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Parent Involvement in Elementary Schools

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Abstract

The current Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium results prove that the Greenfield Union School District is academically low in English and Mathematics. This is a problem that the school district is facing because students are not engaged with their education. Poverty and low parental involvement puts students at risk to not be engaged in their education, since the socioeconomic status of parents can prohibit parents with the level of engagement in their children's education. The majority of the students at Greenfield Union School District are English learners, this is another risk factor because at times parents cannot help their children in their school work. The consequences connected to this problem are increases on low test scores, dropout rates and lifetime negative outcomes. The capstone project that directly addressed this problem was creating opportunities for parent involvement. Three workshops were delivered to increase knowledge in the importance of school attendance, learning how to read assessments and building a growth mindset. These workshops provided room for knowledge, but emphasized the importance of initiating parent involvement. The expected outcome from the project was to deliver knowledge from all topics and have a consistency of parents' attendance. The results from the project were that parent's attendance was consistent throughout all workshops and parents increased significant knowledge from the pre to the post on all topics.

Key words: education, students, parents, parent involvement, pupils

Agency and Communities Served

The Greenfield Union School District is a district that is consisted of five schools. The Greenfield Union School District serves four elementary schools and one middle school. The four elementary schools are Arroyo Seco Academy, Mary Chapa Academy, Oak Avenue Elementary School, Cesar Chavez Elementary School and Vista Verde Middle School. The elementary schools serve students from preschool to sixth grade, and the middle school serves grade levels of seventh grade to eighth grade, for it serves 3,593 students (GUSD, 2019). The mission statement of Greenfield Union School District is “To promote ALL students with high levels of academic and personal achievement through a collaborative system of support, guided by passionate, dedicated staff in a safe, nurturing, and culturally responsive environment that fully prepares students for future college and career success” (GUSD, 2019). The Greenfield Union School District implements high levels of education in the elementary years so students are fully prepared for middle school, high school and after high school. This is because the Greenfield Union School District vision statement is “Greenfield Union School District will be a national leader in education ensuring high levels of learning and success for ALL students” (GUSD, 2019).

The Greenfield Union School District promotes high levels of education to all students for their many programs and services that are provided. Programs that help academic proficiency are after school programs, migrant programs, parent cafecitos, parent academy, Family and Community Engagement, and Lego Education. These programs do not only help students improve academic levels, but as well provide services for parents to be engaged in their children's education. The services that the Greenfield Union School District provides to all

students are counseling, academic mentoring, special education and college preparedness. The Greenfield Union School District consists of “97% Hispanic, 94% socioeconomically disadvantaged, 60% English learners, and 10.5% special education students” (GUSD, 2019). Thus, the Greenfield Union School District strives to serve high levels of education to all four communities.

Problem Description

A problem that the Greenfield Union District is facing is that students are not engaged with their education. The SBAC assessment results of mathematics and English language arts prove that this is a current problem that the Greenfield Union School District is facing. In the academic year of 2017-2018 only 27% of students met the standard of English Language Arts and 19% of students met the standard of mathematics (GUSD, 2019). The percentages of students exceeding the standard for English Language Arts and mathematics impact the Greenfield Union School District because it perceives that the district is not complying with their mission.

Contributing Factors

Two contributing factors that contribute for students lack of engagement with their education are poverty and being an English Learner. In the Monterey County, the per capita income is 27, 997, for 11.4% of the residents, they are below the poverty line (US Census Bureau, 2017). According to Altschul (2011), “Important distinction in types of parental involvement, especially among low-income families, is that between the investment of time and the investment of money in children’s education” (p.161). Thus, the social economic status of a student has a tremendous impact on a student’s education. Since, low income parents may not

have the money to pay for outside resources that can help their children improve in a subject. Another factor that contributes to the disengagement of Greenfields' student population is that most of the students are English language learners. According to Capps et al., (2005), "DLLs with low English proficiency are more likely to have parents with both poor English proficiency and limited literacy in L1 themselves, compared to DLL children with greater English proficiency" (as cited by Kim et al., 2014, p.2602). Therefore, students that are English language learners struggle in a certain subject because parents cannot help them in their academics since they are not fluent in English. Another factor that contributes to this problem is low parental involvement because to have good outcomes in a children's education parents must collaborate in the process. According to Panferov (2010), "As educators, we expect parental involvement with the schooling of their children to be important to students' success; however, we often know little or nothing about who the parents are and the realities of their own education" (p.107). Even though, parent involvement is consisted to promote student achievement districts must understand that there are differences among parents. Since, it may be that parents cannot attend parent's conferences, back to school night or other school events because of accessibility or acceptability.

Consequences

The consequences of poverty, being an English Learner, and low parent involvement is that students have low test scores, higher dropout rates and lifetime outcomes. In 2016, 40.6% students were English Learners in the Monterey County (Kidsdata, 2019). According to Pew Research (2019), "Analysis of recent data from standardized testing around the country shows that the fast growing number of students designated as English language learners are among

those farthest behind” (para. 1). Thus, students that are behind in school consistently can end up dropping out from high school due to discouragement. Moreover, poverty also impacts the consequence of dropping out. According to Henry et al., (2011), “schools or school districts that serve a higher proportion of youth from lower socio-economic backgrounds have a substantially higher dropout rate” (p. 1164). Therefore, the socioeconomic status of a student has a correlation with the performance of a student which in the long run affects lifetime outcomes. According to Child Trends Databank (2015), “Young people who do not complete high school are more likely to struggle with employment, live in poverty, be depended on welfare benefits, have more poor physical and mental health” (as cited by Kidsdata, 2019). It is important that schools and parents collaborate in the process because short-term problems in the future become long-term problems that are much harder to fix.

Problem Model

Contributing Factors	Problem	Consequences
Factor 1: Poverty	Students are not engaged with their education.	Consequence 1: Increases on low test scores
Factor 2: English Learner		Consequence 2: Increases on dropout rates
Factor 3: Low parent involvement		Consequence 3: Lifetime outcomes

Capstone Project Description and Justification

Capstone Project

A capstone project that addressed this problem is creating opportunities for parent involvement. The purpose of the capstone project was to see what impact parent involvement has

on student academic achievement. The goal of the capstone project was to increase parent involvement by conducting workshops directed at engaging parents in their childrens' education. Workshops were once a month for an hour long. There were a total of four workshops. The first workshop consisted of the importance of parent involvement. The second workshop focused on the factors that affect children's academic growth. Third workshop consisted of learning how to read academic assessments and the last workshop focused on the importance of setting goals and building a growth mindset. To see if there was an impact on the workshops data was collected from third graders to sixth graders who are far below grade level. Teachers selected five students from each grade level. Thus, data consisted of the attendance of parents who attended the workshops, students' attendance, first quarter report cards, I-Ready reports and bi-weekly progress reports of students.

Project Purpose

The capstone project can increase test scores among students who are not engaged with their education is parent involvement. The capstone project of parent involvement addressed this consequence because parents will be informed on many topics throughout workshops. Specifically, on factors that make a difference to children's academic growth. In this workshop parents, will be informed on the importance of attendance and reading. There was a need to inform parents about the effects of chronic absences because children are affected academically when not attending school. According to Attendance Works (2018), "Excused, unexcused absences and suspensions, can translate into third-graders unable to master reading, sixth-graders failing subjects and ninth-graders dropping out of high school" (para. 1). Therefore, missing

school in any grade level is effective to students because there is a correlation with poor outcomes. Furthermore, to improve test scores there is the need to inform parents about the effect of reading in children's education. According to Sukhram and Hsu (2012), "Research indicates that 74% of students identified with reading deficits in third grade continue to experience significant reading difficulties in ninth grade" (p. 115). Thus, this statistic shows that if parent involvement does not exist during the elementary years' students will struggle throughout the years. According to Connor, Alberto, Compton and O'Connor (2014), "Those who cannot read are more likely to be unemployed and adjudicated, and therefore require government supports" (as cited by McConnell and Kubina, 2016, p.116). Thus, low parental involvement can put a child at risk for long term consequences.

Project Justification

Presenting workshops to parents about the importance of parent involvement is effective for academic success. According to Hiatt-Michael (2012), "Parent involvement promotes better student attendance, increased graduation rates and less grade retention, higher parent and student satisfaction with school, less discipline reports, and higher achievement scores in reading and math" (as cited by Ferrara & Ferrara ,2005, p. 77). Therefore, providing workshops to parents about what defines parent involvement is necessary because throughout them parents are being informed on the needs from their part for their children to be successful. Indeed, providing workshops to parents is necessary because schools are required to promote any type of engagement to fulfill with their mission statement.

Project Implementation

The development of the project was to view the impact of parent involvement on academic achievement among students who are at risk in school. The components of the project were to deliver four workshops. Thus, preparatory activities were implemented to deliver the project. The first task was to get in contact with all the upper grade teachers to email me a list of the ten students who are at risk in their class. Second task was to compose all four workshops during the summer to start implementing them at the end of August. Moreover, during summer personal letters, flyers and surveys will be developed. Flyers and personal letters were distributed on the second week of school. On the first week of school; the cafeteria was arranged to secure the dates to develop the workshops. On week two school liaisons were scheduled to provide child care for the morning and evening workshops. On the second week of school the incentives were established to deliver; the menu of the food and the backpacks to raffle. Funding was not necessary because all these will be provided from the school's parent teacher association. In appendix A, a detailed implementation plan and timeline can be seen.

Expected Outcomes

The expected outcomes of the project were that the at-risk children improve academically in English and Math. Moreover, the expected outcome of the capstone project is for the parents of at-risk children to increase parental involvement in the education of their children. Thus, inform the parents of the consequences of low parental involvement and the advantages of parent

involvement in the education of their children. The project will emphasize to parents that the academic journey of a children is a collaboration between the student, parent and teacher.

Assessment Plan

To measure effectiveness from the project the attendance of the parents was measured. Attendance was measured because the consistency of parents attending the workshops proved that the workshops were interesting and effective to put into consideration. Moreover, to continue the consistency of parents attending workshops, raffles were provided at the end of each workshop. Two backpacks with school utensils was given to participants. However, because life happens and sometimes parents were not be able to attend a workshop, all workshops were provided twice during the week. On Tuesday the workshops were provided in the morning and on Thursday the workshops were provided in the afternoon. However, to have a consistency of parents attending all the workshops, an iPad was raffled for participants who had perfect attendance.

Project Activities

The activities that were conducted for this project were to compose and deliver three workshops. Therefore, many preparatory activities were done to deliver all workshops. Some preparatory activities were done before the summer break and others after the summer break. Emailing all upgrade teachers about my capstone project, so teachers would email me ten names of students who are at risk in their classroom was the first activity. The second activity was to set dates to established the school cafeteria and personal for child care. Once the names of the

students were derived the research was conducted. Presentations and surveys were composed two weeks in advance, so mentor could approve content. In the process of composing each presentation, individual letters to parents and flyers were composed and delivered to the teacher's boxes. Flyers were created to invite the whole school about the workshops. Therefore, on the morning of each workshop, flyers were delivered to parents personally to invite them and a text message was sent to parents through the parent square to remind them about the workshop.

Project Outcomes

The project outcomes that were determined to be achieved by the conclusion of the project were for parents to derive and increase knowledge in the importance of school attendance, the importance of building a growth mindset and learning how to read assessments. In the first workshop it was important that parents knew the effects and long-term consequences of school absenteeism. As for the second workshop it was significant for parents to know how to read state test assessments and know how to test their children for school assessments to improve in reading. In the third workshop it was important for parents to know about the importance of building a growth mindset and adapt the implementation of developing goals and putting the effort to be successful at school. Therefore, deriving and increasing knowledge to parents to change or adapt new behaviors of parent involvement.

Findings/ Results

The outcome measures to assess the effectiveness of the project's progress toward achieving the outcome were three different pre and post surveys for each workshop and the

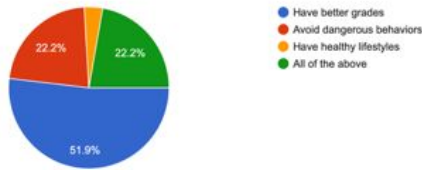
attendance of parents. Throughout all of the workshops there was a consistency amount of parents attendance. At the first workshop there were twenty-seven parents, the second workshop hold twenty-five parents and the last workshop was composed of twenty-four parents. This is because all parents from Mary Chapa Academy were invited to all workshops, since only eight teachers only provided ten names of students.

Even though only one parent from the target group attended all workshops the project achieved the expected outcomes because the parents who attended all workshops derived knowledge on all topics. The project achieved the expected outcomes because the presentations and surveys were bilingual. Also, there was a consistency of parents attendance because parents were interested in the topics and because they related their children's educational background to the presenters.

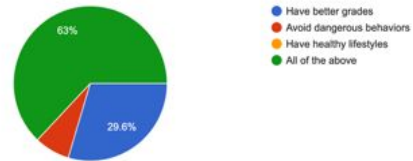
Workshop One

In the first workshop 40.8% of knowledge was increased between the pre and post survey because parents learned that students who missed fewer school days than their counter classmate have better grades, avoid dangerous behaviors, and have healthy lifestyles. Parents also increase knowledge in knowing that being late to school also affects their children as like being absent, since the difference between the pre and post survey was 48.2%. Likewise, parents increase knowledge in knowing that poor attendance contributes for students not to graduate since the difference between the pre and post survey was 7.4%.

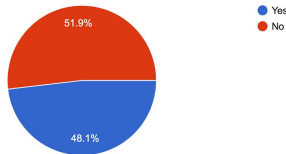
Students who miss fewer days than their counter classmates
27 responses



Students who miss fewer days than their counter classmates
27 responses



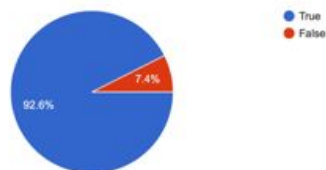
Being late to school does not affect my children as like being absent would.
27 responses



Being late to school does not affect my children as like being absent would.
27 responses



Poor attendance can contribute for students to not graduate high school.
27 responses



Poor attendance can contribute for students to not graduate high school.
27 responses

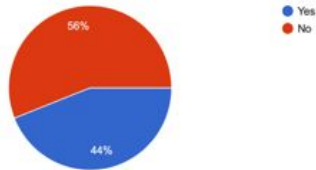


Workshop Two

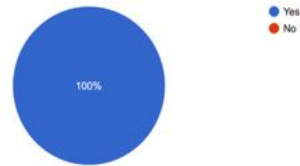
In the second workshop there was an increase in knowledge that high frequency words should be memorized. The difference between the pre and post survey was 56%. Parents also increased their knowledge on how many times their children are tested throughout the academic year in their oral fluency. The difference between the pre and post survey was 80%. Also, an

increased occur on the knowledge of the recommendations that could improve percentile scores in oral fluency, since the difference between the pre and post survey was 52%.

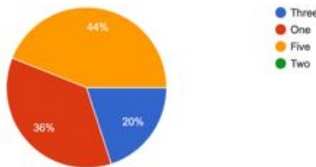
High frequency are words that should be memorized.
25 responses



High frequency words are words that should be memorized.
25 responses



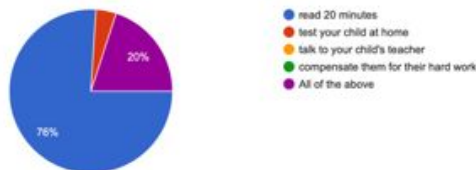
Students are tested on their oral fluency ____times.
25 responses



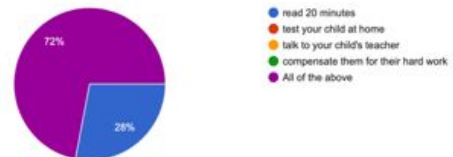
Students are tested on their oral fluency ___times.
25 responses



To improve percentile scores in oral fluency it is recommended to;
25 responses



To improve percentile scores in oral fluency it is recommend to;
25 responses

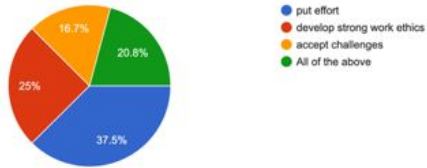


Workshop Three

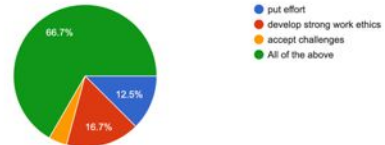
In the third workshop parents increased their knowledge in what is a growth mindset, because there was an increase of 45% between the pre and post survey. Moreover, parents increased their knowledge in knowing if the implementation of a short-term goal helps to

accomplish a long-term goal because there was an increase of 12.5% between the pre and post survey. In this workshop, parents also increase knowledge in knowing that professionals at school can help them with suggestions, referrals and strategic plans for developing a growth mindset, since the difference between the pre and post survey was 45.8%.

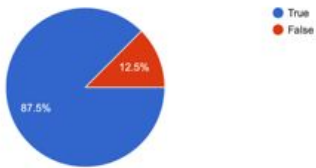
Students with a growth mindset
24 responses



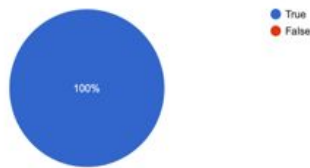
Students with a growth mindset
24 responses



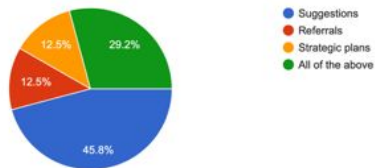
A short-term goal can derived me to accomplished a long-term goal.
24 responses



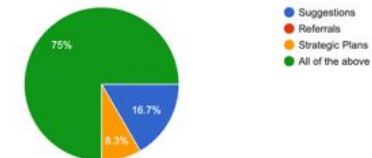
A short-term goal can derived me to accomplished a long-term goal.
24 responses



Professionals personal can help me with;
24 responses



Professionals personal can help me with;
24 responses



Conclusion and Recommendations

Based on the results from the capstone project the project meet the expectations. The capstone project was a success because it aligned with the agency's mission. The workshops provided parents with lots of knowledge to fully prepare successful students. On all workshops parents derived new knowledge and learned new techniques to better assist their children in their education. The long-term consequences of low parental involvement emphasized the importance of continuing this project. Low parental involvement can affect a student with an increased on low test scores, dropout rates and lifetime outcomes. Therefore, this project should be continued because throughout the availability of informative workshops from the school it creates opportunities for parent involvement, such as networking with school personal and other parents to prepare successful students.

The recommendations for the agency based on the results from the project are that the school should continue to provide informative workshops to parents. Currently, the school provides parents with Parent Cafecito were the school informs the community about possible resources that can be useful or educational programs that the school provides to better assist students. Thus, the school needs to continue to create workshops were parents are only informed about techniques that can encourage opportunities for parent involvement to fully prepare successful students. Also, because throughout these workshops parents are involved and recommend them to other parents. To better improve the project the workshops should be provided twice a day, because this option will be fully available to all schedules from parents.

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Appendices**Appendix A****Scope of Work**

Activities	Deliverables	Timeline/ Deadlines	Supporting Staff
Email teachers	Population of Students	Week of May 20	Mrs. Botello (mentor)
Research Presentations	Formation of Presentations	May-August	Mrs. Botello
Compose Paper Forms	Letters to Parents, Flyers and Surveys	May-August	Mrs. Botello
Arrange Schedule for Setting	Cafeteria	Week of August 12	Mrs. Botello
Confirming Personal for Workshops	Child Care (2 School Liaisons)	Week of August 12	Mrs. Botello Daniela and Erika
Incentives	Food Backpacks	Week of August 19	Mrs. Botello
First Workshop	The Importance of School Attendance/ The Importance of Parent Involvement Pre-Survey	August 26, 2019	Mrs. Botello
Second Workshop	Learning How to Read Assessments/The Importance of Parent Involvement	September 16, 2019	Mrs. Botello

Third Workshop	The Importance of Setting Goals and Building a Growth Mindset	October 7, 2019	Mrs. Botello
Analyzed Data	Composed Capstone Project	October-November	Mrs. Botello Andrea

Pre and Post Surveys**Workshop One Survey**

1. Being late to school does not affect my children as like being absent would.
 - a) Yes
 - b) No

2. Students who miss fewer days than their counter classmates
 - a) Have better grades
 - b) Avoid dangerous behaviors
 - c) Have healthy lifestyles
 - d) All of the above

3. At what grade level, should your child must read proficiently?
 - a) Third grade
 - b) Fifth grade
 - c) Second grade
 - d) First grade

4. If students are left behind in reading they will be affected in
 - a) P.E. and Art
 - b) Science and Social Studies
 - c) Math and Writing
 - d) Sports and Drama

5. Poor attendance can contribute to students not to graduate high school.
 - a) True
 - b) False

6. How many minutes should your children be reading at home?
 - a) 15
 - b) 20
 - c) 10
 - d) 45

Workshop Two Survey

1. High frequency words are words that should be memorized.
 - a) Yes
 - b) No

2. High frequency composed _____ words in a passage.
 - a) 10-20%
 - b) 50-70%
 - c) 90-100%
 - d) 30-40%

3. Students are tested on their oral fluency _____ times.
 - a) three
 - b) one

c) five

d) two

4. At what grade level, should your child read proficiently?

a) Third grade

b) Fifth grade

c) Second grade

d) First grade

5. At the lower grade levels children are learning to read and in the upper grade levels children are reading to learn.

True

False

6. To improve percentile scores in oral fluency it is recommend to;

a) read 20 minutes

b) test your child at home

c) talk to your child's teacher

d) compensate them for their hard work

e) All of the above

Workshop Three Survey

1. Mistakes are a part of human nature.

a) True

b) False

2. Professional personal can help me with;

a) Suggestions

b) Referrals

c) Strategic Plans

d) All of the above

3. How many minutes should your child be reading at home? Enter as a whole number.

4. Students with a fixed mindset are;

a) more likely to give up

b) accept challenges

c) believe abilities are unchangeable

d) a and c

5. Students with a growth mindset

a) put effort

b) develop strong work ethics

c) accept challenges

d) All of the above

6. A short-term goal can derived me to accomplish a long-term goal.

a) True

b) False