

**Lack of Parental Involvement of Not Reading All
Communication with Kindergarten Students Using
the Communication Log of the Avid College
Readiness Binder**

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Abstract

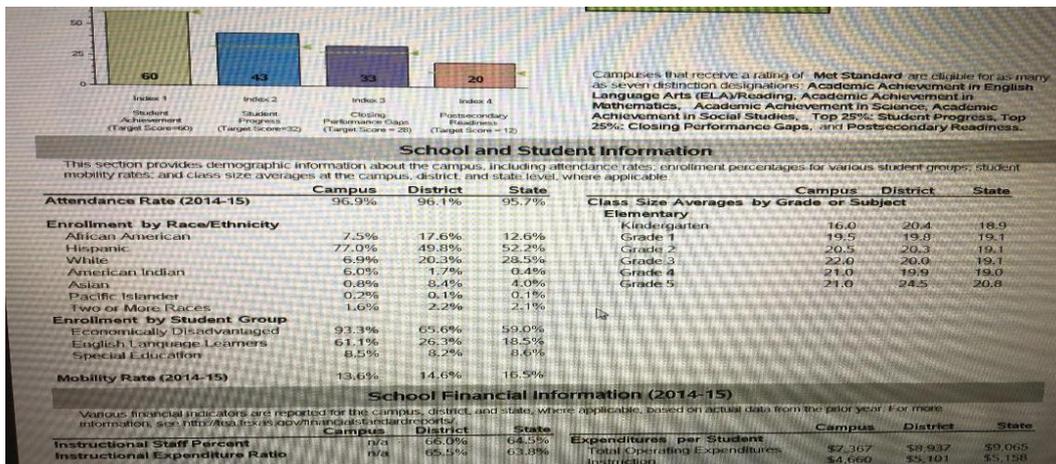
The purpose of this study was to examine the parental involvement in students' learning. Garland Independent School District is a suburban district located outside of the major city of Dallas, Texas. GISD is located in the northeast corner of Dallas County and it services the suburban cities of Garland, Rowlett and Sachse. Educating 58,000 students at 71 campuses, Garland Independent School District ranks as the second-largest district in Dallas County, twelfth-largest in Texas, and is among the 100-largest in America. Within Garland ISD, the student population is very diverse with the make up being that Hispanic culture making up 52% of the district; while 21% make up the Caucasian community, 17% make up the African American/Black and Asian making up 8% of the population. There is 2% that make up two or more cultures. The problem appears to be a lack of parental involvement. However, we do not know that this is intentional, but perhaps a lack of awareness or even the lack of English language proficiency of our parents and families. With a maximum of 22 students, routinely only a handful of parents will check Avid notebooks for the school and the class calendars, the list of special events, and the class newsletter. I am contending that if parents would regularly check their students' AVID Binder for communication from teachers and the school, their level of involvement and the knowledge of activities within the school and classroom will rise.

Keywords: Kindergarten students, parental involvement, communication, Caldwell Elementary.

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Introduction

Caldwell Elementary is a school whose achieved Met Standards in school ratings by the Texas Educational Agency as well as the Federal Report Card. Caldwell has also achieved a recognized rating by the Community and Student Engagement Ratings. The Caldwell campus demographics include a 10.70 % African American student body, Hispanic population of 78.60%, while the Caucasian/white student body shows a 6.20% student enrollment while the American Indian: 1.60%, Asian: 1.00%, Pacific Islander: 0.00%, Two or more races: 1.90% show a student enrollment. According to the mobility rate, 13.6% of the Caldwell Elementary account for 14.65% of Garland ISD. The School and Student Information chart below comes from the Texas Educational Agency, with the data coming from the 2014-2015 school year. Texas Educational Agency had this as the current year data as the search was conducted for Caldwell Elementary.



My Kindergarten General Education class demographics is made up of 22 students; 13 female and 9 males. The class culture is created by 1 Caucasian male; 1 Asian female; 7 African American/Black- in which 3 are female and 4 males; 13 Hispanic/Latinos(as)- in which 9 females and 4 males. 16 families being fluent in English and 6 being non-fluent in English. This information comes from the current 2017-2018 SchoolNet Data on Site for Garland Independent School District at Caldwell Elementary for Ms. Kelly Dudley's classroom.

The problem is that the parents of my Kindergarten students are not reading the communication that is being sent home in AVID Binders. This results in students not completing some assignments and/or missing out in some activities due to their parents or families not being aware of these and therefore not prompting their child to complete the assignments, bring the needed items or permission slips back to school.

The problem appears to be a lack of parental involvement. However, we do not know that this is intentional, but perhaps a lack of awareness or even the lack of English language proficiency of our parents and families. With a maximum of 22 students, routinely only a handful of parents will check Avid notebooks for the school and the class calendars, the list of special events, and the class newsletter. Parents have approached the teachers with the statement that they would be more involved “If I had only known...”. I am contending that if parents would regularly check their students’ AVID Binder for communication from teachers and the school, their level of involvement and the knowledge of activities within the school and classroom will rise.

This class of 13 girls and 9 boys will be the subjects listed in this action research study. The plan is to implement the three interventions and use the findings to determine their usefulness in increasing the parent or family involvement. The plan is to use the data collected on from the students’ Avid notebook, the signature page, the “read” from the Remind application, the sign in sheets and the surveys from parents for this study. This group of students and their families were chosen because they are the students in our classes and are readily available to us Monday through Friday from 7:45-3:10 p.m. As their teachers of record, I have seen a lack of parental involvement of the students and the effects it is having on them daily. This class will serve as the study group to determine whether or not these three interventions will serve to increase parent or family involvement. The research is to study the effects of early childhood students, and more so, how the level of parental involvement will increase when the intervention strategies are provided.

The main research question tends to drive the research design. The main question in this study is “What effect will a targeted approach to communication in two languages have on the parent participation in the students’ school activities?”

This section of the proposal will include a description of the method and the plan for implementing the research study.

The method is to perform a series of three interventions. The first is to have parent meetings to inform parents the importance of using the AVID binder and to facilitate communication between home and school. It is during these meetings that the AVID teachers will discuss the color-coded forms of the important communication within the AVID binder. The second is to send notes home on colored paper so that parents will be better able to notice the announcements. The communication will be sent home in both English and Spanish. The third intervention is to use technology using the Remind 101 application, electronic email, Educreation and Robo-calls in both languages. The school principal will continue to send weekly information by use of Robo-calls and Educreation every Sunday evening. Additionally, I will remind the students to remind their parents to

view, read and sign their AVID communication log. By doing this, it is also my hope that these interventions will increase the level of parental involvement.

All communication documents from the time spanning from September 25, 2017 to December 1, 2017 will serve as the intervention being implemented. Communication will be provided in English and Spanish languages. It will also be on colored paper in a protective sleeve in their AVID binder. Parents will be asked to respond with initials to indicate they have reviewed the information in the binder sent home daily. I will be collecting data from the returned initial sheet, and to see if there's any other indication that the parents/families are reading the printed communication. Within the communication I asked parents to do small projects with their students, complete reading and math homework as well as look over homework.

The use of the electronic communication Educreation application and the weekly Robo-calls sent out weekly will be provided in both languages by the building principal. The Educreation is sent out by email to faculty and to families who have provided a working email address, just before the Robo calls go out. This application is seen like a blackboard. The principal includes important dates, photos of the bulletin boards. The Robo-calls occur around 6pm every evening. Should a family not answer, it is left as a voicemail and remain there until the family listens and/or deletes it.

The last method I implemented was talking to my kindergarten students about sharing and discussing their Avid binder with their parents. I had to sit down in circle group with my students and discuss the components of the AVID binder and what they were for. I explained to my students that the AVID binder was to get them ready for college by giving them a tool to help keep them organized. I had to explain that organization effects the learning of a student and we had to start early so that they could practice and be the best student possible. In discussion with my students, I had to get creative and get them excited with sharing their binder. In the binder, for homework, I included several small projects that they had to do with their parents such as go on a walk with someone in your family (hopefully a parent) and collect 10 leaves. Currently, within their binder, they have a project about creating a poster of their family's tradition and culture. This gets the parents/families involved in not just the work part of the binder but a family friendly activity that includes everyone.

I decided to look into what would happen when parents are provided with communication documents in both languages, in a protective sleeve?

To address this question, we will assess how communication is being sent out to parents. I will assess how the office is communicating with parents via written and phone communication. We will analyze this data two different ways. First, we will calculate how

much of the class communication is being sent home in English. From that I will determine the average gain or loss in participation by the parents, reading the communication in the teacher's native spoken language.

I will then analyze how much of the school communication in written form and electronically is being sent home in both English and Spanish. My second level of analysis will be with communication sent home from the front office and by the school principal via Robo-calls. Finally, we will look at the scores for each student in our class's AVID Binder to see if there is a return initials on the required sign space to see if they've read all communication from both teachers and school. We will look for any other evidence of indication that they've been asked to do in the communication that we ask, such as collect 10 different leaves, or create an escape route in case of a home fire for Fire Prevention week.

What happens when electronic communication is provided in two languages?

To answer this question, I will record the "read" icon for each parent who's read the Remind 101 communication and along with group text. We will tally each survey that comes back completed by the parents. In regards to Educreation-we will have to trust that each parent receives communication and participates when given the information this way. We will analyze this information sent via survey, Remind 101, group text by the number of tallies of "read" by Remind 101 and group text. We will count and tally the number of surveys that are sent back to us completed and we will analyze Educreation based on an indicator that the student or the family has completed a task to indicate that the information was received and read. This was a great method and visual for me to see that when I started implementing the communication via Remind 101 and Educreation that the beginning of the project started with a low 36% indicating only 14 of my 22 students/families were checking communication this way. Since the implementation our class average went up to 95%, which indicates that 21 out of my 22 families are reading communication this way. This seemed to be the more effective way of communicating with my students/families.

What happens when Kindergarten students are encouraged to discuss their AVID binders with their parents?

To answer this, we will get the Kindergarten students excited about their AVID Binder and showing it to their parents. We will create a fun activity for the students to complete with their parents. Having a prize or a clip up will give the students the incentive to share their binder with their parents. We will interview our students and check projects upon entry and the put away process of the AVID Binders. We will tally how many students showed their parents on the completion of the family project and simply by asking our students if they shared their binder with their parents by looking for the signature of

the parents, indicating that they have seen the binder and all communication involved. Prior to the first parent's meeting, the class average of having parents sign the communication log and Thursday folder (included in the AVID binder on Thursday only) was 23% indicating that only six students were getting the required signatures. After the first parents meeting explaining the use of the AVID binder to the families, I saw a slight increase to 45% showing that now half or 11 of my students were getting signatures on a daily basis.

After seeing that there was some still confusion, with my non-proficient English-speaking parents, prompted a discussion with my administration and a second AVID parents night the evening before parent teacher conferences. A second avid night for parents was held. This time two sessions were implemented in the evening-one for English speaking families and the other specifically for Spanish. Once this occurred numbers from my classroom were elevated more than previously noted. The second session increased my numbers by six; now making 17 out of my 22 students/families/parents knowledgeable about the use of their AVID binder. This has now increased my class percentage to 77%. Even though this was not 100% the numbers indicate to me that having a second session for non-English speaking parents and families was beneficial. The implication I would hold would be that had this intervention been introduced from the beginning of the school year, we would not have the issues with lack of parent communication but in abundance of participation.

Researching the effects of level of parental engagement with kindergarten students using the Avid College Readiness Binder from two different school districts to see if the problem is at grade level or through school communication. We want to increase the level of parental involvement, so that we can have active participation from parents of the kindergarten students in our classrooms and higher participation at school functions. I have identified this as a problem in my classroom and at grade level. My next step is to implement the intervention strategies and then start recording data. Data collection will take place over the time period of September 25, 2017 to December 1, 2017. I will then share findings to see if there is a rise in the level of parental involvement in the Kindergarten classrooms, by integrating modifications in the way parent communication is sent out and sent home to parents in English and Spanish was successful. The outcome of the written

The support of the building principal will need to be involved, as they will be the ones sending out the Robo calls weekly and the communication documents to the parents from the front office. There is no need to do an audit check. For now, this is a self-contained classroom project; should we see a rise in participation, I would like to share the findings with the grade level and administration. I would like to receive their input on the

findings that we present and collaborate any new ideas that could help gain more active parent participation.

The people who know about our topic, are the office staff who puts the documents together to be placed in teacher mailboxes for distribution; the administrative team since they will be the ones who feed the communication with approval to be sent to the office staff. Upon completion of the action research project, I am willing to share the findings with the administration team, as well as the office staff, and grade level teams. Should the administrative team decide that the research and results are valid-they could share it with other grade levels in a staff meeting.

I believe in the method that I propose to research problem with a lack of parental involvement in not reading all communications with kindergarten students using the communication log of the avid College Readiness Binder. The philosophy behind the three implementations is that it requires little or no effort on the part of the parent other than showing up for a meeting to explain what the binder's duties were and to accept and read all electronic communication in addition to the written communication in the binders. It is my own belief that written communication though not environmentally friendly, is a good way to communicate with parents for involvement should they do not have a cell phone or iPad to accept the electronic forms of communication. The literature that I've read supports the electronic communication. It gave evidence that the students are excelling in education through the use of technology.

Review of the Literature

In a family-based involvement program collaboration among families, schools and communities is vital to reduce the risk factor and enhance factors by encouraging supportive family relationships, increasing positive parenting skills, promoting adequate parental supervision, providing parents with information in urging consistency of discipline in the home. Researchers have reported several parent involvement programs but not all are effective. Researchers in the United States have accumulated a significant number of empirical studies in per pertaining to parental involvement; the study provides meaningful information regarding effective parental involvement programs. This will stimulate decision-makers to engage enhancement of parental involvement programs (Baek, 2015).

Calzada (2015) noted in research by Joyce Epstein in 1987, concludes that parental involvement in the school may manifest as purse dissipation in school-based activities and communication with teachers, whereas involvement at home may manifest as engagement in educational activities such as reading to the child, taking them to museums and helping them with homework. Parent involvement is determined first by how parents interpret their

role in their child's education. Parents feel that they do not have a well-defined position in their child's education. Most parents believe in a well-organized and structured natural growth to child initiated learning. Researchers highlight the importance of acculturation it when discussing parental involvement in immigrant families. Researchers in family and teacher characteristics as predictors of parent involvement in education during early childhood among Afro-Caribbean and Latino immigrant families find from their study that there may be direct implications for intervention efforts. They feel a wealth of evidence supports the link between parent involvement in academic achievement among students from all backgrounds but question how to best promote parent involvement in this population (Calzada, 2015).

Extensive research over the span of many decades document a broad range of academic and social-emotional benefits for children associated with parent involvement. This research establishes that parent involvement in general is associated with improved academic outcomes of students. Daniel (2016) discusses Bandura's social cognitive theory that proposes contextual and personal factors jointly affect students' academic achievements, and considers the role of the children's self-regulated learning behaviors in the relationship between school-based parent involvement in student academic outcomes in the early years of school. School-based parent involvement is thought to contribute to students' motivation to learn and commitment to school activities through an inferred parental affirmation of the validity of this school site, staff and the tasks experienced in the learning environment says Daniel in 2016. May face a range of barriers that limit their engagement in school activities, particularly families of minority or disadvantaged backgrounds. Findings confirm in research that lower engagement in school-based parent involvement activities was related to socio-economic disadvantage and those speaking a language other than English at home (Daniel, 2016).

DeLoatche's research highlighted the importance of parent involvement reflected in Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory which underscores the influence of environmental interactions on child development. Through research, DeLoatche indicated promoting parents as teachers within the home setting may serve as a potential strategy to increase levels of parent involvement. Parental involvement is widely recognized by researchers, policy makers and professionals as an important factor related to school achievement. Findings in Dotterer's study indicated the findings in the literature did not provide clear evidence that parental involvement is directly linked to academic achievement; however, studies have shown that parental involvement may benefit, hinder or be unrelated to the achievement. Joyce Epstein's overlapping spheres model was adopted in Dotterer's research in 2016. This model emphasizes that proximate environments educate and socialize children and that the interactions between family and school jointly influence student learning and development. Across multiple frameworks

and conceptualization of parent involvement scholars emphasize home-based- which leads into involvement including parents help with homework and knowledge of school performance. This benefits children because it reinforces what students are learning at school and school-based which often includes parents work with third child's teacher or school involvement strategies. When parents are involved at school they are demonstrating that school is important which help students become more invested in their school in school work ultimately leading to academic achievement (Dotterer, 2016).

Studies indicate that parental involvement is most effective when viewed as a partnership between educators and parents. Each factor of Epstein's framework for parent involvement can lead each factor in the various results for the student, parents, teaching practices in the school climate. According to ĐURIŠIĆ (2017) parents gain a more positive attitude towards the school and staff while gaining more confidence in assisting their children by being involved with their education. They are more likely to gather support for the school and the programs in the community and become more active community members. Teachers benefit by better communication with the parents, a deeper understanding of the family of their students and their everyday living situation while being more effective in communication with both the home and community (Epstein, 2009). ĐURIŠIĆ focused on parents' roles being identified as a major contributor to their willingness to engage in supportive parent involvement.

The areas that were focused on were parental aspirations which referred to the idealistic hopes or goals that parents may form regarding future attainment for their children; parenting efficacy referring to the beliefs that one's capable to organize and execute the courses of action required to produce attainment (Bandura, 1997); perceptions of school which referred to the parents' degree of involvement likely to be affected by the school itself. Findings from this research include involvement of parents is related to the position at home as well is the participation in activities organized by schools. Research shows that parental involvement is more important to children's academic success than their families socioeconomic status, race, ethnicity or educational background. Parental involvement can encourage achievement in many ways (ĐURIŠIĆ, 2017).

Involvement in school is both critical and legally mandated for parents of students with disabilities according to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 2004. This research is clear when it discusses the legally mandated parent involvement in IEP meetings. The ramifications of low involvement and poor parent-school partnerships are especially severe. Parents must learn to navigate a highly specialized system therefore the importance to elevate the efficacy of interventions for increasing parent involvement at school specifically for students with disabilities is extremely important. The results indicate that further analysis be completed. The evaluation of the effectiveness of parent training

on increasing parent involvement of parents of students with disabilities in school be reevaluated. Results of random effects their meta-analysis did not provide evidence of effectiveness of parent trainings in increasing parent involvement in school for parents of students with disabilities (Goldman, 2017).

Ma's article about the relationship between learning outcomes and parental involvement during early childhood education and early elementary education was enlightening. As it examined the relationship between the outcomes of children and educational involvement of the parents during the early childhood education and early education years. The study indicated a strong and positive correlation between learning outcomes and parental involvement. Through many types of parental involvement in building institutional capacity demonstrated the greatest importance to the relationship the role of the parent was more important than the role of the schools and communities (Ma, 2016). While emphasizing the early school success, no federal policies have more explicitly prescribe parental involvement for publication been no child left behind that mandated effective parental involvement that fosters achievement to high standards for all children (Section 1111. D). Family and involvement refers to the engagement of parents in various activities and behaviors that promote learning and development of their children. Home-school connection establishes a communication for parents to contact schools for children's academic performance, school programs, course selections, placement decisions and social behaviors (Epstein, 1987).

Family school partnerships emphasize the critical importance of open communication, healthy relationships, mutual respect for differences and a genuine willingness to share power between family and schools. The school communicates with involved parents in old wide range of activities from providing information to engaging parents in policy and decision-making. It reaches out to special populations such as immigrants, refugees and non-English speaking children and parents in all school related activities (Semke and Sheridan, 2012). According to Epstein (2009) education programs that promote family-school-community partnerships have the best chance to make children succeed in school. It is through Epstein's framework of six types of parental involvement that is the basis of her view. Type I of Epstein's framework is parenting. Schools and community educate or assist families to create positive home environment that supports the care and education of children. Type II involvement is communicating-schools and communities establish effective forms or channels of communication between home and school about school programs and student progress; type III involvement is volunteering-schools and communities recruit and organize efforts from parents to support school operations and functions; type IV involvement is learning at home-schools and communities provide families with information and education to help parents carry out curriculum activities at home; type V involvement is decision-making-schools and

communities trained or developed parents to become leaders and representatives for educational decision-making in school; type VI involvement is collaborating with the community-schools and communities identify and integrate resources and services from communities to strengthen family practices in school programs that enable parents and educators to better support the learning and development of children.

Studies investigating parent involvement and parent-educator communication in early childhood settings in school are not new topics. Results range in parental involvement and communication as decreasing as children move from grade level to grade level, however educators in this setting reports using strategies to promote parent involvement in it communication but there was setting differences for parents' communication effectiveness. Reports show that very little attention is given to parents' involvement in children's school in the lower early childhood settings such as preschool and childcare centers (Murray, 2015). There is an emphasis on teachers developing respectful partnerships with families that create a welcoming environment where all children and families are respected and actively encouraged to collaborate with teachers about curriculum decisions to ensure learning experiences are meaningful. These partnerships highlight a need for early childhood teachers to implement effective strategies for communicating with families and to encourage their involvement.

I have implemented three strategies on behalf of my class. One strategy that was in common from my research to my literature was that teachers recognize the different communication preferences of families and utilize strategies to facilitate communication with parents. Other forms of strategies used was verbal communication through drop-off and pick-ups of the students, at parent-teacher conferences, home visits or by telephone. You the literature and I both agree that written communication through the various forms of newsletters, parent letters, noticeboards and daily journals are used and taking into account that some parents may prefer electronic communication in the forms of email, websites and digital portfolios. These are effective strategies for enhancing teacher-family communication that require one-way and two-way communication opportunities. Statements were made that teachers need to be aware that there is no (one size fits all approach to facilitating parental involvement (Murray, 2015).

Since the speedy expansion of the Internet boom in the 1990s, having a new interaction Avenue as a way of communication plays an increasingly important role in the relationships among parents' teachers and students. Having application such as remind 101 and edgy creation gives parents and students a 24-hour access to information provided regarding school work and school activities. Having this method of communication may also prompt parents to reach out to teachers more frequently because of being in tenuously informed, they feel more involved in their child's education Patrikakou (2016) states that

having a smaller body of literature examines how home-school communication should be enhanced through technology and media use to keep parents informed regarding various school-related matters such as school events, homework, learning strategies and student progress. Shin's research in 2016 in regards to blogging with Web 2.0 technologies and how the parent's involvement of English Language Learners has evolved from an ecological perspective. Shin went on to say that his study views digital literacy as "discursive practices" that are shaped by one's social, cultural and political access. Findings from this study indicate that parents used blogging to support their child's academic and social goals. Studies have shown that blogging practices support learners' language development, identity expressions, intercultural communications, civic and political participation as well as reflecting critically (Shin, 2016).

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