Creating a school based family literacy institute

Teresa Ann Cimino

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CREATING A SCHOOL BASED FAMILY LITERACY INSTITUTE

A Project
Presented to the
Faculty of
California State University,
San Bernardino

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts
in
Education:
Reading/Language Arts

by
Teresa Ann Cimino
March 2007
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ABSTRACT

Family literacy is an area of education that has the most impact on a child's literacy, school readiness, and attitude toward school and learning. Many teachers feel that parents have little to no interest in their children's education. This is due to the fact that many do not willingly participate in school functions, conferences, and discipline issues. Many parents, on the other hand, find school and teachers intimidating.

The purpose of this project is to educate parents on the importance of their role in their children's education and literacy through a series of literacy sessions in a six week long Family Literacy Institute. The institute provides a common ground for teachers and parents that destroy preconceived ideas and stereotypes held about each other, which creates a barrier to working together. In addition, parents are taught to use a variety of reading strategies and have the opportunity to practice these strategies with assistance with their children. This program is based on the Kenan Model for family literacy programs as well as Patricia Edward's program, Parents as Partners in Reading Program.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to take this opportunity to thank a few pivotal people. Without you all, I would never have completed this project.

My first thank you is to my mom. Thank you so much for worrying if I was getting anything done on my project as I procrastinated or had writer's block. You know me, I rarely stress over my lack of time management skills until I am down to the wire. Also, thank you for watching Josie when I needed to work for extended periods of time. You are a lifesaver and I love you very much!

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Finally, I want to mention my beautiful daughter, Josie. Thank you so much for flashing the smile that lights up my world and laughing that infectious laugh of yours. Watching you grow and change is the biggest blessing I could have ever asked for. My heart gushes with love for you, bugaboo. I am so lucky to be your mommy.

Oh yes, for those of you I did not mention by name, just know that I do not appreciate you any less. I just would never end if I did. And do you really want to read anymore? You have a long road ahead with this book already.

Love, Peace, and Happiness

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Introduction to the Study

I have always wanted to be a teacher. I can remember being in the second grade and wanting to be just like my teacher, Mrs. May, when I grew up. I loved school and the creative freedom I found there. I also loved that my mom was involved in my school not only as a parent, but also as a teacher's aide. At home, my mom promoted my love of learning. We read and discussed books together and she was there to assist me with my homework. My mom, at that time, was also going to night school to become a teacher.

My first teaching job (1996-97) was an eye-opener. I found a climate in which teachers were no longer venerated. Instead, we were blamed for the ills of education and society. The age of accountability had dawned. However, parents were not part of the accountability equation. In fact, many dropped their children off at school and expected the teacher to perform miracles. There was a lack of support for the teacher and school and this caused teachers to place the blame back on the parents.
I have now been teaching for ten years and the climate has yet to change. Teachers are still blamed for the ills of education. However, there is a trend beginning slowly. That trend is "family literacy" and it is going to prove to be an important change in education. Parents and teachers will begin to come to together and work for a common goal—the children. Teachers will create a learning community in which parents learn, discuss, and practice the strategies our students are taught. Parents will work hand-in-hand with teachers to successfully promote their child's learning at home and at school. Stereotypes and preconceived ideas will be dismissed on both sides. Blame will be a foggy memory. It will be a win-win situation as teachers will have the support at home and parents will know exactly what is happening in class as well as how to support that learning at home.

The hope of such a learning community is what spurred me to create a six-week "Family Literacy Institute". I believe it is extremely important to have parents that are willing to commit their time to their child's literacy and education. I cannot do it alone.
Background of Study

At my former elementary school site, the principal instituted mandatory "literacy nights". These nights were to be held once a school year by each grade level team. During these sessions, parents were bombarded with reading, writing, and math strategies. Many parents came away overloaded and unable to use any strategy well. Teachers were stressed and frustrated. They tried to cram as much information into a few hours as they would, previously, have over the course of a school year. The teachers that participated knew that one night was not enough, but found that it was so much work that they did not wish to repeat the experience.

Seeing the failure of these literacy nights, I decided there must be a more effective way of teaching parents the strategies that are taught throughout the school year. I realized that parents needed far more support than one night could give. I also realized that a teacher must have the opportunity to teach and re-teach parents in order to make any strategies effective, long-lasting, and, consistently, used in the home. Especially, as many strategies are spiraled over the course of a child's
education. In addition, demonstrating reading, writing, and math strategies in one session was too much. One subject in depth would be far better for the parents, children, and teachers.

Statement of Problem

Many teachers feel that parents have little to no interest in their children's education. It is also believed that many parents are neither committed to nor supportive of teachers and the education system. This is due to the fact that many do not willingly participate in school functions, conferences, and discipline issues.

Many parents, on the other hand, find school and teachers intimidating, "...connections with parents and the community are often weak or hostile. Parents and teachers often blame each other for the failures, instead of together to raise expectations of students and improve students performance" (Doherty & Abernathy, 2005). Therefore, the purpose of this study was to determine what method best promotes parent participation in their children's education and literacy acquisition. In addition, to ascertain how teachers can better prepare as well as
help parents feel more comfortable helping their children at home. This will lead parents to provide with an educationally consistent and supportive environment. Thereby leading to student achievement.

Purpose of Study

The purpose of this study is to educate parents about importance of their role in their children's education and literacy development. Parents are the child's first teacher, thus the home environment and educational attitudes of parents play a very important role in shaping a child's attitude about school and learning.

Another purpose of this study is to find a common ground for parents and teachers. In effect, it will help to eliminate the preconceived ideas and stereotypes held by both parents and teachers. Mutual respect will lead to a classroom and school environment in which both parents and teachers work together and support one another.

The most important purpose and probable by-product of this study is to create an environment in which students know their parents are committed to their education and literacy development. It is vital that the students know that their parents can provide support for their homework
needs including a quiet place and assistance when needed.

In addition, the students will know that their parents speak often to their teacher and can ask for help when needed. Students will also find that they can, too, teach their parents. This will reinforce the importance of both reciprocal learning as well as the power of homework.

Rationale for the Study

I believe that that teachers and schools must build a bridge to parents. Our students' futures depend upon teachers, schools, and parents working together for a common goal. In this age of "accountability", parents need to see what is happening in the classroom and have a voice in educational decisions that impact their children.

Parents need to realize that they are their children's first teacher and that they have a continuing responsibility to their children's education. Parents must understand that teachers are not the enemy and cannot do it alone. We need the help and support of our parents to create successful lifelong learners.

It is my hope that by holding multiple sessions and teaching parents the reading strategies used in class, they will become more comfortable with helping their child at
home. It is also my hope that a six-week program with follow up sessions will give parents the opportunity to see how important their commitment is and how the time spent helping their children can lead to successful learning experiences.

Hypotheses

H1: This study will show a marked improvement in the attitude of parents toward their children's education and literacy development.

H2: This study will educate parents on how to create a home environment conducive to, successfully, completing homework and teach them to use reading strategies to help their children be successful readers.

H3: This study will benefit student's reading abilities and attitudes about school and learning.

H4: This study will create a welcoming environment that will encourage parents to participate in the educational process.
Significance of Study

The significance of this study is three-fold. First, in order for students to be successful in the school environment, all parties connected with that child must work together. Parents, guardians, teachers, and the school must work hand-in-hand in order to establish a positive learning environment, rich learning experience, and a positive attitude for the student both at school and at home. This home and school collaboration will demonstrate that the student's education is the priority for all involved.

In addition, the purpose of this study is to help parents understand the crucial role they play in their children's education. Many parents are under the assumption that the school will, singularly, educate their children. This myth will be dismissed once parents are an involved part of the child's school, classroom, and education. Once the parents establish a working relationship with the teacher and school, they will then be able to learn how to best support their children's learning as well as the teacher in the quest for the best possible education.

This study is also significant for teachers. Many teachers have negative opinions concerning parents and
their willingness to be actively involved in their children's education. Family literacy events would encourage teachers to reach out to parents and show them how their support and help is imperative to the educational success of their children. Teachers working closely with parents will also debunk the myth that the school is the only educator and parents belong on the periphery.

Definition of Terms
Family Literacy: A combination of the daily, functional use of literacy in the home. Organized literacy programs that support interactive literacy activities, parent training, and parent/child reading time.
Reading strategies: A series of reading skills used by readers to understand, monitor, and clarify text for reading achievement and comprehension.

Limitations of Study
One of the limitations of this study may be a language barrier. Many teachers have students from a variety of backgrounds and languages. Therefore, they may have to
rely on translators to speak and translate materials for the parents. Due to this, both teachers and parents may feel uncomfortable meeting in person. They may use the language barrier as an excuse to not collaborate together about how to best support the student at school as well as at home.

Another limitation is the six-week commitment required for the Family Literacy Institute to be successful. Parents that do not attend all sessions will be at a disadvantage. In order for parents that have missed a session to catch up, each meeting will begin by discussing and demonstrating the prior week's strategies.

Child-care may be a limitation. If parents bring younger siblings, they will be distracted and not focus on the strategies being taught. It is my hope that the school will provide an aide to watch younger siblings, so that parents are free to actively engage in the sessions.

A final possible limitation is the fact that the teacher will become both researcher and facilitator of the proposed program. This may be a disadvantage since they may not have input from an unbiased source. To overcome this, parents should complete a survey at the end of each session
to guide the instruction provided at subsequent sessions. Another possibility might be to have an outside mentor that follows the program and provides feedback to the director. This feedback would be based on both facilitator notes and parent surveys.
CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Introduction

As early as the 1960's, there has been a call by the federal government to examine and create programs that will improve the literacy levels of adults and children. According to the Administration for Children and Families (2004), the Head Start Project was designed to break the cycle of poverty of children and their families. During the 1980's, more attention became focused on adult literacy. However, as the 1990's approached, literacy education was viewed as a way to meet the need of both at-risk children and adults. Educators and policy makers began to realize that "educating children may not have long-term effects if the messages in the home do not support their learning" (Potts & Paull, 1995, p. 169). Thus, an innovative program combining the needs of children and adults was a necessity.

This chapter contains a definition of family literacy and a historical overview of family literacy programs in the United States. In addition, the Kenan Model as well as a variety of family literacy programs found throughout the
nation will be discussed. The range of programs is from federally sponsored to "grassroots efforts conceived by volunteers to classroom- or school-based initiatives implemented by teachers and/or parents" (Barnhardt, 2003, pg. 7).

Definition of Family Literacy

According to Morrow, Tracey, and Maxwell (1995), the term family literacy is a complex and frequently debated issue among policy makers, researchers, parents, and educators. It is complex due to the fact that there are many different beliefs concerning the relationship between families and literacy. The debate then is centered upon the differences in these varying beliefs.

There are many different perspectives on the definition of family literacy. However, there are common themes that emerge throughout the many definitions. The common themes are: 1) parents as first teachers and home as first school, 2) parents and children learning together, 3) time to practice with support, 4) student academic success, and 5) literacy happens daily outside of school (Morrow, et al., 1995, National Institute for Literature, 2004, National Center for Family Literacy, 2003).
Researchers and literacy organizations realize that a child is exposed daily to literacy events that are beyond "school-based" activities (Morrow, et al., 1995). Thus, family literacy extends well beyond the school day and its lessons. In fact, it points to parents as an important factor in the success of a child's education.

A History of Family Literacy

According to Morrow, et al. (1995), the study of family literacy had its start in the fields of anthropology and sociology. Studies in these fields showed relationships between the social organization of the family unit and education were very broad in scope. Researchers examined a variety of family types, nuclear to non-traditional, as well as literate to non-literate. This research illustrated a multitude of variance in attitudes toward education. In contrast, educators held a more narrow view of the relationship between family and education. Rather than being concerned with the variances and how to use them to enhance education, educators, many times, are more concerned with the final product (Morrow, et al, 1995).

During the 1980's, Denny Taylor who had coined the term family literacy "...conducted ethnographic research into
the literacy development of young children... [it] was originally used to refer to ways literacy is interwoven in daily routines of family life (Barnhardt, 2003, p. 1). The term has since come to include components and beliefs from educators and researchers alike. In this era of "accountability" and blame, the change has seemed to evolve into one of school-based programs rather than home exposure.

"Although family literacy traditionally takes place within the family, family literacy activities can be initiated by organizations outside of families" (National Institute for Literacy, 2004). Ultimately, the term has come to incorporate not only home literacy, but also programs that are sponsored and/or created by educators, communities, or local or federally sponsored organizations. According to the National Institute for Literacy (2004), the purpose of family literacy programs is to create long-lasting familial changes through interactive parent-child activities and parent training that supports their involvement in their child's education. Parents can only "make a difference in your child's education if you are a part of it" (Doherty & Abernathy, 2005). Parental support and commitment will, in conjunction with hard working
teachers, create an environment in which children will be successful. In addition, parents will know that the home environment is just as or more important than the one at school. One such model that promotes the home-school connection is the Kenan Model.

Kenan Model

A model for comprehensive center-based family literacy programs emerged in a 1986 Kentucky literacy program called Parent and Child Education (PACE) in the late 1980's. The PACE program brought "parents and children to school to learn together" (Potts & Paull, 1995, p.168). Due to the success of this program, the William R. Kenan, Jr., Charitable Trust of Chapel Hill, North Carolina gave a grant in 1988 to PACE directors for the expansion of the program (Potts & Paull, 1995).

The Kenan Trust later lent its name to the successful literacy model the PACE program developed and used. This model has four basic components: 1) adult literacy including life skills, basic education skills, and ESL (English as a Second Language) classes, 2) early childhood education, 3) parenting education and support groups, and 4) regularly scheduled parent-child interactions which
support and practice skills learned by the children (Potts & Paull, 1995).

According to Potts & Paull (1995), the objectives and goals of the Kenan Model were "to provide holistic, family-focused program services" (p.170). These services were created to improve:

(1) Skills and educational level of undereducated parents and other caregivers, (2) the developmental skills of their young children, (3) the parenting and cooping skills of adults, and (4) the quality of parent-child interactions in support of children's learning. (Potts & Paull, 1995, p. 170)

Thus, the model's intention is to offer adults the skills and confidence necessary to help themselves out of poverty as well as support their child's growing social and educational skills. In addition, to encourage parents to participate, they are offered transportation, child-care, and informal counseling.

The Kenan Model for family literacy can be adapted for use in a myriad of settings. Communities can modify the four components to fit the needs of their populace. Programs based on the model can be tailored to be completely center-based, home-based, or a combination of
both. Local schools as well as community buildings could, possibly, house centers or outreach offices. No matter how a community personalized it services, the basic Kenan Model would be the guiding principle. While not all family literacy programs are based on the Kenan Model, many incorporate one or more of its components. The next section outlines the characteristics of a successful program.

Successful Programs

Based on the most recent research, I have found that there are specific attributes that make a family literacy program successful. First and foremost, a family literacy program must be based on a model shown by similar studies to produce positive results. A successful model must stand up to rigorous scrutiny of not only research, but of those who are affiliated with the program. These include, but are not limited to, educators and parents.

Flexibility is another trait of a successful program. A program based on a model that can be modified is extremely important. Each community has a different population and needs. This being so, the sponsors and organizers of a new program must be able to attain the
goals of the model without compromising the values and principals of the community it wishes to assist.

In order to be a success, a program must have a good retention rate. In other words, a program must continually assess its services to guarantee that they reflect the needs and wants of the families they support. This way, parents will be more likely to make a commitment to the program. With this commitment, the children benefit from the consistent services and support. Thus, both parents and children are engaged in and benefit from the program.

Finally, a successful program is linked to the neighborhood school. Schools that either promote or house literacy programs tend to have a higher retention rate. In many ways, the neighborhood school is the center of the community. Typically, a parent may have a child or relative that attends the school. Thus, families are in constant contact with the local school and, therefore, are more likely to complete a family literacy program.

Another way in which having a school-based program is beneficial is educators know the children with the greatest need. Thus, they can recommend those children and their families for services. This would mean that parents who would normally be afraid, ashamed, or unaware to ask for
services would be invited instead. With a school-based program, a family would build a relationship with the school and be more likely to participate in other school activities. They would learn that they are the most important factor in their child's attitude toward learning and that they are accountable for their child's successes and failures. The children would benefit by seeing that their families support their educational pursuits as well as encourage literacy practices in the home.

Federally Sponsored Programs

In the early 1960's, the federal government became concerned with the nation's literacy levels, particularly that of impoverished and at-risk children. In 1964, a federal task force, made up of child development experts, was asked to create a program to meet the needs of disadvantaged children. They recommended a comprehensive federally sponsored preschool program, initially, called Project Head Start. The goals of this new program were ambitious. It was "designed to help break the cycle of poverty by providing preschool children of low-income families with a comprehensive program to meet the emotional, social, health, nutritional, and psychological
needs" (Head Start Bureau, 2004). In addition, the program was designed to increase school readiness through child-focused activities.

Head Start provides services for children from birth to five years of age as well as pregnant women and their families. Eligibility is based on income. Families earning under the national poverty line or those eligible for public assistance are invited to participate in their state's program.

Head Start programs are designed to educate both the child and parent. "In 1965, Head Start was designed to encourage and support family involvement at all program levels" (Head Start Bureau, 2004). These programs help parents to reflect on their attitudes and values regarding education and reading. Parents are given child development information and counseling on how to apply it to their own unique family situation. In addition, parents are provided formal learning opportunities as well as outside resources relevant to themselves and their families. When parents are involved, they are "highly motivated to take on the challenges of learning new skills and behavior themselves, when they realize how their children benefit" (Head Start Bureau, 2004).
Another federally funded literacy program is the Even Start Family Literacy Program. Originally authorized in 1988 by Congress, Even Start was funded by Title I, Part B, Subpart 3 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1965. The program has since been reauthorized in 2000 in the Literacy Involves Families Together (LIFT) Act and, most recently, in the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001 (National Center for Family Literacy, 2003).

Even Start services are available for children from birth to seven years of age and their parents. To be admitted into the program, parents must be eligible to participate in an "adult basic education program under the Adult Education Act; or are within the State's compulsory school attendance age range" (National Even Start Association, 2003). Approximately one million parents and children are serviced in the year-round programs in over 800 sites across the country.

Although it is explicitly stated, Even Start programs institute the four components of the Kenan Model. According to McKee & Rhett (1995), the programs integrate "early childhood education, adult basic education, and parenting education" (p. 157). In addition, they are "required to include 'scheduling and location of services to allow joint
participation by parents and children" (McKee & Rhett, 1995, p. 161). The three goals of Even Start are: 1) to improve literacy of parents, 2) encourage and help parents be actively involved in the child's education, and 3) ensure children reach their full potential (Barnhardt, 2003, McKee & Rhett, 1995).

In order to meet these goals, Even Start programs are flexible, so each individual's needs are met. Parents and children can be involved in home-based activities, center-based activities, or a combination of the two. Home-based activities offer a more informal custom-made program for a family. Activities would be centered on the family's interests and needs. Center-based activities would be more formal. Parents and children would participate in predetermined activities based on the common interests and needs of the group such as GED (General Equivalency Diploma) workshops, storytelling, or art (National Even Start Association, 2003, The Montana Office of Public Instruction, 2004).

An important feature of the Even Start program is Parent and Child Time (PACT). It is during this time that parents and their children engage in interactive literacy activities. These activities are developed using "literacy-
focused strategies, based on scientifically-based reading research" (The Montana Office of Public Instruction, 2004). Thus, children and their parents have time to explore language and books. This exploration leads to language enrichment for both parties, a skill that is necessary to become a life-long learner.

Another important element is parent training. It is during these workshops that parents are directly taught how to help, support, and encourage their children. They are taught to be their child's primary teacher by using everyday events as a teaching tool. Parents are also taught how to be fully engaged as well as an active partner in their child's formal education. With these tools and strategies, parents will become confident participants in helping their children to succeed in school.

Literacy Program Studies

According to Gadsden (1995), the Parent-Child Learning Project (PCLP) is an outgrowth of other literacy program models (p.290). One of several programs offered to Head Start parents and staff, the two-year program was a series of 16 literacy workshops offered to 25 Head Start parents. The goal of the project was to provide "parents with multiple
reading strategies to use with their children and offering information about selecting appropriate books for their children" (Gadsden, 1995, p. 293).

The parent workshops were held weekly. Each week, parents met with the research team for two- to three-hour workshops. During these meetings, parents and the research team discussed literacy and parenting topics such as literacy issues that came up in the home and literacy activities. In addition, parents were required to complete weekly written assignments. These assignments were then compiled and used in the program's newsletter and workbook.

At the workshops, parents were given instruction in and support for literacy strategies. The parents were taught how to use these strategies to work with their children at home. In addition, parents were given the means to find relevant community resources, practice literacy skills such as letter writing, and learn and practice better communication skills. If requested, parents received intensive literacy tutoring either at the site or were referred to other programs (Gadsden, 1995).

At the time of the workshops, parents were given access to either a "lending library... created at the project sites, [or]. a mobile library of 25 to 50 children's books"
Parents took home the books from the library to read with their children. The parents discussed how the reading experience went at the following workshop. They discussed the interaction between themselves and their child during the reading activities. The parents also described the strategies used, if they were appropriate, and how effective they were. Additionally, the parents role-played the literacy experiences they had had with their children.

Parent journals as well as storybooks created by the parents and their children were also shared at these meetings. The parent journals included their thoughts and observations about the stories they read with their young children. It was in these journals that parents identified the literacy issues in their homes and whether or not the strategies they had been using with their children worked. In addition, the parents "shared stories about their lives... and what their specific literacy goals are for their children and themselves" (Gadsden, 1995, p. 294–295).

The overall results of this study were positive. The researchers found that there was willingness by the parents to engage and be proactive during the process. "These relationships must be reciprocal and result in helping
parents unmask ways that literacy can increase their capacity as parents, family members, and learners" (Gadsden, 1995, p. 302). The fact that parents collaborated with the research team, discussed literacy issues based on their home literacy experiences, and actively worked on solutions to solve any dilemmas showed that parents do want the best for their children and can overcome their personal literacy hurdles to achieve it.

According to Patricia Edwards (1995), in October 1987 a survey of Donaldsonville School kindergarten and first grade parents was taken and used to create a reading program based on the results. The survey questions asked whether the teacher asked the parents to read to their child, what does that would entail, the importance of reading, and what difficulties they have encountered while reading with their children (p. 55-56).

Edwards compiled the data from the survey results and concluded that "parents wanted their children to succeed, but they did not have a plan for helping them succeed...[and] reading was not an important part of the parents' daily interactions with their children" (Edwards, 1995, p.57). One of the reasons was that parents did not understand what to do when they read with their children. Another reason
was that the parents "could not provide the necessary scaffolding for their children" (Edwards, 1995, p.57). The parents did not have the literacy background necessary know what reading strategies to use although "teachers had assumed that these parents had this knowledge" (Edwards, 1995, p.57).

Based on the needs of the parents, Edwards developed the Parents as Partners in Reading Program. The goal of this program was to "assist parents in understanding how to share books with their children" (Edwards, 1995, p.55). In addition, the program would help parents to learn reading strategies through teacher modeling, discussion, and practice.

The program was held October 1987 thru May 1988. It consisted of 23 sessions, each two hours in length. The program was "divided into three phases: coaching, peer modeling, and parent-child interactions" (Edwards, 1995, p.62). Each phase lasted between six and seven weeks.

According to Edwards (1995), coaching was the objective of phase one. The parent group was provided with direct instruction in reading strategies that they could actively use in their home. Throughout this phase, the parents watched as teachers modeled reading behaviors and
strategies. Although they varied week-to-week, strategies such as picture walks and making real life connections to the text were included. Also presented during phase one was a teacher modeling the strategies previously taught as she read a book with a child. Parents then discussed what they saw during the modeling as well as asked any questions or for clarification on any points they needed (p. 62-63).

Peer modeling was the purpose of phase two. It gave the parents the opportunity to practice the strategies they had learned in phase one with the other parents before they worked with their children at home. According to Edwards (1995), throughout the peer-modeling phase, parents were assisted by:

(1) guiding their participation in book reading interactions with one another, (2) finding connections between what they already knew and what they needed to know, (3) modeling effective reading behaviors for them when such assistance was needed (encouraging them to review teacher tapes), and (4) providing praise and support for their attempts (p. 63).

The objective of phase three was to give parents time for parent-child interactions. It was at this time that the parents "shared books with their own children and
implemented strategies they learned in the previous two phases" (Edwards, 1995, p.63). During these sessions, Edwards watched, evaluated, and offered feedback on the parent-child interactions. In addition, she offered assistance when necessary (Edwards, 1995, p.63).

At the end of the 23 sessions, the parents were ready to take home all they had learned so they could support their children's literacy as well as continuing their own literacy pursuits. According to Edwards (1995), as a result of the program, the parents began to understand that they had to be partners in their children's education and that they could not assume that teachers wanted to be fully responsible for it (p.65). Most important, the parents "came to recognize that the ways in which they interacted with their children affected how well their children performed in school" (Edwards, 1995, p.65-66).

Parents could no longer expect the teachers and school to be the critical piece in their children's education. Rather, the parents learned that they were, not only, the most important teacher in their children's lives, but that they hold the key to a successful educational experience.
CHAPTER THREE
DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The development of this family literacy program is based on the needs of an elementary school in which a majority of the students are second language learners and their parents speak Spanish. Another factor is that the majority of the students come from low socio-economic families. Many of which were born in Mexico, migrated to California, and live with their extended families.

This program is also research-based. It is based on the Kenan Model for family literacy programs. The four components of the model are used in the program: 1) adult literacy including life skills, basic education skills, and ESL (English as a Second Language) classes, 2) early childhood education, 3) parenting education and support groups, and 4) regularly scheduled parent-child interactions which support and practice skills learned by the children (Potts & Paull, 1995, p.170). In addition, the program is also styled after Patricia Edward's Parents as Partners in Reading Program (1995). Like the parents at Donaldsonville School, this program will have the parents
go through coaching and parent-child interactions in order to learn and practice the reading strategies taught during the program.

The purpose of this project is to assist parents, through the development of a school-based Family Literacy Institute, to learn to actively help their children when they read at home. It is, also, to get parents involved with their children's literacy development and to support their educational experiences from elementary school through high school. The children of the participating parents will attend the sessions, so that parents have the opportunity to practice with teacher support before they try the strategies at home.

The use of an initial baseline survey as well as weekly quickwrites will measure how parents feel about helping their children and how the students feel about their parent's help. In addition, the survey will have a needs assessment section. Parents will have the opportunity to express what they want to know, have questions about, or see as they use the strategies in the home. In addition, a final survey will be given at the end of the Institute that has parents and students reflect on the usefulness of the program.
The Family Literacy Institute would be conducted weekly over a six-week period. The goal of the study would be to teach parents how to pick appropriate books for and with their children and use them as a read aloud. Parents will learn how to perform a picture walk and encourage their children to make predictions and connections. Parents will also learn how to form multi-leveled comprehension questions using Bloom's Taxonomy and help their children to retell stories.

At the end of the six weeks, a round table meeting of the participating parents and teacher will be held once a month. Parents will be invited to participate and discuss strategies they learned during the institute or ask for help if they need it. Basically, it will give parents a forum for additional literacy discussions that may or may not have arisen during the initial Literacy Institute sessions. It will also give the parents a place to discuss any issues that pertain to their child's education. This will allow parents a safe and informal place to talk about the issues that are most important to them and discuss ways to address these issues and as well as collaborate to find solutions.
Methodology

The sessions will take place once a week over a six-week period. Each week, a one-hour class will be held after school for parents and the child that is a student in the director's class. Each session of the Family Literacy Institute will have a different theme related to reading strategies.

Week One will set the tone for the six-week institute. Topics will include: a schedule and overview of the following weeks (SEE APPENDIX C), how to create a place and routine for homework, the importance of a parent's commitment to their child's literacy and education, and parent resources. It will also be at this session that parents will complete a survey regarding their place in their child's education and their knowledge of literacy strategies (SEE APPENDIX A).

The first meeting is designed to give the parents an opportunity to get to know the director and understand his teaching philosophy. Parents will be given a schedule of topics for the following five sessions as well as a journal in which to discuss what they learned in the session, keep notes, and jot down questions for the next session (SEE APPENDIX D). The contents of the journal will be one way in
which the director can assess what the parents learned as well as what they need and want to discuss in subsequent sessions. It will also give the director topic ideas for future round table discussions. This journal will be brought to each future gathering.

In addition, parents will be given an opportunity to take notes throughout the lessons. The director will provide an abundant amount of note sheets each session as well as a binder to keep them organized (SEE APPENDIX F). The goal of the notebook and notes is so that the parents have a resource to refer back to when they need clarification or reminders on how a strategy worked.

The topics for Week Two are how as follows: 1) to pick appropriate books, 2) to do a picture walk with a new story, and 3) how to facilitate predictions and make connections to the text. The session will begin by showing the parents how to choose an appropriate book from the classroom library. The book will then be used to model or demonstrate a picture walk. First, the parents will be shown the pictures in the text as the director talks about or does a "think aloud" about what is happening in each picture, make predictions about what will happen next, and make connections or what the text reminds me of (text-to-
self, text-to-text, and text-to-world). After the picture walk, the book will be read aloud with occasional pauses for the director to discuss where, when, and how to make predictions and connections as well as adjust predictions based on information found in the text.

Following the demonstration, another book will be picked and used so the parents will have the opportunity to practice the new strategies with the director. In other words, upon reading aloud the new book, parents will participate in the picture walk, making and adjusting predictions, and making connections. The group will discuss, throughout the reading, what visuals helped them to make their predictions and whether those prediction need to be adjusted based on the information found in the text. In addition, the group will discuss what in the text made them remember something or make a connection to the text as well as how did what they already knew helped them to make that connection. Thus, parents will experience how a reader's background knowledge or life experiences help make sense of a text.

After the strategies are modeled and practiced, parents will be invited to choose a book and practice the strategies with their children. The director will be there
to assist and re-demonstrate as necessary. When the session is finished, a few minutes will be available for questions and/or comments.

Week Three will be a session discussing comprehension and retell strategies as well as any topics requested by the parents. The session will begin by discussing and re-demonstrating the prior week's strategies and answering any questions. As in the week before, the session will begin by choosing a few books.

After choosing the books, the director will read a text aloud once without interruption. After the book is read aloud, the director will model how to ask comprehension questions throughout the text. This will happen by stopping periodically and asking questions using who, what, where, when, why, and how about what has happened already in the text. When finished reading and doing comprehension, the director will then demonstrate a retell or sequence of events. The director will begin at the beginning of the story and tell, in order, what happened during the story. In addition, the sequence of events will be written on a piece of chart paper, so there is a visual aid for the parents to use.
Next, the director will read a new book. The parents will have the opportunity to both answer and ask comprehension questions. They will also participate in an oral retelling of the story. As they do the retell, the parents will do an interactive writing or sharing the pen exercise to write the sequence of events on chart paper. As the parents and director write together, they will stop after each sentence to read the sentence together. The group will also stop periodically to reread the sequencing and make sure it makes sense and has all of the events. Throughout the reading of the shared writing, the connection between reading and writing will be more clearly understood.

The interactive writing strategy is a strategy that can be used at home. Sharing the pen to write together gives parents another way to interact with their child as they practice the retelling strategy as well as give the child an opportunity to practice writing. It shows the parents how important writing is to developing good reading strategies (SEE APPENDIX E).

After the lesson, the director will have the parents choose a book and work with their child on the new strategies. They will have the opportunity to practice both
the comprehension strategies and retelling both orally and in writing. The director will assist and demonstrate as necessary. At the conclusion of the session, a question time will be available.

Week Four’s topic is the read aloud. This strategy is useful to students as they are exposed to reading fluency, oral intonation, and natural pausing. During this session, the group will also use the strategies from the previous day’s session during the read aloud. The director will model, not only how to read aloud a text, but also how to incorporate the picture walk, prediction, connections, comprehension, and retell as important features of the read aloud and literacy acquisition.

As during the previous sessions, the director will begin by discussing strategies already covered and answering any questions about those strategies. The director will again go through the process of choosing an appropriate book to use. The director will then read the first story without interruption. As the second reading is happening, the director will stop to "think aloud" and model the prediction, comprehension, and retelling strategies previously taught.
Next, the parents and the director will do a read aloud together. The group will first do a picture walk together for a new story. During the picture walk, parents will make connections and predictions. As the director begins to read the story, he will stop periodically for parents to answer and ask comprehension questions. At the end of the reading, the parents will do a retell orally and on chart paper. They will finish the exercise with a question and answer session. Finally, parents will have an opportunity to practice what they have learned with their child. The director will be available to assist parents or to do further demonstrations. At the end of the session, parents will have an opportunity to ask questions.

Week Five's topic will begin with a question and answer session as well as an opportunity for the director to address any specific issues relating to reading or re-teach strategies as requested by the parents in their journals. In addition, the director will have the parents work again with their children. They will pick a book, do a picture walk, ask comprehension questions, and have their child make predictions. The parents will then either read aloud to their child or have the child read aloud to them. They will ask comprehension questions and ask if the
predictions made during the picture walk were correct or if they need to be adjusted. The parent will also illicit any connections made to the text.

At the end of the reading, the child will retell the story either orally or written on a piece of chart or construction paper. Throughout this time, the director will be available to help parents and/or model the strategies again.

The final week, Week Six, the parents and the director will meet briefly at school. It will be at this meeting that parents will fill out a final survey (SEE APPENDIX B). It will be a survey similar to the one that was given at the beginning of the institute. This survey will again ask about attitudes about reading. It will also give the parents an opportunity to explain if their attitudes or their child's attitudes about literacy and school have changed.

After completing the survey, the parents will go on a "field trip" to the local library. The group will have a tour of the library, meet the librarian, learn about library events, and sign up for library cards. Parents and students will have a chance to browse and check out books. The director and librarian will help parents to choose
appropriate books. The director will also answer any final questions the parents may have.

As a follow up to the Family Literacy Institute, an informal round table discussion will be held once a month. It will be during these meetings that parents can ask questions, talk about any issues that may have arisen throughout the month, discuss and/or give anecdotes about how the strategies are affecting their children and themselves, talk about their feelings, and ask for help or resources. During these meetings, the director can work with parents on strategies they do not feel comfortable with.

The meetings will be a place for parents to continue to dialogue about literacy and their part in their children's education. It will reinforce the importance of their commitment to their child's education and literacy. It will give the parents a place to have a voice.

Sample

Teachers, support staff, and parents were the sample that completed the needs assessment survey. The information of the survey was used to plan the format and themes of the six-week Institute.
The sample for the Family Literacy Institute will be the parents of first graders that attended Kindergarten in the same school. Parent languages may include English, Spanish, and English-Spanish bi-lingual. Parents will bring their first grade children to each session, so they can practice the strategies that are taught.

Assessment/Data Collection

Prior to the Family Literacy Institute, a needs assessment survey (SEE APPENDIX G & H) will be given to teachers, support staff, and parents of the school the Institute will support. This survey will help determine the course of the Institute. The information gathered will help to guide the director in creating lessons and materials that will target the areas suggested in the survey. Thus, parents and teachers will have a voice on what the Institute focuses as well as how to strengthen the home-school connection in order to help every student be successful in school.

At the beginning of the six-week institute, each parent will be given a survey. This survey will help the director to better understand the parents and create a safe environment that transcends education backgrounds and
attitudes about reading. The hope is to give all parents the tools to create lifelong learners of their children and, as a by-product, themselves.

The first set of questions in the survey will ask questions about the parent such as educational status, if classes are currently taken, and attitudes towards reading. Another section will inquire about how the parent feels about their child's education and literacy. In addition, it will ask the degree to which the parent helps their child and how they feel when they help.

Another set of questions will find out about the first grade child's homework habits and home learning environment including where and when it is done and the type of help available to the child. Finally, the survey will give the parents an opportunity to express the type of services or support they would like provided by the school and Institute.

At the end of the six-weeks, the parents will receive a modified version of the original survey. The parent education questions will be eliminated and in its place will be a section in which parents will articulate what they found most beneficial and least beneficial during the six-week Institute. This piece will be essential to the
continuing involvement of parents. Without acknowledging needs and wants, the teacher cannot hope that parents will stay involved in their children’s education. "Understanding is in fact central to all the other achievements: unless we eventually understand the deeper meanings and import what we know and the skills we develop, we cannot make the most effective and wise uses possible of our knowledge" (Wiggins, 1998, p. 72). The survey will also give the parents an opportunity to make suggestions on how to make the classes better for future Family Literacy Institutes as well as the monthly round-table discussions they will attend each month.

Furthermore, parents will be given the opportunity, at the end of each session, to jot down their questions and comments in their parent journal. This will allow them to have a voice at each session. Additionally, the parent's comments and questions will be addressed in the next session. Thereby, the opportunity to ask questions and make comments will alleviate any mistrust or fear that they are being told what to do rather than working together to create better readers and students.

The Family Literacy Institute's primary goal is to give the parents tools to improve their child's reading and...
attitude towards school. Thus, the participating students' reading scores will be used to indicate whether or not the institute has had an impact on reading level and retelling scores. The director will use the approved method of reading assessment or running records to assess reading levels at the beginning of the school year. The assessment will use leveled books as well as have the student retell the story to demonstrate reading level. In addition, after discovering the reading level the student is at, the student will write a response to that leveled book. The written response will help the evaluator to understand the connections the student has made to the story. It will, also, give a clearer understanding of the student's schema or background knowledge.

A miscue analysis will be used to determine what type of errors the student is making; to establish the patterns that will help the teacher to individualize reading instruction. These assessments will give a clear picture of the students' reading ability. In addition, these patterns will provide more information to guide the parents when they are taught the skills necessary to help their child. It will allow the director to give the parent's a sense of their child's reading needs.
At the conclusion of the six-week institute, the student's reading levels will again be assessed by the method previously mentioned. These levels will be compared to student reading levels across the school year. In addition, these students will be compared against the growth of students that had similar reading levels, but had parents that were unable to participate in the Institute. This, in addition to the parent survey, will give the director a clear picture of the success of the institute. Of course, future-reading assessments will also indicate the continuing power of the parents' use of the tools they learned throughout the institute. The expectation is that participation in the institute will lead to higher student reading scores and better attitudes toward reading and school in general.

Data Analysis

In order to develop the initial Family Literacy Institute, a needs assessment was developed and administered to teachers, support staff, and parents (SEE APPENDIX G & H). The purpose of the survey was to ascertain beliefs held about parental involvement in school activities, in the classroom, and educational decisions.
It also inquired about the availability and need as well as suggestions for programs and resources provided for students, parents, and teachers.

The data collected from the needs survey was essential to understanding the needs and desires of both teachers and parents. It provided a starting point from which to begin formulating the type of materials and lessons that would be best used in the Family Literacy Institute. In addition, the survey offered insight on the perception both teachers and parents had about each other. Understanding these feelings and being sensitive to them are paramount in building trust between school and home.

Data will be gathered from both the beginning and ending surveys given in the course of the Institute. The findings will be calculated in percentages and shown in bar graphs. The data from the initial survey, information from the first meeting, and end of session quickwrites will be used to create interesting and accessible lessons throughout the following five-week period. The information will give the director an opportunity to discuss the questions and concerns of the parents.

In addition, the data collected will be instrumental in creating a format for the monthly round table
discussions. The director will use the information gathered to share what he learned with his colleagues, parents, and students. In order for parents to remain committed to a monthly meeting, they need to know if and what changes have taken place over the course of the institute. They also need to know that the director and school, too, are committed and value the input solicited from the parents throughout the Family Literacy Institute and the monthly round table meetings. Thus, the parents and school working together can ensure the success of all students as well as build a strong relationship that promotes literacy in the home and school.
CHAPTER FOUR
RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Presentation of the Findings

The purpose of this project was to create a program in which parents and teachers work together to support and encourage student achievement. It would be a six-week institute in which parents would be given the opportunity to learn and practice using the most current research-based reading strategies. In addition, parents would be invited to attend monthly round tables in which they could discuss any issues they were having with using the reading strategies at home, learn about the latest research and programs that are available, or ask for further help. The hope of this is to foster a trusting relationship between parents and teachers.

Although I believe that parents would benefit having a program in which they could learn and use reading strategies that would allow them to work effectively with their children at home, I wanted to know what my colleagues and peers believed as well as a sampling of parents. Therefore, I drew up a needs assessment survey (SEE
to ask the teachers, support staff, and parents their beliefs about the parental involvement as well as programs and resources either available or wanted. I gave the survey to a total of 30 teachers and support staff and 20 parents. Of this, 20 teachers and support staff participated. A total of six parents returned the survey. The survey was completely confidential and anonymous. The teachers and support staff were given one version of the survey (SEE APPENDIX G) and the parents another (SEE APPENDIX H). Both versions asked the common questions of gender and educational background. In addition, each survey asked questions about teachers support of students, administration support, inclusion in curriculum/literacy decisions, parent support and involvement, what type of programs and/or trainings would be beneficial to parents, the type of programs that would liked to be offered, and availability of resources for parents. The teacher/support staff survey included a few additional questions asking which degrees/credentials the participants had, years teaching, and if they had had any staff development opportunities, thus far, during the current school year.
Teacher and Support Staff Demographics

Two Kindergarten, three first grade, three second grade, one third grade, one fourth grade, two fifth grade, one sixth grade, and three special education teachers participated. Of the teachers surveyed, 12 of the 16 participants were female. Years of teaching experience ranged from first year teachers to veteran teachers. Four participants have been teaching 0-2 years, three for 3-5 years, five for 6-10 years, four for 11-15 years, and zero for 16+ years. Of these, one teacher is working on clearing a preliminary credential and seven are working on their Master's Degrees. Four female support staff participated in the survey. One is a counselor, one is the health clerk, and two are front office staff. One of the front office staff is currently working on a BA in Business and the health clerk is continuing with her RN (Registered Nurse) classes.

Parent Demographics

Of the parents surveyed, five were female and one male. Regarding their highest educational level, one has only a high school diploma, one has some college or an AA,
one has an undergraduate degree, and three declined to answer. They have a total of six children attending the school ranging from Kindergarten to fifth grade: one in Kindergarten, three in first grade, one in fourth grade, and one in fifth grade.

Survey Findings

The question of teacher and school support for students as well as administrator support for both teachers and parents were crucial questions. If teachers and/or parents did not believe this support was taking place, then a program such as the Family Literacy Institute would be a bandage rather than a solution. Eighty-five percent of teachers/staff and eight-three percent of parents believed that students were well supported by teachers and staff. In addition, 100% of teachers/staff and 83% of parents believed that the administration supported both teachers and parents.

Another important issue was parent willingness to participate in not only school and curriculum decisions, but also parent support of teachers. One-hundred percent of teachers and 83% of parents believed that parents were
actively involved at the school in both the classrooms and in decision making. One parent commented, “I do believe that it is always a team between parents [and] school”. In addition, 83% of parents and 95% of teachers believed that parents were supportive of teacher and staff decisions.

On the question of if parents would benefit from literacy classes, trainings, or programs provided by teachers, 83% of parents and 100% of teachers/staff believed this to be a positive. Those that did not agree had no opinion on the subject. The types of programs, trainings, etc. that the participants said they would like to see offered were reading, GATE (Gifted and Talented Education), Step Up to Writing, math, refresher classes in math and English, help for second language parents, or anything that benefits the students.

Discussion of the Findings
The needs assessment survey gave way to a few trends. First, 80% or more of parents and teachers/support staff believed that teacher, staff, and administrator support was an imperative to the success of the relationship between home, school, and student achievement. The undertaking of a
family literacy program such as the Family Literacy Institute must have support of not only the teachers, but also of the administration who support it not only monetarily, but also, with time, materials, space, and staff such as translators or aides. In addition, it requires that parents be committed and involved. The data shows that parents are involved with not only their own children, but also decision making for the school and curriculum. Parental involvement and commitment are essential to a child’s understanding of the importance of an education. Without parental involvement a child may begin to believe that education is not important and they may begin to become apathetic about their own learning.

The most interesting piece of data was the question on what types of trainings, classes, or programs would be beneficial to help parents work with heir children at home. The suggestions given by teachers ranged from English language development for parents to math, reading, and writing strategies. For the most part, parents had similar requests. However, one parent made it very clear that they “so not feel it is the school’s responsibility to teach English as a Second Language”. It would be interesting to
create another survey to investigate the feelings of parents, teachers, and support staff about parents and students that speak another language and the school’s responsibility to them.

The conclusion drawn from this survey data is that parents would like to see opportunities to learn to better help their children and work hand-in-hand with the school. It also shows that teachers and support staff believe that it is an area of need. One in which they are willing to partner with parents to better serve the students they teach as well as those that will come through their doors at a future time.
CHAPTER FIVE
SUMMARY/CONCLUSIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

Education is quickly moving toward an understanding that parents play an important part in a child’s education. Parents are the first teacher. It is from the parent that children learn their beliefs and values. They learn right from wrong as well as attitudes towards life, work, and education. The educational system is missing a crucial link when it does not include and encourage parents to be an active part of education. Leaving it solely to the teachers is shortsighted as students go home each day and spend a majority of their time with their families. Therefore, the need for parent education in the form of trainings, classes, and programs is essential if we as educators want parents to support the strategies being used in the classroom at home.

The goal of this project was to provide teachers with a six-week family literacy program that would teach parents how to use the research-based strategies used in the classroom at home. The program would give parents the
opportunity to be taught reading strategies and practice them in a safe and caring environment. Parents would be able to practice with their own children under the supervision of the teacher. Parents would also have the opportunity to ask questions and receive extra help as the need arises. In addition, parents would be invited to a monthly round table where the latest research and strategies are discussed and, possibly, modeled. It would also be a time to bring up concerns and ask for additional help from the teacher. In this way, the parent and teacher would build a mutually trusting relationship in which the students' benefits.

Another goal was to use a needs assessment survey to show that parents, teachers, and support staff find there is a need for parent programs. Through the data collected, the researcher was able to show that more than 80% of parents and teachers agree that educational programming for parents, ranging from math to reading to writing, would be a useful tool in the procurement of student achievement. Parents want to be an active part of their children's education. By giving parents the resources to support what is happening in the classroom, students will have the
support they need when working at home. This support will, then, help lead to the academic success of all students.

Conclusions

Working in a school environment that encouraged a one time "literacy night", I found that parents were bombarded with many strategies in many subjects. The parents were shown what to do quickly, but had no place to ask questions. In addition, they were sent home without the teachers making sure that they had neither a full understanding of nor the ability to repeat the strategies with their own children. Thus, it was time to think out of the box and create a program that would be held over six weeks. This program would give the parents an opportunity to not only have the strategies modeled, but a chance to use them under the guidance of the teacher. The parents would also have a time to ask questions and get the sometimes much needed help to understand what is happening in the classroom. Over the six weeks, parents and teachers would forge a common bond and see that they both have the same goal–successful, life-long learners.

The Family Literacy Institute concept is backed by the data compiled by the needs assessment survey administered
to 26 teachers, parents, and support staff. Over 80% of those polled agreed that parent education and commitment to their children’s education are needed to achieve a relationship between all parties and increase student achievement. Both parents and teachers wanted to partake in classes, trainings, or programs in math, reading, and writing strategies. The survey showed that 83% of parents believe that they had to be involved in not only their own student’s education, but also in educational decisions made in relationship to the school and their children’s curriculum. Building a partnership between home and school can only benefit the students.

Recommendations

It is my sincere recommendation that teachers and schools look closely at relationship between student achievement and home support. We, as educators, need to use this valuable resource to foster a love of learning in our students and give them the needed support at home. I recommend that schools take a survey to assess the needs of their parents and teachers and to offer training or programs that will help booster student achievement.
In addition, I recommend that schools develop extended programs such as the Family Literacy Institute tailored to their own population’s needs. Using a canned program will not show that their concerns and needs are taken seriously and that can jeopardize the potential home/school partnership.

It is time for all parents to become involved and not expect that teachers can do everything themselves. A child’s education must be based on a partnership between home and school. Parents shape their children’s attitudes about education. Being a partner with the school will show students that their parents have a healthy attitude toward learning and that it is a priority. Only a strong relationship between the parent, teacher, and school will reinforce this attitude and the expectation that every student will work to their own potential.
APPENDIX A

INITIAL PARENT SURVEY
Initial Parent Survey

Child's name: ____________________________

Parent's name: ____________________________

1) Do you enjoy reading?  Yes  No

2) Do you feel that you are a good reader?  Yes  No

3) Do you read with your child every day?  Yes  No

4) When reading with your child, do you read any other text besides the reading homework he brings home?  Yes  No

5) Do you feel that you effectively help your child when he reads?  Yes  No

6) Do you understand how the teacher expects you to help your child with his reading homework?  Yes  No

7) Does your child enjoy reading?  Yes  No

8) Which topics would you like to know more about?

(Please circle all that apply)

Reading  Understanding State Standards
Homework  Understanding "No Child Left Behind"
Behavior  Effective Reading Strategies

9) Any other topics or issues you would like included in the workshops: ____________________________________________
APPENDIX B

FINAL PARENT SURVEY
Final Parent Survey

Child's name: ______________________________

Parent's name: ____________________________

1) Do you enjoy reading?  Yes  No

2) Do you feel that you are a good reader?  Yes  No

3) Do you read with your child every day?  Yes  No

4) When reading with your child, do you read any other text besides the reading homework he brings home?  Yes  No

5) Do you feel that you effectively help your child when he reads?  Yes  No

6) Do you understand how the teacher expects you to help your child with his reading homework?  Yes  No

7) Does your child enjoy reading?  Yes  No

8) Has the Family Literacy Institute changed the way you feel about reading?  Yes  No

9) Why or why not?  ____________________________________________

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10) Do you feel that you are more effective at helping your child with his homework? Yes No

11) Why or why not? ____________________________

12) Would you recommend this program to other parents? Yes No

Thank you so much for attending the Family Literacy Institute. We look forward to seeing you at the first Round Table next month.
APPENDIX C

SIX-WEEK SCHEDULE OF EVENTS
Six-Week Schedule of Events

Week One
1. Introduction to Program
2. Parent Survey
3. Parent Journal--what is it and how do I use it?
4. Taking Notes (hand out)
5. Q & A

Week Two
1. Choosing appropriate books
2. Picture Walk--using pictures before reading the words
3. Making Predictions--smart guesses using text and picture clues
4. Making Connections--text-to-self, world, and text (background knowledge)
5. Practice Strategies--whole group/director and parent/child
6. Q & A
Week Three

1. Revisit Last Week's Strategies
2. Director Read Aloud
3. Comprehension Strategies--parent questioning & 5 W's
4. Retelling & Sequencing--shared pen (hand out)
5. Practice Strategies--whole group/director and parent/child
6. Q & A

Week Four

1. Revisit Last Week's Strategies
2. Read Aloud Strategies--fluency, intonation, and natural pausing
3. Incorporating All Strategies in Read Aloud
4. Practice Strategies--whole group/director and parent/child
6. Q & A
Week Five

1. Q & A
2. Re-teach Requested Strategies
3. Practice Strategies Learned Throughout Sessions--parent/child
4. Discuss Field Trip to Library

Week Six

1. Final Parent Survey
2. Field Trip to Library
APPENDIX D

WEEKLY PARENT JOURNAL
1. What I learned in this session:

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

2. What I would like to know more about:

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

NAME: ___________________________  WEEK# _____
APPENDIX E

RETELL/SEQUENCE CHART
RETELL/SEQUENCING CHART

NAME OF BOOK: _______________________

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First, ______________________________________________________

Next, ______________________________________________________

Then, ______________________________________________________

Last, ______________________________________________________
APPENDIX F

NOTES
APPENDIX G

TEACHER/SUPPORT STAFF SURVEY
School-Wide Needs Assessment
“The Survey”

I am in need of your help!! I am doing an assignment for one of my CSUSB Reading Specialist classes and need your valuable input. The information I receive from this survey is absolutely confidential and for my eyes and use only. If you are interested in the results, just write your name on the survey and I will share the final results with you.

Would you please take a few moments and fill this survey out? I realize you are extremely busy with report cards, assessments, and upcoming conferences, but I really could use your input!!! Please return by October 20 in my box or room. Thanks!!

I appreciate your help with this,

Teresa Cimino
Room 10

Current grade level and/or assignment: __________  Gender:  F  M

Years teaching: 0-2  3-5  6-10  11-15  16-20  21+

Which degree(s)/credential(s) do you have?

__________________________________________________________

Are you currently working on a degree or credential?  Y   N
If so, which one(s)?

__________________________________________________________

Scale Key
Strongly Disagree (SD)  Disagree(D)  No Opinion(NO)  Agree(A)  Strongly Agree(SA)

Please circle answer and add comments as needed:
1. All students are adequately supported by teachers, staff, and programs.

Comments:

__________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________

78
2. Teachers and staff are fully supported by the administration.

Comments:

3. Teachers are included in the curriculum and/or literacy program decisions.

Comments:

4. Teachers and staff have a variety of opportunities to be involved.

Comments:

5. Parents are actively involved.

Comments:

6. Parents are given opportunities to be involved in the curriculum and literacy programs.

Comments:

7. Parents are supportive of teacher and staff decisions.

Comments:
8. Parents would benefit from literacy classes, trainings, or programs provided by teachers and staff.

SD  D  NO  A  SA

Comments:

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

9. What literacy classes, trainings, or programs would you like to see offered to parents?

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Please circle print and non-print resources available to teachers and students at Eastvale:

- Manipulatives (math or literacy)
- Educational Video/DVDs
- Educational Computer Software
- Supplemental Materials (books, workbooks, etc. that can be used to support approved curriculum)

10. What additional resources would you like to see available?

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

11. What resources would you like to see available to parents to support their children at home?

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
12. Have you attended any staff development this school year? Y N
   If so, what?

13. What staff development opportunities would you find useful at Eastvale?
APPENDIX H

PARENT SURVEY
School-Wide Needs Assessment
“The Survey”

I am in need of your help!! I am doing an assignment for one of my CSUSB Reading Specialist classes and need your valuable input. The information I receive from this survey is absolutely confidential and for my eyes and use only. If you are interested in the results, just write your name on the survey and I will share the final results with you.

Would you please take a few moments and fill this survey out? I realize you are extremely busy with report cards, assessments, and upcoming conferences, but I really could use your input!!! Please return by October 20 in my box or room. Thanks!!

I appreciate your help with this,

Teresa Cimino
Room 10

______________________________

Parent(s) Gender: F  M

Educational Level (please circle):
High School       Some College or AA
Undergraduate Degree (BA or BS)  Graduate Degree (MA or MS)
Other

Number of children attending school: ____  Grade levels: _________________

Scale Key
Strongly Disagree (SD)  Disagree(D)  No Opinion(NO)  Agree(A)  Strongly Agree(SA)

Please circle answer and add comments as needed:

1. All students are adequately supported by teachers, staff, and programs.
   SD  D  NO  A  SA

Comments:

______________________________

83
2. Parents are fully supported by the administration.
   
   Comments:
   
   SD    D    NO    A    SA

3. Parents are included in the curriculum and/or literacy program decisions.
   
   Comments:
   
   SD    D    NO    A    SA

4. Parents and the community have a variety of opportunities to be involved.
   
   Comments:
   
   SD    D    NO    A    SA

5. Many parents are actively involved.
   
   Comments:
   
   SD    D    NO    A    SA

6. Parents are given opportunities to be involved in the curriculum and literacy programs.
   
   Comments:
   
   SD    D    NO    A    SA

7. Parents are supportive of teacher and staff decisions.
   
   Comments:
   
   SD    D    NO    A    SA
8. Parents would benefit from literacy classes, trainings, or programs provided by teachers and staff.

SD    D    NO    A    SA

Comments:

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

9. What literacy classes, trainings, or programs would you like to see offered to parents?

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Please circle print and non-print resources available to teachers and students at Eastvale:

Manipulatives (math or literacy)    Educational Video/DVDs
Educational Computer Software
Supplemental Materials (books, workbooks, etc. that can be used to support approved curriculum)

10. What additional resources would you like to see available?

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

11. What resources would you like to see available to parents to support their children at home?

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
REFERENCES


