

**Research and Evaluation of Family
Involvement in Education:
What Lies Ahead?**

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Today we're considering specific elements of a *system of family–student–school–community relationships*, including

1. Parent–child and parent–student–school relationships

- **Why parents become involved**
- **How their involvement influences student outcomes**
- **How teachers and schools can be supported in encouraging involvement**

2. Broader issues in parental behavior & relationships with schools (e.g., communication, parental expectations)

3. School-based programs of school, family, community partnerships; roles of districts & states in guiding programs

4. Community organizing as a means of involving parents, improving schools and children's learning and development

Examining parent–child and parent–student–school relationships is important because

- **Parents and families play a major role in children’s school success**
- **Parents do things with their children that contribute to children’s school success**
- **What parents do to enhance their children’s school success is influenced by teachers, schools, and communities**

Suggestions and priorities in this area are based on

- **A theoretically grounded model of the parental involvement process (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1995, 1997; see Figure 1)**
- **Research by others and in our lab that has led to changes in the model (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 2005; see Figure 2)**
- **A process of continuous refinement and revision as we learn more about this portion of the parent/family–child–school–community system**

Why Do Parents Become Involved? What Research Suggests

Psychological motivators encourage involvement

- **Active role construction—“*I should be involved*”**
- **Positive sense of efficacy for helping child succeed—“*My involvement will make a difference*”**

Invitations to involvement from others encourage involvement

- **General invitations from school**
- **Specific invitations from child/student**
- **Specific invitations from teacher(s)**

Life context variables allow/enable involvement

- **“*I have knowledge and skills that will help child succeed*”**
- **“*I have time & energy for involvement*”**

Why Do Parents Become Involved?

Priority Areas for Research

1. How can schools, teachers effectively encourage active role construction, positive valence toward school, strong sense of efficacy?

- How do these change across student development, pre-K through 12?**

2. What kinds of invitations are effective in encouraging involvement (across school-general, specific from child & specific from teacher invitations)?

- How do content and focus of effective invitations change from pre-K through 12?**

3. How can schools best tailor invitations to family culture and community? How do “best approaches” change

- **Across different family cultures and communities?**
- **As parents and schools experience success and learning in effective invitations?**

How Does Parental Involvement Influence Student Outcomes? What Research Suggests

- 1. Through home-based, school-based, & other forms of involvement**
- 2. Through specific mechanisms, including encouragement, modeling, reinforcement, & instruction**
- 3. Through children's perceptions of their parents' involvement**
- 4. Through the influence of parents' involvement on proximal student outcomes, e.g.,**
 - Academic self-efficacy**
 - Intrinsic motivation for learning**
 - Self-regulatory strategy use**
 - Social self-efficacy for relating to teachers**

How Does Parental Involvement Influence Student Outcomes? Priority Areas for Research

- 1. How may schools best offer & encourage forms of involvement most consistent with family culture and circumstances?**
- 2. What mechanisms of parental influence are particularly helpful in supporting children's school success?**
 - How do these change across time (pre-K through 12) & across family circumstances?**
- 3. What proximal student outcomes are strongest targets for parental involvement influence?**

How Can Teachers and Schools Be Supported in Encouraging Involvement? What Research Suggests

1. The importance of focused, respectful, participatory school consultation & in-service programming that:

- Builds on participant & parent/ community experiences & strengths**
- Respects participants' & families' positive and negative experiences with involvement**
- Encourages active brainstorming, planning with peers & parents**
- Encourages ongoing evaluation and adjustment of approaches, plans, programs**

2. The importance of strong, informed principal and district support, including allocated time for involvement activities

How Can Teachers and Schools Be Supported in Encouraging Involvement? Priority Areas for Research

- 1. What influence does preservice preparation for parent, family, community involvement have on teachers' sense of efficacy for involvement, invitations to involvement?**
- 2. How can new-teacher mentoring programs best support teachers' family involvement practices?**
- 3. What pedagogical and consultation approaches are most effective in enhancing teachers' and schools' invitations to parental involvement?**