Improving Parent Involvement For Culturally And Linguistically Diverse Parents Of Middle School Students With Disabilities From Urban Settings in Suburban Schools

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IMPROVING PARENT INVOLVEMENT FOR CULTURALLY AND LINGUISTICALLY DIVERSE PARENTS OF MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES FROM URBAN SETTINGS IN SUBURBAN SCHOOLS

by

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A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the Department of Child, Family, and Community Sciences in the College of Education at the University of Central Florida Orlando, FL

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ABSTRACT

This study was designed to address the need for improved collaborative experiences for culturally and linguistically diverse (CLD) parents of students with disabilities. Historically, these individuals have had limited interactions with special education services and professionals, particularly at the middle school level. To improve the collaborative relationship between CLD families and schools, the study offered collaborative training sessions designed to provide opportunities for parents to build on their current knowledge base and skills for effective partnerships with school personnel. The goal of the training was to increase the types and frequency of school involvement by CLD parents.

The participants for this study consisted of teachers and parents of culturally diverse groups of middle grade students in special education transitioning from an urban elementary school into a suburban middle school. Hence, the researcher evaluated parent perceptions of the collaborative experience to determine the effects it had on future efforts to collaborate. Student perceptions of both the collaborative process and the teacher’s ability to provide services that embrace cultural differences and reflect high expectations were also assessed.

Overall evaluation of Parent Collaborative Training (PCT) demonstrated a direct influence on the behaviors of parents as well as students and teachers, who were indirectly affected by the parenting behaviors. The training influenced parents’ knowledge and skills, opinions of students regarding their parents and teachers, and showed higher ratings for students across three domains: student behaviors, student capabilities, and teacher expectations.
This work is dedicated to my children, Shauna and Kelsi-Ann, who inspire me each day with their youthful innocence and unconditional love. Thank you for your patience and most importantly, your forgiveness when Mommy couldn’t be there at the very moment you needed me. I promise that life will be beautiful from here on out.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

First and foremost, I would like to thank God for giving me the ability to realize my purpose in life. Without his relentless push for me to overcome the obstacles, I would not have made it this far. To my most significant other, my family and friends, I thank you for your encouragement and support through it all. Specifically, to my parents, Lester and Lorna, thank you for reminding me that God is in control. To my sisters, Karim and Samantha, thanks for always providing other perspectives on life and living. To Kevin, thank you for challenging the way I think and act, thus creating for me a new way of seeing and interacting with those around me.

Dr. Norma Waite, my mentor and friend, thank you for your support and guidance throughout my life. Because you embody the spirit of a purpose driven woman and have not been selfish in sharing your many gifts with the world, I have been able to identify the purpose of my own life, which includes service to humankind. For the rest of my life, I will continue to regard you as one of the most important blessings in my life.

Dr. Lisa Dieker, a woman of distinction, who effortlessly balances professional and personal while setting the measure by which others, including myself, aspire to. You have brought a breath of fresh air to our college community and have become a source of inspiration to young females through your display of knowledge and skills, fairness and open-mindedness, as well as your devotion to the professional growth of doctoral students entrusted in your care. Thank you for your guidance and support throughout this journey. You have been instrumental in not only my professional making, but also in my acquisition of personal responsibility. God Bless.
Dr. Maria Blanés, you have been a source of inspiration and strength throughout this academic process. Thank you for being a beacon of light on this pathway to academic enrichment. Your experiences as a researcher have been a launch pad for the contributions I intend to make in the field of special education. I have developed a deep sense of respect for you, not only in the professional sense, but in the personal as well. You have taught me not to allow life’s challenge to rob me of who I truly am, but to exist independent of adverse situations. To you, I am eternally grateful.

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To the UCF Ex. Ed. Faculty, thank you for providing the discourse for learning and the platform for employing the skills of a professional. The niche carved by each of you has collectively formed the foundation upon which I will build my own.

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If I have forgotten to formally recognize someone who has helped me in one way or another to accomplish this task, please realize that this omission was made in good faith. Know that I have thanked you a million times over during this process and will continue to thank you at least that many times in the future.
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<th>Full Form</th>
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<tr>
<td>ADHD</td>
<td>Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder</td>
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<tr>
<td>BPI</td>
<td>Behavior Problems Index</td>
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<tr>
<td>CLD</td>
<td>Culturally and Linguistically Diverse</td>
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<tr>
<td>CPRC</td>
<td>Community Parent Resource Center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CPPRG</td>
<td>Conduct Problems Prevention Research Group.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DOE</td>
<td>Department of Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>IDEA</td>
<td>Individuals with Disabilities Education Act</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IEP</td>
<td>Individualized Education Plan</td>
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<tr>
<td>EASE</td>
<td>Early Access to Success in Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>EBD</td>
<td>Emotional-Behavioral Disorders</td>
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<tr>
<td>ED</td>
<td>Emotional Disorders</td>
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<td>ESE</td>
<td>Exceptional Student Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fast</td>
<td>Families are Students and Teachers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GPA</td>
<td>Grade Point Average</td>
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<tr>
<td>HIPPY</td>
<td>Home Instruction Program for Preschool Youngsters</td>
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<tr>
<td>HHS</td>
<td>Department of Health and Human Services</td>
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<tr>
<td>IFSP</td>
<td>Individual Family Service Plan</td>
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<td>MR</td>
<td>Mental Retardation</td>
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<td>NASP</td>
<td>National Association of School Psychologists</td>
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<td>NCATE</td>
<td>National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education</td>
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<td>NCLB</td>
<td>No Child Left Behind Act</td>
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<td>NEA</td>
<td>National Education Association</td>
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<tr>
<td>Acronym</td>
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<tr>
<td>NELS</td>
<td>National Education Longitudinal Study</td>
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<td>NPTA</td>
<td>National Parent-Teacher Association</td>
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<td>NLTS</td>
<td>National Longitudinal Transition Study</td>
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<td>PACER</td>
<td>Parent Advocacy Coalition for Educational Rights</td>
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<td>PARENT</td>
<td>Parent Accountability Recruitment and Education National Training</td>
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<td>PCT-PICEQ</td>
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<td>PCT-TDQ</td>
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<tr>
<td>PET</td>
<td>Parent Effectiveness Training</td>
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<tr>
<td>PIQE</td>
<td>Parent Institute for Quality Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>PLT</td>
<td>Parent Leadership Training</td>
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<tr>
<td>PTA</td>
<td>Parent Teacher Association</td>
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<td>SAC</td>
<td>School Advisory Committee</td>
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<tr>
<td>SEELS</td>
<td>Special Education Elementary Longitudinal Study</td>
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<tr>
<td>SES</td>
<td>Socio-Economic Status</td>
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<tr>
<td>STEP</td>
<td>Systematic Training for Effective Parenting</td>
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Researchers and educators have long documented the potential benefits to students, parents, teachers, and schools when parents are engaged in their children’s education (Desimone, 1999; Epstein & Sheldon, 2002; Hill, et al., 2004; Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1997a, 1997b; Hoover-Dempsey, et al., 2005; Jeynes, 2003; Singer, 2002; Smalley & Reyes-Blanes, 2001). More specifically, the National Middle School Association (2000) reports that “parent involvement has been linked with student outcomes including increased achievement test results, a decrease in dropout rate, improved attendance, improved student behavior, higher grades, higher grade point average, greater commitment to schoolwork, and improved attitude toward school” (p. 1).

In 1988, Hampton and Mumford conducted a four-year study using the Project Fast (families are students and teachers) model in Cleveland, Ohio to investigate the impact of parent/family involvement on student achievement. Utilizing five kindergarten classrooms where, collectively, 99% of the student population are African American, 69% come from households headed by single parents, and 49% are members living at or below the poverty level, the researchers set out to improve student achievement through long-term collaborative relationships where the school took on the role of extended family for the students and their parents.

Parents and schools were engaged in monthly workshops, projects, and summer enrichment activities that focused on facilitating achievement through basic parenting skills. At the conclusion of the study, Hampton and Mumford (1988) found that when
parents were involved in collaborative relationships with schools, student achievement and parental commitment to education surpassed that of students and parents who participated in less collaborative ways.

Hampton and Mumford’s (1988) study supports the premise that all entities benefit from parent involvement. Through collaborative relationships, schools are able to support more meaningful educational opportunities for students with disabilities as teachers acquire information from parents regarding “housing situations, medical/emotional needs, and economic and family concerns, all of which may have a profound impact on student success in the classroom” (p. 413).

After initiating a parent training program, Smalley and Reyes-Blanes (2001) found that in addition to leading to appropriate, meaningful outcomes for children with disabilities, parent involvement also provides opportunities for families to increase their skills as life-long advocates. The general purpose of the Parent Leadership Training (PLT), facilitated by Smalley and Reyes-Blanes, was to provide information to African American parents of elementary, middle, and high school students so that they could develop their knowledge and skills to better assist their children develop to their full potential, academically and socially. Thirty-one participants, of whom 24 completed all training sessions, took part in the study. The demographic characteristics of the participants varied across family composition, income, and education, as well as learning characteristics of their children. Still, the one unifying characteristic for all participants was that they resided in the urban community selected for the study.

As participants in the research, parents completed an open-ended pre-test assessment, attended five training sessions on various topics, completed a posttest
assessment, took part in a graduation ceremony where they each received a certificate of completion, and attended a follow-up session three months post graduation. Subsequent monthly meetings were held per parent requests. All of these components were part of the comprehensive parent training offered by the researchers (Smalley & Reyes-Blanes, 2001).

Upon analysis of data gathered via assessment and evaluation instruments, Smalley and Reyes-Blanes (2001) concluded that parents were satisfied with the program’s ability to impact their lives at the personal, family, school, and community levels. For example, one parent noted that the program helped her build confidence in her ability to express her opinions and concerns. On a personal level, parents not only reported improved skills in communication, but also in goal setting and problem solving. At the school level, parents reported more involvement, particularly in homework assistance and grade monitoring. Still, several parents expressed an interest in helping other parents become empowered through involvement practices. This community level affect of the parent training helps to support the premise that involvement opportunities are instrumental in providing parents, schools, and communities with a series of positive, interrelated outcomes that extend to the success that students experience.

*Historical Mandates Impact Parent Involvement*

Public Law 94-142, the Education for All Handicapped Children Act (1975), established the foundation for subsequent mandates to recognize the rights of parents to actively participate in the educational decision-making process regarding their children. The subsequent release of *A Nation at Risk*, a report on the state of education in the United States by the National Commission on Excellence in Education (1983), preceded
by extensive research on effective schools in the 1970s, brought attention to the need for widespread reform in America’s school systems. The report further stipulated the recruitment of families to assist in this endeavor.

More recently, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Amendments of 1997 and its reauthorized version, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 2004, coupled with the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001 confirm the fundamental role of parents as participants. These laws further advocate for collaboration between parents and professionals (Blackbourn, Patton, & Trainor, 2004; Blue-Blanning, Summers, Frankland, Nelson, & Beegle, 2004; IDEA, 1997; IDEA, 2004; Kalyanpur, Harry, Skrtic, 2000; Muscott, 2002; NCLB, 2001; Smalley & Reyes-Blanes, 2001). In sum, the explicit call for active parent involvement in the education of students with disabilities has been demonstrated by these various pieces of legislation (Kroth & Edge, 1997, 2007) (See Figure 1).
Figure 1

Federal Legislation Impact Parent Involvement

Additionally, the historic significance of parent groups such as the National Parent Teacher Association (NPTA) and its long-standing political affiliation with the unionized teacher associates of the National Education Association (NEA) has allowed for additional awareness of parent roles in the education of children. The relationship between these two entities has influenced government decisions regarding education, including the 1994 enactment of Goals 2000: Educate America Act, which formally acknowledged parent involvement as a national education goal (Goals 2000, 1994; Haar, 2002). In addition, it was the NPTA’s initiation of the Parent Accountability, Recruitment, and Education National Training (PARENT) Act in 1999 that strengthened the policies governing parent participation and advocacy as provisioned by the
Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), later reauthorized as NCLB (Haar, 2002; NCLB, 2001; NPTA, 2000).

In fact, the NPTA’s efforts to ensure that parents continue to play a vital role in their children’s education led to the development of standards to guide program development for improving student achievement. The quality indicators of the NPTA’s National Standards for Parent/Family Involvement Programs are research based guidelines that include promoting participation among parent and community groups, raising awareness of effective program components, and providing guidelines necessary for schools to develop programming regarding parental involvement. Laws such as NCLB base their definition of parental involvement on the six interrelated standards developed by the NPTA. These standards and their quality indicators are centered on parent practices that support a child’s learning and success. They include communicating, parenting, student learning, volunteering, school decision making and advocacy, and collaborating with the community (NPTA, 1998).

The Need for Continued Involvement of Parents

Collectively, the laws enacted to reform public education have had profound effects on the involvement of parents and the roles they assume in the collaborative process. Based on decades of research linking parent involvement to student success, lasting implications for student achievement and social adjustment also resulted. Social and academic programs, reflecting age- and cultural appropriateness, are developed when parents share information on the abilities, experiences, needs, and difficulties of their children with teachers (Smalley & Reyes-Blanes, 2001). Particularly in the middle school, parents, themselves, need to be active members of the decision-making teams so
that positive interventions could be undertaken to meet the unique needs of their child (Rutherford & Billig, 1995). This involvement further stimulates a child’s interest in school and learning. As a result, students are inclined to participate more, display less disruptive behaviors, and socially adjust to changes in their academic environment, leading them to pathways of success (Comer, 1988; Epstein, 1988; Epstein, 1990; Epstein, 1991; Epstein, 1995; Epstein, 2001; Epstein & Sheldon, 2002; Henderson, 1987; Kohl, Lengua, & McMahon, 2000; Kohl, Weissberg, Reynolds, & Kasprow, 1994; Reynolds, 1992; Reynolds, Weissberg, & Kasprow, 1992). When parents participate, not only are the children more successful, but parent knowledge and skills in supporting a child’s development improves and educators develop a more solid base for planning and implementing educational programs (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1997a, 1997b; Hoover-Dempsey, et al., 2005; Nunn & McMahan, 2000; Smalley & Reyes-Blanes, 2001).

Demographic Change Provides a Rationale for New Approaches

The American Youth Policy Forum, in conjunction with the Center on Education Policy (2001) estimate that the number of children with disabilities being served under IDEA has increased by over 75% in the last twenty years, perhaps faster than the overall school-age population. With these increases, the number of students with disabilities representing diverse groups has also grown at alarming rates. These changing demographics have provided opportunities for cross-cultural learning where teachers, students, families and communities share and gain knowledge of and from each other. A steady and continuous shift of racial/ethnic identities away from the homogeneous grouping of Euro-American students is prevalent. Researchers predict that this rapid
change in the demographics will reveal an increase in the percentage of culturally and linguistically diverse (CLD) students to nearly 50% of the total student population by 2025 (Blackbourn, et al., 2004). This estimate heightens the need for teachers to become aware of the cultural and linguistic diversity that exists among families. They must be more willing to provide a forum where parity and mutual respect are common features of the collaborative relationship (Dunst, 2002; Peck, 2000; Turnbull & Turnbull, 1997, 2001).

By creating culturally sensitive atmospheres where equity and respect serve as guiding principles, diverse family groups are more free to express themselves, are more trusting of the educator’s role in the decision-making process, and are more likely to increase their rate of participation in the school (Adams & Christenson, 2000; Hampton and Mumford, 1988; Peck, 2000; Muscott, 2002; Turnbull & Turnbull, 1997, 2001; Turnbull, Turnbull, Erwin, & Soodak, 2006). Although this rationale is explicit, teachers still have not embraced the concept of facilitating collaborative experiences with culturally and linguistically diverse families, and as a result, often hold worldviews that do not purport a strong sense of cultural competence. Since CLD students differed in the ways they communicated, behave, spoke, related, learned and responded to the dominant culture, they were rarely given opportunities to demonstrate knowledge and skills reflective of their full potential (Obiakor, Utley, Smith, & Harris-Obiakor, 2002).

Henderson suggests (as cited in Smalley & Reyes-Blanes, 2001) that family status, educational level, income, and IQ should not be the determining factors of success for students with special needs. One of the chief determinants in a child’s success at school and in life is the level of participation of the parents in the child’s education.
Essentially, parent-teacher partnerships positively impact a child’s success in school, without regards to differences in economics, race, or culture (Mapp, 2003). Nonetheless, it is the obligation of the educator to provide the means for parents to become successful collaborators and participants in the schooling of students with exceptional needs. Only then will teachers encounter their own biases and have opportunities to examine their perceptions, expectations, and behaviors of the ever increasing number of CLD students with disabilities, which they have been entrusted to teach (Harry, 2002).

Rationale for Study

This study aimed to assess the attitudes of middle school teachers to determine if parent participation in collaborative training had an impact on teacher’s perceptions and expectations for CLD students from urban settings who receive special education services in a suburban middle school. Currently, no specific studies have investigated this area of research (McCray & Garcia, 2002; Warren, 2002) and little is known about the effect of parent involvement in the middle grades (Tucker & Herman, 2002; Zeedyk, et al., 2003). Only a limited number of studies have focused specifically on CLD students with disabilities in urban settings with most attending to the need for cultural sensitivity among practitioners as a survival mechanism within those schools (McCray & Garcia, 2002; Patterson, Collins, & Abbott, 2004).

The Scope of Research Supporting the Current Study

To date, there is a paucity of research that studies the influence of teachers’ perception on the outcomes of students with disabilities and their families (McCray & Garcia, 2002; Warren, 2002). In addition, a small amount of attention has been given to
the factors that aid in the development of teacher sensitivity towards CLD students (Muscott, 2002). Typically, research has been conducted to examine teacher perceptions of the parent involvement process, in and of itself, or to heighten the awareness of the link between parent involvement and student success, primarily in early childhood and elementary grades (Epstein & Sheldon, 2002; Hill, et al., 2004; Jeynes, 2003; Singer, 2002; Smalley & Reyes-Blanes, 2001; Westat and Policy Studies Associates, 2001).

Similarly, little research exists specific to training parents in exceptional education programming and/or services (McCray & Garcia, 2002; Wiese, 1992; Wiese & Kramer, 1988). On a whole, behavioral journals and those pertaining to clinical or counseling psychology published more empirically based parent training articles than journals with a special education emphasis. Of the 18 journals examined, Wiese and Kramer found that less than 20% of the empirical studies included were related to special education although parents with children that were identified as non-compliant, disabled, or abused/neglected comprised the majority of research participants.

In 1992, Wiese extended her research by reviewing 148 studies specific to parent training as an intervention. Among the studies examined, several limitations, such as limited collection of information regarding treatment integrity and limited use of control grouping occurred in more than 50% of the studies. Overall, these methodological shortcomings affect the reliability and validity of the results, limiting interpretation and generalization to other populations or settings.

Most often, students with special needs are overwhelmed by the daily challenges brought on by their disability. For students with disabilities attending school at the middle grade level, and for those who transition from urban to suburban schools, additional
stress related to socio-cultural and organizational/procedural differences are encountered. These differences often result in maladjustment for the student (Carter, Clark, Cushing, & Kennedy, 2005). Typically, parent participation declines heavily in the middle grades whereas the need for more structure and support from parents and teachers increases (Tucker & Herman, 2002).

For this reason, this study also examined the perceptions of parents to determine the level of impact that training had on their knowledge, skills, and inclination to collaborate effectively and more frequently with educators. The importance of parent perceptions being included in this study is supported by Bauer and Shea (2003, p. 23) who state that “when working with families from various culture, ethnic, or linguistic groups, professionals should identify parents’ perception of the special education process”. Similarly, Muscott (2002) concurs, stating that including the parent’s voice allow a more accurate picture of the collaborative process to be presented.

Nevertheless, since “the heterogeneity of participant characteristics poses a significant challenge to research design based on establishing equivalent groups, even when randomization and stratification is possible” (Odom, Brantlinger, Gersten, Horner, Thompson, & Harris, 2005, p.137) it is the objective of the researcher to match participants across intervention conditions on relevant demographic characteristics, an indicator of a quality research project (Gersten, et al., 2005).

To further deepen our understanding of the impact of parent training and to provide a more holistic picture, this study also assessed student perceptions to determine the impact of training on student views of parents as collaborators and to identify the behaviors and expectation of their teachers. This reliance on two-generational
perspectives allows a more balanced perception of the process to be garnered, whereby permitting the researcher to imply the value of this research to the development of (future) parent education programs (Strom, et al., 2002).

Impact of Parent Training on Long-Term Student Success

During the middle adolescent years, interventions such as parent training and/or involvement are more efficient when initiated through a series of careful and methodological planning prior to a student’s transition from one educational setting to the other. The success of these support mechanisms, and long-term student success, rests on a parent’s continued involvement, beginning in their early years of school, into secondary school, and beyond the scope of any parent training on involvement (Izzo, Weissberg, Kasprow & Fendrich, 1999; Miedel & Reynolds, 1999). Since students from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds are more inclined to drop out of school during the middle grades, collaboration must take place to match services with needs early in the middle school placement, perhaps even earlier on (Zeedyk, et al., 2003).

In summary, this research is supported by the premise that the success of CLD students with special needs is marked largely by the perceptions, expectations, and behaviors of the teaching population, which is comprised primarily of middle-class Euro-American females and the ideals and values with which they come. Hence, when working with students, parents, and teachers, the presumption that each entity shares the same preconceptions of parent involvement and the impact that these suppositions have on behavior and attitudes can be “problematic” (Barge & Loges, 2003).

Additionally, a teacher’s keen understanding of student ability and needs, as they relate to social and cultural factors unique to the child, is necessary to facilitate student
learning (Harry, 2002). Consequently, this study also aimed to highlight the importance of a teacher’s cultural competence when dealing with CLD students, including those students transitioning into a setting that is ecologically different from the setting they originate from (McKay, Atkins, Hawkins, Brown, & Lynn, 2003).

The general purpose of this research is to add to the existing body of knowledge on parent involvement and the potential benefits to schools, parents, and students. More importantly, the research intends to demonstrate the far reaching implications of PCT, particularly the effect of such training on teacher perceptions and expectations of students with disabilities from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds (See Figure 2).
Figure 2

Conceptual model of predictors and outcomes of Parent Collaborative Training
By demonstrating the need for continued parent involvement in the middle grades for students with disabilities, the research intends to minimize the challenges posed by socio-cultural factors and a demand for increases in academic and personal responsibilities. As a result, this study may be of interest to researchers, administrators, educators, and teacher preparation programs who may be inclined to replicate and cross validate the findings under different conditions to better determine if the data warrants theoretical interpretations. In essence, this study may therefore serve as a catalyst for continued exploration of cultural and linguistic implications of parent participation, particularly for students with special needs and including those from urban settings who transition to suburban schools. In addition, teachers who understand the rationale on which this research is based would be more inclined to evaluate their own biases of students based on the cross-classifications of demographics as presented in this study.

Research Questions

To gain a better understanding of the direct impact that parent training and subsequent collaboration has on the views and attitudes of teachers regarding culturally and linguistically diverse students with disabilities and their families, the researcher pursued the following questions:

Question 1: Is there a difference in teacher ratings regarding their perceptions and expectations of CLD students with disabilities transitioning from an urban elementary school to a suburban middle school whose parents participate in Parent Collaborative Training (PCT) than for similar students whose parents do not participate?

Question 2: How do CLD parents of children with disabilities rate the content and
usefulness of each component as they proceed through five sessions of collaborative training?

Question 3: After engaging in PCT, how do CLD parents from urban settings rate their abilities to collaborate with teachers from a suburban middle school?

Question 4: What impact will the experience of parent collaboration have on student ratings of their parents and teachers?

Procedures

Two major activities guide this inquiry: the parent-training component and ongoing assessment. The former intends to provide families with strategies for effectively communicating with teachers regarding special education services. The latter intends to assess participants’ perceptions of parent involvement as well as the subsequent affect of the training.

The participants for this study was comprised of parents and teachers of culturally diverse groups of middle grade special education students who are transitioning from an urban elementary school into the suburban middle school. In addition, the students who participated in this study reside in an urban community identified as having residents who are predominantly African American and Hispanic.

An initial survey, the Parent Involvement and Collaborative Experiences Questionnaire (PCT-PICEQ) was provided to all parents of the students with disabilities who were targeted for this study. The purpose of the survey was to collect demographic information, interests in and perceptions of parent involvement and training, and a needs assessment. Parents then engaged in training activities to familiarize them with laws.
governing special education, services available for students with disabilities, technology
acquisition and use, advocacy rights, goal setting toward self-determination, and
interagency collaboration as well as other parent-initiated areas of concern or interest.
Guided by Epstein’s typology of parent interaction, parents also took part in activities
across three settings: home, school and community and will keep a journal of their
experiences with these activities.

At the end of each training session, the parents completed a brief survey, Parent
Session Evaluation (PCT-SE) evaluating the training’s ability to meet its intended
objectives, with the results being used to determine participants’ experiences as they go
through training. Results will also be used to modify future training to make them more
efficient and in line with parent needs. A final survey, Summative Questionnaire, (PCT-
SumQ) will be conducted to assess learning among participants, identify parent
perceptions of the collaborative process, and to determine the likelihood that parents will
be engaged in future collaborative opportunities.

Seemingly, the selection of student participants was based on the parents selected
to participate. It was anticipated that twelve 6th-7th grade students, between the ages of 10
and 14, would be recruited to complete the survey, using the Student Questionnaire
(PCT-SQ) regarding their perspectives of the training and subsequent collaborative
efforts. In actuality, only five students were given consent to participate.

The selection of teachers to complete surveys, therefore, was based on the parents
and students selected to participate. Four teachers participated in the study. The survey,
Teacher Perception of Students Questionnaire (TPSQ) required teachers to provide
insight into their viewpoints of the child whose parent has completed training.
Compensation was provided to parents and teachers who participated. Incentives, childcare, and refreshments were provided to parent participants as a means of increasing the likelihood of them committing to the program and participating on a regular basis, particularly since participation remains most critical to the intervention’s success. Teachers, who participated, receive a token of appreciation in the form of a gift basket of classroom supplies. No compensations were made to students.

Research data was analyzed using SPSS. No known risks exist to any participant. The identity and responses of the participants were and will continue to be kept confidential. When a participant returned a completed questionnaire, the instrument was locked in a project file available only to the researcher and supervisors associated with this study. In addition, their name will never be connected to their answers in any way. Findings of this study will be made available to participants upon request and will be disseminated only as summaries in the form of a dissertation, as well as conference presentations.

Definition of Terms

The following terms, used throughout this study, are defined as follows:

*Parents/Family/Caregivers* (terms used interchangeably) are defined as the primary care providers of a child in the home. Turnbull and Turnbull (1997, 2001) offer a broad definition of family that extends beyond the traditional description and regards families as two or more people who identify themselves as such, while performing some or all of the functions typically performed by families. These individuals may or not be related by blood or marriage. The term, therefore, can include blended, extended, multi-generational, single-parent, divorced, or migrant families. Caregivers can be biological,
adoptive, foster, and step-parents. Many family units also include other family members serving in the capacity of the parent such as grandparents, aunts or uncles, older siblings, guardians, and adult family friends (Gutman & Midgley, 2000; Gutman & Reynolds, 1999).

**Parent Involvement** is defined as the extent to which a family member voluntarily participates in school activities undertaken in the home or at school. Activities may include parenting, communicating, volunteering, learning at home, decision-making, and collaborating with the community (Epstein, 2001).

**Collaboration** is a dynamic, empowering process whereby decisions are jointly made by families and educators as they share resources and interact in a safe, risk-free environment where equality and respect for each other’s culture, ideas, and behaviors are common features (Peck, 2000; Turnbull & Turnbull, 1997, 2001).

**Parent Education**, as defined by Croake and Glover (1977) is the “purposive learning activity of parents who are attempting to change their method of interaction with their children for the purpose of encouraging positive behavior in their children” (p. 51).

**Parent Collaborative Training** (PCT) is defined as a series of interactions designed for parents that focus on utilizing effective interpersonal communication and interaction skills to effectively work with teachers, specifically those instructing students with disabilities. The objective of this training is to increase the knowledge and skills of parents regarding special education services and delivery options as well as to promote long-term parent involvement.

**Culturally and Linguistically Diverse** (CLD) refers to individuals who identify with ethnic or cultural groups outside of White, European Americans and may speak English
as a second language. The term “CLD” used in this study refers specifically to the following categories: African American, Caribbean, and Latin/Hispanic.

**Exceptional Student Education (ESE)** is defined as the coordinated set of services provided to children with disabilities by teachers or other service providers, often within the school setting.

**Transition** is defined as movement from one stage/setting to another. In this case, students are changing placement from an urban elementary school to a suburban middle school.

**Urban** pertains to residential areas located within a city where the majority of the residents live at a low-income status. The eligibility status for the federally assisted free lunch program is a proxy measure for low-income family status. To be eligible, the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) states that the annual household income must be at or below 130 percent of the federal poverty guidelines. The 2006 HHS poverty guidelines set the level of poverty for a family of four at $20,000 (HHS, 2006). In this study, both parent and student participants reside in an urban community. Students transition from an elementary school located in an urban setting.

**Suburban** pertains to, residential areas near or adjacent to a city where the majority of the residents live above the poverty threshold, typically at a middle-class or higher status. In this study, students are instructed by teachers working at a middle school located in a suburban setting.

**Title I**, also known as Improving the Academic Achievement of the Disadvantaged (Part A), refers to the largest federal program in K-12 education that provides financial assistance to local public schools that serve high numbers (at least 40% of the school
population) of children living in low income families as well as those living in foster homes or correctional institutions. The program requires schools to use scientifically based research methods to help ensure that these children meet state academic content and student academic achievement standards. Title I also addresses parent involvement where schools are required to implement effective parent involvement activities (Berger, 2004; USDOE, 2005).

Perception is defined as cognition, insight, or judgment one person has of another. Expectation is defined as the attitude or supposition of one’s work ethic based on a prescription of one’s ability.
Overview

A review of the relevant literature is presented in Chapter Two. The theoretical framework for this study is included in the second chapter as well. Chapter Three includes a statement of the research question, a description of the sample, instruments, methodology, procedures, and data analyses procedures to be used in this study. Results of the study are presented in Chapter Four. Discussions of the results and their implications are to be found in Chapter Five.
CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Introduction

This chapter presents the literature, which served to guide the development of the present study. It begins with a clear definition of the term “parents” and flows into a general overview of parental involvement. The historical construction of parental roles are then presented along with how these roles have been shaped not only by child studies conducted in the field of psychology, but also by parent leadership organizations, legal mandates, and cultural ideals.

The chapter then gradually builds to a more specific discussion on parental involvement in special education. The discussion highlights the levels, types, and effects of parent involvement and then provides a comparison of involvement across demographic characteristics, including race and socioeconomic status. Recent studies on parent involvement and training are referenced to support the current study’s premise and to provide a rationale for the study’s undertaking.

Introduction of Related Literature

Parents, a term used broadly to identify the primary adult caregivers of children, are essential links in the education process of students with disabilities. Often used interchangeably with the word “families”, parents have come to include not only biological parents, but adoptive, single, step-, foster parents and legal guardians. In many instances, grandparents, aunts, uncles, and older siblings serve in the capacity of parents. These caregivers possess a wealth of knowledge concerning their child’s abilities and interests and are capable of utilizing this information when selecting appropriate service
options relating to the child’s education. This keen understanding of their children allows parents to provide singular expertise regarding the ecologies in which those children interact best (Kalyanpur, et al., 2000).

Historically, the roles of parents are ever evolving, yet clearly defined. Since Colonial times, the primary duty of the father was to support the family financially, while the mother’s duty was to the home, which included childrearing. Mothers were revered as being most knowledgeable of nurturing childcare techniques helpful in the development of well-rounded children, and her primary responsibility to the family was to educate the children (Berger, 2004).

However, the early to mid 1900s produced two World Wars, creating a series of financial depression among families in the United States. The need for women to enter the workforce generated a shift in focus from the family’s direct involvement in the rearing of children to a community focus, evidenced by the establishment of childcare centers and kindergartens (Berger, 2004) which were considered to have essential information regarding the importance of nurturing and training young children. These establishments targeted urban and immigrant families to influence their parenting styles. Parents, on a whole, were no longer viewed as having the most knowledge of childrearing (Barbour & Barbour, 2001).

Consequently, associations organized by women presented more influence on a child’s development than the child’s family alone. As parents networked through organizations, such as the Society for the Study of Child Nature, the American Association of University Women, the National Association of Colored Women, and the National Association of Parents and Teachers, later known as the National Parent
Teacher Association (NPTA), the tendency of parents taking on supportive roles in the schooling of their children was more evident (Barbour & Barbour, 2001; Berger, 2004). Twelve women established the first parent cooperatives at the University of Chicago as a means of providing quality childcare and parent education for themselves and to provide a forum where they could discuss their fears and concerns as they relate to child development and parenting (Barbour & Barbour, 2001).

Hence, the field of psychology began to focus on young children, who became the center of numerous studies at colleges and universities across the country. In fact, G. Stanley Hall established the first known lab schools to test educational theories and childrearing practices. These lab schools provided opportunities for parents to learn new strategies for working with their children (Barbour & Barbour, 2001). By the mid 1900s, other child development “experts” such as Erik Erikson, Jean Piaget, Benjamin Spock, and Burton White influenced the behaviors of families through varied theories on social and emotional child rearing practices as well as theories on intellectual and cognitive development. Consequently, by 1970, professionals gained more control of the schooling of young children and the power of families diminished, resulting in less decision making rights in the educational process, especially for minorities and the poor (Barbour & Barbour, 2001; Berger, 2004, Reyes-Blanes & Smalley, 2001).

By the 1980’s training generalized to other settings and conditions. Most approaches to involving parents in education sought to increase the levels of consistency in behaviors among parents of young children through parent education programs. Parents of deviant children and youth with developmental delays, along with teen parents were the target groups for these interactions. Parents were seen as needing help
supporting their child’s learning. Hence, these programs were deemed vital to the general welfare of society. Educators began to take on the responsibilities for implementing these services. Opportunities for learning continued in the form of university courses and lectures, school programs, conferences, reading materials, and television programs (Barbour & Barbour, 2001). The success of these programs was most consistent among middle class and White families (Barbour & Barbour, 2001; Harry, 2002). For urban and immigrant families of students with disabilities, the good intentions of these programs fell short in meeting their needs as, in many cases, these practices reflected the values of the mainstream culture (Harry, 2002; Turnbull, Blue-Banning, Turbiville, & Park, 1999). Additionally, early intervention services for individuals with disabilities focused more on the disability rather than differences in culture or language (Barbour & Barbour, 2001; Harry, 2002).

The last decade, however, has seen a shift in how professionals view the role of families in the development of intervention and support programs for individuals, including those with disabilities. Recent considerations for families from diverse backgrounds have been evident as well. Among a list of overlapping roles, families have transformed from being the recipients of professional’s decisions to advocates, and now collaborators (Turnbull & Turnbull, 1997, 2001). The shift from passive to active participation is apparent in today’s schools. The NPTA has had major influences on how parents interact with schools. In fact, it is the NPTA’s historical association with the National Education Association (NEA) that has heightened awareness among educators and encouraged political acknowledgement of the roles of parents in the education of children (Berger, 2004; Haar, 2002).
The Role of Collaboration in Parent Involvement

Guided by the need to increase opportunities for ongoing, quality interactions between the highly influential institutions of family and school, legislators have mandated the participation of parents in the planning, delivery, and assessment of special education services. The amendments of the Education of Handicapped Act (1986) require Individualized Family Service Plans (IFSP) when providing services to children birth-to-3. When developing these plans, collaboration between school staff, social service agencies, and parents is essential to the development of effective programming (Bauer & Shea, 2003; Blackbourn, et al., 2004; Epstein & Salinas, 2004; Kalyanpur, et al., 2000; Minke & Scott, 1995). Additionally, parents are required to be informed of any considerations being made regarding their child’s education and are invited to be a part of the decision-making committee. Similarly, mandated involvement in meetings about Individualized Education Programs (IEP) is part of the referral, placement, and planning process (Lovitt, 1999).

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) recognizes the role of parents as decision makers in the education of their children and calls for on-going, active collaboration between parents and professionals (Blackbourn, et al., 2004; Blue-Blanning, et al., 2004; Kalyanpur, et al., 2000; Muscott, 2002; Smalley & Reyes-Blanes, 2001; Turnbull & Turnbull, 1997, 2001). Subsequently, IDEA’s acknowledgement of the importance of parent participation is affirmed by Goals 2000: Educate America Act of 1994 in which one of the National Education Goals, Goal 8, is devoted to increasing parent involvement by establishing parent centers in every state and increasing funding for family involvement programs (Goals 2000, 1994; Haar, 2002; USDOE, 1997).
Lawmakers’ value of parent involvement in education is confirmed by the recent passages of the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) of 2001 and the 2004 reauthorization of IDEA, which are aligned to ensure equity, accountability, and excellence in the education of children with disabilities through policy driven school practices, including continued opportunities for parents to participate (Berger, 2004; IDEA, 2004; NCLB, 2001). In essence, parent participation in schooling activities has been identified by legislation as an essential component of a child’s education.

Types of Parent Involvement

Joyce Epstein (1988, 1990, 1991, 1995, 2001) a notable figure in the development of parent-school partnerships, has suggested a broad spectrum of parental involvement. Among them are parenting, communicating, volunteering, learning at home, decision-making, and collaborating with the community. Epstein’s conceptual model of family-school partnerships suggest that schools, families, and communities have responsibilities and influences that interconnect when shaping a child’s education. These overlapping spheres of pushes and pulls are determined by attitudes, communications, and behaviors held by families, schools, and communities (Barge & Loges, 2003; Billig, 2003; Epstein, 2001).
Walker, Wilkins, Dallaire, Sandler, and Hoover-Dempsey (2005) revised Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler’s (1997a, 1997b) theoretical model of parental involvement process to demonstrate hypothesized relationships within and between constructs for why parents become involved. They suggest, as Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler did, that psychological factors are affected by contextual factors. Psychological factors include the parent’s belief of what they should do, the invitations for their involvement, and the impact of the parent’s modeling, reinforcement, and instruction on their child’s educational outcomes. Conversely, contextual factors include time, the potential affect of the involvement, the fit between parent actions, student needs and school expectations, and the child’s own efficacy for school success. The difference between the original and
revised model is that the latter proposes the conceptual and methodological processes under three interrelated domains: (1) parents’ motivational beliefs, (2) parents’ perceptions of invitations for involvement from others, and (3) parents’ perceived life context. An additional difference between the two is that the dependent measures for each construct had been collapsed to one, resulting in a fourth domain: the parents’ choice of locale for involvement.

Parent participation can occur in the home, school, or community. Traditional home-based parent involvement activities for children with disabilities include communicating with teachers or service providers via notes in the student planners/agendas and supporting the child’s learning at home by assisting with homework. Attending parent/teacher conferences, volunteering in classrooms, serving on school committees or governance such as the Parent Teacher Association (PTA) or School Advisory Committee (SAC), respectively, reflect school-based participation. Accessing therapies through outside agencies is one type of community-based involvement (Turnbull & Turnbull, 2001). (See Figure 3)
Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Attended General Meeting</th>
<th>Attended Scheduled Meeting with Teacher</th>
<th>Attended School Event</th>
<th>Volunteered or Served on a Committee</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


However, by analysis of a series of interviews, observations, and field notes, researchers conducting a qualitative study of Hispanic families across eight schools found that teachers and families conceptualized involvement in different ways. Teachers defined involvement in terms of a parent’s support of academic achievement at the school. On the other hand, parent perception of involvement was all-encompassing, dealing not only with academic achievement, but the socio-emotional well-being of the child, as well (Scribner, Young, & Pedroza, 1999).

One study (Shumow & Miller, 2001), set out to investigate the difference that context and individual characteristics made on the nature and intensity of parent involvement at home and in school. Parents of 60 students were randomly selected from
50 urban, suburban, and rural middle schools across the United States. The researchers used parent reports on involvement and student academic outcomes as measured by self-reports on attitudes towards school. Researchers also used grade point averages (GPA), and math and science test scores, as reported in seventh and eighth grades, respectively. Interviews revealing involvement type, backgrounds, and family activities, gathered via the Longitudinal Study of American Youth (LSAY), were comparatively related to student academic outcomes during the analysis.

The researchers found that parent involvement in the home was related to increases in students’ positive attitudes about school, but also, decreases in grades and test scores. These findings were perhaps due to parental tendencies to assist more regularly with students struggling to maintain basic academic standards. In contrast, at-school involvement was found to be a strong predictor of higher grades, though not to test scores or student attitudes toward school (Shumow & Miller, 2001).

In terms of the relationship between personal characteristics and type of involvement, Shumow and Miller (2001) found that parents with higher education levels participated more at home and school than parents with minimal education. Fathers reported being equally involved at home, though mothers were more involved at school. A student’s gender had little to no impact on parent involvement at home or in school. In addition, parents of less successful students were more likely to offer assistance in the home than parents of above-average students. Parents of high-achieving students were, reportedly, more involved at the school level. Finally, the study’s findings suggested that a higher frequency of parent involvement correlated with greater value being given to achieving in school by children.
In a qualitative study examining involvement among 62 low-income African American families with members of both high-achieving and low-achieving fifth- and sixth-graders, researcher found that parents of both groups were equally involved at home helping children with schoolwork and having discussions about school. To reach this conclusion, Gutman and McLoyd (2000) drew participants from a larger longitudinal study on early adolescence. The original sample consisted of fifth-grade elementary students (n=901) and sixth grade middle school students (n=738) across four school districts in the southeastern region of Michigan. For this study, data was collected from families of students in one school district with a large African American student population (42%) who were economically disadvantaged (82%), based on the proportion of students receiving free or reduced lunch. Of the original 97 families recruited, the researchers retained 62 families in which 257 of the students were fifth-graders and 218 were sixth-graders.

Interviewers asked open-ended questions related to the use of parent involvement in the home, at school, and in the community, as an education management tool. The function of these questions was to determine whether the children were experiencing academic success or failure. More specifically, they examined the parents’ support of educational activities, frequency of involvement, and frequency of the child’s extracurricular activities, as well as the rationale for each of these. Responses, transcribed and coded, revealed that parents of both high- and low-achieving students discussed using similar strategies for supporting their children’s learning (Gutman & McLoyd, 2000).
Similarly, Mapp (2003) confirmed this through a qualitative case-study of 18 parents from an elementary school serving a racially and socio-economically diverse student population. The K-5 school, is an urban, full inclusive placement for 220 students, where 67% qualified for free and reduced lunch. The school also had a high rate (90%) of parent participation. Twenty-five percent of the school population was students with disabilities. Parent participants included 16 women and 9 men, representative of African American, White, and Hispanic families from a diverse mix of family compositions. From one-on-one, in-depth interviews conducted with school staff at the residence of the parent participants, contextual information was derived. Observations provided information on how parents were involved in activities such as school committee meetings and parent events.

After a thorough analysis of observations, interviews, and school documents, Mapp (2003) reported that most parents held innate desires to advocate for and facilitate their children’s academic and social achievements. These parents were often involved in their children’s education in ways that went beyond traditional activities such as volunteering or participation in school governance.

These studies suggest that CLD parents are active in their children’s education, but in slightly different ways of White parents. All students, including those in middle schools, prospered when schools supported the parents’ varied types and intensity of involvement. Primarily, children at risk of failure profited from the support that families and communities offered, regardless of whether these types of involvement were sanctioned by school personnel as traditional involvement.
Accordingly, when teachers give account to the limited frequency of participation among CLD families, they must be cognizant of the varied degrees of participation these individuals engage in and the value each type of participation carries. More specifically, they should turn their attention to increasing the frequency of collaborative experiences between families and schools by providing parents with knowledge of and involvement in a wide range of opportunities, especially since evidence suggests that benefits can be obtained across varied forms of active engagements (Peña, 2000).

Active participation, in the form of collaboration, requires educators to think of parents as partners rather than as clients and emphasizes the need for increased parental input and involvement. Collaboration, through trust, mutual respect, understanding, and decision-making, ultimately results in all members feeling valued as equal partners (Dunst, 2002; Hampton & Mumford, 1988; Peck, 2000; Rao, 2000; Kalyanpur, et al., 2000; Turnbull, et al., 2006). In addition, collaboration provides opportunities for families to increase their skills as life-long advocates for children with disabilities, resulting in appropriate, meaningful outcomes (Nunn & McMahan, 2000; Smalley & Reyes-Blanes, 2001).

**Parent Involvement Linked to Student Achievement**

When parents were involved in collaborative relationships with schools, students experienced greater levels of physical, social, emotional, and academic growth. In fact, decades of experience and research (Epstein & Sheldon, 2002; Hill, et al., 2004; Jeynes, 2003; Singer, 2002; Smalley & Reyes-Blanes, 2001; Westat & Policy Studies Associates, 2001) has consistently shown that successful student outcomes are associated with teacher outreach and parent participation.
In several landmark studies linking parent involvement to student achievement, researchers found confirming evidence regarding the positive correlation between the two constructs. First, the 1966 publication of *Equality of Educational Opportunities* by James Coleman and his colleagues documented the evaluation of data on schools and student achievement by race and family background, including income and educational level. A sample of 645,000 students across 4,000 schools was surveyed. The findings of this study suggested that minority students, with the exception of Asian students, performed below their non-minority counterparts, primarily because they were far less convinced that they had some control over their own fate. These students did not hold high expectations for their own educational outcomes. The researchers did find, however, that a family’s background had the most effect on student achievement. Better educated parents, as well as those who effectively supported their child’s learning at home, seemed to be more involved in their child’s learning. Accordingly, the students of these families reported higher academic success (Berger, 2004).

Second, in 1974, Urie Bronfenbrenner presented an analysis of twelve studies on the effects of early intervention programs for disadvantaged pre-school children ranging in age from one to six. His synthesis revealed that when mothers were actively involved in their child’s learning, primarily in the home, students demonstrated higher, long-lasting academic gains (Berger, 2004).

A quarter of a century later, a meta-analysis of 25 research studies was conducted by Fan and Chen (1999). They, too, found that parent involvement had a significant impact on student academic achievement. To identify different aspects of parent involvement and the extent each had on student success, the researchers began by
reviewing about 2,000 articles, papers, and reports. They then narrowed their search to
data-based studies on parent involvement and student achievement. Another criterion for
inclusion of studies was that they included path analysis or regression when determining
the relationship between the factors. Of all the studies, only 25 met the criteria for
analysis.

Across the studies examined, the researchers found that involvement and
achievement were defined in various ways. To depict a valid account of the relationship
between parent involvement and student success, investigators used multifaceted
techniques that grouped the findings among the studies. Overall, Fan and Chen (1999)
found that parent involvement had a medium effect size ($r = .25$), which, in social
sciences, is a meaningful effect (Cohen, 1988). Specific forms of parent involvement,
though, had varied effects on achievement. For example, parents aspirations and
expectations, which had the greatest positive correlation with achievement ($r = .40$)
contrast with parent supervision of their child at home, which had the weakest positive
relationship ($r = .09$). Although the researchers did not focus on race and culture
specifically, they found that student success (as measured by GPA) was, in general, 30%
higher for those students whose parents were involved on a regular basis than for those
students whose parents had limited involvement.

Fan and Chen’s (1999) meta-analysis revealed that parent involvement in the
home was an area of concern, especially since it appeared to have the least impact on
student achievement. Hence, researchers at John Hopkins University wanted to
determine if a specific strategy for engaging parents and students in the home would have
a more profound effect on achievement. In collaboration with teachers from Maryland,
Virginia, and the District of Columbia, Joyce Epstein and her colleagues (Epstein, Simon, & Salinas, 1997) examined an interactive homework method entitled Teachers Involve Parents in Schoolwork (TIPS). With TIPS, teachers design homework that requires the children to interact with a family member at home. Parents are encouraged to observe the students while facilitate his or her learning outside the school setting. Researchers wanted to determine whether this cooperative style of engagement between the parents and children would have any affect on middle school students’ writing scores and report card grades. In addition, parent and student perception of the TIPS process were assessed.

Over the course of one school year, researchers analyzed three writing samples of 683 sixth-and seventh-graders from two low-achieving schools serving predominantly African American students in the city of Baltimore, Maryland. School reports indicated that students at both schools had poor writing skills and evidence suggested that there was little parent involvement in student learning in the home. At the end of the year, 218 parent participants and 413 student participants were surveyed about their familiarity and experience with the TIPS process (Epstein, Simon, & Salinas, 1997).

An increase in parent involvement at home resulted from TIPS interactive homework. Conclusively, the researchers reported that students experienced significant gains in writing ability during the school year as evidenced in their writing scores and language arts report card grades. These results suggest that through a series of organized engagements, parent involvement in the home could have profound effects on student achievement (Epstein, Simon, & Salinas, 1997).
The Effects of Changing Demographics

Recently, however, demographic changes have evoked new questions about the relationship between parent involvement and student achievement. Researchers have begun to hypothesize whether factors such as race/culture, socio-economic levels, and family composition were influencing the terms of engagements between home and school differently than in previous times as well as influencing the marked differences in student outcomes across racial lines (Lareau & Horvat, 1999; Mapp, 2003; Westat & Policy Studies Associates, 2001). Thus, changing demographics and the consistent increase in the special education student population, particularly for cultural and linguistic learners (Berger, 2004; Blackbourn, et al, 2004; Gollnick & Chinn 2002; Livingston & Wirt, 2005; US Census, 2000a; USDOE, 2002; USDOE, 2003; Warren, 2002), have created additional challenges for a system of education that is still trying to determine how to best educate traditional learners (See Table 2). Yet despite the awareness of how conceptually important parent involvement is, there still exists limited opportunities for engagement, especially for poor, minority families (Mapp, 2003) (See Table 3).
Table 2
Increase of Students Receiving ESE Services (in Percents), by Race/Ethnicity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>62.7</td>
<td>62.6</td>
<td>67.4</td>
<td>67.2</td>
<td>62.3</td>
<td>61.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>16.0</td>
<td>15.2</td>
<td>14.8</td>
<td>15.5</td>
<td>19.8</td>
<td>20.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>17.3</td>
<td>13.9</td>
<td>13.8</td>
<td>14.5</td>
<td>14.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian/Pacific Islander</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Indian/Alaska Native</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Lareau and Horvat’s (1999) study set out to explore the disparaging climate of social inequality that schools foster for racially diverse families and how this condition manifested into the relationships between home and school. More specifically, the researchers wanted to determine if the disparity in achievement between students resulted from social and cultural capital differences among families. The researchers defined social capital as the communal networks that made parents access to information about the schools and their teachers possible. Cultural capital was exemplified by expansive
vocabularies, a sense of being equal with teachers, spare time within the day to engage in activities outside of work and home, and easy access to transportation and childcare.

The researchers selected a sample of 24 third grade students from an elementary school in a small Midwestern town. Although the community’s population of about 25,000 was comprised of 52% White, 44% Black, and 4% Hispanic and Asian residents, the researchers chose to look specifically at differences among Black and White families. The middle- and low-income families were comprised mostly of White and Black families, respectively. Interviews were conducted with 40 parents, 9 educators, and 26 community members (Lareau & Horvat, 1999).

Results from this study indicated that teacher views of their efforts to engage parents were seen differently than how the parents saw them. Teachers regarded their efforts as unbiased, efficient, and hospitable and that these efforts were intended to encourage greater accomplishments among students. Teachers wanted parents to be positive and supportive and preferred those who relented to their judgments, assessments, and opinions.

Parents, on the other hand, differed in views across race and socio-economic levels. White parents were more trusting of school efforts than Blacks were. Their ability to access information from school was more successful because their efforts were not viewed with suspicion. The results also indicated that White parents networked more because of available free time and access. Whites also had more cultural similarities with the school and its philosophy in educating students. Blacks, however, had been critical of the schools efforts towards them and were often viewed by school personnel as “hostile” and “destructive”. These findings, therefore, meant that schools perceived Blacks as not
having the social or cultural capital necessary to engage in the discourse with educators. As a result, limited opportunities for involvement existed for these families (Lareau & Horvat, 1999).

Current Trends to Include Diverse Groups

Paredes-Scribner and Scribner (2001) summarized the findings of an earlier study of schools serving Mexican American students. In the original study, the researchers utilized a purposeful sample method to select nine high performing elementary, middle, and high schools with diverse student populations to determine what factors were present in the schools that allowed students to reach their level of success. To be included in the study, the schools met the following criteria: (1) had, at minimum, 66.6% of its student population being of Mexican American heritage, (2) above-average scores on standardized tests, and (3) recognized within the state and nation for being a high performing school.

Paredes-Scribner and Scribner (2001) reported that after conducting a series of work in the field and a complete analysis of the data, it was found that student success was attributed to the schools high levels of expectations for all students. These expectations were demonstrated through interactive instruction based on the shared vision of providing student-centered education. In addition to the high expectations of students, the schools were also successful because they addressed community and family involvement and utilized their awareness of the families’ culture and values to connect curricula and instructional techniques to the students' own knowledge base. These schools also provided a collaborative model within its system of school governance and used advocacy-oriented evaluation methods to hold educators accountable for the
techniques used to instruct students. Yet, one of the most profound findings of the study was that the schools offered an inclusive climate in which the community of stakeholders, including culturally and linguistically diverse parents, felt a part of the learning process.

These findings were an extension of an earlier discussion on parent-school relationships, in which Scribner, Young, & Pedroza (1999) concluded:

Parent involvement encompasses a multitude of complex phenomena. Differences in the family structure, culture, ethnic background, social class, age and gender represent only a few of the factors affecting interpretations of or generalizations about the nature of parent involvement. (p. 36)

Equally, however, other demographic factors such as poverty, low levels of education, and immigrant status have independently and collectively shown strong influences on the type and intensity of involvement that parents enter into with school personnel (Chrispeels & Rivero, 2001). Chrispeels and Rivero’s ethnographic study explored the effects of a series of eight parent education classes on immigrant parents’ sense of place in their children's education as they learned about the American educational system. One hundred Latino parents, of whom 98 only spoke Spanish, participated in the study. These parents had children attending one of two low-socioeconomic, inner-city elementary schools chosen for this study, where the majority of the students performed below state standards.

The study’s question, “How do Latino parents define their role and perceive their place in their children's education and their relationship with the school?” served to guide the inquiry. The influence of poverty, education and emigrant status were found to be significant once the researchers analyzed responses to pre- and post-surveys, videotapes
of each training session, and interviews with parents who had participated in training and
had since graduated. The study’s findings indicate that the involvement of most Latino
families was negotiated by the parents’ “concept of place” or role in the education of
their child, as well as the parent’s own efficacy for involvement. During the study, there
was limited variability in the types of involvement among parents. In fact, parents were
more concerned about at-home activities and saw the school as being primarily
accountable for the instruction that promoted their children’s academic growth. Differing
cultural perceptions about a parent’s role in the schooling of their child, coupled with
additional barriers such as the language, often create disparate conditions for schools and
families, as well as major roadblocks to the opportunities students have at being
successful (Chrispeels & Rivero, 2001).

Hence, the need for schools and teachers to adopt effective practices for engaging
culturally and linguistically diverse groups in collaborative engagements is rapidly
becoming a well accepted ideology by researchers, policy makers, educators, and parents
alike (Reyes-Blanes & Smalley, 2001). Despite this accepted ideology, the field of
special education has been slow to accept and publish research with culture and language
diversity as its focus (McCray & Garcia, 2002).

After conducting an exhaustive review of special education literature published
between 1975 and 2001, McCray and Garcia (2002) found that less than five percent of
published works were specific to the issues of disability in the context of culture or
language. In fact, of the educational research published with a focus on race/ethnicity,
language, and class, the majority were conducted outside of special education. This
extremely low rate of empirical studies does little to examine and validate practices that inform program and services for children with disabilities from diverse backgrounds.

In terms of parent involvement, this body of research is considered to be in an early stage of development. Hoover-Dempsey, et al. (2001) explain that the majority of the research provides descriptive accounts of (a) the activities of parents when involved, (b) school and teacher outreach, and (c) student outcomes. Others have looked at family patterns and fixed characteristics, such as parent education, socio-economic levels, and relationships at home (Montemayor & Romero, 2000), but limited studies on disability in terms of culture and language persists. Few studies focus on urban, minority children and their families (McKay, et al., 2003).

The history of special education has had a long history of issues that continuously affect the schooling of culturally and linguistically diverse student populations. Among the disproportionate representation of minorities and the inadequate supply of trained professionals, the lack of useful culturally responsive practices continues to impede the understanding that racial and cultural differences among children are useful in explaining their behaviors and learning outcomes (McCray & Garcia, 2002). The implication of not acknowledging the diversity within and between cultures is immense, as differences in race, social class, and language often exerts influences on teachers and the practices they employ when teaching students with disabilities from diverse backgrounds (Barbour & Barbour, 2001; Carr, 2000).

In order for parent participation to bring successful outcomes, educators must remain proactive in the ways in which they approach parental involvement, especially with families from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds. Teachers must become
the initiator of parent-school partnerships by first ridding themselves of stereotypes and false perceptions of the home culture. Educators must then develop plans that recognize the child and the family as the central focus of any collaboration. Beliefs and practices, which are guided by policies and mainstream values, should be changed in ways that embrace family and culture while promoting the welfare of all students, including those with disabilities. Cultural sensitivity, along with use of collaborative models to promoting positive parent school relationships, is needed to meet the needs of all student and their families (McKay, et al., 2003; Reyes-Blanes & Smalley, 2001)

One such model is represented in a research study undertaken across three states (Kansas, North Carolina, and Louisiana) to identify the indicators of professional behaviors associated with collaborative partnerships from the perspective of diverse family group members and professionals. The authors, Blue-Blanning, et al. (2004), conducted 34 two-hour focus group sessions with 137 family members from diverse family compositions within a wide range of racial/ethnic groups and other demographic variables including age, income, language proficiency, and disabilities. For example, of the family participants, 99 (72%) were females and eight (6%) were individuals with disabilities. Seventy of the participants had a child with a disability. Of these participants, twenty-three percent reported having a child with a disability in preschool, 36% in elementary, 19% in secondary and 7% in post-secondary placements.

The distribution of focus group participants across ethnicities include 64 (41%) African Americans, 23 (17%) Latino, 41 (30%) White, and 6 (4%), comprising other ethnicities. Among the family participants, the 51% were employed full or part-time. Thirty-seven percent had incomes under $25,000 while the income of 34% of the family
participants ranged between $25,000 and $50,000. The remaining participants (21%) reported annual incomes over $50,000. Subsequent interviews, using an open-ended questioning format, were conducted with 18 family participants with limited English proficiency. These participants included 16 Latinos, 1 Hmong, and 1 Vietnamese (Blue-Blanning, et al., 2004).

In addition to family members, fifty-three professionals, the majority (70%) being White females, also served as participants in the study. The 17 remaining professionals were of African American background. Of them, 17 (32%) were administrators and 36 (70%) were service providers representative of various professional fields, including education, human/social services, health care, or a combination thereof. All professional participants took part in focus group sessions, whereas only 14 were interviewed. Data collected during the study were coded and verified for trustworthiness (Blue-Blanning, et al., 2004).

Six themes of the Collaborative Family-Professional Partnership were derived along with their respective indicators. Among these themes are: (1) quantity and quality of communication between parents and professional; (2) commitment to the collaborative process and the goals being pursued on behalf of the child; (3) equality in empowerment opportunities through efforts in decision making and service implementation; (4) demonstration of skills in terms of concrete help in providing appropriate instructional approaches and support for students; (5) trust with respect to the reliance and dependence of each member in the partnership; and (6) respect for the abilities and experiences of each other through non-discriminatory, nonjudgmental actions and communication.
The results also indicate that opportunities for parents to become effective partners with service providers should not only occur during the period in which student receive services, but should extend beyond and continue as the child grows older (Blue-Blanning, et al., 2004).

Barriers to Parent Involvement

Despite some recent evidence suggesting considerable advances in student achievement among minority children, there remains sufficient evidence of racial and economic gaps in the level of achievement for these students (Barton, 2003). These social and educational realities have led to the conclusion that a lack of parental involvement among culturally and linguistically diverse families is one cause of low achievement (Blackbourn, et al., 2004).

Although Patton (1998) has suggested that the overrepresentation of minorities in special education contributes to low rates of achievement, underachievement is most often correlated to low rates of parent participation (Epstein & Sheldon, 2002; Hill, et al., 2004; Jeynes, 2003; Mumford, 1998; Singer, 2002; Smalley & Reyes-Blanes, 2001). In her study, Desimone (1999) found parent involvement, a student’s ethnic background, and family income to be strong predictors of student success.

To obtain these results, Desimone (1999) used survey data and standardized test scores of 8th graders available from the National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988 (NELS:88). Variances in student and parent perceptions of involvement were analyzed to determine its affect on school success for students from disparate cultural and socio-economic backgrounds. The measures, taken from survey questions on parent behavior and practices, were categorized using Epstein’s typology of parent involvement. Twelve
measures of parent behaviors resulted; eight from parent responses to the survey and four from student responses. Three measures of achievement were used: student self-reported GPA, standardized math scores, and standardized reading scores. Family characteristics, which included demographic information, were taken from parent reports to the NELS:88 survey. Finally, a least square analysis was used to determine statistically significant differences parent involvement variables. In addition to race and economics, parent involvement was also found to play an integral part in student success. In contrast to other studies, though, Desimone found that poor and minority parents were less involved than the other groups studied.

Still, a parent’s level and intensity of involvement is often a function of their perceived skills and abilities (Smalley & Reyes-Blanes, 2001). Although many educators are well aware of the need for effective collaboration among school, families and agencies, the problem of limited parent involvement in special education is profound. Limited collaboration often results from the combination of various factors, including the perception of collaborative skills that a family member may have of himself (Kalyanpur, et al., 2000).

Shumow and Lomax (2001) presented findings supporting the notion that parents’ feelings of efficacy had an impact on their ability to guide their child, ultimately leading them to successful outcomes. Utilizing a national sub-sample of 929 children aged 10-17 and their families, the researchers examined data from the Survey of Parents and Children, collected seven years earlier via telephone interviews by the National Commission on Children. After defining parents feeling of success across three general categories: (1) positively influencing academic, social, and emotional development, (2)
limiting to negative influences from their child’s peers, and (3) positive influences on school and community agencies, Shumow and Lomax examined parents self report on three sets of questions about their involvement and linked them to student performance. Student reports on social and emotional well-being were also linked to perceived levels of success.

Although limited by parent and student reports of success, the study not only revealed that families with higher feelings of efficacy monitored their children more frequently and were more involved with the children at home, but were more inclined to participate in school on a more frequently basis. Results also indicated that children felt happier, safer, and more stable in the school environment, consequently leading to higher levels of achievement. Interestingly, results indicated that family background, income, and neighborhoods do affect a parent’s sense of efficacy. Consequently, these factors imply the need for programs to address the involvement of families across race and ethnicities. In summary, Shumow and Lomax (2001) stated, “Given the link between parental efficacy, developmentally appropriate parenting behaviors, and adolescent outcomes, one important goal of programs for parents of adolescents might be to bolster their sense of efficacy” (p. 7).

In fact, Sanders and Woolley (2004) and Deslandes and Bertrand (2005) concur that parent self efficacy can be developed through a series of strategically implemented parent education activities aimed at teaching the skills of parent planning and service selection that is needed to manage behaviors that lead to successful outcomes.

Hoover-Dempsey, et al. (2005) recognizes that a parent’s sense of efficacy is one of two motivational factors for involvement and intent to help children succeed in school.
Efficacy, a socially constructed belief system, drives parental efforts for goal setting and decision-making regarding the child’s education and further builds persistence towards achieving those goals. The second belief system, role construction for involvement, gives account for decisions or reasons for being involved. Along with efficacy, role construction helps in shaping the attitudes, behaviors, and activities related to the types and levels of involvement parents undertake. Parents without a high sense of efficacy or those whose role is negatively constructed from personal experiences tend to be less involved (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1997a, 1997b).

Of the groups that do get involved in their child’s schooling, the majority are White middle-income families who often share the values and beliefs of the teachers (See Table 3). In fact, these families are more likely to be informed about special education services since they participate more frequently in school governance (Murray, Smith, & Hill, 2001). Thus, the interactions of race, ethnicity, culture, and socio-economic status (See Table 4) interfere with opportunities for involvement among minorities who tend to hold beliefs guided by their cultural ideals and values. Factors of racism, discrimination, and prejudice create and sustain disparities between culturally and linguistically diverse groups and their mainstream counterparts in terms of power, influence, rights, and access to resources. These disparities often limit the involvement of families from diverse backgrounds and are often more pronounced at schools with higher rates of poverty (See Table 5) (Hampton & Mumford, 1998; Hoover-Dempsey, et al., 2005; Lareau & Horvat, 1999; Murray, Smith, & Hill, 2001).
Table 3

Percentage of Parent Participation in the United States, by Race/Ethnicity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race/Ethnic Category</th>
<th>Parents who attended a school event</th>
<th>Parents who volunteered or served on a committee</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Table 4

Percentage of Parent Participation in the United States, by Income

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Household Income</th>
<th>Parents who attended a school event</th>
<th>Parents who volunteered or served on a committee</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&gt; $50,000</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$35,000-$50,000</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$20,000-$35,000</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$10,000-$20,000</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt; $10,000</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5

Percentage of Teachers Reporting Lack of Parent Involvement as a Moderate or Serious Problem across the United States, by Poverty Level of School: 2000

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Percentage of teachers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All Schools</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low-Poverty Schools</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High-poverty Schools</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: *Education Week*, Quality Counts, 2003, p.62

The most prevalent group that does not actively participate in the school is culturally and linguistically diverse families (Kalyanpur, et al., 2000; Thorp, 1997). A vast majority of these families live in poverty. Citing data from the National Longitudinal Transition Study (NLTS) of 1986, Valdés et al. (1990) reported that families of students with disabilities from urban areas are more likely to live in poverty than families of students in suburban or rural areas. At the time the NTLS study was conducted, 47% of urban youth with disabilities lived in households where the annual reported income was less than $12,000, compared to 19 percent of suburban and 34 percent of rural students with disabilities.

In a compilation of studies conducted over a 10-year period across the northeast region of the United States, Gottlieb and Alter (1994) found that, of the students with disabilities (N = 139,780) sampled across 165 schools in poor urban districts, more than 80% of them lived in poverty and as many as 90% receive some form of public assistance. Data also revealed that 95% of the students receiving special education
services were members of a minority group, and only 10 to 25% live with two parents. Currently, more than one-fifth of the total number of children younger than 18 years old, live in poverty, with nearly 25% of them being between the ages of six and thirteen (See Table 6) (US Census, 2000; Villegas & Lucas, 2002). Most families living below the income threshold are headed by single-parent females (Park, Turnbull, & Turnbull, 2002). In 2002, the total number of female households, without a husband present, living in poverty was greater than 3.6 million, half of all families living in poverty (US Census, 2002).

This body of evidence suggests that low socioeconomic status is an underlying condition for many students with disabilities. Living in poverty, therefore, is a precipitating factor for receiving services in special education, particularly among ethnic minority students. Even so, racial and economic gaps in achievement among less advantaged children from diverse backgrounds may be lessened when systematic interventions are instituted. To reduce the disparity in academic success experienced among high and low achievers, an increase in the present level of parental involvement among culturally and linguistically diverse families of students receiving special education services is warranted.
Table 6

Annual Household Income for Families of Students with Disabilities in the United States

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Annual Household Income</th>
<th>% Reporting</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&lt; $15,000</td>
<td>19.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15,000-24,999</td>
<td>16.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25,000-50,000</td>
<td>31.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50,001-75,000</td>
<td>19.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt; $75,000</td>
<td>13.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number living in Poverty</td>
<td>23.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

US Bureau of Census, Census 2000, n=8083 (age 6-13)

Additional Factors Serve as Barriers to Parent Involvement

The variables that diverse family groups experience often contribute to low levels of involvement (See Table 7). Oftentimes, communication and language barriers, along with other factors such as a history of poor relationships with schools, cultural differences about disabilities and the nature of accessing help for the disabled, exacerbate the problem. Still, other issues and family obligations, such as transportation and childcare, also stand as contextual barriers to effective, on-going parent-teacher collaboration (Bauer & Shea, 2003). These barriers often exist because of the differences in values placed on equity and advocacy between middle class, European American teachers and CLD families. The disparity is further extended since culturally and linguistically diverse families experience with-in group diversity, namely differences in language, social class, and educational levels that exist among the group’s subpopulations. This limited
homogeneity among minority groups further disaggregates the variables of language, social class, and economics. It is important to classify groups based on their unique characteristics and experiences. Without clear, theoretical distinctions among population subgroups, local patterns may be masked and a true understanding of the factors that inhibit behaviors, namely a parent’s willingness to participate in school, may be lost. (Artiles, Rueda, Salazar, & Higareda, 2005; Barge & Loges, 2003; Kalyanpur, et al., 2000; Strom, et al., 2002).

Table 7
Race/Ethnicity of Students with Disabilities by Income Level across the United States

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Annual Household Income</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>White (%)</th>
<th>African American (%)</th>
<th>Hispanic (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&gt;50,000</td>
<td>2980</td>
<td>84.8</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>6.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35,000-50,000</td>
<td>1215</td>
<td>73.9</td>
<td>10.5</td>
<td>12.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20,000-34,999</td>
<td>1787</td>
<td>59.4</td>
<td>19.8</td>
<td>16.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt; 20,000</td>
<td>2169</td>
<td>41.3</td>
<td>34.5</td>
<td>19.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Special Education Elementary Longitudinal Study (SEELS), 2002

Clearly, socio-cultural factors compound the present state of involvement by minority families in education. Disparities in race and culture may be experienced when families face extraneous and bureaucratic systems lead by educational professionals with little to no representation of themselves. On average, only 14% of special educators were from historically underrepresented groups (Billingsley, 2002, 2004), though other accounts place this figure closer to 18% (US Census, 2000), still a far cry from the ratio
of students with disabilities to teachers, by race (See Table 8). Even as early as 1996, Sileo and Sileo stated that socio-cultural diversity within the general population of the United States was disproportionately greater than the diversity of the teaching force. Currently, still, classrooms are being led by first and second-generation middle-class Americans of European decent who are often guided by middle class values. At the same time, students from culturally diverse backgrounds are filling special education classrooms (Berger, 2004; Blackbourn, et al, 2004; Gollnick & Chinn 2002). Livingston and Wirt (2005) estimate the increase in enrollment for ethnically diverse students to have almost doubled from 22% in 1972 to over 42% in 2003. This statistically significant figure is supported by Warren (2002), adding that approximately one-sixth of the total student population is foreign born.
### Table 8

Distribution of ESE Students and Teachers, by race

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race/Ethnic Category</th>
<th>FL District (%)</th>
<th>Florida (%)</th>
<th>United States (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ESE Students</td>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>ESE Students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>47.3</td>
<td>60.4</td>
<td>48.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black/African American</td>
<td>26.6</td>
<td>20.8</td>
<td>23.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>21.8</td>
<td>17.0</td>
<td>22.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian/Pacific Islander</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>2.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Indian/Alaska Native</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other/Multiracial</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>2.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Data on Florida and District’s “Other/Multiracial” Teacher categories not reported.

US Bureau of Census, Census 2000, Special Tabulations; n=4,339,605 (teachers), n=9739 (age 5-14/students); Florida DOE, Education Information and Accountability Services, (Fall, 2004), n=158,624 (teachers ), n=2,638,127 (students); FLDOE, Orange County, 2003, n=20,222 (teachers).

The level of growth among students with disabilities is three times greater than any other population of students. It is estimated that if this growth continues, by 2010, an additional 1,256,000 students with disabilities, ages 3 to 21, will require services in schools across the country (McLeskey, Tyler, & Flippin, 2004). As more students enter the classroom, the ranges in disabilities increase and the means of addressing those
variances become complex, especially when teachers are not assuming cultural sensitivity for others ethnically and linguistically different from them. The disparity between the numbers of CLD students being taught by teachers assuming mainstream values creates a mismatch between teaching styles and learning styles (Tyler, Yzquierdo, Lopez-Reyna, & Flippin, 2004).

Across the United States, the Bureau of Census (2000a) estimates that about 380 categories of languages, other than English, are spoken. Approximately 1.8 million people, ages 5 and over, do not speak English at all, while 47 million families (18% of the total population) do not use English as the primary language in the home (See Table 9). Villegas and Lucas (2002, p. 20) translates these statistics to mean that “one in seven children between the ages of 5 and 17 speak a language other than English at home; more than one-third of them are limited English proficient” (See Table 10). These differences in cultural and linguistic representation (See Table 11), as well as the overrepresentation of minorities in the special education classrooms, often are factors consistent with low rates of achievement experienced by students with disabilities. In fact, these high numbers of students is an indication that minority children do not have equal access to all educational programs (Blackbourn, et al., 2004).
## Table 9

**Primary Language Spoken in the Home, in Percents**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Homes across the US</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>92.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>5.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sign-Language</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other non spoken</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>language</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

US Bureau of Census, Census 2000

## Table 10

**Ten Languages Most Frequently Spoken at Home other than English and Spanish**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Population of Speakers, 5 years and older (in millions)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>French</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>German</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tagalog</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vietnamese</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italian</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Korean</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russian</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polish</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arabic</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

US Bureau of Census, Census 2000
Table 11

Percentage of Students whose Primary Language is other than English, by Race/Ethnicity for FL District

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race/Ethnic Category</th>
<th>% Students in FL District</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>7.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black/African American</td>
<td>17.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>69.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian/Pacific Islander</td>
<td>5.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Indian/Alaska Native</td>
<td>0.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multi-racial</td>
<td>0.66</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

FLDOE, Orange County, 2003; n=11,307

Additionally, the concerns for children of migrant workers are distinctive. High mobility rates often impede their efforts to access appropriate educational services, schools competes with the need to work alongside parents, and low rates of academic achievement becomes prevalent. These factors result in the student being more likely to drop out of school (Blackbourn, et al., 2004). Without access to a solid education, the future for these children remains bleak.

In the meantime, the quality of family-professional relationships is impacted, especially when teachers has do make connections with the home culture. The unique needs of students often lead to tensions between the families of students with disabilities and educators. Increased levels of tension result in parents becoming wary of the motives of educators (Rao, 2000; Turnbull, et al., 2006).
Too often, contact between the parent and teacher has a negative focus on the child’s difficulties (Maroney, 2001), or is focused on issues that have no impact on the child’s educational program. Although parents want more active decision-making roles, they tend to defer to the authority of school personnel. In doing so, they adopt the posture that the teacher knows best and can effectively articulate their concerns when planning educational programs for their child (Kalyanpur, et al., 2000; Sileo & Sileo, 1996). Still, educators must realize that only the family can judge the fit between a service option and their family values.

Equally important, educators need to understand that diverse groups bring strengths and needs to the interaction that will be different from their own. If this understanding does not develop, there will ultimately be a mismatch of family values with the school. Without an interface between socio-cultural and linguistic differences, the student’s participation in educational programs will have little or no relevance to the values and cultures reflected in their homes and community. Because language and cultural barriers place students at risk for educational and behavioral problems (Sileo & Sileo, 1996), educators must consider the uniqueness and concerns of parents as individual members of a culturally diverse population. Educators must realize that factors such as race, ethnicity, gender, religion, SES, and education influence one’s attitude, values, beliefs, and behavior (Carr, 2000).

The need exists to consider racial-ethnic and economic group level differences when suggesting interventions (Artiles, et al, 2005). Generalizing about individuals and families based on these diverse demographic variables can be misleading (Desimone, 1999). Furthermore, it is unethical for assumptions and stereotypes of a cultural group to
influence the quality of education a teacher offers a student when teaching (Blackbourn, et al., 2004). When accounting for equal educational outcomes, a teacher’s use of quality instructional techniques and programming, as well as social support services, should rest upon individual considerations of each student’s background experiences, needs, and strengths. Furthermore, a teacher’s belief about diversity, curriculum, assessment, instruction, school culture, governance, and professional development have long term implications on the type and intensity of involvement opportunities made available to parents (Artiles, et al, 2005). In sum, without thoughtful deliberations about individual differences when planning and implementing interventions, a mismatch between cultures is imminent.

Teacher Factors Serve as Barriers to Parent Involvement

One of the underlying reasons for the mismatch between home and school culture is the shortage of qualified teachers (Billingsley & McLeskey, 2004; Darling-Hammond, 2001; Warren, 2002) and the increase in the number of positions in exceptional student education classes being filled by out-of-field teachers. Reports from the U.S. Department of Education suggest that, by recent counts, 47,532 teachers in special education classes across the country are without proper credentials (McLeskey, et al., 2004). It appears that teachers without appropriate licenses are serving the most challenging students.

According to the Florida Department of Education (2004), over 13% of the teachers of high incidence disabilities do not have adequate certification. In central Florida, about one-third of the teachers teach without certification, while others have passed through low standards of preparation or are teaching on emergency certificates. Essentially, these statistics “pose larger obstacles to student achievement than do student
characteristics” (Blackbourn, et al., 2004, p. 245). For example, teachers serving urban CLD students are more inclined to leave the profession because they are ill-prepared to deal with complex issues of diversity and equity (Billingsley, 2004; Billingsley, Carlson, & Klein, 2004; Gersten, Keating, Yovanoff, & Harniss, 2001).

Not without mention, is the fact that there has been a significant decline in the number of minority teachers serving students with exceptionalities, with less than 15% of teachers representing CLD groups (Billingsley, 2002, 2004). Research indicates that teachers, who tend to be members of the same minority group as the families, are more proactive in involving those families in collaborative efforts (Zellman & Waterman, 1998). Increasingly, however, students are engaging in interpersonal teaching-learning process with persons whose worldviews are significantly different than their own (Obiakor & Algozzine, 1993). Although culturally and linguistically diverse students comprise over 40% of the nation’s student body (Livingston & Wirt, 2005), a major percentage (87%) of the teachers are European Americans. Many of these teachers have not had any experience living in the urban communities serving racially diverse groups (Blackbourn, et al., 2004).

With the existing disparity between teacher and student cultures, classrooms must be filled with individuals who are willing to interact with families by including the concerns of the family in the dialogue. Additionally, the need for educators to become culturally competent is emphasized by the cultural differences that permeate the education system (Warren, 2002). An often ignored, but essential aspect of teacher preparation is the need to prepare teachers to work with families. In order to be highly effective, teachers must be armed with a broad range of skills and methodologies that will
help them adapt to the unique perspectives of the families who have children with disabilities. The affect that teachers have on the academic achievement of students is profound. Warren (2002) suggests that the quality of the teacher accounts for 40% of the student’s academic achievement.

It is critical, therefore, that teachers are given the opportunities to explore and develop clear strategies for including parents. Colleges of education need to extend teacher preparation programs to impart both theoretical and experiential knowledge of families, homes, and communities to meet this objective. Presently, training in family issues typically are placed in graduate level courses. Generally, these trainings excludes pre-service teachers at the undergraduate level, individuals returning for certification purposes only, and those not returning for continuing education opportunities (Knight & Wadsworth, 1999).

Empirical evidence suggests that teacher education programs offer no assurance that teachers are acquiring the skills to work with diverse groups of children. These programs have shown little influence in altering the attitude and disposition that pre-service teachers have of CLD students (Dee & Henkin, 2002). Currently, pre-service programs present diversity issues in fragmented and superficial ways that inhibit the teachers’ ability to comprehend socio-cultural differences, as they exist. An effective program would embrace rigorous standards for infusing issues of diversity, not through specialized courses, but throughout the teacher preparation program (Villegas & Lucas, 2002; Dee & Henkin, 2002). A contextualized approach that exposes pre-service teachers to issues in cultural sensitivity is advocated by Harry (2002).
To meet this challenge, the Council for Exceptional Children’s (CEC) Guidelines for Pre-service Training of Special Educators has recently been endorsed by the Specialty Areas Studies Board of the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE). This sanction requires states seeking NCATE accreditation to submit plans for teacher preparation programs that follow certain standards, one of which is the development of skills to collaborate with families (Knight & Wadsworth, 1999).

When considering alternately certified teachers, in-service training must be offered by local school districts so that learning and motivation in support of incorporating a successful program for involving families may be enhanced (Knight & Wadsworth, 1999). In fact, researchers, policy makers, colleges of education, and school districts must collaborate and develop programs that will adequately prepare all teachers to meet the diverse needs of all children with disabilities and their families. An increased awareness of diversity issues facilitates the increase in effectiveness when teaching CLD students (Blackbourn, et al., 2004)

Carr (2000) suggests that the recruitment and retention of special education teachers remain critical issues since the field is currently experiencing some of the most significant shortages. She reports that 32,000 certified special education teachers are needed annually to provide education and related services for individuals with disabilities, ages 3-21. Since recruitment is difficult and high attrition rates are reported each year, the shortage of teachers is problematic. Often, the individuals attained to serve in this high need area tend to be ill-prepared to deal with the unique aspects of the special education settings.
Parents’ Perceived Skills and Prior Experiences Serve as Barrier to Involvement

Still other factors limit the involvement of parents. Many educators often hold negative characterizations that suggest families lack the necessary skills needed to collaborate due to limited knowledge of the special education process and impractical expectations. This institutional view of nonparticipation by parents is based on a deficit model. This model assumes that parents’ lack of knowledge or expertise limits their participation whereby affecting their child’s ability to succeed (Kalyanpur, et al., 2000).

Most research studies use the deficit model when portraying poor and minority families. Families are often viewed as broken and in need of outside assistance to be fixed. This pattern only goes to strengthen racial, ethnic, and class biases that permeate the education system (Harry, 2002; Kalyanpur, et al., 2000; Montemayor & Romeo, 2000; Warren, 2002).

As evidenced by a case study of a 30-year old African American mother’s view of special education service and professional behaviors, this assertion was found to be especially true. Thick descriptions of a mother’s perception revealed dissatisfaction with the special education system that eventually led her to withdraw from participation altogether. Specific details provided insight into interactions between the mother and special educators, where blatant disrespect and discounting of cultural differences occurred. Additionally, the parent felt judged, labeled as “at-risk”, and deemed to be in need of training. Although the mother entered the special education “partnership” with optimism, her withdrawal from the dialogue was due to her need for service providers to genuinely care for her son and listen to her concerns (Rao, 2000). Parents only want their voices heard and their opinions respected (Muscott, 2002).
Parents’ perceived skills and abilities, their employment and other demands, and invitations and opportunities presented by the school often determine the level and intensity of involvement (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1997a, 1997b; Hoover-Dempsey, et al., 2005; Kalyanpur, et al., 2000; Shumow & Lomax, 2001, Smalley & Reyes-Blanes, 2001). More often, nonparticipation results from prioritization of obligations, demographic changes, and values, not necessarily lack of skills. Not being able to assimilate to or match with the teacher’s ideals and values, frequently result in family members feeling disenfranchised.

Prior negative experiences of parents may be the single most important factor challenging participation (Hampton & Mumford, 1988; Kalyanpur, et al., 2000; Mapp, 1999). Although the parents desire to participate, they often do not feel welcomed. A climate of mistrust may be experienced when parents become uncertain that educators will act in the best interest of their child. This lack of trust, brought on from days of desegregation, has been reinforced by the overrepresentation of minority students in special education (Artiles, Harry, Reschly, & Chinn, 2002; Artiles, et al., 2005; Hosp & Reschly, 2004; Obiakor, 2001; Patton, 1998). African American students, in particular, have significantly elevated representations in high incidence programs; most noticeably in classes that serve emotionally disturbed (ED) and mentally retarded (MR) students. The high rates of placement result from discrepancies in the identification and diagnostic processes (Artiles, et al., 2002).

When teachers do not have a full understanding of a culture, they are likely to misinterpret behaviors displayed by students. Students are given indications that they are not successful and they begin to fall behind academically. As a result of limited cultural
understanding, teachers tend not to provide appropriate interventions; further limiting the child’s full potential. Consequently, academic achievement is negatively influenced and the child is most likely referred for assessment. Since assessment is a strong predictor of special education eligibility, many students are placed in classrooms where instruction further limits their outcomes (Hosp & Reschly, 2004). This cycle of failure helps perpetuate the self-fulfilling prophecy.

For many parents, their own personal schooling has left them facing obstacles to participation (See Table 12). Many, of which several may have dropped out, do not feel a sense of confidence when placed in the school setting. Limited schooling, which often is compounded by language and literacy deficiencies, will also influence parent participation at home. As research has shown, parents without a history of school success are more likely to have weaker self-efficacy for their ability to perform tasks such as assisting with homework (Desimone, 1999; Shumow & Lomax, 2001).
Table 12

Parents’ Education for Students with Disabilities, by Race

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Schooling</th>
<th>Mothers (%)</th>
<th>Fathers (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor’s Degree or more</td>
<td>16.2</td>
<td>20.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some College</td>
<td>27.1</td>
<td>25.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School</td>
<td>37.7</td>
<td>36.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate/GED</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than High School</td>
<td>18.9</td>
<td>18.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

National Household Education Survey, 1999

Economics and Time Constraints Present Barriers to Involvement

Additional barriers that limit collaboration between home and school and further impact a student with exceptionalities from receiving appropriate services at school are based on economic and time constraints (Bauer & Shea, 2003; Peña, 2000; Scherer, 1996; Shumow & Miller, 2001). In a time of limited employment opportunities, parents of today have to protect themselves by working long hours. This focus on the self leaves many urban children home without an adult caregiver for several hours of the day. As a result, children become autonomous, as they are increasingly independent with organizing their own time, preparing meals, and spending time alone (Scherer, 1996).
Due to long hours at demanding jobs, parents experience time constraints that impede on their flexibility with scheduling (See Table 13) (Bauer & Shea, 2003). Still, others, who would like to be more actively involved in school, find meeting times inconvenient (Smalley & Reyes-Blanes, 2001). Many parents work multiple jobs and others work nights. This makes it impossible to appear at a daytime meeting, especially when these meetings are not planned with the family needs in mind and more so, when they interfere with other family obligations.

Table 13

Employment of Parents of Students with Disabilities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender of Parent</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Full-time Employment</th>
<th>Part-time Employment</th>
<th>Not Employed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mother</td>
<td>8651</td>
<td>47.3</td>
<td>23.0</td>
<td>29.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Father</td>
<td>6019</td>
<td>88.2</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>7.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

National Household Education Survey, 1999

In Bracey’s (2001) review of the Harvard School of Public Health’s report on how poverty influences parent involvement, he provides results indicating that poor families encounter working conditions that further impact opportunities for involvement in their child’s schooling. After utilizing the 1994 National Longitudinal Survey of Youth, a 28-item Behavior Problems Index (BPI), and the Peabody Individual Achievement Tests in reading and math, the original researchers found that of 1280 mothers in the study, forty percent of families above the poverty line and sixty-seven percent of families below the poverty line had no paid sick leave. Additional findings include: 71% of families below the poverty line had no sick leave at all; 46% had no paid
vacations; and 67% could not leave their job site. These work-related factors contribute to the difficulties already being faced by families wanting to participate in their child’s schooling, but cannot.

In addition to work and time conflicts, it is also less likely that single parent families, families from urban neighborhoods, families living far from schools, or families where both parents work will participate in the school (Cheney & Osher, 1997). Other factors such as transportation, childcare needs, and the lack of knowledge of the individualized education program process are deterrents to parent participation (Bauer & Shea, 2003; Dempsey, et al., 2005; Hampton & Mumford, 1988; Harrison & Arnold, 1995; Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1997a, 1997b).

One study, in particular, provides insight into how the roles of parents and demographic factors served as barriers. A qualitative case study conducted by Peña (2000), focused on factors for involvement and communication among Mexican American families. Participants included 28 parents of children in two pre-kindergarten/kindergarten and two third/fourth grade classes, 4 teachers and principals from a year-round urban school with multi-age classes and dual-language programs. Approximately 96% of the school population is Mexican American.

Over the course of one year, data were gathered from interviews, home visits, parent meetings, conference observations, informal discussions, and school documents. Peña (2000) found that cultural attitudes, of both an outspoken clique of parents and the school staff, influenced involvement in activities presented by the school. The study also revealed that factors, such as parent roles, language and literacy barriers, and parents’ educational level, served as barriers. In addition, family issues such as childcare, work
schedules, transportation, and time constraints were confirmed as factors affecting participation. Interestingly, parents cited attitudes of the school staff to be one of the most influential factors as some parents were not made to feel welcomed and many felt judged because of their need for assistance in compensating the issues they faced.

Consequently, educators should not only develop non-traditional methods to involve parents, but they must do so in ways that take into account the barriers that these parents face. One way of doing so is by making the meeting times and location more convenient to the parents. Teachers must be more willing to meet parents away from the school setting. Meetings can take place in the communities of families. Successful options include churches, YMCAs, and libraries (Smalley & Reyes-Blanes, 2001).

**Student Barriers**

In addition to the barriers experienced by the CLD families as a unit, students also experience their own set of personal barriers when their parents are not actively involved in their schooling. The transition of students from elementary to middle school is often considered as one of the most difficult periods of a student’s educational career (Gutman & Midgley, 2000; Zeedyk, et al., 2003). This period of emergence into adolescence is laced with changes in identity, peer association, level of autonomy, and competence. These changes can create a state of instability for the student as they move between ecologies (Strom, et al., 2002).

Transitional discontinuity is particularly true for students with disabilities. This transition between vastly different school environments, one with a small, closely-knit community of learners to a larger, less personal environment, can create anxious situations where a mix of excitement, apprehension, curiosity and concern occur. During
this phase, parents often wonder how their child will adjust to the additional social and academic demands that often occur in the middle school environment (Bauer & Shea, 2003; Carter, et al., 2005; Gutman & Midgley, 2000).

Students, too, worry about their own success. Many disengage from school during the middle school years because they are less motivated (Billig, 2003). Because of these fears and the realities of moving from elementary to middle school, it is imperative that successful transitions occur. A students’ self-efficacy, or confidence that they can perform well in school, often serves as the single most important factor in their adjustment to new environments and overall academic success (Gutman & Midgley, 2000).

In their study, Gutman and Midgley (2000) looked at the role protective factors play in supporting the achievement of poor African-American students as they transition from fifth to sixth grade. Students from 62 low-income African American families were selected to be interviewed. Four factors were looked at independently and collectively to determine the level of interaction of these factors on student achievement. The four factors included: (1) academic self-efficacy, (2) parent involvement at home and school, (3) feeling supported by teachers and school staff, and (5) sense of belonging at the school. They examined each factor on the students’ grade point average (GPA) at the end of fifth and sixth grades.

As hypothesized, researchers found that students had higher GPAs at the end of fifth grade than at the end of sixth. After controlling for prior academic success, the researchers looked at each factor’s independent and collective effect on achievement. Overwhelmingly, they found that, on its own, a student’s high confidence level was
predictive of high GPAs than for students who did not exhibit high self-efficacy. When factors were combined, students with high parent involvement and sense of belonging also had higher GPAs as did students who reported high levels of parent involvement and teacher support. Overall, the researchers found that a student’s belief in their success translated to actual success. Nevertheless, as students transition from elementary school to middle school, family and school supports were important in influencing the levels of achievement experienced (Gutman and Midgley, 2000).

Perhaps, one reason for this influence may rest on the fact that without proper supports, students tend to experience low self-esteem and a decrease in their own abilities to perform (Bauer & Shea, 2003). The stresses that students face can be minimized when schools are responsive to their needs (Billig, 2003). Responsive school climates help students become well-adjusted and socially connected to their learning environments. Students become engaged when their needs are being responded to by effective teachers. Consequently, they become more motivated to achieve academically (Simons-Morton & Crump, 2003).

In a study on effective teachers, Owens and Dieker (2003) conducted focus groups of nine culturally diverse students with emotional and behavioral disorders (EBD) and observation of three White teachers, one male and two females, identified as “outstanding” in a district of approximately 7,000 teachers. Six of the students were high school students and the remaining three were middle school students, all on the caseload of one of the three teacher participants. Collectively, the teachers had 45 years of teaching experience and were currently teaching in urban settings.
Teacher characteristics relating to teaching styles, curriculum use, behavior management styles, and techniques for involving parents and service agencies were observed. The researchers also examined student definitions of effective teachers. From the data collected, it was revealed that teacher responsiveness was a strong quality held by the participating teachers. These teachers were able to “embrace the strengths of the diverse backgrounds presented by each student’s life” (p.20) and provide the necessary modifications and accommodations needed to make each child feel successful. Still, the effective teachers utilized a team effort to promote positive outcomes among CLD students with EBD. As a result, parents and service agencies were recruited to become active members of the decision-making team (Owens & Dieker, 2003).

*Overcoming Barriers through Collaboration*

Without ongoing collaborative efforts, the participation of parents in the education process dramatically declines as soon as the children grow older, most noticeably when preadolescent children transition to middle school (Bauer & Shea, 2003). The role of families within the education process has seemingly been given varying levels of emphasis depending on factors such as the age of the child with disability (Billig, 2003; Knight & Wadsworth, 1999). This generally happens with the shift from an IFSP to an IEP when focus on the family unit shifts to the child. Still, family centered practices should continue throughout the child’s education and parents should always be considered a crucial factor in the development and implementation of strategies and programs concerning their child (Pruitt & Wandry, 1998).

Turnbull and Turnbull (1997) used the findings of the National Longitudinal Transition Study (NLTS) of 1989 to support the claim that there was significant

Although few research focus on factors influencing middle school adjustment and engagement (Simons-Morton & Crump, 2003), it is clear that participation of parents is important. As reported in the Twenty-fourth Annual Report to Congress on the Implementation of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (U.S. DOE, 2002) parents of students with a disability were involved in ways ranging from very superficial to highly involved, partly due to each districts way of providing activities to involve families. Districts were categorized as implementing general activities for parent involvement that, in general terms, met the intent of Federal laws governing parent involvement to those that went beyond the intent of the law by employing aggressive activities to get parents involved. Although these methods raised the overall level of participation among parents of students with disabilities, little evidence was provided to substantiate the need for parent involvement in the older years of children, particularly when the child is in transition from one educational setting to the other.

The Twenty-fifth Annual Report to Congress (U.S. DOE, 2003) provided statistics however, that does give more credence to the need for parents to be involved in
the schooling of their middle school students with disabilities; more so, for those who are ethnically/racially diverse. On average, middle school students with disabilities do not transition from grade level to grade level with their non-disabled peers. Most are held back at least one time during their schooling. The average 11-year old is in sixth-grade. Only five percent of 11-year olds with disabilities are in 6th grade, whereas the majority of sixth-graders with disabilities is 12- and 13-year olds, 53% and 45% of each age group, respectively. Similarly, the average age of seventh graders is 12-years old and the average age of eighth graders is 13-years old. For students with disabilities, only five percent of 12 year olds are in seventh grade and only 4% of 13 year olds are in eighth grade.

Across racial/ethnic groups, these finding were more prevalent among Blacks and Hispanics, where an elevated risk for poor outcomes was imminent, as the students grew older. This was due primarily to poor social skills that impeded learning in the classroom. Although parents and teachers concurred that the majority of students with disabilities display average to above average social skills, many engage in problem behaviors, especially among African American students, students with emotional disorders, and those with lower family incomes. These students were more likely to be disciplined. One-third of students, age 13-17 with disabilities have been suspended or expelled, compared to 8.7% of six to nine year olds and 18.9% of ten to twelve year olds. By the end of the 2000-2001 school year, 47.6% of students with disabilities graduated with a standard diploma, whereas 41.1% dropped out. In Florida, where 89.3% of the population lives in urban areas, the majority (51.2%) of the student population are racially/ethnically diverse, and 17.7% of students under 18-years old live below the
poverty level, only 33% of students with disabilities, age 14-21, exited school with a diploma. Thirty-six percent dropped out (U.S. DOE, 2003).

Clearly, post-school outcomes are based on parent expectations for success and the level and intensity of engagement in their children’s education. To validate this claim for ethnically diverse groups, Fan (2001) utilized the NELS:88 data set, which included a variety of academic, demographic, social, psychological, and familial variables, including multiple items related to parent involvement, to determine the statistical relationship between parent participation and success of high school students. Data were collected via student, parent, and teacher questionnaires, taken on a nationally representative sample of approximately 24,400 students. The sample size for the analyses of ethnic group differences in parental involvement was approximately 10,600 students and data representing only student and parent reports were included. Fourteen items related to parental involvement were identified on the student questionnaire and extracted for analysis, whereas 22 items from parent data were utilized. Analyses included descriptive statistics, exploratory factor analysis, multivariate analysis of covariance (MANCOVA), and latent growth curve analysis.

After analyzing the data, Fan (2001) found that students, whose parents reported higher expectations for academic achievement, performed better. This translated into a variety of *educationally beneficial activities and behaviors during the child’s life* that, perhaps, facilitated self-determining skills and prepared him or her for successful transition. Outside of considerable academic performance differences among ethnic groups, the results indicated that parent expectations for students' future education attainment were highly correlated ($r = .43$) between student and parent responses. As
expected, higher SES (socio-economic status) parents had higher expectations for their children's education. In all but one instance, SES correlated most strongly with parents' educational aspiration for their children (\( r = .34 \); \( r = .42 \) from student and parent data, respectively). For example, different SES levels were related to observed differences in parents' aspirations for their children's education attainment between the Asian American (mean=9.88) and Hispanic (m=8.58) groups, with a medium effect size of about .5. Little difference existed, however, between the two groups in parents' education aspirations for their children when similar SES levels were reported by parents. The reported means for Asians and Hispanics were similar, 9.51 and 9.49, respectively, when the two groups reported similar SES. On the other hand, when White students were compared with African American students, Whites consistently surpassed African American students with higher academic achievement. However, when adjusting for SES, the White group had a mean of 8.70 whereas the African American group had the highest mean of 9.72, with a standardized mean difference of .35, a small-to-medium effect size. In fact, the variance in parental involvement dimensions, as accounted for among the four ethnic groups, was relatively small, ranging from 1% to 1.9%. Still, it was the parents’ aspiration for their children’s education and success that had the most profound effect on academic growth, over and above the effect of SES. In reality, the parent’s expectation for academic growth may have transferred to the child’s own behavior and expectations for their own success (Fan, 2001).

Since, parents’ expectations may, in fact, exert influence on student achievement, it is important that parents become openly involved in collaborative activities with school personnel. Programs should be developed to increase the skills of parents as
collaborators and to increase their abilities to advocate on behalf of their children. By being involved in the education of their child, parents are able to provide a stronger voice, foster the students’ belief in their own skills, and aid in the child’s adjustment and engagement within new environments (Fan, 2001).

Active involvement of culturally diverse parents in the transition process also aids in the identification of measurable goals and objectives. These goals and objectives should maintain focus on post-secondary education or training, employment, independent living skills, and community and leisure activities (Geenen, Powers and Lopez-Vasquez, 2001). These findings resulted from a study by Geenen and her colleagues, who wanted to assess the participation of 308 African American, Asian American, Hispanic American, Native Americans and European American to determine the activities these parents were involved in and the importance of each activity. These participants were parents of students attending schools in a large urban school district that served more than 57,000 students, 29% of whom were from culturally and linguistically diverse families and 9% receiving services in special education classrooms. The researchers also had 52 school personnel complete a parallel survey detailing their perceptions of the parent involvement process. Demographically, this group of professionals comprised of 90% ESE teachers, 94% European Americans, and 52% middle school workers. Surveys, focus groups, and interviews were the primary means of gathering data.

The researchers investigated whether parent groups varied by ethnicity in how they participated. Findings include: (1) Parents self-reported high levels of participation in the transition process, particularly among culturally and linguistically diverse parent groups whose participation in activities outside of the school setting (i.e. teaching of
family values and beliefs, discussions of life after high school, etc.) surpassed that of European Americans; (2) Professional descriptions of parent involvement differed significantly between culturally and linguistically diverse parents and European American parents. Collectively, the professionals reported low levels of participation for the diverse groups of parents. Still, the most profound piece of evidence from this study was that parent participation during the transition process helped to facilitate student learning needed beyond school and into other life domains (Geenen, et al., 2001).

Perhaps, successful transition into middle school occurs when teachers offer the appropriate learning environment where the child is comfortable and their learning needs are met. It is this comfort within the classroom that spurs participation and subsequent learning (Bauer & Shea, 2003; Carter, et. al, 2005; Gutman & Midgley, 2000; Simons-Morton & Crump, 2003). In addition, open communication between participants of a collaborative relationship helps educators understand, identify and support transition outcomes that are in sync with a family’s culture and values (Geenen, et al., 2001). Without continuous dialogue between parents and teachers, support mechanisms will not be available to shield students from socio-cultural factors, procedural changes, and developmental differences, among other things. In addition, cultural sensitivity is required so that the use of strategies and support system match the belief system of the students (Harry, 2002). Collectively, these factors generate successful outcomes for children with disabilities as they transition into the middle school setting.

Positive Factors for Successful Participation

Several factors can lead to successful parent participation during the middle school years. First, educators must facilitate parent involvement and encourage
participation in the decisions that affect their children’s lives. This task can be
accomplished through the implementation of parent involvement programs that seek to
provide ongoing opportunities for collaboration. After a rigorous review of more than
200 journal articles and a subsequent analysis of replicable school-based parent
involvement programs, the National Council of Jewish Women (1996) found that only a
few programs supporting the involvement of families of older children have been
meticulously assessed. Hence, there is a need for program implementation at the middle
school level and into high school, since parent participation tends to decline significantly
during those years.

Conclusively, involvement programs are critical to the development and success
of children across all demographic categories. When parents share knowledge of their
children’s strengths, experiences, needs, and problems, teachers create social and
academic programs that are age- and culturally appropriate. This results in the
stimulation of the child’s interest, which in turn spurs success (Smalley & Reyes-Blanes,
2001).

Minke and Scott (1995) conducted a systematic investigation of interactions
between parents and staff to determine the difference between family-staff interactions in
traditional programs where professionals made the decisions regarding a child’s
education to programs that were family-centered and focused on collaboration among
parents and staff.

Hoping to use the results of their study to aid in the development of IFSP for
young children, the researchers used purposive sampling to select programs ranging from
state funded programs, those with a range in history of service to infants and toddlers,
and those with varied service delivery models. To be included in the study, the programs could not be affiliated with national or model programs and each should be attempting to involve families without training in family-centered models. Of the 12 programs meeting the criteria, 3 were selected. Participants included 9 families, 4 administrators, and 10 direct service providers. All participants were White and all but one was female (Minke & Scott, 1995).

Videotapes, interviews, observations, and written documents were analyzed. Grounded theory methodology was used to extract themes. Two overriding themes developed: (1) parent participation resulting from personal parent-staff relationships; (2) the reactions of staff members to parent participation. Results indicated that parent-staff bonding appeared to make the process of collaboration work. Indeed, several benefits of the parent-staff relationship were identified. Parents felt less intimidated by professionals and were more willing to participate in the schooling of their child through the family-centered approach. In addition, the development of close parent-teacher relationships helped staff members identify easier ways of problem solving and enhanced the overall acceptance of program limitations (Minke & Scott, 1995).

As Turnbull and Turnbull (1997, 2001) suggest, results similar to these are not atypical. In fact, when parents share information with school personnel, there is a clear shift away from the passive role as recipients of information to a more empowered, active, family-centered role characterized by equal status. Also, the development of support groups occurs more frequently when parents are able to express the desire to connect with others. This connection often validates the feelings guilt, shame, joy and
happiness that parents experience when they have a child with a disability (Muscott, 2002; Turnbull & Turnbull, 1997, 2001; Turnbull, et al., 2006).

In addition to parents sharing information during the collaborative process, educators must be willing to take the time to inform parents of services available to them and their child with disabilities. They must research and become knowledgeable of community agencies and the services they offer. With this knowledge, teachers can assist families with identifying appropriate services beneficial to the child, making the transition from one setting to another successful (Carter, et al., 2005; Lovitt, 1999). When considering the fact that parent input helps tailor intervention needed to meet a child’s unique needs, teachers must be willing to provide parents with the basic knowledge needed to participate in designing the IEP (Hoover-Dempsey, et al., 2005).

In the 1999 publication of his research study, *Parents of Youth with Disabilities: Their Perceptions of School Programs*, Lovitt utilized a larger study on curriculum and instruction for high school students with disabilities to extract parent perceptions of school programming as reported on surveys and to interview questions. Forty-three parents of students in public schools and three parents of students who had graduated private schools were participants in this study. Tape recorded responses were transcribed and summarized with responses to survey questions. Several themes resulted. Among expressions of disappointment with special education on a whole, parent feedback suggested that, oftentimes, parents had issues with the IEP process and that the IEP often lacked individualization. Parents reported that most special education teachers prepared the document in advance with little input from them. Most often, parents were merely required to show up and sign off on the IEP. The impact of such unprofessional behavior
led parents to feel that the procedure was a routine act to cover some law or required process. This practice, parents felt, did little to incorporate the voice of their family and more or less made them feel less valued.

Subsequently, Lovitt (1999) recommended that parents should (1) take part in identifying goals related to their child’s future; (2) become aware of their child’s progress and the methods employed to measure such progress; (3) know the trends and issues as they relate to current practices in instruction and curriculum; (4) become aware of diploma options and post-school opportunities; (5) know about agencies, what they offer, and how to access them; and (6) know about the general guidelines of IDEA and subsequent laws regarding their rights, privileges, and due process.

*Research in Parent Training and Education*

Parenting encompasses a complex set of skills that is learned and practiced over time. Often, parents rely on instincts when providing appropriate interventions for their children. These interventions can provide long-lasting improvements, but with complex situations, parents may employ ineffective strategies that produce short-term resolve. At some point in their parenting career, then, it is assumed that all parents need support and training appropriate to the issues they face. Parent education opportunities offer a variety of programs and evidence-based strategies that target the knowledge, skills, and behaviors parents need to raise children to become productive, well-meaning citizens. The holistic approaches encountered in effective training programs often takes child, family, and community considerations into account. By being involved in parent training, parents acquire a wealth of resources that mold them into change agents, a role necessary for improving the outcomes of their families.
In 1815, the first parent education programs were held in Portland, Maine. The purpose of these programs was to provide parents with adequate knowledge and skills in childrearing (Barbour & Barbour, 2001) through prescriptive, well-intentioned methods. Since then, traditional opportunities for parents to learn shift its focus to parenting skills for parents of children with behavior problems, teen parents, pre-natal care for pregnant women, or other targeted group deemed. Today, parent-directed education, as a means of improving involvement through awareness of behaviors that improve educational outcomes for children, has become more prevalent (Turnbull, et al., 1999). It is no surprise, then, that parents of students with disabilities often report a need for information (Thorpe, 1997).

To encourage parental involvement, Title IV of Goals 2000 provided for parent education, which it defined very broadly to include parent support activities, the provision of child development resources and materials, parent-child learning activities, including issues related to child rearing, guidance for private and group education and learning activities and experiences, and additional activities geared at improving parent learning in the home (Haar, 2002).

Goals 2000 supports four major types of parent-directed activities for families of students with disabilities that foster effective and successful partnership education. They include: (1) training and support through Parent-to-Parent Networks; (2) Parent Training and Information Centers such as New Mexico’s Project Adobe, which provides materials and support while parents develop interdependent relationships with each other and with the teacher; (3) the Technical Assistance Alliance for Parent Centers, which supports families understanding of federal and state laws guaranteeing specific rights and
responsibilities to parents; and (4) advocacy groups, such as the Family and Advocates Partner for Education Project, which provides information on IDEA and other laws specific to students with disabilities (Turnbull, et al., 1999).

Parents who participate in parent training often report high levels of satisfaction. No evidence exists documenting any negative effects resulting from the implementation of a well-designed parent involvement program (National Middle School Association, 2000). In fact, organized programs of school, family and community partnerships working together to increase students’ learning opportunities and experiences are needed, especially for culturally and linguistically diverse groups (Epstein & Salinas, 2004).

Newby and Fisher (1991) surmise that the theoretical and empirical foundation for parent training developed from the literature on aggression, tantrums, and other behavior problems in children; more recently on attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). Training assumes that poor parenting practices develop and maintain children’s antisocial behavior (Howard, 2003). Parent training approaches, therefore, typically focus on compliance and noncompliance as target behaviors when teaching behavior management skills to parents (Newby & Fischer, 1991).

Ground-breaking parent training programs developed by Russell Barkley, Gerald Patterson, and Rex Forehand documented three early efforts in providing parent training programs that embodied developmentally appropriate parent management techniques for elementary-aged children and adolescents experiencing behavioral challenges. These revolutionary parent training efforts, which are currently used in clinical practice, set the framework for subsequent studies and program development (Newby & Fischer, 1991) (See Table 14).
Table 14

Features of Three Revolutionary Parent Training Programs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Training Features</th>
<th>Focus of Parent Training</th>
<th>Parent Training Activities</th>
<th>Format of Training</th>
<th>Number of Training Sessions</th>
<th>Age of Children</th>
<th>Assessment Procedures</th>
<th>Outcome Data Resulting from Parent Training</th>
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<tr>
<td><em>Russell Barkley</em> (1981, 1987)</td>
<td>Helps parents cope with chronic problems by helping to minimize noncompliant behaviors among children with ADHD</td>
<td>Training involves teaching and discussions on causes of misbehavior, appropriate interactions with children, use of rewards and incentives, use of timeout, and adaptation/generalization of appropriate behaviors.</td>
<td>Parents from single family or parent groups</td>
<td>8 to 10</td>
<td>Ages 2-11</td>
<td>Interviews, Observations, and Parents and Teachers Questionnaires</td>
<td>Children improved in their display of compliant behaviors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Gerald Patterson</em> (1976, 1982) Patterson, Reid, Jones &amp; Conger (1975)</td>
<td>Helps parents reduce coercive interactions between parent and child</td>
<td>Training involves teaching and discussions on problem behaviors, the coercion theory, effective request making, effective use of timeout procedures, and generalizations of appropriate behaviors to outside settings</td>
<td>Parents from single families</td>
<td>6 to 8</td>
<td>Up to age 12</td>
<td>Parent/Family Interviews</td>
<td>Parents were more consistent in their use of effective management techniques.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Rex Forehand</em> (1981); Forehand &amp; McMahon (1981)</td>
<td>Helps parents improve their children’s display of compliant behaviors</td>
<td>Training involves teaching and discussions on compliance problems resulting from rule-governed behaviors.</td>
<td>Parent-child dyads</td>
<td>10 or more</td>
<td>Age 3-8</td>
<td>Interviews, Observations (in home and clinic), and Parents Questionnaires</td>
<td>Parent-child interactions improved/children were more likely to display rule-governed behaviors.</td>
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</table>
In further elaboration, the first parent education effort to be discussed, as reported by Barkley in 1981 and later in 1987, set out to help parents cope with the chronic problems associated with rearing children, age 2 to 11, with ADHD by helping minimize the frequency noncompliant behaviors are displayed. The three main goals guiding parent training include: (1) increase parental awareness of causes for misbehavior; (2) improve parent’s management skills and competence; and (3) improve compliant behaviors among children (Newby & Fischer, 1991).

The series of steps employed during the training involved teachings and discussions on causes for misbehavior, appropriate interactions with children, use of rewards and incentives to support compliant behaviors, appropriate use of time-out procedures, and adaptation methods for generalization of appropriate behaviors. Outcome data show that children, although more likely to retain deviant behaviors when compared to typical children, improved in their display of compliant behaviors as a result of parent training (Newby & Fischer, 1991).

Continuing the discussion on well-known training programs, Newby and Fischer (1991) described the second parent training method’s focus on reducing coercive interactions between parents and children, as employed by Patterson and his colleagues at the Oregon Social Learning Center. The steps include a detailed assessment of the perceived problem and six to eight sessions (depending on severity of the problem) where information about problem behaviors and the coercion theory are introduced, effective request making, and effective use of timeout procedures and generalizations to outside settings are made. This family therapy approach, which is based on Patterson’s coercion
theory, has consistently shown that parents were more consistent in their use of effective management techniques because of their participation in training.

In the third program, Forehand and his colleagues addresses rule-governed behaviors among 3 to 8 year olds. Specifically, the training facilitators dealt with compliance problems resulting from episodic commands as well ongoing noncompliance to rules established at home. The program set out to shape the expectations of parents and the resulting interactions they had when getting children to comply with their rules (Newby & Fischer, 1991).

The two main phases of this parent training program included: (1) an initial evaluation that involved an interview with the child and an extensive interview with the parents about parent adjustment and knowledge of the child in context with social learning principles; and (2) Ten treatment sessions, where parents learned about appropriate reactions to desired and undesired behaviors, and compliance training, where compliance commands are given and consequences applied, were conducted. During each session, parent-child interactions were observed, discussions ensued, modeling, role-playing, and explanations were used for clarifying skill concepts, and practice sessions were employed where coaching took place to help shape the expected behaviors of parents and children. Results indicate that the moment-to-moment, day-to-day interactions between parents and children, as a result of parent training, encountered minimal difficulties associated with children complying with rule-governed behaviors (Newby & Fischer, 1991).

Along with the implementation of these innovative programs, other programs have also been offered for parents of at-risk for, or exhibiting conduct problems. These
programs promote a child’s mental health in the home, school and community, while addressing problematic social and emotional behaviors. In fact, in 2000, the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) proposed its *Standards for the Provision of School Psychological Services*, which promotes the use of parent education programs among practitioners as being effective in increasing parenting success (Howard, 2003).

One such training (Anastopoulos, Shelton, Dupaul, & Guevremont, 1993) offered to parents of school-aged children suffering from ADHD was implemented and studied for its impact on parent functioning. To determine the success of the behavioral training, 34 children, between the ages of 6 and 11 years old, and their mothers were selected based on responses to an initial interview. The participants were selected from a pool of referrals to a university medical center clinic that specializes in the assessment and treatment of ADHD. Of the 25 boys and 9 girls, 24 received special education services. The majority of the students were White middle class.

Diagnostic procedures included parent interviews and child-behavior rating scales. Child ADHD outcome measures were assessed for severity and pervasiveness across home situations. Parent self-report outcome measures were taken for stress, efficacy and satisfaction, personal distress, marital satisfaction, and knowledge of ADHD. Added measures included child medication and psychotherapy status, parent psychotherapy status, and psychosocial stress experienced by mothers outside of the parent-child relationship. Additionally, interviews, observations, and school and medical record reviews were conducted and analyzed (Anastopoulos, et al., 1993).

Anastopoulos and his colleagues (1993) employed Barkley’s intervention because of its comprehensive nature and focus on ADHD. Nine required sessions were
implemented for the 34 participants, while a waitlist group served as a control group. Parents were instructed on ADHD symptoms, behavior management techniques, positive reinforcement skills, use of punishment strategies, modification techniques for implementing each strategy in public, and working cooperatively with school personnel (Newby & Fischer, 1991).

A t-test analysis was employed to examine the pre-treatment variability between the treatment and control groups. Prior to treatment, both groups were found to be statistically equivalent. Repeated-measures ANOVAs were conducted to assess the impact of the parent training intervention and additional t-tests were utilized to examine the interactions that emerged. Among the findings, the two groups were significantly different after treatment ended; primarily less ADHD symptoms among children and less stress and more self-esteem among parents were accounted for among the group receiving training. These results were sustained for two months at follow-up. Thus, the results indicate that parent training can have positive outcomes for both children and parents (Anastopoulos, et al., 1993).

Another study (Gross, et al., 2003) which offered the Incredible Years BASIC Program to an ethnically diverse sample, wanted to determine the generalizability of results to this population. For five years, the program was offered to large sample of low-income parents of 2 and 3 year old children enrolled in 1 of 11 state-licensed day care centers in Chicago. The centers, which varied in the number of children served, ethnic composition, and quality, were matched to obtain equivalent experimental conditions across these variables, as well as other characteristics such as the number of single-parent families it served and medium income of those families.
Of the 551 children in the target population, the parents of 264 were retained. Of those, 56 withdrew leaving 208 parent-child pairs. A sample of 77 teachers was also retained for the study. The effectiveness of training was evaluated across four conditions: (1) parent training only (PT), (2) teacher training using the PT program (TT), (3) separate group training for parents and teachers (PT + TT), and (4) a waiting list where no intervention was used (C). To determine if changes in parents and children would result from the parents’ participation in training researchers assessed parenting self-efficacy, coercive discipline strategies, parent interactions with their child, and the complexity and pervasiveness of stress in their lives. In addition, parent and teacher reports were used to assess child behavior problems (Gross, et al., 2003).

Over the course of 12 weeks, Gross, et al. (2003) conducted parent meetings for groups of up to twelve parents for 2-hr sessions each week. Groups of up to twelve teachers also met weekly for their 2-hour session. Parents also were engaged in homework assignments that fostered collaboration between them and their child’s teacher. Data gathered from these interactions were tested using growth curve modeling. The outcomes received via parent training (PT and PT+TT) were compared to the conditions observed for those who did not receive training (TT and C) and then compared to baseline dependent measures. Overall, the results showed that parents receiving training reported a 2.1 point increase in self-efficacy whereas the points for parents without training decreased from its baseline measure. A 1.0 point decrease was found for the PT and PT+TT groups, suggesting the intervention’s effect in reducing the use of coercive discipline strategies. Positive parent behaviors (t= -2.14, es=.30, df=190, p<.01), and limited use of commands were observed (t= 6.73, es=.44, df=189, p<.01);
more so, for the parent groups receiving training than for those who did not. Overall, these effects were more profound for the PT groups.

Other outcomes showed the effectiveness of the program. Specifically, the outcomes for children were positive, as children whose parents attended training showed significant improvements in high-risk classroom behavior problems with these results lasting from post-intervention to a one year follow-up. Overall, 90% of parents rated the program “very helpful” and 98% reported better behaved children since beginning the program. Teachers also felt that the behaviors exhibited by the children were better (55%) or much better (41%) than before the program began. Of the teachers participating, 98% felt that the program was “very helpful”. Conclusively, these findings support the hypothesis that parent training produced significant outcomes for parents, teachers, and students alike (Gross, et al., 2003).

Research supporting the efficacy of parent training programs in altering children’s non-compliant behaviors was extended to other areas including mental health and education (See Table 15). In a study (Bickman, Hefflinger, Northrup, Sonnichsen, & Schilling, 1998) evaluating a parent training program, a team of researchers from the Vanderbilt Caregiver Empowerment Project set out to determine whether or not their program was effective in influencing the caretaker’s knowledge of the mental health service system, their collaborative skills, and their self-efficacy in meeting the mental health needs of their child. Two hundred fifty caretakers, whose children were receiving services through a mental health clinic in North Carolina, were recruited. Of the participants, 82% were mothers and the majority (73%) was White. The remaining participants were African Americans (15%), Hispanics (7%) and a compilation of other
ethnic/racial backgrounds (9%). Sixty percent of the children, who were between the ages of 6 and 17 years old, were male. After completing a self-report instrument at baseline, caretakers were randomly assigned to one of two groups; an intervention group consisting of those to receive training or the comparison group of those not receiving training.

Over the course of two weeks, the parents attended an 11-hour training program that focused on empowering parents through (1) knowledge of the mental health system, as well as community resources; (2) communication, problem solving and goal setting skills; and (3) caregiver mental health self-efficacy. Self-reported questionnaires (conducted at baseline and at 3- and 12-month follow-ups) were used to evaluate these constructs. Upon evaluation and after comparison with the mental health status at baseline ($r = .58$), the parent training was found to significantly predict caregiver knowledge ($r = .43$) and efficacy ($r = .15$). At three months, though, caregiver knowledge ($r = .02$) and self-efficacy ($r = .09$) were not significantly related to caregiver involvement. Involvement, however, did predict service use ($r = .58$), which in turn predicted mental health status at 12 months ($r = .16$). In essence, the empowerment training was successful in reaching its intended goals as participants showed significant increases on measures of knowledge and self-efficacy, which were maintained over time (Bickman, et al., 1998).
Table 15

Summaries of Parent Training and Education Research

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<tr>
<td><strong>Number of Participants</strong></td>
<td>34 students (24 received ESE services) and their parents</td>
<td>208 parent-child pairs; 77 teachers</td>
<td>250 (127 received training/123 in comparison group)</td>
<td>8 students (reading at/below grade level)/4 parents participated in training</td>
<td>335 students</td>
<td>2 studies: a). 28 African-American mother-child pairs; b). 31 Latino mother-child pairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Age/Grade of Child</strong></td>
<td>6-11 years old White</td>
<td>2-3 years old</td>
<td>6-17 years old</td>
<td>1st grade</td>
<td>2nd - 8th grade</td>
<td>4-5 year olds</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Race</strong></td>
<td>57%-Black 29%-Latino 4%-White 4%-Multi-ethnic 6%-Other</td>
<td>15%-Black 73%-White 7% -Hispanic 5%-Other</td>
<td>50%-Black 38%-White 12%- Other</td>
<td>Varied</td>
<td>Varied: Middle to low-SES status; 35% receive free/reduced lunch</td>
<td>Varied: Middle to low-SES status</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Socio-Economic Status (SES)</strong></td>
<td>Middle-Class</td>
<td>90% of families met income eligibility requirements for subsidized child care with each bringing in less than 50% of the state’s median income</td>
<td>Varied: Middle to low-SES status; 35% receive free/reduced lunch</td>
<td>Varied: Middle to low-SES status</td>
<td>Low-SES status</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>City/State or Region</strong></td>
<td>Not identified</td>
<td>Chicago IL</td>
<td>Fayetteville NC</td>
<td>Urban city in southeast US</td>
<td>West Virginia</td>
<td>San Francisco CA</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Other Demographics</strong></td>
<td>Majority White, Middle Class (M = 58.8, SD = 23.1).</td>
<td>26%-Immigrants to the United States</td>
<td>82% were mothers</td>
<td>School of 760 students with racial breakdown of 45%-Black, 43%-White, 12%-Other; 40% receive free or reduced lunch</td>
<td>None reported</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Parent Training</strong></td>
<td>9-session behavioral parent training program designed for school-aged children with attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) to improve parent-child relationships</td>
<td>Using the Incredible Years BASIC training program, parents participated in a 12 two-hour sessions to improve parent-child interactions</td>
<td>11-hours over 3 days parent training designed to empower families to become involved in the mental health treatment of their children</td>
<td>Two 45-minute sessions to train parents to use the Reading Recovery and Helping Hand models to increase students’ reading scores; Use of Books-in-a-Bag program</td>
<td>4-three hour workshop sessions to increase parent involvement in their children’s reading and math</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Design</strong></td>
<td>Pre-posttest of experimental/control groups</td>
<td>Experimental/Parent Training, Teacher Training, Parent Training +Teacher Training, Control group</td>
<td>Quasi-Experimental/Comparison group</td>
<td>Experimental/Control groups</td>
<td>Quasi-experimental Correlation with statistical controls</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

97
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Researchers</th>
<th>Instrument(s)</th>
<th>Research Finding Resulting from Training</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anastopulous, et al.</td>
<td>Parent and teacher-completed child behavior rating scales, parent self-report rating scales, parent and child interviews, observational assessment, psychological testing, and school and medical record reviews.</td>
<td>Parent-child dyads experienced improved relationships; less ADHD symptoms were reported among children; less stress and more self-esteem reported among parents. Results sustained 2-months following training.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gross, et al. 2003</td>
<td>Questionnaires, parenting scale, stress index, depression scale, parent and teacher reports of child behavior problems, observational ratings</td>
<td>Self-efficacy scores increased, used less coercive discipline strategies, used more positive parent behaviors with toddlers, reduced use of commands during free play, less high-risk behaviors displayed in the classroom; overall, parents and teachers were satisfied with the program.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bickman, et al. 1998</td>
<td>Self-report questionnaires for self-efficacy, mental health services knowledge, child behavior checklist</td>
<td>Mental health services knowledge and self-efficacy was significantly higher and was maintained for 9 months post training.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faires, et al. 2000</td>
<td>Informal assessment measures: Running record of students’ word recognition accuracy level; teacher journal of student reading progress</td>
<td>A significant difference occurred in the growth in reading levels for students receiving training; journals revealed that students were more eager about reading.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shaver &amp; Walls 1998</td>
<td>Standardized reading and math assessment</td>
<td>Gain in both reading and math scores, particularly for the younger students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Starkey &amp; Klein 2000</td>
<td>Standardized math assessment</td>
<td>Students achieved higher scores in math when parents were involved in their learning.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Other research studies (Baker, Piotrkowski, Chaya, & Brooks-Gunn, 1998; Chrispeels & Rivero, 2000; Epstein & Sanders, 2000; Faires, Nichols, & Rickelman, 2000; Jordan, Snow, & Porche, 2000; Shaver & Walls, 1988; Starkey & Klein, 2000) were conducted in the field of education. Study focuses included the effect of parent training on (1) student performance in the content areas, (2) interaction between parents and school personnel, and (3) knowledge and skills use in obtaining appropriate services for students with disabilities, among other areas. Most dealt with elementary school population and a small sample targeted individuals from diverse backgrounds.

In one example, Faires and his colleagues (2000) initiated a study to determine if parent training and subsequent involvement in the teaching of reading lessons produced increases in their children’s reading abilities. A total of 8 parent-student-teacher groups from an urban southeastern U.S. city were recruited for the study. Students, who were all reading below grade level at baseline, were divided into two equivalent groups, comprised of 4 in each.

The intervention required parents to receive initial training from teachers in selected components of the Reading Recovery model, which they were required to implement in their home for 3 days a week over a 5 week period. At school, the students in the experimental and control groups were equally involved in group and independent work with the teachers. Activities were designed to reinforce a strategy or skill. At home, only the experimental group engaged in the supplemental activities as delivered via the Books in Bag program (Faires, Nichols, & Rickelman, 2000).

Analysis using an independent t-test of pre-and post-reading test results for both groups, revealed no statistically significant difference in pre-test for both groups. A
dependent t-test, however, indicated that, although there was not difference for the control group \((t= -2.83, es= 1.17, df=3, p>.05)\), there was significant differences for the students whose parents received training \((t= -4.32, es=2.76, df=3, p \leq .05)\), signifying growth in reading level for these students. The average gain from pre-test to post-test for students whose parents received training was 4.5 points, compared to 2.0 points for students in the control group (Faires, Nichols, & Rickelman, 2000).

In addition to parent training, the researchers conducted an analysis of teacher journals, which were implemented to record the teacher’s perceptions of the process. Included in journals reflections were interesting snapshots of participants’ behaviors. Students were eager to check out and read books and were enthusiastic when using decoding strategies in class; parents displayed positive behaviors regarding student progress more frequently; and teachers were excited about working with parents and enjoyed the program. Overall, the results suggest that parents were more active, resourceful, committed and enthusiastic about their involvement when given the skills and opportunities to help their children perform academically (Faires, Nichols, & Rickelman, 2000).

Similarly, in 1998, Shaver and Walls reported on their study regarding the effects of parent involvement on student achievement in math and reading. Students \((n= 335)\) in second to eighth grade, attending class in 1 of 9 schools targeted from a school district in West Virginia, were part of the study. Achievement data (performance on the Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills) and family histories were examined for each of these Title I students. In addition, a series of workshops were initiated by the school district for parents of these low performing students.
Four workshops, each lasting three hours, were scheduled each year by the Title I teachers serving the students targeted. During the meetings, various types of involvement were promoted, parents received updates on their child’s progress, topical issues were discussed, and training in utilizing math and reading learning packets were conducted. Since children attended these sessions, opportunities for practice were often on the program’s agenda (Shaver & Walls, 1998).

Findings of the study included: (1) gains in both reading and math for students whose parents participated in training and were subsequently involved in their child’s learning; (2) greater gains for younger students (grades 2-4) in both subject areas than older students (grades 5-8); (3) parents of elementary aged students were more likely to be involved than parents of middle school students; (4) low-income students made greater gains in math and reading if their parents were involved, although achievement levels were still lower than students from higher-income families; and (5) income level did not affect the involvement of family members (Shaver & Walls, 1998).

In particular, students whose parents participated in training and were highly involved in their learning, had higher “total math”, “math application”, “total reading”, and “reading comprehension scores”; 18.3, 12.9, 13.3, and 10.9 respectively, than children whose parents had low levels of participation; 10.6, 9.3, 4.4, and 4.7, respectively. These findings suggest that well-designed parent-teacher experiences, such as the parent training provided in this study, can increase the likelihood that students from disadvantaged backgrounds, as well as those experiencing academic problems, will receive the support they need in order to be successful (Shaver & Walls, 1998).
Still, in another study (Starkey & Klein, 2000) researchers conducted two experimental studies of a four month program for families to develop math skills in pre-kindergarten children between four and five years old. Two sites in San Francisco, one serving African American families and the other Latino families, provided training for mothers in using math activity kits in support of their children’s math development.

In the first intervention, 28 African American mother-child pairs were randomly assigned to an intervention or control group. An equal number of boys and girls were in each group. Pre-assessment of each family group took place in the fall and post-assessment in the spring. Over the course of four months, the mother-child pairs of the intervention groups were involved in a set of eight bi-weekly math classes and utilized, on average 11 math kits. Role-play activities were conducted by African American facilitators to teach the families the correct interactions expected of them. After answering questions and providing feedback, the facilitators opened the math library to participants, allowing them access to the math kits they would use at home (Starkey & Klein, 2000).

Assessment results on numbering skills, numerical reasoning, spatial reference, and emergent literacy indicate that students, who took part in the intervention, made significant gains in math knowledge, though not literacy. For example, math composite score and number composite scores for the intervention group changed from .60 to .75 and .51 and .70, respectively, and was significantly higher than the scores of the comparison group, whose scores changed slightly from .61 to .68 and .55 to .58, respectively (Starkey & Klein, 2000).
For the second intervention involving 31 Latino families, the training was facilitated by Latino facilitators and assessment was conducted in Spanish by a bilingual experimenter. Control and experimental groups were established and family pairs randomly assigned. Similar to the first intervention, parent-child pairs attended eight family math classes over the course of four months (Starkey & Klein, 2000).

Assessments for this group covered numbering skills, numerical reasoning, geometric reasoning and emergent literacy. Results show that both the intervention and control groups experienced higher scores at the end of the year. Still, the intervention group developed more extensive math knowledge than the control group. Specifically, emergent literacy, math composite and number composite scores for the intervention group increased from .16 to .31, .38 to .65, and .33 to .66, respectively. For the control group, scores went from .16 to .30, .43 to .57, and .34 to .55 for the same respective assessment categories (Starkey & Klein, 2000).

Overall, the study showed that parent involvement in math training was effective in increasing children’s math knowledge as more children performed in the upper-end range of the assessment. In fact, Starkey & Klein (2000) found that, in terms of math knowledge and skills, “low income families were willing and able to support this important area of their children’s development once they were provided with the training to do so” (p.676).

Nationally Recognized Parent Training Resources

Across the United States, there are several nationally recognized parent training programs and support organizations that offer an abundance of resources and services to parents, teachers, and researchers alike. These programs and organization are founded on
practices that have been confirmed by research to produce consistent results for families. Several of these parent resources, training objectives and available services are briefly described here along with research to support the validity and reliability of each.

**Parent Effectiveness Training (PET)**

*Parent Effectiveness Training* encompasses a set of practical childrearing suggestions that Thomas Gordon developed in his quest to provide parents with techniques and materials needed to demonstrate effective parenting skills. PET includes topics such as active listening, parent-child conflicts, conflict resolution, and behavior change methods, among other areas of interest. Many parent education programs incorporate the principles of Gordon’s Parent Effectiveness Training (Berger, 2004)

Since its implementation in the early 1970s, several evaluation studies of PET have been conducted. Most show that long-term gains in conflict resolution skills and application resulted. For example, in Davidson and Wood’s (2004) meta-analysis of their own series of research on skills training using PET, it was found that the average person participating in PET fared better on assessment measures of three essential PET skills (active listening, appropriate assertiveness, and conflict resolution) than 63% of those who did not participate in the training.

For example, in one research study on PET, Wood and Davidson trained 9 parents in a PET group and while 10 parents served in the control group. Prior to commencing PET, a demographic match across groups was conducted to equate them. Immediately following engagement in PET and again at a 3-month follow-up, a posttest was administered. Significant differences were observed among the groups as the parents who participated in PET performed better on all three essential PET skills. Similarly, in
1994, Davidson and Woods administered a re-test to 8 of the 9 PET parents and 9 of the 10 control parents. After this extended period, there were still significant differences between the groups on all three measures. About half of the gains achieved after the initial training, was evidenced 7 years later, suggesting that parents were motivated to produce a change in skills and behavior beyond the training.

**Systematic Training for Effective Parenting (STEP)**

The *Systematic Training for Effective Parenting* program, developed by Don Dinkmeyer and Gary McKay, includes similar skills as PET. Training materials such as cassettes and manuals help guide parents to positive relationships with their children. STEP includes the concepts of natural and logical consequences where parents become involved by frequently checking the goals of their children’s misbehavior (Berger, 2004).

In a study on STEP, 62 subjects were recruited and participated. These parents were evenly divided among the experimental group of those participating in training and the control group comprised of non-participants. Assessment measures included ratings on the program’s ability to determine the program’s effectiveness on parent-child relationships, which included communication, individual rights and respect, acceptance of one another and parental openness (Noller & Taylor, 1989).

Parents were required to complete measures at the beginning and end of training as well as at an 8-week follow-up. Results indicate that the parent training program was highly effective in building parental skills since it had a mean rating of 7.84 (SD=1.11) on a 9 point scale among participants. Similarly, improvements in parent-child relationships resulted from involvement in the training, as the mean for the sample on this measure was 3.83 on a 5-point scale. These results suggest that this training program is
capable of providing an important resource for parents who wish to improve their parenting skills (Noller & Taylor, 1989).

Friends of Special Education

One training program specific to the special education population is the *Friends of Special Education* training module. For years, this project involved parents in their child’s education and in community leadership positions by helping them develop their skills and knowledge in accessing services for their children and to prepare them to support other parents with their issues of access. Mainly, the program goals included increasing the number of effective interactions that parents have with school personnel, help them understand the teaming process, and increase the number of positive involvement in their child’s school program (Wolf & Stephens, 1990).

In one research project spanning 5 years, parent training involving 200 Chicago parents was based on the premise that parents who understood the system of special education and could communicate effectively with school personnel, would be able to gain vital information and services for their children. Parent participants attended 1 training each month for 6 months. Upon completion, parents completed session evaluations where they rated their level of satisfaction regarding affective areas such as the relevancy of content, usefulness of materials, organization, and with their overall satisfaction with the workshop. Results revealed that parents were highly satisfied with the training, with mean ratings of 4.50 on a 5.0 scale (Wolf & Stephens, 1990).

Parents were also required to complete a questionnaire where they reported their perceptions about their own ability to assist their children. Wolf and Stephens (1990) reported that “Parents were almost unanimously positive about their feeling toward their
child’s school experience and about their own feelings of confidence in interacting with school personnel” (p. 349). In informal discussions regarding questionnaire responses, some parents reported being able to use communication skills learned during training to initiate services for their child. Parents also suggested that they were better prepared to assist other parents improve their child’s educational program. In addition, parents reported an increase in engagement activities, including decision-making opportunities concerning educational programming for students with disabilities (Wolf & Stephens, 1990).

On a whole, parent training through the Friends of Special Education Program, since 1986, has provided the forum where parents are able to exchange ideas and information while gaining and refining the skills needed to collaborate effectively with special education school personnel. Research provides documented support regarding the long-term gains made by parents, and consequently students, when parents engage in collaborative training through the Friends program (Wolf & Stephens, 1990).

The Parent Institute for Quality Education (PIQE)

The Parent Institute for Quality Education program, initiated in 1987, provides Latino and other immigrant parents, information and opportunities to learn about the American educational system, how to interact with school personnel, and how to help their children at home. It provides a forum for parents to (a) consider their own cultural beliefs in reference to those of the schools, (b) examine role constructs and its influence on their participation in school, and (c) examine their involvement practices while exploring alternative ideas regarding their role in their child’s education (Chrispeels & Rivero, 2000).
In their study, Chrispeels and Rivero (2000) examined the impact of the PIQE program on the 198 Latino immigrant parents from 95 families who served as participants in six content sessions. To determine the level of impact the program had on the participants, the researchers conducted pre- and post assessments on parents’ perceptions of their role and place in their children’s education. The researchers also conducted observations, videotape evaluations of the training session, in-depth interviews, and a review of artifacts.

The data revealed that participation in the PIQE program provided information that resulted in a shift in parenting styles. Most consistently, parents reported an increase in their awareness and ability to communicate with school personnel once they had an opportunity to explore their own attitudes and practices. This awareness led to more positive outcomes for students, including an increase in self-esteem among children. (Chrispeels & Rivero, 2000).

The findings of this study led the researchers to conclude that a parent’s cultural traditions and prior experiences can limit the types and levels of involvement. Parent training programs such as PIQE were helpful in building the bridge between diverse parent populations and teachers. Parent role constructions were enhanced when low-income and immigrant parents were given information about the education system, taught how to interact with school and teachers, and given directions and resources on how to help their children at home (Chrispeels & Rivero, 2000).

**Home Instruction Program for Preschool Youngsters (HIPPY)**

*Home Instruction Program for Preschool Youngsters* is an educational enrichment program provided fee of cost to poor and immigrant families. Mothers of
four- and five-year olds receive a series of stories and activity packets that are delivered through home visits. Each activity is geared to help the child develop language skills, sensory and perceptual skills, and problem solving skills. When delivered, each activity is modeled through role-play. Mothers are then encouraged to read to children and engage them in supplementary activities that reinforce skills (Baker, Piotrkowski, & Brooks-Gunn, 1998).

A long-term experimental study was conducted to examine the educational outcomes that resulted from being engaged in the first cohort of the HIPPY program. One hundred-eighty two children participated in this study. Participants were evenly and randomly distributed among the HIPPY training group and the control group. Over the course of two years, children and their families participated in a preschool program and were later enrolled in kindergarten. Baseline data were conducted during home visits. Children’s cognitive skills were later assessed. Assessment of performance in kindergarten and then first grade was done through careful evaluations of test scores, school records, and teacher ratings of classroom adaptations (Baker, Piotrkowski, & Brooks-Gunn, 1998).

When compared to the control group of children, research findings for the HIPPY group revealed significantly higher scores on the inventory of cognitive skills and on teacher ratings. In a one-year follow-up, high scores were maintained by the experimental group. Essentially, the HIPPY program guided parents in the acquisition of skills essential to school success (Baker, Piotrkowski, & Brooks-Gunn, 1998).
Early Access to Success in Education (EASE)

Project *Early Access to Success in Education*, is a series of education sessions designed to assist parents in cultivating their young children’s literacy skills. First developed in Minnesota, Project EASE targets vocabulary, story comprehension, and sequencing in story telling. It offers parent-child activities at school and book-centered activities at home. Parent training, which is offered at the school, is executed in five units, each with a different theme and lasting approximately one month. (Jordan, Snow, & Porche, 2000).

For a yearlong literacy project, Jordan, Snow and Porche (2000), recruited 248 low-income kindergarten students and their families to take part. Participants were divided into two groups where 177 would partake in training and the remaining 71 would comprise the control group. Pretest and Posttest measures were administered to both groups. The researchers then analyzed the children’s performance on a battery of language and literacy tests. Higher achievement scores were reported among Project EASE participants.

After controlling for variations in literacy skills, the researchers examined the impact of home literacy support on student gains. With 80% of all Project EASE families having completed all home activities and 85% having participated in varied school activities, the children of these families made significantly greater gains in three language domains: vocabulary, story comprehension, and sequencing in storytelling.

Through Project EASE, families engaged in training to enhance their knowledge and skills. As a result, they became more involved in both at-home and at-school
activities. Student gains were reported as a result of the parent’s hands-on, interactive engagement in their children’s learning.

Parent Advocacy Coalition for Educational Rights (PACER) Center

The PACER Center, through the Alliance and Parent Training and Information Centers (PTIs) and Community Parent Resource Centers (CPRCs), provides training and information to parents of infants, toddlers, children, and youth with disabilities. The PACER Center also provides resources to professionals who work with children with disabilities. Parent-to-Parent support helps parents understand the special education system and the IEP process and increases positive educational outcomes for students with disabilities by encouraging parents and schools to develop collaborative partnerships (PACER, 2005).

Current research (Birch & Ferrin, 2002) on factors for low parental involvement suggests that parental attitudes, characteristics, background, and resources, are causes for low involvement in their children’s education. Oftentimes, as Birch and Ferrin suggest, parents do not know the course of action necessary in helping their children become successful in their academic efforts. The capacity for nationally recognized training programs and support organizations to provide adequate resources and experiences to foster learning and the acquisition of skills in a culturally responsive manner is important, particularly for families of students with disabilities. Hence, a program for families should focus on strengthening parental involvement in home, school, and community activities. These training programs should further incorporate components that help foster collaborative relationships with schools where parents can utilize their knowledge.
and skills when making long-term, consequential decisions about their children’s education.

Conclusion

When considering parent participation, there are certain elements that need to be well thought-out. First, in order to build effective parent-professional partnerships, one must include the critical components of honesty, trust, and commitment so that parents of children with disabilities will feel safe when they contribute to the educational process (Hampton & Mumford, 1988; Harrison & Arnold, 1995; Rao, 2000; Turnbull & Turnbull, 1997; 2001; Turnbull, et al., 2006). Teachers should also be considerate of family needs when scheduling meetings. When they do meet, educators should inform parents of advocacy services and parental rights as well as process, services, and programs in special education. In designing activities to promote parent involvement, educators need to include families of diverse backgrounds and be sensitive to race, culture, gender, and disability (Cheney & Osher, 1997; Chrispeels & Gonzalez, 2004; Chrispeels & Rivero, 2001; Peck, 2000; Peña, 2000).

As previously identified, studies have shown that parent education activities that focus on collaboration have the propensity to enrich student lives as parents are better informed about community resources that are available to students. In return, students perform better in school. However, for many CLD families, access to extra resources may be easier said than done and so the importance of including interagency collaboration as a necessary component of collaborative training is needed (Epstein & Salinas, 2004).

Since parent participation positively impacts a child’s physical, emotional, and social development, teachers should facilitate participation that is family centered,
community-based, comprehensive, and flexible. Focus should be on the families’ strengths rather than perceived deficits (Harry, 2002; Kalyanpur, et al., 2000; Montemayor & Romeo, 2000; Warren, 2002). Additionally, the atmosphere should be free of blaming. When parents participate, not only are the children more successful, but parent knowledge and skills in supporting a child’s development also improve and educators gain essential skills needed to develop a more solid base for planning and implementing educational programs (Nunn & McMahan, 2000).
CHAPTER THREE

METHODS AND PROCEDURES

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to determine if parent participation in collaborative training impacts the attitudes and perceptions of suburban middle school teachers for urban students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds (CLD) who receive special education services. The research also evaluated parent perception of the collaborative experience to determine the level of success the training had in informing parents and motivating them to participate in future collaboration. Student perceptions of both the collaborative process and the teacher’s ability to provide services that embrace cultural differences and reflect high expectations was also assessed. This chapter begins with the statement of research questions that guides the study. The next section describes the context and access of the selected school site. A description of the participants in the study is then presented, followed by a discussion of the research procedures, instrumentation, and design. Next, data collection procedures are discussed. Finally, data analysis procedures are presented.

Statement of Research Questions and Hypothesis

To better understand the direct impact that parent collaboration has on the views and attitudes of culturally and linguistically diverse students with disabilities, their parents and their teachers, the researcher pursued the following questions:

Question 1: Is there a difference in teacher ratings regarding their perceptions and expectations of CLD students with disabilities transitioning from an urban
elementary school to a suburban middle school whose parents participate in Parent Collaborative Training (PCT) than for similar students whose parents do not participate?

Question 2: How do CLD parents of children with disabilities rate the content and usefulness of each component as they proceed through five sessions of collaborative training?

Question 3: After engaging in PCT, how do CLD parents from urban settings rate their abilities to collaborate with teachers from a suburban middle school?

Question 4: What impact will the experience of parent collaboration have on student ratings of their parents and teachers?

Null Hypothesis 1: The perceptions and expectations of culturally and linguistically diverse, urban students receiving special education services as held by suburban middle school teachers will not be significantly different for students whose parents participated in collaborative training than for those whose parents did not participate.

Null hypothesis 2: Parents will display a lack of response to the collaborative experience

Null hypothesis 3: Parents who attend training via PCT will view their abilities to collaborate the same as they did before engaging in training.

Null hypothesis 4: Collaborative training will not have an impact on the way children rate their parents and teachers.

The researcher conducted this study intending for it to show a significant difference in teacher perceptions and expectations of students who are culturally and linguistically diverse in urban settings and served in special education whose parents
participated in collaborative training than for this same subset of students whose parents did not participate. In addition, it was anticipated that parents who attended PCT would view the collaborative experience positively, see an increase in their abilities to collaborate effectively with teachers, and be inclined to engage more frequently in collaboration with the teachers of their children. As a result of this study and the inclusion of the collaborative training piece, it was hypothesized that children, whose parents collaborate with teachers, will have favorable perceptions of their parents as collaborators and rate the level of expectations and perceptions of the teachers highly.

Context and Access

Detailed information of the schools targeted in this study is provided in Table 16. The middle school, from which participants of this study were targeted, is situated in an upper middle class suburban community in the southwest region of a largely metropolitan area in central Florida. The school has been serving a diverse group of sixth to eighth grade students for the past fifteen years. Contrastingly, the elementary school, from which targeted students transition, was built in 1964. The school is located in a relatively isolated urban region in southwest central Florida, approximately 4 miles from the middle school. The elementary school receives Title I funding based on the high number of enrolled students living at or below the poverty level. A significant proportion of the residents in this urban setting are renters, thereby affecting the mobility rate of the pre-kindergarten through fifth grade students who attend the school. Due to the distance between residential settings, students from the urban community are bussed into the middle school.
Table 16
Context of Elementary and Middle Schools

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Demographic Characteristics</th>
<th>Urban Elementary School</th>
<th>Suburban Middle School</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Southwest region of Metropolitan city</td>
<td>Southwest region of Metropolitan city</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grades</td>
<td>Kindergarten through 5th</td>
<td>6th through 8th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total number of Teachers</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent White</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent Black</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent Hispanic</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent Asian/Pacific Islander/Other</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total number of Students</td>
<td>441</td>
<td>1293</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent White</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent Black</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent Hispanic</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent Asian/Pacific Islander</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Sixty-eight percent of the 64 teachers at the middle school are White females, whereas 73% of the 26 elementary school teachers are White females. Both schools serve diverse groups of students. Of the 1293 students enrolled in the middle school, approximately 51% are White, 19% are Black, 17% Hispanic, 13% Asian/Pacific Islander. In contrast, the student population at the elementary school is 7% White, 74% Black, 16% Hispanic and 3% Asian/Pacific Islander. The total number of elementary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Demographic Characteristics</th>
<th>Urban Elementary School</th>
<th>Suburban Middle School</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total number of ESE teachers</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number White</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number Black</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number Hispanic</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number Asian/Pacific Islander</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total # of students with disabilities (w/ percent of total student population)</td>
<td>44 (10)</td>
<td>161 (12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent White</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent Black</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent Hispanic</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent Asian/Pacific Islander</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Orange County Public School, School Demographics
school students is 441. On average, the elementary school transitions 60 CLD (98% of fifth grade) students to the middle school each year.

The middle school is considered a center school as it serves a large population of students with special needs. Of the 161 students with disabilities (representing 12% of the total student population), 52% are White, 25%, are Black, 17% are Hispanic, and 6% are Asian/Pacific Islander. The disabilities range from moderate to severe and include mental disabilities, autistic, speech/language, and a large population of students with specific learning disabilities. Similarly, at the elementary school, forty-four students with disabilities represent 10% of the total population. Here, the major categories of disabilities include specific learning disabilities and speech/language, while the remaining percent, which is relatively small in comparison, are students with mental disabilities. However, racial categories have a contrastingly different distribution at the elementary school, where 11% are white, 73% are Black, 14% are Hispanic, and 2% are Asian/Pacific Islander. For all intents and purposes of this study, students identified as gifted, who typically receive services via Exceptional Student Education (ESE) services, are not included in the statistical representation of the student population in ESE nor are they included in any characterization of students in ESE or students with disabilities.

Providing service to all students with disabilities are 9 full-time teachers of ESE (not to include teachers of students identified as gifted), with one being a full time speech/language therapist. Itinerate staff includes an occupational therapist, a physical therapist, a deaf/hard of hearing specialist and a vision specialist. All of these professionals are White with 12 of the 14 (86%) being female. Classes include self-
contained, pull-out, and full inclusion. Instructional activities are conducted between 9:30 a.m. and 3:50 p.m., Monday through Friday.

In contrast, the elementary school serves 10% of its population as students with special needs. The school has 2 self-contained varying exceptionalities classrooms and a speech unit. The remaining population of students in ESE, of which 45% are students with specific learning disabilities, are served via pull-out or full inclusion classes. On staff are 26 teachers, among them, 3 providing services exclusively to students with disabilities and 1 part-time speech/language therapist. Of the three teachers teaching in ESE classes, all are female, with one being White, another Hispanic, and the third being of mixed race. Instructional activities are conducted between 8:45 a.m. and 3:00 p.m., Monday through Friday.

The middle school has an active Parent-Teacher-Student Association (PTSA) and School Advisory Committee (SAC). Within the PTSA, 77 are teachers and staff of the 693 members. The PTSA board consists of 37 members, none of which represents the urban community being studied. The main function of the PTSA is to support the school mission by sponsoring fundraiser activities, Teacher Appreciation Week, Teach-In, Breakfast for Champions (a celebration of honor roll students), and coordinating volunteers who work with teachers in classrooms throughout the school, among other things. The 18-member SAC committee is comprised of 1 administrator, 4 teachers/staff, 12 parents, and one community representatives. The board consists of 2 members, with none residing in the urban community being studied. The primary purpose of the SAC committee is to serve as an advisory panel on matters of school efficiency in meeting annual goals. The elementary school has an active Parent-Teacher Association (PTA)
comprised of 24 members, four of which serve on the executive board. The PTA’s main function is to support the school’s vision through several coordinated activities. Statistically, the PTA’s racial composition is reflective of the student population. The SAC committee at the elementary school is comprised of one administrator, five teachers/staff, nineteen parents, and seven representatives of the community.

According to school personnel, both schools received recognitions, such as the “Red Carpet” and “Five Star School” awards, for providing a “family-friendly” environment reflective of the number and types of parental involvement that occur on the campuses. While staff members at the elementary school report moderate to high levels of parent participation among all parents including those whose children receive special education services, ESE teachers and administrators at the middle school report that parents, of students with disabilities, participated on a less frequent basis. Results of a recent Parent Involvement Teacher Questionnaire help to portray the perceptions that teachers have regarding the level and type of participation among parents of students with disabilities.

On the questionnaire, teachers were asked to rate the level of frequency of parent participation across several categories. Eight (89%) of the middle school ESE teachers responded. With “IEP meetings” as one of the categories, 50% of the teachers said that their parents participated very often, 25% informed of occasional participation, while the remaining 25% reported that parents seldom participated in IEP meetings.

The next category of parent participation that teachers reported on was “Parent/School Organization” such as membership in PTA or SAC. In this case, the majority (50%) of ESE teachers reported that parents seldom participated in parent/school
groups, while only 25% reported that parents *occasionally participated* in these associations. Of the remaining 25% ESE teachers informing on parent participation in “Parent/School Organizations”, half (12.5%) reported that their parents participated *very often*, while the remaining 12.5% of teachers stated that their parents participated *not at all*.

Another of the parent participation categories, “Class/School Volunteer” was reflected upon as well. A vast majority (62.5%) of the teachers reported that parents *seldom* participate as volunteers at school or in the classroom. In fact, no teachers reported that parents participated *very often*, while 25% reported no participation at all in this category. The remaining 12.5% of teachers indicated that there was *occasional* participation among parents.

Yet, another category of parent participation in which teachers were asked to report on was “Homework Assistance”. Twelve and a half percent of the teachers claimed that parents participated *very often* with homework; 50% reported that participation occurred *occasionally*; 12.5% reporting *seldom*; and the remaining 25% indicated *not at all*.

On another question, the ESE teachers suggest that only 23% of parents of middle school students with disabilities participated on a regular basis across all categories. Additionally, 88% of the ESE teachers responding to the question perceived parents as *very* receptive or *moderately* receptive to phone calls, 50% and 38% respectively. Meanwhile, only 63% of the ESE teachers sampled found parents to be *very* receptive or *moderately* receptive to written communication home (i.e. daily agenda, parent letters, etc.). These findings are reflective in much of the current literature regarding the decline
of parent volunteers in the middle school years. Collectively, these factors heightened the level of concern held by the school staff and administrators while strengthening the need for the research project proposed.

In addition to the data collected via the teacher questionnaire, the middle school conducted a School Effectiveness Survey during the 2004-2005 school year with 205 parents, 60 teachers and 1016 students responding to an array of questions, many dealing specifically with family involvement. Results of the survey indicated “frequent communication occurring between parents, faculty, and administration” being viewed as a problem for 28% of parents, 28% of students, and 33% of teachers/staff. When students were asked to disclose whether or not their parents were knowledgeable of what was going on in the school, 71% responded yes. Despite this high percentage of reported awareness, 51% conceded that their parents were “not actively involved in school events”. On a similar question, 26% of teachers reported that parents were “not involved in or supportive of school practices”.

The survey also asked questions more specific to culture. When asked if “parents from all cultures are encouraged to participate in school activities, parent organizations, and advisory committees”, 93% of the middle school parents responded yes. Incidentally, while 98% of the teachers reported that they “try to learn the strengths and values of different cultures”, 23% of the parents disagreed with the notion that “decisions about instruction used information from parents and communities”. In addition, only 66% of the students responded, “students from different cultures worked well together at their school”. Evidently, a great number (34%) of students felt otherwise. Therefore, it is important that an understanding of the factors contributing to this perception be
garnered as a student’s adjustment within the school environment may, in fact, be influenced by their ability to work with a diverse group of peers.

This middle school from which the participants in this study came was identified and selected using the following criteria: 1) had an existing ESE program; 2) reported relatively low parental involvement in ESE services, especially among CLD families; 3) located in a suburban setting; 4) provided services CLD students transitioning from an urban elementary; 5) indicated a high level of interest and commitment to the research project. In addition, the site was chosen because of the familiarity of the school, administrators, and personnel to the researcher, who was employed there two years prior to this study.

The elementary school chosen as the feeder school, or the school from which the sample of participants will transition from, was selected based on the following criteria: (1) had an existing ESE program; (2) located in an urban setting; and (3) provided service to CLD students with disabilities transferring into a suburban middle school.

Participants

The participants for this study consisted of teachers and parents of culturally diverse groups of middle grade students with special needs who are transitioning from an urban elementary school into the suburban middle school. The students entered middle school from a community identified with residents who are predominantly culturally and linguistically diverse, and for a large majority, their socio-economic status places them at or below the poverty line. At the beginning of the 2004-2005 school year, 82% of the students attending the elementary school qualified to receive free or reduced lunch, thus warranting the school’s Title I status. By contrast, 31% of the middle school students
receive free or reduced lunch. Students targeted for this study are identified as having an Individual Education Plan (IEP) necessitating special education services. A list of these students, including demographic information, was also developed by the placement specialist at the middle school (See Table 17). From the student list, a list of potential parent participants was generated by school officials (See Table 18). At least five teachers who serve middle grade CLD students with special needs were identified for this study. However, only four were recruited to participate (See Table 19).

Once the parent-student dyads were identified and verified by comparing the lists created by the placement specialist with each teacher’s class roster, parents were sent letters requesting them to volunteer in a parent training group (See Appendix F). Within the letter of request, consent to participate in the study was included.

Initially, it was intended that this study select a group of up to 24 parents responding to the invitation to participate in this study, with half of half of them participating in the training and the other half serving as control. However, despite multiple efforts at securing recruits and due to circumstances beyond the researcher’s control, the recruitment efforts were successful in netting a limited sample of seven consenting participants for the actual study. As Moore (1983) suggests, small sample sizes are not unique in settings where only a static number of available participants are accessible.

To establish the control group, a list of students, whose parents elected not to participate, was generated along with the names of their primary teachers. These students were part of the original parent-student dyad presented by the placement specialist, and therefore were similar in demographics as the experimental group. Each teacher was
asked to randomly select one to two students from the list, depending on the number of consenting participants from their class. These students, who were being served in the same class setting because of similar disability characteristics with those in the intervention group, were randomly selected by the teacher to protect their identity. Furthermore, this random selection of students compensated for the initial lack of randomization with school selection while matching by demographics served as a pseudo-pretest. Nevertheless, two parent-child groups were established for comparison. The groups included: (a) those that received training and collaborated, and (b) those that did not train and did not collaborate.

In addition, four of the initial five teacher participants were recruited due to the limited number of participants being served in these teachers’ classrooms. Still, if any caregiver from the initial list of participants request to participate after the training has begun, the researcher will have the ethical responsibility and intention of providing subsequent training opportunities for them at the conclusion of this study.
Table 17

Student Participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student ID</th>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Race</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Primary Disability</th>
<th>Native/Home Language</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>Black</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>Black</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>K</td>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>Black</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>K</td>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>Black</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>K</td>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>Black</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>K</td>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Spanish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Black</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>V</td>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Intervention Group**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student ID</th>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Race</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Primary Disability</th>
<th>Native/Home Language</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>Black</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>Black</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>K</td>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>Black</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>K</td>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>Black</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>K</td>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>K</td>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Spanish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>V</td>
<td>Spanish</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Control Group**

**Disability Codes:** A=Educable Mentally Handicapped; K=Specific Learning Disabled;

N=Profound Mentally Handicapped; V= Other Health Impaired;
Table 18

Parent Participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parent ID</th>
<th>Age Range</th>
<th>Race/ Gender</th>
<th>Annual Income Range</th>
<th>Marital Status</th>
<th>Level of Education</th>
<th>Relationship to child</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>55 or older</td>
<td>Black F</td>
<td>$15,000 or less</td>
<td>Single</td>
<td>High School Grad</td>
<td>Grandmother</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>25-34</td>
<td>Black F</td>
<td>$15,001-$35,000</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>Some High School or less</td>
<td>Mother</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>45-54</td>
<td>Black F</td>
<td>$15,001-$35,000</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>High School Grad</td>
<td>Mother</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>35-44</td>
<td>Black F</td>
<td>$15,001-$35,000</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>High School Grad</td>
<td>Mother</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>25-34</td>
<td>Black F</td>
<td>$15,000 or less</td>
<td>Single</td>
<td>Some High School or less</td>
<td>Mother</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>25-34</td>
<td>Hispanic F</td>
<td>$15,001-$35,000</td>
<td>Single</td>
<td>Some High School or less</td>
<td>Mother</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>45-54</td>
<td>Black M</td>
<td>$35,001-$55,000</td>
<td>Single</td>
<td>Some High School or less</td>
<td>Father</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 19

Teacher Participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher ID</th>
<th>Race/ Ethnicity</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th># years teaching</th>
<th># years teaching ESE</th>
<th>Primary classification of students taught</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>VE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>VE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>TMH/EMH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>SLD</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Research Procedures

This research project followed a four-phase plan. Phase I has two components. First, the researcher met with the principal and placement specialist to discuss the intentions of the proposed study. During the meeting, the researcher outlined the obligations of the researcher and the request she had of the school personnel in assisting with the implementation of this study. The researcher acquired the permission of the school principal, the school board, and the Institutional Review Boards to conduct this research. The development of scripts for each training session and the surveys also began during this initial phase. Funding was also secured during Phase I.

Secondly, the time allotted during Phase I was used to recruit participants based on demographic information provided by school staff. Likewise, parents were recruited to participate in a pilot study conducted to ensure that the proposed sessions topics and activities were relevant and useful. Parents were recruited from a list of seven 8th grade parents who matched demographically, with the parents who would participate in the actual study. These parents lived in the targeted community and had children who transitioned from the urban elementary to the suburban middle school and were receiving special education services at the school. Three parents were recruited to participate in the pilot study. In addition to a needs assessment, these parents completed three instruments, the Parent Involvement and Collaborative Experiences Questionnaire (PCT-PICEQ), the Session Evaluation (PCT-SE), and the Parent Summative Questionnaire (PCT-PSumQ) to determine relevance of items and to aid in the formulation of training sessions. When applicable, the researcher used the information gathered from parent responses on the questionnaire and needs assessment to modify the script to reflect topical issues they
wanted to address. In sum, the feedback given by parents in the pilot group helped to shape the instruments and activities. For example, one activity dealing with service delivery was revised in order to facilitate ease in comprehending its purpose. Two items were removed from the initial questionnaire because one appeared to replicate a previously asked question and the other was deemed irrelevant to the group of parents being surveyed. The final parent questionnaire was revised because several items contained language that potentially posed some difficulty in comprehension. The small sample size (n=3) of the pilot may limit generalizability to other populations of similar demographic characteristics. Hence, national experts were recruited to check the validity of the surveys to assure that the tests would measure what they intended to measure (See Table 20).
Table 20

Phase I Events

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action/Task</th>
<th>Objective</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Part 1</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Meet with Principal or</td>
<td>• Propose study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>designee</td>
<td>• Discus intent of study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Identify benefits of study to school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Outline obligations of school personnel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Obtain approval</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Meet with Placement Specialist</td>
<td>• Discus intent of study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Outline obligations of school personnel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Submit study proposal to</td>
<td>• Obtain school board approval for conducting study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>school board</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. Submit IRB proposal</td>
<td>• Obtain IRB approval to begin study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E. Develop scripts for training</td>
<td>• To streamline the implementation of the training with consistent session modules useable across study groups and applicable if study were replicated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sessions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F. Develop study surveys</td>
<td>• To obtain consistent sets of data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G. Secure funding</td>
<td>• To support the implementation of the study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Action/Task</strong></td>
<td><strong>Objective</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Part 2</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Recruit participants for pilot study</td>
<td>• To conduct pilot study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Request a review of survey instruments by national experts in the field of Special Education</td>
<td>• Check validity of survey for use in study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Recruit participants for study</td>
<td>• To ensure parents have access to training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. Conduct pilot study</td>
<td>• To test the implementation of study making sure procedures are clear, consistent, and meets its objectives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E. Retain Training Venue (Neighborhood YMCA)</td>
<td>• To provide a neutral meeting place convenient to parent participants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F. Conduct initial questionnaire with parents</td>
<td>• To obtain information regarding parent perceptions of involvement and collaboration prior to training</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The second phase of this study contained the focus of the research, the parent-training component. At the onset of Phase II, parent participants completed an initial questionnaire and provided insight into their perceptions of parent involvement. During Phase II, parents were engaged in training over five sessions where the facilitator used strategies and activities to engage the participants in learning. The experiences were
designed to increase the parents’ familiarity with strategies for effective communication with teachers regarding special education services. Topics included special education laws and parental/student rights, services available for students with disabilities, and interagency collaboration. Activities included an active search for local, community resources, a make-and-take toolkit for assisting students with enrichment activities (i.e. homework), and role-playing exercises to maneuver difficult collaborative situations (See Appendix H for the training scripts and Appendix I for the training materials). Homework was assigned to parents to enrich the learning experience beyond the scope of the training (See Table 21)

Table 21

Parent Activities Linked to Types of Parent Involvement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session</th>
<th>Type of Involvement</th>
<th>Parent Activities (Homework)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1       | Parenting           | Activity 1: *Expressing Expectations*  
Home: *Supervise homework/discuss interests* (Epstein, Saimon, Salinas, 1997; Kohl, Lengua, & McMahon, 2000)  
School: *Find out more about the classes your child is taking* (Chrispeels & Gonzalez, 2004)  
Community: *Take a leisure outing to the mall or movie, etc.* (Geenan, et al., 2001) |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session</th>
<th>Type of Involvement</th>
<th>Parent Activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(Homework)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 2       | Communicating       | **Activity 2: Discuss student’s achievement**  
**Home:** Talk with child about their academic performance and social adjustment (Fan, 2001; Lovitt, 1999)  
**School:** Make contact with teacher regarding child’s academic performance (Lovitt, 1999; Smalley & Reyes-Blanes, 2001; Turnbull & Turnbull, 1997, 2001)  
**Community:** Seek community support (Blue-Blanning, et al., 2004; Lovitt, 1999) |
| 3       | Learning at Home    | **Activity 3: Plan for future**  
**Home:** identify post-school plans (Fan, 2001; Fan & Chen, 1999; Geenan, et al., 2001; Lovitt, 1999)  
**School:** align post-school plans with IEP goals (Hoover-Dempsey, et al., 2005; Lovitt, 1999)  
**Community:** visit local college, technical school, etc. with child (Chrispeels & Gonzalez, 2004) |
| 4       | Decision Making Supporting School | **Activity 4: Take action**  
**Home:** make a list of how your school’s governing bodies can better serve you (Chrispeels & Gonzalez, 2004)  
**School:** join PTA/SAC (Chrispeels & Gonzalez, 2004)  
**Community:** volunteer (Kohl, Lengua, & McMahon, 2000) |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session</th>
<th>Type of Involvement</th>
<th>Parent Activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Collaborating with Community</td>
<td><strong>Activity 5: Identify resources</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Home:</strong> team with another parent (Muscott, 2002; Wolf &amp; Stephens, 1990)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>School:</strong> take part in fundraiser event; volunteer (Epstein &amp; Salinas, 2001; Kohl, Lengua, &amp; McMahon, 2000)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Community:</strong> identify and/or visit community resource (i.e. therapy service providers, public library, museum, etc.) or attend community event with child (i.e. Special Olympics event, March of Dimes, Charity Run, etc.) (Blue-Blanning, et al., 2004)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
During Phase II, an on-going evaluation instrument was given to parents at the end of each training session (See Appendix D). The evaluations were tied to outcome measures of the effectiveness of the facilitator and training materials in informing parents, thus influencing their attitudes, knowledge, and skills of the collaborative process.

At the end of Phase II, parents participated in a focus group session where they discussed their perspectives on parent involvement, the training process and their experiences with program activities, which were aligned with Epstein’s typology for parent involvement (See Appendix E). These activities, which were to have occurred away from the training sessions and documented in parent journals, were geared to prepare parents to be involved with their child’s schooling in ways outside of traditional involvement. A list of potential questions was utilized during the focus group session to elicit responses from parent participants regarding this experience. A written record of common themes was taken and included as support for the study’s findings. The use of journals helped establish the social validity of the intervention. Parent journals were reviewed to determine if the best practices for collaborating with school personnel were implemented appropriately and to determine if, by way of the participants’ perspectives, the intervention was socially important and had sufficient impact on their intentions to collaborate more frequently in the future.

Following the focus group session, parents were required to complete a survey regarding the usefulness of skills and knowledge gained of the collaborative process, ESE service delivery models, the IEP process, and other relevant issues explored during each training session (See Appendix D). From an analysis of the data gathered, program
outcomes were obtained. In addition, parents completing all sessions of the training participated in a graduation exercise to celebrate their achievements (See Table 22).

Table 22

Phase II Events

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parent Collaborative Training</th>
<th>Session Topics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Session Topics</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• What is collaboration? Why is it important?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Types of collaboration/Parent Involvement</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• What are my rights and responsibilities? What knowledge and skills do I need to possess?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Understanding service delivery models available to children</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Developing an action plan</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Collaborative session with teacher</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• What technological tools are available to my child? (optional)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Parent initiated topics</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Focus group session</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evaluation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• On-going session evaluation</td>
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<tr>
<td>• On-going journaling</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Exit survey regarding participation</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Focus Group Discussions</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Graduation</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Issue certificates of participation</td>
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Phase III of the research focused on answering the remaining questions of the research (See Table 23). During this time, students and teachers completed surveys (See Appendix D). Students were assessed on their views of parents and teachers as a result of
training. Teachers were surveyed regarding their perception and expectations of CLD students with disabilities, some of whose parents participated in training to ascertain if their views are different for these students based on the collaborative experiences or whether they are indifferent when compared to surveys on students whose parents did not participate in training.

The fourth and final phase of this study involved repeating the posttest to the teacher participants, data analysis and dissemination of findings (See Table 3.8).

Table 23
Phase III & IV Events

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase</th>
<th>Activities</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Phase III</td>
<td>• Students complete surveys</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Teachers complete surveys</td>
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<tr>
<td>Phase IV</td>
<td>• Repeat of post-test to teachers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Data analysis</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Complete reports/Dissemination</td>
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</table>

Research Instrumentation

Six instruments were developed by the researcher and based on the conceptual framework and validity constructs of instruments used by the Fast Track Project (FTP), a nationally recognized intervention project designed by the Conduct Problems Prevention Research Group (CPPRG) to prevent serious behaviors in adolescents. The comprehensive project, which followed 891 students from first through tenth grade, had a
major emphasis on the transition period from elementary to middle school. Yet, a major part of the *Fast Track* prevention program is its parent effectiveness training, which promoted positive school-home relationships, hypothesized to be a contributing factor to pro-social behaviors among youth, high academic performance, and increased personal identity development (CPPRG, 1992).

The instruments for this study were developed with careful wording to avoid biased responses. Furthermore, three specific instruments used in *FTP* were adapted to fit the needs of this study. The first *FTP* questionnaire to serve as a model was the *Parent-Teacher Involvement Questionnaire: Parent Version*. This 26-item measure was developed to assess facets of parent and teacher involvement, including (1) the type and amount of contact made between parents and teachers, (2) the interests and comfort level of the parents when communicating with teachers, (3) the level of satisfaction with the school, and (4) the degree of parent involvement. A 5-point Likert scale, where a point value of zero (no involvement) to four (high involvement) was used. The next *FTP* instrument used was the *Parent and Teacher Involvement Measure-Teacher version*, which was a 21-item assessed the same constructs as the parent version, but on the following three subscales: (1) parent’s comfort in their relationship, (2) parent’s involvement and volunteering, and (3) parent-teacher contacts. The same Likert scale point value was used as in the parent version. The third *FTP* instrument was the *School Adjustment-Child questionnaire*, a 20-item scale, evaluated the child’s perception of their current state of adjustment at school. Statements about school experience, academic performance, discipline problems, and interactions with other students and school personnel were included in the instrument. Likert scale relating to the truth of the
The first of the six instruments used in this study, the *Parent Involvement and Collaborative Experiences Questionnaire (PCT-PICEQ)*, collected demographic information, conducted a needs assessment, and gathered information regarding the initial views and concern that parent participants have of parent involvement (See Appendix D). The second instrument, the *Session Evaluation (PCT-SE)*, collected evaluative data regarding the value and usefulness of the content, activities and materials, as well as the researcher’s ability to conduct the sessions efficiently. In addition, the instrument queried the participants most and least liked experienced during the training, intended use of the information presented, and what the participant wanted to learn more about (See Appendix D).

The third and fourth instruments, the *Parent Summative Questionnaire (PCT-PSumQ)* and the *Student Questionnaire (PCT-SQ)*, were used to discover the perceptions of parents and students, respectively (See Appendix D). Questionnaire/survey data were analyzed using qualitative and quantitative methods. Responses to open-ended questions were analyzed to identify themes to support the study’s findings. Quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive statistical procedures.

The fifth instrument, the *Teacher Demographic Questionnaire (PCT-TDQ)* was used to collect teacher demographic information for descriptive analysis (See Appendix D), was issued along with a sixth and final survey, the *Teacher Perception of Student Questionnaire (PCT-TPSQ)*. This sixth instrument, an attitudinal survey, was used to ascertain teacher perceptions and expectations of CLD students with disabilities whose
parents participated in PCT as well as those whose parents did not participate (See Appendix D). The survey was administered post the implementation of PCT and contained Likert scale type questions for statistical significance, as well as open-ended questions to gather anecdotal and narrative information. The teacher received one survey for each child identified as a participant and one for those identified as a member of the control group.

Since the instruments used for this research inquiry are not standardized, though modeled on the *Fast Track* instruments, no specific evidence of its content validity is available, other than the review of the literature presented in Chapter II, which provides support for the instruments’ connection with the nature of the study. In fact, knowing that “the validity of a test is perhaps the most important indicator of its quality” (Moore, 1983, p.197) and that such validity is essential to any educational research, especially one with a focus on special education (Gersten, et al., 2005), a panel of experts convened to attest to the appropriateness of the survey’s design to answer the research questions. Likewise, the panel reviewed the training manual and attested to the relevance of the study’s purpose and its consistency with the literature. The panel consisted of Drs. Susan Donavon, and Mary Senne, who collectively have enriched the body of research on Parent Involvement through their work with *Family Partnerships in Special Education Teacher Preparation* program. This project of national significance continues to provide the field of education with the research-based personnel preparation program needed to ensure that pre-service teachers are equipped with the knowledge and skills to actively involve parents in decisions concerning the education of their children. By the same token, the panel has independently enriched the body of research on Parent Involvement
via professional affiliation, advocacy, and policy development in the field of special education.

To support the cultural validity of the instruments, a pilot study was conducted with a small group of culturally and linguistically diverse eighth grade parents from the urban community selected for this study. The purpose of this field test was to ensure that the proposed sessions topics and activities were useful, reflective of parent needs, presented in a clear, logical format, and made the best use of time. Additionally, each question of the evaluation tools were reviewed for clarity and understanding and each domain was checked to determine if they represented an accurate reflection of the parent-child experience as it relates to school and learning. Feedback from parents participating in the field test was used to revise the instruments.

Design of the Study

For this study, which focuses on attitudinal changes, a quasi-experimental design was utilized since fixed aspects of the environment, such as the school and socio-economic levels of the parent participants, were not directly controlled by the experiment. In addition, the choice of quasi-experimental design was based on the need to utilize groups of individuals transitioning from an urban community into a suburban school, thus greatly reducing the practicability of randomization. According to Campbell and Stanley (1963), this selection of real world constructions allows for greater external validity and controls for 6 of 8 threats to internal validity. More specifically, a posttest-only nonequivalent control group design was used, as teacher responses reflecting perceptions and expectations of students whose parents are in one group receiving the treatment
(PCT) will be measured and compared to a control group not receiving the treatment (no PCT). The post-test only option was selected to control for pre-test interaction on the ongoing development of viewpoints. With attitude change studies, pre-tests impose a “giveaway” of content that may bias the teachers’ perspectives or adjust their attitudes when they are asked to stop and think about the population in question. Utilizing the demographic information on parents-student dyads to match across groups serves as a pseudo-pretest in that when the covariance is analyzed, an increase in the power of significance test, similar to that provided by a pre-test is achieved (Campbell & Stanley, 1963).

Data Collection and Analysis

Overview of the Process

Collection of the data took place during the Spring 2006 semester. SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Science) 11.0, a computerized statistics application was used to analyze the collected data. In order to understand the underlying structure of the relationship between the independent and dependent variables, a multivariate analysis was utilized. Descriptive statistics were employed for student, parent, and teacher demographic information. Specifically, on a descriptive level, bar graphs, means, and standard deviations were utilized. An independent samples t-test was incorporated to examine for differences between means.

Description and Analysis of Research Questions

Four research questions framed the current study, which investigated the direct impact of PCT on the perceptions and attitudes of CLD students, parents, and teachers.
Each research question is presented and described individually along with the instrument used to gather data.

*Question 1: Is there a difference in teacher ratings regarding their perceptions and expectations of CLD students with disabilities transitioning from an urban elementary school to a suburban middle school whose parents participate in PCT than for similar students whose parents do not participate?*

Data was collected during Phase III, after the completion of the training sessions. The researcher provided each teacher with a *Teacher Perception of Student Questionnaire (PCT-TPSQ)* to be completed on a specific group of student students: (a) students whose parents participated in the training and (b) and those whose parents did not participate, but were demographically similar to the intervention group. At no time were the teachers provided any information, either verbally or on the survey that connected the parent-student dyads to the training. The surveys, aimed at answering the question regarding teacher perceptions and expectations of CLD students, contained demographic questions for descriptive analysis, Likert scale type questions for statistical significance, as well as open-ended questions for anecdotal and narrative information. Upon completion of the survey, the teacher submitted them to the researcher for analysis.

*Question 2: How do CLD parents of children with disabilities rate the content and usefulness of each component as they proceed through five sessions of collaborative training?*

During Phase II, program evaluations, *Session Evaluation (PCT-SE)*, were implemented and subsequently used to analyze parents’ views of the training program. Evaluations were conducted at the end of each session. It contained three specific
questions dealing primarily with the value of the content, activities, and materials used during each session. Four questions related to the facilitators ability to present information efficiently and effectively. Collectively, these seven questions utilized the Likert scale range of strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, and strongly disagree. Still, four additional questions requesting the responder to make comments or suggestions in an open-ended format were presented. Results from the program evaluation will be used to modify program content and delivery.

*Question 3: After engaging in PCT, how do CLD parents from urban settings rate their abilities to collaborate with teachers from a suburban middle school?*

Initial collection of data occurred during Phase II via the *Parent Involvement and Collaborative Experiences Questionnaire (PCT-PICEQ)* received by parents prior to training. Responses were analyzed to aid in the development of training sessions. In addition, the analysis of the data was conducted to acquire an understanding of parent concerns and views on parent involvement and collaboration. Responses to open-ended questions were analyzed for common themes. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistical procedures. Data was also collected by use of a *Parent Summative Questionnaire (PCT-PSumQ)*, which contained Likert scale and open-ended questions. The survey was issued to parents at the end of Phase II, after all training had been completed, but prior to graduation. When reviewed, responses to open-ended questions on the *PCT-PSumQ* along with reflective comments made during the focus group session and within the parent journals, revealed themes that provided social validation for the intervention in that the treatment goals, procedures, and outcomes were acceptable and
socially relevant. Quantitative data collected by the \textit{PCT-PSumQ} was analyzed using descriptive statistical procedures.

\textit{Question 4: What impact will the experience of parent collaboration have on student ratings of their parents and teachers?}

Question four was answered by the use of a questionnaire, the \textit{Student Questionnaire (PCT-SQ)} implemented during Phase III. Students needing assistance with reading and/or writing responses were given the option of having the survey questions read to them as well as having their answers dictated for the researcher to record. This data was analyzed using qualitative and quantitative methods. Themes were generated from the responses to open-ended questions once analyzed. Descriptive statistical procedures were used to analyze quantitative data.

\textit{Fidelity of Treatment}

For this intervention, a standardized protocol was used to implement the treatment across training sessions. To ensure that the training was implemented to the degree at which it was intended and to maintain internal validity, fidelity of treatment direct observation checklists were utilized. Two observers, neither of whom was associated with the study, were recruited and trained to simultaneously use identical checklists to verify, with an 80\% or better agreement, that the application of the intervention components adhered to the protocol (See Appendix I).

The two observers were trained on how to use the checklist, each at different times due to conflicts in scheduling both on the same occasion. Each observer was given a script of the training, which had been adapted to include a check-off box for each major section of the script. In addition to checking off areas of compliance with the protocol,
the observer was instructed to write notes about the nature of the delivery of training in a comment box, which was included for each major section of the adapted script. For example, the observer was instructed to write specific information about the use of time, the adherence to the script, or other procedural differences that varied from the script. Comments made by the observer would be useful in the discussion that followed each training session, particularly when an area of the checklist was not checked. Following the explanation of the responsibilities, each observer participated in a brief role-play activity to familiarize them with the checklist format and to acquaint them with the expected behaviors and duties of an observer/rater.

The Training

After the intervention and comparison groups were established and protection of human subject assured, the PCT was provided to parents across five sessions. Each session was conducted in a predetermined meeting room located in the community’s YMCA and lasted approximately two hours. For each session, a similar structure was used as the training followed a script. Each session began with a welcome and introduction, a review of the previous week’s activity, a briefing on the ground rules that served to guide the discussion, and an introductory activity in which the training objectives were outlined. Mini-lectures were presented using PowerPoint, posters and activities that were designed to meet each session’s goals and objectives. In addition, homework activities were presented and icebreaker activities were included (See Appendix I). Each session ended with a wrap-up activity that helped to summarize the training, and completion of the Session Evaluation (PCT-SE) (See Appendix D). Specific questions that were brought up during the training, which were not relevant to
the topic of the training session, were addressed on an individual basis at that time. Time
to sample refreshments was also provided. Children, who were being supervised by a
childcare provider, were brought back to the training venue at this time. On average, four
children were cared for each evening of the training. The childcare provider received
payments for services totaling $250.00 from PCT funds.

After the training, the researcher met with observers, who were recruited to
complete an observation checklist. Checklists were reviewed and concerns were
addressed. The researcher took notes on the comments and later made notations
regarding the training.
CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS OF THE STUDY

Introduction

The purpose of this quasi-experimental study was to determine the impact of Parent Collaborative Training (PCT). The training was designed for culturally and linguistically diverse (CLD) parents of students with disabilities. More specifically, the purpose of this inquiry was to answer four questions developed by the researcher. The questions included:

Question 1: Is there a difference in teacher ratings regarding their perceptions and expectations of CLD students with disabilities transitioning from an urban elementary school to a suburban middle school whose parents participate in PCT than for similar students whose parents do not participate?

Question 2: How do CLD parents of children with disabilities rate the content and usefulness of each component as they proceed through five sessions of collaborative training?

Question 3: After engaging in PCT, how do CLD parents from urban settings rate their abilities to collaborate with teachers from a suburban middle school?

Question 4: What impact will the experience of parent collaboration have on student ratings of their parents and teachers?

Since this study sought to understand the impact of PCT, as experienced by students transitioning from an urban elementary school to a suburban middle school, their parents and their teachers, information for statistical analysis was conducted via survey instruments. In this chapter, the researcher will delineate the statistical procedures used.
to analyze the data as well as the connections found between the collected data and the hypotheses of the study. In the first section of this chapter, a summary of the training experience is explained. Each section, thereafter, provides the findings as they relate to each of the four questions, respectively. The final section provides a summary of the impact of PCT on the participants.

Summary of Training Experience

The parent training was conducted over five sessions at a community YMCA. The first session covered topics relating to collaboration and its importance in the education of students with disabilities. At this training, seven consenting parents were present. At the second session, parents were introduced to the rights and responsibilities as guaranteed by federal law. Five parents were present at the training and one parent, who acknowledged wanting to participate, but having a conflict with work schedule, was provided training in her home. The IEP and its process as well as service delivery were the focus of session three. Five parents were present at this session and the fourth session, which involved action planning for collaboration. The delivery of the action plan was an integral part of the study since it afforded parents the opportunity to implement new best practices learned from training, therefore increasing the social validity of the intervention. At the final training session, parents completed the summative questionnaire and participated in the focus group session and graduation ceremony (See Figure 4). Due to time conflicts and issues with transportation, no parent elected to sign on as a participant at the optional training on assistive technology located at the metropolitan university located several miles away from their own community.
List of Potential Participants Provided by School

Parents and students consent to participate in training n=7

Control group of parents and students selected n=7

Participated in training

Did not participate in training

Trained all sessions; Collaborated with school personnel n=4

Trained 4 sessions (did not participate in focus group); Collaborated with school personnel, n=1

Trained 2 sessions; (1 session conducted outside of training venue); Did not collaborate n=1

Trained 1 session; did not collaborate n=1

Figure 4

Parent Selection and Participation
Summary of Session 1

After extending a ten-minute wait time for potential late comers, the first session of PCT began with eight parents, seven of whom were consenting participants and one who had come to learn what she could for her daughter who was receiving services in the elementary school. The session began with a welcome and icebreaker activity that sought to make participants more comfortable being among the group. Following the introductory activities, parents completed the initial questionnaire. To facilitate the process, the researcher read each question while providing adequate wait time for parents to mark their responses. Completion of the questionnaire extended 15 minutes beyond the allotted time. Each questionnaire was collected for evaluation.

Parents were then instructed to follow along as the researcher summarized the training topics and objectives. Ground rules were established and an “I Promise” sheet was completed by each participant. Ground rules are a set of conventions used to guide participants’ behaviors during the training, while the “I Promise” sheet is a statement of understanding signed by the parent to state their intent to participate in the training so they can better assist their child (See Appendix I). The researcher then proceeded with the introductory module, Getting in Condition by showing a PowerPoint presentation. Parents followed along using the copy found in their manuals. Although parents participated by reviewing each slide and a review of the module topics, they did not engage in conversation beyond specific questions posed by the researcher.

After a brief intermission, questions were answered and a transition icebreaker was conducted to get participants acclimated back to the training atmosphere. The first session continued with the presentation of module two, What is collaboration? Why is it
important? The training’s ground rules were briefly discussed to remind parents of the rules for interaction. Parents were instructed to turn to the page in their training manual that corresponded to the training slides being presented. The objectives of the second half of training were then discussed. To begin module two, parents were provided with the rationale for ongoing, open communication among themselves and school personnel.

During module two, a role-play activity was conducted where the researcher, along with a parent participant, demonstrated a non-example and then an acceptable example of collaboration. A discussion ensued and the skills of effective communication, such as body language, knowledge, tone, equality among partners, among other exemplary behaviors, were discussed and contrasted with unacceptable behaviors. Parents were then instructed to engage in collaboration with each other as one assumed the role of parent and the other as teacher. The researcher guided the parents’ interaction with each other, verifying that they each demonstrated competency of the skills needed for effective collaboration.

After a brief review of the major points, session one ended with parents completing a brief journal activity and a session evaluation. Evaluations were then collected. Children, who were being supervised by a childcare provider commissioned by PCT, met with their parents for refreshments. Parents conversed briefly with each other and then left the training venue (See Appendix H).

Summary of Session 2

The second session of PCT began promptly with five parent participants in attendance. After signing in and picking up their training manuals, parents appeared more relaxed and engaged in conversations with their peers, more so than the previous
session. The session, *Rights and Responsibilities in the Special Education Process*,
began with a welcome and icebreaker activity. Ground rules guiding parent behaviors
were reviewed and posted in the meeting room. Parents were instructed to open their
training manuals and to follow with the PowerPoint slides being presented. An overview
of the session’s focus was presented, along with the training objectives. The researcher
then proceeded by listing a set of rights guaranteed to families by law. Parents
participated by making general comments, sharing experiences, and asking for
clarification of statements made during the training.

Once the researcher presented the rights and responsibilities of parents involved
in the special education process, parent participating in the training became engaged in a
reflective activity that involved discussions about the aforementioned rights and
responsibilities. Parents were also asked to complete a “Bill or Rights” that would
become an artifact of the learning experience. To complete the activity, parents, along
with the researcher, collaborated in writing short phrases reflective of each right and
responsibility on a scroll. Parents were encouraged to hang the scrolls in their homes as a
reminder of their rights and responsibilities.

A recap of the training events followed and the session closed with the
completion of a journal writing assignment and session evaluations. Before leaving the
training venue, parents were asked about their interest in attending an optional session on
assistive technology. Parent responses indicated that participation would be minimal.
Parents were also directed to schedule a meeting with their child’s teacher and were
provided with the timeframe for the meeting. Afterwards, parents met with their children
and sampled refreshment items provided by PCT (See Appendix H).
Summary of Session 3

Five participants attended the third session, which was delivered in two modules: one on the IEP and the other on service delivery. Once a brief welcome and introduction were conducted, parents were reminded of the ground rules. A summary of the training focus and objectives were then presented. Immediately after, parents used the materials in their training manuals to follow with the presentation on The IEP Process. Parents also reviewed a checklist designed to assist parents in preparing for and attending an IEP meeting. Next, the researcher facilitated a review of the information presented and checked for comprehension among the participants.

A second icebreaker activity was used to transition to the next activity, which was an extensive review of the parts of the IEP most needing parental input. Parents used a blank IEP, identical to the one used in their school district, to write responses or comments in the areas reviewed. The researcher assisted parents in clarifying the information they wanted to record on the sample IEP. Parents wanting to share responses were given the opportunity to do so. At the end of the module, the homework assignment was reviewed and parents were given time to respond in their journals. A short break was taken before continuing with the second half of the session.

After the break, parents were briefly welcomed back to the session. The ground rules were mentioned but not reviewed. The training focus and objectives were presented for the session entitled, Service Delivery Models. A review of service delivery was conducted and the continuum of services explained. Parents completed a service delivery flowchart by writing the name of their child in the placement option they thought best suited their child. An examination of the actual placement was made and a discussion
about appropriate placement ensued. Parents examined student capabilities and needs and made notations about the location on the placement chart that their child actually was, the services their child was receiving, and where they wanted the child to be. A plan, which included monitoring school progress, helping with homework, and talking specifically with the child’s teacher about placement to assist the child, was formulated by each parent. Afterwards, a review of the activities took place and the homework assignment was explained again. Journal entries were made by parents before the session ended. Session evaluations were also conducted at this time. Again, parents were encouraged to schedule a meeting with their child’s teacher, if they had not yet done so. Parents and children then sampled refreshment items provided by PCT (See Appendix H).

**Summary of Session 4**

Session four, *Developing an Action Plan*, had five participants, the same group that had consistently attended the previous sessions. Parents were welcomed and introduced to the session’s focus and objectives. The training session continued with each parent reviewing their child’s current IEP, looking specifically at parental comments, present level of performance, goals and objectives, transition plans (if applicable), accommodations and modifications, among other things. As the review was being conducted, parents were instructed to make a list of questions or concerns of the IEP or other school related issue. From this list, parents determined the goal for their collaborative meeting. Using the IEP meeting checklist as a guide, parents were then instructed to identify actions they needed to take prior to the scheduled meeting.
Before the end of the training, the homework assignment was reviewed and reflective comments on the day’s training were made. Parents were prompted to brainstorm potential problems that could arise during their planned meeting with the teacher and to find practical solutions for those problems. Parents then reflected in their journals about their feelings on the ensuing collaborative meeting. A short break was taken between the modules of the training session.

The next module, *Helping My Child Find Success*, began promptly after the short break. A transition icebreaker was used to get parents back into training mode. Following the icebreaker, the session’s focus and objectives were introduced. Parent involvement activities were reviewed and strategies for helping the child were addressed. Parents then participated in an activity where an artifact was created. The artifact, entitled “Keys to Success”, was a set of key-shaped cutouts on which parents wrote specific strategies they could implement at home, at school, or in the community that would contribute to their child’s success. A review of the strategies followed and then parents were instructed to write a reflection on a strategy they deemed most important to their child’s success. At the end of the session, parents and children sampled refreshment items provided by PCT (See Appendix H).

*Optional Session on Assistive Technology*

The optional session on assistive technology, which was slated to occur on the campus of the local metropolitan university, was not scheduled since parents noted that the distance from their community to the university would be a major influence on their attendance. Parents cited time and transportation issues as being factors. A brief, non-
scripted session, lasting about 10 minutes, was provided to parents at the beginning of the next session (See Appendix H).

Summary of Session 5

The fifth and final session of PCT involved four participants. After the welcome and overview of the session, a brief introduction and activity on assistive technology was done. During this time, the assistive technology terminology was defined, the use of devices was explored, and possible reasons a child would need to use assistive technology were provided. Similarly, parents had requested information on reading instruction and the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT). A brief summary on strategies to improve reading skills were provided. The importance of the FCAT test, the accommodations and modifications offered to test takers, and the implications for passing were addressed.

The parents were given time to complete a summative evaluation and to participate in a focus group session where questions about parent collaboration were asked. Journals were collected from participants to be analyzed for themes. Following the collection of the journals and summative evaluations, a ceremony to commemorate the parent’s completion of the training was held. Five parents were awarded certificates of completion, a graduation medal, and were compensated ten dollars for each session attended (See Appendix H).

Parents were encouraged to use the previous homework assignments to guide future efforts of involvement and to continue sharpening their knowledge and skills by joining a parent advocate group. The session ended with a meal and candid discussions about each of our families. In a previous session, one parent had referred to the group as
her “new family” and the sense of family, which had developed among total strangers, remained evident the night of the last training session.

Session Variables

During the course of the training, there were several instances where changes were made to accommodate the issues that surfaced (See Table 24). Most often, these procedural changes were done to meet the unique needs of the participants. When deciding on the changes to make, caution was taken to ensure that these changes would not violate the integrity of the study.

Table 24
Extenuating Circumstances Occurring During Session Implementation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session</th>
<th>Variables</th>
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| 1       | - Session did not start on time as wait time was given in the event parents were to arrive late.  
         | - Eight (8) parents were present with one being a relative of a consenting participant. The parent explained that she came to get information from the training as she had a daughter receiving services at the elementary school.  
         | - Questionnaire read to participants although not scripted. Decision to read based on body language of several parents when conducting their own review of the document.  
<pre><code>     | - Module one journal reflection omitted due to time constraints. |
</code></pre>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session</th>
<th>Variables</th>
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</table>
| 2       | - Though not scripted for this session, parents were instructed to plan a collaborative session with their child’s teacher. Evaluators recruited to complete fidelity of treatment checklist were made aware of this change prior to the start of the session.  
- Journals were not collected as intended because of the parents’ need to write reflections on the homework assignments. Though not scripted for this session, parents were instructed to plan a collaborative session with their child’s teacher. Similarly, evaluators recruited to complete fidelity of treatment checklist were made aware of this change prior to the start of the session.  
- One parent (along with her relative) who attended the first session, but could not attend the second session due to a previously scheduled therapy session for her child, met with the researcher in her home to participate in a one-time training activity. The activity’s intent was to keep the parent current on the information and activities presented in the training so that her return to the training would not be marked by a lack of information. However, neither the parent, nor her relative returned to any successive PCT activity. |
| 3       | - The review of the ground rules was optional in the second half of the training session and was therefore omitted.  
- An optional interactive session on the IEP was omitted because the training venue did not have sufficient technology to support the activity.  
- Parents were reminded to plan a collaborative meeting, although the script calls for this in a later session.  
- Journals were not collected as intended because of the parents’ need to write reflections on the homework assignments  
- Two parents, who were not recruited, but heard about the training, came to the session with a member of the training. |
4

- The opening icebreaker activity was omitted.
- The review of the ground rules was optional and therefore omitted.
- The calendar activity was omitted because the time of implementation for this study did not allow for scheduling the collaborative meeting this late in the training. Parents were prompted to plan meetings during earlier sessions.
- Journals were not collected as intended because of the parents’ need to write reflections on the homework assignments.

Optional Session

- The optional session on assistive technology (AT) was not conducted because parents were not able to participate due to circumstantial factors. However, a needs assessment conducted at the onset of training, as well as comments made during a session to recruit participants for the optional session, indicated parents’ desire for information on AT. A mini-session on AT was provided to parents in the final session.

5

- A non-scripted session on Assistive Technology, Reading Instruction, and the function of the FCAT for students with disabilities was provided to parents based on the request for information.
- One parent, who could not make the session due to a conflict with his work schedule, completed the summative evaluation later the next evening. At that time, he was given his certificate of completion and graduation medal, and was compensated for the time committed to the training. Similarly, the two parents who attended one or two of the earlier sessions were compensated accordingly.

*Fidelity of Treatment Results*

Following the training sessions, a briefing of concerns was conducted. The results of the analysis indicate that over the first four sessions of the treatment, the range
of the observers’ mean scores were 92.5% to 100%. Observer differences in scores were based on variation in the interpretation of what was expected. For example, in one situation, one observer looked for exact word for word delivery of training, whereas the other observer allowed for word differences as long as the main point of the script was delivered as intended. Nevertheless, the results, which show agreement between observers above the 80% threshold, support the treatment’s integrity as well as the external validity (See Table 25). These conditions allow for replication and dissemination of the current study. The fifth session of the training was excluded from the analysis because the session was reserved for the completion of the final parent instrument, the focus group discussion, and the graduation of participants.

Table 25

Fidelity of Treatment Results Using Checklists

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Modules 1-2</td>
<td>Modules 3</td>
<td>Modules 4-5</td>
<td>Modules 6-7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Target Score</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observer 1</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of target</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observer 2</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of target</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean %</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>92.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The findings of the present study cannot be generalized beyond the sample since the small sample size (n=7) of parent-student dyads was not randomly selected from the
larger population. A comparison group (n=7) was randomly selected from a list of potential participants, but they, too, were not randomly selected from the larger population. Although a chi square analysis indicated that both the comparison and treatment groups were comparable on age, grade level, race, annual income, and characteristics relating to the child’s disability, they were not comparable on intervention. In addition, extraneous variables, such as exposure to information about special education or collaboration (i.e. internet searches, communication with outside sources, etc.) were not controlled variables.

Analysis of Question 1

The first question sought to determine if statistically significance existed in teacher ratings of CLD students with disabilities whose parents attended PCT than for those who did not. To answer this question, teachers (n=4) completed questionnaires that measured their thoughts across three scales: (1) teacher perception of student behaviors, (2) teacher perception of student capabilities, and (3) teacher expectations. Five questions relating directly to parent and teacher involvement activities were removed from the analysis since they did not fall under the scales assessing teacher perceptions of the students. A Likert scale was employed for each question. Items relating to teacher perception of behaviors utilized a 5-point scale ranging from one, an indication that the behavior is absent, to five, an indication that the behavior is present at all times. More specifically, the scale ranged, in ascending order, from “never”, rarely, “sometimes”, “often”, to “always”. Likewise, a 4-point scale was used for statements relating to teacher perceptions of capabilities and teacher expectations. For these, the scale ranged
on level of agreement with “strongly disagree”, “disagree”, “agree”, and “strongly agree”, arranged in ascending order.

To answer the question, an analysis was conducted using an independent sample t-test that compared the means across each statement for the normative group and the control group (See Table 26). The means represent the average Likert scale ratings for each statement. Results indicate that the means were higher for the students whose parents attended training among 14 of 17 items. On one statement, “the student completes homework on time”, the mean ($\chi = 3.00$) was slightly lower for the intervention group than for the control group ($\chi = 3.29$)
Table 26

Comparison of Teacher Ratings on Student Behaviors, Capabilities, and Expectations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>attendance at training</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>the student attends school regularly</td>
<td>attended training</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>1.16</td>
<td>.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>did not attend training</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3.86</td>
<td>.38</td>
<td>.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the student tries to do well on assignments</td>
<td>attended training</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>1.16</td>
<td>.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>did not attend training</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3.71</td>
<td>.76</td>
<td>.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the student completes school work on time</td>
<td>attended training</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3.71</td>
<td>1.38</td>
<td>.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>did not attend training</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3.29</td>
<td>.49</td>
<td>.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the student completes homework on time</td>
<td>attended training</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>1.16</td>
<td>.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>did not attend training</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3.29</td>
<td>.49</td>
<td>.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the student receives help with homework at home</td>
<td>attended training</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3.20</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>did not attend training</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2.20</td>
<td>.45</td>
<td>.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the student respects his or her teacher</td>
<td>attended training</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3.86</td>
<td>1.46</td>
<td>.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>did not attend training</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3.57</td>
<td>.98</td>
<td>.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the student respects his or her teacher</td>
<td>attended training</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3.86</td>
<td>1.46</td>
<td>.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>did not attend training</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3.57</td>
<td>.98</td>
<td>.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the student cooperates with his or her teacher</td>
<td>attended training</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>1.16</td>
<td>.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>did not attend training</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3.57</td>
<td>.98</td>
<td>.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the student gets along with children in class</td>
<td>attended training</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3.71</td>
<td>.95</td>
<td>.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>did not attend training</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3.29</td>
<td>.49</td>
<td>.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the student is capable of maintaining</td>
<td>attended training</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3.43</td>
<td>.54</td>
<td>.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>satisfactory academic progress</td>
<td>did not attend training</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>.82</td>
<td>.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the student is capable of maintaining</td>
<td>attended training</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>.82</td>
<td>.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>appropriate behaviors</td>
<td>did not attend training</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2.71</td>
<td>.49</td>
<td>.18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* p < .05
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>attendance at training</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>the student is capable of adjusting to new environments</td>
<td>attended training</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>did not attend training</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td>.54</td>
<td>.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the student is capable of completing assignments with minimal assistance</td>
<td>attended training</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2.43</td>
<td>.98</td>
<td>.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>did not attend training</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td>.79</td>
<td>.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the student will transition to the next grade successfully</td>
<td>attended training</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2.86</td>
<td>1.22</td>
<td>.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>did not attend training</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td>.79</td>
<td>.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the student is capable of graduating HS on schedule</td>
<td>attended training</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2.29</td>
<td>.95</td>
<td>.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>did not attend training</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td>.49</td>
<td>.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the student will lead an independent life</td>
<td>attended training</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2.43</td>
<td>1.40</td>
<td>.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>did not attend training</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td>.76</td>
<td>.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the student will become a model citizen in adult life</td>
<td>attended training</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2.57</td>
<td>1.27</td>
<td>.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>did not attend training</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td>.38</td>
<td>.14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Although four missing values were netted in the analysis of the statement, “the student receives help with homework when at home”, there was a meaningful difference (p = 0.046, t=2.35, df= 8;) when equal variances were assumed and p < .05. These results show that the teacher ratings of students whose parents participated in training, when compared to ratings of students whose parents did not participate, were more favorable (See Figure 5).
In a separate independent t-test, the five statements relating to parent and teacher involvement activities were examined. The Likert scale range of “never”, “rarely”, “sometimes”, “often” and “always” was used. For all of the statements, the means were higher for students whose parents trained than for students whose parents did not train (See Table 27). Although five missing values were netted in the analysis of the statement, “the parents or guardians of this child talk to their children about the importance of school”, there was a meaningful difference, (p=.014, t=3.248, df=7) (See Figure 6).
Table 27

Average Teacher Viewpoints on Parent and Teacher Behaviors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>attendance at training</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>parents talk to student about importance of school</td>
<td>attended training</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4.40</td>
<td>.55</td>
<td>.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>did not attend training</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3.25</td>
<td>.50</td>
<td>.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>parents contact teacher regarding the child's progress</td>
<td>attended training</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2.57</td>
<td>1.72</td>
<td>.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>did not attend training</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2.29</td>
<td>1.11</td>
<td>.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>teacher contact parent regarding academic progress</td>
<td>attended training</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>.82</td>
<td>.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>did not attend training</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3.71</td>
<td>.76</td>
<td>.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>teacher contact parent regarding social progress</td>
<td>attended training</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>.82</td>
<td>.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>did not attend training</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3.71</td>
<td>.76</td>
<td>.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>teacher provides opportunities for parents to be involved in school</td>
<td>attended training</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4.14</td>
<td>.69</td>
<td>.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>did not attend training</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3.71</td>
<td>.76</td>
<td>.29</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* p < .05

Figure 6

Teacher Ratings of Parents across Groups Showing a Meaningful Difference
Similarly, on the teacher questionnaire, five questions regarding parent involvement were rated using a 4-point Likert scale. Teachers were asked to respond with “Strongly Disagree”, “Disagree”, “Agree” and “Strongly Agree” for the following statements: (1) “Parent involvement is important to student success”, (2) “Parent Involvement is important to school success”, (3) “Parent involvement is important to student performance”, (4) “Parents in my class want to be involved”, and (5) “Teachers should do more to help parents get involved”. An analysis of the responses indicate that teachers hold strong opinions about the value of parent involvement as it relates to the child’s success ($\bar{x} = 4.00$), as well as the school ($\bar{x} = 4.00$), and their own performance ($\bar{x} = 3.50$). They, however, moderately agreed with the notion that teachers should do more in involving parents ($\bar{x} = 3.00$), although disagreeing that parents want to be involved ($\bar{x} = 2.00$). Again, the means represent the averages of the Likert scale ratings as responded to by teachers on the questionnaire (See Table 28).

Table 28

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parent involvement is important to child’s success</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent involvement is important to school success</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent involvement is important to teacher performance</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3.50</td>
<td>.58</td>
<td>.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents in my class want to be involved</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2.25</td>
<td>.50</td>
<td>.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers should do more to help parents get involved</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Yet, when asked “What factors or conditions are present in the child's life that would hinder his/her academic or social success?” teachers’ written replies indicate that parental/family factors may be the root of student failure across all students regardless of level of intervention. The teachers respond that, in addition to a child’s “national origin” or, “home environment/numerous children”, parenting factors could hinder the child’s success. These factors included: (a) the child “may not receive parental support for education improvement”, (b) the absence of “caring parents”, or (c) that the parent “has not followed through on behavior plan”. Other responses suggest that a “parent’s level of education”, or “academic success” also contribute to the child’s success.

In contrast, when teachers were asked “What factors or conditions are present in the child’s life that would foster his/her academic or social success?”, teachers commented that “good teachers, good schools”, a “lot of support from within the school”, or “things in place” at school (i.e. behavior specialist, school nurse, etc.) were the most beneficial since teachers were “taking on the parent role”. These statements, when deducted, provide two emerging themes. The first suggests that teachers believe parents do not get involved because they do not value education. The second implies that teachers believe the culture of the school is most important in shaping the outcomes for CLD students with disabilities.

Analysis of Question 2

The second question of the study aims to address the effectiveness of the parent training. More specifically, the question is, “How do CLD parents of children with disabilities rate the content and usefulness of each component as they proceed through five sessions of collaborative training?”. To answer this question, descriptive statistics
reporting the frequencies of parent responses to several statements were conducted. The statements include:  (1) *The content of today’s training session was useful*, (2) *The activities provided during the training were useful*, (3) *The materials used during the training were useful*, (4) *The facilitator was knowledgeable about the content*, (5) *The facilitator made best use of time*, (6) *The information was presented in a clear, meaningful way*, and (7) *The training environment was suitable for this training*.

A 4-point Likert scale ranging from “strongly agree” to “strongly disagree” was used. The order of the scale was intentionally placed in descending order of agreement to increase the likelihood that parent participants would respond sincerely. Nevertheless, there was consensus among parents that the training was effective in all aspects. Comments made on the session evaluation offered more insight to support the parent ratings regarding the usefulness of the training components.

When asked what was *liked most about the training session*, parents indicated they “enjoyed the sessions very much” for the following reasons:

- “It’s new information I’ve discovered”
- “Info[rmation] about schools thinking parents not really involved in child’s education”
- “She explained everything very well”
- “The way [the] teacher gave the information”
- “Reviewing IEP”
- “I was able to learn about mediators, which was I was unaware that it could be provided by my child’s school”
• “Class was interesting and showed that being a part of my child’s education is important”
• “I could understand what she was talking about”
• “I liked how she taught class”
• “What IEP stands for and how important it is for my child’s education”

When asked what they liked least about the training session, parents either left the space blank or responded:
• “NA”
• “Nothing, everything was great”
• “Nothing”
• “All was great”

Most importantly, when asked, how they will use the information from the training”, the answers provided insight into the value placed on the session topics. Responses included:
• “To look into government fund[ed] programs to help my child do better”
• “Gain more info about child’s placing
• “When I go to my next session at the school”
• “To help my friends”
• “Use information at my child’s next IEP meeting. I will now be involved because I didn’t realize I had a voice in the matter.”
• “Speak with my child’s school to gather more information on advocate information and tutoring”
• “Increase my child’s knowledge and participation in all school functions”
• “Tell my family and friends about what I know now”
• “Continue educating my child”.

Yet, when asked what they would like to learn about, parents indicated that they would like more information on:
• “Tutoring, reading, and math programs”
• “Child’s IEP and info being used to place student”
• “The IEP session”
• “The IEP test”
• “IEP and what I can do to ensure best education possible for my child”
• “Reading program for my child”
• “How to help my friends and family”
• “More programs the government is offering the students needing assistance in education”

The majority of these questions were answered in subsequent training sessions or after each training session when the researcher fielded questions or provided information to questions asked previously. Perhaps, having their needs met shaped the responses given to the session evaluation. These statements provide support for the hypothesis that parents will find the training useful; therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected.

Analysis of Question 3

The third question of the study sought to answer how CLD parents rate their own abilities to collaborate with teachers at the suburban middle school after engaging in PCT. The initial questionnaire, which utilized the 5 point Likert scale of never, rarely, sometimes, frequently, and always provided insight into the level of involvement parents
(n=7) had before the PCT training. The questionnaire was divided into four parts: (1) a demographic section, (2) parent involvement opportunities, (3) role of parent involvement, and (4) a needs assessment. The responses to the statements regarding parent involvement roles and opportunities provide an indication of how parents view parent involvement and the role it plays in the education of their student with disability. A descriptive analysis regarding the frequency was used. Reported means represent the average of the Likert scale ratings as reported by parents on the questionnaire.

First, and foremost, parents agreed that while improvement in academic performance has declined over the transition to middle school, their child’s race/culture is often not valued by the teachers ($\bar{\chi} = 3.00$) and that teachers rarely inquired about the child’s home experiences ($\bar{\chi} = 1.43$). Yet despite this feeling, parents reported sending their child to school ready to learn ($\bar{\chi} = 5.00$) and prepared them by discussing the importance of getting a good education ($\bar{\chi} = 4.29$) and behaving well in school ($\bar{\chi} = 5.00$).

Across the parents, participation in the school was less, as they volunteered less for fieldtrips or class parties ($\bar{\chi} = 1.29$) and rarely took part in community service activities at the school ($\bar{\chi} = 1.29$). Still, they were more likely to send materials to school ($\bar{\chi} = 3.57$) to support projects or activities there. Parents also were less likely to take their child to the library ($\bar{\chi} = 2.71$) or organize therapies with outside agencies ($\bar{\chi} = 1.86$). Similarly, parents were less inclined to participate in PTA ($\bar{\chi} = 1.29$) or SAC ($\bar{\chi} = 1.57$) meetings. They felt that limited opportunities in decision-making ($\bar{\chi} = 2.00$), limited invitations to participate in school governance ($\bar{\chi} = 1.71$) and inconvenient IEP meetings ($\bar{\chi} = 2.71$) afforded them less opportunities to actively participate in meaningful ways.
outside the home. Furthermore, the schools often did not provide information about outside agencies (χ̅ = 1.29) or helped them establish relationships with these agencies (χ̅ = 1.14). These low frequencies support the need for this training.

At the end of training, parent participants completed a 24-item summative evaluation using Likert scale to rate their level of learning. The 4-point scale included, in ascending order, “not at all”, “minimal”, “moderate”, and “very much”. Responses averages ranged from 2.60 to 4.0, of which 20 (83%) items had a 3.00 mean average or higher. The data indicates that parents found that the journal writing (χ̅ = 2.75) was minimally useful, because they “did not have much time to write” outside of class. During the focus group session, one parent shared that she thought, “It was a good idea”. Adding, “it was just hard to keep up with” as she had to “focus” on what she was doing’ or she would “forget” about what she was going to write. Another parent added that she “didn’t write much either” but that she did write “a little about [her] meeting” with the teacher and that the “meeting was good”. When asked about the importance of the action planning before meeting with the teacher, one parent responded that the action plan helped her “look good in front of the teacher”. Still, PCT had minimal to moderate influence on the parents’ abilities to collaborate with outside agencies (χ̅ = 2.60) as it did with their efficiency in establishing ongoing, effective collaboration with the community (χ̅ = 2.80) or frequency of volunteering opportunities (χ̅ = 2.80).

Overall, parents were empowered by the training events as related in the focus group discussion. Parent shared that the knowledge and skills gained about collaboration “opened up a whole new world”, and has allowed for “so many other things that I can do,
like what we did for the homework, that we can do now” because it was realized “how important [collaboration] is”.

In one parent’s journal reflection about her collaboration with her son’s teacher, she wrote, “I gained so much information about my son in his class that I can push him forward. With the information I got from this activity, I am likely to collaborate more”.

Another parent wrote, “Knowing the teacher on a personal level helped me to like her more because I didn’t like her before”.

When asked to relate the ways in which the training affected their knowledge and skills about special education programming, parents explained, “there was so much I didn’t know before.”, while another suggested, “the regular class was what we expected. When my child was placed in special education, even in the beginning, they didn’t give us enough information about other options. It seemed so cut and dry. Without this class, I would continue not knowing about other options”.

When asked how much influence the PCT had on their way of thinking about parent involvement in special education, one parent stated, “I’ve always been involved”, although she was “just making [her] way through since everything seemed set and sealed.” To which another parent added, “I became aware of things I was not aware of before. I knew questions to ask and thing to tell them about my child”. She learned “not be accepting of everything they have to say,” because before PCT, she did not realize that she “had a say” but since participating in PCT, she knew “better”. She added, “next year will be different”. Strong perceptions about the influence of PCT on the academic and social outcomes of the child are explained by one mother: “Since I met with the teacher, I had my son with me, and I made a commitment with my child and the teacher to do
more to help him. He got by this year, but it’s not going to be like that next year.” One parent added, “…..my child realizes that he cannot slide through because I will be more involved on the school campus, not just at home.”

During the focus group session, parents were asked if they saw themselves engaging more frequently in collaboration than before. A unanimous response affirming that they would was chorally given. When asked how, one parent responded that she could “visit more frequently in his class”, while others explained that they would “ask for weekly reports” or “volunteer more…maybe even join SAC.”, which she noted that she had “done more in the elementary school”.

What are some of the challenges facing parents and reducing their efforts to collaborate? When asked this question, parents stated that “work” schedules, not having “a car too get to the school”, schools that are “unorganized” or “do not provide interesting info[rmation]”, and a lack of “interest” on their part as being the most common reasons why they don’t participate as much as they would like to. However, they felt that the true threat to their involvement included “teacher attitude” and “lack of time”, to which one parent quickly added that she will “make time”.

Parent expectations of the training were met as parents informed that they got “more than” what they expected because the sessions were “informative and interesting”. Although they each had “never been to one” like this before, the parents hoped that future training would be provided to help them “deal with high school”.

Based on the analysis of the summative evaluation and the social validity provided by the parent comments in the journal and focus group sessions, CLD parents
from urban communities can increase their knowledge and skills through an effective program like PCT. Therefore, the null statement is rejected.

Analysis of Question 4

The fourth and final question of this study sought to determine the level of impact PCT would have on student ratings of their parents and teachers across several domains. A 22-item instrument consisting of a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from never, rarely, sometimes, often, and always was used. Each child participant was read questions to which they were asked to relate their answers to experiences during or after the PCT. Across five questions, students rated their teacher. The averages of the ratings ranged from 3.60 to 4.60. Students acknowledged that teachers provided work that made them think ($\bar{\chi} = 4.40$), wanted them to do well in school ($\bar{\chi} = 4.40$), asked about life at home ($\bar{\chi} = 3.60$), made them feel important ($\bar{\chi} = 3.80$) and liked them ($\bar{\chi} = 3.60$). Students stated that since their parents participated in PCT, the teachers “makes sure I do my work”, “gets me to participate more than before” and “talks to me about my work and helps me more.”

Similarly, parents were rated across eight questions relating to their involvement. The averages of the ratings for parents ranged from 1.60 to 5.00 with the lowest average rating relating to parents’ frequency of volunteering at school functions ($\bar{\chi} = 1.60$). Higher averages included the frequency of talking about the importance of school ($\bar{\chi} = 4.60$), talking about what was being learned at school ($\bar{\chi} = 4.20$), and talking about behaving well at school ($\bar{\chi} = 5.00$). Other domains, which included helping with homework ($\bar{\chi} = 3.80$), checking that all work is finished on time ($\bar{\chi} = 3.6$) helping to study
(χ =3.80), and attending meetings (χ =4.40). On the open-ended questions, student commented that parents were “helping a lot more now”, and “making sure I do my work”. Based on these findings, it is evident that, since participating in PCT, parents, were more involved across various levels of involvement and, as a result, were rated favorably by the their children. Teachers received moderate to high ratings by their students, as student responses revealed that teachers were more likely to express behaviors supporting higher expectations. These findings support the hypothesis that PCT does positively impact student ratings of their parents and teachers and further affirms the rejection of the null statement.

Summary of the Impact of Parent Collaborative Training

This study, which sought to examine the impact of PCT on the perceptions and behaviors of students with disabilities, their parents and teachers, was guided by four research questions. To answer the questions, the researcher utilized questionnaires, journals, and a focus group session to collect data. Each question and results from the data analysis is summarized below.

The first question sought to determine if a difference in teacher ratings regarding their perceptions and expectations of culturally and linguistically diverse (CLD) students with disabilities transitioning from an urban elementary school to a suburban middle school was different for students whose parents participated in PCT than for similar students whose parents did not participate. To answer the question, teachers rated students across three domains: (1) student capabilities, (2) student behavior and (3) teacher expectations of student. Results indicate that teachers, on average, tend to rate
students whose parents participate in PCT higher than students whose parents do not participate.

Question two wanted to determine: how CLD parents of children with disabilities would rate the content and usefulness of each component as they proceed through five sessions of training. Based on the analysis of the data collected, parents rated the PCT highly suggesting that the content, activities, and, materials were useful. In addition, the parents also thought the environment was suitable for training and that the facilitator was knowledgeable about the content, made the best use of time, and presented the information in clear, meaningful ways.

For the third question sought to determine how CLD parents from urban settings would rate their abilities to collaborate with teachers from a suburban middle school after participating in PCT. The analysis of the data suggest that parents rate their abilities highly after engaging in PCT due to an increase in awareness about special education and an increase in knowledge and skills about the collaborative process. Parents expressed a desire for continued involvement beyond PCT.

The fourth and final question of the study sought to determine the impact of PCT on student ratings of their parents and teachers. Upon analysis of the data, it was found that students rated their parents highly on their involvement since PCT, and felt that their teachers’ expectations and behaviors were supportive of their learning since their parents’ participation in PCT.

Overall evaluation of PCT suggests a direct influence on the behaviors of parents as well as students and teachers, who were indirectly affected by the parenting behaviors. The training influenced parents’ knowledge and skills, opinions of students regarding
their parents and teachers, and showed higher ratings for students across three domains: student behaviors, student capabilities, and teacher expectations.
CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS AND IMPLICATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Introduction

This study utilized questionnaires, journals, and a focus group session to collect data to determine if Parent Collaborative Training (PCT) impacts (1) teacher ratings of students based on parents’ participation in collaborative training, (2) perceptions and behaviors of parents regarding their involvement in special education, and (3) student ratings of their parent’s involvement as well as their teacher’s behaviors and expectations. This final chapter includes the following: (a) a summary of the results of this study, (b) the relationship between the results and the current literature, (c) the implications of the research findings, (d) the need for future research, and (e) the limitations of the study.

Summary of the Study

Parent training was offered to culturally and linguistically diverse (CLD) parents of middle school students with disabilities who transitioned from an urban elementary school to a suburban middle school. The objective of the training was twofold. First, PCT sought to increase parental awareness of special education services and the role the IEP plays in guiding those services. Secondly, the training sought to increase parent understanding of the collaborative process and the role it plays in student achievement.

Once a list of potential participants was generated by school officials, the researcher contacted the parents to recruit them as participants in the training and the larger study, which sought to determine the impact of training on the perceptions and behaviors of the parents who participate, their children, and their children’s teachers.
After recruiting participants and obtaining consent, training was conducted over five sessions. As part of the study, parents completed three questionnaires reflecting their perceptions of parent involvement and the training. In addition, parents kept journals documenting their experience as participants in the training and participated in a focus group session to provide additional insight. Childcare and refreshments were provided by PCT. Five participants completed all sessions of the training. Upon completion of the training, parents were compensated ten dollars for each session attended and were awarded certificates and medals to commemorate their experience. Teacher and student participants also completed questionnaires. Though teachers were compensated with a small token of appreciation, students received no compensation.

Description of the Parent Collaborative Training

PCT encompasses the principles and qualities of nationally recognized programs by focusing on the premise that families are central to any form of effective home-school collaboration. Thus, PCT supports and strengthens parents to become actively involved in their child’s learning through a variety of opportunities that allow children to tap into experiences that have “development-enhancing qualities” (Dunst, 2002). Furthermore, the development of PCT is based on the argument that families of students with disabilities, particularly those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, do not participate as frequently as their peers. The training, therefore, engages parents in a variety of activities and learning experiences to increase their knowledge and skills of special education and collaboration.

The theoretical basis underlying the PCT has been established by two interrelated theories: the Family Systems Theory (FST) and the Ecological Theory of Human
Development (ETHD). As a means of effectively meeting the needs of each member of a particular family, the former promotes the importance of understanding various demographic factors of the family, including, but not limited to race, ethnicity, culture, and socio-economic status. The latter identifies the family as its own microsystem, continuously interacting with several other systems. Each system must be adequately assessed and understood in order to for others outside those systems to collaborate effectively. Yet, despite longstanding mandates, a solid theoretical base, and extensive research supporting the inclusion of families within the educational process, professionals have been reluctant to embrace these concepts (Knight & Wadsworth, 1999).

Utilizing Epstein’s typologies of involvement, PCT provided families with strategies for effectively communicating with teachers regarding special education services. Epstein’s six areas of involvement include: (1) Parenting, (2) Learning at home, (3) Decision-making, (4) Communicating, (5) Volunteering, and (6) Collaborating with the community (Epstein, 1988, 1990, 1991, 1995, 2001). Through a series of well-implemented activities that took all 6 types of involvement into account, parents became involved in various ways in the home, at school, and in the community. These involvement activities were designed to foster a comprehensive approach to parent involvement (Epstein & Salinas, 2004). Through PCT, parents were better prepared to employ specific strategies that aligned outcome objectives with current teaching practices, while utilizing available resources to produce maximum student achievement results (Lovitt, 1999).
Relationship between the Results and the Current Literature

The constructs of the present study were based on the state of parent involvement for CLD families, as supported by the current literature. Researchers, educators, and parents alike, report low levels of involvement among CLD families, especially during the middle adolescent years (Harry, 2002; Rutherford & Billig, 1995; Turnbull & Turnbull, 2001; Zeedyk, et al., 2003). Academically, students from diverse backgrounds, including those who receive services in special education classes, tend to do less well when parent participation is limited. A student’s inability to perform up to standards may be a direct result of inappropriate programming created when parents and teachers do not collaborate (Blackbourn, et al., 2004; Lareau & Horvat, 1999; Pruitt & Wandry, 1998). When parents are not involved, students tend to be less motivated to perform, thus reducing the likelihood that these children will grow up to live productive lives (Chrispeels & Gonzalez, 2004; Simons-Morton & Crump, 2003).

The need for parent training, such as PCT, is warranted by the results of this study, which clearly demonstrated an impact among the community members who participated. In many instances, these results matched the focus of the literature to which the study was grounded. Hence, this section will provide a synopsis of those instances where the results of this study and the current literature, which supports it, are related.

Role of Parents in the Collaborative Process

Federal laws, such as IDEA, Goals 2000, and NCLB, all support the inclusion of parents in the education process. These laws stipulate that parents, a faction detrimental to the development and implementation of effective programming, are to be part of the decision-making process, particularly in the education of students with disabilities.
These parents are guaranteed the opportunity to participate in on-going collaborative experiences, such as the IEP meeting, and must be kept informed of student progress by their child’s teachers (Goals 2000, 1994; IDEA, 2004; NCLB, 2001). The basis for these mandates rests on the well-documented premise that potential benefits to student, parents, teachers, and schools are maximized when parents are engaged in their child’s education (Desimone, 1999; Epstein & Sheldon, 2002; Hill, et al., 2004; Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1997a, 1997b; Hoover-Dempsey, et al., 2005; Jeynes, 2003; Singer, 2002; Smalley & Reyes-Blanes, 2001).

The focus of this study, therefore, was to increase parents’ knowledge about the laws governing special education and parental involvement. In the module, *What is collaboration? Why is it important?*, parents were introduced to the laws and the basic principles of each. By becoming familiar with the laws governing involvement, parents were equipped with the basic ideologies supporting their efforts to become involved. Results of the study indicate that prior to PCT, parent participants were not fully aware of the stipulations of these laws or of their right to participate. Parents believed that every aspect of special education was “set and sealed”. This belief was one factor limiting their involvement. However, after being armed with the information that involvement was a right guaranteed by federal law, parents’ intention to participate increased. In fact, one parent felt that she did not realize that she “had a voice” in the decision-making process regarding special education services, but felt that, since PCT, she “know better” and that her involvement “would be different” in the future.

Still, it is important that parents make every effort to participate in their children’s education. By most accounts, the participation of CLD families is often limited to at-
home activities (Turnbull & Turnbull, 2001). As in the literature, participants of this study explained that they often did not participate in activities at school or the community as often as they did in their homes. Parents felt that their participation, which included sending their child to school on a regular basis ready to learn, talking to them about the importance of their education and good behaviors, and checking homework, were sufficient acts of parenting and involvement. They noted that school- and community-based involvement was often affected by contextual factors, such as work and family schedules, the potential effect of the involvement on student levels of social adjustment, and the fit between parent actions, student needs and teacher expectations. In addition, teacher attitudes and the mismatch between parents’ interests and school-sponsored activities often served as factors hindering the type and frequency of involvement. In essence, attending conferences, joining school governance, and volunteering were less among participants.

Data from student responses to questionnaire items show that the students strongly felt that their parents prepared them for the rigors of school by encouraging them to do well academically and socially and by being involved at home. Though students noted an increase in parent involvement activities such as attending meetings at school, they reported that their parents volunteering was limited, perhaps the result of a mismatch between school needs and what parents could offer.

Similarly, teachers noted that parent involvement at home, such as talking with their children about the importance of school, was higher than other types of involvement, particularly among parents who participated in training. In addition, there was a consensus among teachers that parent involvement was an important facet of
student and school success. They believed, however, that parents did not want to assume the role as participants in their children’s education by being involved at school and felt strongly that, as teachers, they provided many opportunities for involvement. Though the averages for teacher ratings of parents and students were higher among those who attended training than for those who did not, these ratings were still suggestive that teachers, in general, did not have high expectations for the parents or students, since they were perceived as deficient in their respective abilities.

Based on the fact that CLD parents often participated in less traditional ways (Blackbourn, et al., 2004), perhaps different from the school’s belief of what constituted involvement, activities were incorporated into PCT that extended parent participation beyond their homes. One essential component of the PCT was the homework activities that prescribed tasks to be undertaken in the home, school, and community across Epstein’s six types of involvement. The guiding principle for including these assignments was that parents would become empowered. Giving parents direct examples of involvement activities increased their awareness of varied ways for involvement beyond their present knowledge base. In addition, these activities helped parents gain more influence in shaping their child’s education (Barge & Loges, 2003; Billig, 2003; Epstein, 2001).

It was during the collaborative experience that parents truly began to see how influential they were in steering their child’s educational path. Being armed with knowledge about the importance of collaboration and the IEP, as well as the skills for effective communication, parents were able to take charge of self-initiated meetings with their child’s teacher. Parents reported being highly satisfied with the outcomes of their
collaborative experiences and were more inclined to participate in varied ways in the future. As Faires, Nichols, and Rickelman (2000) suggested, parents’ enthusiasm and commitment to be involved increase when parents are given the skills and opportunity to demonstrate their roles as participants in the collaborative process.

*Parent Involvement and Achievement*

As the literature indicates, parent involvement is highly correlated to student achievement. The more that parents are involved in their child’s education, the more likely that students experience academic and socio-emotional growth (Epstein & Sheldon, 2002; Hill, et al., 2004; Jeynes, 2003; Singer, 2002; Smalley & Reyes-Blanes, 2001; Westat & Policy Studies Associates, 2001). Likewise, the more that parents engage in collaborative experiences with school personnel, the more aware teachers become of differences that exist among families, thus, the more likely appropriate, meaningful services are provided by teachers (Owens & Dieker, 2003; Smalley and Reyes-Blanes, 2001). Still, due to the limited engagements among diverse families and teachers, students from CLD backgrounds who receive special education services tend to fare worse than their non-disabled peers, especially when they have transitioned from one school community to another (Rutherford & Billig, 1995; Gutman & Midgley, 2000; Harry, 2002; Jeynes, 2003).

Students in this study transitioned from an urban elementary school into a suburban middle school where the worldviews were often at odds with each other and where parental efforts to participate at school were often thwarted by factors such as time, transportation, limited opportunities for engagement, and decisions to withdraw their presence in an effort to bolster their child’s independence. Though CLD parents
want to be more active, their participation often wanes in the middle school years (Bauer & Shea, 2003) and they often relent to the authority of school personnel, who they believed knew what was in the best interest of their child (Kalyanpur, et al., 2000; Sileo & Sileo, 1996). In doing so, they allowed the school to make all of the decisions without their input or cultural considerations. With the belief that parents should always be involved in the development and implementation of programs and services (Pruitt & Wandry, 1988), PCT activities were implemented to inform parents that their involvement was crucial to the academic and social development of their children, even in the middle grades.

In addition, PCT activities supported parent involvement at home, school and in the community. By educating parents, PCT increased the types and frequency of parental involvement, which, according to Berger (2004) contributes significantly to student success rates. In essence, better-educated parents are involved more. Parents who are involved more are able to support their children better. A growth in self-efficacy, which results from being involved in a well-planned parent education program designed to teach new skills, is often the reason for increased parental involvement (Deslandes & Bertrand, 2005; Sanders & Wooley, 2004; Shumow & Lomax, 2005).

Parents who participated in PCT expressed a growth in knowledge and skills. They felt better prepared to help their children grow academically and socially and realized the importance of continued involvement in their children’s life during their middle school years. Parents were in strong agreement that PCT influenced their parenting practices, knowledge of special education, and ability to collaborate and that
they would implement their learning to seek appropriate services for their children and to make lasting differences on the children’s educational outcomes.

Although no specific figures were collected on student academic growth during this study, an analysis of the data indicates that students, whose parents participated in PCT, perceived their parents’ involvement as a major contributor to their own efforts to manage their learning and maintain adequate grades. In addition, students felt that teachers’ interest in their learning had increased since PCT as teachers showed more support of the students’ acquisition of information. In fact, since PCT, the behaviors of the parents and teachers, made an impact on the students, in that the children all believed they would successfully transition to the next grade.

Similarly, teacher ratings of students, whose parents attended training, were higher than the ratings of the control group. The data indicated that teachers believed that, of the students reported on, students whose parents were involved in PCT placed a higher value on education, were more capable of maintaining satisfactory academic progress, were more likely to transition on to the next grade successfully, and would be more inclined to lead independent lives as model citizens.

Based on the evidence of this study, PCT has demonstrated direct and indirect influences on academic growth. When parents believe that they have the skills to participate in on-going collaborative experiences, they tend to do so more frequently. Through these efforts, parents share information about their cultural ideologies and expectations. The interactions between parents and teachers directly challenge the assumptions that teachers hold. When teachers work alongside parents as equal partners, their attitudes and behaviors are shaped accordingly. Teachers begin to understand the
differences that exist among families and are more inclined to provide activities that consider individual needs. As a result, the desire to be successful is awakened among CLD students with disabilities and achievement levels rise.

*Increase of CLD Populations in ESE*

The disproportionate representation of minority students in special education has been well-documented (Harry, 2002; Patton, 1998). Estimates indicate that the present numbers of CLD students in ESE is expected to increase, particularly since the rate of growth among the entire population of students with disabilities is three times higher than other student populations (Livingston & Wirt, 2005; McLeskey, Tyler, & Flippin, 2004). These high numbers of CLD students being served in special needs classrooms often correlate with low achievement, as children do not have equal access to appropriate educational programming. Despite the fact that the student population is becoming increasingly diverse, a major population of the teachers are White (Billingsley, 2002, 2004), with most having limited experiences interacting with racially diverse groups (Blackbourn, et al., 2004) and a high percent teaching with less than adequate credentials (Billingsley & McLesjey, 2004; Carr, 2000; Darling-Hammond, 2001; Warren, 2002).

As with the national trend, 68% of the teachers at the middle school in this study are White, while 49% of the students are minorities. Among the nine ESE teachers, all are white. Of the 12% of the students with disabilities, 48% are students from diverse backgrounds. Parent-student dyads were from CLD backgrounds. These existing conditions lead to a disparity in services (Tyler, Yzquierdo, Lopez-Reyna, & Flippin, 2004), particularly when culture and language create educational barriers that place student at risk for academic failure (Sileo & Sileo, 1996).
An important component of PCT was to help parents understand the dynamics of special education and the important role collaboration plays in accessing programs that increased the likelihood that students will get a fair chance at experiencing success. Moreover, the information presented to parents during PCT provided insight into service delivery options and how the IEP guides such delivery. Parents were engaged in hands-on activities that allowed them to validate their concerns about student placement and services. Parents were informed of the limitations that can result if a child is misplaced in the system and how active involvement by knowledgeable parents was, perhaps, the single most important action that ensured proper placement.

In fact, CLD students have significantly higher placements in high incidence programs perhaps due to limited considerations for racial and economical group level differences when interventions are being contemplated (Artiles, et al., 2002). It is important, then, that the gross overrepresentation of minority students in special education be challenged by informed parents who question placements, which may have resulted from misidentification and misdiagnosis. In view of the fact that teachers often make generalizations about students and their families based on demographic variables (Desimone, 1999), it was important that parents share their expectations for student outcomes with school personnel. By participating in PCT, parents were taught to have a voice and were encouraged to make informed decisions.

The coursework and extension activities in PCT collectively engaged parents in developing a viewpoint regarding the importance of providing appropriate opportunities for students (Barges & Loges, 2003). These activities further challenged the parent to look at special education programming and determine if the services being provided will
lead to their expected outcomes. Parents were also taught to be realistic in their expectations as each student’s present level of performance can be influenced by their own reluctance to perform at their highest potential level. In addition, parents investigated the process of placement in special education services. Still, the overall intent of these activities was to ensure that students were correctly placed and that all options to find the least restrictive environment and programming had been explored (Pruitt & Wandry, 1988). Parents revealed that they were unaware of their rights and responsibilities regarding access to their children’s school record and were naïve about the process of placement and the implication being in special education had on a child’s long-term goals if services are not properly implemented. After the training concluded, parents reported a sense of confidence in their abilities to share information with other parents and felt that it was their duty to inform others, especially since they felt the “system” did not adequately “inform” them of their rights. When parents share their knowledge with others, those parents can in turn inform other parents and so forth. With knowledge, parents can affect the course of their child’s education (Barges & Loges, 2003; Billig, 2003; Epstein, 2001) and perhaps reduce the number of CLD children being served in highly restrictive settings or in special education altogether.

Student reports indicate that they feel that they will be successful in transitioning to the next grade and most have goals that extend well beyond the scope of interventions being provided based on their IEP. However, if the discontinuity persists into high school, many of the student’s goals will not materialize. Parents and teachers need to inform students about realistic goal setting without limiting their quest to realize their dreams. Nevertheless, it is important, too, that teachers have high expectations for CLD
students even when the odds seem stacked against a student (Warren, 2002). Though students had high ratings of their teachers' behaviors and attitude, teachers' ratings of students' capabilities were moderate to low. Conceivably, teacher beliefs transfer into actions that influence the outcomes of children in that, if the child is of the opinion that he or she has the capabilities and feel success is imminent, the quality of work and expectations of the teacher will determine whether the child will be prepared to reach his or her full potential. This hypothesis intensifies the need for on-going parent involvement as well as family centered interventions such as PCT.

The Impact of Parent Collaborative Training on Perceived Barriers to Parent Involvement

Smalley and Reyes-Blanes (2001) suggest that the skills and abilities, as perceived by parents, are factors that influence their decisions to participate. Hoover-Dempsey, et al., (2005), support this premise, adding that self-efficacy and role construction were motivating factors for involvement. Parents who believe that they are influential in shaping their child’s education assume the role of involved parents more frequently. Contextual factors such as family obligations, transportation, childcare, and prior negative experiences (Bauer & Shea, 2003; Peña, 2000), as well as socio-cultural factors, such as negative characterizations of families by teachers, limited engagements with educators from similar backgrounds, and lack of cultural sensitivity by teachers when extending engagement opportunities (Billingsley, 2002, 2004; Rao, 2000), often impede collaboration.

Studies (Chrispeels & Rivero, 2000; Hoover-Dempsey, et al., 2005; Shumow & Lomax, 2001) have demonstrated that parent role constructions and self-efficacy were
enhanced when parents were given information about the education system, taught how to interact with school and teachers, and given directions and resources on how to help their children at home. Hence, PCT included activities that allowed parents to demonstrate competencies reflective of these subject matters. Further more, a goal of PCT was to engage parents in collaboration with teachers so that the parents’ cultural values and personal goals could be shared and an awareness and understanding of parent needs could be acquired by teachers (Geenen, et al., 2001).

In this study, parents reported similar factors that impede their desires to be engaged in collaborative experiences with their children’s teachers. However, when armed with “new information…discovered”, and realizing that “being a part of [the] child’s education is important”, parents quickly assumed their role in the collaborative process and became engaged in activities at home, in school, and in the community. Parents vowed to be more involved and agreed with one parent’s assertion that when factors such as time and transportation become evident, it is important to “make time” and “take as many buses” as possible to get to the school. Another parent explained that she wanted to get involved in school governance, as she did at the elementary school, and that she would “find a way”.

When asked about their parents’ involvement, students responded that their parents’ involvement had increased across several areas, with the exception of volunteering. Parent and teacher data support the same claim. When parents are involved, the climate of the school becomes responsive to the needs of the child (Billig, 2003). Student self-esteem also rises and a belief in their own abilities is realized when parents are engaged (Bauer & Shea, 2003). Students in this study reported a strong belief
in their abilities, which may be attributed to their relatively high ratings of protective factors such as being supported by their teachers and a sense of belonging to the school. These factors have shown to have a marked effect on student achievement and when in place, the barriers to student success diminish (Gutman & Midgely, 2000).

Still, the one true barrier, “teacher attitude”, still permeates, as evidenced by the responses of parents and teachers. Parents declared that the teachers’ mannerisms were perhaps, the most influential factors in their decisions to withdraw from involvement in school activities prior to PCT. In addition, parents spoke of limited opportunities for engagement because they believed that teachers did not care to extend opportunities that were interesting to them.

Results from Lareau & Horvart’s (1999) study indicate that teacher views on their efforts to engage can be quite different from how parents perceived them. The same holds true for this study. Teachers reported that they did not believe that parents wanted to participate and, consequently, were operating on the assumption that the parents lacked many of the essential skills necessary to do so. Nevertheless, since being involved with PCT, parents felt that the collaborative experience helped to increase their knowledge and skills and that they were better equipped to deal with any challenges encountered, including teacher attitudes and behaviors. They knew that their child’s achievement was influenced by the teacher’s beliefs and actions and were not willing to let the teachers be the only one who made the decisions. Due to their involvement in PCT, parents expressed a renewed desire of make a difference in their childrens’ education and were willing to share their expertise with other parents so that they, too, could overcome the barriers that limit meaningful interactions with school personnel.
PCT Addresses the Positive Factors of Participation

For children with disabilities transitioning from an urban elementary school into a suburban middle school, participation of parents is crucial. Educators must be willing to facilitate meaningful involvement opportunities for CLD families. By providing these opportunities for collaboration, parents can increase their knowledge base by learning practical strategies and specific skills that can benefit their children. When collaborating, parents can share their expertise, be seen as equal partners, and develop a relationship of mutual trust and understanding (Dunst, 2002; Peck, 2000). This partnership may help reduce the belief held by teachers that parents do not want to be involved. Teachers may come to realize that traditional involvement declines as children grow older and that it is important that they extend opportunities to parents. Still, programs such as PCT can help build a parent’s self-efficacy, making them more inclined to initiate meetings with school personnel based on their own needs.

Workshops should be designed to increase parents’ understanding and skills (Hoover-Dempsey, et al., 2005) as parents need training regarding specific procedures for helping their children succeed in school (Faires, Nichols, & Rickelman, 2000). Thus, parent education programs should strive to enhance the skills and self-efficacy of parents (Deslandes & Bertrand, 2005). Role construct, a primary predictor of parent involvement, can be influenced by a culturally sensitive parent education program and the knowledge gained from it (Chrispeels & Gonzalez, 2004).

Chrispeels and Gonzalez (2004), in a study involving a 9-week education program aimed at influencing parents’ knowledge, beliefs, and actions as well as identifying pathways, by which parents became involved, found that the knowledge gained from the
education program was the strongest predictor for involvement of parents in their children’s education. For parents of elementary and secondary school students, an increase in knowledge of how to be involved became a motivator for their actual involvement. Parent education programs were shown to have a profound effect on motivation, particularly for diverse family groups, who respond to invitations for involvement when information is provided in culturally sensitive ways. Findings from the current study parallel the literature showing that when CLD parents engaged in PCT, which was specifically designed to meet their needs, their knowledge of special education programming increased and their collaborative skills were enhanced. Tooled with information and the ability to engage in meaningful opportunities with teachers, the parents of this study indicate having the inclination to participate more.

In response, students in this study reported an immediate awareness of their parents’ involvement behaviors and responded favorably. They had high ratings for their own abilities and believed that they will find success in their efforts to become achievers. Similarly, teachers were more likely to view students, whose parents participated in PCT more positively and were more apt to motivate these students to do better in school. The teacher’s expectations, perceptions of student capabilities, and perceptions of student behaviors were positively rated for students whose parents participated in training, and as a result, teachers provided an environment more conducive to student learning.

Implications

Research supports the assertion that parent involvement is beneficial to students, parents, teachers, and schools (Desimone, 1999; Epstein & Sheldon, 2002; Hill, et al., 2004; Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1997a, 1997b; Hoover-Dempsey, et al., 2005; Jeynes,
Though many CLD parents want to participate, they often do not, especially during the middle adolescent years (Harry, 2002; Rutherford & Billig, 1995; Zeedyk, et al., 2003). Limited opportunities for engagement limit the educational outcomes for students, more so for students with disabilities (Harry, 2003).

For too long, educators have been concerned with the plight of the “average” student. With mandates such as the No Child Left Behind Act demanding higher standards for students, it is imperative that students with disabilities be considered equal to their non-disabled peers. The literature and this study support the decline of parent participation in the middle grades. Students with disabilities are further disadvantaged when parents are not engaged. Researchers, policy makers, educators, and colleges of education must address the need for rigorously evaluated parent training programs that consider the direct needs of CLD parents of students with disabilities. When schools offer parent education program to increase parent knowledge and skills regarding special education programming, parents become aware of the need to be involved in the decisions being made about their children’s education and are more inclined to do so. When parents are engaged, students benefit. The findings of this research, therefore, have direct implications on parents, students, teachers and schools. These implications will be addressed further in this section.

Implications for Parents

At the onset of this study, parents reported that they often displayed effective parenting behaviors that supported their child’s education. However, for most of these parents, these behaviors were limited to at-home activities such as helping with
homework. Furthermore, limited invitations for their involvement in the school were extended, though school personnel believed that parental involvement was an important factor in student success. These limited opportunities were often supported by the teachers’ assumptions that parents were not willing to become involved.

However, as parents progressed through training, they became involved in activities that extended their involvement into the school and community. Parents increased their understanding of the important role collaboration plays in accessing appropriate services for their children. Furthermore, the results of this study show that the behaviors of parents influenced the perceptions and subsequent behaviors of teachers and students. Teachers were more likely to display supportive behaviors and attitudes towards students whose parent participate in school. Students positively rated their parents’ involvement since participating in PCT. These positive outcomes suggest that it is important that parents seek opportunities for involvement. If involvement opportunities do not readily present themselves, parents must become initiators of such opportunities.

Parents must also use involvement opportunities to dispel the myth that absence translates into non-caring. Through their participation, parents can inform teachers of the plight of CLD parents from urban settings. Teachers can become informed about how parents manage their days, which are often overwhelmed by tight work schedules, home maintenance, and child-care. Teachers can use this knowledge to extend occasions for engagement that take the culture and lifestyles of the families into consideration. Moreover, collaborative experiences help parents increase their knowledge and skills while sharing cultural values and personal goals. By being involved, parents have the
medium to influence teacher perceptions of their home life and culture. These opportunities can greatly reduce misunderstandings and the role of each participant can be better understood (Geenen, et al., 2001; Nunn & McMahan, 2000).

In addition to influencing teachers, parents can also make an impact on how their children view their involvement. The results of this study show that students rated their parents highly in terms of engagement after participating in PCT. Furthermore, by engaging in various activities across the home, school, and community, parents can increase their child’s awareness of how important their performance in school is and consequently, influence the child’s attitude and behavior towards school success.

Still, since parents need training regarding specific procedures for helping their children succeed in school (Faires, Nichols, & Rickelman, 2000). It is important that parents seek workshops designed to increase their understanding and skills (Hoover-Dempsey, et al., 2005). In addition, parents need to become members of advocacy groups such as the National Parent-Teacher Association, so that they can increase their sphere of support and influence. Most often, it is within these advocate and training groups that parents increase their parenting skills and become better collaborators.

**Implications for Students**

The results of this study imply that student success hinge on the interactions of their parents and teachers. It is important then, that parents and teachers collaborate to identify appropriate programming and services that help students maximize their learning potential. When parents interact with school personnel, students become aware of the benefits it has on their education. It is this awareness that drives student motivation (Chrispeels & Gonzalez, 2004; Simons-Morton & Crump, 2003).
Despite peer pressure and the need for independence, students should encourage their parents to be involved in their education in varied ways across multiple grade level. If students informed parents of the personal impact active, on-going involvement has on their motivation to do well, perhaps, parents would be more inclined to participate. These student initiated requests for involvement would be well received by parents, especially since parents have the desire to become involved in the classroom, become volunteers at school, participate in school government, and support their children with homework assistance (Smalley & Reyes-Blanes, 2001). Yet, the reluctance of parents to become involved has developed out of the need to build a sense of autonomy among their children, especially as they enter the middle adolescent years (Rutherford & Billig, 1995; Zeedyk, et al., 2003). Students, though, can encourage their parents to keep involved and should seek every opportunity to do so.

**Implications for Teachers**

Teachers have the propensity to operate on the assumptions they have of students and their families. For CLD students with disabilities who come from urban settings, these teacher behaviors can limit the opportunities students have at becoming life-long learners. To gain a better understanding of CLD families, teachers need to become proactive in their efforts to engage parents in educational programming. Likewise, teachers need to take every occasion to examine their own biases and be willing to learn beyond their limited scope of reference.

From these interactions, teachers will come to understand the conditions that may limit CLD parent participation, particularly those who have children with disabilities. Furthermore, teachers need to become more accommodating of the differences that exist
among families and be prepared to accommodate those differences. When teachers develop this level of understanding, they expand their repertoire of knowledge and skills, which enable them to provide appropriate, meaningful programming to meet student needs (Owens & Dieker, 2003).

**Implications for School**

Schools have a tremendous responsibility when it comes to addressing the needs of cultural and linguistically diverse families, particularly those whose children receive special education services. As this study demonstrated, parents want to be involved but feel that activities in the schools are limited in that they do not take the needs of CLD families into consideration. If schools evaluate their current parent involvement practices against cultural needs, they will realize that, in some instances, a mismatch with culturally diverse groups exists. They must then be able to develop programs that will link parental needs with involvement opportunities.

By providing varying levels of parent involvement opportunities that address the needs of these diverse groups, parents are more likely to become interested in the opportunities that are made available and be inclined to participate on a more frequent basis. Since increases in the frequency and levels of participation among CLD parents of students with disabilities do improve student outcomes, it is in the best interest of schools to provide opportunities for parents to share their rich knowledge base regarding their child’s abilities. This is particularly important in this era of high stakes testing and accountability when a school’s existence is solely based on student performance.

Parents also need opportunities to increase their knowledge and skills. Schools can provide training that can help them focus on their child’s strengths rather than their
disabilities. “If families have limited understanding of the education system….relating information in appropriate formats can be helpful” (Hoover-Dempsey, et al., 2005, 119-121). Formats such as workshops and specific training activities would be advantageous for school communities that design and implement these opportunities to learn. By participating in learning activities, parents can discover practical strategies that are beneficial to their children. Knowing that parental involvement is vital to student success, a school’s willingness to provide CLD parents from urban areas with these learning experiences may increase the propensity that new skills will be implemented and long-term gains by students will be sustained.

In addition to providing opportunities for parents to become involved in meaningful ways, school leaders have the responsibility in shaping the thoughts and actions of teachers by encouraging and facilitating meetings between school personnel and CLD families. Schools must take the needs of the parents into consideration when planning such meetings. Considerations for location, time, and activities must be made when including families from diverse background. This is especially important when, as in the instance of this study, the parents live several miles away from the school. Nevertheless, if school leaders set the tone for involvement, teachers will be more inclined to follow-through in ways more meaningful to CLD families.

Still, much more has to be done to improve the skills of teachers working with diverse family groups. Teachers must be taught how to build collaborative relationships with diverse families. Furthermore, teachers need to understand the implications of the deficit model, which further limits their expectations of parents, and inherently, students. Training, therefore, should be developed to provide teachers with experiences of working
with diverse families. Teachers and parents should have input in the development of these training. When teachers are involved in the development of these programs, the likelihood that their learning will be put into practice is realized.

Future Research

When considering the implications of the present study, several extensions can be conducted to determine if the results were, in fact, due to training, and if so, if these results can sustain its impact beyond training. A follow-up would be warranted at intervals up to one year from the culmination of training. At 4-months, and then again at 9-months and one-year, the researcher can collect data to determine if parents were still satisfied with the process. Furthermore, an examination of the types and frequency of parent involvement activities since training would provide insight into the long-term impact of training.

When considering long-term influence, an examination of student achievement levels could be undertaken at the beginning, mid-point and end of the school year to determine whether parent involvement has a direct impact. Achievement can be measured by looking specifically at standardized test results, grades, GPA, attendance, student behaviors, attitudes towards school, commitment to schoolwork, and propensity to drop out of school. Similarly, direct observational data can be collected to verify if student achievement is directly attributed to cultural issues or school climate. Furthermore, an inquiry into how students rate their level of social adjustment as they transition from the urban elementary school to a suburban middle school is warranted since socio-cultural factors play an important part in children’s ability to adapt to new
environments. The issue of continuity between ecologies is important when designing programs that are relevant to CLD students’ success in special education programs.

In addition, a major focus of the present study was to determine the level of impact PCT had on teacher ratings of students. Follow-up interviews can be conducted to determine if there were changes in teacher perceptions of students and their families since the study’s end. Results of such a study may provide the rationale for teacher training where teachers would learn essential skills for working with students from diverse backgrounds. On the other hand, the results may demonstrate the need for training where parents and teachers train side-by-side to learn essential skills regarding cultural reciprocity and collaboration.

In the present study, a number of parents self-selected out of the training. Several theories exist as to why they decided not to return. Having limited time to participate, being intimidated by the collaborative process, struggling with tasks requiring reading and written responses, and feeling that each task become more work than anticipated are hypothesized as reasons for parental withdrawal. A larger study can be undertaken to test each hypothesis. Such a study may provide insight into actions that can be implemented to compensate for a parents inclination to withdraw from training.

It is important that research in this area of parent involvement be continued, perhaps in replicating this study. Perhaps, providing this training during the month students are diagnosed would help parents understand the importance their involvement would play. Nevertheless, researching the impact of training for CLD parents of students with disabilities is important, but a complete understanding of the dynamics that govern the success of training cannot be limited to the initial questions of this research.
Information gathered from these potential studies would provide information about the significance of the training and therefore indicate if future trainings are defensible.

Limitations of the Study

The potential limitations of the study are:

1. Participation in PCT was voluntary.

2. The sample groups were not randomly sampled from the larger population and therefore not representative of the populace, whereby limiting the ability to generalize the findings.

3. The sample group was limited to parents in a predetermined school who consented to participate and was further limited by the actual number who participated. A relatively high attrition rate served as a factor to the limited sample.

4. There was a lack of control for extraneous variables. These variables increased the likelihood that uncontrolled factors accounted for the differences experienced between groups, thus creating the need to consider this limitation when analyzing and interpreting the results.

5. The survey instruments were modeled from instruments used in similar attitudinal studies. These instruments are not standardized, so reliability or validity of the results based on this premise are limited. Inferences from the results should be interpreted with caution.

6. Sessions were conducted over a relatively short period; hence, the training may not have had as great an impact that it potentially could have had. Likewise, the
level of impact could have been affected by the time of year in which the study occurred.

**Personal Statement of the Researcher**

This intervention was both educational and enjoyable to the participants whose comments attest to their levels of satisfaction with training components and the facilitator. Furthermore, it was most satisfying to the researcher, that while implementing the training, the level of involvement, commitment, and appreciation expressed by parents made the process completely worthwhile. Perhaps this expression can be summed up in the very words said by one of the parents when asked, “What motivated you to come to all sessions of PCT?” She said, “the spirit of the teacher.”
April 20, 2006

Michelle Urquhart
1716 Tailo Way
Orlando, FL 32818

Dear Ms. Urquhart:

With reference to your protocol #06-3437 entitled, “Improving Parent Involvement for Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Parents of Middle School Students with Disabilities from Urban Settings in Suburban Schools,” I am enclosing for your records the approved, expedited document of the UCFIRB Form you had submitted to our office. This study was approved on 4/18/06. The expiration date will be 4/17/07.

Should there be a need to extend this study, a Continuing Review form must be submitted to the IRB Office for review by the Chairman or full IRB at least one month prior to the expiration date. This is the responsibility of the investigator. Please notify the IRB office when you have completed this research study.

Please be advised that this approval is given for one year. Should there be any addendums or administrative changes to the already approved protocol, they must also be submitted to the Board through use of the Addendum/Modification Request form. Changes should not be initiated until written IRB approval is received. Adverse events should be reported to the IRB as they occur.

Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call me at 407-823-2901.

Please accept our best wishes for the success of your endeavors.

Cordially,

Barbara Ward
Barbara Ward, CIM
UCF IRB Coordinator
(FWA00000351 Exp. 5/13/07; IRB00001138)

Copies: IRB File
Lisa Dieker, Ph.D.

BWjm
THE UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL FLORIDA
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD (IRB)

IRB Committee Approval Form

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR(S): Michelle Urquhart
Supervisor: Lisa Dicker, Ph.D.
IRB#: 06-3437

PROJECT TITLE: Improving Parent Involvement for Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Parents of Middle School Students with Disabilities from Urban Settings in Suburban Schools

[X] New project submission [ ] Resubmission of lapsed project #
[ ] Continuing review of lapsed project # [ ] Continuing review of #
[ ] Study expires: [ ] Initial submission was approved by expedited review
[ ] Suspension of enrollment email sent to PI, entered on spreadsheet, administration notified

Chair

[ ] Expedited Approval

Dated: 4/12/06
Cite how qualifies for expedited review: minimal risk and #

[ ] Exempt

Dated: 4/12/06
Cite how qualifies for exempt status: minimal risk and #

Expiration Date: 4/12/07

IRB Reviewers:

Signed:__________
Dr. Jacqueline Byers, Chair

Signed:__________
Dr. Sophia Dziegielewski, Vice-Chair

Signed:__________
Dr. Tracy Dietz, Vice-Chair

Complete reverse side of expedited or exempt form

[ ] Waiver of documentation of consent approved
[ ] Waiver of consent approved
[ ] Waiver of HIPAA Authorization approved

NOTES FROM IRB CHAIR (IF APPLICABLE):

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________
APPENDIX B

ORANGE COUNTY APPROVAL FORM
**Requester's Name:** Michelle D. Urquhart  
**Date:** September 6, 2005

**Address:** Home: 1716 Tallo Way, Orlando, FL 32818  
**Phone:** 407-293-8268

**Business:** N/A  
**Phone:** 407-823-5314

**Project Director or Advisor:** Dr. Lisa Dieker  
**Phone:** 407-823-3885

**Address:** University of Central Florida, College of Education, P.O. Box 161250, Orlando, FL 32816-1250

**Degree Sought:**  
- Associate
- Doctorate
- Bachelor's
- Master's
- Specialist

**Project Title:** Improving the outcomes for middle school students with disabilities from urban schools - a suburban school: The impact of parent collaboration training on teacher perceptions and expectations of students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds

**Estimated Involvement**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Personnel/Centers</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Amount of Time (Days, Hours, Etc.)</th>
<th>Specify/Describe Grades, Schools, Special Needs, Etc.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>30 mins. each</td>
<td>Special Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>30 mins. each</td>
<td>Special Education, General Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrators</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schools/Centers</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1 day 10 hours over 5 sessions</td>
<td>Middle School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others (specify)</td>
<td>Parents</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Specify possible benefits to students/school system:**  
- Increased parental involvement/collaboration.
- Increase awareness of perceptions held by parents, students, and teachers regarding parental involvement expectations.

**Assurance**

Using the proposed procedures and instrument, I hereby agree to conduct research in accordance with the policies of the Orange County Public Schools. Deviations from the approved procedures shall be cleared through the Senior Director of Accountability, Research, and Assessment. Reports and materials shall be supplied as specified.

**Requester's Signature:** 

**Approval Granted:**  
- Yes
- No  
**Date:** 10-3-05

**Signature of the Senior Director for Accountability, Research, and Assessment:**

**NOTE TO REQUESTER:** When seeking approval at the school level, a copy of this form, signed by the Senior Director, Accountability, Research, and Assessment, should be shown to the school principal.

Reference School Board Policy GCS, p. 249
September 21, 2005

To Whom It May Concern:

This letter is being submitted on behalf of Michelle Urquhart, a graduate student at the University of Central Florida currently working towards completing her Doctoral degree. As part of her study, Ms. Urquhart will be conducting a study, entitled: “Improving the Outcomes of Middle School Students with Disabilities from Urban Settings in Suburban Schools: The Impact of Parent Collaborative Training on Teacher Perceptions and Expectations of Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Students”. I have given Ms. Urquhart permission to conduct this study on our campus and with our parents and teachers. It is understood that this study will commence in early October and be completed by the end of March. If anyone should have any questions or concerns, they may contact me at the number on this letterhead.

Respectfully submitted,

[Redacted]

Cc: Michelle Urquhart
    Lee Baldwin, OCPS
APPENDIX D

RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS
Parent Collaborative Training

Home  →  School

Student Success

Increasing Achievement Opportunities for Students with Disabilities through Effective Home-School Partnerships

PARENT SURVEY INSTRUMENTS
- Initial Questionnaire
- Session Evaluation
- Summative Questionnaire
Parent Collaborative Training

Parent Involvement and Collaborative Experiences Questionnaire

As a parent or guardian, you are your child’s first teacher. You possess an abundance of knowledge and skills that are important to your child’s well-being at home, in school, or in the community. When your child leaves home and goes to school each day, your child’s teacher becomes important to him or her. Together, you and your child’s teacher can work together in ways that help your child do better in school. So, the relationship that you have with your child’s teacher and school is important.

We would like to gain some information about you, your child, and the relationship you have with your child’s school teacher, as well as information on your involvement in your child’s school life. To help, we ask that you take a moment to complete the following questionnaire. Directions for each section are provided below.

Directions: Please place a check mark next to the appropriate response for each statement. Please check only one.

**About You:**

How are you related to this child?
- [ ] Mother
- [ ] Father
- [ ] Stepmother
- [ ] Stepmother
- [ ] Aunt
- [ ] Uncle
- [ ] Grandmother
- [ ] Grandfather
- [ ] Guardian
- [ ] Other relative
- [ ] Advocate
- [ ] Other, Explain:

Which best describes your age?
- [ ] 10-24
- [ ] 25-34
- [ ] 35-44
- [ ] 45-54
- [ ] 55 or older

Which best describes your educational level?
- [ ] Some high school or less
- [ ] High school graduate
- [ ] Some college
- [ ] 2 year degree
- [ ] 4 year degree
- [ ] Post graduate study

Which best describes your family’s yearly household income?
- [ ] $15,000 or less
- [ ] $15,001 to $35,000
- [ ] $35,001 to $55,000
- [ ] $55,001 to $75,000
- [ ] Over $75,000

What is your race?
- [ ] Asian
- [ ] African-American
- [ ] Caucasian (non-Hispanic)
- [ ] Hispanic/Latino
- [ ] Pacific Islander
- [ ] Other, Explain:

What is the primary language spoken in your home?
- [ ] English
- [ ] Spanish
- [ ] Creole
- [ ] Other, Explain:

Please continue on next page
Directions: Please circle the number that best rates your participation in your child’s life across six areas of parent involvement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1=Never</th>
<th>2=Rarely</th>
<th>3=Sometimes</th>
<th>4=Frequently</th>
<th>5=Always</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

### What efforts have you taken to keep involved in your child’s schooling this year?

#### Parenting

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How often have you done these this school year?</th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Frequently</th>
<th>Always</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I send my child to school ready to learn.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have discussions with my child about the importance of a good education.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I talk to my child about what he or she is learning.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I teach my child about the importance of behaving well at school.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Learning at Home

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How often have you done these this school year?</th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Frequently</th>
<th>Always</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I help my child with homework assignments.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I check to see that all assignments are completed on time.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I assist my child with studying for tests.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Decision Making

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How often have you done these this school year?</th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Frequently</th>
<th>Always</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I attend IEP meetings.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I attend PTA meetings.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I attend SAC meetings.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please continue on next page
Directions: Please circle the number that best rates your participation in your child’s life across six areas of parent involvement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Communicating</th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Frequently</th>
<th>Always</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I attend parent-teacher conferences when requested by my child’s teacher or school personnel.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I contact my child’s teacher or other school personnel when I have concerns about my child.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I inform my child’s teacher or other school personnel about situations that may affect my child’s learning or behavior.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Volunteering</th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Frequently</th>
<th>Always</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I volunteer to help with fieldtrips or class parties.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I volunteer by sending some of the items needed for special projects in the classroom.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I volunteer in community service activities at school.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Collaborating with Community</th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Frequently</th>
<th>Always</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I take my child to a library.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I organize therapies for my child.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I involve my child in community service activities.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please continue on next page
Directions: Please circle the number that best rates the efforts of your child’s teacher or school across six areas of parent involvement.

1=Never  2=Rarely  3=Sometime  4=Frequently  5=Always

What efforts has your child’s teacher or school made to keep you involved in your child’s schooling this year?

### Parenting

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How often has your child’s teacher or school done these this school year?</th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Frequently</th>
<th>Always</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>My child’s school provides workshops for parents of students with disabilities at school.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My child’s teachers inquire about my child’s experiences at home.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Learning at Home

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How often has your child’s teacher or school done these this school year?</th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Frequently</th>
<th>Always</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>My child’s teacher provides opportunities for me to work with my child at home.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My child’s teacher informs me of activities that I can use at home to help my child find academic success.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My child’s teacher provides me with strategies to help me teach appropriate social skills at home.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Decision Making

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How often has your child’s teacher or school done these this school year?</th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Frequently</th>
<th>Always</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>My child’s teacher plans IEP meetings that are scheduled at my convenience.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My child’s school invites me to participate in school decision-making opportunities.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My child’s school invites me to participate in school governance (i.e. PTA, SAC, etc.).</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please continue on next page
Directions: Please circle the number that best rates the efforts of your child’s teacher or school across six areas of parent involvement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1=Never</th>
<th>2=Rarely</th>
<th>3=Sometimes</th>
<th>4=Frequently</th>
<th>5=Always</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Communicating</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How often has your child’s teacher or school communicated these this school year?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My child’s school sends home information about school activities (i.e., book fairs, plays, etc.)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My child’s teacher keeps me informed about my child’s progress.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My child’s teacher calls me to inform me of my child’s successes.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My child’s teacher invites me to parent-teacher conferences throughout the school year.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My child’s school provides involvement opportunities at school that are scheduled at convenient times.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My child’s teacher-school makes me feel comfortable when I communicate about my child’s education</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Volunteering</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How often has your child’s teacher or school allowed you to volunteer during this school year?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My child’s teacher-school invites me to volunteer at school functions.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My child’s teacher-school provides a variety of volunteer activities</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please continue on next page
Directions: Please circle the number that best rates the efforts of your child’s teacher or school across six areas of parent involvement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Collaborating with Community</th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Frequently</th>
<th>Always</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>My child's school provide me with information about outside agencies that may be beneficial to my child's education or well-being</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My child's school helps me establish collaborative relationships with outside agencies</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Directions: Please use the following scale to express your general thoughts about parent involvement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parent Involvement</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Most parents know how to help their children with school work at home</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All teachers can help children do well when at school</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All family members can learn new ways to help their children become successful at school</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers can do more to get diverse families involved</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent involvement can help teachers do a better job instructing children from diverse backgrounds</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent involvement can help teachers learn more about diverse families</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent involvement plays an important part in a child’s academic success</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Directions: Please check the statement that best describes your involvement experiences at your school compared over the last two years.

- This year, I have been involved in my child’s schooling about the same as last year.
- This year, I have been involved in my child’s schooling more than last year.
- This year, I have been involved in my child’s schooling less than last year.
Needs Assessment

Directions: Please check the box next to the items that you would like to learn more about during the Parent Collaborative Training sessions.

☐ Knowledge and Skills for Collaboration

☐ Your General Rights as a Parent

☐ Due Process Rights

☐ Your Child’s Educational Rights

☐ Individualized Education Program (IEP)

☐ Evaluations/Assessment

☐ Annual Review/Reevaluation

☐ Disciplinary Procedures

☐ Service Delivery Models

☐ Assistive Technology

☐ Interagency Planning

☐ Transition Planning

☐ Parent Involvement/Volunteering

☐ Other: ________________________________

Thank you for completing this questionnaire. Please return the completed form to your training facilitator.
Parent Collaborative Training
Session Evaluation

Directions for Part A: Please use the following scale to rate the training session that you completed today. Circle the number that corresponds with the answer choice that best reflects your opinion for each statement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rating Scale:</th>
<th>1= Strongly Agree</th>
<th>2= Somewhat Agree</th>
<th>3= Somewhat Disagree</th>
<th>4= Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Part A:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STATEMENT</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Somewhat Agree</th>
<th>Somewhat Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. The content of today’s training session was useful.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. The activities provided during the training were useful.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. The materials used during the training were useful.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. The facilitator was knowledgeable about the content.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. The facilitator made the best use of time.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. The information was presented in a clear, meaningful way.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. The training environment was suitable for this training.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please continue on next page
Directions for Part B: Please complete the following statements regarding the training session you participated in today.

Part B:

8. What I liked most about this training session was

________________________________________________________

9. What I liked least about this training session was

________________________________________________________

10. I will use the information gained from today’s training to

________________________________________________________

11. I would like to learn more about

________________________________________________________


Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey.

Please return the completed survey to your training facilitator.

For more information, please contact your training facilitator or Michelle Urquhart at urquhart@mail.ucf.edu or by phone at (407) 823-5314
# Parent Collaborative Training

Directions: Please use the following scale to answer the questions below. Circle the number that best reflects your opinion.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1= Not at all</th>
<th>2= Minimal</th>
<th>3= Moderate</th>
<th>4= Very Much</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

1. To what extent did your participation in *Parent Collaborative Training* increase your knowledge or awareness of:
   - the collaborative process        1 2 3 4
   - skills needed to effectively collaborate 1 2 3 4
   - the importance of parent involvement 1 2 3 4
   - your rights and responsibilities 1 2 3 4
   - the Individual Education Plan (IEP) 1 2 3 4
   - ESE Service delivery models 1 2 3 4
   - Assistive technology 1 2 3 4

2. To what extent did your participation in *Parent Collaborative Training* help increase your ability to effectively:
   - collaborate with special educators at your child’s school 1 2 3 4
   - collaborate with other families 1 2 3 4
   - collaborate with outside agencies providing service to children with disabilities 1 2 3 4
   - assume the roles and responsibilities of a collaborative team member 1 2 3 4
   - assume parent leadership positions 1 2 3 4
   - respond positively to challenges that may occur during the collaborative process 1 2 3 4

3. To what extent did the *Parent Collaborative Training* increase your understanding and awareness of special education? 1 2 3 4

4. How useful were the following components of the *Parent Collaborative Training*:
   - Homework assignment 1 2 3 4
   - Journal writing 1 2 3 4

Please continue on next page
Directions: Please use the following scale to answer the questions below. Circle the number that best reflects your opinion.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1= Not at all</th>
<th>2= Minimal</th>
<th>3= Moderate</th>
<th>4= Very Much</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

5. To what extent did your participation in Parent Collaborative Training positively influence your:

- ability to utilize effective Parenting practices when supporting your child  
  1 2 3 4
- use of effective strategies to increase your child’s Learning at Home  
  1 2 3 4
- ability to use Decision-Making strategies when participating on an IEP team or participating on school governance committees such as PTA or SAC  
  1 2 3 4
- ability to establish and use ongoing methods for Communicating with school personnel  
  1 2 3 4
- frequency of engaging in Volunteering opportunities  
  1 2 3 4
- efficiency in establishing ongoing, effective Collaborative experiences with Community service providers and agencies  
  1 2 3 4

6. To what extent did the training impact your ability to:

- assist other families with special education concern  
  1 2 3 4
- collaborate with teachers/school personnel outside of Special Education  
  1 2 3 4

Directions: Please answer the following question reflectively. Include why/how, rationale/support for each answer.

1. Identify aspects of the Parent Collaborative Training that were the most valuable to you and please specify why this is so.

___________________________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________________________

Please continue on next page
Directions: Please answer the following questions reflectively. Include why/how, rationale/support for each answer.

2. Identify aspects of the Parent Collaborative Training that were the least valuable to you and please specify why this is so.

3. Please provide recommendations that can be used to enhance the Parent Collaborative Training program.

4. Please use this space to make additional comments on any component or aspect of the Parent Collaborative Training (i.e. timeline, process, benefits, requirements, etc.)

Thank you for participating in Parent Collaborative Training and for completing this questionnaire. Please turn in this completed form to your training facilitator.
Parent Collaborative Training

Increasing Achievement Opportunities for Students with Disabilities through Effective Home-School Partnerships

TEACHER SURVEY INSTRUMENTS
- Teacher Demographics
- Perceptions of CLD Students
# Teacher Demographic Questionnaire

The purpose of this brief survey is to collect demographic data of teacher participants in the current research study. Completion of this survey is voluntary. Your identity and all responses will be kept confidential. Only the research team will have access to the information. The results of this survey will be analyzed. At the end of this research, all survey information will be destroyed.

Findings from this study will be made available to participants upon request. Completion of this form implies voluntary consent.

**Directions:** Please place a check mark next to the appropriate response for each question. Please check only one for each.

## About You:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What is your current teaching position?</th>
<th>What is the primary setting you teach in?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>VE Teacher</td>
<td>Self-contained (all day)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SLD Teacher</td>
<td>Self-contained (part day)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MH Teacher</td>
<td>Resource Room</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other, Explain</td>
<td>Co-taught classroom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Other, Explain</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How many years have you been an ESE teacher?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8-12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12-16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17-22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23-30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 or more</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How satisfied are you with teaching in Exceptional Education?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very Dissatisfied</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dissatisfied</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfied</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Satisfied</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## What is your race?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Asian</th>
<th>African-American</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Caucasian (non-Hispanic)</td>
<td>Hispanic/Latino</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pacific Islander</td>
<td>Other, Explain</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## What is your gender?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

---

Please continue with questionnaire on next page
Directions: Complete the questionnaire by rating the subsequent school experiences using the following scale.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1 = Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>2 = Disagree</th>
<th>3 = Agree</th>
<th>4 = Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

1. Parent involvement is important for a child’s success.  | 1 2 3 4 |
2. Parent involvement is important for a school’s success. | 1 2 3 4 |
3. Parent involvement can make teachers perform their jobs better. | 1 2 3 4 |
4. Parents in my class want to be more involved. | 1 2 3 4 |
5. Teachers should do more to help parents get involved in school. | 1 2 3 4 |

Thank you for completing this questionnaire. Please return to Michelle Urquhart when complete.
Teacher Questionnaire

The purpose of this brief survey is to collect information regarding student academic and social success. Completion of this survey is voluntary. Your identity and all responses will be kept confidential. Only the research team will have access to the information. The results of this survey will be analyzed. At the end of this research, all survey information will be destroyed. Findings from this study will be made available to participants upon request. Completion of this form implies voluntary consent.

Directions: Complete the questionnaire by rating the child’s school experience using the following scale.

1= Never   2= Rarely   3= Sometimes   4= Often   5= Always

1. To what extent does the child display the following traits?
   The student attends school on a regular basis
   The student tries to do well on school assignments
   The student completes school work on time
   The student completes homework on time
   The student receives help with homework when at home
   The student respects his/her teacher
   The student cooperates with his/her teacher
   The student gets along with children in his/her class
   The student values his/her education

Directions: Complete the questionnaire by rating the child’s school experience using the following scale.

1= Strongly Disagree   2= Disagree   3= Agree   4= Strongly Agree

2. How capable is the child in maintaining the following expectations?
   The student is capable of maintaining satisfactory academic progress
   The student is capable of maintaining appropriate behaviors

Please continue on next page
2. How capable is the child in maintaining the following expectations?

The student is capable of successfully adjusting to new environments 1 2 3 4
The student is capable of completing assignments with minimal assistance 1 2 3 4

Directions: Complete the questionnaire by rating the child's school experience using the following scale.
1=Strongly Disagree 2=Disagree 3=Agree 4=Strongly Agree

3. To what extent do you believe this child will reach the following milestones?

The student will transition to the next grade level successfully 1 2 3 4
The student will graduate high school on schedule 1 2 3 4
The student will lead an independent life 1 2 3 4
The student will become a model citizen in adult life 1 2 3 4

Directions: Complete the questionnaire by rating the child's school experience using the following scale.
1=Never 2=Rarely 3=Sometimes 4=Often 5=Always

4. To what extent do you (the teacher) or the child's parents display the following traits?

The parents or guardians of this child talk to their children about the importance of school 1 2 3 4 5
The parents or guardians of this child contact me regarding their child's progress 1 2 3 4 5
I (the child's teacher) contact this child's family regarding academic progress 1 2 3 4 5
I (the child's teacher) contact this child's family regarding social progress 1 2 3 4 5
I provide opportunities for this child's parents or guardians to become actively involved in the schooling of their children 1 2 3 4 5
5. Please use the following space to respond reflectively to the following questions. If more space is needed, please attach a separate sheet of paper.

a. What factors or conditions are present in this child’s life that would hinder his/her academic or social success?

b. In what ways do these factors serve as barriers to success?

c. What factors or conditions are present in this child’s life that would foster his/her academic or social success? In what ways do these factors serve as motivators to success?

d. In what ways do these factors serve as motivators to success?

Thank you for completing this questionnaire. Please return to Michelle Urquhart when complete.
Parent Collaborative Training

Home

School

Student Success

Increasing Achievement Opportunities for Students with Disabilities through Effective Home-School Partnerships

STUDENT SURVEY INSTRUMENT
- Student Perception Questionnaire
Parent Collaborative Training

Student Questionnaire

Directions: Please complete the following by circling the number that best rates your school experience.

Directions: Please circle the number that best rates your school experience.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Experience</th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Often</th>
<th>Always</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I go to school.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I try to do well on my school work.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I do my school work on time.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I respect my teacher.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I like being at my school.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I get along with children in my class.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I come to school ready to learn.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I get good grades.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I will go to the next grade</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please go to the next page
Directions: Please circle the number that best rates your school experience.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Experience</th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Often</th>
<th>Always</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>My teacher provides work that makes me think.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My teacher asks me about my life at home.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My teacher wants me to do well in school.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My teacher makes me feel important.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My teacher likes me</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Directions: Please circle the number that best rates your school experience.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How often has your family done these since participating in Parent Collaborative Training?</th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Often</th>
<th>Always</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>My family talks to me about how important school is.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My family talks to me about what I am learning at school.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My family talks to me about behaving well at school.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My family helps me with my homework.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My family checks that all of my work is finished on time.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My family helps me to study for tests.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My family attends meetings at my school.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My family volunteers at my school to help with fieldtrips or class parties</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please continue on next page
Directions: Please complete the following by writing your answer to the question below:

On the lines below, please tell what you plan on doing after high school.

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

On the lines below, please tell how much your family member has helped you with your school work since he or she took part in the Parent Collaborative Training. Does your family member help you more or do they help you less?

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

On the line below, please tell how your teacher treats you since meeting with your family member who participated in the Parent Collaborative Training.

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Thank you for completing this survey. Please return it to Michelle Urquhart
APPENDIX E

FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS
Directions: Use the following questions to guide the focus group discussion.

Q1. Studies have been conducted to identify the reasons why many minority parents do not participate in the schooling of their children. What are some reasons why parents do not participate at the school?

Q2. Have you been involved in any prior parent training activities before this one?

Q3. What motivated you to attend? What motivated you to stay?

Q4. In what ways did the training affect your knowledge and skills about collaboration?

Q5. In what ways did the training affect your knowledge about special education programming?

Q6. How important was it to have an action plan before meeting with your child’s parent? Did the training have an impact on the way you delivered your action plan?

Q7. Overall, how much has the Parent Collaborative Training influenced your way of thinking about parent involvement in special education programming?

Q8. How valuable were the journal and homework assignments to you?

Q9. What type of influence will this training have on the academic and social outcomes of your child? How do you think the children will benefit?

Q10. Do you see yourself engaging more frequently in collaboration with school personnel after this training than you did before? In what ways do you see yourself participating?

Q11. What are some of the challenges that you may face as you collaborate with school personnel?

Q12. Now that you have completed training, how capable are you of helping other parents understand special education? How capable of helping other parents understand the importance of parent participation and collaboration?

Q13. Did you get what you expected from this training?

Q14. What are your needs beyond this training?
Dear Parent(s)/Guardian(s),

Let me begin by introducing myself to you. My name is Michelle Urquhart and I am a past resident of the Tangelo Park community. I also worked at Southwest Middle School for three years (2001-2004) as the VE and TMH teacher. Currently, I am a student at the University of Central Florida working towards a Ph.D. in special education. As part of my studies, I have teamed up with Southwest Middle School to offer a training program that will help increase parental involvement of families of children with disabilities. The training will focus on increasing awareness of special education laws, parental and student rights, the IEP process and collaboration with teachers in the identification and delivery of the best special education services possible.

As part of my research study, I will be offering the Parent Collaborative Training (PCT) for families of children with disabilities who attend Southwest Middle School. The training is open to a member of your family and is provided at no cost. In fact, if you are randomly chosen from those who respond to participate in the five sessions of this training, take part in a focus group session, and complete the surveys associated with this study, you will receive a token of appreciation of $50 for attending all sessions, free childcare and refreshments during each session, and a certificate of completion of the PCT training. Training will be held on Wednesday evenings from 5:30 until 7:30 p.m. at the Tangelo Park YMCA. A schedule of training dates and topics is provided below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>April 26, 2006</td>
<td>- What is Collaboration? Why is it important</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Types of Collaboration/Parent Involvement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>May 3, 2006</td>
<td>- What are my rights and responsibilities?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- What knowledge and skills do I need to effectively collaborate?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- What rights does my child have?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- The IEP process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Understanding service delivery models</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>May 10, 2006</td>
<td>- Developing an action plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Independent Session used to collaborate with teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>May 17, 2006</td>
<td>- Family Choice: Seminar on Assistive Technology at UCF's Toni Jennings Institute</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>optional</td>
<td>May 18-23, 2006</td>
<td>- Parent Focus Group Session/PCT Graduation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(your choice of date)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>May 24, 2006</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If you are interested in participating in the training or have additional questions or concerns, please contact me at (407) 654-6767 or (407) 452-4013. My faculty supervisor, Dr. Lisa Dieker, may be reached at (407) 823-3885. I look forward to working with you.

Sincerely,

Michelle Urquhart
APPENDIX G

CONSENT FORMS FOR PARENTS AND TEACHERS WITH ASSENT SCRIPT FOR

CHILD PARTICIPANTS
April 17, 2006

Dear Parent(s) or Guardian(s):

My name is Michelle Urquhart and I am a student at the University of Central Florida. I am writing to ask for your help in a study entitled "The Impact of Parent Collaborative Training on Teacher Perceptions and Expectations of Students with Disabilities from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Backgrounds". If you are randomly chosen from those who respond to participate in this study, you will attend a five-part training program that will help you develop a better relationship with your child’s ESE teacher. In addition to attending those sessions, you will be asked to participate in a focus group session and asked to complete surveys related to this study. At the same time, the researcher wants to learn how your participation in the training will affect the beliefs that your child’s teacher may have of your child. During the training, you will be required to develop and practice a plan for working with the teacher. You will also be asked to complete a brief survey about your experiences and opinions of the training program. We will also ask your permission to survey your child about his/her own feelings of the parent collaborative training.

Your participation in the training sessions is voluntary and there are no known risks. You will be paid a stipend of $50.00 ($10.00 per attendance at a session) for your participation in this study. Meals and childcare will be provided to you and your children, under the age of twelve, when you participate. Your identity and responses will be kept confidential. When you participate in the training and focus group sessions as well as when you complete the surveys, your name, or other identifiable information, will not be linked to your responses in any way. Information gathered from the focus group session will not be audio or video recorded and only notes on the conversation will be generated. Additionally, data collected from you and your child will not be linked to each other in any way. Each data set collected during this study will be kept in secured files away from other data. Three years after the end of this study, all data will be destroyed. You may stop attendance to the training at any time and receive payment for the time you committed before your withdrawal. Findings of this study will be made available to you upon request and will be disseminated only as summaries in the form of dissertation/thesis, conference presentations, journal articles.

If you have any questions or comments about this research process, please contact me at (407) 823-5314 or you can write me at 1716 Tallo Way, Orlando, FL 32818. My faculty supervisor, Dr. Lisa Decker, may be contacted in writing at the College of Education, 4600 Central Florida Blvd., P.O. Box 161250-1250, Orlando, Florida 32818-1250 or by phone at (407) 823-3855. Questions or concerns about your rights as a research participant may be directed to the UCF IRB Office, University of Central Florida Office of Research, 12201 Research Parkway, Suite 501, Orlando, FL 32826-3246. The phone number is (407) 823-2901.

Enclosed, please find a postage-paid envelope in which to return this signed consent giving us permission to contact you and include your contributions in this research. I have provided an extra consent letter that you may keep for your records. Thank you very much for helping with this important study.

Sincerely,

Michelle Urquhart
Doctoral Candidate
University of Central Florida
Improving Parent Involvement for Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Parents of Middle School Students with Disabilities from Urban Settings in Suburban Schools

Page 2 of 2 (Parent Consent Form)

Please review the following statements, check those that apply, sign, date and return this consent in the enclosed postage paid envelope.

I am 18 years or older in age.

I have read the procedure described above.

I voluntarily agree to participate in the procedure, which includes attendance at 5 training sessions, a focus group session, as well as the completion of surveys.

I voluntarily agree to allow my child to participate in this research by completing a survey regarding my participation.

I would like to receive a copy of the procedure described above.

I would not like to receive a copy of the procedure described above.

I would like to receive a copy of the results of this study.

My child's Name:

My Child's Teacher's Name:

Your Name:

Participant's Signature __________________________ Date ____________

If your child has your permission to participate as you have indicated above, and you share guardianship of your child with another adult, please have that individual sign below, affixing their consent for your child to participate in the study as proposed.

I voluntarily agree to allow my child to participate in this research by completing a survey regarding parent participation in the Parent Collaborative Training.

Parent/Guardian's Signature __________________________ Date ____________

APPROVED BY
University of Central Florida
Institutional Review Board

[Signature]

IRB "Designated" Reviewer
Teachers:

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this study aimed at examining your perceptions of several randomly selected students identified as having a disability and being served in your classroom. You will be able to provide insight when you take a few minutes to share your experiences and opinions about the targeted students by completing a brief survey. Your completed survey as well as a signed copy of this document, will serve as consent to your participation.

Participation in this research is voluntary and there are no known risks. By participating in this study, you will receive a small token of appreciation (classroom supply item) worth no more than five dollars. Your identity and responses will be kept confidential. When you complete the survey, your name, or other identifiable information, will not be linked to your responses in any way. Findings of this study will be made available to you upon request and will be disseminated only as summaries in the form of dissertation publication, conference presentations and journal articles.

If you have any questions or comments about this research process you may ask me at this time. Are there any questions or concerns? My contact information is: 1716 Talfo Way, Orlando, FL 32818; (407) 293-8368 if you should need to reach me in the future. My faculty supervisor, Dr. Lisa Deck, may be contacted in writing at the College of Education, 4000 Central Florida Blvd., P.O. Box 161250-1250, Orlando, Florida 32816-1250 or by phone at (407) 823-3885. In addition, questions or concerns about your rights as research participants may be directed to the UCFIRB Office at the University of Central Florida, Office of Research, 12201 Research Parkway, Suite 501, Orlando, FL 32826-3246. The phone number is (407) 823-2901. We appreciate your time and contributions to this research effort. Please take this moment to complete the consent form below.

Sincerely,

Michelle Urquhart
Doctoral Candidate
University of Central Florida

Please review the following statements, check those that apply, sign and date, and return this consent with the completed questionnaire.

I have read the procedure described above.

I am 18 years of age or older

I voluntary agree to participate in the study, which includes completion of a survey.

I would like to receive a copy of the procedure described above.

I would not like to receive a copy of the procedure described above.

I would like to receive a copy of the results of this study.

Participant's Signature

APPROVED BY
University of Central Florida
Institutional Review Board

Date

IRB Designated Reviewer
Assent Script for Child Participant

May 15, 2006

My name is Michelle Urquhart and I am a student at the University of Central Florida. I would like to ask you to complete a survey and tell me what you think about parents working with teachers at school. It should take you about 20-minutes to do. No one will see your answers except my teacher and me. I will only share the groups’ answers with your parents and teacher. If you participate, it will not affect your grades and you will not get hurt. You do not have to answer questions you do not want to. I hope that your answers will help teachers and parents understand how important it is for them to work with each other. Would you like to participate?
Parent Collaborative Training

Home

School

Student Success

Increasing Achievement Opportunities for Students with Disabilities through Effective Home-School Partnerships

TRAINING MANUAL
Developed by Michelle Urquhart

251
Information for *Parent Collaborative Training* was obtained from the following:


Table of Contents

Introduction

Training Tips

**Module 1:** Getting in Condition

**Module 2:** What is Collaboration? Why is it important?  
Types of Collaboration/Parent Involvement  
What knowledge and skills do I need to effectively collaborate?

**Module 3:** What are my rights and responsibilities?  
What rights does my child have?

**Module 4:** Special Education and the IEP process

**Module 5:** Understanding service delivery models

**Module 6:** Developing an action plan

**Module 7:** How do I help my child find success

**Module 8:** Seminar on Assistive Technology (optional)

**Module 9:** Parent Focus Group Session/PCT Graduation

**Appendix:**

- Ground Rules
- Training Itinerary (by week and module)
- Icebreaker and Closing Activities
- Training Certificate
- Parent Materials (includes manual and surveys)
**Introduction**

*Parent Collaborative Training* is designed to provide you with the guidance and materials needed to conduct parent training sessions geared at providing parents of students with disabilities with the knowledge, skills, and experiences needed to effectively collaborate with special education professionals.

Specifically, this self-help manual helps you steer parents in improving their ability to collaborate by increasing parent understanding of special education laws, rights and responsibilities, and the Individual Education Plan. In addition, Parents use the information and materials in this training kit to action plan for a collaborative experience with their child’s teacher.

Each kit contains: (1) a trainer’s manual scripted to provide ease in delivering content, (2) handouts and assessment tools, and (3) a sample of the parent manual.

**PROGRAM DESIGN**

The *Parent Collaborative Training* program is divided into nine modules (one optional):

**Module 1:** Getting in Condition

**Module 2:** What is Collaboration? Why is it important?
   - Types of Collaboration/Parent Involvement
   - What knowledge and skills do I need to effectively collaborate?

**Module 3:** What are the laws guaranteeing my right to participate?
   - What are my rights and responsibilities?
   - What rights does my child have?

**Module 4:** The IEP
   - The IEP process

**Module 5:** Understanding service delivery models

**Module 6:** Developing an action plan

**Module 7:** Helping my child find success

**Module 8:** Seminar on Assistive Technology (optional)

**Module 9:** Parent Focus Group Session/PCT Graduation

These modules are based on research supporting effective strategies for engaging parents in collaborative experiences with school personnel. These modules also are based on research findings regarding the information that parents need to know about the special education process in order to effectively support their child’s learning. Thus, materials provided in the training kit are based on the module topics and are geared to strengthen parent understanding and skills of both the collaborative process and the special education process. Each module (except for the one optional module) contains a training overview, outlining the activities, methods, and materials for each module and a comprehensive lesson plan with instructions for delivering training. Parents will use these materials during class and for at-home work. Collectively, the modules are scheduled to be delivered over five successive sessions, lasting approximately 2 hours each. It is encouraged that training sessions be tailored to the needs and interests of parents.
Tips for Working with Parent Participants
When working with parents, be sensitive to their needs. Some parents may be nonreaders while others may have difficulty with comprehending the training materials. Provide parents with a variety of ways to participate. Offer support in ways that is not offending to the parents. Get to know your parents early and set the ground rules at the onset of training. Encourage parents to discuss their training experiences with their children.

Tips for Presenting Training Materials
The modules are designed to be covered in the order presented. However, parent concerns/questions and needs may necessitate the inclusion of other topics into the discussion. The nine modules are designed to be presented over the course of 5 consecutive weeks. If, pressed for time, module eight may be shortened as long as parent concerns/questions for previous modules have been adequately addressed and parent engagement in meaningful discussions have not been cut short for the sake of time.

Tips for Facilitators of Training
Before beginning each session, make sure that you have reviewed the materials so that you are familiar with the scope and sequence for training. Have the information and resources for each module are readily available by laying them out in an organized manner. Always have extra handouts, writing instruments, and other materials for parent use.

When conducting each session, provide parents with an agenda of the training session. Also, review the ground rules and post in an accessible location in the training class. Ensure that parents are comfortable in the workshop environment. You can do this by establishing a positive environment, eliminating risks, recognizing parent contributions, providing positive feedback, allowing parents to become actively involved in their learning, and by offering different approaches to learning, including the use of real life situations and analogies. Encourage parent involvement, if perhaps, a parent’s body language suggests a lack of interest in the training. Do not allow any one parent to dominate the discussion or be negative, as this behavior is inappropriate and may discourage the participation of other parents. At the end of each session, announce instructions for next session and promote parent attendance for those sessions.

Adapted from Passport to Success training
Module 1
Getting in Condition

Focus: Formulating an understanding of collaboration and the ensuing training

Objective: Parents will develop an understanding of the training’s overall objectives and become familiar with training protocol and expectations

Skill: Developing the frame of mind and attitude needed to participate as a learner of skills and knowledge needed to collaborate effectively with special education personnel

Evidence: Completion of pre-survey and opening activities handouts

Homework Focus: Parenting (Joyce Epstein’s Typology for Parent Involvement)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TRAINING OVERVIEW</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Activities</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Welcome and Introduction | • Parent sign in and pick up training materials  
|                     | • Welcome parents to training (icebreaker) 
|                     | • Parents complete initial questionnaire 
|                     | • Introduce Parent Collaborative Training (PCT) | • Week 1 Sign-in Sheet  
|                     |                                                | • Name tags  
|                     |                                                | • Icebreaker Activity  
|                     |                                                | • Pens and pencils  
|                     |                                                | • Initial questionnaire  
|                     |                                                | • Parent Training Booklets | 30 minutes |
| Ground Rules       | • Discuss Ground Rules and post in classroom  
|                    | • Ask group to review Ground Rules page in the | • Ground Rules Poster  
|                    | PCT manual                                      | • PCT manual | 5 minutes |
| Introductory Activity | • Conduct a walk through of manual  
| Mini-Lecture       | • Discuss Objectives for PCT training  
|                    | • Complete activities from PCT manual | • PowerPoint Slides  
|                    |                                                 | • PCT manual | 10 minutes |
| Learning Activities | • Complete “I Promise” Sheet  
|                     | • Complete Learning Activities page in the PCT manual | • PCT manual  
|                     |                                                 | “I Promise” handout | 10 minutes |
## Homework Activities for Session 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity 1:</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Expressing Expectations</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Home:</strong> supervise homework/discuss interests</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>School:</strong> Find out more about the classes your child is taking</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Community:</strong> Take a leisure outing with your child (to the mall, park, or movie, etc.)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents next mtg.: BRING IN COPY OF STUDENT IEPs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Wrap-up</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Complete the Module 1 wrap-up section</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- PCT manual
- PowerPoint Slides
- Homework Activity handout #1

**Total Time Needed:** 75 minutes
Module 1 TRAINING
Welcome and Introduction (30 minutes)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Methods</th>
<th>Materials</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>➢ Ask parents to</td>
<td>• Week 1 Sign-in Sheet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• sign in on the Week 1 Sign-in sheet</td>
<td>• Name tags</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Pick up training materials</td>
<td>• Pens and pencils</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Take a seat</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ Welcome parents to training</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ Introduce yourself</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ Conduct the pre-survey (this can also be done as parents come into session)</td>
<td>• Pre-survey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ Introduce Parent Collaborative Training (PCT)</td>
<td>• PowerPoint Slides</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ Use PowerPoint Slides to explain the rewards of attending Parent Collaborative Training and subsequently being involved in child’s education</td>
<td>• Parent Training Booklets</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ground Rules (5 minutes)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Methods</th>
<th>Materials</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>➢ Go over Ground Rules poster with the group and make sure that everyone agrees with the rules. Ask parents to add suggestions. Post Ground Rules poster in classroom</td>
<td>• Ground Rules Poster</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Ask group to review Ground Rules page in the manual and to sign in agreement</td>
<td>• PCT manual</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Introductory Activity (10 minutes)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Methods</th>
<th>Materials</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>➢ Conduct a brief walk through of manual</td>
<td>• PCT manual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Introduce the activity by prefacing with the following statement: “Many times parents feel as though they have little control in their child’s education. They may feel that they are unwelcomed at the school or that what they do to help their child often goes unappreciated. Nothing is further from the truth. Today is the beginning of your journey as knowledge seekers and doers. You will learn how to navigate the special education system so that you can engage in meaningful collaboration with your child’s teachers. You will become empowered to believe in your ability to make a difference in the life of your child. You are important.”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Mini-Lecture (10 minutes)

### Methods

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The mini-lecture covers ideas about parent involvement from the PCT manual</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>➢ Discuss Objectives for PCT training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. To empower parents to become effective collaborators</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. To provide information and learning experiences that inform about special education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. To facilitate the development of an innate desire for on-going parent participation in all varieties of involvement activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. To provide the forum for discourse between parent and special education personnel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. To indirectly stimulate a teacher’s desire to provide meaningful classroom activities that are considerate of student needs, culturally responsive, and reflective of high expectations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. To increase student performance through an increase in parent involvement and teacher behaviors reflecting high expectations and cultural responsiveness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ Discuss PCT Guiding Principles:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Parents are an essential link in the education of their child</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Parents are a child’s first teacher and therefore have the most accurate information about the child</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. All parents can learn the skills necessary to become effective collaborators</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ Discuss with parents:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Participation in <em>Parent Collaborative Training</em> will give parents the edge they need to become their child’s biggest advocate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Participation in <em>Parent Collaborative Training</em> can become a motivating factor for the child to perform successfully and adjust satisfactorily with their learning environment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Parents who believe that they can make a difference will. If they have faith in their abilities, then, in time, the rewards will be evident.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Complete activities from PCT manual

### Materials

- PCT manual
- PowerPoint Slides
- PowerPoint Slides
- PowerPoint Slides
- PCT manual

260
## Learning Activities (10 minutes)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Methods</th>
<th>Materials</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Explain the “I Promise” sheet as an agreement or promise to their child that they will complete *Parent Collaborative Training* so they can better attend to the special education needs of their child. | • PCT manual  
• “I Promise” handout |
| Direct parents to complete “I Promise” Sheet. | |
| Complete Module 1 Learning Activities pages in the PCT manual. | |

## Homework (5 minutes)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Methods</th>
<th>Materials</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Discuss the importance of homework in the development of self-efficacy. | • PCT manual  
• PowerPoint Slides  
• Homework Activity handout #1 |
| Define self-efficacy as the belief that one has that he or she can accomplish a specific task. | |
| Explain that homework activities, which are grounded in Joyce Epstein’s (2001) typology for parent involvement, encourage parent participation across three settings (home, school, and community) and further enhances skills learned in training sessions. Homework activities help parents to build the resources necessary to become effective participants in the collaborative process, as well as help define effective parenting practices. | |
| Research suggests that, overall, parents receiving training reported an increase in self-efficacy and therefore, were more apt in collaborating with teachers (Gross, et al., 2003). | |
| Direct parent to complete the following activities before next scheduled class meeting: | |
| Home: supervise homework/discuss interests | |
| School: Find out more about the classes your child is taking | |
| Community: Take a leisure outing with your child (to the mall, park, or movie, etc.) | |
## Wrap-Up (5 minutes)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Methods</th>
<th>Materials</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Complete the Module 1 wrap-up by reviewing PCT objectives and principles. Direct parents to write a brief reflection on Module 1 in their journal</td>
<td>• PCT manual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Parent Reflective Journals</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


SCRIPT: Module 1
Getting in Condition

[Trainer’s directions are in bold letters.]

After parents have signed in and picked up training materials, say:

I would like to welcome each one of you here today to the Parent Collaborative Training. As you know, you have decided to participate in a 5 week workshop to develop your knowledge and skills as effective collaborators with teachers and school staff regarding your child who receives Exceptional Student Education services at the middle school. By participating in this training, you have consented to be involved in a related study that seeks to determine the impact this training has on (1) your future intentions to participate in collaborative relationships with school staff, (2) your child’s educational outcomes, and (3) your child’s teacher’s perception and behaviors regarding your child.

The first item on the agenda is to determine that you have all of the necessary items to participate in this training. By this time, each one of you has collected your parent training materials. You have received a bag that has several important items in it. At this time, please take out the items in your bag.

Give a wait time of about 30 seconds and verify that everyone has taken out the items in the bag.

Now that you each have taken out your items, let’s make sure that we have all of the necessary items. If you do not have an item, please let me know as I have extra ones here for you. You should have the following items: a black folder containing your training manual and workbook, a spiral notebook for journal writing, a pen, a pencil, a nametag and a snack item. Please go ahead and put your nametags on. Throughout the course of this training, you will be provided with other items and be given instructions on what to do with each item. Are there any questions at this point?

Answer questions as they arise. If unsure about the answer to a question, advise parent that you will provide them with an answer as soon as possible.

Locate Icebreaker list –found in appendix; complete icebreaker #1 following icebreaker script. Then say:

At this time, we are going to do a short activity so that we can get to know each other a little better and so that we can feel comfortable working with each other.

Complete Icebreaker activity #1, then say:
At this time, you will complete a questionnaire that should take you about 20 minutes. If, at anytime you should have any questions, please let me know and I will assist you. You have the right not to complete this questionnaire. Even if you chose not to complete the questionnaire, you will still have the opportunity to participate in this training.

Pass out the questionnaire labeled “Parent Involvement and Collaborative Experiences Questionnaire”, then say:

Are there any questions?

If there are no questions, say:

There are 8 pages to the questionnaire. Please complete the questionnaire. If you should have any questions, please let me know and I will do my best to assist you with the process.

Allow 20 minutes for completion of questionnaire. If participants request more time, please provide time to complete the questionnaire in its entirety. Before collecting each, please instruct the parents to review each question to make sure that they are completely answered. Collect completed questionnaire and place in folder. Turn over completed questionnaire to researcher for evaluation after the close of today’s training.

Take a 5 minute break before proceeding with next section. At this time, set up PowerPoint (ppt) for Module 1 and verify that you have all the tools to proceed. After break, say:

Welcome back. Now it is time to get started with an introduction to Parent Collaborative Training. First, let me talk briefly about the training and what you can expect. I need for you to take out your training manual and turn to page 1. Please follow with me through the slides and feel free to take notes on the space provided on the worksheet. Are there any questions?

Go to slide 1 of ppt., then proceed to slide 2. Read slide 2, then add the following:

As I stated earlier, you will be involved in 5 weekly sessions that will provide you with information that will help you work better with your child’s teacher and school staff regarding special education services. You will learn about the importance of collaboration as well as your rights and responsibilities as a parent of a child with a disability. You will also learn about the IEP process and how services are delivered. You will also have the option of participating in a session about assistive technology. You will take part in a collaborative meeting with your child’s teacher where you use your skills and knowledge when participating. At the end of this training, you will receive your certificate of completion and participate in a graduation ceremony. By being a participant in the training, you will have the opportunity to develop the skills needed to effectively participate in decisions made about your child’s academics. By being a
participant in this training, you will increase your knowledge in special education and be able to fully advocate for your child. By being a participant in Parent Collaborative Training, you will become a lifelong advocate for your child. Are there any questions?

If there are no questions, proceed with slide 3. You will also need your Ground Rules Poster. After hanging poster at front of room, say:

At this time we will talk about the ground rules for participating in this training. Please review with me by looking at the third slide on the first page. The slide is entitled, “Ground Rules”.

Read through each Ground Rule making sure that participants comprehend what each rule means.

At this time, you will instruct parents to take out their training manual for a quick review. Have your copy of the Parent Training Manual for reference. Then say:

Okay. Let’s switch gears for a short while. At this time, I am going to ask you to take out your training manuals so that we can become familiar with the contents. Let’s look at the Table of Contents.

Verify that each participant has turned to the table of contents, then say:

As you can see, your manual is organized in the order that we will conduct this training. There are 9 modules that we will go through over the course of 5 weeks. Each section is organized in the same way. You have for each training session: a PowerPoint worksheet, your activity sheet, a session evaluation sheet, and your journal prompt and homework assignment. Go ahead and skim through to see how each section is organized.

Allow 2-3 minutes for participants to look through designated pages, then say:

Now turn to the first page, which is your copy of the Ground Rules we discussed previously. Please sign the bottom of the page to signify that you will abide by the ground rules. Now, let’s read over the “I Promise” page together. It can be found on the second page.

Read through, then say:

Please complete this page by writing your child’s name at the top and then sign. Are there any questions?

After answering questions, say:

Many times parents feel as though they have little control in their child’s education. They may feel that they are unwelcomed at the school or that what they do to help their child often goes unappreciated. Nothing is further from the truth. Today is the beginning
of your journey as knowledge seekers and doers. You will learn how to navigate the special education system so that you can engage in meaningful collaboration with your child’s teachers. You will become empowered to believe in your ability to make a difference in the life of your child. You are important.

Proceed through slides reading through each and emphasizing content. Complete slides 4-9, leaving the last three slides (Self-Efficacy and Homework Activities) for later in the training. Once you have completed the third “Did you know” slide, STOP. Then say:

Now, let’s talk about a very important set of words called “Self-efficacy”. Self-efficacy is the belief that one has that he or she can accomplish a specific task. If you believe that you can do something, then you can. If your child believes that he or she can do something, then he or she will. Knowing and believing that you can do something is the first step in doing it well. As your child’s parent, you will need a strong self-efficacy when it comes to working with others, especially your child’s teacher. You will need to develop those skills through activities that support your personal growth. During Parent Collaborative Training, you will have homework assignments that help in this area. You will be asked to complete a series of tasks, which are based on Joyce Epstein’s six types of parent involvement. Joyce Epstein is a notable figure in the field of education whose lifelong work is in parent involvement. You will be engaged in activities in the home, school, and community and most often, these assignments will have you engaged and talking with your child. By completing the homework assignments, your will further enhance the skills learned in the training sessions. Homework activities will help build the resources you need to become better collaborators and better parents. Research in parent training has shown that parents tend to increase their self-efficacy and are more likely to be involved in collaboration with teachers. You will have three assignments for this first module. I will pass out the homework sheet that explains the three areas that you will be involved with. You will also be instructed to write about your experiences in your journal.

At this time, pass out Homework #1 sheet, which includes the journal prompt. Review with participants, then say:

Let’s now take a moment to look back on what we have discussed so far. First, we looked at the importance of this training and the objectives. Can anyone recall what we said?

Call on participants to share. Also, ask what they expect to gain from participation. Discuss responses and provide feedback. Steer the conversation and have participants stay on topic. Be reflective of the time. Then say:

Now, that we have completed the first module, Please take out your journal to write a brief reflection.

Verify that everyone has his or her journal out, along with a writing tool. Then say:
In your journal, please write what your first impressions of this Training are and what you expect to gain by participating. When you are finished, please close your journal and manual. We will then take a short break before proceeding with the second half of our training. The second half is shorter than this introduction. When we are finished, you will have the opportunity to have some refreshments with your child. At that time, we will dismiss and you are free to go. If you have any questions, you may talk with me at the end of the second session. Again, please take this time to write about your first impressions and what you expect to gain from training. You may begin.

END Module 1
Module 2

What is Collaboration? Why is it important?
Types of Collaboration/Parent Involvement
What knowledge and skills do I need to effectively collaborate?

Focus: Getting a clear understanding of what collaboration is and the important role collaboration plays in special education

Objective: Parents will develop an understanding of the collaborative process and the important role collaboration plays in the academic success of their child with a disability. Parents will learn about their roles in the collaborative process and the skills needed to effectively collaborate.

Skill: Developing the skills for engaging in collaborative experiences

Evidence: Completion of parent worksheets and role-play activities

Homework Focus: Parenting (Joyce Epstein’s Typology for Parent Involvement)

TRAINING OVERVIEW

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Methods</th>
<th>Materials</th>
<th>Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Welcome and Introduction</td>
<td>• Welcome parents back to training</td>
<td>• Icebreaker Activity #3</td>
<td>6 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Conduct transition icebreaker activity</td>
<td>• Pens and pencils</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Parent Training Booklets</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ground Rules</td>
<td>• Brief reminder of ground rules (if necessary)</td>
<td>• Ground Rules Poster</td>
<td>1 minute</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• PCT manual</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introductory Activity</td>
<td>• Brief discussion of training objective</td>
<td>• PCT manual</td>
<td>1 minute</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mini-Lecture</td>
<td>• Discuss Collaboration</td>
<td>• PowerPoint Slides</td>
<td>17 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Complete activities from PCT manual</td>
<td>• PCT manual</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning Activities</td>
<td>• Conduct Role Play activity regarding collaboration</td>
<td>• PCT manual</td>
<td>10 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Parent Training Booklets</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homework Activities for Session 1:</td>
<td>Activity 1: Expressing Expectations</td>
<td>• PCT manual</td>
<td>2 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PARENTING</td>
<td>Home: supervise homework/discuss interests</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>School: Find out more about the classes your child is taking</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Community: Take a leisure outing with your</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Homework Activity handout #1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• PowerPoint Slides</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Homework Activity handout #1</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

268
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>child (to the mall, park, or movie, etc.)</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Wrap-up</strong></td>
<td><strong>8 minutes</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Complete the Module 2 wrap-up section</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Complete the Session Evaluation</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

**Total Time Needed: 45 minutes**
### Module 2 TRAINING

**Welcome and Introduction (6 minutes)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Methods</th>
<th>Materials</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>➢ Ask parents to take a seat</td>
<td>• Pens and pencils</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ Welcome parents back to training</td>
<td>• Icebreaker Activity Sheet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ Conduct icebreaker activity #3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Ground Rules (1 minute)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Methods</th>
<th>Materials</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>➢ Briefly remind parents of Ground Rules using poster posted in classroom</td>
<td>• Ground Rules Poster</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Ask parents to signify acceptance of these rules (if necessary)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Introductory Activity (1 minute)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Methods</th>
<th>Materials</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• State the lesson title, focus, and objective(s):</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Title:</strong> What is Collaboration? Why is it important?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Types of Collaboration/Parent Involvement.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What knowledge and skills do I need to effectively collaborate?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Focus:</strong> Getting a clear understanding of what collaboration is and the important role collaboration plays in special education</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Objective:</strong> Parents will develop an understanding of the collaborative process and the important role collaboration plays in the academic success of their child with a disability. Parents will learn about their roles in the collaborative process and the skills needed to effectively collaborate.</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Mini-Lecture (17 minutes)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Methods</th>
<th>Materials</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The mini-lecture covers ideas about collaboration from the PCT manual</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ Review concepts related to parent-teacher collaboration in special education programming</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Define collaboration and collaborative roles parents assume</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Identify the traits of a collaborative relationship as well as the skills for effective communication</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Explain the laws that encourage collaboration between parents and schools</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Discuss the reasons why collaboration is important</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Identify the benefits of collaboration</td>
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</table>

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<table>
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<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• PowerPoint Slides</td>
<td>• PCT Manual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• PCT Manual</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning Activities (10 minutes)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Methods</strong></td>
<td><strong>Materials</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ Engage in role play activities as outlined:</td>
<td>• PCT manual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Partner with a parent to model a collaborative experience. Model bad example first and then good example. Have parents identify which of the two demonstrations was the better example of collaboration and to point out the major differences between the two examples.</td>
<td>• Parent Training Booklet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Stress the positive factors for successful collaboration</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Partner parents in groups of 2 or 3.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Have parents take turns being “parent(s)” or “teachers” as they role play effective collaborative skills.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Each participant must demonstrate a collaborative experience using the concepts learned.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Facilitator will monitor each experience providing feedback to parents</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Complete activities from PCT manual</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Homework (2 minutes)</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Methods</strong></td>
<td><strong>Materials</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ Direct parent to complete the following activities before next scheduled class meeting:</td>
<td>• PCT manual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Activity 1. Parenting: Expressing Expectations</strong></td>
<td>• PowerPoint Slides</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home: supervise homework/discuss interests</td>
<td>• Homework Activity handout #1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School: Find out more about the classes your child is taking</td>
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<tr>
<td>Community: Take a leisure outing with your child (to the mall, park, or movie, etc.)</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Wrap-Up (8 minutes)</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Methods</strong></td>
<td><strong>Materials</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Complete the Module 2 wrap-up by reviewing PCT module 2 (Collaboration) objectives and principles.</td>
<td>• PCT manual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Direct parents to write a brief reflection on Module 2 in their journal.</td>
<td>• Parent Reflective Journals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Direct parents to complete the Session 1 Evaluation</td>
<td>• PCT Session Evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Collect training materials and evaluations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SCRIPT: Module 2
What is Collaboration?

[Trainer’s directions are in bold letters.]

After parents have returned to training and settled in seats, say:

Welcome back and thank you for such a successful start to our training program. Before we move forward with the second half of this session, are there any questions regarding the purpose of this training?

Give wait time of 30 seconds after facilitator’s (your) question is posed or last answer is given to move forward and say:

Let us get started by first taking part in a short activity to get our minds moving again.

Use the Icebreaker Activity sheet to conduct activity #3 as stated on sheet. When complete, point to poster of Ground Rules, then say:

Great. Let’s refresh on our “Ground Rules. Remember that these rules guide how we interact with each other.

Read through Ground Rules or have participants read through. Once they have been read, verify that everyone agrees with these rules.

At this time, you will instruct parents to take out their manuals and turn to Module 2: Collaboration while you cue the PowerPoint to the first title frame. At this time you will state the title, focus, and objective of this module by saying:

Please turn to the second module entitled Collaboration. Now this session deals with the major reason why we are here. This module deals with collaboration, the reason why collaboration between parents and school is important in special education, and the knowledge and skills you need to become an effective collaborator. The focus of this module is to promote a clear understanding of what collaboration is and the role it plays in accessing special education services for your child. By participating in this module, you will develop an understanding of the collaborative process and its relationship with your child’s academic success. You will learn about your role in the collaborative process and you will identify and sharpen the skills you will need to fulfill that role. Are there any questions?

Give wait time of 30 seconds after facilitator’s (your) question is posed or last answer is given to move forward. Cue to next PowerPoint slide and say:
Alright. Let’s start by defining collaboration.

Read through each of the statements regarding collaboration and then proceed with subsequent slides, making sure participants comprehend what each statement means. Say:

Collaboration is a supportive relationship between parents and schools where each member of the team is seen as an equal partner.

All members of the team share the goal of student success. What this means is that in a collaborative relationship, both the teacher and parents want the child to succeed and so they team up as partners to plan and implement programs that will benefit the child.

When members team, they are actively making decisions in a cooperative way rather than a competitive way. When members compete, nothing is accomplished.

As a parent, you will share information, reinforce schoolwork at home, speak up for quality services, and try to understand the teacher’s ideas.

Collaboration involves communication, commitment, equality, skills, trust and respect. Communication is an important part of collaboration. As a parent, if you are able to communicate your concerns, needs, or ideas in an honest, open way, you will be more likely to be heard and respected. The information you provide will help you to gain access to the programs your child needs. Communication involves listening, responding appropriately, and using the right body language so that your message is received as it is intended.

Commitment to the effort of collaboration is important. If you stay focused on the goals for your child, then you will help ensure that the right programs are provided to your child.

Equal status among partners helps in the decision-making process as each person has the same power and feels that they can influence the outcomes that the child will have.

Still, if you are not equipped with the right skill to collaborate, then you will not be effective in the process. You will need to know about the topic, which in this case is special education programming. You will also need to assume multiple roles. You will be the parent, teacher, and cheerleader for your child.

As a collaborator, you will also need to be truthful, dependable, and respectful so that those who collaborate with you will trust you.

The laws that promise you this right includes the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act also known as IDEA, the No Child Left Behind Act, as well as a few others.
For you, collaboration is important because it brings results. Teachers improve in knowledge and skills, parents like you improve their knowledge and skills, and most importantly, your children increase their abilities to achieve in academics. Now, these are some important reasons to collaborate. Tell me what you think about these issues?

Have parents share their insight, keeping responses brief and on topic. Then say:

Let’s try a fun activity that will test your understanding of collaboration while at the same time checking on your acting skills. We will engage in role-play. I will first demonstrate for you 2 examples of collaboration. You will identify which example is the best example of the collaborative process and then you will give me reasons why it is the best example by pointing out major differences between the examples.

Pick a parent to collaborate with and you demonstrate as a parent while the parent switches role and becomes the teacher. Explain to the volunteer parent what example you are going to demonstrate first and the type of behavior that he/she is expected to demonstrate. Do not allow other group members to hear your discussion. Demonstrate both the accepted model of collaboration and the non-example of collaboration. Ask participants to determine which example is best and which is not, while pointing out major differences between examples. After demonstrating examples say:

Who can tell me which of the previous example is an acceptable demonstration of the collaborative process?

After getting responses, ask for specific differences between the examples by saying:

What is the major difference in the behaviors of the good and bad examples?

Stress the positive factors for successful collaboration, then say:

Okay. Now each of you will get a chance to shine. I will put you in small groups of 2 or 3 people. Each of you will get the chance to be the parent or teacher, as we will switch roles halfway into our demonstration.

Put parents into groups. Have one parent be the “parent” while the other is the “teacher”. Have them demonstrate an acceptable model of collaboration. Monitor groups for about 3 minutes and then have them switch roles demonstrating, again, an acceptable model of collaboration. Look for specific skills that are being demonstrated and make general comments like, “I like the way you are actively listening.” Or “I see here a demonstration of equality as no one is taking full charge of the conversation”. When finished, say:

Good job everyone. Now, please take out your journals and turn to the next available writing space.
Verify that everyone has their journal out, along with a writing tool. Then say:

In your journal, please write a brief reflection of the activities we just completed. In your reflections, you can write about what you learned, your experience with role play or something you might want to do or do differently now that you have had this experience. Please take about 5 minutes to complete this.

At this time, review Homework #1 sheet, which includes the journal prompt. Review with participants, then say:

Let’s now take a moment to look back on what we have discussed so far. First, we looked at the importance of collaboration and the roles parents accept when collaborating with school professionals. Can anyone recall what some of the major points that were said?

Call on participants to share. Discuss responses and provide feedback. Steer the conversation and have participants stay on topic. Be reflective of the time. Then say:

The completion of this second module marks the completion of our first training session. Please close your journals and manuals. Make sure that your name is on the outside of the manual. Place your journals in your bags and pass your manuals forward. I will keep your manuals until next session. You will take your journals with you so that you can reflect on your homework assignments during the week.

Now, you will have the opportunity to have some refreshments with your child. Once you are done, you are free to go. If you have any questions, you may talk with me after I have collected and put away all of the training manuals. I look forward to seeing you again next week.

END Module 2
Module 3

What are the laws guaranteeing my right to participate?
What are my rights and responsibilities?
What rights does my child have?

Focus: Getting acquainted with mandated rights and responsibilities of parents and child

Objective: Parents will develop an understanding of their rights and responsibilities as a parent of a child with a disability. Parents will understand how laws protect their rights.

Skill: Becoming knowledgeable about parental rights and responsibilities in the special education process.

Evidence: Complete “Bill of Rights” activity sheet with parent rights/responsibilities

Homework Focus: Communicating (Joyce Epstein’s Typology for Parent Involvement)

TRAINING OVERVIEW

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Methods</th>
<th>Materials</th>
<th>Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Welcome and Introduction</td>
<td>• Parents sign in and pick up training materials&lt;br&gt;• Conduct Icebreaker activity #4</td>
<td>• Week 2 sign-in sheet&lt;br&gt;• Training materials&lt;br&gt;• Icebreaker Activity Sheet</td>
<td>Prior to session beginning and up to first 5 minutes of session start</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ground Rules</td>
<td>• Brief reminder of ground rules</td>
<td>• Ground Rules Poster&lt;br&gt;• PCT manual</td>
<td>1 minute</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introductory Activity</td>
<td>• Brief discussion of training objective</td>
<td>• PCT manual</td>
<td>1 minute</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mini-Lecture</td>
<td>• Discuss Rights and Responsibilities and the laws guaranteeing these&lt;br&gt;• Complete activities from PCT manual</td>
<td>• PowerPoint Slides&lt;br&gt;• PCT manual</td>
<td>50 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning Activities</td>
<td>• Engage in activities regarding rights and responsibilities</td>
<td>• PCT manual&lt;br&gt;• Parent Training Booklets</td>
<td>38 minutes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Homework Activities for Session 2: COMMUNICATING

**Activity 2: Discuss student’s achievement**
- **Home:** talk with child about their academic performance and social adjustment
- **School:** make contact with teacher regarding child’s academic performance
- **Community:** Seek community support

**Tools:**
- PCT manual
- PowerPoint Slides
- Homework Activity handout #2

**2 minutes**

### Wrap-up

- Complete the Module 3 wrap-up section
- Complete the Session Evaluation

**Tools:**
- PCT manual
- Session Evaluation

**8 minutes**

**Total Time Needed:** 1 hour 45 minutes
Module 3 TRAINING
Welcome and Introduction (5 minutes)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Methods</th>
<th>Materials</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Parents sign in and pick up training materials</td>
<td>• Week 2 sign-in sheet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Icebreaker Activity #4</td>
<td>• Training materials</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Icebreaker Activity Sheet</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ground Rules (1 minute)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Methods</th>
<th>Materials</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>➢ Briefly remind parents of Ground Rules using poster posted in classroom</td>
<td>• Ground Rules Poster</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Introductory Activity (1 minute)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Methods</th>
<th>Materials</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>➢ State the lesson title, focus, and objective(s)</td>
<td>• PCT manual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Title: What are the laws guaranteeing my right to participate? What are my rights and responsibilities? What rights does my child have?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus: Getting acquainted with mandated rights and responsibilities of parents and child</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Objective: Parents will develop an understanding of their rights and responsibilities as a parent of a child with a disability. Parents will understand how laws protect their rights.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Mini-Lecture (50 minutes)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Methods</th>
<th>Materials</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The mini-lecture covers ideas about parental rights and responsibilities including the laws that govern parental involvement</td>
<td>• PowerPoint Slides</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ Review concepts related to parent-teacher collaboration in special education programming</td>
<td>• PCT manual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Begin by explaining the general rights of parents to participate in the educational decision making process for their child with a disability and that school must inform them of these rights.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Then explain the rights of children to FAPE and LRE</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Move forward by introducing additional rights including those involving evaluation, access to child’s records, participation in IEP development.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Switch focus of discussion to parental responsibilities. Introduce partnering with schools and service agencies, learning about the special education process, keeping records, and involvement in parent organizations.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Complete activities from PCT manual</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Learning Activities (38 minutes)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Methods</th>
<th>Materials</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| - Have participants complete “Bill of Rights” activity by writing down a list of Rights/Responsibilities  
- Complete Module 3 Learning Activities page in the PCT manual | - PCT manual  
- “Bill of Rights” worksheet |

### Homework (2 minutes)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Methods</th>
<th>Materials</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| - Direct parent to complete the following activities before next scheduled class meeting:  
  **Activity 2:** Communicating: Discuss student’s achievement  
  **Home:** Talk with your child about their academic performance and social adjustment.  
  **School:** Make contact with the teacher regarding the child’s academic performance  
  **Community:** Seek community support | - PCT manual  
- PowerPoint Slides  
- Homework Activity handout #2 |

### Wrap-Up (8 minutes)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Methods</th>
<th>Materials</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| - Complete the Module 3 wrap-up by reviewing PCT objectives and principles.  
- Direct parents to write a brief reflection on Module 3 in their journal  
- Have parents complete session evaluation  
- Collect training materials and evaluations | - PCT manual  
- Parent Reflective Journals  
- Session Evaluation |
SCRIPT: Module 3
Rights & Responsibilities

[Trainer’s directions are in bold letters.]

After parents have signed in and picked up training materials, say:

Welcome back and thank you for last week’s successful start to our training program. Before we move forward with this session, are there any questions regarding the training or any activity that we have done so far?

Give wait time of 30 seconds after facilitator’s (your) question is posed or last answer is given to move forward and say:

Let’s get started by first taking part in a short activity to get our minds moving again.

Use the Icebreaker Activity sheet to conduct activity #4 as stated on sheet. When complete, point to poster of Ground Rules, then say:

Great. Let’s refresh on our “Ground Rules. Remember that these rules guide how we interact with each other.

Read through Ground Rules or have participants read through. Once they have been read, verify that everyone agrees with these rules.

At this time, you will instruct parents to take out their manuals and turn to Module 3: Rights and Responsibilities while you cue the PowerPoint to the first title frame. At this time you will state the title, focus, and objective of this module by saying:

Please turn to the third module entitled Rights and Responsibilities in the Special Education Process. This module deals with the rights and responsibilities that are guaranteed to you and your child by federal law. The focus of this module is to promote a clear understanding of these rights as well as the role parents play when enacting these rights. By participating in this module, you will develop an understanding of your rights and responsibilities and its relationship with your child’s academic success within special education. You will also become familiar with the laws that protect these rights. Are there any questions?

Give wait time of 30 seconds after facilitator’s (your) question is posed or last answer is given to move forward. Cue to next PowerPoint slide and say:

The law guarantees your rights to participate in the decision-making process. This means that you are entitled to be a team member on the IEP team or any other team that makes
decisions about your child’s education. Schools must provide you with a list of your rights as a parent. Most often, this is called “Procedural Safeguards”.

Continue through PowerPoint slides and review the concepts of each as stated. Be sure to include discussions on FAPE, LRE, assessment, access to school records, and parent consent. Also, discuss the slides relating to a parent’s responsibility in the special education process. These include partnering with schools and service agencies, keeping accurate records, and involvement in parent organizations. Say:

Your child is entitled to a free education that is appropriate in meeting his or her need. There are other rights to you and your child as well. In order to conduct an evaluation or make a change in placement, the school must notify you and obtain your consent in order to proceed. You will provide your consent if you agree to the terms outlined in the consent letter. If you disagree with the results of the school’s evaluation, you have the right to have an independent evaluation done. Also, if you feel that your child’s current placement is inappropriate, you have the right to request a re-evaluation. Your child must also be tested in his or her primary language. For example, if your child speaks and understands only Creole, then the test must be given in Creole.

When the school communicates with you, they must provide information to you in your native language. Any information contained in your child’s school records must be made available to you when you request it.

One important right given to you by law is the right to participate in the development of the IEP. The school must make every possible effort to include you at the meetings that are held to develop the educational programming for your child. This helps to make sure that your child is provided the most appropriate program in the least restrictive environment.

Still, with all of these rights, there are certain responsibilities that must be taken in order for your child to get the best opportunity to learn. As a parent, you must develop a partnership with the school, learn as much as you can about your rights and the rights of your child, ask the school to clear up any information that you do not understand, and keep records/copies of all information exchanged with the school. One other important aspect of being a responsible parent is to join a parent group such as the PTA so that you can gain support of other parents like yourself.

When complete with PowerPoint presentation, say:

Now, that you are familiar with your rights and responsibilities as a parent of a child with a disability, you will participate in an activity that will foster your awareness even more. In the next activity, you will be writing a “Bill of Rights” document that you will be able to post in your home as a reminder of your rights and responsibilities. To complete this activity, you are going to need a copy of the scroll that you will record your rights on, a pair of scissors, a marker to write with. I have these supplies for you.
Pass out supplies and instruct parents to cut out the scroll from the sheet. They are to list their rights and responsibilities on it. Once parents have cut the scroll from the sheet and have a writing tool to begin, say the following:

Let’s work on this activity as a whole class. Let’s first identify the rights that we have as parents of children with disabilities. Once we have identified them, we will narrow it down to make sense so that when we write, it won’t take up the entire space on our bill document.

Let’s start first by writing the words “Bill of Rights” on the top leaf of our scroll.

Model activity and then say,

Can someone please name one of our rights, as discussed in the training?

After someone has named a right, verify it, and then assist the class to narrow down. Proceed by writing the right down on our scroll. Proceed through rights and then make write the term “responsibilities” below the last right written. Write a list of responsibilities. When complete with this activity, then say:

Good Job. Now you can take these and frame them or use a nice ribbon and hang it on your wall.

At this time, pass out Homework #2 sheet, which includes the journal prompt. Review with participants, then say:

Let’s now take a moment to look back on what we have discussed so far. First, we looked at the importance of our rights and responsibilities. Can anyone recall what we said?

Call on participants to share. Discuss responses and provide feedback. Steer the conversation and have participants stay on topic. Be reflective of the time. Then say:

Now, that we have completed the third module, Please take out your journal to write a brief reflection.

Verify that everyone has his or her journal out, along with a writing tool. Then say:

In your journal, please write what your impressions of this training module are and how you can benefit from the information presented. When you are finished, please complete your session evaluation. I will know that you are finished when your journals are closed. I will come around to collect your training manual and you can put your journal

Verify that everyone has written in their journal and collect them. Then say:
The end of this session marks the end of this session. Now that we are finished, you will have the opportunity to have some refreshments with your child. At that time, we will dismiss and you are free to go. If you have any questions, you may talk with me at the end of the second session. Again, please take this time to write about your first impressions and what you expect to gain from training. You may begin.

END Module 3
Module 4

The IEP

The IEP Process

**Focus:** Developing an understanding of the Individual Education Program (IEP) process

**Objective:** Parents will develop an understanding of the IEP including components of the IEP, laws governing the IEP, and the IEP process

**Skill:** Developing an understanding of the IEP in order to become an effective team member in the decision-making process

**Evidence:** Parents will review an example of an IEP and complete components reflective of their child.

**Homework Focus:** Learning at Home (Joyce Epstein’s Typology for Parent Involvement)

### TRAINING OVERVIEW

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Methods</th>
<th>Materials</th>
<th>Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Welcome and Introduction</td>
<td>• Parents sign in and pick up training materials &lt;br&gt; • Conduct Icebreaker Activity #6</td>
<td>• Week 3 sign-in sheet &lt;br&gt; • Training materials &lt;br&gt; • Icebreaker Activity Sheet</td>
<td>Prior to session beginning and up to first 5 minutes of session start</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ground Rules</td>
<td>• Brief reminder of ground rules</td>
<td>• Ground Rules Poster &lt;br&gt; • PCT manual</td>
<td>1 minute</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introductory Activity</td>
<td>• Brief discussion of training objective</td>
<td>• PCT manual</td>
<td>1 minute</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mini-Lecture</td>
<td>• Discuss the IEP and its relevance to parent involvement &lt;br&gt; • Complete activities from PCT manual</td>
<td>• PowerPoint Slides &lt;br&gt; • PCT manual</td>
<td>38 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning Activities</td>
<td>• Engage in activities regarding the IEP</td>
<td>• PCT manual &lt;br&gt; • Parent Training Booklets</td>
<td>20 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homework Activities for Session 3: LEARNING AT HOME</td>
<td><strong>Activity 3:</strong> Plan for future &lt;br&gt; Home: identify post-school plans &lt;br&gt; School: align post-school plans with IEP goals &lt;br&gt; Community: visit local college, technical school, etc. with child</td>
<td>• Homework Activity Sheet</td>
<td>2 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Wrap-up</strong></td>
<td><strong>Complete the Module 4 wrap-up section</strong></td>
<td><strong>PCT manual</strong></td>
<td><strong>8 minutes</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Complete the Session Evaluation</strong></td>
<td><strong>Session Evaluation</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total Time Needed:** 75 minutes
Module 4 TRAINING

Welcome and Introduction (5 minutes)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Methods</th>
<th>Materials</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>● Parents sign in and pick up training materials</td>
<td>● Week 3 sign-in sheet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Icebreaker Activity #6</td>
<td>● Training materials</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>● Icebreaker Activity Sheet</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ground Rules (1 minute)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Methods</th>
<th>Materials</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>➢ Briefly remind parents of Ground Rules using poster posted in classroom</td>
<td>● Ground Rules Poster</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Introductory Activity (1 minute)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Methods</th>
<th>Materials</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>➢ State the lesson title, focus, and objective(s):</td>
<td>● PCT manual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Title:</strong> The IEP/The IEP Process</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Focus:</strong> Developing an understanding of the IEP process</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Objective:</strong> Parents will develop an understanding of the IEP including components of the IEP, laws governing the IEP, and the IEP process</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Skill:</strong> Developing an understanding of the IEP in order to become an effective team member in the decision-making process</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Mini-Lecture (38 minutes)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Methods</th>
<th>Materials</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The mini-lecture covers ideas The IEP process from the PCT manual</td>
<td>● PowerPoint Slides</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Introduce the IEP by defining it and relating what the purpose of the IEP document is.</td>
<td>● PCT manual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Explain how the law supports parent participation in the IEP development</td>
<td>● Icebreaker Activity Sheet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Describe the function of an IEP meeting and the participants of the IEP meeting</td>
<td>● Computer access for optional activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Provide a description of the IEP process by indicating the steps in it development and implementation</td>
<td>● Sample IEP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Explain each step of the IEP process</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Explain the role of parents in the IEP process</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Indicate the importance of each part of the IEP</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Explain how to resolve IEP disagreements (May use computer to access interactive website dealing with what parents should know when the school is reluctant to provide adequate services—available at the following URL: <a href="http://www.nclid.unco.edu/Hvoriginals/Advocacy/Popup/popup.html">http://www.nclid.unco.edu/Hvoriginals/Advocacy/Popup/popup.html</a>)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
- Provide a list of resources available to parents regarding the IEP
- Have parents review sample IEP while reviewing specific parts and discussing relevance in matching students’ needs.
- Complete activities from PCT manual
- Complete Icebreaker Activity #5

### Learning Activities (20 minutes)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Methods</th>
<th>Materials</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Have parents complete selected sections of sample IEP as it relates to their child.</td>
<td>- PCT manual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Monitor progress and provide assistance as needed.</td>
<td>- Sample IEP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- As a whole group, discuss the choices parents have made.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Direct parents to complete Module 4 Learning Activities pages in the PCT manual</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Homework (2 minutes)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Methods</th>
<th>Materials</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Direct parent to complete the following activities before next scheduled class meeting:</td>
<td>- PCT manual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity 3. Learning at Home: Plan for future</td>
<td>- PowerPoint Slides</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home: identify post-school plans</td>
<td>- Homework Activity handout #3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School: align post-school plans with IEP goals</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community: visit local college, technical school, etc. with child</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Wrap-Up (8 minutes)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Methods</th>
<th>Materials</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Complete the Module 4 wrap-up by reviewing PCT objectives and principles.</td>
<td>- PCT manual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Direct parents to write a brief reflection on Module 4 in their journal</td>
<td>- Parent Reflective Journals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Complete Session Evaluation</td>
<td>- Session Evaluations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Collect training materials and evaluations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SCRIPT: Module 4

The IEP

[Trainer’s directions are in bold letters.]

After parents have signed in and picked up training materials, say:

Welcome back and thank you for returning for this third session of our training program. Before we move forward with the second half of this session, are there any questions regarding the training or any activity that we have done so far?

Give wait time of 30 seconds after facilitator’s (your) question is posed or last answer is given to move forward and say:

Let’s get started by first taking part in a short activity.

Use the Icebreaker Activity sheet to conduct activity #6 as stated on sheet. When complete, point to poster of Ground Rules, then say:

That was super. Now, let’s refresh on our “Ground Rules. Remember that these rules guide how we interact with each other.

Read through Ground Rules or have participants read through. Once they have been read, verify that everyone agrees with these rules.

At this time, you will instruct parents to take out their manuals and turn to Module 4: The IEP Process while you cue the PowerPoint to the first title frame. At this time you will state the title, focus, and objective of this module by saying:

Please turn to the third module entitled The IEP Process. Now, this module deals with The Individual Education Program or IEP, which is the document that guides instruction and related services provided to your child. This session will help you to develop a better understanding of the IEP, it’s function, and the process through which it is developed. The focus of this module is to promote a clear understanding of what the IEP is and the role it plays in accessing instruction and services for your child through special education programs. By participating in this module, you will develop an understanding of the IEP in order to become an effective team member in the decision-making process. Are there any questions?

Give wait time of 30 seconds after facilitator’s (your) question is posed or last answer is given to move forward. Cue to next PowerPoint slide and say:
Let’s learn more about the IEP and get an understanding of the important role this document plays in the life of your child. Please look on with me at the second slide that describes what the IEP is.

Verify that parents are on the correct page and have located the slide for the discussion. Go through all PowerPoint slides using each to guide the discussion. Make sure that all parents have an understanding of what is being discussed. Say:

The IEP is a written statement of the educational program designed for your child. It is based specifically on the needs of your child. The IEP outlines the instructional program and services your child will receive. It is important then, that it match your child’s needs.

IDEA and No Child Left Behind Act are two major laws that support your participation on the IEP team. When the team meets, you will participate in the development of the document with a group of other professionals. It is important that you know as much about the IEP as possible and be able to communicate your concerns. Before the team meets, the school must make the meeting date, time, and place convenient to you. If you cannot attend, notify an IEP member as soon as possible so that you can reschedule. It is important that you be there.

The IEP process involves 5 major steps. They include pre-referral, screening, service, instructional planning, and evaluation of progress.

When you attend the IEP meeting, make sure that you are prepared and are there on time.

If you disagree with any part of the IEP, you have the right to another meeting or someone who can help you resolve the matter. There are many resources available to you. Your child’s school can provide you with a list if your request one.

At this time, you can incorporate the optional activity by accessing an interactive website that provides information to parents for resolving IEP disagreements. The website’s URL is http://www.nclid.uco.edu/Hvoriginals/Advocacy/Popup-popup.html

When finished, say:

Here is a checklist of activities that can help you in the IEP process.

Pass out checklist and then say:

Take a few minutes to look through.

After about 2 minutes, direct parents back to the course of study. Say:
Now, let’s take a moment to look back on what we have discussed so far. First, we defined the IEP, learned about the laws that govern the IEP, talked about IEP meeting s
and team members, and looked at the process in which IEPs are developed. Can anyone recall what we some of the key points we discussed about each of these topics?

Call on participants to share. Discuss responses and provide feedback. Steer the conversation and have participants stay on topic. Be reflective of the time. Then, using the Icebreaker activity sheet, say:

Before we move on, let’s take a break by doing a fun activity.

Conduct icebreaker activity # 5 using the Icebreaker Activity Sheet. When finished, say:
Now we will take a moment to get you to review a sample IEP. Although this IEP may not look like the one issued to your child, it contains the same information. We will use these samples to brainstorm specific areas as they relate to your children. You can write on these samples as we go through.

Review IEP format focusing on specific areas as indicated by a star on each sheet. Talk parents through the thought process of what information is important to the development of each section. Help parents write in information that may be important to them. Monitor progress and discuss choices with parents making suggestions along the way. As a whole group, discuss the choices made by parents. When finished say:

I hope that this session was informative to you. For now, let’s put this sample away. If you should need help with understanding any area, you may see me at the end of the next module. Now we will proceed on to the next item on today’s agenda.

At this time, pass out Homework #3 sheet, which includes the journal prompt. Review with participants, then say:
Now, that we have completed the fourth module, please take out your journal to write a brief reflection.

Verify that everyone has their journal out, along with a writing tool. Then say:

In your journal, please write what your impressions are about the training, the IEP, or the process of developing the IEP. When you are finished, please close your journal and manual. We will then take a short break before proceeding with the second half of our training. When we are finished, you will have the opportunity to have some refreshments with your child. At that time, we will dismiss and you are free to go. If you have any questions, you may talk with me at the end of the fifth module. Again, please take this time to write about your thoughts on what was learned from this module. You may begin.

END Module 4
Module 5

Understanding Service Delivery Models

Focus: To provide a framework for understanding how services are delivered to a child with a disability

Objective: Parents will know how special education services are delivered and be able to identify which model is appropriate for their child with special needs.

Skill: Developing the awareness of how services are delivered and how to collaborate with school personnel in ensuring that their child has access to the most appropriate placement according to his/her needs.

Evidence: Completion of Flow Chart regarding appropriate services based on the child’s educational needs.

Homework Focus: Learning at Home (Joyce Epstein’s Typology for Parent Involvement)

TRAINING OVERVIEW

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Methods</th>
<th>Materials</th>
<th>Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Welcome and Introduction</td>
<td>• Welcome parents back to training</td>
<td>• Pens and pencils</td>
<td>1 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Parent Training Booklets</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ground Rules</td>
<td>• Brief reminder of ground rules (if necessary)</td>
<td>• Ground Rules Poster</td>
<td>1 minute</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• PCT manual</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introductory Activity</td>
<td>• Brief discussion of training objective</td>
<td>• PCT manual</td>
<td>1 minute</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mini-Lecture</td>
<td>• Discuss Service Delivery models as they relate to accessing the general curriculum</td>
<td>• PowerPoint Slides</td>
<td>12 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Complete activities from PCT manual</td>
<td>• PCT manual</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning Activities</td>
<td>• Engage in activities regarding service delivery</td>
<td>• PCT manual</td>
<td>5 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Parent Training Booklets</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homework Activities for</td>
<td>Activity 3: Plan for the future</td>
<td>• Homework Activity Sheet #3</td>
<td>2 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Session 3: LEARNING AT HOME</td>
<td>Home: identify post-school plans</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>School: align post-school plans with IEP goals</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Community: visit local college, technical school, etc. with child</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wrap-up</td>
<td>Complete the Module 5 wrap-up section</td>
<td>Complete the Session Evaluation</td>
<td>PCT manual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Complete the Session Evaluation</td>
<td></td>
<td>Session Evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8 minutes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total Time Needed: 30 minutes**
### Module 5 TRAINING

#### Welcome and Introduction (1 minute)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Methods</th>
<th>Materials</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>➢ Ask parents to take a seat</td>
<td>• PCT manual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ Welcome parents back to training</td>
<td>• Training materials</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Ground Rules (1 minute)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Methods</th>
<th>Materials</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>➢ Briefly remind parents of Ground Rules using poster posted in classroom (if needed)</td>
<td>• Ground Rules Poster</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Introductory Activity (1 minute)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Methods</th>
<th>Materials</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>➢ State the lesson title, focus, and objective(s):</td>
<td>• PCT manual</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Title:** Understanding Service Delivery Models  
**Focus:** To provide a framework for understanding how services are delivered to a child with a disability  
**Objective:** Parents will know how special education services are delivered and be able to identify which model is appropriate for their child with special needs.

#### Mini-Lecture (12 minutes)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Methods</th>
<th>Materials</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **The mini-lecture covers ideas about service delivery models from the PCT manual**  
  • Introduce by stating student rights, as guaranteed by FAPE and LRE, includes access to the general curriculum  
  • Discuss continuum of services and relate to service delivery  
  • Complete activities from PCT manual | • PCT manual         |
|                                                  | • PowerPoint Slides  |

#### Learning Activities (5 minutes)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Methods</th>
<th>Materials</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>➢ Complete service delivery selection flow-chart</td>
<td>• PCT manual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ Direct parents to complete Module 5 Learning Activities page in the PCT manual</td>
<td>• Service Delivery Model Selection Flow Chart</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Homework (2 minutes)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Methods</th>
<th>Materials</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| ➢ Direct parent to complete the following activities before next scheduled class meeting:  
  **Home:** supervise homework/discuss interests  
  **School:** Find out more about the classes your child is taking  
  **Community:** Take a leisure outing with your child (to the mall, park, or movie, etc.) | • PCT manual  
• PowerPoint Slides  
• Homework Activity handout #3 |

### Wrap-Up (8 minutes)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Methods</th>
<th>Materials</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| • Complete the Module 5 wrap-up by reviewing PCT objectives and principles.  
• Direct parents to write a brief reflection on Module 5 in their journal  
• Complete Session Evaluation  
• Collect training materials and evaluations | • PCT manual  
• Parent Reflective Journals  
• Session Evaluations |
After parents have returned to training and settled in seats, say:

Welcome back! The module before was filled with quite a bit of information regarding the IEP process. This session will deal with how the services outlined in the IEP are delivered. Before we move forward with the second half of this session, are there any questions regarding the previous module or any other aspect or activity of this training?

Give wait time of 30 seconds after facilitator’s (your) question is posed or last answer is given to move forward. Review Ground Rules (if necessary) by pointing to poster of Ground Rules, then saying: [if not move to starred item]

Great. Let’s refresh on our “Ground Rules. Remember that these rules guide how we interact with each other.

Read through Ground Rules or have participants read through. Once they have been read, verify that everyone agrees with these rules.

At this time, you will instruct parents to take out their manuals and turn to Module 5: Service Delivery Models while you cue the PowerPoint to the first title frame. At this time you will state the title, focus, and objective of this module by saying:

Please turn to the 5th module entitled Service Delivery Models. This module deals with the delivery of services to your child. The module will inform you of how services are delivered to students with disabilities. The focus of this module is to provide you with the framework for understanding the delivery of these services. By participating in this module, you will be able to better collaborate with school personnel in determining which model is appropriate for your child. Are there any questions?

Give wait time of 30 seconds after facilitator’s (your) question is posed or last answer is given to move forward. Cue to next PowerPoint slide and say:

The delivery of educational services to your child is based on your child’s ability and needs. The delivery of these services is to be free and appropriate and conducted in a placement appropriate to meeting your child’s needs. More importantly, regardless of placement, the child should have access to the general curriculum and be given the opportunity to participate in state and district-wide assessment.
Educational services are delivered in environments ranging from the hospital setting to the general setting. Services can come from a variety of providers.

Students can be taught in a self-contained special educational setting, be pulled out of the general classroom for instruction on specific skills, be mainstreamed for all or part of the day, or be fully included in the general education classroom. When included in the general education classroom, ESE services can be provided by a co-teacher or on a consultation basis.

When finished, have participants turn to “Service Delivery Flowchart” and assist them with completing. Say:

With what you know about service delivery, it is time to determine the most appropriate placement for your child. Look at the flowchart and find the service delivery option you believe to be the most appropriate and place your child’s name in that square. Does this choice reflect your child’s educational and social needs?

At this time, review Homework #3 sheet, which includes the journal prompt. Review with participants, then say:

Let’s now take a moment to look back on what we have discussed so far. First, we looked at how services are delivered and then completed a service delivery flowchart. Now we will wrap up by shifting to a brief review of our homework assignment.

Call on participants to share. Discuss responses and provide feedback. Steer the conversation and have participants stay on topic. Be reflective of the time. Then say:

Now, that we have completed the fifth module, please write a brief reflection in your journal about your experience with this session. Be sure to reflect on all parts of our discussion today.

Verify that everyone has their journal out, along with a writing tool then say:

When you are finished, please close your journal and manual. Since we are finished, you will have the opportunity to have some refreshments with your child. After having your refreshments, you are free to go. If you have any questions, you may talk with me at the end of the second session. Again, please take this time to write your reflections on today’s training session. You may begin.

END Module 5
Module 6
Developing an Action Plan

Focus: Developing a plan of action for engaging in collaborative experiences with special education personnel

Objective: Parents will develop a plan of action for meeting with their child’s teacher where they will utilize knowledge and skills learned about the collaborative process and special education services

Skill: Application of learning in a collaborative experience

Evidence: Completed Action Plan worksheet

Homework Focus: Decision Making (Joyce Epstein’s Typology for Parent Involvement)

TRAINING OVERVIEW

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Methods</th>
<th>Materials</th>
<th>Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Welcome and Introduction</td>
<td>• Parents sign in and pick up training materials</td>
<td>• Week 4 sign-in sheet</td>
<td>Prior to session beginning and up to first 5 minutes of session start</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Icebreaker Activity #15</td>
<td>• Training materials</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Icebreaker Activity Sheet</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ground Rules</td>
<td>• Brief reminder of ground rules</td>
<td>• Ground Rules Poster</td>
<td>1 minute</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• PCT manual</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introductory Activity</td>
<td>• Brief discussion of training objective</td>
<td></td>
<td>1 minute</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• PCT manual</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mini-Lecture</td>
<td>• Discuss Action plans for collaboration</td>
<td>• PowerPoint Slides</td>
<td>18 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Complete activities from PCT manual</td>
<td>• PCT manual</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning Activities</td>
<td>• Engage in activities regarding (action plan) collaboration</td>
<td>• PCT manual</td>
<td>40 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Parent Training Booklets</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homework Activities for Session 4:</td>
<td>Activity 4: Take Action</td>
<td>• Homework</td>
<td>2 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DECISION-MAKING/SUPPORTING SCHOOL</td>
<td>Home: List how PTA/SAC can serve you School: join PTASAC</td>
<td>Activity Sheet # 4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Community: Volunteer</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wrap-up</td>
<td>Complete the Module 6 wrap-up section</td>
<td>Complete the Session Evaluation</td>
<td>PCT manual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total Time Needed:** 75 minutes
Module 6 TRAINING

Welcome and Introduction (5 minutes)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Methods</th>
<th>Materials</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Parents sign in and pick up training materials</td>
<td>• Week 4 sign-in sheet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Icebreaker Activity #15</td>
<td>• Training materials</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Icebreaker Activity Sheet</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ground Rules (1 minute)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Methods</th>
<th>Materials</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>➢ Briefly remind parents of Ground Rules using poster posted in classroom</td>
<td>• Ground Rules Poster</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Introductory Activity (1 minute)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Methods</th>
<th>Materials</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>➢ State the lesson title, focus, and objective(s):</td>
<td>• PCT manual</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

  **Title:** Developing an Action Plan  
  **Focus:** Developing a plan of action for engaging in collaborative experiences with special education personnel  
  **Objective:** Parents will develop a plan of action for meeting with their child's teacher where they will utilize knowledge and skills learned about the collaborative process and special education services

Mini-Lecture (18 minutes)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Methods</th>
<th>Materials</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The mini-lecture covers ideas about action planning for collaboration from the PCT manual</td>
<td>• PCT manual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ Have parents review student IEPs looking for specific areas that they may not understand.</td>
<td>• PowerPoint Slides</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ Provide parents with list of items to do when preparing for IEP meeting</td>
<td>• Student IEPs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ Complete activities from PCT manual</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Learning Activities (40 minutes)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Methods</th>
<th>Materials</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>➢ Have parents take notes of items they need clarification on, while generating a list of questions and concerns they may have.</td>
<td>• PCT manual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ Outline objectives for meeting</td>
<td>• PowerPoint Slides</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ Identify potential meeting dates</td>
<td>• Action Planning Worksheet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ Make a list of items you may need to take.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ Complete Module 6 Learning Activities pages in the PCT manual</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Homework (2 minutes)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Methods</th>
<th>Materials</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Direct parent to complete the following activities before next scheduled class meeting:</td>
<td>PCT manual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home: take action</td>
<td>PowerPoint Slides</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School: make a list of how PTA/SAC can serve you</td>
<td>Homework Activity handout #4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community: volunteer</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Wrap-Up (8 minutes)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Methods</th>
<th>Materials</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Complete the Module 6 wrap-up by reviewing PCT objectives and principles.</td>
<td>PCT manual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct parents to write a brief reflection on Module 6 in their journal</td>
<td>Parent Reflective Journals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complete Session Evaluation</td>
<td>Session Evaluations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collect training materials and evaluations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Hello everyone, Welcome back to another training session. We are almost at the end of our training program. So far we have covered a lot of material in a relatively short time. Hopefully, you have found the presentations to be informative and useful. Before we move forward with the second half of this session, are there any questions regarding the purpose of this training?

Give wait time of 30 seconds after facilitator’s (your) question is posed or last answer is given to move forward and say:

Let’s get started by first taking part in a short activity to get our minds moving again.

Use the Icebreaker Activity sheet to conduct activity #15 as stated on sheet. When complete, point to poster of Ground Rules, then say (if necessary--if not move to starred item):

Great. Let’s refresh on our “Ground Rules. Remember that these rules guide how we interact with each other.

Read through Ground Rules or have participants read through. Once they have been read, verify that everyone agrees with these rules.

At this time, you will instruct parents to take out their manuals and turn to Module 6: Developing an Action Plan while you cue the PowerPoint to the first title frame. At this time you will state the title, focus, and objective of this module by saying:

Please turn to the module six entitled Developing an Action Plan. This module deals with putting together a plan for collaboration between parents and teacher. The focus of this module is to bridge the learning from this training with active collaboration. By participating in this module, you will utilize the knowledge and skills learned about the collaborative process and special education services to plan for and engage in a collaborative experience with your child’s teacher. Are there any questions?

Give wait time of 30 seconds after facilitator’s (your) question is posed or last answer is given to move forward. Cue to next PowerPoint slide and say:
Please take out your child’s current IEP and review it for specific areas that you might have trouble understanding or areas that you have specific questions on.

After parents have completed their review of the IEP, review the list of preparation activities for meeting with the child’s teacher. Pass out a notepad, pencil, and a calendar to each participant and the say:

Developing collaborative relationships with teachers is an important part of parent involvement. Your goal for today is to prepare for action. You will plan a meeting with your child’s teacher to discuss academic and/or social progress and to chart a course for next year.

Please make a list of your questions or concerns for the IEP. Also, make a list of general questions and concerns. When finished, set the goals for the meeting.

Walk around room and assist parents with activity. When finished, say:

Look at the calendar that you have been given. Think of two days that you may be able to meet with your child’s teacher. Circle those two dates. Think of a convenient place and time. Write the time and place on the calendar. Make a plan to call your child’s teacher and schedule the meeting for one of your two choices. [If parents need more time to plan, they may do so at home].

After adequate wait time, say:

Before you go to the meeting, be sure to gather all important documents that you may need. Arrange for a babysitter if you have younger children. Call the teacher 2 days before the meeting to confirm that it is still scheduled as planned. On the day of your meeting, leave with enough time to find parking and walk to the meeting location. Think positive. Express positive words and behaviors.

After you meet with the teacher, follow-up with any goals that you set.

Please plan to meet within the next two weeks.

At this time, pass out Homework #4 sheet, which includes the journal prompt. Review with participants, then say:

Let’s now take a moment to look back on what we have discussed so far. First, we looked at the importance of planning for meetings and then we made plans to meet with our child’s teacher. Let’s brainstorm potential problems that may arise. We will also discuss solutions for the problems.

Call on participants to share. Discuss responses and provide feedback. Steer the conversation and have participants stay on topic. Be reflective of the time. Then say:
Now, that we have completed the sixth module, Please take out your journal to write a brief reflection.

**Verify that everyone has their journal out, along with a writing tool. Then say:**

In your journal, please write what about your thoughts regarding meeting with your child’s teacher. Indicate if you feel confident, afraid, or whether you believe that you have the skills to collaborate effectively. When you are finished, please close your journal and manual. We will then take a short break before proceeding with the second half of our training. When we are finished, you will have the opportunity to have some refreshments with your child. At that time, we will dismiss and you are free to go. If you have any questions, you may talk with me at the end of the session. Again, please take this time to write your reflections in your journal. You may begin.

**END Module 6**
Module 7

Helping my Child Find Success

**Focus:** Identify strategies for helping the child with disabilities find success

**Objective:** Parents will learn ways in which they can help their child find success

**Skill:** Identifying specific strategies that can be readily employed to help the child with disability find success at school and in the community

**Evidence:** Completion of “Keys to Success” activity

**Homework Focus:** Decision Making (Joyce Epstein’s Typology for Parent Involvement)

## TRAINING OVERVIEW

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Methods</th>
<th>Materials</th>
<th>Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Welcome and Introduction</td>
<td>• Welcome parents back to training&lt;br&gt;• Conduct transition icebreaker activity #17</td>
<td>• Icebreaker Activity Sheet&lt;br&gt;• Pens and pencils&lt;br&gt;• Parent Training Booklets</td>
<td>8 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ground Rules</td>
<td>• Brief reminder of ground rules (if necessary)</td>
<td>• Ground Rules Poster&lt;br&gt;• PCT manual</td>
<td>1 minute</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introductory Activity</td>
<td>• Brief discussion of training objective</td>
<td>• PCT manual</td>
<td>1 minute</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mini-Lecture</td>
<td>• Discuss specific strategies for helping children find success&lt;br&gt;• Complete activities from PCT manual</td>
<td>• PowerPoint Slides&lt;br&gt;• PCT manual</td>
<td>10 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning Activities</td>
<td>• Engage in activities regarding collaboration</td>
<td>• PCT manual&lt;br&gt;• Parent Training Booklets</td>
<td>15 minutes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Homework Activities for Session 4: DECISION-MAKING/SUPPORTING SCHOOL**

**Activity 4: Take Action**
Home: List how PTA/SAC can serve you
School: join PTA/SAC
Community: Volunteer

• Homework Activity Sheet # 4

2 minutes
| Wrap-up                  | • Complete the Module 7 wrap-up section  
|                         | • Complete the Session Evaluation | • PCT manual  
|                         |                                   | • Session Evaluation | 8 minutes |

**Total Time Needed:** 45 minutes
Module 7 TRAINING

Welcome and Introduction (8 minutes)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Methods</th>
<th>Materials</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>➢ Ask parents to take a seat</td>
<td>• Training materials</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ Welcome parents back to training</td>
<td>• Icebreaker Activity Sheet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Conduct icebreaker activity # 17</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ground Rules (1 minute)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Methods</th>
<th>Materials</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>➢ Briefly remind parents of Ground Rules using poster posted in classroom (if necessary)</td>
<td>• Ground Rules Poster</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Introductory Activity (1 minute)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Methods</th>
<th>Materials</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>➢ State the lesson title, focus and objective(s):</td>
<td>• PCT manual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Title: Helping my Child Find Success</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus: Identify strategies for helping the child with disabilities find success</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Objective: Parents will learn ways in which they can help their child find success</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Mini-Lecture (10 minutes)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Methods</th>
<th>Materials</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The mini-lecture covers ideas about collaborating with professionals when employing strategies for helping children succeed</td>
<td>• PCT manual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Review list of activities that parents can do to be involved in their child’s education</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Review parent checklist for student success</td>
<td>• PowerPoint Slides</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Discuss parents as advocate</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Complete activities from PCT manual</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Learning Activities (15 minutes)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Methods</th>
<th>Materials</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Complete “Keys to Success” Activity</td>
<td>• PCT manual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Module 7 Learning Activities pages in the PCT manual</td>
<td>• Keys to Success materials</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Homework (2 minutes)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Methods</th>
<th>Materials</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Direct parent to complete the following activities before next scheduled class meeting:</td>
<td>• PCT manual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home: take action</td>
<td>• PowerPoint Slides</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School: make a list of how PTA/SAC can serve you</td>
<td>• Homework Activity handout #4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community: volunteer</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Wrap-Up (8 minutes)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Methods</th>
<th>Materials</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Complete the Module 7 wrap-up by reviewing PCT objectives and principles.</td>
<td>• PCT manual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct parents to write a brief reflection on Module 7 in their journal</td>
<td>• Parent Reflective Journals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complete Session Evaluation</td>
<td>• Session Evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collect training materials and evaluations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
After parents have returned to training and settled in seats, say:

Welcome back! Before we move forward with the second half of this session, are there any questions regarding the purpose of this training?

Give wait time of 30 seconds after facilitator’s (your) question is posed or last answer is given to move forward and say:

Let’s get started by first taking part in a short activity to get our minds moving again.

Use the Icebreaker Activity sheet to conduct activity #17 as stated on sheet. When complete, point to poster of Ground Rules, then say:

Great. Let’s refresh on our “Ground Rules. Remember that these rules guide how we interact with each other. [If necessary--if not move to starred item]

Read through Ground Rules or have participants read through. Once they have been read, verify that everyone agrees with these rules.

At this time, you will instruct parents to take out their manuals and turn to Module 7: How do I Help my Child Find Success while you cue the PowerPoint to the first title frame. At this time you will state the title, focus, and objective of this module by saying:

Please turn to the seventh module entitled How do I Help my Child Find Success. This module deals with strategies for helping your child find success while receiving services in special education. The focus of this module is to promote collaboration as a way of identifying strategies to help your child become successful. By participating in this module, you will become more aware of strategies that can be used to reinforce skills your child needs to become productive citizens in school and in the community. Are there any questions?

Give wait time of 30 seconds after facilitator’s (your) question is posed or last answer is given to move forward. Cue to next PowerPoint slide and say:

Parent Involvement occurs across 6 areas. You can become involved by displaying appropriate parenting skills, communicating more frequently with your child’s school,
volunteering at school, reinforcing concepts at home, participating in decision-making, and by collaborating with community agencies and service providers.

To develop your parenting skills, you can attend workshops to develop your skills or participate in a parent support group and network with other parents.

To open the lines of communication, you can visit the school, call or email the teacher, respond promptly to notes or request for information, and use effective communication skills.

Volunteer opportunities can be in the form of chaperoning a field trip, making contributions to your child’s class or helping the teacher, or assisting with school-wide activities like fund-raisers, sport events or play.

At home, you can become involved by helping with homework, establishing a routine for completing assignments, assigning a specific space to study, or by providing additional support to your child by assigning a study buddy or tutor.

Involved parent engage in decision-making. You can join the PTA or SAC, attend and become a full participant in an IEP meeting, take leadership positions, or start a parent support group.

Community involvement is also a major part of parent involvement. Participate in a community sponsored activity and advocate for your child by encouraging his or her involvement in a civic or youth organization. Even more, you can seek out community service agencies that may be able to provide valuable services to your child.

Become an involved parent. Support your child’s success by stressing the importance of school success. Talk with your child. Set goals with him or her. Listen to their concerns.

Focus on academic success by being aware of your child’s assignment.

Focus on the importance of appropriate behaviors. Teach your child to respect him/herself and others. Teach your child to value hard work and responsibility and make sure he/she attends school on a regular basis.

Now, parents will complete the “Keys to Success” activity, where they will identify three or four strategies that are important in helping their child find success. Pass out 3 or 4 key cut-outs and have parent write one strategy on each. Tie the keys together with decorative ribbon and have parents hang on wall at home as a reminder of the important strategies.

Next, review Homework #4 sheet, which includes the journal prompt. Review with participants, then say:
Let’s now take a moment to look back on what we have discussed so far. First, we looked at the importance of having specific strategies that will help our children find success. Can anyone recall some of those strategies?

**Call on participants to share. Discuss responses and provide feedback. Steer the conversation and have participants stay on topic. Be reflective of the time. Then say:**

Now, that we have completed the seventh module, Please take out your journal to write a brief reflection.

**Verify that everyone has their journal out, along with a writing tool. Then say:**

In your journal, please write about one strategy that is perhaps the most important to you and your child. Provide a brief explanation why. When you are finished, please close your journal and manual. I will collect your training manuals. You may keep the journals and other supplies for our next meeting session. You may now have some refreshments with your child. After this, you are free to go. If you have any questions, you may talk with me after I have collected and put away the parent manuals. Again, please take this time to write about you’re the strategy that is most important to you and your child along with a brief explanation why you selected this strategy. You may begin.

**END Module 7**
Module 8
Seminar on Assistive Technology (optional)

Focus: Becoming aware of AT devices
Objective: Parents will develop awareness for assistive technology (AT) devices that are available to supplement the educational needs of students with disabilities. Students will identify an AT device that may be appropriate for their own child’s needs
Skill: Match student needs with appropriate AT device
Evidence: Inventory of AT devices
Homework Focus: Collaborating with Community (Joyce Epstein’s Typology for Parent Involvement)

TRAINING OVERVIEW

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Methods</th>
<th>Materials</th>
<th>Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Welcome and Introduction</td>
<td>• Parents sign in and pick up training materials</td>
<td>• Week 4 sign-in sheet</td>
<td>Prior to session beginning and up to first 5 minutes of session start</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ground Rules</td>
<td>• Brief reminder of ground rules</td>
<td>• Ground Rules Poster</td>
<td>1 minute</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introductory Activity</td>
<td>• Brief discussion of training objective</td>
<td>• PCT manual</td>
<td>1 minute</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mini-Lecture</td>
<td>• Discuss use of specific AT devices</td>
<td>• PowerPoint Slides</td>
<td>30 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Complete activities from PCT manual</td>
<td>• PCT manual</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning Activities</td>
<td>• Engage in exploration of AT devices. Complete inventory sheet.</td>
<td>• PCT manual • Parent Training Booklets</td>
<td>15 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homework</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wrap-up</td>
<td>• Complete the Module 8 wrap-up section</td>
<td>• PCT manual • Session Evaluation</td>
<td>8 minutes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Time Needed: 60 minutes
SCRIPT: Module 8
Getting in Condition

[Trainer’s directions are in bold letters.]

Scripts are not available for this module since it is optional and being presented by a group independent of this training.
Module 9
Parent Focus Group Session/PCT Graduation

Focus: Synthesize learning experience

Objective: Parents will demonstrate learning by engaging in a debriefing session where they will share major points about the training experience. Parents will complete training by participating in a graduation ceremony.

Skill: Collaborate with peers to develop a comprehensive understanding of an experience.

Evidence: Graduation certificates

Homework Focus: Collaborating with Community (Joyce Epstein’s Typology for Parent Involvement)

TRAINING OVERVIEW

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Methods</th>
<th>Materials</th>
<th>Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Welcome and Introduction</td>
<td>• Parents sign in</td>
<td>• Week 5 sign-in sheet</td>
<td>1 minute</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Training/Graduation materials</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ground Rules</td>
<td>• Brief reminder of ground rules</td>
<td>• Ground Rules Poster</td>
<td>1 minute</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• PCT manual</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introductory Activity</td>
<td>• Brief discussion of training objective</td>
<td></td>
<td>1 minute</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• PCT manual</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mini-Lecture</td>
<td>• NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning Activities</td>
<td>• Conduct focus group session (part 1)</td>
<td>• Focus Session Guiding questions</td>
<td>30 minutes (part 1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Conduct Graduation Ceremony (part 2)</td>
<td></td>
<td>60 minutes (part 2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homework activities extending beyond training: COLLABORATING WITH COMMUNITY</td>
<td>Identify Resources Home: Team with other parents. School: Take part in a fundraiser event. Community: Identify and visit community resources</td>
<td></td>
<td>2 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wrap-up</td>
<td>• Complete the Summative Evaluation</td>
<td>• PCT manual</td>
<td>10 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Summative Evaluation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Time Needed: 1 hour 45 minutes

Module 9 TRAINING
## Welcome and Introduction (1 minutes)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Methods</th>
<th>Materials</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Parents sign in</td>
<td>• Week 5 sign-in sheet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Training/Graduation materials</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Ground Rules (1 minute)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Methods</th>
<th>Materials</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>➢ Briefly remind parents of Ground Rules using poster posted in classroom</td>
<td>• Ground Rules Poster</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Introductory Activity (1 minute)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Methods</th>
<th>Materials</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>➢ State the lesson focus and objective(s):</td>
<td>• PCT manual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Focus:</strong> Synthesize learning experience</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Objective:</strong> Parents will demonstrate learning by engaging in a debriefing session where they will share major points about the training experience. Parents will complete training by participating in a graduation ceremony</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Mini-Lecture (0 minutes)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Methods</th>
<th>Materials</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A mini-lecture will not be conducted during this session/module</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Learning Activities (90 minutes)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Methods</th>
<th>Materials</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Conduct focus group session (30 minutes)</td>
<td>• Focus Session Guiding questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Conduct Graduation Ceremony (60 minutes)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Homework (2 minutes)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Methods</th>
<th>Materials</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>➢ Direct parents to complete the following activities beyond the scope of parent training:</td>
<td>• PCT manual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Collaborating with Community:</strong> Identify Resources</td>
<td>• Homework Activity handout #5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Home:</strong> Team with other parents.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>School:</strong> Take part in a fundraiser event.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Community:</strong> Identify and visit community resources</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Wrap-Up (10 minutes)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Methods</th>
<th>Materials</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Complete the Module 9 wrap-up by reviewing PCT objectives and principles.</td>
<td>PCT manual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complete Session Evaluation</td>
<td>Parent Reflective Journals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collect journals</td>
<td>Session Evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collect training materials and evaluations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SCRIPT: Module 9

Getting in Condition

[Trainer’s directions are in bold letters.]

Scripts are not available for this module since it includes a focus group session and an unscripted graduation ceremony. Please refer to the Focus Group’s Guiding Questions for directions.
See “PCT Session 1 PowerPoint: Getting in Condition” attached

Welcome to Parent Collaborative Training

See “PCT Session 1 PowerPoint: “What is Collaboration: Why is it Important” attached

See “PCT Session 2 PowerPoint: “Rights and Responsibilities” attached

Rights and Responsibilities in the Special Education Process
See “PCT Session 3 PowerPoint: The IEP” attached

See “PCT Session 3 PowerPoint: Service Delivery Models” attached

See “PCT Session 4 PowerPoint: Developing an Action Plan”
See “PCT Session 5 PowerPoint: Helping my Child Find Success” attached
Homework Activity

Handout 1

**Directions:** Parents will complete the following activities and write a journal entry regarding the experience.

**Parenting: Expressing Expectations**

**Home:**
- Supervise/help with homework activities.
- Discuss your child’s interests in school. Identify ways that you can help your child develop areas of his/her interests.

**School:**
- Find out more about the classes your child is taking. Are they appropriate in meeting your child’s needs? What is the content/curriculum for the class? What are the teacher’s expectations for your child? How does your child feel about the class? What does he/she like about the class? What does he/she dislike about the class?
- Identify ways you can help your child adjust to the class. Identify ways that you can support your child’s learning in the class.

**Community:**
- Take a leisure outing to the mall, movie or other entertainment venue.
- Find out places your child is interested in visiting with you.
- Set a time (weekly or monthly) that you will take your child to his/her place of interest.

Don’t forget to write about your experiences in your journal. **GUIDING QUESTIONS:** How did these experiences affect your parenting? How did your child respond to your interaction with him/her during these experiences? How did you feel about the overall experience?
Homework Activity
Handout 2

**Directions:** Parents will complete the following activities and write a journal entry regarding the experience.

**Communicating:** *Discuss Student’s Achievement*

**Home:**
- Talk with your child about their academic performance and social adjustment.
- Find out how the child thinks he/she is doing. What areas do they think they can improve in? What obstacles does your child believe are in his/her way of success? What does the child believe he/she needs to be successful?

**School:**
- Make contact with the teacher regarding the child’s academic performance
- Find out how the child is performing. Is he/she meeting his goals? What does the teacher perceive to be obstacles? What does the teacher believe the child needs to be successful?
- Share child’s concerns with teacher
- Decide with teacher how you can help increase opportunities for success.

**Community:**
- Seek community support by identifying agencies or programs that can assist your child in reaching his/her academic or social goals. (Learning centers can be influential in academic areas while youth clubs or organizations can be influential in improving self esteem and overall social skills.
- Match agency or program with child needs
- Determine if programs/agencies are affordable. Some programs/agencies offer discounted rates or financial support to families who can document financial hardships. Request information.
- Have your child participate in the selection of agency or programming.

Don’t forget to write about your experiences in your journal.

**GUIDING QUESTIONS:** How did these experiences affect your parenting? How did your child respond to your interaction with him/her during these experiences? How did you feel about the overall experience?
Homework Activity
Handout 3

Directions: Parents will complete the following activities and write a journal entry regarding the experience.

Learning at Home: *Plan for the Future*

**Home:**
- Identify post-school plans by discussing your child’s interest with him/her or by evaluating your child’s needs after high school. Are these goals reasonable? Will your child be able to function on his/her own or will he/she need assistance? What skills are important in making your child reach independence? What training is importance in helping your child reach his/her post-school goal?
- Discuss these options with your family.
- Discuss these options with the teacher. Find out if the teacher agrees with your ideas. Ask for suggestions or resources that can help you make the right decision for your child.

**School:**
- Align post-school plans with IEP goals. Review your child’s IEP to determine if the goals will help your child reach his/her post-school goals.
- Ask the teacher for assistance in identifying appropriate goals for your child that will foster growth towards post-school goals.

**Community:**
- Visit local college, technical school, assisted living facility, training center, or service provider that will be a part of your child’s post school plans. Does this facility serve the purpose of leading your child to independence? What other supports are needed to help your child maximize his/her potential? Does this facility offer the support needed to help your child reach his/her post-school goals?
- Have your child visit with you. Ask your child his/her opinion of the facility? How does your child see him/herself adjusting to life with the assistance of those facilities?

Don’t forget to write about your experiences in your journal.

**GUIDING QUESTIONS:** How did these experiences affect your parenting? How did your child respond to your interaction with him/her during these experiences? How did you feel about the overall experience?
Homework Activity
Handout 4

Directions: Parents will complete the following activities and write a journal entry regarding the experience.

Decision Making/Supporting School: Take Action

Home:
- Make a list of how your school’s governing bodies (Parent Teacher Association/School Advisory Committee) can better serve you. Find out what these organizations do and what they offer parents.

School:
- Join PTA or SAC
- Make a list of how you can serve on these committees. What skills can you offer? What time commitments can you make? What resources do you have to share?

Community:
- Volunteer within your community. Determine what paperwork needs to be completed in order for you to become a volunteer. Find out what the community’s needs are. Match the community’s needs with your skills or talent. Make a commitment to volunteer as often as you can.
- Plan a community volunteer project. (i.e. trash pick-up day, area beautification, tree planting, car washing, etc.). Enlist other community residents to volunteer time or supplies.

Don’t forget to write about your experiences in your journal.

GUIDING QUESTIONS: How did these experiences affect your parenting? How did your child respond to your interaction with him/her during these experiences? How did you feel about the overall experience?
Homework Activity
Handout 5

Directions: Parents will complete the following activities and write a journal entry regarding the experience.

Collaborating with Community: Identify Resources

Home:
- Team with another parent. Find out which parents share the same needs and goals.
- Determine how you can best support each other.
- Establish a routine with the parent for meeting or acting on your plans.
- Seek membership with local parent groups.

School:
- Take part in a fundraiser event.
- Volunteer within your child’s school. Determine what paperwork needs to be completed in order for you to become a volunteer. Find out what the school needs are. Match the school’s needs with your skills or talent. Make a commitment to volunteer as often as you can.

Community:
- Identify and visit community resources that are adequate in helping you to develop a skill or that can provide service or enrichment to your child’s life (i.e. therapy service providers, public library, museum, etc.).
- Attend a community event with your child (i.e. Special Olympics event, March of Dimes Charity Run, etc.).

Don’t forget to write about your experiences in your journal.

GUIDING QUESTIONS: How did these experiences affect your parenting? How did your child respond to your interaction with him/her during these experiences? How did you feel about the overall experience?
Parent Checklist for IEP Meetings

Use this simple list of activities to guide your preparation, participation, and follow-up to your child’s IEP team meeting.

Get Ready
- Review your child’s current IEP and mark areas of concern
- Make a list of questions or concerns you have
- Make a list of skills you want your child to learn
- Prepare a list of personally relevant information you want to share (includes information related to culture, health, social skills, etc.)

Get Set
- Locate copies of medical records, evaluation results, or past school records to bring to your IEP meeting.

Go!
- Be on time!
- Bring your child, if necessary.
- Take notes.
- Verify that IEP goals and objectives match your child’s needs.
- State your concerns respectfully.
- Discuss related services that your child may need to be successful. This includes occupational, physical, or speech therapies.
- Discuss assistive technology devices or services your child may need to be successful.
- Ask for clarification of information you do not understand.
- Do not sign if you do not agree. Ask for more time or perhaps a new meeting to resolve the conflict.
- Get copies of all documents you sign.
- Ask what you can do at home to assist your child and help them meet their IEP goals. Commit to take action.
- Follow-through on all commitments.
- Follow-up on the IEP by checking on your child’s progress.

Developed by Michelle Urquhart © 2006
I Promise....

To my child_____________________,

I promise that I will faithfully attend the Parent Collaborative Training so that I can strengthen my skills as your advocate. I will make sure that I attend each session on time, willing to participate. After completing training, I promise that I will become more involved in your learning by accepting the challenges and responsibilities associate with my role as parent participant. I will become a cheerleader for your success. My child, I will praise you, encourage you, and acknowledge your achievements while supporting you when you encounter trials that may test your ability to succeed. I am your advocate. I will not fail you.

Love,_________________________
Which of these is the most appropriate placement for your child?

Full time special education class (Self-Contained)
General Education Classroom with Resource Room Service (Pull Out)
General Education Classroom with Supplementary Instruction or Treatment (Mainstream)
General Education Classroom with Consultation
General Education Setting (Full Inclusion)
Certificate of Graduation

This is to certify that

has completed a course of study in

PARENT COLLABORATIVE TRAINING

on

Signature ___________________ Date ___________________
What are your child’s educational and social needs?

**Assistive Technology Inventory**

List Assistive Technology devices that you are interested in learning more about.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AT Device</th>
<th>Pros</th>
<th>Cons</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Which one is most ideal for your child?________________________________________

How would it help your child meet his or her educational goals?____________________
________________________________________________________________________

330
**Directions:** When you look at the following tools, what “tools” (strategies or information) does is remind you of?

= __________________________________________________

= ___________________________________________________

= ____________________________________________________

= ____________________________________________________

= ____________________________________________________

= ____________________________________________________

= ____________________________________________________

= ____________________________________________________
Parent Collaborative Training

Home
School

Student Success

Increasing Achievement Opportunities for Students with Disabilities through Effective Home-School Partnerships

FIDELITY OF TREATMENT CHECKLIST
Using the Training Manual’s Scripts
Developed by Michelle Urquhart
I would like to welcome each one of you here today to the Parent Collaborative Training. As you know, you have decided to participate in a 5 week workshop to develop your knowledge and skills as effective collaborators with teachers and school staff regarding your child who receives Exceptional Student Education services at the middle school. By participating in this training, you have consented to be involved in a related study that seeks to determine the impact this training has on (1) your future intentions to participate in collaborative relationships with school staff, (2) your child’s educational outcomes, and (3) your child’s teacher’s perception and behaviors regarding your child.

The first item on the agenda is to determine that you have all of the necessary items to participate in this training. By this time, each one of you has collected your parent training materials. You have received a bag that has several important items in it. At this time, please take out the items in your bag.

Give a wait time of about 30 seconds and verify that everyone has taken out the items in the bag.

NOTES:

Now that you each have taken out your items, let’s make sure that we have all of the necessary items. If you do not have an item, please let me know as I have extra ones here for you. You should have the following items: a black folder containing your training manual and workbook, a spiral notebook for journal writing, a pen, a pencil, a nametag and a snack item. Please go ahead and put your nametags on. Throughout the course of this training, you will be provided with other items and be given instructions on what to do with each item. Are there any questions at this point?

Answer questions as they arise. If unsure about the answer to a question, advise parent that you will provide them with an answer as soon as possible.

Locate Icebreaker list –found in appendix; complete icebreaker #1 following icebreaker script. Then say:

At this time, we are going to do a short activity so that we can get to know each other a little better and so that we can feel comfortable working with each other.

Complete Icebreaker activity #1, then say:

At this time, you will complete a questionnaire that should take you about 20 minutes. If, at anytime you should have any questions, please let me know and I will assist you. You have the right not to complete this questionnaire. Even if you chose not to complete the questionnaire, you will still have the opportunity to participate in this training.

NOTES:
Pass out the questionnaire labeled “Parent Involvement and Collaborative Experiences Questionnaire”, then say:

Are there any questions?

If there are no questions, say:

There are 8 pages to the questionnaire. Please complete the questionnaire. If you should have any questions, please let me know and I will do my best to assist you with the process.

Allow 20 minutes for completion of questionnaire. If participants request more time, please provide time to complete the questionnaire in its entirety. Before collecting each, please instruct the parents to review each question to make sure that they are completely answered. Collect completed questionnaire and place in folder. Turn over completed questionnaire to researcher for evaluation after the close of today’s training.

Take a 5 minute break before proceeding with next section. At this time, set up PowerPoint (ppt) for Module 1 and verify that you have all the tools to proceed. After break, say:

Welcome back. Now it is time to get started with an introduction to Parent Collaborative Training. First, let me talk briefly about the training and what you can expect. I need for you to take out your training manual and turn to page 1. Please follow with me through the slides and feel free to take notes on the space provided on the worksheet. Are there any questions?

NOTES:

Go to slide 1 of ppt., then proceed to slide 2. Read slide 2, then add the following:

As I stated earlier, you will be involved in 5 weekly sessions that will provide you with information that will help you work better with your child’s teacher and school staff regarding special education services. You will learn about the importance of collaboration as well as your rights and responsibilities as a parent of a child with a disability. You will also learn about the IEP process and how services are delivered. You will also have the option of participating in a session about assistive technology. You will take part in a collaborative meeting with your child’s teacher where you use your skills and knowledge when participating. At the end of this training, you will receive your certificate of completion and participate in a graduation ceremony. By being a participant in the training, you will have the opportunity to develop the skills needed to effectively participate in decisions made about your child’s academics. By being a participant in this training, you will increase your knowledge in special education and be able to fully advocate for your child. By being a participant in Parent Collaborative Training, you will become a lifelong advocate for your child. Are there any questions?

If there are no questions, proceed with slide 3. You will also need your Ground Rules Poster. After hanging poster at front of room, say:

At this time we will talk about the ground rules for participating in this training. Please review with me by looking at the third slide on the first page. The slide is entitled, “Ground Rules”.

Read through each Ground Rule making sure that participants comprehend what each rule means.

NOTES:
At this time, you will instruct parents to take out their training manual for a quick review. Have your copy of the Parent Training Manual for reference. Then say:
Okay. Let us switch gears for a short while. At this time, I am going to ask you to take out your training manuals so that we can become familiar with the contents. Let’s look at the Table of Contents.

Verify that each participant has turned to the table of contents, then say:
As you can see, your manual is organized in the order that we will conduct this training. There are 9 modules that we will go through over the course of 5 weeks. Each section is organized in the same way. You have for each training session: a PowerPoint worksheet, your activity sheet, a session evaluation sheet, and your journal prompt and homework assignment. Go ahead and skim through to see how each section is organized.

Allow 2-3 minutes for participants to look through designated pages, then say:
Now turn to the first page, which is your copy of the Ground Rules we discussed previously. Please sign the bottom of the page to signify that you will abide by the ground rules. Now, let’s read over the “I Promise” page together. It can be found on the second page of the manual.

Read through, then say:
Please complete this page by writing your child’s name at the top and then sign. Are there any questions?

NOTES:

After answering questions, say:

Many times parents feel as though they have little control in their child’s education. They may feel that they are unwelcomed at the school or that what they do to help their child often goes unappreciated. Nothing is further from the truth. Today is the beginning of your journey as knowledge seekers and doers. You will learn how to navigate the special education system so that you can engage in meaningful collaboration with your child’s teachers. You will become empowered to believe in your ability to make a difference in the life of your child. You are important.

NOTES:

Proceed through slides reading through each and emphasizing content. Complete slides 4-9, leaving the last three slides (Self-Efficacy and Homework Activities) for later in the training. Once you have completed the third “Did you know” slide, STOP. Then say:

Now, let’s talk about a very important set of words called “Self-efficacy”. Self efficacy is the belief that a person has that he or she can accomplish a specific task. If you believe that you can do something, then you can. If your child believes that he or she can do something, then he or she will. Knowing and believing that you can do something is the first step in doing it well. As your child’s parent, you will need a strong self-efficacy when it comes to working with others, especially your child’s teacher. You will need to develop those skills through activities that support your personal growth. During Parent Collaborative Training, you will have homework assignments that help in this area. You will be asked to complete a series of tasks, these homework activities, which are based on Joyce Epstein’s six types of parent involvement. Joyce Epstein is a notable figure in the field of education whose lifelong work is in parent involvement. You will be engaged in activities in the home, school, and community and most often, these assignments will have you engaged and talking with your child. By completing the homework assignments, you will further enhance the skills learned in the training sessions. Homework activities will help build the resources you need to become better collaborators and better parents. Research in parent training has shown that parents tend to increase their self-efficacy and are more likely to be involved in collaboration with teachers. You will have three assignments for this first module. I will pass out the homework sheet that explains the three areas that you will be involved with. You will also be instructed to write about your experiences in your journal.

NOTES:
At this time, pass out Homework #1 sheet, which includes the journal prompt. Review with participants, then say:

Let’s now take a moment to look back on what we have discussed so far. First, we looked at the importance of this training and the objectives. Can anyone recall what we said?

Call on participants to share. Also, ask what they expect to gain from participation. Discuss responses and provide feedback. Steer the conversation and have participants stay on topic. Be reflective of the time. Then say:

Now, that we have completed the first module, Please take out your journal to write a brief reflection.

Verify that everyone has his or her journal out, along with a writing tool. Then say:

In your journal, please write what your first impressions of this Training are and what you expect to gain by participating. When you are finished, please close your journal and manual. We will then take a short break before proceeding with the second half of our training. The second half is shorter than this introduction. When we are finished, you will have the opportunity to have some refreshments with your child. At that time, we will dismiss and you are free to go. If you have any questions, you may talk with me at the end of the second session. Again, please take this time to write about your first impressions and what you expect to gain from training. You may begin.

NOTES:

END Module 1
After parents have returned to training and settled in seats, say:

Welcome back and thank you for such a successful start to our training program. Before we move forward with the second half of this session, are there any questions regarding the purpose of this training?

Give wait time of 30 seconds after facilitator’s (your) question is posed or last answer is given to move forward and say:

Let’s get started by first taking part in a short activity to get our minds moving again.

Use the Icebreaker Activity sheet to conduct activity #3 as stated on sheet. When complete, point to poster of Ground Rules, then say:

Great. Let’s refresh on our “Ground Rules. Remember that these rules guide how we interact with each other.

Read through Ground Rules or have participants read through. Once they have been read, verify that everyone agrees with these rules.

NOTES:

At this time, you will instruct parents to take out their manuals and turn to Module 2: Collaboration while you cue the PowerPoint to the first title frame. At this time you will state the title, focus, and objective of this module by saying:

Please turn to the second module entitled Collaboration. Now this session deals with the major reason why we are here. This module deals with collaboration, the reason why collaboration between parents and school is important in special education, and the knowledge and skills you need to become an effective collaborator. The focus of this module is to promote a clear understanding of what collaboration is and the role it plays in accessing special education services for your child. By participating in this module, you will develop an understanding of the collaborative process and its relationship with your child’s academic success. You will learn about your role in the collaborative process and you will identify and sharpen the skills you will need to fulfill that role. Are there any questions?

NOTES:
Give wait time of 30 seconds after facilitator’s (your) question is posed or last answer is given to move forward. Cue to next PowerPoint slide and say:

Alright. Let’s start by defining collaboration.

Read through each of the statements regarding collaboration and then proceed with subsequent slides, making sure participants comprehend what each statement means. Say:

Collaboration is a supportive relationship between parents and schools where each member of the team is seen as an equal partner.

All members of the team share the goal of student success. What this means is that in a collaborative relationship, both the teacher and parents want the child to succeed and so they team up as partners to plan and implement programs that will benefit the child.

When members team, they are actively making decisions in a cooperative way rather than a competitive way. When members compete, nothing is accomplished.

As a parent, you will share information, reinforce schoolwork at home, speak up for quality services, and try to understand the teacher’s ideas.

NOTES:

Collaboration involves communication, commitment, equality, skills, trust and respect. Communication is an important part of collaboration. As a parent, if you are able to communicate your concerns, needs, or ideas in an honest, open way, you will be more likely to be heard and respected. The information you provide will help you to gain access to the programs your child needs. Communication involves listening, responding appropriately, and using the right body language so that your message is received as it is intended.

Commitment to the effort of collaboration is important. If you stay focused on the goals for your child, then you will help ensure that the right programs are provided to your child.

NOTES:

Equal status among partners helps in the decision-making process as each person has the same power and feels that they can influence the outcomes that the child will have.

Still, if you are not equipped with the right skill to collaborate, then you will not be effective in the process. You will need to know about the topic, which in this case is special education programming. You will also need to assume multiple roles. You will be the parent, teacher, and cheerleader for your child.

As a collaborator, you will also need to be truthful, dependable, and respectful so that those who collaborate with you will trust you.

NOTES:
The laws that promise you this right includes the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act also known as IDEA, the No Child Left Behind Act, as well as a few others.

For you, collaboration is important because it brings results. Teachers improve in knowledge and skills, parents like you improve their knowledge and skills, and most importantly, your children increase their abilities to achieve in academics. Now, these are some important reasons to collaborate. Tell me what you think about these issues?

NOTES:

Have parents share their insight, keeping responses brief and on topic. Then say:

Let’s try a fun activity that will test your understanding of collaboration while at the same time checking on your acting skills. We will engage in role-play. I will first demonstrate for you 2 examples of collaboration. You will identify which example is the best example of the collaborative process and then you will give me reasons why it is the best example by pointing out major differences between the examples.

Pick a parent to collaborate with and you demonstrate as a parent while the parent switches role and becomes the teacher. Explain to the volunteer parent what example you are going to demonstrate first and the type of behavior that he/she is expected to demonstrate. Do not allow other group members to hear your discussion. Demonstrate both the accepted model of collaboration and the non-example of collaboration. Ask participants to determine which example is best and which is not, while pointing out major differences between examples. After demonstrating examples say:

Who can tell me which of the previous example is an acceptable demonstration of the collaborative process?

After getting responses, ask for specific differences between the examples by saying:

What is the major difference in the behaviors of the good and bad examples?

NOTES:

Stress the positive factors for successful collaboration, then say:

Okay. Now each of you will get a chance to shine. I will put you in small groups of 2 or 3 people. Each of you will get the chance to be the parent or teacher, as we will switch roles halfway into our demonstration.

Put parents into groups. Have one parent be the “parent” while the other is the “teacher”. Have them demonstrate an acceptable model of collaboration. Monitor groups for about 3 minutes and then have them switch roles demonstrating, again, an acceptable model of collaboration. Look for specific skills that are being demonstrated and make general comments like, “I like the way you are actively listening.” Or “I see here a demonstration of equality as no one is taking full charge of the conversation”. When finished, say:

Good job everyone. Now, please take out your journals and turn to the next available writing space.

NOTES:
Verify that everyone has their journal out, along with a writing tool. Then say:

In your journal, please write a brief reflection of the activities we just completed. In your reflections, you can write about what you learned, your experience with role play or something you might want to do or do differently now that you have had this experience. Please take about 5 minutes to complete this.

At this time, review Homework #1 sheet, which includes the journal prompt. Review with participants, then say:

Let’s now take a moment to look back on what we have discussed so far. First, we looked at the importance of collaboration and the roles parents accept when collaborating with school professionals. Can anyone recall what some of the major points that were said?

NOTES:

Call on participants to share. Discuss responses and provide feedback. Steer the conversation and have participants stay on topic. Be reflective of the time. Then say:

The completion of this second module marks the completion of our first training session. Please close your journals and manuals. Make sure that your name is on the outside of the manual. Place your journals in your bags and pass your manuals forward. I will keep your manuals until next session. You will take your journals with you so that you can reflect on your homework assignments during the week.

Now, you will have the opportunity to have some refreshments with your child. Once you are done, you are free to go. If you have any questions, you may talk with me after I have collected and put away all of the training manuals. I look forward to seeing you again next week.

NOTES:

END Module 2

Please tally points for this session and put total here:
After parents have signed in and picked up training materials, say:

Welcome back and thank you for last week’s successful start to our training program. Before we move forward with this session, are there any questions regarding the training or any activity that we have done so far?

Give wait time of 30 seconds after facilitator’s (your) question is posed or last answer is given to move forward and say:

Let’s get started by first taking part in a short activity to get our minds moving again.

Use the Icebreaker Activity sheet to conduct activity #4 as stated on sheet. When complete, point to poster of Ground Rules, then say:

Great. Let’s refresh on our “Ground Rules. Remember that these rules guide how we interact with each other.

Read through Ground Rules or have participants read through. Once they have been read, verify that everyone agrees with these rules.

At this time, you will instruct parents to take out their manuals and turn to Module 3: Rights and Responsibilities while you cue the PowerPoint to the first title frame. At this time you will state the title, focus, and objective of this module by saying:

Please turn to the third module entitled Rights and Responsibilities in the Special Education Process. This module deals with the rights and responsibilities that are guaranteed to you and your child by federal law. The focus of this module is to promote a clear understanding of these rights as well as the role parents play when enacting these rights. By participating in this module, you will develop an understanding of your rights and responsibilities and its relationship with your child’s academic success within special education. You will also become familiar with the laws that protect these rights.

Are there any questions?

NOTES:

Give wait time of 30 seconds after facilitator’s (your) question is posed or last answer is given to move forward. Cue to next PowerPoint slide and say:

The law guarantees your rights to participate in the decision-making process. This means that you are entitled to be a team member on the IEP team or any other team that makes decisions about your child’s education. Schools must provide you with a list of your rights as a parent. Most often, this is called “Procedural Safeguards”.

NOTES:
Continue through PowerPoint slides and review the concepts of each as stated. Be sure to include discussions on FAPE, LRE, assessment, access to school records, and parent consent. Also, discuss the slides relating to a parent’s responsibility in the special education process. These include partnering with schools and service agencies, keeping accurate records, and involvement in parent organizations. Say:

Your child is entitled to a free education that is appropriate in meeting his or her need. There are other rights to you and your child as well. In order to conduct an evaluation or make a change in placement, the school must notify you and obtain your consent in order to proceed. You will provide your consent if you agree to the terms outlined in the consent letter. If you disagree with the results of the school’s evaluation, you have the right to have an independent evaluation done. Also, if you feel that your child’s current placement is inappropriate, you have the right to request a re-evaluation. Your child must also be tested in his or her primary language. For example, if your child speaks and understands only Creole, then the test must be given in Creole.

When the school communicates with you, they must provide information to you in your native language. Any information contained in your child’s school records must be made available to you when you request it.

NOTES:

One important right given to you by law is the right to participate in the development of the IEP. The school must make every possible effort to include you at the meetings that are held to develop the educational programming for your child. This helps to make sure that your child is provided the most appropriate program in the least restrictive environment.

Still, with all of these rights, there are certain responsibilities that must be taken in order for your child to get the best opportunity to learn. As a parent, you must develop a partnership with the school, learn as much as you can about your rights and the rights of your child, for the school to clear up any information that you do not understand, and keep records/copies of all information exchanged with the school. One other important aspect of being a responsible parent is to join a parent group such as the PTA so that you can gain support of other parents like yourself.

NOTES:

When complete with PowerPoint presentation, say:

Now, that you are familiar with your rights and responsibilities as a parent of a child with a disability, you will participate in an activity that will foster your awareness even more. In the next activity, you will be writing a “Bill of Rights” document that you will be able to post in your home as a reminder of your rights and responsibilities. To complete this activity, you are going to need a copy of the scroll that you will record your rights on, a pair of scissors, a marker to write with. I have these supplies for you.

Pass out supplies and instruct parents to cut out the scroll from the sheet. They are to list their rights and responsibilities on it. Once parents have cut the scroll from the sheet and have a writing tool to begin, say the following:
Let’s work on this activity as a whole class. Let’s first identify the rights that we have as parents of children with disabilities. Once we have identified them, we will narrow it down to make sense so that when we write, it won’t take up the entire space on our bill document.

Let’s start first by writing the words “Bill of Rights” on the top leaf of our scroll.

Model activity and then say,

Can someone please name one of our rights as discussed in the training.

After someone has named a right, verify it, and then assist the class to narrow down. Proceed by writing the right down on our scroll. Proceed through rights and then make write the term “responsibilities” below the last right written. Write a list of responsibilities. When complete with this activity, then say:

Good Job. Now you can take these and frame them or use a nice ribbon and hang it on your wall.

NOTES:

At this time, pass out Homework #2 sheet, which includes the journal prompt. Review with participants, then say:

Let’s now take a moment to look back on what we have discussed so far. First, we looked at the importance of our rights and responsibilities. Can anyone recall what we said?

Call on participants to share. Discuss responses and provide feedback. Steer the conversation and have participants stay on topic. Be reflective of the time. Then say:

Now, that we have completed the third module, Please take out your journal to write a brief reflection.

NOTES:

Verify that everyone has his or her journal out, along with a writing tool. Then say:

In your journal, please write what your impressions of this training module are and how you can benefit from the information presented. When you are finished, please complete your session evaluation. I will know that you are finished when your journals are closed. I will come around to collect your training manual and you can put your journal.

Verify that everyone has written in their journal and collect them. Then say:

The end of this session marks the end of this session. Now that we are finished, you will have the opportunity to have some refreshments with your child. At that time, we will dismiss and you are free to go. If you have any questions, you may talk with me at the end of the second session. Again, please take this time to write about your first impressions and what you expect to gain from training. You may begin.

NOTES:

END Module 3 Please tally points for this session and put total here:
After parents have signed in and picked up training materials, say:

Welcome back and thank you for returning for this third session of our training program. Before we move forward with the second half of this session, are there any questions regarding the training or any activity that we have done so far?

Give wait time of 30 seconds after facilitator’s (your) question is posed or last answer is given to move forward and say:

Let’s get started by first taking part in a short activity.

Use the Icebreaker Activity sheet to conduct activity #6 as stated on sheet. When complete, point to poster of Ground Rules, then say:

That was super. Now, let’s refresh on our “Ground Rules. Remember that these rules guide how we interact with each other.

Read through Ground Rules or have participants read through. Once they have been read, verify that everyone agrees with these rules.

NOTES:

At this time, you will instruct parents to take out their manuals and turn to Module 4: The IEP Process while you cue the PowerPoint to the first title frame. At this time you will state the title, focus, and objective of this module by saying:

Please turn to the third module entitled The IEP Process. Now, this module deals with The Individual Education Program or IEP, which is the document that guides instruction and related services provided to your child. This session will help you to develop a better understanding of the IEP, it’s function, and the process through which it is developed. The focus of this module is to promote a clear understanding of what the IEP is and the role it plays in accessing instruction and services for your child through special education programs. By participating in this module, you will develop an understanding of the IEP in order to become an effective team member in the decision-making process. Are there any questions?

Give wait time of 30 seconds after facilitator’s (your) question is posed or last answer is given to move forward. Cue to next PowerPoint slide and say:

Let’s learn more about the IEP and get an understanding of the important role this document plays in the life of your child. Please look on with me at the second slide that describes what the IEP is.

NOTES:
Verify that parents are on the correct page and have located the slide for the discussion. Go through all PowerPoint slides using each to guide the discussion. Make sure that all parents have an understanding of what is being discussed. Say:

The IEP is a written statement of the educational program designed for your child. It is based specifically on the needs of your child. The IEP outlines the instructional program and services your child will receive. It is important then, that it match your child’s needs.

NOTES:

IDEA and No Child Left Behind Act are two major laws that support your participation on the IEP team. When the team meets, you will participate in the development of the document with a group of other professionals. It is important that you know as much about the IEP as possible and be able to communicate your concerns. Before the team meets, the school must make the meeting date, time, and place convenient to you. If you cannot attend, notify an IEP member as soon as possible so that you can reschedule. It is important that you be there.

NOTES:

The IEP process involves 5 major steps. They include pre-referral, screening, service, instructional planning, and evaluation of progress.

When you attend the IEP meeting, make sure that you are prepared and are there on time.

If you disagree with any part of the IEP, you have the right to another meeting or someone who can help you resolve the matter. There are many resources available to you. Your child’s school can provide you with a list if your request one.

NOTES:

At this time, you can incorporate the optional activity by accessing an interactive website that provides information to parents for resolving IEP disagreements. The website’s URL is http://www.nclid.uco.edu/Hvoriginals/Advocacy/Popup/popup.html

When finished, say:

Here is a checklist of activities that can help you in the IEP process.

Pass out activities list and then say:

Take a few minutes to look through.

NOTES:

This section will be omitted during this training and therefore, should not be considered in this observation.
After about 2 minutes, direct parents back to the course of study. Say:

Now, let’s take a moment to look back on what we have discussed so far. First, we defined the IEP, learned about the laws that govern the IEP, talked about IEP meetings and team members, and looked at the process in which IEPs are developed. Can anyone recall what we some of the key points we discussed about each of these topics?

Call on participants to share. Discuss responses and provide feedback. Steer the conversation and have participants stay on topic. Be reflective of the time. Then using the Icebreaker activity sheet, say:

Before we move on, let’s take a break by doing a fun activity.

Conduct icebreaker activity # 5 using the Icebreaker Activity Sheet. When finished, say:

Now we will take a moment to get you to review a sample IEP. Although this IEP may not look like the one issued to your child, it contains the same information. We will use these samples to brainstorm specific areas as they relate to your children.

You can write on these samples as we go through.

NOTES:

Review IEP format focusing on specific areas as indicated by a star on each sheet. Talk parents through the thought process of what information is important to the development of each section. Help parents write in information that may be important to them. Monitor progress and discuss choices with parents making suggestions along the way. As a whole group, discuss the choices made by parents. When finished say:

I hope that this session was informative to you. For now, let’s put this sample away. If you should need help with understanding any area, you may see me at the end of the next module. Now we will proceed on to the next item on today’s agenda.

NOTES:

At this time, pass out Homework #3 sheet, which includes the journal prompt. Review with participants, then say:

Now, that we have completed the fourth module, Please take out your journal to write a brief reflection.

Verify that everyone has their journal out, along with a writing tool. Then say:

In your journal, please write what your impressions are about the training, the IEP, or the process of developing the IEP. When you are finished, please close your journal and manual. We will then take a short break before proceeding with the second half of our training. When we are finished, you will have the opportunity to have some refreshments with your child. At that time, we will dismiss and you are free to go. If you have any questions, you may talk with me at the end of the fifth module. Again, please take this time to write about your thoughts on what was learned form this module. You may begin.

NOTES:

END Module 4
After parents have returned to training and settled in seats, say:

Welcome back! The module before was filled with quite a bit of information regarding the IEP process. This session will deal with how the services outlined in the IEP are delivered. Before we move forward with the second half of this session, are there any questions regarding the previous module or any other aspect or activity of this training?

Give wait time of 30 seconds after facilitator’s (your) question is posed or last answer is given to move forward. Review Ground Rules (if necessary) by pointing to poster of Ground Rules, then saying: [if not move to starred item]

Great. Let’s refresh on our “Ground Rules. Remember that these rules guide how we interact with each other.

Read through Ground Rules or have participants read through. Once they have been read, verify that everyone agrees with these rules.

Notes:

At this time, you will instruct parents to take out their manuals and turn to Module 5: Service Delivery Models while you cue the PowerPoint to the first title frame. At this time you will state the title, focus, and objective of this module by saying:

Please turn to the 5th module entitled Service Delivery Models. This module deals with the delivery of services to your child. The module will inform you of how services are delivered to students with disabilities. The focus of this module is to provide you with the framework for understanding the delivery of these services. By participating in this module, you will be able to better collaborate with school personnel in determining which model is appropriate for your child. Are there any questions?

Notes:

Give wait time of 30 seconds after facilitator’s (your) question is posed or last answer is given to move forward. Cue to next PowerPoint slide and say:

The delivery of educational services to your child is based on your child’s ability and needs. The delivery of these services is to be free and appropriate and conducted in a placement appropriate to meeting your child’s needs. More importantly, regardless of placement, the child should have access to the general curriculum and be given the opportunity to participate in state and district-wide assessment.

Notes:
Educational services are delivered in environments ranging from the hospital setting to the general setting. Services can come from a variety of providers.

Students can be taught in a self-contained special educational setting, be pulled out of the general classroom for instruction on specific skills, be mainstreamed for all or part of the day, or be fully included in the general education classroom. When included in the general education classroom, ESE services can be provided by a co-teacher or on a consultation basis.

NOTES:

When finished, have participants turn to “Service Delivery Flowchart” and assist them with completing. Say:

With what you know about service delivery, it is time to determine which is the most appropriate placement for your child. Look at the flowchart. Find the service delivery option you believe to be most appropriate and place your child’s name in that square. Does this choice reflect your child’s educational and social needs?

At this time, review Homework #3 sheet, which includes the journal prompt. Review with participants, then say:

Let’s now take a moment to look back on what we have discussed so far. First, we looked at how services are delivered and then completed a service delivery flowchart. Now we will wrap up by shifting to a brief review of our homework assignment.

Call on participants to share. Discuss responses and provide feedback. Steer the conversation and have participants stay on topic. Be reflective of the time. Then say:

NOTES:

Now, that we have completed the fifth module, please write a brief reflection in your journal about your experience with this session. Be sure to reflect on all parts of our discussion today.

Verify that everyone has their journal out, along with a writing tool then say:

When you are finished, please close your journal and manual. Since we are finished, you will have the opportunity to have some refreshments with your child. After having your refreshments, you are free to go. If you have any questions, you may talk with me at the end of the second session. Again, please take this time to write your reflections on today’s training session. You may begin.

NOTES:

END Module 5 Please tally points for this session and put total here:
After parents have signed in and picked up training materials, say:

Hello everyone, Welcome back to another training session. We are almost at the end of our training program. So far we have covered a lot of material in a relatively short time. Hopefully, you have found the presentations to be informative and useful. Before we move forward with the second half of this session, are there any questions regarding the purpose of this training?

Give wait time of 30 seconds after facilitator’s (your) question is posed or last answer is given to move forward and say:

Let’s get started by first taking part in a short activity to get our minds moving again.

Use the Icebreaker Activity sheet to conduct activity #15 as stated on sheet. When complete, point to poster of Ground Rules, then say (if necessary–if not move to starred item):

Great. Let’s refresh on our “Ground Rules. Remember that these rules guide how we interact with each other.

Read through Ground Rules or have participants read through. Once they have been read, verify that everyone agrees with these rules.

NOTES:

❖ At this time, you will instruct parents to take out their manuals and turn to Module 6: Developing an Action Plan while you cue the PowerPoint to the first title frame. At this time you will state the title, focus, and objective of this module by saying:

Please turn to the module six entitled Developing an Action Plan. This module deals with putting together a plan for collaboration between parents and teacher. The focus of this module is to bridge the learning from this training with active collaboration. By participating in this module, you will utilize the knowledge and skills learned about the collaborative process and special education services to plan for and engage in a collaborative experience with your child’s teacher. Are there any questions?

NOTES:

Give wait time of 30 seconds after facilitator’s (your) question is posed or last answer is given to move forward. Cue to next PowerPoint slide and say:

Please take out your child’s current IEP and review it for specific areas that you might have trouble understanding or areas that you have specific questions on.

NOTES:
After parents have completed their review of the IEP, review the list of preparation activities for meeting with the child’s teacher. Pass out a notepad, pencil, and a calendar to each participant and say:

Developing collaborative relationships with teachers is an important part of parent involvement. Your goal for today is to prepare for action. You will plan a meeting with your child’s teacher to discuss academic and/or social progress and to chart a course for next year.

Please make a list of your questions or concerns for the IEP. Also, make a list of general questions and concerns. When finished, set the goals for the meeting.

NOTES:

Walk around room and assist parents with activity. When finished, say:

Look at the calendar that you have been given. Think of two days that you may be able to meet with your child’s teacher. Circle those two dates. Think of a convenient place and time. Write the time and place on the calendar. Make a plan to call your child’s teacher and schedule the meeting for one of your two choices. [If parents need more time to plan, they may do so at home].

NOTES:

After adequate wait time, say:

Before you go to the meeting, be sure to gather all important documents that you may need. Arrange for a babysitter if you have younger children. Call the teacher 2 days before the meeting to confirm that it is still scheduled as planned. On the day of your meeting, leave with enough time to find parking and walk to the meeting location. Think positive. Express positive words and behaviors.

After you meet with the teacher, follow-up with any goals that you set.

Please plan to meet within the next two weeks.

NOTES:

At this time, pass out Homework #4 sheet, which includes the journal prompt. Review with participants, then say:

Let’s now take a moment to look back on what we have discussed so far. First, we looked at the importance of planning for meetings with our child’s teacher. Let’s brainstorm potential problems that may arise. We will also discuss solutions for the problems.

Call on participants to share. Discuss responses and provide feedback. Steer the conversation and have participants stay on topic. Be reflective of the time. Then say:

Now, that we have completed the sixth module. Please take out your journal to write a brief reflection.

NOTES:
Verify that everyone has their journal out, along with a writing tool. Then say:

In your journal, please write what about your thoughts regarding meeting with your child’s teacher. Indicate if you feel confident, afraid, or whether you believe that you have the skills to collaborate effectively. When you are finished, please close your journal and manual. We will then take a short break before proceeding with the second half of our training. When we are finished, you will have the opportunity to have some refreshments with your child. At that time, we will dismiss and you are free to go. If you have any questions, you may talk with me at the end of the session. Again, please take this time to write your reflections in your journal. You may begin.

NOTES:

END Module 6
After parents have returned to training and settled in seats, say:

Welcome back! Before we move forward with the second half of this session, are there any questions regarding the purpose of this training?

Give wait time of 30 seconds after facilitator’s (your) question is posed or last answer is given to move forward and say:

Let’s get started by first taking part in a short activity to get our minds moving again.

Use the Icebreaker Activity sheet to conduct activity #17 as stated on sheet. When complete, point to poster of Ground Rules, then say:

Great. Let’s refresh on our “Ground Rules. Remember that these rules guide how we interact with each other. [If necessary—if not move to starred item]

Read through Ground Rules or have participants read through. Once they have been read, verify that everyone agrees with these rules.

NOTES:

At this time, you will instruct parents to take out their manuals and turn to Module 7: How do I Help my Child Find Success while you cue the PowerPoint to the first title frame. At this time you will state the title, focus, and objective of this module by saying:

Please turn to the seventh module entitled How do I Help my Child Find Success. This module deals with strategies for helping your child find success while receiving services in special education. The focus of this module is to promote collaboration as a way of identifying strategies to help your child become successful. By participating in this module, you will become more aware of strategies that can be used to reinforce skills your child needs to become productive citizens in school and in the community. Are there any questions?

NOTES:

Give wait time of 30 seconds after facilitator’s (your) question is posed or last answer is given to move forward. Cue to next PowerPoint slide and say:

Parent Involvement occurs across 6 areas. You can become involved by displaying appropriate parenting skills, communicating more frequently with your child’s school, volunteering at school, reinforcing concepts at home, participating in decision-making, and by collaborating with community agencies and service providers.

NOTES:
To develop your parenting skills, you can attend workshops to develop your skills or participate in a parent support group and network with other parents.

To open the lines of communication, you can visit the school, call or email the teacher, respond promptly to notes or request for information, and use effective communication skills.

NOTES:

Volunteer opportunities can be in the form of chaperoning a field trip, making contributions to your child’s class or helping the teacher, or assisting with school-wide activities like fund-raisers, sport events or play.

At home, you can become involved by helping with homework, establishing a routine for completing assignments, assigning a specific space to study, or by providing additional support to your child by assigning a study buddy or tutor.

NOTES:

Involved parent engage in decision-making. You can join the PTA or SAC, attend and become a full participant in an IEP meeting, take leadership positions, or start a parent support group.

NOTES:

Community involvement is also a major part of parent involvement. Participate in a community sponsored activity and advocate for your child by encouraging his or her involvement in a civic or youth organization.

Even more, you can seek out community service agencies that may be able to provide valuable services to your child.

NOTES:

Become an involved parent. Support your child’s success by stressing the importance of school success. Talk with your child. Set goals with him or her. Listen to their concerns.

NOTES:

Focus on academic success by being aware of your child’s assignment.

Focus on the importance of appropriate behaviors. Teach your child to respect him/herself and others. Teach your child to value hard work and responsibility and make sure he/she attends school on a regular basis.

NOTES:
Now, parents will complete the “Keys to Success” activity, where they will identify three or four strategies that are important in helping their child find success. Pass out 3 or 4 key cut-outs and have parent write one strategy on each. Tie the keys together with decorative ribbon and have parents hang on wall at home as a reminder of the important strategies.

Next, review Homework #4 sheet, which includes the journal prompt. Review with participants, then say:

Let’s now take a moment to look back on what we have discussed so far. First, we looked at the importance of having specific strategies that will help our children find success. Can anyone recall some of those strategies?

NOTES:

Call on participants to share. Discuss responses and provide feedback. Steer the conversation and have participants stay on topic. Be reflective of the time. Then say:

Now, that we have completed the seventh module, Please take out your journal to write a brief reflection.

NOTES:

Verify that everyone has their journal out, along with a writing tool. Then say:

In your journal, please write about one strategy that is perhaps the most important to you and your child. Provide a brief explanation why. When you are finished, please close your journal and manual. I will collect your training manuals. You may keep the journals and other supplies for our next meeting session. You may now have some refreshments with your child. After this, you are free to go. If you have any questions, you may talk with me after I have collected and put away the parent manuals. Again, please take this time to write about you’re the strategy that is most important to you and your child along with a brief explanation why you selected this strategy. You may begin.

NOTES:

END Module 7

Please tally points for this session and put total here:

SCRIPT: Module 8
Getting in Condition

Scripts are not available for this module since it is optional and being presented by a group independent of this training.

SCRIPT: Module 9
Getting in Condition

Scripts are not available for this module since it includes a focus group session and an unscripted graduation ceremony. Please refer to the Focus Group’s Guiding Questions for directions.
REFERENCES


94th Congress.


Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (1997). Public Law 105-17. 105th Congress.

Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (2004). Public Law 108-446. 108th Congress.


