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Peeling Back the Layers - Perceptions of Parents of Urban Elementary Students

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PEELING BACK THE LAYERS-

PERCEPTIONS OF PARENTS OF

URBAN ELEMENTARY STUDENTS

A Dissertation

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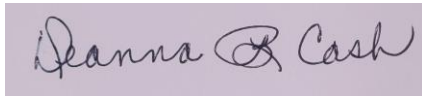Kellie Baldwin, Ed. S.

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APPROVAL OF THE DISSERTATION

This dissertation- Peeling Back the Layers- Perceptions of Parents has been approved by the Ed. D. Faculty of the University of Lynchburg in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Ed. D. degree.

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___December 9, 2020___ Date

DEDICATION

This manuscript is dedicated, in loving memory, to my dad, J. Wayne Scruggs, who encouraged the advancement of my education.

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Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.

-Nelson Mandela

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CHAPTER ONE INTRODUCTION

Our society is fast paced and individuals continually battle the clock to manage the many tasks, activities, and goals of the day. Gone are the days where the father was the breadwinner and the mother the homemaker. In today's society many families struggle to pay the expenses that accumulate over the month. In addition, education has changed dramatically over the past fifty years and students are expected to come to school with many of the skills that were historically taught in kindergarten. Many students enter school being technology savvy and full of energy, but lack many foundational, social, emotional, and academic skills to begin school with success.

Educating the next generation of doctors, lawyers, electricians, and store clerks is a challenging, yet rewarding endeavor. When coupled with the obstacles of poverty and what can appear to be the lack of academic parental support, children can get caught in a web of insufficiencies. However, the opportunities garnered from a rigorous academic education can be life changing for students.

Currently, the poverty rate exceeds 20% within a city in Central Virginia (United States Census Bureau, 2013) that is the subject of this study. Many of the city's students suffer from the challenges that poverty places on this community and those who reside in it. Children raised in low-income families are at risk of academic struggles, social problems, and poor health which can interfere with educational growth and success (Engle, & Black, 2008). Students with weak social skills struggle to conform to the structures of their classrooms. Poor health leads to a child's inability to focus and attendance issues. According to Ryan, Fauth, and Brooks-Gunn (2006), "growing up in poverty can seriously compromise a young child's readiness to enter school and her performance thereafter" (p. 329). If a student enters school in the fall unprepared, he or she is at a disadvantage from the beginning of the school year.

Students who have an adult involved in their academic studies tend to achieve at higher levels. According to Larocque, Kleiman, and Darling (2011) an "increased level of parental involvement in schools and in the education of their children is positively correlated with increasing educational achievement" (p.115). Parents are a vital ingredient in the recipe for success in the classroom and are essential to bridging the home and school. El Nokali, Bachman, and Votruba-Drzal (2010) found "parent involvement bridges two key contexts in children's early development, namely, the home and the school settings" (p. 989). As the rigor of the state standards continues to rise, now more than ever, parent involvement within the educational arena is needed. When students experience the benefits of a solid education and parental involvement, success is accelerated.

Chapter One provides an introduction to the study, explains the purpose of the study and provides definitions to relevant terms.

Background of the Problem

According to the U.S. Department of Education (2015), "In 2013, the percentage of American public and private 4th-grade students performing at or above the *Basic* reading achievement level (68 percent) was not measurably different from the percentage in 2011 but was higher than the percentage in 1992 (62 percent)" (p. 1). This data shows that 32 percent of 4th grade students have below basic reading abilities. This data indicates that many of the students are unable to read and this impacts all areas of academic growth. Many students throughout Virginia school divisions struggle to proficiently master the Virginia Standards of Learning tests (SOL), lack basic life skills, and struggle to maintain emotional and social norms. As a result, many of these students are deficient in their overall ability to enter the workforce career ready. Many students in an identified urban school division in Central Virginia lack basic reading and math skills, educational competencies, acquisition of skills, basic life skills, and

principles including self-respect, persistence, and perseverance. According to the Virginia Department of Education data (2016), an urban school district within Central Virginia is below the state average for on time graduation. The division had approximately 86% of all students graduate on time in 2016 with only 80% on time graduation for black students (Virginia Department of Education, 2016). This is below the Virginia state average of 91% for all students and 88% for black students (Virginia Department of Education, 2016). Many students are not leaving high school ready for college or career success. Although the schools work hard to provide additional opportunities and interventions within the school day as well as outside of the school day, many students still fall below the expectations academically, emotionally, and socially. It is a daily struggle for many students to demonstrate proficiency in the area of reading or other core subjects.

Also, many students have low parent support due to various factors. The U.S. Department of Education (2015) notes that only 67 percent of American public and private students had an adult in the household who checked to ensure student's homework was completed. This is one area of concern in regards to parent involvement and academic support. When coupled with the deficits some students may have in reading and other academic areas such as mathematics the probability of academic success is further reduced. A child's elementary school years, grades pre kindergarten to fifth grade, is a critical time for parents to develop structures, routines, and relationships in regards to education.

The foundational building blocks are established in the early elementary school years and parent support and parental academic involvement are key. The work conducted by Leithwood and Patrician (2015) note that the educational culture of the home directly influences the social and intellectual success of students. The study describes educational culture as "parenting style,

parental expectations for children's work at school, direct instructional support for school learning (e.g., parents reading with their children at home), active parent interest in the school's curriculum, and the monitoring of children's engagement with school work" (Leithwood, & Patrician, 2015, p. 665).

Students that experience consistency with home school routines typically have a more successful educational experience. Additionally, Epstein (2010) notes "families reinforce the importance of school, homework, and activities that build student skills and feelings of success" (p. 83).   When children see the value of education at home with their families and within the school community education may become important to the child. According to El Nokali, Bachman, and Votruba-Drzal (2010), "parent involvement typically involves parents' behaviors in home and school settings meant to support their children's educational progress" (p. 989). The benefits of parent involvement on the school, students, teachers, and parents are clear but, there is uncertainty as to why schools are not more successful at engaging many urban parents in low socioeconomic schools.

Statement of the Problem

Children living in poverty often struggle with the academic skills needed to be successful in school. According to Ryan, Fauth, and Brooks-Gunn (2006), "growing up in poverty can seriously compromise a young child's readiness to enter school and her performance thereafter" (p. 329).   Children of poverty experience challenges from the moment they walk in the school door due to lack of experience with language, literacy, routines, and the formalities of the educational school day. Children raised in low-income families are at risk of academic struggles, social problems, and poor health which can interfere with educational growth and success (Engle, & Black, 2008). Many times parents' decisions unknowingly drive these challenges. Several factors can increase the student's probability of educational success for children

including having access to preschool, literacy exposure, and beneficial, frequent, conversations with adults.

Family background and a parent's prior educational experiences can also have an impact on student success. According to Egalite (2016), better educated parents are more likely to consider the area's schools when selecting where to reside, participating in school activities and conferences, and reading to their child than less educated parents. Brooks-Gunn and Duncan (1997) note "children living below the poverty threshold are 1.3 times as likely as nonpoor children to experience learning disabilities and developmental delays" (p. 61). Often parents are unaware of the challenges and deficits that their child may present and early interventions are not put in place to support the child or identify the child within the special education process. Community outreach programs and formal preschool programs can be an effective way to provide children with the support needed to ensure that each student enters kindergarten ready to learn.

Once children are enrolled in school, parent teacher communication is essential in advancing the student's knowledge. According to Minke and Anderson (2005), "trusting, respectful relationships among teachers and families appear to be the foundation of successful interventions" (p.184). Unfortunately, for children of poverty, many parents and teachers fail to maintain a relationship that enhances the educational process for the child. This is a critical component of the educational process, one that cannot be ignored. The impact that a teacher and parent relationship can have on a student's growth over the course of a year is immeasurable.

Positive teacher and family relationships can benefit the learning environment. According to James Comer (1995), "No significant learning occurs without a significant relationship". Without a strong sense of understanding and meaning within the classroom,

students often do not put forth the effort needed to succeed. "The first step in developing significant relationships with students is to interact with students to get to know them both academically and personally" (Edwards & Edick, 2013, p. 3). In order to best meet the needs of the student, the teacher must extend this meaningful relationship to the family. Comer (2005) notes "It is the positive relationships and sense of belonging that a good school culture provides that give these children the comfort, confidence, competence, and motivation to learn." (p. 758). Once parents truly believe that educators care about their child and their family they may better engage in the school community. "If children see that their parents have a great relationship with their teachers, there's a level of respect and a bond that develops for everyone" (Martucci, Dealey, Chase, Miller, & Lopez, 2016 p. 54). Children often model the behaviors of their parents. If students notice that the teacher and their parents have a positive working relationship more willing behaviors may be noted in the classroom.

Rationale

At the time of the study the researcher was an administrator at an urban elementary school in Central Virginia. The elementary school enrolled approximately 380 PreK-5 neighborhood students or students zoned for the school according to their address. Of these students, more than 63% were considered economically disadvantaged or at-risk. Many of the students struggled with the challenges of poverty and their parents often worked multiple jobs to make ends meet. In addition to the students that were zoned for the school, the school was home to many division-wide programs. The division wide programs included students in three special education classrooms and a program for students with gifted abilities. During the 2017-18 school year, many of the at-risk students struggled to meet grade-level expectations with reading and math skills at the specific elementary school. According to the school's SOL data, 46% of the students from the surrounding neighborhood failed to meet the state expectations for reading.

In addition, 47% of these students fell below the state expectations for math. Although instructional practices in the classrooms are differentiated often, behavioral challenges present roadblocks for learning in the classroom. School data also noted a lack of parent attendance at conferences. During the 2017-18 and 2018-19 school years' fall parent-teacher conferences, approximately 70 parents attended from the identified an urban elementary school in Central Virginia. The 2017-18 Back-to-School Night had poor neighborhood attendance with only 32 K-5 parents attending and this number dropped to 27 for the 2018-19 school year. The local Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) struggled with parent attendance at meetings as well. Monthly meetings averaged well under 15 parents, including the 12 PTO officers for the 2017-18 school year and eight PTO officers for the 2018-19 school year. The lack of parent involvement and attendance at these events was problematic at the identified urban elementary school in Central Virginia.

The purpose of this study was to determine the educational experiences of an identified urban elementary school in Central Virginia parents (similar to the researcher's school's parents) as lived through their own experience and how these educational experiences determine their academic parent involvement for their child. By examining parents' educational experiences, educational professionals may be able to bridge the home and school communities and determine support needed to aid families in educating children.

Research Problem

The purpose of this study was to determine the educational experiences of parents as lived through their own experience and how these educational experiences determine their academic parent involvement for their child. Utilizing a phenomenological approach, the research question was explored. The research question was:

From parents' perceptions, what dynamics determine educational parent support for urban elementary school children?

The study determined common themes by gaining insights of the lived educational experience of parents.

Significance of the Study

This study provided additional research and information related to the elementary education field. The study was valuable to the teachers and administrators within an urban elementary school where poverty often places educational challenges on the students and their families. The parents were given voice by having the opportunity to share their lived experiences. This study provided common themes to more fully showcase how parents perceived educational opportunities. With the knowledge gained from this study the educational professionals may be able to build bridges by better understanding parents' educational experiences. By peeling back the layers of parents' perceptions, educators may be able to gain an understanding of parent perceptions thus leading to strengthened relationships with our most vital partner, the parent.

Definitions of Terms

The study explored the perceptions of parents based on their lived educational experiences. In order to ensure understanding throughout the study, several terms were defined to ensure clarity.

1. *Parent*- Parent refers to the main caregiver of the child. This could be mother, father, guardian, foster parent, grandmother, grandfather, or another relative.

2. *Poverty*- Poverty is "the extent to which an individual does without resources" (Payne, 2005, p.7).

3. *Parent involvement*- Parental involvement refers "to the amount of participation a parent has when it comes to schooling and her child's life" (Ireland, 2014, p.1), "parent involvement typically involves parents' behaviors in home and school settings meant to support their children's educational progress", "parent involvement bridges two key contexts in children's early development, namely, the home and the school settings" (El Nokali, Bachman & Votruba-Drzal, 2010, p. 989).

4. *Academic success*- Academic success is composed of "academic achievement, satisfaction, acquisition of skills and competencies, persistence, attainment of learning objectives, and career success" (York, Gibson, & Rankin, 2015, p. 9).

5. *Standards of Learning (SOL)*- Virginia Department of Education notes the "expectations for student learning and success" (Virginia Department of Education, 2019).

6. *Home-school relationship*- Teachers and parent "partners share joint responsibilities and rights, are seen as equals, and can jointly contribute to the process" of educating the student (Vosler-Hunter, 1989).

7. *COVID-19 Pandemic*- Coronavirus (COVID-19) is an illness caused by a virus that can spread from person to person and symptoms can range from mild (or no symptoms) to severe illness. The illness impacted the world beginning in late 2019. At the time of this research study, very little information was available about the illness and there was no vaccine available to prevent the spread of the illness (Center for Disease Control and Prevention, n.d.).

8. *Class Dojo*- Class Dojo is a two way communication platform that allows teachers, students, and families to share photos, videos, and messages (Class Dojo, Inc., n.d).

Parent involvement and poverty are key factors in determining academic success. Students who have an adult involved in their academic studies tend to achieve at higher levels. An increased level of parental involvement in schools and in the education of children is positively correlated (Larocque, Kleiman, & Darling, 2011). Parents are a vital ingredient in the recipe for success in the classroom. Many teachers appreciate a positive working relationship with a student's family. El Nokali, Bachman, and Votruba-Drzal (2010) found "parent involvement bridges two key contexts in children's early development, namely, the home and the school settings" (p. 989). Students that experience consistency with home school routines typically have a more successful educational experience. Additionally, Epstein (2010) notes "families reinforce the importance of school, homework, and activities that build student skills and feelings of success" (p. 83). Simple family conversations that encourage academic interest and high school expectations can motivate a child's willingness to work hard in class. When students are not equipped with solid parental support the possibility of failure may arise.

According to Devaney and Milstein (1998), "school failure may increase among children at risk who lack parental involvement" (p. 131). Students may show a disinterest in education if their parents do not show an interest in learning or school activities. Finally, poverty can challenge the hopes and dreams of many young students. According to Ryan, Fauth, and Brooks-Gunn (2006), "growing up in poverty can seriously compromise a young child's readiness to enter school and her performance thereafter" (p. 329). The community of poverty breeds many challenges which place undue stress on young students and their educational aspirations. Children that grow up in poverty experience risks in their homes and community, family stress and illnesses, limited resources and lack psychosocial stimulation (Engle & Black, 2008). Poverty does not have to be a barrier for students' academic opportunities. Parental

involvement and support of schooling can bolster a child's interest and motivation in academic tasks.

Chapter Summary

Chapter One provided an introduction to the study, explained the purpose of the study, and provided definitions to relevant terms. By peeling back the layers of parents' perceptions, the educational professionals may be able to gain an understanding of parent perceptions thus leading to strengthened relationships with our most vital partner, the parent.

CHAPTER TWO LITERATURE REVIEW

The purpose of this chapter was to review the literature related to teacher/student and teacher/parent relationships, parent involvement, the impacts of poverty on children, their families, and overall child development. This chapter examined the importance of literacy awareness and interventions for increased parent support.

Parental involvement is an essential element of the educational process. Parents are the child's first teacher and vital to the home-school partnership. One of the first academic foundational blocks cultivated by many parents is literacy. Children that are spoken to and read to early in life typically develop language skills necessary for reading later in their youth. This skill can be fostered by a parent long before the child ever reaches the school doors. Since parents are a necessary and preferred partner in education, it is important to review interventions and to examine ways to promote and bridge the gap between home and school. The literature review section was categorized in the following manner: relationships, parent support and student success, strategies to encourage parental support, lack of parent support and student success, reasons for the lack of parental involvement, implications for the lack of parental involvement, the impacts of poverty on children, their families, and overall child development, importance of early reading development, parent school relationships, and interventions for increased parent support.

Within the research, there were gaps noted in understanding the perceptions of parents' educational experiences. This was a critical component and was explored to better understand the situation at the school that was the subject of this research. Since there were similarities in educational patterns and parental involvement with the researcher's school and the school of study, this study allowed for a deeper understanding of the home school partnership.

Additionally, this research study provided information to contribute to the body of research currently available for urban education.

Relationships

Building positive relationships within the school building is a critical component of educating students. Within the school community many relationships are valuable and essential to the education of students. These relationships include those between the teacher and student and those between the teacher and the parent.

A positive teacher-student relationship can be powerful within the classroom setting. A research study conducted in a large, public elementary school within a southeast metropolitan area examined 61 at risk African-American students in grades three through five (Baker, 1999). The study focused on examining teacher-student interactions and relationships of students with high and low satisfaction with school (Baker, 1999). Students participated in semi-structured interviews and self-reported questionnaires. Additionally, academic observations were conducted by trained research students. According to Baker (1999), "results suggested that perceptions of a caring, supportive relationship with a teacher and a positive classroom environment were related to school satisfaction by as early as third grade" (p. 57).

The teacher-parent relationship is an important aspect to examine when looking to improve parent involvement. Santiago, Garbacz, Beattie, and Moore (2016) conducted a study to determine the influence of demographic variables on parent trust, student behavior, and parent involvement for elementary students. Participants in the study included 212 parents of kindergarten through fourth grade children enrolled in the Pacific Northwest region of the United States (Santiago, Garbacz, Beattie, & Moore, 2016). Forty-seven percent of the participants were eligible for free or reduced-price lunch (Santiago, Garbacz, Beattie, & Moore, 2016). The participants were surveyed using two scales, Family School Relationship Survey and Parent

Trust in Schools Scale, to measure parent trust. According to Santiago, Garbacz, Beattie, and Moore (2016), "A student's eligibility for free or reduced-price lunch significantly predicted a decrease in parent trust in their child's teacher and their child's school" (p. 1012). Additionally, higher levels of parent teacher trust and parent school trust were associated with decreased peer conflicts and decreased total difficulties. Finally, "higher levels of parent trust in teachers significantly predicted increased parent educational involvement" (Santiago, Garbacz, Beattie, & Moore, 2016, p.1013).

Parent Involvement

Parents and caregivers have a unique role in the educational process. Parents have the opportunity to begin learning the personalities of their children when they are born. Kalb and van Ours (2014) found "parents can play an important role in the development of reading skills and cognitive skills of their children by reading to them at a young age" (p. 20). Parents and caregivers know first-hand their child's likes, dislikes, strengths, and weaknesses. When caregivers support their child's educational needs the likelihood of academic success is increased. Parent involvement in the early school years may continue to promote school success in later years (Miedel & Reynolds, 2000). Miedel and Reynolds conducted an inner-city longitudinal study investigating the association of early parent involvement and children's later school competence. Their study included 704 participants and concluded that early parental involvement in prekindergarten and kindergarten activities resulted in higher reading achievement, lower retention rates, and fewer years in special education up to age 14 (2000).

Parent support is vital to the student's academic growth and success. In essence, a parent's willingness to provide encouragement, help, and understanding throughout the educational process can boost school attendance, promote homework completion, and create a drive within the student to be successful. According to Matuszny, Banda, and Coleman (2007),

Parent involvement has a positive effect on: student achievement, students' educational aspirations, the length of time students stay in school, teachers' perceived efficacy of their own teaching habits, teacher's perception of parent effectiveness, parents' rating of schools, parents' ambition to increase or improve their own educational training, parents' own perceived efficacy about their parenting skills, students' drive to increase their independence (p. 25). The benefits of parent involvement for the school, students, teachers, and parents are clear. According to El Nokali, Bachman, and Votruba-Drzal (2010), "parent involvement typically involves parents' behaviors in home and school settings meant to support their children's educational progress" (p. 989). As the classroom instruction and state mandates increase in rigor, parents need to support student learning now more than ever. Many school children lack sufficient foundational social, emotional, and academic skills to be successful. Minke and Anderson (2005) note "collaboration approaches also emphasize the importance of empowerment, which builds the capacity of families to serve as life-long advocates for their children" (p. 182). When parents invest in their children's education, the children feel pushed to succeed.

Gonzalez-DeHass, Willems, and Doan Holbein (2005) found "students whose parents are involved are more likely to take personal responsibility for their learning" (p. 117). Gonzalez-DeHass, Willems, and Doan Holbein conducted a literature review on 13 research studies focusing on parent involvement and K-12 student motivation. These studies examined various populations including elementary, middle, and high school students, and elementary teachers. After examining these studies, it was determined that "when parents are involved, students report more effort, concentration, and attention" (Gonzalez-DeHass, Willems, & Doan Holbein, 2005, p. 117). Additionally, this study noted, "when parents show an interest in their child's education

by getting involved, students adopt a mastery goal orientation to learning where they are more likely to seek challenging tasks, persist through academic challenges, and experience satisfaction in their schoolwork" (Gonzalez-DeHass, Willems, & Doan Holbein, 2005, p. 118).

An increased level of parental involvement in schools and in the education of children is positively correlated (Larocque, Kleiman, & Darling, 2011). When parents become involved in the process of educating their child academic learning experiences are enhanced. Parents and caregivers create a culture of collaborative partnerships when they work together (Larocque, Kleiman, & Darling, 2011). Schools cannot educate children on their own. Parents are an essential and valued part of the team. Families, community groups, and educators all play a role in the success of the students (Larocque, Kleiman, & Darling, 2011). In addition, regardless of the background or income, students with involved parents earn higher grades and test scores, pass their classes, have better school attendance, show improved behavior and social skills, graduate high school, and continue their education (Henderson & Mapp, 2002).

Jeynes (2005) conducted a meta-analysis of 41 studies examining the relationship between parental involvement and the academic achievement of urban elementary school children. The study examined the following components: general parental involvement, specific parent involvement, communication, homework, parent expectations, the parent's ability to read, attendance and participation, and parenting style (Jeynes, 2005). After reviewing the studies Jeynes (2005) noted that the "results indicate a significant relationship between parental involvement overall and academic achievement" (p. 237). Jeynes notes this relationship held firm for males, females, white, and minority students (2005). According to Jeynes (2005), "nearly all of the individual components of parental involvement were positively and significantly related to educational outcomes" (p. 261).

Parent involvement or support within the context of education can be defined in various ways. El Nokali, Bachman, and Votruba-Drzal (2010) note "parent involvement bridges two key contexts in children's early development, namely, the home and the school settings" (p. 989). Students that have parent support typically come to school with the needed supplies, have materials ready for the day, complete homework, and have an ongoing parent and student conversations about the daily school routines and happenings.

According to Epstein (2010) there are six types of involvement: "parenting, communicating, volunteering, learning at home, decision making, and collaborating with community" (p. 85). These types of involvement impact the partnership of parents, teachers, and schools in significant ways. Parenting is the process of schools helping families with their parenting skills by providing child development information to support children as learners (Epstein, n.d). Children of poverty often lack a support system at home to model expected outcomes and behaviors. Some ways the schools may assist with parenting are to guide parents in creating home routines to support the learner, provide families with information on grade level topics, and connect families with health and nutrition programs (Epstein, n.d).

Communication between the home and school community is essential to building relationships and providing support for academic success. Two-way communication between home and school promotes parent involvement. Communicating is the design of effective school-to-home and home-to-school dialogue in relation to the student's progress or school programming (Epstein, n.d). When teachers and parents communicate on a regular basis a team-like approach is developed and this can be effective in reaching the struggling student. Parents can engage in effective communication systems by reading and discussing school newsletters,

attending parent-teacher conferences, or reviewing their child's weekly work folder (Epstein, n.d).

Another area of involvement includes volunteering. Volunteering is the recruitment of, and exercise of, parent help and support for the school (Epstein, n.d). Both teachers and administration encourage this involvement by enlisting classroom volunteers or the use of parent talents or skills (Epstein, n.d). Volunteering allows parents to see first-hand the opportunities within the school provided to support student learning. Oftentimes, parents develop school relationships through volunteering which enhances the educational setting. It is important to note that for children of poverty, volunteering can be problematic, as oftentimes the parent struggles to make this commitment to the school due to family obligations or work, educational inadequacies, or a lack of transportation (Trotman, 2001).

The final type of parent involvement explored by Epstein is collaborating with community. By collaborating with the community, resources and services are integrated to strengthen the school programming (Epstein, n.d). Through collaboration, parents can be connected to community resources that may aid the overall family or their child's specific needs. Some types of resources available in the community may include food pantries, counseling services, mentoring services, and support groups for parents of students with challenging behaviors or disabilities. Epstein (2010) found "when parents, teachers, students, and others view one another as partners in education, a caring community forms around students and begins its work" (p. 82). Once a foundational relationship is built between the parent and teacher, the parent can be more abreast of strategies to guide their children through the educational process. El Nokali, Bachman, and Votruba-Drzal (2010) note an example of this "if parents are aware of teacher's instructional goals, they may provide resources and support for those learning aims at

home" (p. 989). Families will gain insights that will enable them to advocate for the best practices for their child. Knowledge is a powerful tool that can be utilized to maximize growth.

Parents as Partners

There are numerous ways to build, enhance, and foster working relationships with parents. Students will perform to the best of their abilities academically and behaviorally when they attend school regularly and when they receive regular support from their parents or guardians (Trotman, 2001). Michelle Trotman's study of African-Americans' parental involvement provided information on the importance of parental involvement as well as the factors that contribute to the lack of parent involvement. Trotman notes that "parents can no longer be ignored" (2017, p. 282). They are a vital piece to the puzzle and the school community must put in the effort to better understand the parents within the school community. African American parents are very interested in their children and their academic success but situational barriers often establish roadblocks. According to Trotman (2017), "Teachers and administrators must also realize that several barriers contribute to the low level of involvement of urban parents (e.g. family structure/socio economic status; parents' work schedule, educational level; and the expectations of administrators and teachers)- all of which can be overcome" (p. 282). Intentional practices and routines must be established to ensure children receive a solid educational future.

By utilizing various approaches to parent involvement, the needs of most parents and primary caregivers will be met. Devaney and Milstein (1998) state "it is important that the school be viewed by the community as a friendly and positive place where all are welcomed and valued" (p. 138). A program created at Park Early Childhood Center in Ossining, New York aimed to "encourage the families of at-risk youngsters to become involved with the teaching and clinical staff to actively participate in their children's education" (Devaney & Milstein, 1998,

p.131). The community of Ossining is a multicultural, diverse socioeconomic suburban community with a high percentage of at-risk children being raised in single parent families. These families struggle with many obstacles including poverty, joblessness, domestic violence, and chemical dependence (Devaney & Milstein, 1998). The Kids + Family + School = Success program had three goals: to create a welcoming environment for families, encourage parent confidence, and enhance the positive parenting skills (Devaney & Milstein, 1998). The program included an academic workshop, dinner, babysitting services, and a session with the school social worker. Following program completion, parents expressed a positive experience and the teachers concluded that the program met its goals and families were more connected to the school (Devaney & Milstein, 1998).

A few practical ideas to increase parent involvement with academics include but are not limited to hosting a Back to School Night with an opportunity to learn more about volunteer opportunities and organizing workshops driven to aid parents and primary caregivers in building educational skills. Many times, educators utilize strategies vastly different from a parent's own educational experience. When workshops are provided to teach the parents educational strategies, parents' anxieties are reduced. This breaks down a barrier which may impact parent involvement. According to Epstein (2010), "families reinforce the importance of school, homework, and activities that build student skills and feelings of success" (p. 83). When parents and the educational community collaborate all stakeholders benefit. Bryk and Schneider (2003) explain, "Effective urban schools need teachers who not only know their students well but also have an empathetic understanding of their parents' situations and the interpersonal skills needed to engage adults effectively" (p. 44). Relationship development within the school community is a process that must be carefully cultivated. Trotman (2017) notes ways to increase the presence

of urban African-American parents within the school community: establish rapport and develop a history with the family, give parents authority, ask parents about their interests, ask parents to spread the word about activities at the school, allow parents to be teaching partners, and refrain from judging parents.

Providing parents with information and tools to aid in homework and school related curriculum encourages learning at home (Epstein, n.d). By modeling parent engagement activities with their child, parents can replicate the activities and foster a sense of learning throughout life, not just within the school building. Decision making is a vital part of parent involvement. Including parents in decision making within the school community validates the importance of the parents in the educational partnership as leaders and representatives (Epstein, n.d.). After-school functions with family engagement opportunities can provide parents with instructional tips to better inform parents of meaningful instructional practices. Parents of poverty may find this environment less intimidating since their child is actively part of this process.

Lack of Parent Support and Student Success

In education the involvement of parents varies by student. Some parents are actively involved within the school on a weekly, biweekly, or monthly basis. Other parents are rarely, if ever, seen within the four walls of the school building. Teachers and building administrators have the challenging job of ensuring that the parents are welcomed and involved in various aspects of their child's education. When parents are not available or do not make education a priority there can be difficulties. Englund, Luckner, Whaley, and Egeland (2004) note that "Parent involvement is an important predictor of children's achievement in school" (p.723). According to Devaney and Milstein (1998), "school failure may increase among children at risk who lack parental involvement" (p. 131). The lack of parental involvement and educational

awareness hinders a child's academic progress. While some parents are not involved within the school setting due to family obligations or work, others may be embarrassed by their lack of education or simply do not have a means of transportation to engage in school functions (Trotman, 2001). In order to combat challenges like these teachers need to promote relational trust by recognizing parents' vulnerabilities and reach out to support them (Bryk & Schnider, 2003). Pena (2000) notes that "parents' limited education and personal difficulties with the school lead to fear and mistrust" (p. 4). This compounds the situation and creates a tainted parent teacher relationship.

A challenge facing educators in today's schools is the academically uninvolved parent. Academically uninvolved parents are parents that rarely, if ever, participate in school activities, support educational initiatives, or conferences. These parents also do not provide guidance with homework nor do they ensure that school assignments are completed. Communications with teachers or other personnel at the school is extremely limited and for some parents the communication is nonexistent. The lack of involvement is costly in the educational arena.

Reasons for Lack of Parental Involvement

The reasons for uninvolved parents within the school setting vary. Some parents do not believe they have the educational background to successfully aid their child. Many parents are aware of their academic inadequacies and stay away from the school (Trotman, 2001). According to Minke and Anderson (2005), "some families' attempts to comply with demands from the school to help with homework resulted in increased conflict between parents and children or embarrassment when parents themselves did not know how to do the homework" (p.181). When this happens, parents often determine that engaging in school activities or any school involvement is not worth the challenges or the additional stresses that homework brings.

In addition to this, some parents remember the difficulties they faced as a student. Whether the difficulties were due to low grades or a learning disability, poor behavior, friendship issues or bullying, the pain still is present. Williams and Sanchez (2012) state "negative interactions with school personnel and negative experiences during childhood also serve as potential barriers to parent involvement" (p. 629). The challenges that were experienced during their educational process prevents many parents from engaging in school activities.

Another reason parents may be unsupportive in the school setting is due to the lack of time or energy. According to Kalenkoski and Hamrick (2013), "time poverty is defined as not having enough discretionary time" (p. 89). People in general do not have the time to engage in the tasks needed. Individuals are faced with different discretionary time constraints based on life circumstances and life choices (Kalenkoski & Hamrick, 2013). Some of these circumstances include marriage, birth of a child, and employment. According to Williams and Sanchez (2012), "low income parents may experience *time poverty*" (p. 629). This time poverty impacts the educational setting as well. Parents struggle with balancing time to provide the educational support needed for their children because of time constraints. Parents that work multiple jobs or inconsistent schedules do not have the time for family dinners, consistent bedtimes, or routine homework structures (Egalite, 2016). Thus, the ongoing daily demands of life, multiple jobs, or late shifts may prevent parents from engaging with the school or school related tasks like homework. Parents do not have time to embark on the additional time challenges placed on them from the educational arena (Trotman, 2001).

A further concern noted regarding parental involvement is financially based. Many uninvolved parents have financial situations that prevent them from being actively involved in their child's education. Many times, parents from low-income neighborhoods lack access to the

financial and educational resources that middle-class individuals have access to (William &

Sanchez, 2012). A child born in the bottom 20% of family incomes is ten times more likely to

stay there than a child in the top 20% is of falling to the bottom 20% (Greenstone, et. al., 2013).

Additionally, the financial issues are compounded by the lack of knowledge regarding the

educational process. According to LaRocque, Kleiman, and Darling (2011), "For some families

competing factors such as employment issues, whereby they have hourly jobs with inadequate

health insurance and other benefits, thus not allowing them to participate in the amount and in

the ways that their counterparts that have salaried, more stable employment can" (p. 116).

Regardless of the reasons, these barriers can leave parents that want to participate in their child's

education feeling hopeless, inadequate, and reluctant to be involved.

Implications for Lack of Parental Involvement

When parents are not involved with the educational process of their child there can be

negative implications. Oftentimes, children will suffer from the disconnection between home

and school. In many cases, homework is not completed on time, preparation for tests, quizzes, or

projects is nonexistent, and ongoing parent/teacher communication is lacking. This prevents the

student from arriving to class each day ready to learn. Without the preparation needed to get

ready for the daily instruction, the student falls behind peers in the class. In some cases, children

may suffer with behavioral and developmental problems (Engle & Black, 2008). These children

often lack the socio-emotional skills needed to regulate their behaviors in an appropriate manner.

Over time, this can lead to withdrawn behaviors or behaviors of avoidance due to the classwork

being too difficult for the student to complete successfully.

Without the support needed to be successful in school, some students drop out of high

school. High-school dropouts are 63 times more likely to be incarcerated than those that

complete high school (Breslow, 2012). Incarcerated individuals pose a concern for society for

many reasons. For example, in the Commonwealth of Virginia, on average, incarcerated individuals cost the Virginia taxpayers $748,642 each year (Henrichson & Delaney, 2012). This is approximately $25,129 per inmate annually (Henrichson & Delaney, 2012). People who are incarcerated experience problems of financial instability and severed family relationships. Wakefield and Garcia-Hallett (2017) note "incarceration weakens families and causes mental and physical health problems in the partners and children left behind" (p. 12). The children of incarcerated parents experience difficulties in school including behavioral concerns.

"School-age children of incarcerated parents exhibit school-related problems and problems with peer relationships" (Parke & Clarke-Stewart, 2002, p. 5). According to Wakefield and Garcia-Hallett (2017), "Paternal incarceration is harmful for children's wellbeing, mental health, behavioral problems, levels of aggression, risks of homelessness, and school readiness and performance" (p. 6). When a male is removed from the home setting due to incarceration, children, often, lack a positive male influence and this impacts the future educational trajectory for many young students. Additionally, incarnation removes a wage earner from the home lowering the household income level (Egalite, 2016). This places another burden on the financial stability of the family which often leads to poverty.

Poverty

Poverty is "the extent to which an individual does without resources" (Payne, 2005, p. 7). These resources include: financial, emotional, mental, spiritual, physical, support systems, relationships/role models, and the knowledge of hidden rules (Payne, 2005). There are two types of poverty which impact the lives of individuals, generational poverty and situational poverty. According to Ruby Payne (2005), "generational poverty is defined as being in poverty for two generations or longer" and "situational poverty is a shorter time and is caused by circumstance (i.e., death, illness, divorce etc.)" (p. 3).

According to Paul Gorksi (2008), "There is no such thing as a culture of poverty. Differences in values and behaviors among poor people are just as great as those between poor and wealthy people" (p. 3). Often time's poverty is misunderstood and myths are assumed. These myths include statements describing those in poverty as lacking positive work ethics, low parent involvement due to a lack of value in education, and a tendency of those in poverty to abuse drugs and alcohol (Gorski, 2008). Gorski (2008) argues that classism is a problem for society. In order for our society to move forward, individuals must make a commitment to have the best educational opportunities for all students including higher order pedagogies, innovative learning opportunities, and all-inclusive teaching and learning (Gorski, 2008).

Poverty may result from a number of factors. Many individuals are born into poverty and remain in poverty their entire lives. Others experience poverty for a short time period due to a situation or event that caused a strain or burden on their lives. People stay in poverty because they do not realize that there is an alternative and/or they lack the resources needed to move out of poverty. According to Payne (2005), "the ability to leave poverty is more dependent upon other resources than it is upon financial resources" (p. 8). Living in poverty does not mean that you only lack financially. Individuals in poverty often lack a positive role model to follow, are burdened by a physical condition, or lack the knowledge of the unspoken culture in a particular place (Payne, 2005).

Low educational attainment of individuals also causes many people to remain in poverty. Douglas-Hall and Chau (2007) note "higher education is one of the most effective ways that parents can raise their families' incomes" (p. 1). Even with a full-time job, families of poverty struggle to make ends meet. From 1986 to 2006, the percent of children in low-income families increased from 65% to 73% for families where parents had less than a high school diploma. As

families grow in size it becomes more difficult for a parent to obtain a General Education Diploma (GED) or further their educational careers. Poverty is far reaching and affects families and children in numerous ways.

Effects of Poverty on Children

The impacts of poverty are numerous and affect the individual's or family's life in significant ways. According to Ryan, Fauth, and Brooks-Gunn (2006), "growing up in poverty can seriously compromise a young child's readiness to enter school and her performance thereafter" (p. 329). Children that grow up in poverty lack educational resources: computers, books, and games that enhance learning at a young age. Additionally, these children may not be provided the opportunities of visiting museums, libraries, or performances that promote educational themes.

Children that grow up in poverty also lack the daily benefits of quality conversations with adults within the home and exposure to literature in the home. According to Payne, Whitehurst, & Angell (1994), "there are substantial differences among low-income families in literacy environment and that these differences have strong effects on children's language development." (p. 438). Children that engage in meaningful, two-way conversations show growth in language skills which transfer to reading readiness. Fernald, Marchman, and Weisleder (2013) conducted a longitudinal research study with 48 English learning infants and concluded that "significant disparities in vocabulary and language processing efficiency were already evident at 18 months between infants from higher- and lower-SES families, and by 24 months there was a 6-month gap between SES groups in processing skills critical to language development" (p. 234).

In addition to this, children that are raised in poverty lack foundational building blocks, which hinders growth in reading development. According to Brown (2014), "most children follow a similar pattern and sequence of reading behaviors as they learn how to read: from

appreciation for and awareness of print to phonological and phonemic awareness to phonics and word recognition" (p. 35). Students, having mastered the foundational skills, are able to comprehend and understand what is read. By mastering reading skills, children can begin to develop high-level cognitive skills necessary to be successful members of society. By establishing strong reading skills, students are able to attack other subject areas with confidence.

Poverty impacts the academic growth and overall health of children due to the many challenges faced, which may include a lack of community resources, lack of nutritious meals, and the stress of day to day living. Violence, conflict, and social unrest also impact those in poverty (Engle & Black, 2008). These challenges adversely affect the child. A family's income and poverty status are meaningful elements of the cognitive development and behavior of children (Duncan, Brooks-Gunn, & Klebanov, 1994). Notably at school, behavioral issues dramatically affect the learning process for the student. These behavior challenges may be exhibited in the classroom in the form of failure to follow directions, inattention, aggression, avoidance, and withdrawal. According to Moore, Redd, Burkhauser, Kassim Mbwana, and Collins (2009), "Children in poverty have a greater risk of displaying behavior and emotional problems, such as disobedience, impulsiveness, and difficulty getting along with peers" (p. 1). Oftentimes, behavioral supports or medication have few effects on these extreme behaviors due to the lack of routine medication administration, or the absence of structural routines for behavioral management. Lack of focus within the classroom results in the poor skill acquisition and clarity of the content presented. Ackerman and Brown (2006) note their research indicates, "family instability and change in environmental circumstances predict increases in problem behaviors" (p. 123). Children of poverty are often transient and their family dynamics may

change often. Many children struggle to maintain appropriate behaviors as a result of significant changes in their lives.

Once students enter school behind their peers, they typically remain behind throughout their educational careers. The student's deficits become more apparent as the student advances in grades and the gap widens (Engle & Black p. 2008). Some gaps include language processing and vocabulary development, sight word and word attack skills, and social and emotional development. Since schooling can be a struggle for many students in poverty, they feel the added stress of education. Students of poverty have increased attendance problems, teen pregnancy rates, and school dropout rates. Education is the most powerful tool for helping students of poverty rise (Greenstone, et. al., 2013). Without a positive educational experience and successful high school completion, the cycle of poverty often continues for the next generation. Potential dropouts can be predicted as early as first grade and identified with accuracy by third grade (Sparks, 2013; American Psychological Association, 2012). The importance of a positive start to a child's educational career is immeasurable. Children that grow up in poverty experience risks in their homes and community, family stress and illnesses, limited resources and lack psychosocial stimulation (Engle & Black, 2008). One area that impacts children of poverty's academic success is the lack of early literacy exposure.

The following analysis was conducted using the U.S. Census Current Population Survey (CPS) data from October 2007 through October 2008. The data that was analyzed focused on households in poverty. The study reviewed the National Center for Educational Statistics, which included the Common Core of Data, noting the graduation rates. According to Baydu, Kaplan, and Bayar (2013), "while poverty rates increase, graduation rates decrease" (p. 235). Further,

"we conclude that there is a statistically significant relationship between graduation rates and poverty rates in the United States (p<0.05)" (Baydu, Kaplan, & Bayar, 2013, p. 235).

Importance of Early Reading Development

Early exposure to literature can have a lasting impact on a student academically. Research studies note the importance of early reading-skills instruction and the positive impact that this exposure has on children (Butuktaskapu, 2012). Students of poverty often lack opportunities, exposure, and resources related to literature. Although students learn to read at various paces, being exposed to conversational speech, oral storytelling, nursery rhymes, and print materials aid in the development of early reading skills. According to Brown (2014), "learning to read is a developmental process" (p. 35). Reading development includes print concepts, phonological awareness, phonics, word recognition, and fluency. Print concepts refer to how text is organized: left to right and top to bottom. Additionally, the concept of print includes the understanding that letters create words and words are separated by spaces. Brown (2014) found "phonological awareness is the ability to recognize that words are made up of a variety of sound units" (p. 40). Once students have developed this concept then phonics skills begin to emerge. Cheung and Slavin (2013) state "learning to read is a complex task in which many things must go right for a student to become a successful, strategic, and motivated reader" (p. 278). It is important for young children to be afforded the opportunities to establish strong oral language skills prior to entering kindergarten.

According to Brown (2014), "phonics, the understanding that sounds and print letters are connected, is the first step towards conventional reading" (p. 40). Next, children begin to recognize high-frequency words in isolation and in text. These words are often referred to as sight words. After students master basic sight words, it allows for less effort on decoding words and more focus on the comprehension of text. As students practice reading material, fluency

develops. Fluency is a link between decoding and comprehension (Brown, 2014). The process

of reading does not come easy to all children. It is advantageous for parents to begin this long

journey early in a child's life in order for the child to have maximum success.

Children begin to develop early reading skills at a young age. These skills continue to be

fostered as the students are exposed to various types of text. Parents can provide children with

literacy support by sharing in dialogue or discussions about the literature (DeBruin-Parecki,

2009). While it is important to read to children, children raised in poverty lack resources like

books and other print materials. Additionally, parents or caregivers may have limited literacy

awareness. According to Kalb and van Ours (2014) for children, reading is an "early-life

intervention that seems to be beneficial for the rest of their lives" (p. 21). The effects of reading

to small children can have lasting effects on reading growth, academic success, and future

careers. Kalb and van Ours (2014) found "reading to children at age 4-5 frequently has

significant positive effects on the reading skills and cognitive skills of children at least up to an

age of 10-11" (p. 21). It is apparent that long before children take their first steps into the

elementary school setting, initial instruction for young children begins in the home with the first

teacher, the parent. Students that are not reading proficiently by third grade are four times more

likely to leave school without a diploma when compared to proficient readers (Fiester, 2010).

Jumpstart (2009) notes, "The sad truth is that the vast majority of children who start behind, stay

behind, leading to an increase in our nation's dropout rate among low-income and minority

students" (p. 6). Although it is important to foster these foundational skills so children will be

ready for the challenges of elementary school, many families in poverty are unable to meet this

need for their child due to roadblocks including the lack of language development opportunities

and literacy resources.

Interventions for Increased Parent Support

Parent support is vital in order for students to achieve the success each deserves in the academic setting. For parents living in poverty, accessing and developing meaningful relationships with school personnel can be challenging. Schools must be creative in determining and implementing practices and interventions, which increase parent involvement within the educational process. Examples of successful interventions include but are not limited to effective teacher/parent collaboration, school family partnerships, and family literacy programs.

Teacher/Parent Collaboration

Typically, parent teacher collaboration is strongest at the elementary-school level and the relationships taper off as the student progresses to middle school and finally high school (Dervarics & O'Brien, 2009). This, however, is not the case with every child. The society of fast-paced living where extracurricular sports or activities, social media, and multiple jobs plaque everyday life and create challenges for parent involvement. When this is coupled with the added demands of the household, which include, providing meals, doing laundry, attending appointments, and child rearing the challenges become greater. Educational needs and academic attention often fail to get the consideration needed. According to Collay (2013), "Communication with parents is essential in teachers' efforts to make sense of students' lives within and beyond the classroom" (p. 74).

Usually, school traditions such as traditional fundraising or PTO meetings limit collaboration between the parents and the teacher but this does not have to be the norm (Collay, 2013). Several measures can be put in place to start building a collaborative relationship among teachers and parents. Student registration at the school or within the student's community is an avenue to begin welcoming parents and foster a community of inclusion. Teachers and parents need to commit to and implement a two-way mode of communication throughout the school

year. According to Graham-Clay (2005), "Conversations may occur during telephone calls, home visits, parent-teacher conferences, open houses, and various school-based community activities" (p. 118). Determining the most meaningful and appropriate mode of communication will involve a discussion with the parent. Teachers and parents need to determine a means for interactions throughout the school year. Some ideas include joining the parent teacher organization, volunteering to read a book to the class, signing up to have lunch with the child, volunteering during class pictures or book fair, or attending a class field trip, or celebration. Technology can provide an avenue to communicate effectively (Graham-Clay, 2005). Teachers and school personnel need to establish strong family relationships. Comer (1995) notes "No significant learning occurs without a significant relationship". This could be achieved by school staff volunteering in the students' neighborhoods or connecting with students and families outside of school like a sporting event. Possibly, teachers could provide a story time, science experiment, or activity at a community center near the child's home.

Home Visits

Building meaningful relationships with parents does not have to stop at the school door. Home visits can provide teachers with meaningful information about the student's living conditions and avenues for building relationships with families. According to Kronholz (2016), "Montessori pioneered the idea to smooth first-day-of-school jitters for toddlers, and Head Start has long used home visits to teach parenting skills to young mothers." (p.18). Home visits enable teachers to see the students, their parents, and families in a different light. Teachers that take the extra time to make home visits demonstrate to the students and parents that they truly care about the student (Meyer, Mann, & Becker, 2011). The visits allow the teacher to have a better sense of what the child experiences on a day to day basis. This added insight allows the teacher to empathize with conditions outside of the child's control. The home visits may allow

teachers to have a better understanding of a child's behavior (Meyer, Mann, & Becker, 2011).

By conducting a home visit, teachers may become aware of conditions within the home that

resources can be provided to address the lack of heating, shortage of food, or the absence of

clean clothing.

A longitudinal study was conducted with 556 low-income children in one urban and two

rural counties in Pennsylvania (Bierman, Heinrichs, Welsh, Nix, & Gest, 2017). The study

compared the results of the typical Head Start Program to the Research based Developmentally

Informed Program (REDI) which included home visits (Bierman, Heinrichs, Welsh, Nix, & Gest,

2017). The results of the study noted that the home-visit intervention produced benefits for

mental health and cognitive skills (Bierman, Heinrichs, Welsh, Nix, & Gest, 2017). According

to Bierman, Heinrichs, Welsh, Nix, and Gest (2017), "enriching Head Start classroom and home

visiting programs with evidence-based curriculum components in the key areas of social-

emotional and language literacy skills can produce complementary and sustained benefits for

children" (p. 138). These findings also indicate the need for both classroom-learning and home-

learning environments for low-income children (Bierman, Heinrichs, Welsh, Nix, & Gest, 2017).

A study was conducted at John Hopkins University in 2013-14 to determine links

between performance and Flamboyan's Family Engagement Partnership. The Flamboyan's

Family Engagement Partnership (FEP) aims to "develop the capacity of educators to partner

effectively with families so that children succeed" (Flamboyan Foundation, 2018, p. 1). The

Family Engagement Partnership Student Outcome Evaluation study, conducted by the John

Hopkins University School of Education, included 4,000 students in 12 D.C. public elementary

schools. Within this study 2,469 students received a home visit while 2,239 students did not

receive a home visit. The study concluded students whose families received a home visit had 24

percent fewer absences than similar students whose families did not receive a visit. Further, those having home visits were more likely to read at or above grade level compared to students who did not receive a home visit (Flamboyan Foundation, 2018, p.1). Home visits can provide an avenue to connect with parents and families in a personal way where positive relationships can be fostered.

Family Literacy Program

Another tactic to help struggling students is the use of family literacy programs. Often, community volunteers can be of help to children that are struggling with reading concepts. Parents can make a meaningful difference with a child's reading success. With the appropriate training, these community volunteers are able to provide guidance and a listening ear to children that are struggling with reading skills. According to DeBruin-Parecki (2009), "it is not only the frequency with which a parent reads to a child that affects the child's success; what that parent does during shared reading and how he or she mediates the shared text is also important" (p. 386). Inviting the parents to be a part of literacy activities at the school can provide an avenue to model reading practices and strategies.

Dearing, Kreider, Simpkins, and Weiss (2006) conducted a longitudinal study with 281 low-income, ethnically-diverse children from kindergarten through fifth grade. The study explored the relationship between parent involvement and literacy acquisition. At the conclusion of the study, the researchers found strong evidence for the value of parent involvement and literacy performance. Dearing, Kreider, Simpkins, and Weiss (2006) note "the present study adds to increasing evidence that family involvement in school among low-income families may be most likely to improve the achievement of children who are at exceptional risk for academic failure because of both low income and low-parent education" (p.661). Family-school relationships are meaningful to the educational process for children.

In an after-school literacy program, a mixed method research study was conducted at a public school in a rural farming area with 22 diverse families, living in poverty, with children aged three to five years (DeBruin-Parecki, 2009). The ages of the adult parents or guardians in the study ranged from 16-83 years with educational levels varying from fourth grade to some community-college experience (DeBruin-Parecki, 2009). The eight-week interactive after-school reading sessions with parent/child groups included transportation, childcare, a nutritious meal, supplies, and a book. The program was focused around the research-based behaviors of the Adult/Child Interactive Reading Inventory or ACIRI (DeBruin-Parecki, 2009). Following the ACIRI behaviors, strategies were taught to participants and then practiced during each weekly session. Utilizing a pretest and posttest assessment of ACIRI behaviors, significant improvements were noted at .01 for both parents and children (DeBruin-Parecki, 2009). A parent's presence in the educational arena can be meaningful and beneficial.

Discussion

A review of the literature documented that children benefit from environments where education is acknowledged and appreciated. According to Vance (2015), "school organizational systems and belief structures may serve to support or hamper individual achievement" (p. 2). Ongoing oral communication is fostered in young children through two-way communication in the home and school settings. Kalb and van Ours (2014) found that "parents can play an important role in the development of reading skills and cognitive skills of their children by reading to them at a young age" (p. 20). Currently, many students are not yet meeting the established benchmarks or state requirements for basic abilities. Students that fall behind their peers academically may face many challenges throughout their various stages of life. Parent involvement in the early school years may continue to promote school success in later years (Miedel & Reynolds, 2000). Engaging parents in the educational process is critical. The

development of a positive relationship between the home and school can foster community. These relationships are valuable and essential to the education of students. According to Baker (1999), "results suggested that perceptions of a caring, supportive relationship with a teacher and a positive classroom environment were related to school satisfaction by as early as third grade" (p. 57). A parent's connection to the classroom is immeasurable "higher levels of parent trust in teachers significantly predicted increased parent educational involvement" (Santiago, Garbacz, Beattie, & Moore, 2016, p. 1013).

Many parents are not involved with schools due to the ongoing daily demands of life, multiple jobs, and or late work shifts that may prevent parents from engaging with the school or school related tasks like homework. Parents do not have time to embark on the additional time challenges placed on them from the educational arena (Trotman, 2001). When parents are not involved, students may begin to struggle. Devaney and Milstein (1998) explain "school failure may increase among children at risk who lack parental involvement" (p. 131.) Students that struggle academically may drop out of high school. High-school dropouts are costly to society. Individuals that dropout of school many times repeat the cycle of poverty.

Poverty impacts the academic growth and overall health of children due to the many challenges faced, which may include a lack of community resources, lack of nutritious meals, and the stress of day to day living. Violence, conflict, and social unrest impact those in poverty (Engle & Black, 2008). Low educational attainment of individuals also causes many people to remain in poverty. Douglas-Hall and Chau (2007) note "higher education is one of the most effective ways that parents can raise their families' incomes" (p .1).

Early exposure to literature can have lasting impacts on a student academically. Research studies note the importance of early reading skills instruction and the positive impact that this

exposure has on children (Butuktaskapu, 2012). Teachers and school personnel need to establish strong family relationships. Comer (1995) notes "No significant learning occurs without a significant relationship". Teachers and school personnel must learn more about the families they serve and partner with parents to bridge the home school community. According to Kronholz (2016), "Montessori pioneered the idea to smooth first-day-of-school jitters for toddlers, and Head Start has long used home visits to teach parenting skills to young mothers" (p. 18). Home visits enable teachers to see the students, their parents, and families in a different light. Parents are a child's first teacher and with guidance and help these adults are able to provide support and a listening ear to children that are struggling with reading skills. According to DeBruin-Parecki (2009), "it is not only the frequency with which a parent reads to a child that affects the child's success; what that parent does during shared reading and how he or she mediates the shared text is also important" (p. 386).

Chapter Summary

Chapter Two provided a review of literature which indicated that research is missing about primary caregiver's perceptions of what factors determine parental involvement for urban elementary school children in a subsidized housing development in Central Virginia. Practitioners often experience helplessness when trying to aid students with low at home support. The rationale for this study is to provide information to promote changes in the practices at the urban elementary school.

CHAPTER THREE METHODOLOGY

The literature review revealed gaps in the research and contributed to the need for additional research on the topic of parent involvement and perceptions of home-school relationships. Educators need to more successfully bridge and partner with the parent in the educational process. It is important to gain a better understanding of parents' feelings in relation to education. Much of the research indicated reasons many parents of low socio-economic status in urban schools are uninvolved with their child's academics due to poverty, lack of educational resources, lack of the educational understanding on how to help, and lack of time. Research was needed on the lived experiences of parents or caregivers living in a subsidized housing complex in Central Virginia and how their prior experiences affected the involvement they had with their elementary aged students. An overall gap in the research was evident in the area of parent voice in relation to their educational background and how this transferred to their support as a parent of an elementary aged child. As a building administrator, it was important to capture the lived experiences of the parents with similar backgrounds to the researcher's students. During this study, the researcher gathered data to better meet parents' perceptions and needs on the parent/school continuum. The rationale for this study was to gain data to better support families with their child's academic needs and to create a firm bridge between parents and the school.

Qualitative Study

This phenomenological qualitative descriptive study explored the educational perceptions of parents and how their lived experiences determined their involvement with their elementary age child. Qualitative research is designed to dive into the spirit of the topic and aims to discover meaning from an experience (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2016). This research approach was selected to give a voice to the participants and gain an understanding of their story. This approach enabled parents to articulate their past lived educational experience in a

nonthreatening, neutral setting allowing a flow of personal information. This method peeled

back the layers of parents' perspectives in relation to education. It was important to gain a clear

understanding of where parents were and their perceptions of the school and teachers. The

rationale for this study was to gain data to improve practices to better bridge the school

community and parents and allow for relationships to be strengthened and for parent

involvement to improve.

Schools are constantly trying to improve student success across all academic areas. This

is evident by the school improvement plans required by the Virginia Department of Education.

Parents are a vital piece to these efforts. Parental support of the educational arena is essential to

the student's academic growth and success. In essence, a parent's willingness to provide

encouragement, help, and understanding throughout the educational process can boost school

attendance, promote homework completion, and create a drive within the student to be

successful. Gonzalez-DeHass, Willems, and Doan Holbein (2005) found "students whose

parents are involved are more likely to take personal responsibility for their learning" (p. 117).

This research study allowed parents to tell their story of education and how their journey laid the

framework for their involvement in their own child's education. The rationale for this study was

to gain data and improve practices to meet parents where they were in regards to their feelings

and needs to create a bridge in the educational process.

Phenomenology

The phenomenological qualitative descriptive study explored the lived experiences of

parents and how this influenced parental academic involvement of their elementary age child's

academics. According to Rudestam and Newton (2015), "a phenomenological study usually

involves identifying and locating participants who have experienced or are experiencing the

phenomenon that is being explored" (p. 123). Phenomenology dates back to Plato, Socrates, and

Aristotle. This type of study flourished in the early twentieth century when influenced by German philosopher, Edmund Husserl (Shosha, 2012). According to Shosha (2012), "Husserl aimed to establish a rigorous and unbiased approach that appears to arrive at an essential understanding of human consciousness and experience" (p. 1). The researcher systematically described the events and experiences of the parents in this study.

The purpose of this type of study is to provide as much clear insight to the phenomenon being examined to ensure that a robust view of the issue is obtained (Cole, 2016). The researcher studied a population within a subsidized housing development and purposefully selected participants that had children attending an urban elementary school in Central Virginia. The research included six parents from a subsidized apartment complex in an urban area of Central Virginia. This sample population was selected because the students were at risk and a better understanding of the current parental involvement was needed. With a better understanding of the participants' situation, informed decisions to promote better relationships and meaningful parent engagement were developed. The research utilized maximum variation heterogeneous purposive sampling**.** Heterogeneous purposive sampling allows the researcher to use judgment to select participants with diverse characteristics within the population (Cole, 2016). Additionally, the researcher worked to have diversity within this sample in relation to gender, ethnicity, and marital status. The researcher visited the community and engaged in conversations with residents to secure interest.

A phenomenological approach was utilized for this study to give the participants voice and allowed for each to explain their lived experience as it relates to their personal educational experience. According to Smith (2013) phenomenology "leads into analyses of conditions of the possibility of intentionality, condition skills and habits, background and social practices, and

often language, with its special place in human affairs" (p. 5). By gaining insight and

understanding of the phenomenon of each parent's lived educational experience, clarity was

gained on their practices in relation to their own elementary aged children. This information was

utilized to establish practices to better bridge the school community and parents and allow for

relationships to be strengthened and for parent involvement to improve.

Research Question

The research question was:

> From parents' perceptions, what dynamics determine educational parent support for
>
> urban elementary school children?

The purpose of this study was to determine the educational experiences of parents as

lived through their own experience and how these experiences determined their academic parent

involvement for their child. The rationale for this study was to gain data and establish practices

to better meet parents where they were in relation to the home-school partnership. The study

aimed to provide professional educators with information to cultivate opportunities that support

each parent's needs in relation to fostering a positive home and school relationship.

Setting

The participants for this study met two criteria: each resided in the specific urban

subsidized housing development and each was the parent of a student attending an urban

elementary school in Central Virginia. For the purpose of this study, a parent was defined as the

main caregiver of the child this included mother, father, guardian, foster parent, grandmother,

grandfather, or another relative. While the backgrounds of each individual varied, they had two

commonalities: each lived in an urban subsidized housing area and each had a child that attended

an elementary school in the urban school division. This population of parents were of particular

interest to the researcher and relevant to the study because the parents in this community have

similar demographic indicators as parents of students that attended the researcher's urban elementary school. Many of the students within this community struggled academically. This particular population was a critical factor in the overall academic school success. As information was analyzed following the interviews, practices were identified to bridge the school community and family.

Participant/Data Collection

The participants in the study were six parents of elementary school students residing in a subsidized housing development in an urban area of Central Virginia. Maximum variation heterogeneous purposive sampling was utilized to provide a diverse range of cases relevant to a particular phenomenon. Parents were selected for the study based on the following criteria: resident of the local subsidized housing development and parent of elementary aged student in the specific urban school district in Central Virginia. The researcher included African Americans, male, female, married but separated, and single participants in the study in order to have a diverse population. Individual semi-structured Zoom interviews were conducted utilizing loosely structured open-ended questions and probes (Appendix F). Two pilot interviews were conducted with parents from another school within the division.

Prior to seeking out participants, permission to conduct the study was obtained from the superintendent of the local school district (Appendix A). Additionally, permission was obtained from the housing manager and the neighborhood development center's owner (Appendix B and C). Once permission was granted, all of the interviews and one pilot study interview took place by way of Zoom. One of the pilot study interviews was conducted at the neighborhood community center prior to the COVID-19 Pandemic. The participants were provided an electronic copy of the consent form which was signed prior to the start of the interview (Appendix G and H). Participants voluntarily participated in the research study. Once consent

was obtained, the participants talked freely and told their story using their own words, thoughts, and feelings. Each of the participants was given a $50.00 Walmart gift card in exchange for their time for the interview. The two pilot interviewees were also provided a $50.00 Walmart gift card. In order for the participants to remain anonymous pseudonyms or common nouns were utilized for information including school names and staff member's names mentioned by the participants and participant's places of work. The six interviews were audio recorded and transcribed by Temi, an audio to text transcription service. Once the interviews were transcribed the researcher reviewed the recording and the transcription to ensure accuracy. Participants were provided an electronic copy of the transcription to ensure it was accurate. Each of the participants were given a $50.00 Walmart gift card in exchange for their time. The document was reviewed to ensure that the researcher was accurate in obtaining the participant's voice. The demographic information of each participant is noted in Table 1.

Table 1: Participant Demographic Information

Participant Pseudonym	Gender	Race	Age Range	Marital Status	Employment Status	Time at Residence	Level of Educational Completion
James	Male	Black	43-47	Single	Unemployed	14 months	GED
Deborah	Female	Black	28-32	Single	Unemployed	2 years	High School
Tonya	Female	Black	43-47	Separated	Unemployed	6 years	High School
Samantha	Female	Black	28-32	Single	Employed (2 jobs)	6 years	GED/Post-Secondary Career Technical Training
Kelsi	Female	Black	33-37	Separated	Employed	3 years	GED
Wanda	Female	Black	33-37	Single	Employed	3 years	GED

Data Analysis

Once the interviews were transcribed the researcher began the coding process. The researcher utilized the Colaizzi (1978) method of data analysis to code the transcripts. According to Sanders (2003), the Colaizzi method for phenomenological data analysis includes several steps: 1) Read and reread each transcription. Gain a full understanding of each participant. 2) For each transcript, extract specific statements that pertain to the phenomenon. List each separately with the line number and page number. 3) Determine the general meanings from the listed statements. 4) Sort each statement into a category or clusters of themes. 5) Describe the findings of the phenomenon using thick descriptions. 6) Reduce to an essential structure by describing the fundamental structure of the phenomenon. 7) Member check with participants to ensure that the findings are accurate and in line with their lived experience. The researcher coded the transcriptions utilizing the online software Dedoose. This software allowed for qualitative data analysis. Additionally, the program provided a forum to organize the vast amounts of data collected from the six interviews. Finally, the written thematic summary was presented to the individual participant for member checking. Participant readability was not a problem during the interview process so the thematic summary was electronically shared with the participant. Each participant was given an opportunity to review the summary and express any discrepancies. This enabled each participant to ensure that the descriptions gained during the interview accurately reflected the feelings and views held by the participant. Bracketing was utilized by the researcher to acknowledge preconceptions related to the research. This process was necessary to account for situational awareness from the researcher as a parent and building administrator. Tufford and Newman (2010) note that bracketing is the "process whereby the researcher draws awareness to presuppositions regarding the topic" (p.88).

Limitations

The purpose of this study was fully explained to each participant. This study was limited to one population of parents of students within a specific urban subsidized housing community. While the characteristics and themes generated in the study may be reflective of other urban populations this cannot be assumed. The study was limited to six parents of one specific living community therefore the transferability to other populations cannot be assumed. Since the researcher served as a building administrator within the school division being studied and may be known to some of the transient students, some parents may have found this concerning and may have withheld valuable information during the Zoom interviews.

Other limitations were this study was conducted by way of Zoom conferencing during the global COVID-19 Pandemic where fears, uncertainties, and anxieties were high. The COVID-19 Pandemic created challenges due to social distancing requirements and University of Lynchburg's suspension of in person interviews in order to maintain student and participant safety. Zoom conferencing did not allow for relational, in person contact with the participants.

At the beginning of each interview session the researcher explained the purpose of the research study and assured the participant that the information obtained from the interview was to improve practices and enhance student learning and success. Additionally, experiences as an administrator and parent may have created bias and limited the researcher's ability to fully remove thoughts, feelings, or beliefs from the study. Every effort was made, by the researcher to acknowledge these thoughts by the use of bracketing. Bracketing was utilized in an effort to remove bias from the study. It is necessary for the researcher to acknowledge preconceptions related to the research.

Conclusion

The literature review revealed gaps in relation to the lived experiences of elementary school parents and how their prior lived experiences impacted their practices with their elementary-aged students. The phenomenological qualitative descriptive study explored the educational perceptions of parents and how their lived experiences affects their academic involvement with their elementary-aged child. The study gave a voice to the participants and enabled the researcher to provide meaningful information to the educational setting. The study provided professional educators with information to meet parents where they were on the school continuum. The rationale for this study was to gain data and provide information to other educators in the school division to enable these professionals to cultivate practices to further support parents and students in the educational process and bridge parents and the school.

Chapter Summary

Chapter Three explained the methodology which was used to conduct the research study. This chapter provided detailed information on the qualitative descriptive study data analysis using Colaizzi's phenomenological method to explain the lived educational experience of parents. Further this chapter detailed the setting, participant confidentiality, and data collection.

CHAPTER FOUR RESULTS

Parents are a vital component in the education of elementary aged children. Due to various factors many parents especially those living in poverty are unable to actively participate in the educational process of their children. Some of these reasons include ongoing daily demands of life, multiple jobs, and or late work shifts. Qualitative descriptive methodology was used to study the lived experiences of six parents living in a subsidized housing development in Central Virginia. Zoom conferences with semi-structured questioning stems were used to engage parents in sharing their lived educational experience and aspects of their child's or children's educational experiences.

This study utilized the Colaizzi descriptive phenomenological method to organize and analyze the information obtained from each participant's individual interview. All of the participant's transcriptions were read multiple times. Significant statements were extracted from the transcriptions. Like statements were grouped together and meanings were formulated from the participants' statements. Following the development of 281 formulated meanings, 18 cluster themes were arranged which lead to seven emergent themes. Utilizing the developments from the analysis, the researcher determined a full, inclusive description of the phenomenon. The fundamental structure was shared with each participant for review and validation. This chapter provides the study's results including the formulated meanings, cluster themes, and emergent themes derived from each participant's lived educational experience.

Development of Cluster and Emergent Themes

Following the extensive review of the participant's transcriptions, the significant statements and phrases for the individual participant's transcript were color coded. Dedoose was utilized to further analyze each participant's transcription. Next, 281 formulated meanings (Appendix I) were developed from the significant statements and phrases which lead to 18

cluster themes and seven emergent themes (Appendix J). Using the following tables, seven emergent themes are represented noting the formulated meanings and cluster themes. Tables 2-8 in this chapter represent the seven emergent themes.

The 18 cluster themes were reduced to seven emergent themes: scarcity of time, self-determination, positive influence, transmitting values, parent partners, disengaged caregiver, and adverse situations. The emergent themes were shared focusing on the lived experience of the participant. Excerpts from the participant's transcription showcased each theme.

Table 2 notes the formulated meanings describing the concerns with time and the ability of parents to attend school activities or functions due to work demands. The grouping of the significant statements and formulated meanings lead to the cluster theme: *Time Constraints*.

Table 2: Formulated Meaning Cluster Theme- Time Constraints

Formulated Meanings	Cluster Theme
FM33: Parent expresses challenges with being able to attend school functions due to work. **FM34:** School activities held during the school day create a barrier for working parents. **FM121:** Participant noted that some parents are constantly working and do not focus on education. **FM211:** Participant does not volunteer at the school because her work schedule prevents her from attending school functions during the school hours but she provides needed items as requested by the teacher.	Time Constraints

Emergent Theme 1: Scarcity of Time

Scarcity of time noted that the parents often had to work in order to meet the basic needs of their families. Individuals are faced with different discretionary time constraints based on life circumstances and life choices (Kalenkoski & Hamrick, 2013). Often school events are held during the day or in the evenings when many parents are working. The researcher noticed the scarcity of time when attempting to establish the Zoom interviews. It was difficult for three parents to follow through initially with the agreed upon interview time. It took one month to

connect with one participant who the researcher reached out to and scheduled the interview session with in excess of 8 times. Each time there was an obstacle: a trip, phone was dead, work, family was visiting, and a death of a friend that prevented the interview from happening until finally we connected.

Three parents expressed concerns with <u>scarcity of time</u>.

James described concerns that parents needed to work:

I just think more parents need to be involved in their kid's school, but it's also rough and tough because you know, like, you know, with the economy and things like that nature, you know, sometimes you don't have the time you have to work, you know? P1: L 334-336

He additionally noted:

You know a lot of things is done with the schools are done during, you know, daytime working hours. So, you know, if you're a daytime work parent it's hard, you know? P1: L 345-346

Tonya expressed that parents had to work and did not have the needed time to focus on school work:

Cause a lot of times since I've had kids, my main thing has been to be there for them as far as the education is. You know, you have some households that the parents work, work, work, work, work, and the kids have lack of education or the parents don't spend [time], they just send them to school. And, you know, they go to school because they

have to. When the education part, when they come home, they're not making sure that

their homework is done or, you know, something like that. P3: L 276-281

Due to work, *Kelsi* shared that she could come attend school daytime events:

Well, I don't really like volunteer or anything just because I'm working most of the time,

but I always send stuff when they have class parties or if they need anything specifically.

I always try to send or help out any way that I can. Cause usually when they have

parties, they may ask if you can bring anything or if you're able to volunteer and those

types of things. And if I'm working, then of course I can't be there, but I always try to

send my support some kind of way. P5: L 255-259

Table 3 notes the formulated meanings describing further education and goal setting. The grouping of the significant statements and formulated meanings lead to the cluster theme: *Self-Determination.*

Table 3: Formulated Meaning Cluster Theme- Self-Determination

Formulated Meanings	Cluster Theme
FM115: Parent experienced adverse life experiences which created barriers for her own education advancement. **FM117:** Participant enrolled in community college to advance her knowledge base but was unable to complete the degree. **FM162:** Parent continued education at career technical training and education program for young people. **FM261:** Participant is enrolled in a program that will enable her to graduate. She has wanted to graduate since she stopped attending high school.	Further Education
FM4: Parent dropped out of school, was incarcerated, but pursued GED. **FM12**: Participant determined when incarcerated he would not return to school so he obtained his GED. **FM72:** Parent experienced adverse experiences as an adult but persevered and maintained normalcy for children. **FM96:** Participant established goals for self. **FM256**: Parent was incarcerated but pursued GED.	Goal Setting

Emergent Theme 2: Self-Determination

Self-determination is defined as "freedom to make your own choices" (Merriam-Webster, 2020). Five parents in the study exhibited self-determination during adverse conditions. This theme included: <u>further education</u> and <u>goal setting</u>.

Tonya shared that she often had life experiences that caused a pause while attaining her educational aspirations. She said:

My mom was diagnosed with ovarian cancer and it was like just a big snowball effect after that. You know, she passed in 2002. I was five months pregnant with my son. I have five kids total. P3: L 236-238

Further she explained her interest in continuing toward this goal. She shared:

I went to school, I went back to a community college in XXX XXX Community College and I started to major in accounting. But I switched over my major to business administration and my minor accounting. But I didn't finish. So I'm looking to go back when everything... I can't do it now but with everything that's been going on. P3: L 259-263

Samantha shared her accomplishment with receiving certification from a career technical school:

And what I did afterwards, cause I went to the XXX XXX as well. P4: L 161

Parents also expressed their desire to create their own goals for their future even when challenges or obstacles were presented in their lives.

James shared that during his incarceration he completed his General Education Diploma, GED. He noted:

I dropped out, got incarcerated and actually got my GED while I was incarcerated. P1: L 73-74

Deborah noted that even during trying times she pushed forward. She said:

I've been homeless twice. I did what I was supposed to do as a mom. I still maintained work. I still made sure my kids went to school and daycare. P2: L 214, 224-225

Tonya shared how she had to establish her own goals independently. She shared:

I pretty much had to set my own goals… P3: L 103

While being incarcerated, *Wanda* pursued her General Education Diploma. She stated:

I got my GED when I had went to jail in 2010. I started my GED outside and then when I got there, I finished my math. P6: L 248

Table 4 notes the formulated meanings describing positive adult relationships and positive peer relationships. The grouping of the significant statements and formulated meanings lead to the cluster theme: *Positive Influence.*

Table 4: Formulated Meaning Cluster Theme- Positive Influence

Formulated Meanings	Cluster Theme
FM46: Individual relationships are important for student success. **FM51:** Educators can make a positive impact on a person's life. **FM52:** Encouragement from an educator is important. **FM70:** Participant had a positive adult relationship while in high school and could confide in the caring adult. **FM101:** Participant had a positive adult relationship while in elementary school. **FM102:** Participant had positive adult relationships while in elementary school. **FM103:** The adult relationship was meaningful because the parent felt valued. **FM105:** Participant had a positive adult relationship while in middle school and maintained this relationship	Positive Adult Relationships

for many years. **FM110:** Parent was motivated by positive adult feedback and supportive comments. **FM200:** Participant developed a meaningful positive relationship with the principal of the high school whom supported the participant and took a special interest in her. **FM201:** Participant developed a meaningful positive relationship with the keyboarding teacher in middle school whom cared for the participant and ensured she was on the right track. **FM228:** Participant had a positive meaningful relationship with her gym teacher who the participant felt was straightforward with the students. **FM230:** Participant had a positive meaningful relationship with her school counselor whom supported her with her schedule and attendance. **FM231:** Participant had a positive meaningful relationship with the assistant principal whom participant supported in calming down the participant's brother when he was upset. **FM250:** Participant bonded with the assistant principal and felt he was supportive of her. **FM251:** High school coach was positive influence on participant. **FM252:** High school coach was well loved and pushed participant hard, having a positive influence on her. **FM253:** High school coach ensured participant was on the right track, having a positive influence. **FM254:** History teacher created a positive learning environment. **FM255:** Coach provided a positive message to track team and encouraged participant with conditioning. Also, ensured participant was doing okay at home as well.	
FM11: Peer relationships during school were important to the participant and maintained a positive childhood relationship into adulthood. **FM69:** Participant had a positive peer relationship while in high school. **FM167:** Parent had a positive, peer relationship in high school. **FM192:** Parent feels she did well in school and developed meaningful relationships with peers and maintains some of those relationships currently. **FM198:** Peer relationships were important to the participant in school. **FM232:** Participant had a positive start to high school due to peer relationships.	Positive Peer Relationships

Emergent Theme 3- Positive Influence

Positive influence manifested from positive adult relationships and positive peer relationships. During the discussion of positive relationships both adults and peers were noted by several of the participants as being a highlight of their educational experience. Comer (1995) notes "No significant learning occurs without a significant relationship". Healthy relationships had an overall positive impact on the trajectory of the parent. Five participants noted support of a positive adult relationship.

James recalled a meaningful relationship with a vice principal that lasted many years following eighth grade. He shared:

I had teachers that I still remember their names from the second grade. I have a vice principal, I still remember from the eighth grade, that's still asking me about, still asked my mother about me 10 and 15 years after I was out of eighth grade. P1: L 474-477

James continued*:*

Yeah, basically that was basically my eighth grade vice principal kind of got to me. Like sat down had a good talk with me. He didn't down me when I was messing up. He didn't try to be like a parent. He just, basically always just told me, Oh, you're smarter than this. You can do better. I know you are, so straighten up. P1: L 482-485

Deborah shared thoughts about her former high school teacher, she noted that the teacher was trustworthy and provided a listening ear during difficult family situations. She said:

Her name was Ms. Wayne. Cause she treated us well, for one, she treated all her students the same. And like, if we needed extra help in certain activities or curriculum. She helped us. If I had any personal problems at home, I could talk to her. P2: L 192, 196-197, 202

Tonya expressed her appreciation for several teachers when she was in elementary school:

One of my favorite teachers, I know for sure her name when I was in fourth grade. Ms. Sally Vair. I just enjoyed when I got close with my teachers in elementary school. P3: L 119-120

Tonya continued to share:

So she was my fourth grade teacher and I was very and my third grade teacher was Ms. O'Neil and they would, I gravitated to them. P3: L 142-143

Tonya added more about the special relationship that she developed with the meaningful teachers. She said:

So what I did enjoy about that was like I could eat lunch with them. Go to the cafeteria and pick up my lunch tray and then go upstairs and eat with them. Just one on one, have some one on one time with them and eat lunch and talk and what the conversations were about that, I don't remember. But I remember those were the times that I did like in school was just having a teacher all to myself without, you know, my other classmates. P3: L 143-147

Kelsi also had a meaningful positive relationship with an administrator. She expressed:

I had a principal at the time, Ms. Samuel. I would say she took a special interest and just was always there for me if I needed anything. That was at XXX High School. P5: L 134-135

Additionally *Kelsi* recalled a supportive middle school teacher:

And I went to XXX Middle [School] and a teacher that stands out there would have to be Ms. Stern. She was a keyboarding teacher and I felt like she just really cared about her students and she went above and beyond just to make sure everybody was on the right track. P5: L 135-138

Wanda was positively impacted by a high school counselor when she experienced difficulties with school attendance. She commented:

Ms. Wyatt, she was the guidance counselor. She always helped when I would miss days or I was having difficulty with my schedule and she did help with that. P6: L 88-90

Wanda added that an assistant principal provided meaningful support. She said:

Dr. Everett, which was the assistant principal. I bonded with him. He was like always supportive of everything I did. He would stay back with me and my friend, Annette, sometimes he'll help us, with our basketball drills or we'll just simply sit back and have a conversation with him, just talk to him. He was always supportive. Say if I was to get in school suspension or something, he would get me up out of it. I'll go sit in his office or he'll give me extra work to do. P6: L 216-220

Wanda shared another positive influence was a beloved coach. She said:

And Coach David Adams. We've actually been knowing him since I was kinda younger, but he always stayed on me when it came to track made sure I was doing the right thing, I was conditioned well. He would give a speech. He would come out of his way to make sure we was okay, making sure we was fine at home, he was always very supportive, no matter wherever we see him at. P6: L 232, 236-239

Five participants spoke of <u>positive peer relationships</u> that were important to the participants' lived educational experience.

James shared:

He's still my best friend. We have been best friends since like, four or five years old. My friend Timothy his kids, I actually call his kids my nieces and nephews right now. P1: L 144, 148-149

Deborah shared a meaningful memory with a special friend:

Well, one of my best friends, I took her to my, I think it was my prom we had a good time. P2: L 170

Samantha recalled a trustworthy friend from school:

She was like my best friend. We hung out after school. We hung out in school. We could tell each other anything. I will always pick on her because she will always come to my house for snacks. P4: L 200-201

Kelsi noted she maintained relationships with several friends from school:

I would probably, just the people that I met and the friends that I made, they stand out the most because a lot of them I'm still in contact with to this day. And a lot of us went from elementary to middle school up to into high school. So I would say that's probably some of the best memories I had was just the friendships I made. But I mean, I have a lot of good memories from school. P5: L120-123

Wanda shared that her positive friendships helped her connect with others and helped her fit in socially. She said:

I loved high school, ninth grade year I had an older cousin already there, older friends.

So it was just like I kind of fitted in. P6: L 107-108

Table 5 notes the formulated meanings describing positive parent support, parent's view of education, shared feelings, and parent educational concerns. The grouping of the significant statements and formulated meanings lead to the cluster theme: *Transmitting Values.*

Table 5: Formulated Meaning Cluster Theme- Transmitting Values

Formulated Meanings	Cluster Theme
FM2: The positive value of education is acknowledged due to parent's background and the parent feels his education was a positive one overall. **FM8:** Parent perceived education to be important to his parent and exposed to learning materials in the home. **FM10:** Participant was raised by a parent that valued education. **FM68:** Participant's caregiver encouraged school success and participant's parent was knowledgeable of participant's activities and friendships. **FM76:** Parents presence plays a vital role in the overall wellbeing of children. **FM89:** Parent uses previously learned strategies to support child. **FM94:** Participants overall feeling toward personal education is positive and feels her mom provided a stable home life. **FM95:** Participant had a consistent school and was not transient. **FM104:** Parent had stable housing for many years. **FM118:** Parent took on the role of homeschooling children during COVID-19 pandemic. **FM124:** Parent took on the role of teacher during the school shut down due to COVID-19 and exposed her child to chapter books. **FM177:** Parent supports son by watching educational videos. **FM180:** Parent participates in educational opportunities as much as possible. **FM181:** Parent participates in educational opportunities as much as possible. **FM186:** When not working, parent participated with school even when she had a lack of transportation. **FM196:** Participant's parents were involved in the participant education and ensured that school work was put first before other things. **FM197:** Father and older sister were very involved in participant's education and participated in school activities with the participant but Mom lived out of town and participated minimally. **FM212:** Participant attended field day. **FM213:** Participant attended conferences to discuss the academic progress of child. **FM280:** Parent supports child with academic work if help is requested by the child.	Positive Parent Support
FM85: Parent values education and wants to see the child graduate and continue education and get a good job. **FM120:** Participant values a solid education and wants to ensure her children know the value of a solid education. **FM126:** Parent wants to be involved in every aspect of the child's life including education. Parent values open communication with children. **FM134:** Parent wants children to graduate from school and pursue a career with a solid financial path. **FM135:** Parent views school as an extension of the family. **FM136:** Parent views school as a second family. **FM178:** Parent feels it is important to be there for the child as much as possible. **FM183:** Parent wants child to graduate and get all the education he can. **FM184:** Parent wants school to treat her child as if he was their child. **FM217:** Parent wants child to do his best in school and focus on learning while in school. **FM218:** Parent wants child to continue his education at college after	Parent's View of Education

graduating from high school. Parent expresses to the child that if you work hard in school and behave then the child may be awarded a college scholarship. Parent wants child to focus while in school and play and have fun while at home. Parent wants child to go to college after high school. **FM219:** Parent wants school personnel to do their job and let the parent know if there are any problems and any ways she can help. Parent wants school to keep her child safe and let her know if there are problems. If there are problems parent wants to hear this from the school versus the child. **FM220:** Parent feels it is important to maintain an open line of communication with the school. **FM262:** Parent wants to graduate and be a positive role model for children. **FM270:** Parent wants for the child to do what is needed each day and enjoy elementary school. **FM274:** Parent expects school personnel to keep kids safe. **FM275:** Participant wants for there to be two way respect between students/parents and school personnel. **FM277:** Parent expects school to supervise children and keep them safe.	
FM47: Participant notes you cannot make an individual be involved with their child. It has to be a personal choice. **FM50:** Educators need to put forth more effort to connect with the students. **FM137:** Parent notes that some parents are lazy and do not put forth the effort in relation to school support. **FM138:** Parent feels that schooling will be better for children when discipline and education begin at home. **FM139:** Participant feels education is a partnership and supportive parenting begins in the home. **FM185:** Parent indicates that some parents are lazy and others have different reasons for not wanting to participate with the school.	Feelings
FM30: Parent noticed many parents did not focus on education during the school shutdown. **FM31:** Parent is concerned about the impact COVID-19 will have on the educational progress of children. **FM223:** Parent expressed concern about the next school year due to the COVID-19 pandemic and she is uncertain of how that is going to pan out. **FM264:** Parent feels that school can provide better suggestions for parents to support the child. Additionally, positive feedback is needed rather than always providing negative feedback. **FM265:** Parent feels Chromebooks allow for distractions to children learning content. **FM267:** Parent has attended a couple of school events but feels that the school often asks for money. The parent feels the school should not ask for money. **FM268:** Parent has negative feelings toward school and feels there's a lot of negative communication instead of positive communication. **FM269:** Parent feels communication at the school can be improved. Proactive communication may prevent negative student consequences. **FM273:** Parent has difficulty trusting school personnel. **FM276:** Parent feels school personnel's perspective is valued over student's perspective.	Parent Educational Concerns

Emergent Theme 4: Transmitting Values

Although children spend much of their time in the classroom, parents have a distinct role

in the education of their child. Parents are one of the major stakeholders that shape the trajectory

of their children (Pagano, 2002). The parents' thoughts, feelings, concerns, and actions have an

impact on the child. Transmitting values occurs in many ways: conversations, modeling, and

teaching. The following cluster themes: positive parent support, parent's view of education, shared feelings, and parent educational concerns transferred to transmitting values.

James shared <u>positive parent support</u> when he expressed that his mother and stepfather were from a different country and they felt education was important. He said:

My education is pretty good. I was brought up and really believe in education cause my mother is not from this country. P1: L 67-68

He continued to add that he was exposed to learning material at an early age. He said:

They were really focused on education. Like I grew up with the encyclopedias in my house, started playing Scrabble, like eight years old, stuff like that. P1: L 114-115

James shared how verbal conversations with his grandson happened often in the home:

Like we basically talk to him like an adult. We don't baby him. We talk to him like an adult. We discipline him when he needs to be disciplined and he's a really good kid. P1: L 263-265

Deborah explained that her grandmother expected education to come first:

Like my grandma didn't play when it came to homework. She didn't really like, let me hang with a lot of people. That's all. She made sure I did, she made sure I was up to par with my schoolwork. P2: L 147-148

This transferred to the way that *Deborah* supports her children. She said:

I do them like my grandma did me.

So I just teach them what was taught to me. P2: L 397, 399-400

Tonya explained her mom provided a stable home life. She said:

So basically the same elementary school I started kindergarten and I finished all the way

to sixth grade. And then my high school, 9th to 12th. I finished once I started, so it

wasn't a lot of moving around or anything like that. It was like strictly stability that's

how I grew up. P3: L 95-98

Tonya shared her supportive role during the COVID-19 Pandemic:

It's just been hard because my elementary school kids I've been homeschooling them.

P3: L 263-264

Tonya continued:

She's reading, I have her, since they've been out of school and I've been homeschooling

them, I've been having her read chapter books. P3: L 335-336

Samantha shared the positive support she provided her child even without reliable

transportation she attended school functions when she was not working. She said:

Yeah, cause even before I had a car, if it was a bus or cab, I was still making sure that I

could get to school and be a part when I could, if I wasn't working. P4: L 436-437

Kelsi explained that her parents supported her education. She said:

They were very involved. They always made me put school first and my parents were the type where you can't go outside until you finished your homework, etc. So they always tried to make sure that I had a good education and that I was doing what I was supposed to be doing while in school. P5: L 103-105

Kelsi shared her positive support for her child. She commented:

I did, like, the conferences throughout the year where you come in and then they tell you about your child's progress so far.

But yeah, I've definitely been to just like the conferences and just anything to basically find out my child's progress. I have been to a few of those. P5: L 269-270, 272-273

Examples of the parent's view of education emerged during the interviews.

Deborah shared the goals she had for her children:

I want to see them graduate like they supposed to and get a good job. Or if they decided they want to go to college, whatever they want to do. I'm always supporting it. P2: L 363-364

Tonya shared:

I want them to of course, graduate, finish school move on to further their education and whatever field or profession that they choose to go in and just be successful in life and get a nice paying job, something that they want and not just getting a job because of the money. P3: L 452-454

Samantha noted her hopes for her son. She said:

I mean, he keeps getting all the education that he can, learning new stuff, stuff like that.

Be able to graduate. P4: L 411-412

Kelsi shared her view of education and goals for her child. She commented:

Well, I would like him to go to college being that I didn't go to college directly out of

school. I always try to instill in him that if you do good in school and keep your grades

up and act accordingly, then it's a possibility that you can have a scholarship and they

will pay for you to go to school just off your good grades and good behavior. So I always

try to remind him of that. Just while you're in school focus on school, when you're home,

then you can play and have fun and be with your friends. But while you're at school,

focus on what you need to be doing. It's my goal is for him to finish high school and go

on to college. P5: L 314-320

She added her expectations for the school team. She said:

Well, I expect them to definitely do their job and just let me know if there's anything that I

can do to help. Well, let me know if there's any problems that they have with my child.

And like you say, I entrust them to keep him safe and just make me aware of any

incidents, basically. If they know of any problems that are going on, I would prefer to

hear from them, as opposed to hearing it from my child. P5: L 333-336

Wanda shared her thoughts regarding the care of her child while at the school. She commented:

Make sure, they either go to breakfast, or make sure they're escorted to the right class. That they're in place, they are visible, that they can see them. And I don't know, just making sure that all the children are safe. P6: L 475-477

Participants shared their <u>feelings</u>. *James* shared his thoughts on the personal decision a parent must make regarding involvement with the child. He said:

I really can't say there's really nothing that you can do to make a person do it if they don't want to do. If they're just there, they have to really want to be parents. They have to really care about their child on their own to be more involved. There's nothing, that nobody could say, nothing that the courts could say, anybody can say to make a parent more involved in their child's life. P1: L 453-456

Tonya shared how the school is like a second family. She said:

Basically being a second family, which they have showed me. Like Daughter's teacher, Mrs. Inge. She just went above and beyond and I would thank her, you know until I'm blue in the face. But basically just being a second disciplinary action for them. We're on the same page and everything that I expect and I let them know that I expect for them to do it at home. That's the same thing that I expect for them to do at school. So just having them piggyback.
So that's basically the expectations that I expect for the schools. And everything I'm doing here is done at school and vice versa. P3: L 488-492, 494-495

Tonya shared this about her child's school:

To be honest with you, I think they're doing everything in their power that they can do. Like getting to and from school. There's no reason you're not able to get to or from the school for activities and things like that. They, have even as far as parent teacher conferences, they have even went the extra mile instead of me catching the bus or getting all the way out there to XXX Road from here for 15 minutes, a half an hour, or so they would do it over the phone. So that's why I say it's nothing that I would change as far as the school system. I mean, as far as the school is concerned, but you just have a lot of lazy parents, you know, you have a lot of parents who just send the kids to school. First of all, because it is mandated. Second of all, they use it as like a daycare. P3: L 502-508, 510

Further *Tonya* explained education begins in the home:

It's when it starts at home. It's nothing really that you can actually do as far as the school system is concerned. Like I explained it to my kids, I said from the time that I bring y'all home from the hospital, y'all are my responsibility to teach you guys right from wrong from the time that you're brought home from the hospital up until when it's time for you to go to school. I'm teaching you right from wrong, how you're supposed to act, how to be respectful, how to use your positive manners, how to make right choices and not wrong choices. But you have some parents that don't do that. You know, they leave it up to the school system to do that. And I think that's unfair. P3: L 520-526

Samantha shared this regarding her views:

I mean, I'm not for sure cause every parent has a different reason of why they don't want

to come to the school. Some people are just lazy and just don't want to go, you know, so I

can't really, I don't know. P4: L 430-431

Parent educational concerns were also shared. *James* mentioned concerns with student

performance due to the COVID-19 Pandemic. He said:

And I'm worried about that when this Coronavirus thing ends. What's going to happen to

these kids that miss school for the past two or three months? And like what's going to

happen? Are they going to graduate to the next grade? Still, never finished and learning

what they should have learned in their grade? Are they going to be behind a little

bit? P1: L 303-307

Kelsi also noted concerns for the school amidst the pandemic. She shared:

I'm kind of worried about what's going to go on this next year cause I don't know exactly

like when they're going to send the kids back to school or how this is going to play out.

So that's kinda my only worry or biggest concern right now is sending him back to school

for this upcoming year. P5: 370-373

Wanda shared her concern about Chromebooks being used. She said:

And then like with the schools now, with kids, they don't get textbooks, they get

Chromebooks. So with those Chromebooks, they got the opportunity to get on the

internet and YouTube. And so they're not even focused on what they're supposed to do,

even though they're monitoring what the kids do on those Chromebooks. Half of them not

even doing work, they're on social media or YouTube. P6: L 387-390

Table 6 notes the formulated meanings describing educational awareness and

parent/school communication. The grouping of the significant statements and formulated

meanings lead to the cluster theme: *Parent Partners.*

Table 6: Formulated Meaning Cluster Theme- Parent Partners

Formulated Meanings	Cluster Theme
FM24: Parent exposes grandson to conversations in the home and provides discipline when needed. **FM25:** Parent engages in homework opportunities with the child. **FM26:** Parent is aware of the learning opportunities in the classroom. **FM28:** Parent is aware of the learning concepts and engages in homework opportunities with the child. **FM125:** Parent provides child access to educational games. **FM177:** Parent supports son by watching educational videos.	Educational Awareness
FM27: Parent communicates with the child's teachers. **FM29:** Parent talks with the teacher and is available to support the school team. **FM32:** Parent attended a few school events involving the child. **FM77:** Parent uses various formats to engage with teacher. **FM78:** Home visit was important to family teacher relationship. **FM79:** Teacher visited family's home to support student's learning. **FM80:** Parent attends activities at the school. **FM82:** School maintains open lines of communication. **FM87:** Parent attends activities at the school. **FM88:** Parent uses various formats to engage with teacher including Class Dojo. **FM129:** Communication with the school includes utilizing the Class Dojo app. **FM130:** Phone calls with the school are important and parent engages with teachers this way. **FM179:** Parent communicates with the school by using the Class Dojo app. **FM181:** Parent participates in educational opportunities as much as possible. **FM182:** Parent has overall positive feelings toward child's school and feels school keeps her informed and school communicates by phone. **FM214**: Parent communicates with the teachers using an app called Class Dojo. **FM263:** Parent feels weekly contact with the school personnel is important. **FM266:** Parent uses the Class Dojo app to communicate with school personnel. **FM279:** Parent does not prefer communicating with school personnel by phone call.	Parent/School Communication

Emergent Theme 5: Parent Partners

When parents partner with teachers and the school community the students' learning

opportunities increase. According to Epstein (2010), "families reinforce the importance of

school, homework, and activities that build student skills and feelings of success" (p. 83).

During the interviews, all of the parents mentioned ways in which they partnered with the school team. This theme included educational awareness and parent school communication.

During the interviews, <u>educational awareness</u> surfaced with three participants.

James said:

Knowing what's going on with what they're being taught in their class and you know, really being involved. P1: L 275-276

Tonya said she encouraged her daughter to engage in educational technology. She said:

And she loves video games, you know, like getting on there, playing educational games on the computer and stuff like that. P3: L 338-340

Samantha commented:

We watch little videos that shows him how to add and stuff like that. P4: L 358

<u>Parent and school communication</u> is essential to the growth of students. All participants included ways they engaged with the school.

James:

You know still going to parent teacher meetings and you know, things of that nature. P1: L 276

He continued that he communicated with staff during afternoon dismissal:

Usually on pickups, things of that nature, go speak to, talk to the teacher when I go to pick him up. Always available no matter what. P1: L 289-290

Deborah:

I have Zoom. Class Dojo. Emails. I'm always talking to their teachers, like three or four times a week. P2: L 319

Then she shared:

And since this [COVID-19 Pandemic] has been going on, so like, I really do appreciate it now. Since they're doing work from home and we switch over some stuff to their laptop, it was kinda like frustrating at first. So, I just got in touch with her teacher and they came over and helped her, spent a little time with her. P2: L 320-323

She added that she engaged in some school events as well:

Some of them, not all of them. Open house and then they had some, little activities, like a relay thing for the kids and the parents. P2: L 327, 331

Tonya:

So basically Class Dojo is the main line as far as knowing what's going on, whether it is behavioral wise or anything else that needs to be communicated between myself and the teacher. P3: L 385-387

She continued with the support she feels from the school:

Pretty much it's everything. I mean, anything that you can think about, it's everything. I mean, when they have the back to school nights, because I don't have my own

transportation. So with this complex over here, they have back to school nights, they

actually arrange a bus. P3: L 420-422

Samantha indicated she communicated with:

The [Class] Dojo App. P4: L 370

She continued with events she attended*:*

It was like family night. Stuff like that, like they had back to school nights, and stuff like

that, I don't think they did...so I didn't get to go to all of them, but the ones that I went to,

they were just like telling us about what the kids we're doing in the classrooms and stuff

like that. Or their little celebrations. They had a little graduation celebration. P4: L

393-396

Samantha shared her feelings regarding the staff at her child's school:

They do pretty good, really. They call me if anything happens or if he's running out of

medicine. They make sure I am well aware. They blow up the phone...yeah other than

that I really don't have no complaints. P4: L 400-402

Kelsi:

Well, we have an app for the parents and teachers to communicate called Class Dojo. So

you can have a direct link to your child's teacher. So I usually communicate with her on

there. We just send messages back and forth and it's kind of just like a text message.

Basically she'll get it instantly and she can respond instantly. And that's at any time

whether it's school hours or not. So that kind of keeps an open line of communication for us. So if she has any questions for me or anything that I need to know she'll message me and vice versa. P5: L 278-283

Further she said:

So I would just say they probably have a nice staff. Whenever I do come, if I've had to take him to school or pick him up from school early, they all know his name or they know him by his name and they just all seem so friendly and nice so I would say they definitely have a good staff. P5: L 290-292

Wanda:

We communicate through email or through Class Dojo. P6: L 402

Additionally, she shared this regarding her attendance with school events:

Yeah. Sometimes if I'm not working, I'll go.

I've been to like one PTO meeting. I don't like PTO meetings. I don't know why, but that's probably like the only thing I've been to. Like little fair things they be having at the school, I've done been to a few of those, but other than that, I really don't participate with the school and things because I feel like they always want money for the kids to do something. And I feel like you shouldn't have to keep asking the parents for stuff money-wise when ya'll are the ones planning the stuff for the kids. If it's dealing with the school, I feel like the school system should pay for it. P6: L 406, 410-415

She added:

I feel like, some parents that have a struggle, like some don't have a car, some of them

are low on money, so they can't get certain places. I feel like they can either give out a

free tablet or some type of, I don't know, some type of newsletter. Say like some people

don't have internet, so they don't really know what's going on. I feel like they should have

newsletters that they mail out on their own for parents.

They can have a breakdown, they can read it for their self, oh this is what they're doing

today. This is what they're doing this day. This is what they're doing this week. P6: L

491-495, 497-498

Further she said:

I feel like they should do stuff like this because a lot of parents don't like to talk on the

phone to the teachers and stuff. Like I'm one of them. I don't want to sit on the phone

and talk to you about my child. So I kinda already know what's going on. And then,

basically they're all repeating itself over and over. P6: L 498-501

Table 7 notes the formulated meanings describing lack of caregiver support. The

grouping of the significant statements and formulated meanings lead to the cluster theme:

Disengaged Caregiver.

Table 7: Formulated Meaning Cluster Theme- Disengaged Caregivers

Formulated Meanings	Cluster Theme
FM66: Birth parents were not involved in participant's education but foster parent was. Participant experienced an adverse childhood experience when placed in foster care at age 8. **FM113:** Parent was raised in a single parent home with an absent father. **FM114:** Parent feels her relationship with her mother was not as close as she hoped. **FM156:** Personal issues at home negatively impacted school success.**FM158:** Home life situation negatively impacted school success.**FM160:** Participant had an absent father and mother	Lack of Caregiver Support

did not participate in education. **FM166:** Parent felt overwhelmed by the academic expectations and decided to take her GED. Participant did not feel supported by her parent. **FM241:** Participant's parent became unsupportive of the participant. **FM247:** Participant was negatively impacted due to an absent mother. **FM257:** Participant's adverse living arrangement caused her to stop going to school because she would not be at her mother's house and would not have a way to get to school.	

Emergent Theme 6: Disengaged Caregiver

The importance of parent involvement and academic achievement is notable (Jeynes,

2005). During the interview sessions, four participants noted the lack of caregiver support.

Deborah shared that she was placed in foster care at the age of eight. She indicated that

her parents were not involved with her education but her foster parent was.

She said:

Oh, no, not really. My foster parents was. P2: L 130

Tonya spoke of her home life without a father:

And as far as family is concerned, it was always just me and my mom. I'm the only child.

P3: L 234-235

Samantha shared things that happened at home impacted her educational focus:

I guess you, they say sometimes, well, what you're going through at home, kind of, makes,

reflects on your grades and stuff like that. I feel like that's kind of true. Cause I took my

personal issues from home and I just kinda like took it out on school. P4: L 132-134

Samantha explained she had an absent father and a disengaged mother. She said:

They didn't, my father was, I had an absent father. And my mom, she just didn't

participate in anything really. 4: L 152-153

Then she shared:

So right before we were getting ready to go on our Thanksgiving break, I took my GED

test, my pretest, and I passed it on the first round. So I was like, yeah, I'm gonna go

ahead and just get my GED. I'll go ahead and get that. I can't do this big old biology

packet myself. I knew I wasn't gonna have no help from my mom or nothing. P4: L 188-

191

Wanda shared how her mother became disengaged in her life. She shared:

But at the same time she stopped being supportive, when it came to the sports. So it was

like she stopped coming to my track meets like invitationals. I don't to this day, I don't

understand how she was there cheering me on and then the next minute she was gone.

P6: L 135-138

Further she added:

It was more of well, being that I wouldn't be at my mother's house, how was I going to get

to school? Or was she going to make a way for me to get to school every day? And then

it was like, I don't know why I didn't get to go or what the situation was. She didn't

really show too much interest in it. P6: L 260-262

Table 8 notes the formulated meanings describing negative peer relationships, criminal conduct, barriers, unfavorable circumstances, lack of a stable job, and financial hardships caregiver support. The grouping of the significant statements and formulated meanings lead to the cluster theme: *Adverse Situations*

Table 8: Formulated Meaning Cluster Theme- Adverse Situations

Formulated Meanings	Cluster Theme
FM3: Parent experienced obstacles during youth but feels his educational experience was a positive one overall. **FM63:** Parent experienced obstacles during youth which included negative peer relationships. **FM65:** Parent experienced obstacles during youth which included hanging with the wrong crowd. **FM237:** Negative peer relationships impacted participants' academic performance and school attendance. **FM238:** Adverse life experiences and negative peer relationships impacted participant's school attendance resulting in the student being truant. **FM242:** Negative peer relationships negatively impacted her success with school.	Negative Peer Relationships
FM14: Participant has an extensive history with criminal conduct. **FM240:** Participant engaged in the adverse behavior of selling drugs while an adolescent.	Criminal Conduct
FM115: Parent experienced adverse life experiences which created barriers for her own education advancement. **FM119:** Adverse life experiences constantly prevent her from obtaining her educational goals. **FM173:** Parent engaged in skill development for business but became pregnant with her son and stopped attending classes. **FM207:** Participant is interested in furthering her education but this is challenging due to home life and work balance. **FM259:** Participant further education by enrolling in CDL school. She was unable to finish her training because her vehicle broke down.	Barriers
FM145: Parent had a positive experience in early elementary school until participant's parent became very transient beginning in fourth grade. **FM150:** Participant had difficulty fitting in after transitioning to a new school and got in school suspension. **FM157:** Middle school grades were impacted adversely by home situation.**FM164:** Parent dropped out of school in 10th grade. Participant was motivated to get a job and her earn own money. Additionally, parent did not want to transfer to a different high school. **FM165:** Parent was behind academically and was placed in alternative school to work to catch her up but the parent became frustrated with the excessive biology work packet. **FM203:** Participant had a discipline issue which resulted in administration recommending for the participant to attend another school. Participant's feelings towards this recommendation were not favorable. **FM236:** Participant's school attendance was inconsistent and resulted in truancy but she completed her missed work. **FM238:** Adverse life experiences and negative peer relationships impacted participant's school attendance resulting in the student being truant. **FM239:** Participant had poor school attendance. **FM240:** Participant engaged in the adverse behavior of selling drugs while an adolescent. Participant's parent	Unfavorable Circumstances

became unsupportive of the participant. **FM244:** Participant stopped going to school because family was unable to pay tuition to remain at the school and participant did not want to transfer to a new school. **FM245:** Participant experienced an adverse life experience when the participant's parent told her she would have to move out of the house due to there not being enough room.	
FM1: The COVID-19 pandemic impacted the parent financially and he is currently unemployed. **FM15:** Parent experienced difficulty obtaining a job. **FM16:** Parent has experience with several entry level positions. **FM56:** Parent is currently laid off due to COVID-19 pandemic. Parent had dependable work prior to the layoff. **FM73:** Participant had several entry level positions. **FM92:** Parent is currently unemployed. **FM112:** Participant had several entry level positions. **FM171:** After completing the career technical program, job attainment was problematic and the participant did not renew her certification. **FM172**: Parent had several entry level jobs and two managerial jobs. **FM258:** Participant had many entry level jobs.	Lack of Stable Job
FM7: Parent experienced obstacles during youth including financial instability resulting in parent looking to the streets for a resolution. **FM246:** Participant was forced to get a job and fend for herself.	Financial Hardships

Emergent Theme 7: Adverse Situations

Adverse situations were noted by all participants. Many circumstances contributed to these adverse conditions. Adverse situations included the following cluster themes: negative peer relationships, criminal conduct, barriers, unfavorable circumstances, lack of a stable job, and financial hardships.

Three participants noted a <u>negative peer relationship</u>.

James shared:

I started getting into a little trouble in my earlier years, but my education was really good. P1: L 69-70

Deborah noted:

Like any other child, I did things. Got in a little trouble hanging with the wrong crowd. P2: L119-120

She added:

You know, how you like the, I ain't gonna say a new student, but I used to be that for a little while, but just hanging with the wrong people. Not that I got in like any serious trouble, but I got in some trouble. P2: L125-126

Wanda explained:

And I want to say, almost maybe 11th grade year, I started getting in the mix with the wrong crowd. I started slacking and I started missing more days. I started being influenced when I should have been more focused back in school. P6: L 119-121

She continued to share:

I have friends that their parents didn't care what they did. So she was probably, maybe a year older than me so she would never go to school. She was always around guys. That wasn't my thing, I was, still a teen, I was being a teenager. She was doing things that grown people would do. So it was just like yeah so, I felt like when I was around her, it was kind of exciting. But at the same time I knew I couldn't do half the stuff that she was doing. And then, she used to how can you say it, when somebody tried to bribe you, like, well don't go to school, you can just come to my house. And I was actually skipping school and stuff until, they started telling my mother I've been missing all of these days. P6: L 125-131

Criminal conduct was mentioned by two participants.

James commented:

I've been incarcerated a few, a good amount of times. I've probably got about maybe about 20 years under my belt altogether being incarcerated on and off. P1: L 167-169

Wanda shared:

So, I started, I want to say when I was about 15, almost 16, I tried to sell drugs, which I was selling drugs. Nobody knew, my mother was just like, you're not doing that much here to get you know, clothes and stuff. P6: L 133-135

Four participants spoke of barriers in their life.

Tonya shared:

My mom was diagnosed with ovarian cancer and it was like just a big snowball effect after that. You know, she passed in 2002. I was five months pregnant with my son. I have five kids total. P3: L 236-238

She continued with:

So it's just been hectic every time I try to, you know, go back to school for myself it's always something that's out of my control that happens. P3: L 264-265

Samantha shared a barrier for her continued education. She said:

Before I had my first son, I was going to school for business. And I was like halfway through, but I had started missing days because I started getting sick, but I didn't know that I was pregnant. P4: L 293-294

Kelsi explained a barrier when she tried to further her education. She explained:

That's something that I'm definitely trying to do or I've been thinking about doing.

Just trying to balance having a new baby and working and going to school, but that's

something I've definitely been thinking about. P5: L 198-200

Wanda shared a barrier while she worked to complete her Commercial Driver's License

or CDL certification. She commented:

Yeah I actually went to CDL school. I didn't get to really finish because my vehicle had

broke down the last day of training. P6: L 277

Unfavorable circumstances surfaced with three participants.

Samantha shared that her family was transient which was unfavorable for her education.

She said*:*

So I had a pretty smooth elementary, up until I want to say I was in the fourth grade.

That's when we started moving around. P4: L 62-63

She continued with:

I had some people that still didn't like me because of how I dressed and how I talked and

stuff like that, or somebody that I hung out with, they probably didn't like, so it was, I

stayed getting in school suspension. P4: L 89-91

The same participant shared when she made the decision to stop attending school:

[I stopped going to school] Going to the 10th grade. Because I wanted a job. I wanted

to have my own money and stuff like that. So and I didn't want to transfer schools

because we had moved. So they didn't want me to continue at XXX [High School]. They

wanted me to go to XXX [High School]. P4: L 173, 177-179

Kelsi explained an unfavorable experience that led to her dropping out of high school:

Well, I wanted to finish at XXX [High School], but I had an episode happen in XXX

[High School] where I got into a fight. And then they recommended that I go to another

school. So that was kinda more so pushing me to do that as opposed to, me wanting to do

that.

Yes, I guess at that time, because I hadn't really ever gotten into trouble in school, so I

just didn't really understand why they are recommending me to have to do that. So yeah,

at that time I was just like maybe this might be a better option. P5: L 147-149, 154-156

Wanda shared her history with truancy. She said*:*

And sometimes I would exceed the limit so I would have to do truancy, but with me

missing those days, you had to do your makeup work. The principal actually had to meet

with my mother. We had two meetings they asked her, we just confused on how does she

make honor roll, she missed so many days. And I tell them, I make my work up. I still do

my work. I might miss a lot of days, but I was still doing my work, doing sports. P6: L

115-119

She followed with the reason she decided to drop out of school. She said:

And being that I was still taking 11th grade classes in 12th grade. So that really messed

me up, cause I didn't want to go to the XXX County Schools. So I just completely stopped

going to school. P6: L 144-146

She added another adverse situation:

Once my mother told me, basically I couldn't stay there because there wasn't enough

room, I was forced to go live with one of my friends, which was a grown woman, she was

probably two years older than me. P6: L 146-148

The lack of stable job was shared by four participants.

James said:

I just filed for unemployment. P1: L 53

Deborah explained:

 Yes, I'm just on a layoff right now. I work at a college and I've been there two years. P2:

L 37, 41

When asked if employed *Tonya* said:

No ma'am. P3: L 67

While discussing her medical administrative, assistant billing and coding specialist

certification *Samantha* shared she was unable to get a job in that field. She said:

I did not. And when, it was so hard for me to find a job down here for that, because I didn't have any training. I kind of gave up on it. Cause I was like, my year was about to hit. I still hadn't gotten any job in the field and I was like, I'm [not] going to renew it for me to still not get no job in the field. So I just let it expire. P4: L 247-250

Two participants noted <u>financial hardships</u> while in school.

James said:

Well, my childhood high school was basically just getting older. I started hanging in the streets by then. So things like that nature making sure I look good dressed for school. I think a lot of kids are concerned with that. Like if their parents don't have the money, to make them, like to buy them the right kind of outfits, they tend to don't want to go to school. Cause I had that problem at one time. That's what started leading me into the streets, trying to be able to get money so I could buy proper clothes to stay in style to go to school. P1: L 96-101

Wanda spoke of the living arrangement that ended with her mother that caused her to seek employment. She noted*:*

So that forced me to get a job and start defending for myself. P6: L 148-149

Exhaustive Description

Parents have a special role in partnering with schools to educate children. Just as students have strengths and areas of growth so do parents. The participants in this study had unique stories but many common themes were developed from their lived educational experiences. The participants established goals for themselves throughout their personal

education and following high school. Only two of the participants had a support system to encourage and motivate them to stay the course throughout their educational experience. Although this support system was absent for four participants self-determination of the participant was evident throughout their experience. Five participants were raised in a single parent home and four of the participant's parents were not engaged in the participant's education. Two participants experienced financial hardships which included the lack of basic needs including clothing and shelter. The disengaged caregiver was a concern as four participants expressed caregiver engagement was lacking during their lived educational experience.

All of the parents in this study revealed that they felt their educational experience was a positive one overall. Additionally, the participant's provided examples of ways in which they had positive experiences in school. During their schooling experience, all of the parents had at least one positive influence. Five participants expressed a positive relationship with their peers. In addition to this, five participants shared a meaningful, positive adult relationship with a teacher, school counselor, administrative staff, or coach. At times, all of the participants experienced at least one adverse situation including negative peer relationships, barriers to educational advancement, criminal conduct, lack of a stable job, financial hardships, or unfavorable circumstances. Although participants were impacted by the adverse situation, self-determination enabled two parents to successfully graduate with a high school diploma and four parents earned a General Education Diploma, GED. Since high school, four of the parents engaged in several entry level positions and participated in on-the-job training while two participants had managerial roles. The work histories are lengthy for the participants. At the time of the study, three of the participants were employed.

The transfer of educational values and expectations from parent to child was noted in all participants. All of the participants partnered with the school in some capacity. Each communicated with the classroom teacher and was available to support the school team. Sometimes, this was due to the participant wanting to provide a different educational experience for their child than they experienced or the parent wanted to continue some aspects of their own personal education with their child. Additionally, all of the participants attended school events involving their child. This ranged from extensive participation including many visits to the school to minimal participation with only a couple of visits to the school. One participant indicated that she did not like to attend school events because the school requested money. Participants expressed their desire for their child(ren) to listen to the adults and focus on learning while at school. The participants stressed the importance of a good education for their child. All of the participants expressed one or more of the following: desire for their child to do their best in school, get good grades, graduate from high school and get a good job or further their education. All of the participants were comfortable communicating with school staff members and they reached out when needed. Additionally, two parents noted that they used Google (when they are unsure of content) to support their child's learning. Three participants noted scarcity of time due to work commitments which prevented the parent from attending school activities.

Chapter Summary

Chapter Four explained the process utilized to determine the results of this study. Qualitative descriptive methodology was used to study the lived experiences of six parents residing in a subsidized housing development in Central Virginia. Zoom conferences with semi-structured questioning stems allowed parents to share their lived educational experience and aspects of their child's or children's educational experiences. The participants' interview

sessions were audio recorded and transcribed using Temi. After thoroughly reviewing each of the transcriptions each transcribed document was uploaded to Dedoose. The transcriptions were coded. Next, the Colaizzi descriptive phenomenological method was employed to organize and analyze the information obtained from each participant's individual interview. The Colaizzi method was followed to identify the themes which were formulated from the participants' lived educational experience. Like statements were grouped together and meanings were formulated from the participants' statements. Then, 281 formulated meanings were developed and 18 cluster themes were arranged which lead to seven emergent themes. The seven emergent themes included: scarcity of time, self-determination, positive influence, transmitting values, parent partners, disengaged caregiver, and adverse situations. While fully exploring each emergent theme the participants' specific comments were noted as expressed during the individual interview session. Utilizing the developments from the analysis, the researcher determined a full, inclusive description of the phenomenon. Finally, an exhaustive description provided a summary of the data results.

CHAPTER FIVE DISCUSSION

Review of the Problem

Successful school completion is a challenge for children living in poverty. Children often struggle with the academic skills and behavioral norms that are expected within the school environment. Children that grow up in poverty experience challenges from the lack of literature exposure, language development, and educational norms that are encouraged by schools. Children raised in low-income families are at risk of academic struggles, social problems, and poor health which can interfere with educational growth and success (Engle, & Black, 2008). Additionally, Ryan, Fauth, and Brooks-Gunn (2006) note, "growing up in poverty can seriously compromise a young child's readiness to enter school and her performance thereafter" (p. 329).

Many students in an identified urban school division in Central Virginia strive to reach grade level reading and math skills, educational competencies, acquisition of skills, basic life skills, and principles including self-respect, persistence, and perseverance. According to the Virginia Department of Education data (2016), an urban school district within Central Virginia is below the state average for on time graduation. The division had approximately 86% of all students graduate on time in 2016 with only 80% on time graduation for black students (Virginia Department of Education, 2016).

The purpose of this study was to determine the educational experiences of an identified urban elementary school in Central Virginia parents (similar to the researcher's school's parents) as lived through their own experience and how these educational experiences determine their academic parent involvement for their child. Following the examination of parents' educational experiences, insights were gained to enable educators to bridge the home and school communities and determine the support needed to aid families in educating their children. This

chapter reviews the research question, notes the participants' experience in relationship to the literature, summarizes the findings, and explains the recommendations for practice.

Research Question

The purpose of this study was to determine the educational experiences of parents as lived through their own experience and how these educational experiences determine their academic parent involvement for their child. Utilizing a phenomenological approach, the research question was explored. The research question was:

From parents' perceptions, what dynamics determine educational parent support for urban elementary school children?

After gaining insights of the lived educational experience of parents, the researcher determined emergent themes: scarcity of time, self-determination, positive influence, transmitting values, parent partners, disengaged caregiver, and adverse situations.

Relationship to the Literature

Scarcity of Time

Participant responses led to the development of the cluster theme of time constraints and the emergent theme scarcity of time. During the interview sessions half of the participants noted work obligations as a concern regarding attendance at school events. According to Williams and Sanchez (2012), "low income parents may experience *time poverty*" (p. 629). Parents struggled with balancing time to provide the educational support needed for their children because of time constraints. Further, parents noted there does not seem to be enough hours in the day to accomplish all that is needed. The researcher also noticed this when scheduling the interview sessions. Several of the participants had to reschedule due to something that came up which prevented them from participating. It took one month to connect with one participant and more

than eight attempts to schedule an interview. Each time there was an obstacle for the participant: a trip, phone was dead, work, family was over visiting, and a death of a friend that prevented the interview from happening until finally we connected. This study supported the literature in relation to time poverty being a concern for families experiencing poverty. *James* shared the concerns with the economy and work demands. He explained: *I just think more parents need to be involved in their kid's school, but it's also rough and tough because you know, like, you know, with the economy and things like that nature, you know, sometimes you don't have the time you have to work, you know? P1: L 334-336*

Scarcity of time presents concerns when working parents are unable to support children's homework needs. Parents that work multiple jobs or inconsistent schedules do not have the time for family dinners, consistent bedtimes, or routine homework structures (Egalite, 2016). This can place a challenge on the parent when they feel torn between providing for their family's needs and attending school activities. This study echoed the literature as *Tonya* explained the challenges that working parents experience in relation to homework completion. She said: *Cause a lot of times since I've had kids, my main thing has been to be there for them as far as the education is. You know, you have some households that the parents work, work, work, work, and the kids have lack of education or the parents don't spend [time], they just send them to school. And, you know, they go to school because they have to. When the education part, when they come home, they're not making sure that their homework is done or, you know, something like that. P3: L 276-281*

Schools benefit when parents are able to offer their time and talents to the educational arena. Not all parents are able to support the schools in this capacity especially those that experience scarcity of time. Parents do not have time to embark on the additional time

challenges placed on them from the educational arena (Trotman, 2001). Often parents are unable to volunteer because they have hourly paying jobs and missing work means losing valuable income. According to LaRocque, Kleiman, and Darling (2011), "For some families competing factors such as employment issues, whereby they have hourly jobs with inadequate health insurance and other benefits, thus not allowing them to participate in the amount and in the ways that their counterparts that have salaried, more stable employment can" (p. 116). This study supports this finding as *Kelsi* shared her concern with volunteering at the school due to the need to work. She shared: *Well, I don't really like volunteer or anything just because I'm working most of the time, but I always send stuff when they have class parties or if they need anything specifically. I always try to send or help out any way that I can. Cause usually when they have parties, they may ask if you can bring anything or if you're able to volunteer and those types of things. And if I'm working, then of course I can't be there, but I always try to send my support some kind of way. P5: L 255-259*

Positive Influence

The value of a positive influence cannot be underestimated for students. In this study all of the participants spoke of a positive relationship developed during their school years which had a positive influence on their lives. Five participants mentioned a positive peer relationship while in school. Additionally, five participants noted a meaningful adult relationship while in school. Comer (1995) notes "No significant learning occurs without a significant relationship". Teachers make a meaningful difference in the lives of their students. Many provide a supportive network built on trust. This study is supported by the literature. A couple of the participant's significant relationships are recalled. *Deborah* shared a special relationship with a teacher: *Her name was Ms. Wayne. Cause she treated well, for one, she treated all her students the same.*

And like, if we needed extra help in certain activities or curriculum. She helped us. If I had any personal problems at home, I could talk to her. P2: L192, 196-197, 202

Tonya explained meaningful relationships with her teachers*: One of my favorite teachers, I know for sure her name when I was in fourth grade. Ms. Sally Vair. I just enjoyed when I got close with my teachers in elementary school. P3: L 119-120*

So she was my fourth grade teacher and I was very and my third grade teacher was Ms. O'Neil and they would, I gravitated to them. P3: L 142-143

So what I did enjoy about that was like I could eat lunch with them. Go to the cafeteria and pick up my lunch tray and then go upstairs and eat with them. Just one on one, have some one on one time with them and eat lunch and talk and what the conversations were about that, I don't remember. But I remember those were the times that I did like in school was just having a teacher all to myself without, you know, my other classmates. P3: L 143-147

Transmitting Values

All of the participants in this study showed an interest in their child's education. The parents spoke of their desires for their children to be successful and graduate from high school. Parents transmit their values to their children in spoken and unspoken ways. According to El Nokali, Bachman, and Votruba-Drzal (2010), "parent involvement typically involves parents' behaviors in home and school settings meant to support their children's educational progress" (p. 989). This study showcases the ways in which their parents engaged in their education and how they furthered this support with their children. *James* shared that his parents supported education within the home*: They were really focused on education. Like I grew up with the encyclopedias in my house, started playing Scrabble, like eight years old, stuff like that. P1: L 114-115*

Tonya explained that she wanted education to be a priority for her children*: My main thing is just pushing education, education, education on them, and basically practicing what I preach if I'm preaching it to them. P3: L 291-292*

El Nokali, Bachman, and Votruba-Drzal (2010) note "parent involvement bridges two key contexts in children's early development, namely, the home and the school settings" (p. 989). When parents see the school as a partner in the educational goals everyone benefits. *Tonya* shared her thoughts on the value of a solid education beginning in the home: *It's when it starts at home. It's nothing really that you can actually do as far as the school system is concerned. Like I explained it to my kids, I said from the time that I bring y'all home from the hospital, y'all are my responsibility to teach you guys right from wrong from the time that you're brought home from the hospital up until when it's time for you to go to school. I'm teaching you right from wrong, how you're supposed to act, how to be respectful, how to use your positive manners, how to make right choices and not wrong choices. But you have some parents that don't do that. You know, they leave it up to the school system to do that. And I think that's unfair. P3: L 520-526*

Tonya continued with her thoughts on the school being a second family:
Basically being a second family, which they have showed me. Like Daughter's teacher, Mrs. Inge. She just went above and beyond and I would thank her, you know until I'm blue in the face. But basically just being a second disciplinary action for them. We're on the same page and everything that I expect and I let them know that I expect for them to do it at home. That's the same thing that I expect for them to do at school. So just having them piggyback.
So that's basically the expectations that I expect for the schools. And everything I'm doing here is done at school and vice versa. P3: L 488-492, 494-495

Parent Partners

According to Collay (2013), "Communication with parents is essential in teachers' efforts to make sense of students' lives within and beyond the classroom" (p. 74). By communicating regularly the lines of communication remain open. This study shared many ways that the parents communicate with the school community. *Kelsi* noted the main way that she communicates with the school: *Well, we have an app for the parents and teachers to communicate called Class Dojo. So you can have a direct link to your child's teacher. So I usually communicate with her on there. We just send messages back and forth and it's kind of just like a text message. Basically she'll get it instantly and she can respond instantly. And that's at any time whether it's school hours or not. So that kind of keeps an open line of communication for us. So if she has any questions for me or anything that I need to know she'll message me and vice versa. P5: L 278-283*

All six of the participants shared that they correspond with the school team on a regular basis. According to Graham-Clay (2005), "Conversations may occur during telephone calls, home visits, parent-teacher conferences, open houses, and various school-based community activities" (p. 118). Regular communication enables the school team to share information and receive updates regarding the child. Five of the participants shared that the Class Dojo was one of the communication tools used to enrage with the school team. *Tonya* shared that she also uses Class Dojo to communicate with the teacher as well: *So basically Class Dojo is the main line as far as knowing what's going on, whether it is behavioral wise or anything else that needs to be communicated between myself and the teacher. P3: L 385-387*

Wanda shared that she did not prefer to communicate with school staff by way of phone call and a newsletter would be appreciated. She said: *I feel like they should do stuff like this*

because a lot of parents don't like to talk on the phone to the teachers and stuff. Like I'm one of them. I don't want to sit on the phone and talk to you about my child. So I kinda already know what's going on. And then, basically they're all repeating itself over and over. P6: L 498-501

She suggested: *I feel like, some parents that have a struggle, like some don't have a car, some of them are low on money, so they can't get certain places. I feel like they can either give out a free tablet or some type of, I don't know, some type of newsletter. Say like some people don't have internet, so they don't really know what's going on. I feel like they should have newsletters that they mail out on their own for parents.*

They can have a breakdown, they can read it for their self, oh this is what they're doing today. This is what they're doing this day. This is what they're doing this week. P6: L 491-495, 497-498

Effective communication is essential to the home school partnership. Epstein (2010) found "when parents, teachers, students, and others view one another as partners in education, a caring community forms around students and begins its work" (p. 82). *Samantha* shared her feelings regarding the staff at her child's school: *They do pretty good, really. They call me if anything happens or if he's running out of medicine. They make sure I am well aware. They blow up the phone...yeah other than that I really don't have no complaints. P4: L 400-402*

El Nokali, Bachman, and Votruba-Drzal (2010) note "if parents are aware of teacher's instructional goals, they may provide resources and support for those learning aims at home" (p. 989). Parents that support their children with homework have an awareness of the school learning goals. All of the participants expressed their willingness to help their child with school work. *James* shared his awareness: *When your child comes in from school, actually sitting down with them and know what homework they have. P1: L 274-275*

Devaney and Milstein (1998) state "it is important that the school be viewed by the community as a friendly and positive place where all are welcomed and valued" (p. 138). Schools can provide a welcoming atmosphere by engaging in conversations with parents. *Kelsi* shared her comfort with the school team: *So I would just say they probably have a nice staff. Whenever I do come, if I've had to take him to school or pick him up from school early, they all know his name or they know him by his name and they just all seem so friendly and nice so I would say they definitely have a good staff. P5: L 290-292*

Another way the school partnered with the parent was through parent meetings. *James* noted the importance of parent meetings*: You know still going to parent teacher meetings and you know, things of that nature. P1: L 276*
He continued that he communicates with staff during afternoon dismissal:
Usually on pickups, things of that nature, go speak to, talk to the teacher when I go to pick him up. Always available no matter what. P1: L 289-290

Bryk and Schneider (2003) explain "Effective urban schools need teachers who not only know their students well but also have an empathetic understanding of their parents' situations and the interpersonal skills needed to engage adults effectively" (p. 44). By knowing the parents and the community challenges, the school can better provide support to enable the parents to engage in school activities. This study found that the school had an understanding relationship with the parents. *Tonya* explained the school's support when she had unreliable transportation:
Pretty much it's everything. I mean, anything that you can think about, it's everything. I mean, when they have the back to school nights, because I don't have my own transportation. So with this complex over here, they have back to school nights, they actually arrange a bus. P3: L 420-422

The caring nature of the school staff was continued during a home visit. Teachers that take the extra time to make home visits demonstrate to the students and parents that they truly care about the student (Meyer, Mann, & Becker, 2011). By learning more about the home and families teachers become clearer on the students' needs. *Deborah* explained a meaningful home visit during the COVID-19 Pandemic: *And since this [COVID-19 Pandemic] has been going on, so like, I really do appreciate it now. Since they're doing work from home and we switch over some stuff to their laptop, it was kinda like frustrating at first. So, I just got in touch with her teacher and they came over and helped her, spent a little time with her. P2: L 320-323*

Disengaged Caregiver

Four of the participants in this research study expressed concerns with a disengaged caregiver during their lived educational experience. According to Devaney and Milstein (1998), "school failure may increase among children at risk who lack parental involvement" (p. 131). This study supports this finding as the participants shared the difficulty of not having parent support when they were in school. *Samantha* shared things that happened at home impacted her educational focus: *I guess you, they say sometimes, well, what you're going through at home, kind of, makes, reflects on your grades and stuff like that. I feel like that's kind of true. Cause I took my personal issues from home and I just kinda like took it out on school. P4: L 132-134*

She added that her parents did not support her academics: *They didn't, my father was, I had an absent father. And my mom, she just didn't participate in anything really. P4: L 152-153*

Wanda shared her confusion regarding her mom's sudden lack of support: *But at the same time she stopped being supportive, when it came to the sports. So it was like she stopped coming to*

my track meets like invitationals. I don't to this day, I don't understand how she was there cheering me on and then the next minute she was gone. P6: L 135-138

She followed with what caused her to stop attending school: *It was more of well, being that I wouldn't be at my mother's house, how was I going to get to school? Or was she going to make a way for me to get to school every day? And then it was like, I don't know why I didn't get to go or what the situation was. She didn't really show too much interest in it. P6: L 260-262*

Further Englund, Luckner, Whaley, and Egeland (2004) note "Parent involvement is an important predictor of children's achievement in school" (p. 723). *Samantha* explained about pursuing her GED: *So right before we were getting ready to go on our Thanksgiving break, I took my GED test, my pretest, and I passed it on the first round. So I was like, yeah, I'm gonna go ahead and just get my GED. I'll go ahead and get that. I can't do this big old biology packet myself. I knew I wasn't gonna have no help from my mom or nothing. P4: L 188-191*

Adverse Situations

All of the participants in this study experienced some type of adverse situation. Many times, parents from low-income neighborhoods lack access to the financial and educational resources that middle-class individuals have access to (William & Sanchez, 2012). This may include access to basic needs including a home, shelter, food or clothing. *Deborah* shared a very difficult time in her life in which she remained committed to her children: *I've been homeless twice. I did what I was supposed to do as a mom. I still maintained work. I still made sure my kids went to school and daycare. P2: L 214, 224-225*

When a student does not complete high school the likelihood of being incarcerated increases. High-school dropouts are 63 times more likely to be incarcerated than those that complete high

school (Breslow, 2012). Two of the participants' experiences supported this research as they stopped attending high school and were incarcerated. *James* shared: *I dropped out, got incarcerated and actually got my GED while I was incarcerated. P1: L 73-74*

He continued: *I've been incarcerated a few, a good amount of times. I've probably got about maybe about 20 years under my belt altogether being incarcerated on and off. P1: L 167-169*

Wanda explained: *I got my GED when I had went to jail in 2010. I started my GED outside and then when I got there, I finished my math. P6: L 248*

According to Baydu, Kaplan, and Bayar (2013), "while poverty rates increase, graduation rates decrease" (p.235). In the current study, four of the participants stopped attending school. All four of them decided to pursue their GED. The reasons participants decided to stop attending school are varied including: jail time had to be served, the desire to make their own money and not change schools, the desire to not change schools due to a fight, and being behind academically. The participants shared the following:

James: *[Getting the GED] It made me kind of really proud of myself, actually. Cause I was about 17. I got locked up to do a year in my county jail and I kind of had the idea that I got out I probably wasn't going to go back to school. P1: L 154-156*

Samantha: [I stopped going to school] Going to the 10th grade. Because I wanted a job. I wanted to have my own money and stuff like that. So and I didn't want to transfer schools because we had moved. So they didn't want me to continue at XXX High School. They wanted me to go to XXX High School. P4: L 173, 177-179

Kelsi: Well, I wanted to finish at XXX High School, but I had an episode happen in XXX High School where I got into a fight. And then they recommended that I go to another school. So that was kinda more so pushing me to do that as opposed to, me wanting to do that.

Yes, I guess at that time, because I hadn't really ever gotten into trouble in school, so I just didn't really understand why they are recommending me to have to do that. So yeah, at that time I was just like maybe this might be a better option. P5: L 147-149, 154-156

Wanda: But once I got in I want to say it was almost 12th grade I was still doing the 11th grade classes. My brother's father called the school and let them know they don't live in the XXX area, they live in XXX County, so with that being said, we would have to pay like $1,200 for first semester and second semester, if I still wanted to go to XXX High School. P6: L 141-144

She continued: *And being that I was still taking 11th grade classes in 12th grade. So that really messed me up, cause I didn't want to go to the XXX County Schools. So I just completely stopped going to school. P6: L 144-146*

Findings

Participant's Personal Education

Throughout the participant's school experience and following high school the participant established goals for oneself (self-determination). Most participants were raised in a single parent home and some participant's parents were not engaged in the participant's education (disengaged caregiver). All of the participants believed their educational experience was a positive one overall. Additionally, the participants' education had a positive influence on their life. During their schooling experience, the parent had positive peer relationships and positive adult relationships (positive influence). At times, participants experienced one or more of the following: negative peer relationships, barriers to educational advancement, criminal conduct,

lack of a stable job, or unfavorable circumstances (adverse situations). The participants successfully obtained either a high school diploma or a General Education Diploma (self-determination). Since high school, most of the parents engaged in entry level positions and participated in on-the-job training while two participants had managerial roles.

Participant's Support of Elementary Child(ren)

The parents communicated with the elementary school teacher and were available to support the school team. Additionally, the parents attended school events involving the child (parent partners). While the child was at school, the parents expected the child to listen to the adults and focus on learning. The parents stressed the importance of a good education to their child (transmitting values). The parents wanted their child to do their best in school and graduate from high school and get a good job or further their education (transmitting values). The parents were comfortable communicating with school staff members and reached out when needed (parent partners). For three participants work obligations were noted as a concern regarding school activities attendance (scarcity of time).

Recommendations for Practice

Developing meaningful relationships with students and families requires a dedicated educator to invest time and approach the relationship with support and empathy. For educators, parent connection and engagement are valuable tools to propel a student forward. Trotman (2017) notes ways to increase the presence of urban African-American parents within the school community: establish rapport and develop a history with the family, give parents authority, ask parents about their interests, ask parents to spread the word about activities at the school, allow parents to be teaching partners, and refrain from judging parents. All of this can happen when educators intentionally take the time to learn about their students and families. The COVID-19 Pandemic has caused educators to do just that: slow down and connect with families in different

ways including Zoom conferencing and the use of video clips for academic instruction and

messaging to families and students. The following are recommendations from the researcher's

perspective after analyzing the participants' lived educational journeys.

Within this study three of the participants noted that they were made to switch schools

(for various reasons) late in their educational careers. None of the participants favored this

decision and this contributed to each participant's decision to stop attending school. The

researcher recommends that the school system work with the family and student during trying

times. The student should be given the option of remaining at the school with specific

expectations. These expectations may include positive behavior, consistent attendance, and

satisfactory grades. The school system and community would benefit from having the student

finish school successfully. The school division will receive additional state funding and an

improved high school graduation rate. The overall goal is to have students enter the workforce

or further their education so they can be self-sufficient members of society.

Another recommendation is for the elementary schools to utilize the Class Dojo App to

increase parent communication with school. Within this study, five participants mentioned this

as a meaningful way to stay in touch with the teacher or school. The researcher has already

employed this at her current school. The Class Dojo app is free and easy to use. This form of

communication is instant, yet provides privacy. School personnel and parents are able to send

photos, videos, or information by way of text messages. This form of communication seems to

meet the needs of a fast paced society and was supported as an effective communication tool

with five participants in this study.

Following the COVID-19 Pandemic, it is recommended that school personnel continue to

provide in person family engagement activities. Strong relationships and parent partnerships are

needed to propel the students forward with the learning goals. Meaningful connections are made with the students and families during school events. All of the participants mentioned attending events at the school. During the COVID-19 Pandemic, Zoom has been utilized by students and parents to meet in a way that keeps everyone safe. It is recommended that this type of communication remain an option for families after the COVID Pandemic. Zoom has several benefits including it gives the teacher or staff member a glimpse at the student's home. This can provide information to the teachers other forms of communication may not present.

Additionally, Zoom may provide an avenue for parents that might otherwise be unable to attend the school activity, parent/teacher conference, meeting, or event. Zoom can be used to provide parents the opportunity to connect with the school administrators and teachers. For example, the researcher has used Zoom as a platform to hold a Parent Question & Answer session regarding hybrid and remote learning. Currently, the researcher is working with the school literacy team to plan a Reading Strategies Zoom Professional Development for parents. According to DeBruin-Parecki (2009), "it is not only the frequency with which a parent reads to a child that affects the child's success; what that parent does during shared reading and how he or she mediates the shared text is also important" (p. 386). Our literacy team plans to teach parents effective reading strategies using appropriately leveled books with students. Parents will login into Zoom and learn strategies to support at home reading. The parent will be able to practice the reading strategies with their child using the provided reading resources. Following this event, the student will keep the books in the home. This may encourage participation from disengaged caregivers.

In order for the school division to better serve the students and families impacted by adverse situations it is important for the school team to gain awareness of the community

resources available to families. In coordination with the school social worker, school administrators should provide teachers with training on the resources available within the local community. During the first quarter of the school year, it is recommended that administrators work with the school social workers to showcase a Community Resource Fair. Agencies would provide an overview of the community support resource provided by their agency. Teachers and support staff would visit the table exhibits and speak with the representatives from the support agencies in the division. Following this a photo brochure would be created and provided to staff members to provide a summary overview of the community support resources available and contact information for the supporting agency. As teachers build relationships with students and families they can support parents with making connections as needs arise. Throughout this process, the entire community will build relationships and rally together to wrap around that students and families.

Limitations of the Study

This study was limited to one population of participants of students within a specific urban subsidized housing community. While the characteristics and themes generated in the study may be reflective of other urban populations this cannot be assumed. The study was limited to six parents (five African American female participants and one African American male participant) of one specific living community therefore the transferability to other populations cannot be assumed. Since the researcher served as a building administrator within the school division being studied and may be known to some of the transient students, some parents may have found this to be a concern and may have withheld valuable information during the Zoom interviews. Additionally, experiences as an administrator and parent created bias and limited the researcher's ability to fully remove thoughts, feelings, or beliefs from the study.

Another limitation was this study was conducted by way of Zoom conferencing during the global COVID-19 Pandemic where fears, uncertainties, and anxieties were high. The COVID-19 Pandemic created challenges due to social distancing requirements and University of Lynchburg's suspension of in person interviews in order to maintain student and participant safety. Zoom conferencing did not allow for relational, in-person contact with the participants. During the time of the participant's interview, traditional in-person learning had ended for all students in Virginia. This was due to Governor Ralph Northam ordering all schools to close beginning on March 13, 2020 in an attempt to stop the spread of the Coronavirus.

Recommendation for Future Research

Future research regarding the lived experience of parents of urban students may be beneficial to the educators in the specified local school district. First, this study could be replicated following the COVID-19 Pandemic. This may provide parents with the opportunity to share their story in person providing a better opportunity to connect relationally with the researcher.

Second, it may be helpful for administrators to venture into various neighbors and conduct informal chats or a survey to determine ways the parents would like for the school to engage with and provide support to the family. Parents may be willing to share specific information regarding the academic programming, school events, or staff insights that may lead to improved family support.

Another opportunity to further this research is to implement a focus group within the school community. This group would include parents, teachers, community stakeholders, administrators, and support personnel. The purpose of this focus group would be to gather more

data to further assist the researcher in supporting students with academics and social emotional development.

Lastly, it would be insightful to conduct this research study with middle-school and high-school parents. Prior research shows that parent involvement typically tapers off as students progress to higher grade levels. It would be especially interesting to explore if this holds true or if there are significantly varied findings for parents and families that experience the hardships of poverty.

Conclusion

Although poverty may place students at a disadvantage, educators and parents working together can improve the odds for student success. This study revealed emergent themes from participants' lived educational experiences including: scarcity of time, self-determination, positive influence, transmitting values, parent partners, disengaged caregiver, and adverse situations. Educators can best support students and families when meaningful relationships are created with the students and the parents very early on. Additionally, parents deserve to have understanding and empathy from those who work in the school system and it cannot be assumed all parents are on a level playing field. Just as each child is different so is their family and with that comes unique strengths and opportunities. Although historically, many students in an identified urban school division in Central Virginia lacked basic reading and math skills, educational competencies, acquisition of skills, basic life skills, and principles including self-respect, persistence, and perseverance educators and parents communicating effectively and working together can make a difference. Educators that are willing to listen and learn from parents can change the trajectory for the children. Parents are an appreciated and necessary part of educating youth. Leaders practicing meaningful, ongoing communication to establish and

maintain lasting relationships with parents will enhance the academic and social outcomes of students in their schools.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Letter to the Superintendent

Date

Dear [Superintendent],

I am writing to request permission to conduct a phenomenological research study with 8 parents or guardians of 8 students in Lynchburg Public Schools. The title of my research study is "Peeling Back the Layers- Perceptions of Parents of Urban Elementary Students."

The purpose of this study is to determine the educational experiences of parents as lived through their own experiences and how these experiences determine their academic parent involvement for their child. Basically, I want to know about the parent's educational experience and how this relates to their child's education. The information gained from this study will enable the researcher to cultivate practices to further support parents and students in the educational process and bridge parents and the school.

In order to participate in this study the participants must meet the following criteria:
-    Live in the Specific Housing Development
-    Have at minimum of one K-5 school aged child enrolled in the urban elementary school

Once consent is obtained from the participant, each will participate in a maximum one hour-and-a-half audio recorded face to face interview. Following the completion of the interview each parent will be given a $50.00 Walmart gift card for their participation. Member checking is necessary to ensure the participant's voice is accurately portrayed. Once the interview is transcribed, each participant will review the interview. Following this session, participants will be given an additional $50.00 Walmart gift card.

If permission to conduct this study is granted, the parent stories will be instrumental to better meeting parents where they are in relation to education in Central Virginia.

Thank you in advance for your consideration of my request.

Sincerely,

Kellie Baldwin
University of Lynchburg
Ed. D Candidate

Appendix B: Letter to the Housing Manager

Date

Good afternoon [Housing Manager],

Thank you for speaking with me this afternoon. I am writing to seek permission to be on the XXX property to speak with parents regarding my research study. I am conducting my research through the University of Lynchburg. The individuals that I plan to speak with include parents of children that attend XXX and live in the XXX. While speaking with parents, I plan to obtain contact information (name, address, contact number, and email) to reach back out to the individuals regarding their interest in being a research participant. When I confirm the specific date I will be on the property I will provide you with that information.

Thank you for your consideration.

Kellie Baldwin

EdD Candidate

University of Lynchburg

Appendix C: Letter to the XXX Development Center Manager

Date

Good afternoon (Sir),

Thank you for speaking with me this afternoon. I am writing to seek permission to conduct eight 60-90 minute interview sessions at the Jubilee Family Development Center. The interviews are part of the educational research study I am conducting through the University of Lynchburg. The individuals that I plan to interview live in the XXX. Once participants are secured I will be back in touch to confirm the interview session times.

Thank you for your consideration.

Kellie Baldwin

EdD Candidate

University of Lynchburg

Appendix D: Email Message to Participant

Date

Dear Participant:

I appreciate your interest in my research study "Peeling Back the Layers- Parents Perceptions of Urban Elementary Students." This research study will be vital to educators as practices are cultivated to provide a supportive educational experience for children in Central Virginia.

I would like to set up a time to interview you to discuss your educational journey. Please let me know of a couple of dates and times within the next two weeks that will work for your schedule. I plan to meet with you by way of Zoom. The audio recorded interview will take no longer than one hour-and-a-half.

I have attached the Informed Consent Agreement to this email. If you would like to participate please type your name in the form.

Thank you for your interest.

Sincerely,

Kellie Baldwin

University of Lynchburg

Ed. D Candidate

Appendix E: Interview Questions and Probing Stems for Participants

Demographic Questions

1. What is your name?
2. Do you live in XXX Housing Development?
3. How long have you lived at your current address?
4. Do you have an elementary aged child?
5. Please tell me the names and ages of all of your children.
6. What is your current age range: 18-22, 23-27, 28-32, 33- 37, 38-42, 43-47, 48-52, 53-57, 58-62, 63-67, 68-72, 73+
7. Are you currently employed? If so, where? How long have you worked there?
8. What is your race?
9. Are you single, married, separated, or divorced?

Participant's Personal Educational Background

1. Tell me about your educational journey. Begin with the earliest educational experience you can remember.
2. Describe your pre-school, elementary, middle, and high school experiences.
3. Explain how your parents/guardians contributed to (added to) or hindered (held back) your education.
4. What memories do you have of your schooling experience?
5. When you were in school, did you have an individual you formed a bond with? Tell me about that relationship.
6. Did you graduate from high school or obtain a GED?
7. Since high school explain what your life has been like. Include job experience, family situations, and further skill or schooling you have developed?
8. What has been the impact of your schooling on your job situation and life?

Current Involvement with Elementary Child's Education

1. Tell about your child's current education status (grade, strengths, and weaknesses).
2. What does parent involvement mean to you?
3. In what ways do you participate in or communicate with school personnel or school activities?
4. Share the strengths and weaknesses of your child's school.
5. Explain your expectations for your child's school success. What are your hopes and dreams for your child in relation to schooling?
6. What are your expectations of the school and the faculty members?
7. What are suggestions you could offer to improve parent/guardian involvement with your child's school?

8. Describe your comfort level and thoughts on your skills related to supporting your child's education.
9. Do you have any additional information you would like to add to this interview?

Appendix F: Informed Consent Agreement (In Person)

Please read this consent agreement or listen carefully as it is read to you before you decide to participate in the research study. You are being given a copy of what you read or what is read to you – keep your copy.

Project Title: Peeling Back the Layers: Perceptions of Parents

Purpose: The purpose of this study is to determine the educational experiences of parents as lived through their own experience and how these experiences determine their academic parent involvement for their child. Basically, I want to know about your educational experience and how this relates to your child. The information gained from this study will help me improve practices to further support parents and students in the educational process and bridge parents and the school.

Participation: You are being asked to participate in this study because you:
1. Live in the Specific Housing Development
2. Have at minimum one K-5 school aged child enrolled in the urban elementary school

This study will take place in an agreed upon location. You will be asked to share your educational journey and questions related to your academic involvement with your child.

Time Required: Your participation is expected to take no more than one-and-a-half hours.

Risks & Benefits: The potential benefits and risks associated with this study are the opportunity to share your lived educational experience. This opportunity could be instrumental in aiding educators develop an action plan to better meet parents where they are in relation to education in Central Virginia. The interview will be conducted casually and participants will not be forced to discuss areas of their story that they wish to keep private. If participants experience anxiety due the nature of sharing their story, participants should share that with the researcher, the interview can be terminated. Confidentiality will be maintained throughout the study so that participants feel free to share their personal experience, which could help educators.

Compensation: Participants and pilot interviewees will be compensation with a $50.00 Walmart gift card at the conclusion of the interview sessions. Additionally, participants will be compensation with an additional $50.00 gift card following the member checking session. This will be a session for the participant to review the interview and ensure it reflects their feelings.

Voluntary Participation: Please understand that participation is completely voluntary. You have the right to refuse to participate and/or answer any question(s) for any reason, without penalty. You also have the right to withdraw from the research study at any time without penalty. If you want to withdraw from the study please tell the researcher or a member of the research team who is present during your participation. The researcher reserves the right to end your participation for falsifying information. You will not be penalized if you do not participate.

Confidentiality: Your individual privacy will be maintained throughout this study by members of the research team. In order to preserve the confidentiality of your responses, we will keep your interview information maintained in a file that is password protected.

Whom to Contact with Questions: If you have any questions or would like additional information about this research, please contact me, Kellie Baldwin, at baldwin_k@lynchburg.edu You can also contact my faculty research sponsor, who is the Principal Investigator (PI) for this project and is supervising my work on the study, Dr. Mary Ann Mayhew at mayhew.m@lynchburg.edu. The University of Lynchburg Institutional Review Board (IRB) for Human Subjects Research has approved this project. This IRB currently does not stamp approval on the informed consent/assent documents; however, an approval number is assigned to approved studies. The approval number for this study is _____.
You may contact the IRB Director, Dr. Alisha Walker Marciano, through the Office of the Vice President and Dean for Academic Affairs at Lynchburg College at 434.544.8266 or irb-hs@lynchburg.edu with any questions or concerns related to this research study.

Agreement: I understand the above information and have had all of my questions about participation in this research study answered. By signing below, I voluntarily agree to participate in the research study described above and verify that I am 18 years of age or older.

Signature of Participant _____   Date _____

Printed Name of Participant _____

Signature of Researcher _____   Date _____

Printed Name of Researcher _____

Appendix G: Informed Consent Agreement (Zoom)

(This form will be shared with the participant by way of Google and electronically signed.)

Please read this consent agreement (or listen carefully if it is being read to you) before you decide to participate in the research study. Please keep a copy for your records.

Project Title: Peeling Back the Layers: Perceptions of Parents of Urban Elementary Students

Purpose: The purpose of this study is to determine the lived educational experiences of parents and how these experiences determine their academic parent involvement for their child. The researcher wants to know about your educational experience and how this relates to your child. The information gained from this study will help me improve practices to further support parents and students in the educational process and bridge parents and the school.

Participation: As a participant in this study, you will be asked to share your educational journey and questions related to your academic involvement with your child. Open ended questions will be posed by way of the Zoom Cloud Meeting app.

You are being asked to participate in this study because you:

1. Live in the Specific Housing Development

2. Have at minimum one K-5 school aged child enrolled in the urban elementary school

This interview will take place by way of the Zoom Cloud Meeting app. The interview session will be recorded.

Time Required: Your participation is expected to take no more than three hours. The interview session by way of the Zoom Cloud Meeting app is expected to last no more than one and one half hours. The member checking session (review the interview and ensure it reflects your feelings) is expected to take no more than one and one half hours and is completed independently after receiving the electronic version of the transcriptions.

Voluntary Participation: Please understand that participation is completely voluntary. You have the right to refuse to participate and/or answer any question(s) for any reason, without penalty. You also have the right to withdraw from the research study at any time without penalty. If you want to withdraw from the study please tell the researcher or a member of the research team who is present during your participation.

Potential Risks: The interview will be conducted casually and you will not be forced to discuss areas of your story that you wish to keep private. If you experience anxiety due to the nature of sharing your story, you should share that with the researcher, the interview can be terminated. Additionally, you can contact the Community Access Network at 434-220-3366 if counseling support is needed. This company supports individuals with and without insurance.

Confidentiality will be maintained throughout the study (by the usage of pseudonyms) so that you feel free to share your personal experience, which could help educators. Your participation

in the study will remain anonymous and the researcher will not share information regarding the interview. The audio recordings and transcriptions will be maintained in an electronic file that is password protected and knowledgeable only to the researcher.

Potential Benefits: The potential benefits associated with this study is that you will have the opportunity to share your lived educational experience. The information gained from this study will help the researcher improve practices to further support parents and students in the educational process and bridge parents and the school.

Compensation: If you participate you will be compensation with a $50.00 Walmart gift card at the conclusion of the interview session. Additionally, you will be compensated with an additional $50.00 gift card following the member checking session. The member checking session (review the interview and ensure it reflects your feelings) is expected to take no more than one and one half hours and is completed independently after receiving the electronic version of the transcriptions. The participants will be given the opportunity to make the researcher aware of any concerns. If you are a pilot interview (practice interviews with two individuals from another housing development) you will be compensated with a $50.00 Walmart gift card at the conclusion of the interview session. A member checking session will not be utilized.

Confidentiality: Your individual privacy will be maintained throughout this study by members of the research team. In order to preserve the confidentiality of your responses, the researcher will keep your interview information maintained in an electronic file that is password protected and only accessible by the researcher.

Whom to Contact with Questions: If you have any questions or would like additional information about this research, please contact me, Kellie Baldwin, at baldwin_k@lynchburg.edu You can also contact my faculty research sponsor, who is the Principal Investigator (PI) for this project and is supervising my work on the study, Dr. Mary Ann Mayhew at mayhew.m@lynchburg.edu. The University of Lynchburg Institutional Review Board (IRB) for Human Subjects Research has approved this project. This IRB currently does not stamp approval on the informed consent/assent documents; however, an approval number is assigned to approved studies. The approval number for this study is LHS1920039. You may contact the IRB Director, Dr. Alisha Walker Marciano, through the Office of the Vice President and Dean for Academic Affairs at Lynchburg College at 434.544.8266 or irb-hs@lynchburg.edu with any questions or concerns related to this research study.

Agreement: I understand the above information and have had all of my questions about participation in this research study answered. By signing below I voluntarily agree to participate in the research study described above and verify that I am 18 years of age or older.

Signature of Participant _____ Date _____

Printed Name of Participant _____

-

Signature of Researcher _____   Date _____

Printed Name of Researcher _____

Appendix H: Significant Statements

In the table below are the significant statements that were extracted from the six participant's interview transcriptions. Each significant statement is identified by the participant number (P) and line number (L). The formulated meanings (FM) are listed beside the significant statements.

Significant Statements	Formulated Meanings
Participant 1- James	
1. I just filed for unemployment. P1: L 53	FM1: The COVID-19 pandemic impacted the parent financially and he is currently unemployed.
2. My education is pretty good. I was brought up and really believe in education cause my mother is not from this country. P1: L 67-68	FM2: The value of education is acknowledged due to the parent's background and the parent feels his education was a positive one overall.
3. I started getting into a little trouble in my earlier years, but my education was really good. P1: L 69-70	FM3: Parent experienced obstacles during youth but feels his educational experience was a positive one overall.
4. I dropped out, got incarcerated and actually got my GED while I was incarcerated. P1: L 73-74	FM4: Parent dropped out of school, was incarcerated, but pursued GED.
5. English is always my favorite class. P1: L 85	FM5: Parent enjoyed English while in school.
6. Then I started getting into stuff, like art class. Like just basic drawing, like I do tattoos. P1: L 85-86, 90	FM6: Visual arts opportunities while in school were appreciated.
7. Well, my childhood high school was basically just getting older. I started hanging in the streets by then. So things like that nature making sure I look good dressed for school. I think a lot of kids are concerned with that. Like if their parents don't have the money, to make them, like to buy them the right kind of outfits, they tend to don't want to go to school. Cause I had that problem at one time. That's what started leading me into the streets, trying to be able to get money so I could buy proper clothes to stay in style to go to school. P1: L 96-101	FM7: Parent experienced obstacles during youth including financial instability resulting in parent looking to the streets for a resolution.
8. They were really focused on education. Like I grew up with the encyclopedias in my house, started playing Scrabble, like eight years old, stuff like that. P1: L 114-115	FM8: Parent perceived education to be important to his parent and he was exposed to learning materials in the home.
9. They was really big on education, my mother and my stepfather at the time. Cause my stepfather raised me from like four… P1: L 115	FM9: Parent was raised by mother and step-father.
10. She was actually a kindergarten teacher, I think kindergarten or first grade teacher when she was back to her country. P1: L 121-122	FM10: Participant was raised by a parent that valued education.
11. He's still my best friend. We have been best friends since like, four or five years old. My friend Timothy his kids, I actually call his kids my nieces and nephews right now. P1: L 144, 148-149	FM11: Peer relationships during school were important to the participant and he maintained a positive childhood relationship into adulthood.
12. [Getting the GED] It made me kind of really proud of myself, actually. Cause I was about 17. I got	

locked up to do a year in my county jail and I kind of had the idea that I got out I probably wasn't going to go back to school. P1: L 154-156	FM12: Participant determined when incarcerated he would not return to school so he obtained his GED.
13. I was in the top five, everybody that took the GED when I took it, I think I got like a 296 or 305. Something like that. I was really proud of myself. P1: L 161-162	FM13: Parent is proud of his success on the GED.
14. I've been incarcerated a few, a good amount of times. I've probably got about maybe about 20 years under my belt altogether being incarcerated on and off. P1: L 167-169	FM14: Participant had an extensive history with criminal conduct.
15. And the job market in New York is very tough. P1: L 185-186	FM15: Parent experienced difficulty obtaining a job.
16. Mostly construction work or warehouse work. I drive forklifts. I can do roofing. P1: L 197	FM16: Parent has experience with several entry level positions.
17. I've never really went to school or took any classes for it. P1: L 203	FM17: Parent has not participated in further skill development or education.
18. Everything I basically learned as far as I have learned on the job doing construction, driving heavy equipment, driving forklifts. I've learned that on job sites. P1: L 206-207	FM18: Participants had no formal education instead; on-the job-training.
19. Influenced me as far as like, I still like to read. People told me I have a great penmanship, which I think a lot of kids nowadays don't have. P1: L 211-212	FM19: Parent enjoys reading and has good penmanship.
20. I really do believe in education like it's a plus. I'm not too big on nowadays the college thing, but as far as your basic education. Get through learn how to read and write, know your math, know, some type of history. P1: L 213-215	FM20: Participant does not feel a college education is necessary to obtain a positive life experience.
21. I think nowadays in the world you got a lot of millionaires out here now and well educated people that actually didn't go to college. P1: L 217-218	FM21: Financial stability can be obtained without a college education.
22. I know that millionaires and a lot of people have started their own businesses, things of that nature. There's better opportunities out here nowadays. I think without the college experience, you know, I think going through life alone, it's almost like a college experience. You learn a lot. P1: L 227-230	FM22: Entrepreneurships are a possibility without a college education. Life itself is an educational experience.
23. He teaches me things on the laptop. He teaches me things on the tablet. Kids nowadays are a whole lot smarter than they were when I was coming up. I think he is smarter with technical stuff. P1: 237-239, 244	FM23: Parent feels his grandson is learning concepts at an earlier age than he did.
24. Like we basically talk to him like an adult. We don't baby him. We talk to him like an adult. We discipline him when he needs to be disciplined and he's a really good kid. P1: L 263-265	FM24: Parent exposes grandson to conversations in the home and provides discipline when needed.

25. When your child comes in from school, actually sitting down with them and know what homework they have. P1: L 274-275	FM25: Parent engages in homework opportunities with the child.
26. Knowing what's going on with what they're being taught in their class and you know, really being involved. P1: L 275-276	FM26: Parent is aware of the learning opportunities in the classroom.
27. You know still going to parent teacher meetings and you know, things of that nature. P1: L 276	FM27: Parent communicates with the child's teachers.
28. Like I said, know what they're learning, knowing what they bring home to do and not just send them to a corner and telling them to do their own work. Sitting down with them and actually helping them do it. P1: L 277-279	FM28: Parent is aware of the learning concepts and engages in homework opportunities with the child.
29. Usually on pickups, things of that nature, go speak to, talk to the teacher when I go to pick him up. Always available no matter what. P1: L 289-290	FM29: Parent talks with the teacher and is available to support the school team.
30. And that's like, even right now, I've noticed, you know, literally XXX XXX [Housing Complex] right now. There's a lot of parents that I know. They had the situation where parents could connect to the internet to find out what their kids' schooling would still be, you know, like give them their schoolwork and stuff like that. And I know there's a lot of parents out here weren't even involved with it. A lot of parents won't even dealing with still trying to take their kid's classes. It was just kids go outside, play like. P1: L 299-303	FM30: Parent noticed many parents did not focus on education during the school shutdown.
31. And I'm worried about that when this Coronavirus thing ends. What's going to happen to these kids that miss school for the past two or three months? And like what's going to happen? Are they going to graduate to the next grade? Still, never finished and learning what they should have learned in their grade? Are they going to be behind a little bit? P1: L 303-307	FM31: Parent is concerned about the impact COVID-19 will have on the educational progress of children.
32. I've been to like one or two of the little what is it like concerts or plays, you know, things that they do like that. P1: L 333-334	FM32: Parent attended a few school events involving the child.
33.I just think more parents need to be involved in their kid's school, but it's also rough and tough because you know, like, you know, with the economy and things like that nature, you know, sometimes you don't have the time you have to work, you know? P1: L 334-336	FM33: Parent expresses challenges with being able to attend school functions due to work.
34. You know a lot of things is done with the schools are done during, you know, daytime working hours. So, you know, if you're a daytime work parent it's hard, you know? P1: L 345-346	FM34: School activities held during the school day create a barrier for working parents.
35. I think more teachers in my opinion really need to get into teaching because they want to teach. P1: L 357-558	FM35: Parent expressed a desire for teachers to want to be teachers.

36. I do feel that they need to get paid more. I'm really in agreement with that. P1: L 358-359	FM36: Parent feels teachers are underpaid.
37. I'm a firm believer in civil employees, teachers like people that's training your kids' minds don't even get paid as much as somebody that knows how to bounce a basketball and that's terrible, you know? P1: L 359-361	FM37: Participant expressed concern about the priority of sports in society and the financial benefits vs. teachers' compensation.
38. I know how it was, you know I went to school where we had metal detectors. P1: L 369-370	FM38: Parent attended school where student and staff safety was a concern.
39. A little bit of discipline. Somebody that's going to be somewhat strict and not let them do whatever he want to do. Cause you need that. Cause kids get a little loose when they are not around their parents. P1: L 401-402	FM39: Parent expects schools to promote discipline and have expectations similar to home.
40. Good education. Attention to children. Not just attention to the children that are like messing up in class, but attention to the kids that are really going further too. P1: L403-404	FM40: Parent expects school to provide a high quality education and notes children may be mistaken as having poor behaviors when really they are not being challenged.
41. Because I felt like myself even, I used to get frustrated a lot in class because when something was taught the first time, I caught onto it. And for the kids that didn't catch on to it, the first time it used to frustrate me because now I feel like I'm sitting in class, wasting my time. P1: L404-407	FM41: Parent expressed his frustration with not being challenged in school.
42. I started doing things and playing around and messing around. So it seemed like I was a bad kid, but I really wasn't. I was just bored because you wasn't giving me nothing else to challenge myself with. P1: L 407-409	FM42: Participant acted out due to boredom.
43. I think they really need to focus on each more child. P1: L 413	FM43: Parent feels educators need to be more child focused.
44. Focus on each child more and know that child's strengths as an individual instead of as a group, you know. P1: L 413, 417-418	FM44: Parent feels educators need to focus on the individual strengths of the child.
45. I mean, staying with good grades. Actually liking to go to school, which my grandson does. He loves to go to school. P1: L 425-426	FM45: Parent expects child to maintain good grades and enjoy going to school.
46. Like I said, it's just like focus on the kids. And try to get to know each one of them individually. P1: 432	FM46: Individual relationships are important for student success.
47. I really can't say there's really nothing that you can do to make a person do it if they don't want to do. If they're just there, they have to really want to be parents. They have to really care about their child on their own to be more involved. There's nothing, that nobody could say, nothing that the courts could say, anybody can say to make a parent more involved in their child's life. P1: L 453-456	FM47: Participant notes you can not make an individual be involved with their child. It has to be a personal choice.
48. Probably teachers reaching out more and not just when a child does something wrong or a negative. When a child does something good. P1: L 461-462	FM48: Teacher communication is essential. This includes positive communication.

49. Most teachers, definitely aren't in it for the pay. They have to be in there for the love of teaching. P1: L 473-474	FM49: Teachers are not in the profession due to pay and they have a love of teaching.
50. But you know, put a little bit more effort. P1: 474	FM50: Educators need to put forth more effort to connect with the students.
51. I had teachers that I still remember their names from the second grade. I have a vice principal, I still remember from the eighth grade, that's still asking me about, still asked my mother about me 10 and 15 years after I was out of eighth grade. P1: L 474-477	FM51: Educators can make a positive impact on a person's life.
52. Yeah, basically that was basically my eighth grade vice principal kind of got to me. Like sat down had a good talk with me. He didn't down me when I was messing up. He didn't try to be like a parent. He just, basically always just told me, Oh, you're smarter than this. You can do better. I know you are, so straighten up. P1: L 482-485	FM52: Encouragement from an educator is important.
53. Yeah, I'm very comfortable. P1: L 492	FM53: Parent is comfortable with school content.
54. I'm getting a little too old here, but I'm comfortable with a lot of stuff. P1: L 497-498	FM54: Parent is comfortable with school content.
55. I mean, right now I'm thinking about going back to school, like to become a youth counselor. P1: L 515-516	FM55: Parent wants to further his education.
Participant 2- Deborah	
56. Yes, I'm just on a layoff right now. I work at XXX [University] and I've been there two years. P2: L 37, 41	FM56: Parent is currently laid off due to COVID-19 pandemic. Parent had dependable work prior to the layoff.
57. I used to like going to school. I think I liked it more when I got into middle school. P2: L 64	FM57: Parent feels her educational experience was a positive one overall.
58. I liked all my classes. P2: L 74	FM58: Parent feels her educational experience was a positive one overall.
59. And that, and I did like when I used to go to a trade school. Cause I went to trade school for food service. I did like that. I went there for like four years. I would leave my school, to go to vo-tech and then come back from vo-tech and go back to my school. P2: L 82-83, 87-88	FM59: Parent engaged in formal skill instruction while in high school.
60. We used to make/bake cakes, a whole bunch of stuff, fruit trays. We also had where the students on the campus could order food and we would take it to them. P2: L 96-97	FM60: Parent engaged in formal skill instruction while in high school
61. I'm a server there. P2: L106	FM61: Parent continued some variation of the skill development in her job.
62. High school was okay. P2: L 119	FM62: Participant had mixed feelings about high school experience.

63. Like any other child, I did things. Got in a little trouble hanging with the wrong crowd. P2: L119-120	FM63: Parent experienced obstacles during youth which included negative peer relationships.
64. My favorite part of high school was my prom and my ring dance. And when I graduated. P2: L 120	FM64: Parent has favorable memories from high school activities.
65. You know, how you like the, I ain't gonna say a new student, but I used to be that for a little while, but just hanging with the wrong people. Not that I got in like any serious trouble, but I got in some trouble. P2: L125-126	FM65: Parent experienced obstacles during youth which included hanging with the wrong crowd.
66. Oh, no, not really. My foster parents was. P2: L 130	FM66: Birth parents were not involved in participant's education but foster parent was. Participant experienced an adverse childhood experience when placed in foster care at age 8.
67. Yes, I stayed with them until I got grown. P2: L 138	FM67: Participant remained in foster care from age 8 until adulthood.
68. Like my grandma didn't play when it came to homework. She didn't really like, let me hang with a lot of people. That's all. She made sure I did, she made sure I was up to par with my schoolwork. P2: L 147-148	FM68: Participant's caregiver encouraged school success and participant's parent was knowledgeable of participant's activities and friendships.
69. Well, one of my best friends, I took her to my, I think it was my prom we had a good time. P2: L 170	FM69: Participant had a positive peer relationship while in high school.
70. Her name was Ms. Wayne. Cause she treated us well, for one, she treated all her students the same. And like, if we needed extra help in certain activities or curriculum. She helped us. If I had any personal problems at home, I could talk to her. P2: L192, 196-197, 202	FM70: Participant had a positive adult relationship while in high school and could confide in the caring adult.
71. I graduated in 2008. P2: L 210	FM71: Parent graduated from high school.
72. I've been homeless twice. I did what I was supposed to do as a mom. I still maintained work. I still made sure my kids went to school and daycare. P2: L 214, 224-225	FM72: Parent experienced adverse experiences as an adult but persevered and maintained normalcy for children.
73. I worked at a Restaurant. I worked at a nursing home. This is my second time back at XXX [University]. I've worked at one temp service. P2: L 237-238	FM73: Participant had several entry level positions.
74. No, ma'am. P2: L 253	FM74: Participant has not engaged in education opportunities following high school.
75. Cause for one, I can get a good job anywhere. I just really haven't. I don't know. I just like where I'm at. And I'm still around food. Even though I'm not cooking it. P2: L 268-269	FM75: Participant feels prior education provides opportunity for positive work engagements.
76. It means a lot, because for one, a child should at least have one or the other of their parents in their life	FM76: A parent's presence plays a vital role in the overall well-being of children.

to help them. Cause that actually can mess a child up, not having their parents in their life. P2: L 314-315	
77. I have Zoom. Class Dojo. Emails. I'm always talking to their teachers, like three or four times a week. P2: L 319	FM77: Parent uses various formats to engage with teacher.
78. So, I've had two of my daughter's teachers come visit her. P2: L 320	FM78: Home visit was important to family teacher relationship.
79. And since this [COVID 19- Pandemic] has been going on, so like, I really do appreciate it now. Since they're doing work from home and we switch over some stuff to their laptop, it was kinda like frustrating at first. So, I just got in touch with her teacher and they came over and helped her, spent a little time with her. P2: L 320-323	FM79: Teacher visited family's home to support student's learning.
80. Some of them, not all of them. Open house and then they had some, little activities, like a relay thing for the kids and the parents. P2: L 327, 331	FM80: Parent attends activities at the school.
81. Well, for one the teachers at XXX [Elementary School], they do care about the students and they don't leave a student out for nothing. P2: L 337-338	FM81: Parent values school and feels the children are important to the staff.
82. And they keep in contact with the student's parents. Even if it's good or bad. P2: L 338-339	FM82: School maintains open lines of communication.
83. I just liked the school they go to. P2: L 339	FM83: Parent has a positive feeling about the child's school.
84. For them to go to school and listen and learn. I hope they stay focused. P2: L 354, 363	FM84: Parent expects child to listen to the adults and remain focused on learning.
85. I want to see them graduate like they supposed to and get a good job. Or if they decided they want to go to college, whatever they want to do. I'm always supporting it. P2: L 363-364	FM85: Parent values education and wants to see the child graduate and continue education and get a good job.
86. To make sure they get from, from point A to point B, make sure they get to school safe. To make sure that they take care of my kids, because when they leave home, they're in the school's hands. P2: L 370-371	FM86: Parent entrust school personnel to keep the child safe.
87. But like I said, like they have different things for the parents to come to and see how, see what their kids are doing. P2: L 378-379	FM87: Parent attends activities at the school.
88. And then you could always get in contact with your child's teacher, because there's Class Dojo and there's emails for like the ones that can't make it to the school. You can call cause I know a couple of times I couldn't make it to the school for the meeting. So they just did it over the phone. P2: L 383-386	FM88: Parent uses various formats to engage with teacher including Class Dojo.
89. I do them like my grandma did me. So I just teach them what was taught to me. P2: L 397, 399-400	FM89: Parent uses previously learned strategies to support child.

90. I would message one of her teachers and tell her, well, Daughter tried to do what she could and I tried to help her and we couldn't figure it out. Could you help us with this problem? P2: L 422-423	FM90: Parent is comfortable reaching out to school for support.
91. Yes. Their teachers love them! P2: L 429	FM91: Parent feels teachers care deeply for the children.
Participant 3- Tonya	
92. No ma'am. P3: L 67	FM92: Parent is currently unemployed.
93. I know for sure I did go to Head Start. If I'm not mistaken, Ms. Earl and Ms. Burch, that I remember, those were my kindergarten teachers' names. P3: L 87, 88-89	FM93: Early access to educational opportunities and childhood education was memorable.
94. It was pretty good my mom really had stability. P3: L 95	FM94: Participants overall feeling toward personal education is positive and feels her mom provided a stable home life.
95. So basically the same elementary school I started kindergarten and I finished all the way to sixth grade. And then my high school, 9th to 12th. I finished once I started, so it wasn't a lot of moving around or anything like that. It was like strictly stability that's how I grew up. P3: L 95-98	FM95: Participant had a consistent school and was not transient.
96. I pretty much had to set my own goals… P3: L 103	FM96: Participant established goals for self.
97. So as far as education wise I know she graduated high school. But at the same time, it wasn't like she was strict on me. P3: L 104-105	FM97: Participant's parent graduated high school and does not feel childhood was strict.
98. But I actually wished that I would've had that strictness. P3: L 107	FM98: Participant feels it would have been beneficial to have a more firm parenting.
99. I did graduate high school, but at the same time, he educational background wasn't there as strong as I wanted it to be because her education background was like high school. And she really didn't reinforce that on me like I wish she would have. P3: L 108-111	FM99: Participant graduated from high school but participant feels her parents educational background wasn't as strong as it could have been due to her parent having a high school education. Participant feels it would have been beneficial to have education more of a focus.
100. So in turn because I didn't have that, that's what I enforce on my kids, is their education and show them and let them know how important education is for you to get further in life. P3: L 111-112	FM100: Participant wants her children to have what she did not have a strong focus on education.
101. One of my favorite teachers, I know for sure her name when I was in fourth grade. Ms. Sally Vair. I just enjoyed when I got close with my teachers in elementary school. P3: L 119-120	FM101: Participant had a positive adult relationship while in elementary school.
102. So she was my fourth grade teacher and I was very and my third grade teacher was Ms. Owen and they would, I gravitated to them. P3: L 142-143	FM102: Participant had positive adult relationships while in elementary school.

103. So what I did enjoy about that was like I could eat lunch with them. Go to the cafeteria and pick up my lunch tray and then go upstairs and eat with them. Just one on one, have some one on one time with them and eat lunch and talk and what the conversations were about that, I don't remember. But I remember those were the times that I did like in school was just having a teacher all to myself without, you know, my other classmates. P3: L 143-147	FM103: The adult relationship was meaningful because the parent felt valued.
104. It is weird because where I was going to school at the apartment complex that I lived in, I lived there for 26 years. P3: L 153-154	FM104: Parent had stable housing for many years.
105. But middle school, my eighth grade teacher, I know for sure math teacher, her name was Ms. Gray. I would reach out to her and at once I used to have her phone number like years ago. So at the time after I had already graduated high school. I would still go back and she was still there and I would go back and you know and see and visit her and stuff like that. P3: L 155-156, 157, 158-159 161-162	FM105: Participant had a positive adult relationship while in middle school and maintained this relationship for many years.
106. I've been trying to search and everything for her on Facebook, but I haven't been able to find her so, yeah. P3: L172-173	FM106: Participant would like to reconnect with this positive influence.
107. My best I could actually say my best year was 10th grade year. I was an A/B student honor roll all throughout the year. P3: L 178-179	FM107: Parent feels her 10th grade year was a success.
108. Pretty much all through school I was always shy, timid, and, you know, just stayed to myself and a lot of that, I still am. But because of life experiences, I'm more voiceful and you know, more opinionated because I felt as if because I didn't have that when I was in high school that either I was looked past or people thought that I was conceited, stuck up, passive and everything because I didn't talk much. And I was just, it was basically cause I was just shy and I didn't really want to bring much attention to myself. P3: L 179-184	FM108: Participant liked to keep to herself and did not want to stand out.
109. I didn't have no self-esteem about myself. Being picked on, called names, and stuff like that so that was another reason why I just clammed up and stayed in my shell. But growing up, anybody that really showed interest in me, and just gave me encouraging words and to lift me up as a person or what have you, and to make me feel better, I just gravitated to them… But that really meant a lot to me as a child growing up because I looked at it as if they didn't have to. P3: L 197-200, 201-202	FM109: Participant experienced unfavorable treatment as a student but was motivated by positive feedback and supportive comments.
110. So they went out the box out of their comfort zone to comfort me and make me feel better by giving me encouraging words. So Ms. Gray, my eighth grade	FM110: Parent was motivated by positive adult feedback and supportive comments.

math teacher at the end of the school year, I had a yearbook. But she had signed my yearbook and I can't remember exactly what she had signed, but it was something that really made me feel good. It was, you know, encouraging words and everything. P3: L 205-207, 209-211	
111. When I started high school, I say probably my 9th and 10th grade year, I still was going to visit her and stuff like that. So I would always go whenever I had time to go visit her and, you know, sit down, and talk to her and stuff like that. P3: L 214-215, 217-218	FM111: Parent was motivated by positive feedback and supportive comments.
112. Actually, my first job was when I was 16. And then I started working at Restaurant while I was in 10th grade. But after that, when I graduated, that's when I started working at the daycare center. P3: L 229-231	FM112: Participant had several entry level positions.
113. And as far as family is concerned, it was always just me and my mom. I'm the only child. P3: L 234-235	FM113: Parent was raised in a single parent home with an absent father.
114. Me and my mom's relationship wasn't as close netted as it should have been until...I see, cause I got married, had my 19 year old daughter. P3: L 235-236	FM114: Parent feels her relationship with her mother was not as close as she hoped.
115. My mom was diagnosed with ovarian cancer and it was like just a big snowball effect after that. You know, she passed in 2002. I was five months pregnant with my son. I have five kids total. P3: L 236-238	FM115: Parent experienced adverse life experiences which created barriers for her own education advancement.
116. Pretty much on-the-job training. I did some reception work. I have worked at Tax Prep as a receptionist, a caregiver, cashier, customer service. P3: L 257-258	FM116: Participant had several entry level positions.
117. I went to school, I went back to a community college in XXX XXX Community College and I started to major in accounting. But I switched over my major to business administration and my minor accounting. But I didn't finish. So I'm looking to go back when everything... I can't do it now but with everything that's been going on. P3: L 259-263	FM117: Participant enrolled in community college to advance her knowledge base but was unable to complete the degree. The COVID-19 pandemic impacts the participant's ability to go back to college currently.
118. It's just been hard because my elementary school kids I've been homeschooling them. P3: L 263-264	FM118: Parent took on the role of homeschooling children during COVID-19 pandemic.
119. So it's just been hectic every time I try to, you know, go back to school for myself it's always something that's out of my control that happens. P3: L 264-265	FM119: Adverse life experiences constantly prevent her from obtaining her educational goals.
120. Basically, especially when it comes to my kids, pressing education on them and just being there. P3: L 276	FM120: Participant values a solid education and wants to ensure her children know the value of a solid education.
121. Cause a lot of times since I've had kids, my main thing has been to be there for them as far as the	FM121: Participant noted that some parents are constantly working and do not focus on education.

education is. You know, you have some households that the parents work, work, work, work, work, and the kids have lack of education or the parents don't spend [time], they just send them to school. And, you know, they go to school because they have to. When the education part, when they come home, they're not making sure that their homework is done or, you know, something like that. P3: L 276-281	
122. But because I didn't have that when my mom didn't really go about doing that for me, I don't, I think the reason why is because she didn't think that her education was where it should have been for her to push it on me. Because the area, wasn't being strict on me I'm being like that with my kids, because I don't want to be too lenient. P3: L 281-283, 286-287	FM122: Participant does not feel her parent focused on education because her mother's education was not at the level it should be. Parent wants to ensure children value education and make it a priority.
123. My main thing is just pushing education, education, education on them, and basically practicing what I preach if I'm preaching it to them. P3: L 291-292	FM123: Parent wants to ensure children value education and make it a priority.
124. She's reading, I have her, since they've been out of school and I've been homeschooling them, I've been having her read chapter books. P3: L 335-336	FM124: Parent took on the role of teacher during the school shut down due to COVID-19 and exposed her child to chapter books.
125. And she loves video games, you know, like getting on there, playing educational games on the computer and stuff like that. P3: L 338-340	FM125: Parent provides child access to educational games.
126. Being involved in every area of your child's life, whether it's school. Just letting them know that they're there. I have an open door policy. P3: 345-346	FM126: Parent wants to be involved in every aspect of the child's life including education. Parent values open communication with children.
127. So I have told them, especially my older ones, I have told them that the foundation of any relationship is communication. Just like the foundation of a building. If you don't have that, it's not going to stand. So I let them know, you can come and talk to me about anything. P3: L349-352	FM127: Parent feels communication is essential to all relationships.
128. So just being there for them and letting them know that they don't have to fret or they don't have to be afraid as far as coming to talk to me. Whether it's good or bad or just, you know, anything. Because a lot of kids out here, they don't have that. And the statistics of suicide and younger kids is getting and percentage rate is getting higher and higher and I don't want them to be one of those statistics. So I try to be involved with them. Daughter and Daughter, if they have afterschool programs or, you know, little functions at school at the elementary school, I'm there each and every time and, you know, just try to do stuff with them. P3: L 359-365	FM128: Parent is concerned about the number of suicides for adolescents. Parent participates in educational opportunities as much as possible.
129. So basically Class Dojo is the main line as far as knowing what's going on, whether it is behavioral wise or anything else that needs to be communicated between myself and the teacher. P3: L 385-387	FM129: Communication with the school includes utilizing the Class Dojo app.

130. They will call me, let me know what was going on. Let me speak to her if she is willing to, so they didn't go straight to, okay, your child is showing behavioral problems let me suspend her from school. P3: L 394-396	FM130: Phone calls with the school are important and parent engages with teachers this way.
131. The administrators are very excellent... They were A, they were A plus with me this school year. P3: L 405-406, 414-415	FM131: Parent values the administrators.
132. Pretty much it's everything. I mean, anything that you can think about, it's everything. I mean, when they have the back to school nights, because I don't have my own transportation. So with this complex over here, they have back to school nights, they actually arrange a bus. P3: L 420-422	FM132: School arranges transportation for parents so this will not be a barrier.
133. I expect for them to go to school, do what is told of them. Basically respect, show their manners because that's what they're taught here at home. And I'm trying to also teach them what I'm teaching then at home, they are to carry that everywhere they go. And I think they're slowly but surely trying to realize that at school. Put things back where it belongs, you get it, put it back. Cause that's, what's taught to them at home. Clean up behind yourselves, you get up from the table, you know, don't leave it. P3: L 440-445	FM133: Parent wants children to follow the same expectations as home at school.
134. I want them to of course, graduate, finish school move on to further their education and whatever field or profession that they choose to go in and just be successful in life and get a nice paying job, something that they want and not just getting a job because of the money. P3: L 452-454	FM134: Parent wants children to graduate from school and pursue a career with a solid financial path.
135. Oh, just to monitor, you know, have my kid's best interest at heart. P3: L 466	FM135: Parent views school as an extension of the family.
136. Basically being a second family, which they have showed me. Like Daughter's teacher, Mrs. Inge. She just went above and beyond and I would thank her, you know until I'm blue in the face. But basically just being a second disciplinary action for them. We're on the same page and everything that I expect and I let them know that I expect for them to do it at home. That's the same thing that I expect for them to do at school. So just having them piggyback. So that's basically the expectations that I expect for the schools. And everything I'm doing here is done at school and vice versa. P3: L 488-492, 494-495	FM136: Parent views school as a second family.
137. To be honest with you, I think they're doing everything in their power that they can do. Like getting to and from school. There's no reason you're not able to get to or from the school for activities and things like that. They, have even as far as parent teacher conferences, they have even went the extra mile instead of me catching the bus or getting all the way out there to XXX Road from here for 15 minutes,	FM137: Parent notes that some parents are lazy and do not put forth the effort in relation to school support.

a half an hour, or so they would do it over the phone. So that's why I say it's nothing that I would change as far as the school system. I mean, as far as the school is concerned, but you just have a lot of lazy parents, you know, you have a lot of parents who just send the kids to school. First of all, because it is mandated. Second of all, they use it as like a daycare. P3: L 502-508, 510	
138. And they are not spending that quality time. So it's pretty much out of the school systems hands if it's not being done at home. Just because you have kids doesn't mean that you know how to parent. And parenting to me, that will make the school system a whole lot better, is if and when it starts from at home. P3: L 513-516	FM138: Parent feels that schooling will be better for children when discipline and education begin at home.
139. It's when it starts at home. It's when it starts at home. It's nothing really that you can actually do as far as the school system is concerned. Like I explained it to my kids, I said from the time that I bring y'all home from the hospital, y'all are my responsibility to teach you guys right from wrong from the time that you're brought home from the hospital up until when it's time for you to go to school. I'm teaching you right from wrong, how you're supposed to act, how to be respectful, how to use your positive manners, how to make right choices and not wrong choices. But you have some parents that don't do that. You know, they leave it up to the school system to do that. And I think that's unfair. P3: L 520-526	FM139: Participant feels education is a partnership and supportive parenting begins in the home.
140. Yes, actually, I do feel comfortable. Like I stated earlier, I see the difference because all my schooling has been done in the Northern part of Virginia. That is a big difference as far as educational point of views, the Northern part of Virginia is, they are more advanced when it comes to education and how you speak. P3: L 532-533, 537-538	FM140: Parent is proud of her education and is comfortable communicating with school staff members. Parent feels the education she obtained in the northern part of Virginia outweighs the education locally.
141. As far as education is concerned, giving them that same outlook and how to use the words correctly and not be looked at as like not being intelligent or illiterate and those types of things. P3: L 542-544	FM141: Education and correct grammar are important.

Participant 4- Samantha

Excerpt	**Formulated Meanings**
142. Well, I recently just started at Clothing Distribution Center about a month ago and I have been working at Restaurant for almost a year. P4: L 35-36	FM142: Participant is employed at a clothing distribution store and a local fast food restaurant.

143. Well, I know in preschool I was very into everything. P4: L 59	FM143: Participant had early exposure to education.
144. The first grade was pretty good for me. I was ahead of my class. We learned. I liked the way they teach there. They're very helpful. They work together. P4: L 59-60	FM144: Participant feels elementary education overall was positive and she was at the top of the class in first grade.
145. So I had a pretty smooth elementary, up until I want to say I was in the fourth grade. That's when we started moving around. P4: L 62-63	FM145: Parent had a positive experience in early elementary school until participant's parent became very transient beginning in fourth grade.
146. Cause when I came here to City, I was in some advanced classes. P4: L 64	FM146: Parent feels she was well prepared when moving to a new school and participated in advanced classes.
147. Elementary school was pretty good. I still got in trouble for being loud. I kind of stayed in trouble a lot. P4: L 77, 77-78	FM147: Parent has positive feelings toward specific school but feels she was in trouble at school.
148. Well, you know, being new, coming new to a school, you know, you're going to have people they want to pick on you. P4: L 83-84	FM148: Challenges with being transient include difficulty making friends.
149. So I mean, when I first got there, I didn't have any friends. I didn't really talk to anybody. That was kind of my motto just to like see, absorb, you know, see who was cool, who was troublemakers and stuff like that. So yeah, so once I kinda got the hang of the school and, you know, the teachers and all of that stuff I think that's when I kind of opened up more. And I mean, I made some friends. P4: L 85-89	FM149: Challenges with being transient include difficulty making friends. Participant kept to herself after transitioning to a new school.
150. I had some people that still didn't like me because of how I dressed and how I talked and stuff like that, or somebody that I hung out with, they probably didn't like, so it was, I stayed getting in school suspension. P4: L 89-91	FM150: Participant had difficulty fitting in after transitioning to a new school and got in school suspension.
151. My grades were good. It wasn't honor roll, but like A, B, C type thing. Mostly A's and B's a couple of C's. P4: L 96-97	FM 151: Participant maintained good grades
152. So that was a pretty good school. P4: L 116	FM152: Positive feelings toward a specific school.
153. But when I went to XXX Middle [School], it was more buckled down. P4: L 125-126	FM153: Participant focused more on academics once in middle school.
154. I did band my first year of XXX [Middle School]. I played a clarinet for the first half of the school year. And then I went to the bass clarinet. P4: L 127, 131	FM154: Participant participated in fine arts.
155. My grades, they stayed kind of stayed steady. P4: L 131-132	FM155: Parent maintained positive grades.
156. I guess you, they say sometimes, well, what you're going through at home, kind of, makes, reflects on your grades and stuff like that. I feel like that's kind of true. Cause I took my personal issues from	FM156: Personal issues at home negatively impacted school success.

home and I just kinda like took it out on school. P4: L 132-134	
157. So my grades, they kind of, they won't the best. They wasn't as good as they were when I was in elementary school. P4: L 134-135	FM157: Middle school grades were impacted adversely by home situation.
158. And it wasn't because I couldn't do it. It was just because I didn't want to do it because of what I was going through at home. P4: L 136-137	FM158: Home situation negatively impacted school success.
159. My grades were pretty fair there. The teachers, they were nice. I could say my favorite subject, I can say would be history and math. Those were the main good grades I got was history and math. I was in advanced algebra my ninth grade year. P4: L 140-142	FM159: Grades were fair in school and the teachers were nice. History and math were favorite subjects in high school.
160. They didn't, my father was, I had an absent father. And my mom, she just didn't participate in anything really. P4: L 152-153	FM160: Participant had an absent father and mother did not participate in education.
161. So me graduating and getting my GED instead of just completely dropping out of school. I think I'm proud of myself for that. P4: L 159-161	FM161: Participant is proud of her success obtaining GED.
162. And what I did afterwards, cause I went to the career technical school as well. P4: L 161	FM162: Parent continued education at career technical training and education program for young people.
163. So I think I might not have had the best experience in school. But I'm proud of some of the things, I actually I did show, I did chorus my seventh grade year. And I made it to state nationals as a soprano. I think that was one of the exciting things that I could have ever done because I didn't even really think that I could sing, for real. But I actually made it out of a whole lot of people. P4: 161-165	FM163: Parent feels educational experience was not positive overall but there were some positive aspects to her educational career.
164. [I stopped going to school] Going to the 10th grade. Because I wanted a job. I wanted to have my own money and stuff like that. So and I didn't want to transfer schools because we had moved. So they didn't want me to continue at XXX [High School]. They wanted me to go to XXX [High School]. P4: L 173, 177-179	FM164: Parent dropped out of school in 10th grade. Participant was motivated to get a job and earn her own money. Additionally, parent did not want to transfer to a different high school.
165. And it was like, I hadn't been to school the first semester and they wanted me to start, well most of the first semester, and starting back as far as I did, it was kind of hard for me to catch up. So they put me in an alternative school at first. Just so I, cause they was like if I catch up, I can graduate with my class and stuff like that. So I was all for it until I had my biology packet and my biology packet was really, really, really thick. And I had to get it done within a month and I was getting ready to turn 17. And they told me that once I turned 17, I could go ahead and take my GED. P4: L179-183, 187-188	FM165: Parent was behind academically and was placed in alternative school to work to catch her up but the parent became frustrated with the excessive biology work packet.

166. So right before we were getting ready to go on our Thanksgiving break, I took my GED test, my pretest, and I passed it on the first round. So I was like, yeah, I'm gonna go ahead and just get my GED. I'll go ahead and get that. I can't do this big old biology packet myself. I knew I wasn't gonna have no help from my mom or nothing. P4: L 188-191	FM166: Parent felt overwhelmed by the academic expectations and decided to take her GED. Participant did not feel supported by her parent.
167. She was like my best friend. We hung out after school. We hung out in school. We could tell each other anything. I will always pick on her because she will always come to my house for snacks. P4: L 200-201	FM167: Parent had a positive, peer relationship in high school.
168. I had some teachers that were out, I could say I didn't have any problems out of, I didn't really have problems out of my female teachers. I had problems out of my male teachers. I would get kicked out of class. Don't get me wrong I did my work like I was supposed to, it was just, I liked to talk and be funny. I was like the class clown. P4: L 216-219	FM168: Parent felt a better connection with female teachers. Parent reports she completed her work but was the class clown and often got in trouble in class.
169. Yeah, I had to go to the office and I'd get in school suspension or Saturday school or something like that or suspended. P4: L 232-233	FM169: Parent received negative consequences for class conduct.
170. Career Technical School. I was 19, I think, oh yeah 19, 20. I went for medical administrative, assistant billing and coding specialist. I actually graduated. I got that certificate. P4: L 238-239	FM170: Participant enrolled in a career technical training and education program for young people at age 19. She graduated from the program with a certification.
171. I did not. And when, it was so hard for me to find a job down here for that, because I didn't have any training. I kind of gave up on it. Cause I was like, my year was about to hit. I still hadn't gotten any job in the field and I was like, I'm [not] going to renew it for me to still not get no job in the field. So I just let it expire. P4: L 247-250	FM171: After completing the program, job attainment was problematic and the participant did not renew her certification.
172. I was a manager at Restaurant on and off for two years. Before that I was at Clothing Distribution Store doing what I'm doing now which is in production. And before that I've had a whole lot of jobs. I worked at the XXX Factory doing production work. So production and fast food and management is kind of my go to, I guess. I've been a manager twice. My first time being a manager, I was a manager at Restaurant. P4: L 276-279	FM172: Parent had several entry level jobs and two managerial jobs.
173. Before I had my first son, I was going to school for business. And I was like halfway through, but I had started missing days because I started getting sick, but I didn't know that I was pregnant. P4: L 293-294	FM173: Parent engaged in skill development for business but became pregnant with her son and stopped attending classes.
174. I do want to still do business but what I've always wanted to do was be a chef. So they have a online culinary class that I can take that, I want to take after I get me a laptop. P4: L 298-299	FM174: Parent would like to attend culinary arts schools but needs a laptop to enroll.

175. Well, it's made me realize that either with your high school diploma or your GED, you could still get a good job. It all depends on how you apply yourself. Like the dedication, you know, will you go above and beyond for your job and stuff like that. Like some jobs they put you in positions, whether you have your GED or your high school diploma, where you have to pick, and if you have a family, you don't want to always pick your job over your family because, you know, especially if you're all they have. P4: L 307-308, 316-319	FM175: Parent feels GED enabled her to secure jobs but some jobs are very demanding and require a person to choose the job or the family.
176. And I feel like they've done a good job with him. P4: L 331-332	FM176: Participant has overall positive feelings towards son's school experience.
177. We watch little videos that shows him how to add and stuff like that. P4: L 358	FM177: Parent supports son by watching educational videos.
178. I guess being involved as much as possible, helping as much as possible, just being there for the child. P4: L 366	FM178: Parent feels it is important to be there for the child as much as possible.
179. The [Class] Dojo App. P4: L 370	FM179: Parent communicates with the school by using the Class Dojo app.
180. When he went to XXX [Early Learning Center], I tried to be there as much as possible, for the little things that they had going on with the family, like family night and stuff like that. P4: L 378-380	FM180: Parent participates in educational opportunities as much as possible.
181. It was like family night. Stuff like that, like they had back to school nights, and stuff like that, I don't think they did...so I didn't get to go to all of them, but the ones that I went to, they were just like telling us about what the kids we're doing in the classrooms and stuff like that. Or their little celebrations. They had a little graduation celebration. P4: L 393-396	FM181: Parent participates in educational opportunities as much as possible.
182. They do pretty good, really. They call me if anything happens or if he's running out of medicine. They make sure I am well aware. They blow up the phone...yeah other than that I really don't have no complaints. P4: L 400-402	FM182: Parent has overall positive feelings toward child's school and feels school keeps her informed and school communicates by phone.
183. I mean, he keeps getting all the education that he can, learning new stuff, stuff like that. Be able to graduate. P4: L 411-412	FM183: Parent wants her child to graduate and get all the education he can.
184. They would treat him like he was theirs. That they wouldn't do nothing to my kid that they wouldn't want done to theirs. P4: L 421	FM184: Parent wants the school to treat her child as if he was their child.
185. I mean, I'm not for sure cause every parent has a different reason of why they don't want to come to the school. Some people are just lazy and just don't want to go, you know, so I can't really, I don't know. P4: L 430-431	FM185: Parent indicates that some parents are lazy and others have different reasons for not wanting to participate with the school.

186. Yeah, cause even before I had a car, if it was a bus or cab, I was still making sure that I could get to school and be a part when I could, if I wasn't working. P4: L 436-437	FM186: When not working, parent participated with school even when she had a lack of transportation.
187. I would reach out to the teacher or the principal if there is a problem. P4: L 463	FM187: Parent is comfortable reaching out to school for support when needed.

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Participant 5- Kelsi

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188. At Restaurant. It'll be three years in October. P5: L 34, 38	FM188: Participant is employed at a local restaurant.
189. I do remember going to nursery school. P5: L 57	FM189: Participant had early exposure to education.
190. I used to really love school, as a child. P5: L 59-60	FM190: Participant feels education overall was positive as a child.
191. I remember most of my teachers. I loved all of my teachers that I had in elementary school. A lot of them still were teaching up until recently. But, yeah, I kind of remember certain things, I guess there's nothing really, that stands out more than the other, but I definitely remember all of my teachers. P5: L 69-71	FM191: Participant has positive feelings towards teachers but nothing in particular stands out.
192. Academically, I did very well at school. Socially, I think I did pretty well as well. I had a lot of friends that I'm still friends with now from knowing them from elementary, middle school, etc. P5: L 76-77	FM192: Parent feels she did well in school and developed meaningful relationships with peers and maintains some of those relationships currently.
193. Math was a struggle. I was in band for a little while, trying to play the clarinet. Let's see. I loved English and science. I would say those are probably my favorite classes in middle school. But I did things like scrapbooking and stuff like that. I was on the step team as well. P5: L 84-86	FM193: Math was problematic for the participant, participant participated in fine arts, favorite subjects were English and science. Participant engaged in extracurricular activities including the step team.
194. XXX [High School], it was okay. It was a different experience being in high school. Everybody's getting older and doing different things. I think everybody kind of, all my friends kind of went on their own separate journeys by that time. P5: L 91-93	FM194: In high school participant, experienced separation from friends as each went their own direction.
195. It wasn't as fun for me, I would say as probably elementary or middle school cause the work becomes more serious. Then you have to get a little more serious, but I enjoyed XXX [High School], I did. P5: L 93-95	FM195: High school experience was not as fun as elementary and middle school. The demands of the school work became more intense but participant enjoyed high school overall.
196. They were very involved. They always made me put school first and my parents were the type where you can't go outside until you finished your homework, etc. So they always tried to make sure that I had a good education and that I was doing what I was supposed to be doing while in school. P5: L 103-105	FM196: Participant's parents were involved in the participant education and ensured that school work was put first before other things.

197. Yeah, absolutely. And my sister, the one that you met before, we are about 11 years age difference. So she came to a lot of things just because she was already out of school by that time. So she was involved in a lot of my school activities and my father as well. He used to come to a lot of things. At that time, my mother lived in City, Maryland, so she would come when she could, when she was in town visiting. But mostly my father and my sister, they kind of did like the extra-curricular stuff, going to like my dances or performances or stuff like that. P5: L 110-115	FM197: Father and older sister were very involved in participant's education and participated in school activities with the participant but Mom lived out of town and participated minimally.
198. I would probably, just the people that I met and the friends that I made, they stand out the most because a lot of them I'm still in contact with to this day. And a lot of us went from elementary to middle school up to into high school. So I would say that's probably some of the best memories I had was just the friendships I made. But I mean, I have a lot of good memories from school. P5: L120-123	FM198: Peer relationships were important to the participant in school.
199. So many, honestly, I used to really love our cafeteria at XXX [High School]. That was one of my favorite parts was going to lunch, actually, just the way that they had the cafeteria set up. It was different areas where you can pick different types of foods. So that was one of the things I really liked about XXX [High School]. And it was a really nice school as well, as far as how it was built and everything. P5: L 125-128	FM199: Participant enjoyed lunch time while in high school.
200. I had a principal at the time, Ms. Samuel. I would say she took a special interest and just was always there for me if I needed anything. That was at XXX High School. P5: L 134-135	FM200: Participant developed a meaningful positive relationship with the principal of the high school whom supported the participant and took a special interest in her.
201. And I went to XXX Middle [School] and a teacher that stands out there would have to be Ms. Stern. She was a keyboarding teacher and I felt like she just really cared about her students and she went above and beyond just to make sure everybody was on the right track. P5: L 135-138	FM201: Participant developed a meaningful positive relationship with the keyboarding teacher in middle school whom cared for the participant and ensured she was on the right track.
202. Yes, I obtained a GED. P5: L 143	FM202: Participant obtained her GED. She decided to pursue her GED in 11th grade.
203. Well, I wanted to finish at XXX [High School], but I had an episode happen in XXX [High School] where I got into a fight. And then they recommended that I go to another school. So that was kinda more so pushing me to do that as opposed to, me wanting to do that. Yes, I guess at that time, because I hadn't really ever gotten into trouble in school, so I just didn't really understand why they are recommending me to have to do that. So yeah, at that time I was just like maybe this might be a better option. P5: L 147-149, 154-156	FM203: Participant had a discipline issue which resulted in administration recommending for the participant to attend another school. Participant's feelings towards this recommendation were not favorable.

204. Oh well, I was taking classes or whatever so it was other people that were in there doing it as well. I kinda liked it, honestly, because I felt like it was more one-on-one because you have less students to focus on as opposed to being in a whole full classroom. So I felt like I was able to actually learn and focus more and concentrate a little bit better being in that, as opposed to being at XXX [High School]. P5: L 161-164	FM204: Participant had a positive experience while pursuing her GED. The class sizes were smaller, attention was more individualized, and her concentration and focus were better in this environment.
205. I was actually a server and a shift leader at Restaurant at the time when I had my son. P5: L 176	FM205: Participant obtained a shift leader position at a restaurant.
206. Yes, I was also a manager at Supermarket for a little while and I just kind of resigned from that position cause I couldn't really dedicate the time that was needed for that. And I did a little bit of retail as well. P5: L 183-184	FM206: Participant was a manager of a supermarket but this position was very demanding time wise and the participant resigned.
207. That's something that I'm definitely trying to do or I've been thinking about doing. Just trying to balance having a new baby and working and going to school, but that's something I've definitely been thinking about. P5: L 198-200	FM207: Participant is interested in furthering her education but this is challenging due to home life and work balance.
208. I would say it influenced my life positively. Definitely. It made me become more open and I guess friendly, just a people person. I think I developed a lot of my social skills, just being in school, in some of the, like step team and the band I was in, just certain things I did. P5: L 204-206	FM208: Participant feels education had a positive influence on life and school opportunities developed her social skills.
209. It made me more open, definitely. P5: L 212	FM209: Participant feels her educational opportunity made her more open.
210. Parent involvement to me, well, just being there for my child and just making sure, well, both of them actually, but just being there and making sure that they know that they can talk to me about anything and that I'm always going to be there to help them with any type of problems that they may have. And I just try to be active and my son he's not into sports or anything right now, but if he was, I would definitely try to be there for his games and just be a support system to him. P5: L 247-251	FM210: Parent values open communication with children and is there to help them with any problem. Parent wants to support many aspects of son's life.
211. Well, I don't really like volunteer or anything just because I'm working most of the time, but I always send stuff when they have class parties or if they need anything specifically. I always try to send or help out any way that I can. Cause usually when they have parties, they may ask if you can bring anything or if you're able to volunteer and those types of things. And if I'm working, then of course I can't be there, but I always try to send my support some kind of way. P5: L 255-259	FM211: Participant does not volunteer at the school because her work schedule prevents her from attending school functions during the school hours but she provides needed items as requested by the teacher.
212. Just maybe like field day or something like that if that counts? P5: L 263	FM212: Participant attended field day.

213. I did, like, the conferences throughout the year where you come in and then they tell you about your child's progress so far. But yeah, I've definitely been to just like the conferences and just anything to basically find out my child's progress. I have been to a few of those. P5: L 269-270, 272-273	FM213: Participant attended conferences to discuss the academic progress of child.
214. Well, we have an app for the parents and teachers to communicate called Class Dojo. So you can have a direct link to your child's teacher. So I usually communicate with her on there. We just send messages back and forth and it's kind of just like a text message. Basically she'll get it instantly and she can respond instantly. And that's at any time whether it's school hours or not. So that kind of keeps an open line of communication for us. So if she has any questions for me or anything that I need to know she'll message me and vice versa. P5: L 278-283	FM214: Parent communicates with the teachers using an app called Class Dojo.
215. Well, I mean as far as that I can tell my son really enjoyed all his teachers. I know his teacher he has last year, he was very upset that school was kind of cut short and he didn't get to have the full year with her. Cause he really liked his teachers since he's been at XXX [Elementary School]. P5: L 287-290	FM215: Parent feels child enjoys his teachers and child was upset when in person learning ended due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
216. So I would just say they probably have a nice staff. Whenever I do come, if I've had to take him to school or pick him up from school early, they all know his name or they know him by his name and they just all seem so friendly and nice so I would say they definitely have a good staff. P5: L 290-292	FM216: Parent feels the school staff is nice and knows her child by name.
217. Well, I definitely hope that he does his best. I try to teach him that if you need help with anything you know that's what your teachers are there for. And also teach him to be respectful in class and make sure he's paying attention and listening so he can be learning when he's supposed to learn while he's in school. P5: L 307-310	FM217: Parent wants child to do his best in school and focus on learning while in school.
218. Well, I would like him to go to college being that I didn't go to college directly out of school. I always try to instill in him that if you do good in school and keep your grades up and act accordingly, then it's a possibility that you can have a scholarship and they will pay for you to go to school just off your good grades and good behavior. So I always try to remind him of that. Just while you're in school focus on school, when you're home, then you can play and have fun and be with your friends. But while you're at school, focus on what you need to be doing. It's my goal is for him to finish high school and go on to college. P5: L 314-320	FM218: Parent wants child to continue his education at college after graduating from high school. Parent expresses to the child that if you work hard in school and behave then the child may be awarded a college scholarship. Parent wants child to focus while in school and play and have fun while at home. Parent wants her child to go to college after high school.
219. Well, I expect them to definitely do their job and just let me know if there's anything that I can do to help. Well, let me know if there's any problems that	FM219: Parent wants school personnel to do their job and let the parent know if there are any problems and any ways she can help. Parent wants school to keep her child safe and

they have with my child. And like you say, I entrust them to keep him safe and just make me aware of any incidents, basically. If they know of any problems that are going on, I would prefer to hear from them, as opposed to hearing it from my child. P5: L 333-336	let her know if there are problems. If there are problems parent wants to hear this from the school versus the child.
220. I mean suggestions, I would say, just talking to, just keeping a line of contact with your teachers and with your child, just communication would probably be the best thing. I know some parents, you know, probably can't physically do as much or be there as much as they would like, but I feel like just having an open communication with your child and your child's teachers is definitely helpful. P5: L 341-344	FM220: Parent feels it is important to maintain an open line of communication with the school.
221. I feel pretty comfortable. P5: L 348	FM221: Parent is comfortable contacting the school for support.
222. Honestly Google. And if I can't directly ask the teacher or getting contact with the teacher at that very moment, then I just Google and try to refresh my memory on stuff. Google's been my best friend. P5: L 358-359	FM222: If the parent is unable to contact the teacher she uses Google to refresh her memory on educational concepts.
223. I'm kind of worried about what's going to go on this next year cause I don't know exactly like when they're going to send the kids back to school or how this is going to play out. So that's kinda my only worry or biggest concern right now is sending him back to school for this upcoming year. P5: 370-373	FM223: Parent expressed concern about the next school year due to the COVID-19 pandemic and she is uncertain of how that is going to pan out.
Participant 6- Wanda	
224. I'm working through Employment Agency, for XXX Inn. P6: L 34	FM224: Participant is employed by an employment agency.
225. I remember starting school when I was about two or three. I went to Head Start. I went to Daycare and I went to XXX X XXX [Early Learning Center]. P6: L 51-52	FM225: Participant had early exposure to educational opportunities.
226. I remember Ms. Young. She was my kindergarten teacher and she was my, I want to say my fifth grade teacher. She was so nice to us, I remember her, she used to give us little snacks. She was always just so sweet to us. P6: L 69-70, 70-71	FM226: Participant has positive memories of her early educational experience including a positive meaningful relationship with her teacher.
227. And then I was in, I want to say eighth grade, that's when I started trying to run track. P6: 79-80	FM227: Participant participated in extracurricular activities.
228. Ms. White, which was my gym teacher. I loved her. She was always a cool teacher. She had to let you know when you're doing right or wrong. She never sugarcoated anything. She was always cool. P6: 86-87	FM228: Participant had a positive meaningful relationship with her gym teacher who the participant felt was straightforward with the students.
229. Ms. Bell, she was my gym teacher. She was so nice. P6: 87-88	FM229: Participant had a positive meaningful relationship with her gym teacher.

230. Ms. Wyatt, she was the guidance counselor. She always helped when I would miss days or I was having difficulty with my schedule and she did help with that. P6: L 88-90	FM230: Participant had a positive meaningful relationship with her school counselor whom supported her with her schedule and attendance.
231. I was trying to think of another teacher, but I can't remember my...Ms. Newman. She was an assistant principal... So she was always the principal to come get me to talk to my brother, get him to calm down. So she was like a favorite principal that I had. P6: L 94-95, 98-99	FM231: Participant had a positive meaningful relationship with the assistant principal whom participant supported in calming down the participant's brother when he was upset.
232. I loved high school, ninth grade year I had an older cousin already there, older friends. So it was just like I kind of fitted in. P6: L 107-108	FM232: Participant had a positive start to high school due to peer relationships.
233. And then I started doing sports. So I was starting to be well known. I ran track, I played basketball. I had a few friends that I hung with. Everybody knew me. I was always on the XXX Spotlight every Friday, getting recognized for doing sports. P6: L 108-110	FM233: Participant was involved in extracurricular activities and was well known for her success with sports receiving school recognition each week.
234. My teachers, I had a few good teachers that I liked. I'm trying to think of which teacher I want to name. There's like so many that I've really liked. P6: L 110-111	FM234: Participant has positive relationships with several teachers.
235. But it was, high school was a good experience for me. I wanted to go to school every day, but I had a difficulty where I would miss days. P6: L 112-113	FM235: Participant feels high school was a good experience and she wanted to be at school each day.
236. And sometimes I would exceed the limit so I would have to do truancy, but with me missing those days, you had to do your makeup work. The principal actually had to meet with my mother. We had two meetings they asked her, we just confused on how does she make honor roll, she missed so many days. And I tell them, I make my work up. I still do my work. I might miss a lot of days, but I was still doing my work, doing sports. P6: L 115-119	FM236: Participant's school attendance was inconsistent and resulted in truancy but she completed her missed work.
237. And I want to say, almost maybe 11th grade year, I started getting in the mix with the wrong crowd. I started slacking and I started missing more days. I started being influenced when I should have been more focused back in school. P6: L 119-121	FM237: Negative peer relationships impacted participants' academic performance and school attendance.
238. I have friends that their parents didn't care what they did. So she was probably, maybe a year older than me so she would never to school. She was always around guys. That wasn't my thing, I was, still a teen, I was being a teenager. She was doing things that grown people would do. So it was just like yeah so, I felt like when I was around her, it was kind of exciting. But at the same time I knew I couldn't do half the stuff that she was doing. And then, she used to how can you say it, when somebody tried to bribe you, like, well don't go to school, you can just come to my house. And I was actually skipping school and	FM238: Adverse life experiences and negative peer relationships impacted participant's school attendance resulting in the student being truant.

stuff until, they started telling my mother I've been missing all of these days. P6: L 125-131	
239. And I was actually skipping school and stuff until, they started telling my mother I've been missing all of these days. P6: L 130-131	FM239: Participant had poor school attendance.
240. So, I started, I want to say when I was about 15, almost 16, I tried to sell drugs, which I was selling drugs. Nobody knew, my mother was just like, you're not doing that much here to get you know, clothes and stuff. P6: L 133-135	FM240: Participant engaged in the adverse behavior of selling drugs while an adolescent.
241. But at the same time she stopped being supportive, when it came to the sports. So it was like she stopped coming to my track meets like invitationals. I don't to this day, I don't understand how she was there cheering me on and then the next minute she was gone. P6: L 135-138	FM241: Participant's parent became unsupportive of the participant.
242. So I don't know. I wouldn't say that toll on that it was just the environment I was in and the people I was in. P6: L 138-139	FM242: Negative peer relationships negatively impacted her success with school.
243. But once I got in I want to say it was almost 12th grade I was still doing the 11th grade classes. My brother's father called the school and let them know they don't live in the City area, they live in XXX County, so with that being said, we would have to pay like $1,200 for first semester and second semester, if I still wanted to go to XXX [High School]. P6: L 141-144	FM243: Participant was behind academically while in the 12th grade. Participant moved and would have to pay tuition to remain at current school.
244. And being that I was still taking 11th grade classes in 12th grade. So that really messed me up, cause I didn't want to go to the XXX County Schools. So I just completely stopped going to school. P6: L 144-146	FM244: Participant stopped going to school because family was unable to pay tuition to remain at the school and participant did not want to transfer to a new school.
245. Once my mother told me, basically I couldn't stay there because there wasn't enough room, I was forced to go live with one of my friends, which was a grown woman, she was probably two years older than me. P6: L 146-148	FM245: Participant experienced an adverse life experience when the participant's parent told her she would have to move out of the house due to there not being enough room.
246. So that forced me to get a job and start defending for myself. P6: L 148-149	FM246: Participant was forced to get a job and fend for herself.
247. Yeah, cause I will look around and she's not even at my track meet, especially at the big ones where every school was there. Those are the ones that I always wanted her to be at. P6: L 162-163	FM247: Participant was negatively impacted due to an absent mother.
248. She was just more of, if the teacher reached out to her, that's when she talk to the teacher, if the teacher doesn't reach out, she doesn't reach out. As far as I track meets and stuff went, basketball games, she never came to my basketball games. My uncle did, my mother was more of she would come to the track meet. P6: L 180-183	FM248: Participant's parent only engaged with school personnel if the school reached out. Participant's uncle supported the participant by coming to school sporting events.

249. When we used to do volunteer work, we volunteer for certain people. They would come to the school or they'll let us volunteer on Saturdays at certain places. I remember doing stuff like that and helping people. I was always into helping people and to this day I still do that. The volunteer work, dealing with different students, I was attached to this guy named Shaun. He was cripple. He was handicapped in a wheelchair. I used to love coming to the school to see him. P6: L 191-193, 198-199, 202	FM249: Participant enjoyed volunteer opportunities presented in school. Positive peer relationships encouraged school attendance.
250. Dr. Everett, which was the assistant principal. I bonded with him. He was like always supportive of everything I did. He would stay back with me and my friend, Annette, sometimes he'll help us, with our basketball drills or we'll just simply sit back and have a conversation with him, just talk to him. He was always supportive. Say if I was to get in school suspension or something, he would get me up out of it. I'll go sit in his office or he'll give me extra work to do. P6: L 216-220	FM250: Participant bonded with the assistant principal and felt he was supportive of her.
251. Coach Gill, even though he was kind of mean when it came to basketball, but he was a good coach. P6: L 220-221	FM251: High school coach was a positive influence on participant.
252. Coach King, which was the track coach. I love him to death. He was like always hard on us, but he made sure we got to the state championship every year. P6: L 221-223	FM252: High school coach was well loved and pushed participant hard, having a positive influence on her.
253. Coach Burton was the head coach for track. He will always come to the class to check on me, make sure I'm doing my work and he might get me out of class and come down and sit with them for a little while and talk to me, make sure I'm on the right track. P6: L 223-225	FM253: High school coach ensured participant was on the right track, having a positive influence.
254. I want to say her name was Ms. Bowen. She just passed away last year. She was my US History teacher. She was very nice. Fun to be around. P6: L 227-228	FM254: History teacher created a positive learning environment.
255. And Coach Dan Adams. We've actually been knowing him since I was kinda younger, but he always stayed on me when it came to track made sure I was doing the right thing, I was conditioned well. He would give a speech. He would come out of his way to make sure we was okay, making sure we was fine at home, he was always very supportive, no matter wherever we see him at. P6: L 232, 236-239	FM255: Coach provided a positive message to track team and encouraged participant with conditioning. Also, ensured participant was doing okay at home as well.
256. I got my GED when I had went to jail in 2010. I started my GED outside and then when I got there, I finished my math. P6: L 248	FM256: Parent was incarcerated but pursued GED.
257. It was more of well, being that I wouldn't be at my mother's house, how was I going to get to school? Or was she going to make a way for me to	FM257: Participant's adverse living arrangement caused her to stop going to school because she would not be at her mother's house and would not have a way to get to school.

get to school every day? And then it was like, I don't know why I didn't get to go or what the situation was. She didn't really show too much interest in it. P6: L 260-262	
258. I've had fast food jobs. I tried to be a PCA. I did companion aid. I worked for a cleaning company. What else have I done? Work for a housekeeping, did housekeeping. I worked for call centers where I worked with, like Insurance Company. I worked for Insurance in XXX, Virginia through like Aerospace and Defense Company. P6: L 270-272	FM258: Participant had many entry level jobs.
259. Yeah I actually went to CDL school. I didn't get to really finish because my vehicle had broke down the last day of training. P6: L 277	FM259: Participant further her education by enrolling in CDL school. She was unable to finish her training due to her vehicle broke down.
260. So hopefully by next year, I can try to work back on my CDL. P6: L 285	FM260: Participant wants to re enroll in the CDL program in the future.
261. Well, I'm actually right now I'm in a program with the XXX XXX Academy. So they give me the opportunity to get my high school diploma being that I can get my gown, the cap and gown, the diploma, I can get my ceremony. It's actually something I've been wanting to do, most of my life since I left high school cause I didn't get to graduate. P6: L 289, 292-295	FM261: Participant is enrolled in a program that will enable her to graduate. She has wanted to graduate since she stopped attending high school.
262. So this right now's giving me the opportunity to walk across the stage, do what I've always wanted to do. And I'm also setting an example for my children, cause you know, they complain about it. I don't want to go to school. I don't want to do this and in turn I tell them like, you're going to need that education. A GED, is fine, but you need your high school diploma, as well. So this right here is me getting my opportunity to do what I have always wanted to do and besides that setting an example for my children. It's okay to walk across that stage and get that diploma. After you get that diploma, what you do with your life is on you. But what I want you to do is finish getting your education. P6: L 298-304	FM262: Parent wants to graduate and be a positive role model for children.
263. I feel like a parent should be involved at least once weekly with the child and with the teacher, see where their child was standing at academically, how they're acting in class as well as while they're in school, see what they're struggling in. P6: L 377-379	FM263: Parent feels weekly contact with the school personnel is important.
264. See what you can, say if your child was struggling in math, try to get the teacher to see if they can either get a tutor or get you some practice work where you can sit down with your child every day and do some type of activity to help them with what they're struggling in. Instead of always calling the parent, Oh, your child did this and then we recommend this. It's never, the positive stuff it's always a negative. P6: L 379-383	FM264: Parent feels that school can provide better suggestions for parents to support the child. Additionally, positive feedback is needed rather than always providing negative feedback.

265. And then like with the schools now, with kids, they don't get textbooks, they get Chromebooks. So with those Chromebooks, they got the opportunity to get on the internet and YouTube. And so they're not even focused on what they're supposed to do, even though they're monitoring what the kids do on those Chromebooks. Half of them not even doing work, they're on social media or YouTube. P6: L 387-390	FM265: Parent feels Chromebooks allow for distractions to children learning content.
266. We communicate through email or through Class Dojo. P6: L 402	FM266: Parent uses the Class Dojo app to communicate with school personnel.
267. Yeah. Sometimes if I'm not working, I'll go. I've been to like one PTO meeting. I don't like PTO meetings. I don't know why, but that's probably like the only thing I've been to. Like little fair things they be having at the school, I've done been to a few of those, but other than that, I really don't participate with the school and things because I feel like they always want money for the kids to do something. And I feel like you shouldn't have to keep asking the parents for stuff money-wise when ya'll are the ones planning the stuff for the kids. If it's dealing with the school, I feel like the school system should pay for it. P6: L 406, 410-415	FM267: Parent has attended a couple of school events but feels that the school often asks for money. The parent feels the school should not ask for money.
268. I don't know. Cause I really don't like that school. Like not at all. It's just, I don't know. They are more of, instead of telling the positive, they are more of telling the negative, what's wrong. P6: L 420-421	FM268: Parent has negative feelings toward child's school and feels there's a lot of negative communication instead of positive communication.
269. I mean it's a whole lot, but I feel like with their communication, they can do better at that. So they'll let the child do something instead of calling the parent right then and there they'll let it escalate to where they can't control it anymore. So that's something else, that's a problem because any parent will want to know what's going on with their child immediately, especially, if you know it is going to affect them being at school. P6: L 425-429	FM269: Parent feels communication at the school can be improved. Proactive communication may prevent negative student consequences.
270. I want my child to be able to get an education, both of them, to get their education, go to school everyday, do what they need to do. Just enjoy life, enjoy the elementary days while they can. P6: L 434-435	FM270: Parent wants for the child to do what is needed each day at school and enjoy elementary school.
271. I tell all my kids that like school is not a joke. And I used to think it was a joke. P6: 437	FM271: Parent stresses importance of a good education.
272. My mother and my aunt, all of them used to tell me, you're gonna miss those days. You're gonna need that education. And to this day now, I understand why they did like, Oh you gotta stay in school, you gotta do what you supposed to do. P6: 437-440	FM272: Participant's mom and aunt told participant that education is needed.
273. Depends on what faculty member it is. Cause there's a few that I like and a few I don't like, but	FM273: Parent has difficulty trusting school personnel.

other than that, I don't know. Just, it's hard to say. Cause I don't really trust people like that. P6: 445-446	
274. First making sure that the driver is a good driver, he's making sure these kids are okay at all times. P6: 451	FM274: Parent expects school personnel to keep kids safe.
275. And I have to let him know that one day, when I got on the bus, I said, look, if you want respect, you have to give it whether these are children or not. You can't talk to people's kids any kind of way. So that's stuff that we have to deal with as parents, when we go to the bus stop with the grumpy bus driver who feels the need to say whatever he wants to a child and thinking that the child is not going to say nothing back. P6: L 456-458, 464-466	FM275: Participant wants for there to be two way respect between students/parents and school personnel.
276. So that's another thing where the school messes up and where they'll take the bus driver's side instead of figuring out what really happened or not asking them, why your camera's not working? P6: L 468-470	FM276: Parent feels school personnel's perspective is valued over student's perspective.
277. Make sure, they either go to breakfast, or make sure they're escorted to the right class. That they're in place, they are visible, that they can see them. And I don't know, just making sure that all the children are safe. P6: L 475-477	FM277: Parent expects school to supervise children and keep them safe.
278. I feel like, some parents that have a struggle, like some don't have a car, some of them are low on money, so they can't get certain places. I feel like they can either give out a free tablet or some type of, I don't know, some type of newsletter. Say like some people don't have internet, so they don't really know what's going on. I feel like they should have newsletters that they mail out on their own for parents. They can have a breakdown, they can read it for their self, oh this is what they're doing today. This is what they're doing this day. This is what they're doing this week. P6: L 491-495, 497-498	FM278: Paper copies of the school newsletters may be a good communication tool for parents that do not have the internet.
279. I feel like they should do stuff like this because a lot of parents don't like to talk on the phone to the teachers and stuff. Like I'm one of them. I don't want to sit on the phone and talk to you about my child. So I kinda already know what's going on. And then, basically they're all repeating itself over and over. P6: L 498-501	FM279: Parent does not prefer communicating with school personnel by phone call.
280. Oh yeah. If they ask me for help, I help them, and if they don't ask me for help, I don't help them. P6: L 510	FM280: Parent supports child with academic work if help is requested by the child.
281. I usually Google. P6: L 525	FM281: The parent uses Google to refresh her memory on educational concepts.

Appendix I: Development of Clusters and Emergent Themes

Development of Cluster and Emergent Themes

Formulated Meanings	Cluster Theme	Emergent Themes
FM33: Parent expresses challenges with being able to attend school functions due to work. **FM34:** School activities held during the school day create a barrier for working parents. **FM121:** Participant noted that some parents are constantly working and do not focus on education. **FM211**: Participant does not volunteer at the school because her work schedule prevents her from attending school functions during the school hours but she provides needed items as requested by the teacher.	Time Constraints	**Scarcity of Time**
FM115: Parent experienced adverse life experiences which created barriers for her own education advancement. **FM117:** Participant enrolled in community college to advance her knowledge base but was unable to complete the degree. **FM162:** Parent continued education at career technical training and education program for young people. **FM261:** Participant is enrolled in a program that will enable her to graduate. She has wanted to graduate since she stopped attending high school.	Further Education	**Self-Determination**
FM4: Parent dropped out of school, was incarcerated, but pursued GED. **FM12**: Participant determined when incarcerated he would not return to school so he obtained his GED. **FM72:** Parent experienced adverse experiences as an adult but persevered and maintained normalcy for children. **FM96:** Participant established goals for self. **FM256**: Parent was incarcerated but pursued GED.	Goal Setting	
FM46: Individual relationships are important for student success. **FM51:** Educators can make a positive impact on a person's life. **FM52:** Encouragement from an educator is important. **FM70:** Participant had a positive adult relationship while in high school and could confide in the caring adult. **FM101:** Participant had a positive adult relationship while in elementary school. **FM102:** Participant had positive adult relationships while in elementary school. **FM103:** The adult relationship was meaningful because the parent felt valued. **FM105:** Participant had a positive adult relationship while in middle school and maintained this relationship for many years. **FM110:** Parent was motivated by positive adult feedback and supportive comments. **FM200:** Participant developed a meaningful positive relationship with the principal of the high school whom supported the participant and took a special interest in her. **FM201:** Participant developed a meaningful positive relationship with the keyboarding teacher in middle school whom cared for the participant and ensured she was on the right track. **FM228:** Participant had a positive meaningful relationship with her gym teacher	Positive Adult Relationships	**Positive Influence**

who the participant felt was straightforward with the students. **FM230:** Participant had a positive meaningful relationship with her school counselor whom supported her with her schedule and attendance. **FM231:** Participant had a positive meaningful relationship with the assistant principal whom participant supported in calming down the participant's brother when he was upset. **FM250:** Participant bonded with the assistant principal and felt he was supportive of her. **FM251:** High school coach was positive influence on participant. **FM252:** High school coach was well loved and pushed participant hard, having a positive influence on her. **FM253:** High school coach ensured participant was on the right track, having a positive influence. **FM254:** History teacher created a positive learning environment. **FM255:** Coach provided a positive message to track team and encouraged participant with conditioning. Also, ensured participant was doing okay at home as well.		
FM11: Peer relationships during school were important to the participant and maintained a positive childhood relationship into adulthood. **FM69:** Participant had a positive peer relationship while in high school. **FM167:** Parent had a positive, peer relationship in high school. **FM192:** Parent feels she did well in school and developed meaningful relationships with peers and maintains some of those relationships currently. **FM198:** Peer relationships were important to the participant in school. **FM232:** Participant had a positive start to high school due to peer relationships.	Positive Peer Relationships	
FM2: The positive value of education is acknowledged due to parent's background and the parent feels his education was a positive one overall. **FM8:** Parent perceived education to be important to his parent and exposed to learning materials in the home. **FM10:** Participant was raised by a parent that valued education. **FM68:** Participant's caregiver encouraged school success and participant's parent was knowledgeable of participant's activities and friendships. **FM76:** Parents presence plays a vital role in the overall wellbeing of children. **FM89:** Parent uses previously learned strategies to support child. **FM94:** Participants overall feeling toward personal education is positive and feels her mom provided a stable home life. **FM95:** Participant had a consistent school and was not transient. **FM104:** Parent had stable housing for many years. **FM118:** Parent took on the role of homeschooling children during COVID-19 pandemic. **FM124:** Parent took on the role of teacher during the school shut down due to COVID-19 and exposed her child to chapter books. **FM177:** Parent supports son by watching educational videos. **FM180:** Parent participates in educational opportunities as much as possible. **FM181:** Parent participates in educational opportunities as much as possible. **FM186:** When not working, parent participated with school even when she had a lack of transportation.	Positive Parent Support	**Transmitting Values**

FM196: Participant's parents were involved in the participant education and ensured that school work was put first before other things. **FM197:** Father and older sister were very involved in participant's education and participated in school activities with the participant but Mom lived out of town and participated minimally. **FM212:** Participant attended field day. **FM213:** Participant attended conferences to discuss the academic progress of child. **FM280:** Parent supports child with academic work if help is requested by the child.		
FM85: Parent values education and wants to see the child graduate and continue education and get a good job. **FM120:** Participant values a solid education and wants to ensure her children know the value of a solid education. **FM126:** Parent wants to be involved in every aspect of the child's life including education. Parent values open communication with children. **FM134:** Parent wants children to graduate from school and pursue a career with a solid financial path. **FM135:** Parent views school as an extension of the family. **FM136:** Parent views school as a second family. **FM178:** Parent feels it is important to be there for the child as much as possible. **FM183:** Parent wants child to graduate and get all the education he can. **FM184:** Parent wants school to treat her child as if he was their child. **FM217:** Parent wants child to do his best in school and focus on learning while in school. **FM218:** Parent wants child to continue his education at college after graduating from high school. Parent expresses to the child that if you work hard in school and behave then the child may be awarded a college scholarship. Parent wants child to focus while in school and play and have fun while at home. Parent wants child to go to college after high school. **FM219:** Parent wants school personnel to do their job and let the parent know if there are any problems and any ways she can help. Parent wants school to keep her child safe and let her know if there are problems. If there are problems parent wants to hear this from the school versus the child. **FM220:** Parent feels it is important to maintain an open line of communication with the school. **FM262:** Parent wants to graduate and be a positive role model for children. **FM270:** Parent wants for the child to do what is needed each day and enjoy elementary school. **FM274:** Parent expects school personnel to keep kids safe. **FM275:** Participant wants for there to be two way respect between students/parents and school personnel. **FM277:** Parent expects school to supervise children and keep them safe.	Parent's View of Education	
FM47: Participant notes you cannot make an individual be involved with their child. It has to be a personal choice. **FM50:** Educators need to put forth more effort to connect with the students. **FM137:** Parent notes that some parents are lazy and do not put forth the effort in relation to school support. **FM138:** Parent feels that schooling will be better for children when discipline and education begin at home. **FM139:** Participant feels education is a partnership and	Feelings	

supportive parenting begins in the home. **FM185:** Parent indicates that some parents are lazy and others have different reasons for not wanting to participate with the school.		
FM30: Parent noticed many parents did not focus on education during the school shutdown. **FM31:** Parent is concerned about the impact COVID-19 will have on the educational progress of children. **FM223:** Parent expressed concern about the next school year due to the COVID-19 pandemic and she is uncertain of how that is going to pan out. **FM264:** Parent feels that school can provide better suggestions for parents to support the child. Additionally, positive feedback is needed rather than always providing negative feedback. **FM265:** Parent feels Chromebooks allow for distractions to children learning content. **FM267:** Parent has attended a couple of school events but feels that the school often asks for money. The parent feels the school should not ask for money. **FM268:** Parent has negative feelings toward school and feels there's a lot of negative communication instead of positive communication. **FM269:** Parent feels communication at the school can be improved. Proactive communication may prevent negative student consequences. **FM273:** Parent has difficulty trusting school personnel. **FM276:** Parent feels school personnel's perspective is valued over student's perspective.	Parent Educational Concerns	
FM24: Parent exposes grandson to conversations in the home and provides discipline when needed. **FM25:** Parent engages in homework opportunities with the child. **FM26:** Parent is aware of the learning opportunities in the classroom. **FM28:** Parent is aware of the learning concepts and engages in homework opportunities with the child. **FM125:** Parent provides child access to educational games. **FM177:** Parent supports son by watching educational videos.	Educational Awareness	**Parent Partners**
FM27: Parent communicates with the child's teachers. **FM29:** Parent talks with the teacher and is available to support the school team. **FM32:** Parent attended a few school events involving the child. **FM77:** Parent uses various formats to engage with teacher. **FM78:** Home visit was important to family teacher relationship. **FM79:** Teacher visited family's home to support student's learning. **FM80:** Parent attends activities at the school. **FM82:** School maintains open lines of communication. **FM87:** Parent attends activities at the school. **FM88:** Parent uses various formats to engage with teacher including Class Dojo. **FM129:** Communication with the school includes utilizing the Class Dojo app. **FM130:** Phone calls with the school are important and parent engages with teachers this way. **FM179:** Parent communicates with the school by using the Class Dojo app. **FM181:** Parent participates in educational opportunities as much as possible. **FM182:** Parent has overall positive feelings toward child's school and feels school keeps her informed and school communicates by phone. **FM214**:	Parent/School Communication	

Parent communicates with the teachers using an app called Class Dojo. **FM263:** Parent feels weekly contact with the school personnel is important. **FM266:** Parent uses the Class Dojo app to communicate with school personnel. **FM279:** Parent does not prefer communicating with school personnel by phone call.		
FM66: Birth parents were not involved in participant's education but foster parent was. Participant experienced an adverse childhood experience when placed in foster care at age 8. **FM113:** Parent was raised in a single parent home with an absent father. **FM114:** Parent feels her relationship with her mother was not as close as she hoped. **FM156:** Personal issues at home negatively impacted school success.**FM158:** Home life situation negatively impacted school success.**FM160:** Participant had an absent father and mother did not participate in education. **FM166:** Parent felt overwhelmed by the academic expectations and decided to take her GED. Participant did not feel supported by her parent. **FM241:** Participant's parent became unsupportive of the participant. **FM247:** Participant was negatively impacted due to an absent mother. **FM257:** Participant's adverse living arrangement caused her to stop going to school because she would not be at her mother's house and would not have a way to get to school.	Lack of Caregiver Support	**Disengaged Caregiver**
FM3: Parent experienced obstacles during youth but feels his educational experience was a positive one overall. **FM63:** Parent experienced obstacles during youth which included negative peer relationships. **FM65:** Parent experienced obstacles during youth which included hanging with the wrong crowd. **FM237:** Negative peer relationships impacted participants' academic performance and school attendance. **FM238:** Adverse life experiences and negative peer relationships impacted participant's school attendance resulting in the student being truant. **FM242:** Negative peer relationships negatively impacted her success with school.	Negative Peer Relationships	**Adverse Situations**
FM14: Participant has an extensive history with criminal conduct. **FM240:** Participant engaged in the adverse behavior of selling drugs while an adolescent.	Criminal Conduct	
FM115: Parent experienced adverse life experiences which created barriers for her own education advancement. **FM119:** Adverse life experiences constantly prevent her from obtaining her educational goals. **FM173:** Parent engaged in skill development for business but became pregnant with her son and stopped attending classes. **FM207:** Participant is interested in furthering her education but this is challenging due to home life and work balance. **FM259:** Participant further education by enrolling in CDL school. She was unable to finish her training because her vehicle broke down.	Barriers	

FM145: Parent had a positive experience in early elementary school until participant's parent became very transient beginning in fourth grade. **FM150:** Participant had difficulty fitting in after transitioning to a new school and got in school suspension. **FM157:** Middle school grades were impacted adversely by home situation.**FM164:** Parent dropped out of school in 10th grade. Participant was motivated to get a job and her earn own money. Additionally, parent did not want to transfer to a different high school. **FM165:** Parent was behind academically and was placed in alternative school to work to catch her up but the parent became frustrated with the excessive biology work packet. **FM203:** Participant had a discipline issue which resulted in administration recommending for the participant to attend another school. Participant's feelings towards this recommendation were not favorable. **FM236:** Participant's school attendance was inconsistent and resulted in truancy but she completed her missed work. **FM238:** Adverse life experiences and negative peer relationships impacted participant's school attendance resulting in the student being truant. **FM239:** Participant had poor school attendance. **FM240:** Participant engaged in the adverse behavior of selling drugs while an adolescent. Participant's parent became unsupportive of the participant. **FM244:** Participant stopped going to school because family was unable to pay tuition to remain at the school and participant did not want to transfer to a new school. **FM245:** Participant experienced an adverse life experience when the participant's parent told her she would have to move out of the house due to there not being enough room.	Unfavorable Circumstances	
FM1: The COVID-19 pandemic impacted the parent financially and he is currently unemployed. **FM15:** Parent experienced difficulty obtaining a job. **FM16:** Parent has experience with several entry level positions. **FM56:** Parent is currently laid off due to COVID-19 pandemic. Parent had dependable work prior to the layoff. **FM73:** Participant had several entry level positions. **FM92:** Parent is currently unemployed. **FM112:** Participant had several entry level positions. **FM171:** After completing the career technical program, job attainment was problematic and the participant did not renew her certification. **FM172:** Parent had several entry level jobs and two managerial jobs. **FM258:** Participant had many entry level jobs.	Lack of Stable Job	
FM7: Parent experienced obstacles during youth including financial instability resulting in parent looking to the streets for a resolution. **FM246:** Participant was forced to get a job and fend for herself.	Financial Hardships	