the impact that parent involvement has on student achievement. I achieved my research goal by administering surveys to parents identifying both their beliefs and practices about parent involvement. I also conducted action research in my own classroom to determine the effects that parent involvement in the secondary classroom has on student achievement. My final project consists of a literature review and an analysis and report of both the parent survey and action research. Even as it is difficult to conclude whether or not parent presence in the secondary classroom truly affects test scores, it can be concluded that parent presence positively affects the teachers, students, and parents.

Introduction

My project for EDCI 590 conducted research on the effects of parent involvement in the secondary classroom and whether or not parental involvement had an impact on student achievement. My research investigated parents' perceptions of parent involvement at the high school level and how parent involvement in the secondary classroom impacted student achievement. My research also identified areas in which administrators, teachers, parents, and students may need more training on what is parent involvement in the secondary classroom.

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I currently teach Spanish at the high school level. I teach in a region where parents are very visible in the school community. Throughout my career as a classroom teacher, I have taken advantage of many professional development opportunities that address the importance of parent involvement at the secondary level. Through these courses and my own classroom experience, I have learned that as a teacher it is imperative to encourage parent involvement in my classroom. It is important to involve everyone in the learning process – administrators, teachers, parents, students, and the community – to ensure that meaningful and relevant learning takes place (Price-Mitchell, 2009). However, when instructing teachers to make sure that they involve parents, it can be difficult to define parent involvement. For example, according to research done by Ferlazzo (2011), there exists a difference between parent *involvement* and parent *engagement*. Parent involvement often tells parents how they can help, while parent engagement strives to listen to parents and gain partners in educating students (Ferlazzo, 2011). In addition, parent involvement can be defined as simply telling parents the school or classroom expectations, while parent engagement seeks to encourage parents to be a constant presence in the school (Smith, Wohlstetter, Kuzin, & DePedro, 2011). The action research in my classroom looked specifically at parent presence and participation in the high school classroom. In the literature review, the term parent involvement will be used as it is used in the literature as different authors define involvement differently. Parent involvement is defined as asking parents how they would like to help in the classroom and then having them help in the classroom. My project actively involved parents in one of my Spanish 4 classes. Parents worked with small groups, worked with individual students, observed students, or observed a lesson and provided feedback. Parents partnered with the teacher and worked directly in the classroom.

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Even as there are many definitions of what parent involvement is and what needs to be done to successfully integrate parents into the school culture, little attention is given to parent involvement in high school compared to elementary school (Shumow et al., 2011). For example, my best friend has a daughter in kindergarten, and parents are frequently invited into the classroom to be “mystery readers” or eat lunch with the children. In my school, parents do not directly impact student learning by being fixtures in the classroom. Research has demonstrated that parental involvement both in school functions and at home positively impacts student achievement in high school. When parents are involved in both home and school activities, students are more apt to become involved and, therefore, less likely to fail academically (Hoang, 2007). However, research indicates that parent involvement in the school and in classrooms is less common in the high school classroom than in the elementary school classroom as 70% of parents of elementary school aged children report that they have volunteered at the school while only 55% of parents of high school aged children report that they have volunteered (Ferrara, 2009). My research project developed specific strategies and activities that encouraged parents to become involved in my classroom and then implemented these strategies and activities in order to investigate whether or not parent involvement in my classroom leads to increased student achievement.

Literature Review

Administrators, teachers, parents, and students all play a vital role in student learning and achievement. This literature review is organized by the following themes as they are related to parent involvement at the secondary level and what all stakeholders – administrators, teachers, parents, and students -- need to do to ensure that students have all the resources available to them to succeed in the 21st century. First, the review examines the relationship between parent

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involvement and student achievement. Second, the review examines existing attitudes and beliefs toward parent involvement. Third, the review looks at barriers to parent involvement. Fourth, the review focuses on strategies that schools use to involve, engage, and build partnerships with parents. The research included in this review seeks to support these themes as related to creating an atmosphere in which all stakeholders participate, sharing the common goal of increasing student achievement.

Relationship between Parent Involvement and Student Achievement

In addition to what teachers do to help students succeed every day, studies show that parent involvement also impacts student achievement. Ouimette, Feldman, and Tung (2006) conducted interviews of administrators, teachers, parents, and students in a Boston charter school in order to determine what made the Boston Arts Academy successful in engaging a majority of the parents in daily school activities, such as direct presence in the classroom, that helped lead to student success. In this study, parents were often found in the classroom, listening to and providing feedback directly to students, observing classroom lessons, monitoring small group and individual work, or helping students prepare for assessment. Students reported that they do indeed benefit academically when they receive feedback from people other than their teachers. Hoang (2007), Ferrara (2009) and Shumow et al. (2011) also provided evidence, from student and teacher surveys, that having a parent involved in a student's academic activities -- including work done at home and work done at school -- served to predict student success in academics.

In addition to helping in the classroom or with homework, parent involvement in other school activities leads to student academic achievement. One such activity that was included in the findings that had a significant impact on student success is the parent-teacher-student

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narrative, or conference (Ouimette et al., 2006). The conference takes place in the classroom and students can share their work directly with their parents in the school setting. All three parties involved feel that these conferences help parents and students to collaboratively focus learning and achievement so that the student excels (Ouimette, et al., 2006). Additionally, many parents work with their child and the school to secure private tutors, encourage their child to take advanced courses, and participate in extracurricular activities to ensure acceptance to a top university (Weissbourd, 2011). Weissbourd (2011) includes that when it comes to student achievement, parents go to incredible lengths to become involved so that their child is academically successful, going to a prestigious college after high school. Weissbourd (2011), cautions, however, that in order for students to be successful academically, parents must find a healthy balance between being involved for their child's best interests academically and being too involved at the risk of hindering their child's academic progress. Hoang (2007) adds that when parents and students work together on homework, students find academic success. If parents want their child to be successful academically, it seems to be imperative that they are involved in his or her child's school career but in a way that is beneficial to student. By investing their time by becoming involved during the school day, a parent's involvement could positively impact student success (Hoang, 2007; Ouimette, et al., 2006).

Existing Attitudes and Beliefs about Parent Involvement

Several studies examined what students believe about parent involvement in the secondary classroom. Wiseman (2010) organized a study in an eighth grade English classroom that had created a poetry program. The program created many opportunities for parents to come to school and listen to their child's poetry. After speaking to several students at the conclusion of the study, the students reported that they did not want their parents in the classroom as they

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want to feel more independent. Hoang (2007) and Ouimette et al. (2006) add that while students may do well when parents are involved in the classroom and that they do appreciate the support and feedback of their parents, the students feel that their parents need to balance how much they are involved so that students are still motivated to achieve. Therefore, if parents do become involved in their child's classroom, it is first necessary to speak to the students and find out how they feel about having their parents in their space. As the desired outcome to having parents involved in the classroom is *student* academic achievement, the focus must be on the student.

Studies also detail existing parent attitudes and beliefs toward parent involvement in the secondary classroom. Wanat (2010) interviewed parents (chosen by school administrators) in one K-12 public school district. She indicated that the parents believe that parents and teachers should agree on how to work together in the best interest of the child. She adds that the parents also felt that when they were excluded from the classroom, the school was trying to hide something. Just as it is important to talk to the student to find out how best to involve their parents in the classroom, Wanat's study provides further evidence that parents also believe that conversation between the parent and teacher is vital so that their child's needs are met in the best possible way.

Research has also been conducted to determine teachers' attitudes and beliefs toward parent involvement. Pryor and Pryor (2009) constructed a study in an urban school district asking 40 K-12 teachers to rate their attitudes and beliefs toward parent involvement. They found that high school teachers had a slightly more negative attitude toward asking for parent volunteers to come into their classroom. Christianakis (2011) adds that teachers believe that parents who are not available to help are not interested or do not care and have a negative learning environment at home, while parents who are available to help have a positive home

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learning environment. Even if parents were asked to volunteer and come into their child's high school classroom to help, Christianakis (2011) provides evidence that teachers view parents as assistants, not as partners with whom they could collaborate to help students find academic success. Ferlazzo (2011) adds that teachers believe that they only need to involve parents when there is a problem or when they need the parent to do something – that it is a good thing *not* to hear from parents. These studies indicate that there is a need for parent-teacher communication regarding what parent involvement in the classroom; however, there seems to be a disconnect between parent desires to help and teacher beliefs that could be eliminated if a simple conversation between the parent and teacher were to take place.

Even as these negative attitudes regarding parent involvement in the high school classroom do seem to exist, Barnyak and McNelly (2009) surveyed 92 K-12 teachers in an urban Pennsylvania school district. The results indicated that teachers believe it is important to involve the parents in the classroom, to provide parents access to information on how to improve student achievement, to give parents input in school decisions, and to give teachers resources to improve parent involvement. However, there was a significant difference in what teachers believed and what was actually practiced. If teachers do truly believe that parent involvement may positively impact student achievement, and they do want to involve parents in their classroom, they might simply be unsure of *how* to implement the practice, so they may avoid doing so. Further teacher training is necessary on how to involve parents in their high school classroom, in a way that is beneficial to the student.

Barriers to Parent Involvement

Parents may be reluctant to become involved in school and school activities as several studies document findings that often pre-existing negative teacher attitudes and beliefs can create barriers to parent involvement in the classroom (Christianakis, 2011; Hindin, 2010; Pryor & Pryor, 2009; Wanat, 2010). Hindin (2010) asserts that sometimes teachers feel uncomfortable opening up their classroom door to parents. Wiseman (2010) likewise explains that there are several factors, besides the negative feelings of teachers, which may limit parent involvement including other family responsibilities, work schedules, financial resources, their own relationship to their student, transportation, and their comfort level in the school. Shumow, Lyutykh, and Schmidt (2011) add that parents with a lower income and education level, who are immigrants, or who are minorities are generally less involved in school. McCloskey (2011) additionally reports that parents are often discouraged as they feel that schools tell them what their academic goals for their child should be instead of partnering with them to decide. She adds that parents are confused as to what defines parent involvement. Moreover, Ouimette et al. (2006) reported findings that some parents indicated that they wanted to help, and had made this known through writing, but had never been contacted by the school. Ouimette et al. (2006) further found that other parents may not want to commit to helping in the school and then later may not be able to follow through with their commitment. Training workshops that partner parents and teachers need to be offered, at times convenient to parents and teachers, so that both can learn what effective parent involvement in the secondary classroom looks like and how it best benefits the student academically.

Strategies to Increase Parent Involvement

Before administrators and teachers provide parents with activities that they can do for the school, they must first work together to define parent involvement. Ferrara (2009) looked at a school district and surveyed administrators, teachers, and parents about how best to define parent involvement. She recommends that schools need to provide training for parents, teachers, pre-service teachers, and administrators so that they can all work together to define parent involvement. Additionally, she adds that in order for parents to successfully integrate and be involved in the school, all members of the school staff need to see the parents as members of the same team. Training, workshops, or conferences with the parents before classroom intervention are imperative so that parents know what is expected of them before they enter the classroom. Weissbourd (2011) also recommends that parents and teachers must be on the same page when talking about student achievement and adds that schools should guide conversations about achievement so that teachers and parents say the same thing to students. If a parent knows ahead of time exactly what is expected of him or her before entering the classroom, the transition to helping in the classroom will be seamless (Ferrara 2009). Therefore, it is important to provide parents with options of exactly what they can do in the classroom before they actually visit the classroom so that the classroom experience for everyone involved is a successful one. Hindin (2010) adds that teachers need to give specific requirements for how parents should connect to the classroom.

After defining parent involvement together, administrators, teachers, and parents need to develop strategies of how best to involve parents at school. Smith, Wohlstetter, Kuzin, and DePedro (2011) establish that while many activities including home visits, classroom observations, classroom activity monitoring, providing feedback to teachers and students, and

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school decision making are used to garner parent involvement, what needs to be emphasized are the strategies, how to get parents involved. Smith et al. (2011) add that when parents are confident and they know how to be involved, then the activities in which they are involved increase. One strategy includes creating a family coordinator who works at a school full time and helps to facilitate parent involvement at the school (Ouimette, et al., 2006). Wanat (2010) recommends teacher and parent training so that everyone involved knows how to best involve parents at school. She further recommends involving parents in decisions about the curriculum and inviting parents into the classroom for observations and presentations. Hindin (2010) also adds that teachers need to give specific requirements for how parents, teachers, and students connect in school so that partnerships can be created where everyone learns from each other. This could include contacting parents individually to see where they could best become involved in the classroom. Creating open lines of communication and providing parents with specific options of how they can help in the classroom to choose from will help parents to feel welcome to enter the classroom and therefore contribute to their child's academic experience (Wanat 2010). Include strategies such as the creation of a parent center at the school, translation services provided by the school, and parent focus groups that help define school policy (Smith et al., 2006). These strategies were successful in getting parents involved because the schools had first invested the time in teaching parents, teachers, students, and administrators what parent involvement in the classroom entails. Parent involvement in the classroom increases when parents confidently know what parent involvement means and how to be involved in their child's classroom so as to help their child find academic success (Smith et al., 2011).

Once parent involvement has been defined and strategies have been developed, administrators, teachers, parents, and students can begin to integrate parents in every area of the

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school. Price-Mitchell (2009) reports that parent involvement needs to be integrated throughout the school and not treated as a short term project. She adds that it is strategic for everyone to be involved in decision-making and that everyone is open to new ideas and new strategies.

Administrators, teachers, parents, and students must work through barriers, learn how to build partnerships, and value each other. Similarly, Ouimette et al. (2006) add that to ensure student success the parent, teacher, student team must be valued, seeing everyone as a partner.

Research has shown that little attention is given to parent involvement in high school compared to elementary school (Shumow et al., 2011). There has been little research on parent involvement in the secondary classroom. As the above studies indicate that students seem to benefit academically from having a variety of people helping them to succeed academically, then why is parent involvement in high school so low? Why are parents absent from the high school classroom? My research project investigated the effect that parent involvement in the secondary classroom had on student achievement and discovered that there is a need for training opportunities for parents, students, and school staff need so that all stakeholders can become partners that work together to increase student success.

Research Questions

Based on information from my review of literature, I have developed the following research questions to investigate for my EDCI 590 project:

1. What attitudes and perceptions do parents have about participating in a high school classroom from the parent survey?
2. What impact does parental involvement in the secondary classroom have on student achievement?

Methodology

I conducted original, qualitative research on parent involvement in my secondary Spanish classroom and its impact on student achievement through a parent survey and action research in my own classroom. Before beginning my research, however, I conducted an in-depth review of literature relating to my research topic. This review of literature helped me to develop and analyze the surveys of parents regarding existing beliefs about parent involvement in our school, why or why not parents are involved, and what strategies and activities are implemented in order to successfully involve parents in the classroom. The survey of parents prior to the action research provided answers to research question one above. The literature review served as my main source for what criteria are needed for positive, effective parental presence in my action research. The action research in my classroom provided answers to research question two. Before I began to collect data, I made sure to obtain approval to conduct my research from the University of Mary Washington (UMW) Institutional Review Board (IRB) and also all of the appropriate school officials both at my school and also in Fairfax County. When I received UMW IRB and county approval, I also took steps necessary to gain permission from parents and students who volunteered to be parts of my study by having them each complete appropriate consent and assent forms (see Appendices A, B, C, D, E, and F).

Data in this study came from parent surveys, pre- and post-instructional scores on Spanish 4 benchmark tests, which are school-wide assessments based on foreign language content standards, and from any homework and classwork assignments, periodic student reflections, my researcher's journal, and a parent discussion group after the action research.

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I implemented the first part of my study using parent surveys (see Appendix G). Before I selected my survey participants, I consulted *How to Conduct Surveys: A Step-By-Step Guide* (Fink & Kosecoff, 1998). Survey participants included approximately 91 parents of my Spanish 4 students. I allowed for ten days (two school weeks) for the return of the survey results. As surveys are used in my school frequently, I expected 90% participation among the parents (or 82 out of 91 of the parents to participate). I made sure to send a reminder as the two-week deadline drew near. As I teach in a school where there are really no English Language Learners (ELLs) or special education students, no diverse races, and no free and reduced lunches, the scope of this investigation was limited as participants will come only from my school.

I used Survey Monkey, an online survey program, to survey parent participants quickly and easily. I chose to use Survey Monkey because it is a survey tool that is used frequently in my school, so parents will be familiar with the tool and should find it easy to use. It is also a tool that also provides participants with anonymity. I sent an “invitation” letter with the survey to invite parent participation on the survey. The letter also contained information about how to complete and submit the survey. In order to ensure that all parent participants provided their consent for participation in the survey and to maintain the anonymity of the participants, the first section of the survey was used to obtain the participant’s consent. The second section of the survey consisted of statements relating to parent presence in the classroom. Participants recorded their answers using a Likert Scale (ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree). For example, a statement on the survey was “Parent presence in the classroom will lead to increased student achievement.” Participants recorded their responses on the Likert scale (ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree). The third section of the parent survey gave parents options of activities in which they can participate in the classroom. I developed these

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activities based on both strategies discussed in the literature review and on what activities we were completing in class at the time of the action research. For example, activities on the survey included observing a lesson, helping with small groups, monitoring student computer use, providing feedback to the teacher, or listening to a student practice a presentation and providing feedback to the student. Participants used a rank order scale to rank their preference for participating in each activity, with 1 being their top ranked choice and 5 being their lowest ranked choice. I put easy-to-answer demographic questions at the end as respondents get tired of answering questions and they can answer these questions quickly (Fink & Kosecoff, 1998). The questions in this section on the parent survey included how much education they have, what their profession is, and their gender. I also explained that even though this is a classroom where learning Spanish is the primary focus, it is not necessary for them to be able to speak Spanish to participate in the activities in the classroom as the activities are designed for any parent that wishes to participate in the classroom, regardless of their knowledge of Spanish.

Once I collected my data from the parent surveys, I again consulted *How to Conduct Surveys: A Step-By-Step Guide* (Fink & Kosecoff, 1998) as it contained excellent tips for organizing and analyzing data. I first looked to see if there were any common themes or trends, making note of any. Looking for common themes or trends allowed me to see if there were any common attitudes or beliefs about parent involvement as related to student achievement and as related to literature already reviewed in the literature review. When I analyzed the parent surveys I wanted to see what less educated parents would like to do in the classroom compared and contrasted with the classroom activities in which more educated parents like to participate. I also looked at the data to see if there is a relationship between the profession and gender of each parent to what activities they reported in which they would like to be involved in the classroom.

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After I collected and analyzed the data from the first part of my study, the surveys of parents, I began the second part of my study, the action research. I used *Taking Action with Teacher Research* (Meyers & Rust, 2003) and also *Qualitative and Action Research: A Practitioner Handbook* (Grady, 1998) to guide my classroom-based research. This research was done in my own classroom but results can be applied to many classrooms school-wide.

Participants in this part of the study consisted of 52 11th and 12th grade students (15-19 years old). The students were members of two Spanish 4 classes that I teach at a suburban high school of approximately 2,000 students. One class served as the control class (no parents volunteered in this class) and the other class served as the experimental class (parents volunteered in this class). Participants also included eight parents of Spanish 4 students who were willing to participate in the action research and who were willing to be present in my classroom for two week's worth of classes (two to three classes per week).

In order to recruit parent volunteers, I contacted all 21 parents of my Spanish 4 students in the experimental class via email, explained the study in detail, and asked them to choose both a time period when they could volunteer (two to three options of 30-45 minute blocks) and also to rank the order of five activities (the same from the survey) in which they preferred to participate (see Appendix H). The email was sent two weeks prior to the start date of the classroom intervention. Of the 21 parents contacted, 8 mothers responded that they were able to volunteer in the classroom. I then emailed the eight volunteers and asked them to come to an orientation meeting in the afternoon, the week before the action research began. During the orientation meeting, I introduced myself, explained the study, and explained why I wanted to conduct the study. I told the parents what I have learned about effective parent involvement. I then explained the activities in which the parent volunteers participated. I explained that I

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developed these activities based on strategies discussed in the literature review and also based on feedback that I received from the parent surveys. The five activities included evaluating student work and providing feedback, observing a lesson and providing feedback, monitoring computer use, helping with small groups, or studying with students to prepare them for an assessment – none of these activities required a prior working knowledge of Spanish. I also explained that parent volunteers will not necessarily be working with their individual child, as this study sought to investigate the impact of parent involvement as it benefited the class as a whole, not the individual child of a specific parent. I then provided time for parents to ask questions.

Prior to the intervention, I took time to explain the study and why I conducted the study to my Spanish 4 students, both in the experimental classroom and the control classroom. I told my students what I have learned about effective parent involvement. I then explained the activities in which the parent volunteers participated. I also took time to inform participants of their rights and risks involved in the study. I explained that while they are not permitted to “opt-out” of the class, they may choose to withdraw the use of their work or feedback to be used in the study. I provided time for students to ask questions. I then distributed a student assent form (see Appendices D and F) used to obtain their agreement for participation in the study.

Appendix D was the student assent form used for students in the experimental classroom and Appendix F was the student assent form used for students in the control classroom. Students signed the form in class, so that they had a chance to ask questions at that time. I also distributed parent permission forms (see Appendices B, C, and E) at this time, asking students to take the forms home to their parents and return them by the end of the week. Appendix B was used to obtain consent from the parents to use their own information as volunteers in the experimental classroom. Appendix C was used to obtain consent from the parents of students in the

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experimental classroom in order to use their child's information and allow their child's participation in the study. Appendix E was used to obtain consent from the parents of students in the control classroom in order to use their child's information and allow their child's participation in the study.

Also prior to parent presence in the experimental classroom, a school-wide benchmark test was administered to students in both Spanish 4 classrooms, experimental and control. An answer key was used to grade the tests. After the benchmark test, two parents per day (for two weeks, parents rotated days) served as classroom volunteers in the experimental classroom. The parent volunteers worked with students in a variety of ways including evaluating and providing feedback for student work, studying with students to prepare them for an assessment, helping with small groups, monitoring student computer use, or observing a lesson and providing feedback. The activities above were based on strategies from the literature review, parent surveys, and also from activities in which the parent volunteers chose to participate. During the classroom intervention, data in both the control and experimental classrooms was collected through Spanish 4 benchmark tests, homework or classwork assigned daily, periodic student reflections on what the students thought of having (or not having) parent volunteers in the classroom, and any notes made in my researcher's journal regarding anything unexpected or any positive or negative surprises. At the end of the two-week period, students in both classrooms were administered the same Spanish 4 benchmark test as the students took before parents volunteered in the classroom. The same answer key that was used to assess the pre-study samples was used to grade the post-study samples. Also at the end of the intervention period, I held a meeting in the afternoon for all of the parent volunteers. The meeting allowed for me to

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get feedback regarding the study from the parents through informal conversations with them. For example, they told me anything that stood out or was surprising during the study.

Once I collected the data from my action research, I organized my data into different resources: benchmark tests before action research, my researcher's journal, student reflections, student classwork and homework, notes from the parent discussion group after the intervention, and benchmark tests after action research. I collected data during the intervention period by taking notes during and after the class period. After collecting and organizing the data, I read through my notes and noted anything interesting or surprising. I analyzed the data collected from my classroom research in order to further answer research question two. I read my researcher's journal, student reflections, student classwork and homework, and notes from the parent discussion group. I looked for patterns and categorized the data if common threads appeared. After analyzing the classroom observation data, I then compared the results of the pre-test in the experimental classroom for all students who gave permission to their post-test results. I looked for any changes in scores on the post-test. I then compared the results of the pre-test of the control group for all students who gave their permission to their post-test results. I also looked to see if the results of the experimental post-test were different from those of the control group. Then, I compared the homework and classwork grades and student and teacher notes of the experimental group for all students to those of the control group.

After analyzing the data from each parent survey (pre-action research), pre- and post-test, and qualitative classroom data separately, I triangulated my data from all three sources to see if they supported a similar conclusion. This helped to establish validity for the results of my research if all three sources of data point to the same conclusion about the impact of parent involvement in the secondary classroom (J. Tyler, personal communication, July 2012).

Analysis of Results

Survey

The survey was sent out to 91 parent email addresses in both of my Spanish 4 classes. As surveys are often sent out using the Survey Monkey tool in our school, I expected 90%, or 82 of the parents to respond to the survey. However, I received only 41 responses, meaning only 45% of the parents that received the survey completed the survey. In a school where every single one of my students and their parents have access to a computer and have a functioning email address, this result was surprisingly low. Wiseman (2010) lists several reasons as to why communication between the parent and the school could be low: work schedules, family responsibilities, time, and their own comfort level with the school. Wanat (2010) adds that some parents lack the confidence when it comes to communicating with the teacher or school. It is interesting to note that these parents are not the parents of 9th grade students and 9th grade parents are more involved at home and less at school, which is different from other grades (Shumow et al., 2011).

The survey had four questions that asked the parent to choose Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, and Strongly Disagree. All 41 parents who participated in the survey answered four questions: 48.78%, or 20 parents, agreed with the statement, “Parent presence in the classroom will lead to increased student achievement” while 51.22%, or 21 parents, also agreed with the statement, “Parent presence in the classroom will embarrass the student.” Eighteen, or 43.9% of the parents, believe that their presence in the classroom will help the student to focus on the lesson. However, 56.10%, or 23 parents, believe that their presence in the classroom will serve as a distraction for the student.

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In the next section of the survey, parents were asked to rank five activities in which they could participate in the classroom – 1 being the most preferred and 5 being the least preferred. 40 of the 41 parents participated in this section. Of the 40 parent responses, 3.85% preferred to monitor small group work and engage with students; 3.43% preferred to listen to student presentation and provide feedback; 2.75% parents desired to monitor and aid student computer/technology use; 2.50% wanted to observe a lesson and provide feedback; and 2.48% preferred to quiz students on chapter material.

The last three sections of the survey asked for demographic information. All the parents provided their level of education, 40 of 41 participants listed their gender, and 40 of 41 listed their area of professional expertise. Eighteen, or 47.37% of the parents, have earned a Bachelor's degree, 36.84%, or 14 parents, possess a Master's degree, and 15.79%, or 6 parents, have a PhD. One parent has a M.D., one parent has a J.D., and one parent has a Bachelor's degree plus 18 credits towards a Master's degree. Ten, or 25%, of the parents that listed their gender were male while 75%, or 30, of the participants were female. Areas of professional expertise include: pharmacy, economy, law, information technology, telecommunications, endocrinology, natural resource science, leadership development and sales, international development (NGO), nursing, health care, computer science, financial planning, marketing, business, English, biomedical research, sales, system analysis, software engineering, finance, nutrition, literature, art, Spanish, television, medicine, risk management and finance, accounting, financial expertise, engineering, and social behavior science/organizational psychology.

After analyzing the results for each participant, conclusions can be made that neither gender, educational degree earned, nor a person's job influenced the answers to questions one through four. For example, both a female and a male answered the first four questions in the

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same way. Someone with a Bachelor's degree, a Master's degree, and a Ph.D. also answered the first four questions similarly. A person's job did not influence the way they answered the first four questions either. For example, of the five participants that listed their job as marketing, none of the five answered the first four questions in the same way. Gender, educational degree earned, or a person's job also did not influence the preference for activity in which they would participate in the classroom. Some females and some males listed their top priority as monitoring and aiding student computer use. Parents holding different degrees (Bachelor's, Master's, or Ph.D.) all listed a preference for observing a lesson and providing feedback. Of the five parents who work in marketing, there was no pattern to what activity they prefer to perform in the classroom: one listed their top preference as listening to students and providing feedback, while another listed this as number two, another as number three, and two others as number four.

Pre-Intervention Responses

After closing the survey, I began the classroom intervention. I explained the study to both Spanish 4 classes, reporting to the students in my second period that some of their parents would be volunteering in the classroom over the next two weeks for 30-minute periods of time. I explained to my third period that no parents would be volunteering in their classroom. Wiseman (2010) reports that students do not usually encourage their parents to be involved in school activities because they are peer-oriented and independent in high school. Surprisingly, my third period was disappointed that they would not be the "experimental" class and my second period was excited for their parents to come in and participate.

In order to encourage parents to volunteer in second period, I sent a letter home with each student in second period explaining the need for parent volunteers, the dates and times that were

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available, and a schedule of classroom activities from which they could choose (See Appendix H). I also sent the letter home via email. I noted that the parents responded quickly, and were overwhelmingly positive. Initially, it was disappointing that only 26%, or 8 parents, volunteered, as I had hoped that at least 10 parents would volunteer. Many parents listed their work schedule as the constraint that kept them from volunteering (Wiseman, 2010). Even as only eight mothers could volunteer, I received countless emails offering encouragement and support. During the orientation meeting, parents told me that, regardless of what activities they had marked as their preferred activities, they were willing to do anything. The parents also told me that they were excited to be participating in their child's classroom, something that they had not done since elementary school.

Post-Intervention Responses

Table 1

Results of Pre- and Post-Intervention Benchmark Test, Experimental Group

Student	Pre-Intervention Score	Post-Intervention Score	Change
Student 1	65	65	----
Student 2	n/a*	88	----
Student 3	74	75	+1
Student 4	n/a	79	----
Student 5	45	65	+20
Student 6	87	88	+1
Student 7	46	n/a	-----
Student 8	47	81	+34
Student 9	91	93	+2
Student 10	68	79	+11
Student 11	67	72	+5
Student 12	75	77	+2
Student 13	79	77	-2
Student 14	71	82	+11
Student 15	92	94	+2
Student 16	89	93	+4
Student 17	n/a	83	----
Student 18	67	75	+8
Student 19	58	n/a	----
Student 20	89	91	+2
Student 21	58	59	+1

*n/a: student was unavailable for testing

Table 2*Results of Pre- and Post-Intervention Benchmark Test, Control Group*

Student	Pre-Intervention Score	Post-Intervention Score	Change
Student 1	53	57	+4
Student 2	71	83	+12
Student 3	65	72	+7
Student 4	71	72	+1
Student 5	88	93	+5
Student 6	71	80	+9
Student 7	65	74	+9
Student 8	58	62	+4
Student 9	76	91	+15
Student 10	80	84	+4
Student 11	56	72	+16
Student 12	71	74	+3
Student 13	69	74	+5
Student 14	83	86	+3
Student 15	52	62	+10
Student 16	60	68	+8
Student 17	82	89	+7
Student 18	76	80	+4
Student 19	76	77	+1
Student 20	62	74	+12
Student 21	52	67	+15
Student 22	57	64	+5
Student 23	74	78	+4
Student 24	66	72	+6
Student 25	79	82	+3
Student 26	66	65	-1
Student 27	88	88	----
Student 28	59	59	----
Student 29	76	79	----
Student 30	78	79	+1
Student 31	n/a	83	n/a

*n/a: student was unavailable for testing

The class average of the experimental group's pre-intervention scores was 70.5% while the class average of the control group's was 69.33%. The class average of the experimental group's post-intervention scores was 79.79% while the class average of the control group's was

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75.48%. All students in both the experimental and control classes completed all homework and classwork grades pre- and post-intervention. Therefore, whether or not students completed their homework or classwork assignments did not depend on whether or not a parent was present in the classroom.

Based on my reflections regarding the intervention, I noted that I felt nervous to relinquish complete autonomy in my classroom the first day that parents volunteered. Many times teachers do not open their classrooms to parents because they are not comfortable in doing so (Hindin, 2010). As the experiment progressed and the more the parents were present in my classroom, I read from my notes that I became increasingly comfortable and reliant on having the parents present in my classroom. I came to depend on the extra help. I also noticed the first day that my students were hesitant to ask anyone but me for help. By the end of the intervention, my students were much more likely to ask a parent to help them with their work – we were all, students, parents, and teacher, working together to make sure that students were successful. The parents in my classroom were not just assistants, but partners with whom we could actively collaborate (Christianakis, 2011).

Often, students do not encourage their parents to become volunteers at their school because they are becoming more peer-oriented and independent (Wiseman, 2010). As I asked my students to journal about the experience, I was interested to see if this was how they felt by having parents work with them directly in the classroom. Surprisingly, all 21 of the students in the experimental classroom enjoyed the experience of having parents come into the classroom and help. Students 5, 10, and 12 all reported that having parents in the classroom helped students to focus and stay on task. Student 6 further reports that “having a parent looking over your shoulder, checking the boxes and making notes, means that you feel far more personally

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obligated to do work than you would with the typical teacher. The urging is especially powerful when both parent and teacher simultaneously encourage completion of an activity.” Student 6 adds that he liked the classroom atmosphere more when the parents were there – that it was more “homey.” Student 20 said that having parents there caused some students to behave better. As our classroom was a Spanish classroom, some parents worried what their role would be if they did not speak Spanish. To ensure that the parents were comfortable with their role in the classroom (McCloskey, 2011), I made sure to allay their fears that they would not have to speak Spanish in the classroom in order to be a volunteer. Student 12 wrote that “having parents that didn’t speak Spanish very well ask questions helped students to think over their thought process and make sure that their ideas were clear and easy to understand.” Student 17 adds that “although most parents did not speak Spanish, it did not detract from the overall experience because volunteers were still able to contribute new ideas.” Conversely, students 5 and 10 wrote that it was helpful having a mom that spoke Spanish come in and volunteer. Student 6 wrote that “having the language barrier of Spanish made the situation a little worse than it could have been.”

The students’ comments in their journals were overwhelmingly positive, stating that they enjoyed the experience. Students 10 and 15 even said that they wished we could have had more volunteers per day and for longer than just two weeks.

Similar to my journal and the student responses, the parent responses post-intervention were again, overwhelming positive as they reflected on the experience. Parents 2, 3, 4, and 5 expressed that they enjoyed coming into their high-school child’s classroom as they have not been in the classroom since their child was in elementary school. Parent 5 further added, “having parents involved and at school affirms how important school is to the whole family’s

time and values, and also reminds students that their parents are there for them in this most important of pursuits.” Therefore, it is vitally important to see parents as partners as they have just as much of an impact as teachers in ensuring student success (Ouimette, 2006). Similar to what the students noted, Parents 4 and 6 noted that it is advantageous to have another set of hands in the classroom to help the teacher with monitoring student progress and behavior. All of the parents noted that they were pleasantly surprised at how well the students seemed to be on task and how well they seemed to master the subject matter. Parents 2 and 4 added that none of the students seemed hesitant to interact with someone that was not the teacher.

Much like the students noted, however, several of the parents noted that it was challenging to help without “completely understanding the subject matter” (Parent 4). Parent 2 felt that she would have been more use to the students if she had “been able to talk with them in Spanish.” Even as Parent 5 did speak Spanish, she agreed that if a parent was not able to converse in Spanish, he or she “might feel a bit helpless to meaningfully contribute.” It is important to make sure that parents are confident when they volunteer so that parent involvement increases (Smith et al, 2011).

Even with the language barrier, every parent volunteer thanked me for the opportunity to engage with their child during high school. This feedback confirms that parents do indeed want to help, but as teachers we need to take the first step and ask for parents to volunteer (Shumow et al., 2011).

Conclusions

After analyzing this data and looking for relationships, it can be concluded that most parents agreed, when surveyed, that parent presence in the secondary classroom would increase

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student achievement. They also agreed that their presence would embarrass and distract the students as well as cause the students to lose focus. After studying teacher, student, and parent reflections, however, all three groups of stakeholders seemed to agree that having parents present in the classroom helped the students to remain on task and be focused and that students were not embarrassed but were willing to share what they were working on with the parent volunteers.

While the class average was indeed higher on the benchmark test post-intervention, it is difficult to conclude whether or not this was due to parent presence in the classroom. The test was given both before and after parents came to volunteer. Therefore, no parent was actually present during test administration. The testing conditions were the same in both the experimental and control classrooms.

Even as it is difficult to conclude whether or not parent presence in the secondary classroom truly affects test scores, it can be concluded that parent presence positively affects the teachers, students, and parents.

Recommendations

In conclusion, the importance of this study was to determine the attitudes and perceptions that parents have about participating in a high school classroom and also to test the impact, if any, that parent presence in the secondary classroom has on student achievement. Parent involvement is the most important factor in a child's academic success in school and in life (Ferrara, 2009). A more involved parent will have a goal-oriented, successful child (Hoang, 2007). Parents are to be seen as partners in education because they have just as much of an impact on student success as do teachers (Ouimette, 2006). It is important that teachers find

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ways to involve parents in the academic part of their child's life in order to create a well-rounded, successful individual.

Recommendations for further research in this study are as follows. As it cannot be concluded from this study whether or not parent presence in the classroom truly affected student grades, it may be interesting to test the students in the experimental classroom with the benchmark while the parents are present. If, as the teacher, students, and parents reported, students seem to be more focused when the parents are actually in the classroom, perhaps parent presence during a test would have an impact on test scores. Also, as a few students and parents mentioned, the language barrier made it difficult at times for some parents to participate who did not speak the language. One parent made the suggestion that it may be easier for non-Spanish speaking parents to volunteer when the classroom was experiencing a cultural day. A student further recommended that, since there was a language barrier, he would be interested to see the results of having parents volunteer in a "non-language" classroom. Finally, a few of the students noted that the study seemed short and they would have liked for the parents to be in the classroom longer. It would be interesting to see the results if parents volunteered for a month, or even a nine-week grading period. In other words, it is important to not only make parent presence in the high school classroom a project, but to integrate it into the school as everyone – parents, teachers, and students – is involved and is a partner to a child's success (Price-Mitchell, 2009). In order to truly integrate parent volunteers into more classrooms than just a Spanish classroom, it is further recommended that teachers are first made aware that parents do want to help in the classroom and then that teachers are trained in ways that they can use parent volunteers effectively.

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The study may show more success if the parent volunteers in the classroom were to have been present during the actual benchmark testing. In this study it is unclear whether or not the parent presence in the secondary classroom affected the increase in the experimental group's test scores. It is also unclear how much more student achievement would have been impacted if the study had been longer and had occurred in an English-speaking classroom. As learned from the study, it is extremely valuable to build positive relationships with parents, as they truly do enjoy being involved in their child's classroom, even in high school; and the students enjoy the interaction with someone different from the teacher as well. It will be interesting to see a long term effect of having parents volunteer and engage in the secondary classroom if more teachers are willing to invite parents to be involved and if this project was truly integrated long-term by the school.

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Appendices

APPENDIX A

Online Survey

Informed Consent from Parent Participants

Informed Consent:

This survey is being conducted by Jennifer Stocks, a Spanish teacher at Langley High School. I am conducting this research as part of my Masters of Education degree requirements for the University of Mary Washington. The purpose of this research is to discover the impact that parent volunteers in the high school classroom have on student achievement. The data from this survey will be analyzed to provide part of the information for this research.

Your participation in this survey is completely voluntary and anonymous. Neither I nor anyone else associated with this research will ever know your identity. There are no risks to you for participating in this survey. After beginning the survey you may opt out at any time simply by closing the website. By clicking the *SUBMIT* button at the end of this survey, you indicate that you are 18 years of age or older and have been informed of and consent to the purpose and ultimate use of your survey data as described here. I will be collecting additional data from you at a meeting after you have volunteered in the classroom. If you have additional questions about this research, please contact me at jestocks@fcps.edu or (703) 287-2844.

Thank you,

Jennifer E. Stocks

APPENDIX B

Informed Consent Form

Parent Volunteers in Classroom

Description of the research and your participation

You are invited to participate in a research study conducted by Jennifer Stocks. I am a graduate student at the University of Mary Washington. In this study, I will be researching how having parent volunteers present in my classroom impacts student achievement. The following information explains what your participation as a classroom volunteer will entail.

If you agree to participate in this study, you will first read and sign an informed consent form. You will then complete an online survey providing times that you are available to volunteer and also a list of activities you can choose from when you volunteer. The amount of time required for your participation in the classroom will be two or three class sessions for 30-45 minutes. During the time that you volunteer in the classroom, I will take notes in a researcher's journal to keep track of any interesting observations I make about parent involvement in the classroom. I will not use your name in my notes.

Risks and discomforts

There are no known risks to you by volunteering to help in the classroom. You will be asked to participate in a "follow-up conversation" with me and the other volunteers after the intervention. I will take notes on what you say.

The risks of participating in the follow-up conversation may include discomfort in talking about your experience as a volunteer. You are not required to answer any questions during the follow-up conversation that make you uncomfortable.

Potential benefits

Student academic achievement is important to parents. As research has demonstrated little attention is given to parent involvement in high school classrooms, it is important to discover the impact that parent volunteers in the high school classroom have on student achievement. If parent involvement in the high school classroom positively impacts student achievement, then we can determine what we can do as a school community to increase parent involvement in the high school classroom.

Protection of confidentiality

When reporting all data collected in the classroom, parent volunteers will be assigned a number; for example, I will use “Parent 1” in place of your name. The numbers used in the data are only used so that I can match the data from the same participant and to allow any participant the ability to request that their data be withdrawn from the study. Only I will know which parent matches which number.

In rare cases, a research study will be evaluated by an oversight agency, such as the University of Mary Washington IRB Board, that would require that we share the anonymous information we collect from you. If this happens, the information would only be used to determine if we conducted this study properly and adequately protected your rights as a participant.

Voluntary participation

Your participation in this research study is completely voluntary. You may choose not to participate, and you may withdraw your participation at any time and no data collected about you will be used in any reports of this study. If you feel uncomfortable answering any of the questions on the survey or uncomfortable participating in any classroom activity, you may leave them blank or withdraw your participation in the activity. You will not be penalized in any way should you decide not to participate or to withdraw from this study.

Contact information

If you have any questions or concerns about this study or if any problems arise, please contact Jennifer Stocks at jestocks@fcps.edu or (703) 287-2844.

Consent

I have read this consent form and have been given the opportunity to ask questions. I acknowledge that I am at least 18 years old, and I give my consent to participate in this study. I fully understand that I can withdraw from this study at any time without any penalty whatsoever.

Parent Participant’s Name printed: _____ Date: _____

Parent Participant’s signature: _____ Date: _____

Researcher’s Name printed: _____ Date: _____

Researcher’s signature: _____ Date: _____

A copy of this informed consent form should be given to you.

APPENDIX C

Informed Consent Form

Parent Permission for Student Participation in Experimental Group

Description of the research and your participation

Your child is invited to participate in a research study conducted by Jennifer Stocks. I am a graduate student at the University of Mary Washington. In this study, I will be researching how having parent volunteers present in my classroom impacts student achievement.

If you consent to having your child participate in this study, you will first read and sign an informed consent form. The children who participate in the study will complete the same activities and assignments as all other children in the class, but only data from children whose parents have given consent will be used in the study. Your child will participate in classroom activities designed to involve parents. The amount of time required for your child's participation in the classroom with two to three parents present per session will be 30-45 minute sessions for two weeks. Data from the study will come from the following sources: achievement tests given to students before and after the study is completed, all homework and classwork assignments and periodic student reflections during the two weeks that the study is being conducted, and my daily observations and reflections of the classroom recorded in my research journal.

Risks and discomforts

The risks associated with this research are minimal since participants perform exactly the same activities as all students in the class. As this study takes place during regular classroom hours, your child cannot withdraw from the class. You are simply being asked to give consent for data about your child to be used in the study. If you feel that there is any risk to your child of having their data used for this study, you may withdraw your consent to use any data collected from your child during this study. Your child will not be penalized in any way should you decide not to include any data collected from their work in this study.

Potential benefits

Student academic achievement is important to parents. As research has demonstrated little attention is given to parent involvement in high school classrooms, it is important to discover the impact that parent volunteers in the high school classroom have on student achievement. If parent involvement in the high school classroom positively impacts student achievement, then we can determine what we can do as a school community to increase parent involvement in the high school classroom.

Protection of confidentiality

When reporting all data collected in the classroom, each student will be assigned a number; for example, the researcher will use “Student 1” in place of your child’s name. The numbers used in the data are only used so that the researcher can match the data from the same participant and to allow any participant the ability to request that their data be withdrawn from the study. Only I will know which student matches which number.

In rare cases, a research study will be evaluated by an oversight agency, such as the University of Mary Washington IRB Board, that would require that we share the anonymous information we collect from you. If this happens, the information would only be used to determine if we conducted this study properly and adequately protected your rights as a participant.

Voluntary participation

Your consent for inclusion of your child’s data collected in this research study is completely voluntary. You may choose not to allow that the data be included, and you may withdraw your consent to use the data at any time. Your child will not be penalized in any way should you decide to withdraw their data from use in this study.

Contact information

If you have any questions or concerns about this study or if any problems arise, please contact Jennifer Stocks at jestocks@fcps.edu or (703) 287-2844.

Consent

I have read this consent form and have been given the opportunity to ask questions. I acknowledge that I am the parent/guardian of a child who is under the age of 18 years, and I give my consent to use my child’s data collected in this study. I fully understand that I can withdraw my child’s data from use in this study at any time without any penalty whatsoever.

Student name: _____ Date: _____

Parent’s signature: _____ Date: _____

Researcher’s Name printed: _____ Date: _____

Researcher’s signature: _____ Date: _____

A copy of this informed consent form should be given to you.

APPENDIX D

STUDENT ASSENT FORM for the Experimental Group

The Study: Parent Involvement in the High School Classroom

My name is Jennifer Stocks and I am a graduate student at the University of Mary Washington.

I am asking you to take part in this research study because I am trying to learn more about how having parents participate in classroom activities will affect student achievement. I want to learn if having parents present in the classroom will positively impact student achievement.

The study will take place over a 2-week period with parents present in the classroom. During this time period, parents will be present in the classroom for 30-45 minute sessions.

If you agree to participate, you will complete the same activities and assignments as all other students in the class, but only data from students who have given assent will be used in the study. As this study takes place during regular school hours, you cannot leave class if you do not wish to participate. The data collected for the study includes tests before and after the two week period, homework and classwork assignments, student reflections, and my observations of the class. If you do not wish to participate in the study, I will not use any of this data from you. Whether or not you decide to have your information included, your grade in the class will not be affected. I will not be mad if you decide not to include your information in the report. Even if you start, you can stop later if you want. You may ask questions about the study.

If you decide to be in the study, I will not tell anyone else what you say or do in the study. Even if your parents or teachers ask, I will not tell them about what you say or do in the study. In any reports I make about this study I will not refer to any students by name or give identifying information about you or your school.

If you have any questions or concerns about this study or if any problems arise, please contact Jennifer Stocks at jestocks@fcps.edu or (703) 287-2844.

Signing here means that you have read this form, or have had it read to you, and that you are willing to be in this study.

Print student participant name: _____ Date: _____

Student participant signature: _____ Date: _____

Researcher's signature: _____ Date: _____

A copy of this assent form should be given to you.

APPENDIX E

Informed Consent Form

Parent Permission for Student Participation in Control Group

Description of the research and your participation

Your child is invited to participate in a research study conducted by Jennifer Stocks. I am a graduate student at the University of Mary Washington. In this study, I will be researching how having parent volunteers present in my classroom impacts student achievement.

If you consent to having your child participate in this study, you will first read and sign an informed consent form. The children who participate in the study will complete the same activities and assignments as all other children in the class, but only data from children whose parents have given consent will be used in the study. Your child will participate in routine classroom activities. The amount of time required for your child's participation in the classroom will be 30-45 minute sessions for two weeks. There will be no parent volunteers present in your child's classroom. Data from the study will come from the following sources: achievement tests given to students before and after the study is completed, all homework and classwork assignments and periodic student reflections during the two weeks that the study is being conducted, and my daily observations and reflections of the classroom recorded in my research journal.

Risks and discomforts

The risks associated with this research are minimal since participants perform exactly the same activities as all students in the class. As this study takes place during regular classroom hours, your child cannot withdraw from the class. You are simply being asked to give consent for data about your child to be used in the study. If you feel that there is any risk to your child of having their data used for this study, you may withdraw your consent to use any data collected from your child during this study. Your child will not be penalized in any way should you decide not to include any data collected from their work in this study.

Potential benefits

Student academic achievement is important to parents. As research has demonstrated little attention is given to parent involvement in high school classrooms, it is important to discover the impact that parent volunteers in the high school classroom have on student achievement. If parent involvement in the high school classroom positively impacts student achievement, then we can determine what we can do as a school community to increase parent involvement in the high school classroom.

Protection of confidentiality

When reporting all data collected in the classroom, each student will be assigned a number; for example, the researcher will use “Student 1” in place of your child’s name. The numbers used in the data are only used so that the researcher can match the data from the same participant and to allow any participant the ability to request that their data be withdrawn from the study. Only I will know which student matches which number.

In rare cases, a research study will be evaluated by an oversight agency, such as the University of Mary Washington IRB Board, that would require that we share the anonymous information we collect from you. If this happens, the information would only be used to determine if we conducted this study properly and adequately protected your rights as a participant.

Voluntary participation

Your consent for inclusion of your child’s data collected in this research study is completely voluntary. You may choose not to allow that the data be included, and you may withdraw your consent to use the data at any time. Your child will not be penalized in any way should you decide to withdraw their data from use in this study.

Contact information

If you have any questions or concerns about this study or if any problems arise, please contact Jennifer Stocks at jestocks@fcps.edu or (703) 287-2844.

Consent

I have read this consent form and have been given the opportunity to ask questions. I acknowledge that I am the parent/guardian of a child who is under the age of 18 years, and I give my consent to use my child’s data collected in this study. I fully understand that I can withdraw my child’s data from use in this study at any time without any penalty whatsoever.

Student name: _____ Date: _____

Parent’s signature: _____ Date: _____

Researcher’s Name printed: _____ Date: _____

Researcher’s signature: _____ Date: _____

A copy of this informed consent form should be given to you.

APPENDIX F

STUDENT ASSENT FORM for the Control Group

The Study: Parent Involvement in the High School Classroom

My name is Jennifer Stocks and I am a graduate student at the University of Mary Washington.

I am asking you to take part in this research study because I am trying to learn more about how having parents participate in classroom activities will affect student achievement. I want to learn if having parents present in the classroom will positively impact student achievement.

The study will take place over a 2-week period with parents volunteering in one class and no parents volunteering in another class. There will be no parents volunteering in your class. I am requesting to use data from students in your class for comparison to another class.

If you agree to participate, you will complete the same activities and assignments as all other students in the class, but only data from students who have given assent will be used in the study. As this study takes place during regular school hours, you cannot leave class if you do not wish to participate. The data to be collected for the study includes tests before and after the two week period, homework and classwork assignments, student reflections, and my observations of the class. If you do not wish to participate in the study, I will not use any of this data from you. Whether or not you decide to have your information included, your grade in the class will not be affected. I will not be mad if you decide not to include your information in the report. Even if you start, you can stop later if you want. You may ask questions about the study.

If you decide to be in the study, I will not share your individual data with anyone. Even if your parents or teachers ask, I will not tell them about what you say or do in the study. In any reports I make about this study I will not refer to any students by name or give identifying information about you or your school.

If you have any questions or concerns about this study or if any problems arise, please contact Jennifer Stocks at jestocks@fcps.edu or (703) 287-2844.

Signing here means that you have read this form, or have had it read to you, and that you are willing to be in this study.

Print student participant name: _____ Date: _____

Student participant signature: _____ Date: _____

Researcher's printed name: _____ Date: _____

Researcher's signature: _____ Date: _____

Appendix G

PARENT SURVEY

Part I: Participant Consent

The above letter will be used to obtain informed consent from each parent participant.

Part II: Parent Presence in the Classroom

1. Parent presence in the classroom will lead to increased student achievement.

STRONGLY AGREE AGREE DISAGREE STRONGLY
DISAGREE

2. Parent presence in the classroom will embarrass the student.

STRONGLY AGREE AGREE DISAGREE STRONGLY
DISAGREE

3. Parent presence in the classroom will help students to focus on the lesson.

STRONGLY AGREE AGREE DISAGREE STRONGLY
DISAGREE

4. Parent presence in the classroom will serve as a distraction for the student.

STRONGLY AGREE AGREE DISAGREE STRONGLY
DISAGREE

Part III: Activities in the Classroom

The following are options of activities that as a parent volunteer you could help with in the classroom. Please rank the following activities, with 1 being your top choice and 5 being the activity that you would feel the least comfortable performing.

_____ Monitor small group work & engage with students

_____ Listen to student presentation and provide feedback

_____ Monitor student computer use

_____ Observing a lesson and providing feedback

_____ Quiz students on chapter material

Stocks, Parent Involvement

Part IV: Demographic Information

Highest level degree earned:

HIGH SCHOOL COLLEGE Bachelor's Master's PhD. OTHER

Area of Professional Expertise: _____

Gender: _____

Appendix H

Letter to Parent Volunteers in the Experimental Classroom

Name: _____

Your child's name: _____

Please choose a 30 minute time period that you would be available to volunteer in your child's classroom. Please rank the following times, with 1 being your top choice and 4 being your last choice.

_____ 7:45 – 8:15 a.m., Wednesday, 5/28, and Friday 5/30

_____ 8:15 – 8:45 a.m., Wednesday, 5/28, and Friday 5/30

_____ 7:45 – 8:15 a.m., Tuesday, 6/3, and Thursday 6/5

_____ 8:15 – 8:45 a.m., Tuesday, 6/3, and Thursday 6/5

_____ I am not able to volunteer in the classroom at this time

The following are options of activities that as a parent volunteer you can help with in the classroom. Please rank the following activities, with 1 being your top choice and 5 being the activity that you would feel the least comfortable performing.

_____ Monitor small group work & engage with students

_____ Listen to student presentation and provide feedback to individual students

_____ Monitor student computer use

_____ Observe a lesson & provide feedback

_____ Study with students to prepare them for an assessment

Please send this back to school with your child no later than this Friday, May 16th. There will be a parent volunteer information meeting on **Thursday, 5/22, at 2:30 p.m. in Room 257.**

Thank you so much for your participation!

Miss Stocks

jestocks@fcps.edu

(703) 287-2844