

A Special Project

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FACULTY APPROVAL

Increasing Student's Academic  
Achievement through Parent Involvement

Approved for the Faculty

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## ABSTRACT

The researcher examined the relationship of parent involvement in the student's education and the effect of the involvement on the student's reading fluency. The student's reading fluency was measured by the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills as a pretest in September and then again as a posttest in January. The results indicated the students had made progress in oral reading fluency as measured by the DIBELS ORF pre and post tests. The results also indicated the amount of time spent reading at home significantly affected the students' reading fluency progress. The reading goal of 20 minutes a day was not met by all of the students. The students who had met the reading goal made higher gains than the students who had not met the reading goal.

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## CHAPTER 1

### Introduction

#### Background for the Project

Parents and families have played an important role in helping children develop good study habits and attitudes to become lifelong learners. Homework has been the link between school and home that has shown what children have been studying. The term "parent involvement" has been used as a broad term. This term has been associated with several different forms of participation in education and with the schools (Cotton, 1982).

Recent major legislation, such as the Goals 2000, Educate America Act and the reauthorized Elementary and Secondary Education Act, have made parents' involvement in the children's education a national priority. School districts nationwide have been encouraged to reexamine parent involvement policies and programs and have had to demonstrate innovative approaches in order to obtain federal education dollars. In particular, eligibility for Title I funding, available to school districts in high poverty areas, has been contingent upon the development of "compacts" in which families and schools have agreed to assume mutual responsibility for children's learning. "Partnerships have been forged between homes, schools, and communities, requiring an unprecedented level of contact and communication between parents and educators (U.S. Department of Education, 1994, pg.1)."

Parents have supported children's schooling by having attended school functions and having responded to school obligations such as parent-teacher conferences. By becoming more involved, parents have helped students improve academically. Having provided encouragement, having arranged for appropriate study time and space, having

modeled desired behavior (such as reading for pleasure), having monitored homework, and having actively tutored children at home, have all been ways to show parent involvement.

Outside the home, parents have served as advocates for the school. Having volunteered to help out with school activities or having worked in the classroom have been some ways parents have shown involvement. Some parents have chosen an active role in the governance and decision making necessary for planning, developing, and providing an education for the community's children.

Although parents have conscientiously sent children off to school every day and expected the children to do well, parent involvement has been shown to increase the children's success. Parent participation has made the difference. Parents' active involvement with a child's education at home and in school has had great rewards and has had a significant impact on children's lives. The children of involved parents have been absent less frequently, have behaved better, have done better academically from pre-school through high school, and have gone farther in school (Epstein, 1995).

A home environment that has encouraged learning has been even more important than parents' income, education level, or cultural background. By having actively participated in a child's education at home and in school, parents have sent some critical messages to the child. Having shown interest in the child's activities reinforced the idea that school has been important (NYU Child Study Center, 2007).

### Statement of the Problem

There was a question the researcher sought to answer. Would the student make greater than expected gains in fluency achievement as measured by the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills with parent's support with homework and support with daily reading at home?

### Purpose of the Project

A critical dimension of effective schooling has been parent involvement. The purpose of this project was to show conclusively that parent involvement at home in children's education has improved student achievement in reading fluency.

### Delimitations

Students enrolled in a second grade classroom in the fall of 2007 were selected for the project. The study took place in a rural community of approximately 17,000 located in the eastern part of Washington State. The elementary school where the study took place had kindergarten through fifth grade classes and the population of 425 was 49.4% Hispanic and 44.7% Caucasian. Of this population, 12.1% were transitional bilingual and 6.2% were migrant students. The majority of the student population, 70.2%, was on the free and reduced lunch plan (OSPI, 2007). The sample consisted of 20 second grade students of various races, backgrounds, ability levels and socioeconomic status.

The scores from the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills assessment for fall 2007 were taken and then compared to the scores taken in winter 2008. All students were tested within a one hour period to prevent academic maturation of some students. Students who left during the 2007-2008 time period for longer than twenty consecutive school days were excluded from the project. Materials used to conduct the study included Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills booklets for fall 2007

and winter 2008 and trained educators to administer the assessment. The educators were previously trained together at a school district in-service which included instruction and training in administering the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills assessment. There were also homework logs and reading logs kept for each student. The reading logs were sent home and returned daily. The homework log was a record which indicated how often the weekly homework packet was completed and returned.

### Assumptions

*The Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills* assessment was administered both times in a quiet area and away from any excess noises or distractions. The assessment was administered on the same days for all students. The materials used for the assessment were designed and intended to assess a student at the second grade level. The Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills assessment was administered by trained educators and the same educator gave the pre and post assessment to the same student. Also, each student received the same homework assignment on a weekly basis during the fall semester. The expectations for reading at home were the same for all of the students. These expectations, as well as the homework expectations, were sent home in a letter at the beginning of the year. The expectations and homework assignments were also addressed at the school's Open House on September 18, 2007.

### Hypothesis

Second grade students who receive parent support with homework and support with daily reading will make higher than expected achievement gains in reading fluency as measured by the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills assessment.

### Null Hypothesis

Second grade students who receive parent support with homework and support with daily reading will not make greater than expected achievement gains in reading fluency as measured by the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills assessment.

### Significance of the Project

No Child Left Behind was a law created to improve the academic achievement of K-12 students in the United States. No Child Left Behind required schools to ensure that all students were reading at grade level by third grade (U.S. Department of Education, 2005). In order to have achieved this goal, schools have needed to work together with the student's families.

This special research project examined the correlation of parent's support with daily reading on the student's reading fluency achievement. The researcher also focused on parent's involvement with weekly homework.

### Procedure

The Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills reading fluency pre-test was given to a second grade class of 19 students on September 11, 2007. All of the students were tested within a one hour period. The students were tested in the same room, with the same environment, and the same testing conditions to increase the reliability of the assessment. The students were tested by instructors who had been trained to administer this assessment. The only people in the room were the four instructors and the students being assessed.

At the beginning of the year a letter had been sent to parents with the expectations and guidelines for homework and daily reading. This letter was signed and returned to the

teacher. The letter stated that the students were required to read twenty minutes a day and then were to record the reading in the reading log. Some of this reading should have been done orally. There was also information regarding the weekly homework packet that the students would receive on Monday to complete and return by Friday. Parents also received a handout which included different ways parents have been able to support students with homework. This information was also discussed at the school's Open House on September 18, 2007. There were 13 of the 19 students represented at the Open House.

The Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills post test was given to the same 19 students on January 15, 2008. Again the students were tested in the same room with the same instructors and the students were assessed within a one hour period. The only people in the room were the four instructors and the students being assessed. As each student finished the students would quietly join the class next door and then another student would enter the classroom to be assessed. This continued until all 19 students had been tested. The students were tested individually, facing away from other students to avoid distractions. A *t*-test was done to compare the students' achievement gains from September to January. These results were compared to the amount of time the student had spent reading at home.

#### Definition of Terms

comprehension- Readers with good comprehension understood the text.

fluency- Fluency was the ability to read a text accurately, quickly, and with proper expression and comprehension.

phoneme segmentation- Phonemes were the smallest units of sound that changed the meaning of spoken words.

oral reading fluency- This was a measure that assessed fluency with text and the ability to translate letters-to-sounds-to-words fluently.

#### Acronyms

DIBELS – Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills

NCLB – No Child Left Behind

ORF – Oral Reading Fluency

ESEA- Elementary and Secondary Education Act

ELL- English Language Learners

## CHAPTER 2

### Review of Selected Literature

#### Introduction

Education reform has become a reality and laws, such as NCLB and ESEA, have increased the pressure on educators to further improve student achievement. Educators have had to enlist the help of parents and families in supporting the student's learning.

In this study the researcher wanted to examine the correlation between parent's involvement with the students and the effects this involvement had on the student's reading achievement as measured by the DIBELS. This involvement was measured by using weekly homework charts, as well as, daily reading logs. The DIBELS was used to measure the second grade student's reading progress throughout the school year.

#### The Challenges of Parent Involvement Research

While most practitioners and researchers have supported the policy direction of increased parent involvement, not many practitioners have agreed about what has constituted effective involvement. Confusion has persisted regarding the activities, goals, and desired outcomes of various parent involvement programs and policies. A major source of this confusion has been the lack of scientific rigor in the research informing practice and policy. There has been less known about parent involvement than has been commonly assumed.

Several studies found that families of all income and education levels and from all ethnic and cultural groups have been engaged in supporting children's learning at home. White, middle-class families, however, have been more involved at school. Supporting



involvement at school from all parents has been an important strategy for addressing the achievement gap (Henderson & Mapp, 2002).

### Research on Parent Involvement

The research on parent involvement addressed parents' activities in support of learning at home, in school, and in the community. Joyce Epstein, a leading researcher in the field of parent involvement, identified and studied multiple measures of parent involvement (Epstein, 1995; Epstein, Sanders, Simon, Salinas, Jansorn, & Van Voorhis, 2002). As a result of this research, Epstein and colleagues developed a framework of six types of involvement with associated activities, challenges, and expected results.

The first type of involvement used was called parenting. Activities were designed to help families understand young adolescent development, acquire developmentally appropriate parenting skills, set home conditions to support learning at each grade level, and help schools obtain information about students. The next type of involvement was communicating. The focus was on keeping parents informed through such things as notices, memos, report cards, conferences about student work, and school functions. The next type was volunteering. Activities were used to incorporate strategies to improve volunteer recruiting, training, and scheduling. The fourth type of involvement was called learning at home. Activities allowed coordination of schoolwork with work at home (e.g., goal setting, interactive homework). Decision making was the next type of involvement. The activities were designed to solicit the voice of parents in decisions about school policies and practices. The last type of involvement used in this research was collaborating with the community. The activities used acknowledged and brought

together all community entities with a vested interest in the students' education. ( Pate, & Andrews, 2006, pg 1).

The results of this research showed that parent involvement led to improved educational performance (Epstein et al., 2002; Fan & Chen, 2001; NMSA, 2003; Sheldon & Epstein, 2002; Van Voorhis, 2003). Parent involvement fostered better student classroom behavior (Fan & Chen, 2001; NMSA, 2003). Parents who participated in decision making experienced greater feelings of ownership and were more committed to supporting the school's mission (Jackson & Davis, 2000). Parent involvement increased support of schools (NMSA, 2003). Parent involvement improved school attendance (Epstein et al., 2002). Parent involvement created a better understanding of roles and relationships between and among the parent-student-school triad (Epstein et al., 2002). Parent involvement improved student emotional well-being (Epstein, 2005).

#### Parents Developing Academically Supportive Relationships with The Children

Many students have tried to avoid homework, but teaching and learning research has indicated that children who have spent more time on regularly assigned, meaningful homework, on average, have done better in school, and that the academic benefits of homework have increased as children have moved into the upper grades.

Parents and families have played an important role in the homework process. Together, families and teachers have helped children develop good study habits and attitudes to become lifelong learners. Parents have often asked why teachers have given homework. There have been three main reasons for teachers to assign homework. The first was to help students understand and review the work that has been covered in class. The second reason was to see whether students understood the lesson. The third was to

help students learn how to find and use more information on the subject. (National PTA, 2000).

Homework has also been the link between school and home that has shown what children have been studying. Research has shown that when homework has been turned in to the teacher, graded, and discussed with students, the student's grades have improved, as well as the understanding of the schoolwork. Parents have also wondered how much time the children should spend on homework each night. Most educators have agreed that for children in grades k-2, homework has been more effective when the homework has not exceeded 10-20 minutes each day. Children in grades 3-6 have been able to handle 30-60 minutes each day. In middle school and high school, the amount of homework has varied by subject (Smith-Harvey 2002).

There have been several ways in which parents have helped with homework. Parents have sent the children to school each day, well-rested, fed and with a positive outlook, and have taken an active interest in the children's schooling. The parents have also asked specific questions about what has happened at school each day and how the children have felt about the day. Parents have not tried to not let any personal negative experiences keep the parents from having supported and encouraged the children's personal learning. Parents have let the students know the importance of education by having continued learning both informally and formally and having impressed the importance upon the students. If possible, the parents have set up a quiet, comfortable area with good lighting and the school supplies that the children have needed. The parents have set a family "quiet time" where the parents and children have worked

together on homework, reading, letter writing, and playing games. The parents have allowed the children to study in the way the students have learned best.

Parents also have wondered how much help to give the child. Younger children have often needed extra homework help. First, the parents have made sure the child has understood the directions. Parents have done a few problems together, and then watched the child do a few. The parents have praised right answers and then shown how to correct mistakes.

Teachers have wanted parents and families to be involved in the children's education. When parents have stayed in touch with the children's teachers, the teachers have been able to ease worries and have offered homework tips and ideas on how to help the children learn.

If there has been a night when the student has not had homework, the emphasis has been on reading. Parents should have been reading to younger children or have been reading alongside the older children (Richards, 2007).

There have been a variety of ways parents have helped the children to be lifelong readers. Parents have let the children help organize the books in the children's room. Parents have set up a little library and have found a comfortable place in the house where the parent and child have been able to read together. When parents have read to younger children, parents have let the child pick out the books, (even if the book has been read over and over). Parents have always had plenty of reading material available in the house and have remembered to let the children see the parents reading. The parents have been the child's best role model (Salvadore, 2003).

*Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills*

The DIBELS was a set of standardized, individually administered measures of early literacy development. These measures have been designed to be short (one minute) fluency measures used to regularly monitor the development of early literacy and early reading skills.

The DIBELS was comprised of measures to test fluency in the areas of initial sounds, letter naming, phoneme segmentation, nonsense words, oral reading, retelling, and word use. The measures were developed to assess student development of phonological awareness, alphabetic understanding, accuracy and fluency reading connected text, vocabulary and comprehension. Each measure had been thoroughly researched and demonstrated to be a reliable and valid indicator of early literacy development. When used as recommended, the results have been used to evaluate individual student development toward validated instructional objectives as well as provide feedback on effectiveness of intervention support (Good & Kaminski, 2007).

The key features of DIBELS have made the assessment an excellent measure for screening and progress monitoring. First, DIBELS have been reliable and valid indicators of early reading skills. The Oral Reading Fluency component, which has been used on first through third grade students, had a reliability of .92 to .97 (Good & Kaminski, 2002). According to Good and Kaminski (2002), thousands of children, parents, teachers, and school administrators have participated in collecting data on the many iterations of DIBELS since 1988. The ongoing collaboration with children, teachers, parents, and administrators has helped ensure that DIBELS has been a valuable as well as practical tool for educators. DIBELS was designed to provide teachers with indicators of students' overall early literacy ability. For example,

If a student is significantly behind in phonological awareness at the end of kindergarten as measured by the DIBELS Phoneme Segmentation Fluency Measure, this is an indicator that the student is not on track for being a reader by the end of first grade. If a student is “at risk” for reading failure, other diagnostic reading assessments should be administered to determine which intervention is appropriate for the student (Hawkin, 2004, pg 22).

### Summary

The research literature clearly showed the positive relationship between parental involvement and the student’s literacy success. Improvement in student achievement occurred when parents and families had been actively involved in the education of the students. Furthermore, when parents continued with an education or read in front of the children, the parents became the main role model for the student.

The use of DIBELS to assess students has been given to students in kindergarten through third grade. DIBELS was created in Oregon and has been used to measure a student’s reading progress. This assessment has been used throughout the United States and has identified “at risk” students. This assessment has also provided early reading intervention as needed.

## Chapter 3

### Methodology and Treatment of Data

#### Introduction

The researcher examined the relationship of parent involvement in the student's education and the effect of the involvement on the student's reading fluency. The student's reading fluency was measured by the *Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills* as a pretest in September and then again as a posttest in January. Parents were given a letter at the beginning of the year with guidelines and expectations for homework and daily reading. The expectations and guidelines were again reiterated at the fall open house.

#### Methodology

The study was conducted in an elementary school in a rural community in eastern Washington. The participants were a class of second grade students. The researcher gathered data using the *Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills* to conduct a pretest in the September and then a posttest in January. The researcher examined the results of this quantitative study.

#### Participants

Students enrolled in a second grade classroom in the fall of 2007 were selected for the project. The study took place in a rural community of approximately 17,000 located in the eastern part of Washington State. The elementary school where the study took place had kindergarten through fifth grade classes and the population of 425 was 49.4% Hispanic and 44.7% Caucasian. Of this population, 12.1% were transitional bilingual and 6.2% were migrant students. The majority of the student population, 70.2%, was on the

free and reduced lunch plan. The sample consisted of 19 second grade students of various races, backgrounds, ability levels and socioeconomic status. The study began in August 2007 and was completed in January 2008. The study compared reading fluency gains to the time students spent reading at home.

### Instruments

The researcher used the DIBELS Oral Reading Fluency Test for the study. The Oral Reading Fluency Test was a standardized assessment intended for first through third grade students. The test measured fluency and accuracy in reading grade-level passages aloud, as measured by words read correctly per minute. The score represented the students' oral reading fluency rates. The Oral Reading Fluency Test's reliability was .92 to .97 (Good & Kaminski, 2002).

### Design

The DIBELS reading fluency pre-test was given to the second graders during the second week of September 2007. The DIBELS test was given again as a posttest to the same second grade students during the second week of January 2009. The scores of the posttest were used to measure the achievement gains the students had made in reading fluency. A *t*-test was done to compare the students' achievement gains from September to January.

### Procedure

*The Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills* reading fluency pre-test was given to a second grade class of 19 students on September 11, 2007. All of the students were tested within a one hour period. The students were tested in the same room, with the same environment, and the same testing conditions to increase the reliability of the



assessment. The students were tested by instructors who had been trained to administer this assessment. The only people in the room were the four instructors and the students being assessed.

At the beginning of the year a letter had been sent to parents with the expectations and guidelines for homework and daily reading. This letter was signed and returned to the teacher. The letter stated that the students were required to read twenty minutes a day and then were to record the reading in the reading log. Some of this reading should have been done orally. There was also information regarding the weekly homework packet that the students would receive on Monday to complete and return by Friday. Parents also received a handout which included different ways parents have been able to support students with homework. This information was also discussed at the school's Open House on September 18, 2007. The parents of 13 of the 19 students were represented at the Open House.

*The Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills* post test was given to the same 19 students on January 15, 2008. Again the students were tested in the same room with the same instructors and the students were assessed within a one hour period. The only people in the room were the four instructors and the students being assessed. As each student finished the students would quietly join the class next door and then another student would enter the classroom to be assessed. This continued until all 19 students had been tested. The students were tested individually, facing away from other students to avoid distractions. A *t*-test was done to compare the students' achievement gains from September to January. These results were compared to the amount of time the student had spent reading at home.

### Treatment of the Data

*The Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills* was used as a posttest on the 19 second grader students. The assessment was given on January 15, 2008. A *t*-test was done to compare the students' reading fluency achievement gains from September 2007 to January 2008. The achievement gains of the second grade students were compared to the amount of time spent reading at home using a test of chi-square.

### Summary

In September 2007, the *Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills* was given to a second grade class of 19 students. The second grade students received the same reading instruction in class throughout the semester. Weekly homework was assigned which was due on Friday. Students were also expected to read 20 minutes a day. The minutes were recorded on a reading log and the reading logs were signed by the parents. At the school's open house in September, the parents were given information dealing with ways to support the students with homework assignments as well as support with daily reading. A posttest using the *Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills* was given to the second grade class on January 15, 2008. The scores from the posttest were compared to the pretest scores. The reading achievement was compared to the amount of time the students spent reading at home.

## Chapter 4

### Analysis of the Data

#### Introduction

The researcher examined the relationship of parent involvement in the student's education and the effect of the involvement on the student's reading fluency. The student's reading fluency was measured by the *Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills* as a pretest in September and then again as a posttest in January. Parents were given a letter at the beginning of the year with guidelines and expectations for homework and daily reading. The expectations and guidelines were again reiterated at the fall open house.

#### Description of the Environment

Students enrolled in a second grade classroom in the fall of 2007 were selected for the project. The study compared reading fluency gains to the time students spent reading at home. The study took place in a rural community of approximately 17,000 located in the eastern part of Washington State. The elementary school where the study took place had kindergarten through fifth grade classes and the population of 425 was 49.4% Hispanic and 44.7% Caucasian. Of this population, 12.1% were transitional bilingual and 6.2% were migrant students. The majority of the student population, 70.2%, was on the free and reduced lunch plan (OSPI, 2007). The sample consisted of 19 second grade students of various races, backgrounds, ability levels and socioeconomic status.

The scores from the *Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills* assessment for fall 2007 were taken and then compared to the scores taken in winter 2008. All students were tested within a one hour period to prevent academic maturation of some

students. Students who left during the 2007-2008 time period for longer than twenty consecutive school days were excluded from the project. Materials used to conduct the study included *Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills* booklets for fall 2007 and winter 2008 and trained educators to administer the assessment. The educators were previously trained together at a school district in-service which included instruction and training in administering the *Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills* assessment. There were also homework logs and reading logs kept for each student. The reading logs were sent home and returned daily. The homework log was a record which indicated how often the weekly homework packet was completed and returned.

#### Hypothesis/Research Question

Second grade students who receive parent support with homework and support with daily reading will make higher than expected achievement gains in reading fluency as measured by the *Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills* assessment.

#### Null Hypothesis

Second grade students who receive parent support with homework and support with daily reading will not make greater than expected achievement gains in reading fluency as measured by the *Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills* assessment.

## Results of the Study

Table 1.

### t-test of Pre and Post DIBELS Scores

Test	N	Mean	Standard Deviation
Pre	19	42.21	20.25
Post	19	72.26	27.74

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df= 18                                      t= 11.45                                      p<.001

After comparing the students' pretest and posttest DIBELS scores, Table 1 demonstrated the results for the second grade class. Each of the students made oral reading fluency progress during the duration of the study from September through January.

Table 2.

$\chi^2$  Test of Student's Oral Reading Progress and Time Spent Reading at Home

DIBELS Gains	Reading Goal Met	Reading Goal Not Met
0-20	1	3
21-40	7	5
41-60	2	1
df = 2	$\chi^2 = 8.87$	$p < .05$

The goal for each student was to read for at least 20 minutes a day for the duration of the study. The students' reading progress was measured by the DIBELS ORF pretest and posttest scores. Table 2 indicated there was statistical significance when the students' oral reading progress was compared to the time read at home during the study. The hypothesis was accepted.

Findings

The results indicated the students had made progress in oral reading fluency as measured by the DIBELS ORF pre and post tests. The results also indicated the amount of time spent reading at home significantly affected the students' reading fluency progress. The reading goal of 20 minutes a day was not met by all of the students. The students who had met the reading goal made higher gains than the students who had not met the reading goal.

At the beginning of the year a letter had been sent to parents with the expectations and guidelines for homework and daily reading. This letter was signed and returned to the teacher. The letter stated that the students were required to read twenty minutes a day and then were to record the reading in the reading log. Some of the reading should have been

done orally. There was also information regarding the weekly homework packet that the students would receive on Monday to complete and return by Friday. Parents also received a handout which included different ways parents have been able to support students with homework. This information was also discussed at the school's Open House on September 18, 2007. There were 13 parents of the 19 students represented at the Open House.

A homework survey was also given to the parents at the beginning of the year. Of those surveyed, seventy nine percent completed and returned the survey. The survey indicated most parents supported and encouraged the students to complete the homework given. The results also showed that 93% of the parents helped the student complete the homework. Only 53% needed to remind the student to return the homework to school. The results indicated most students completed the homework with some assistance and encouragement from the parents.

### Discussion

The results indicated all of the students had made progress in ORF as measured by the DIBELS assessment. There were significant statistical gains made by the students who had met the reading goal from September through January. Most of the students who had not met the reading goal had not made significant gains in the DIBELS fluency scores. Students who had met the reading goal had parents who had supported the daily reading and had also helped the student complete and return the daily reading logs.

### Summary

The nineteen second graders in the study all had made progress in oral reading fluency as measured by the DIBELS. The students who had parents who had supported

the daily reading at home and who had met the reading goal from September through January had made significant statistical gains compared to the students who had not met the reading goal. The hypothesis was accepted as the time spent reading at home was a factor which contributed to the oral reading fluency progress as measured by the DIBELS assessment.



## Chapter 5

### Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations

#### Introduction

The researcher examined the relationship of parent involvement in the student's education and the effect of the involvement on the student's reading fluency. The student's reading fluency was measured by the *Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills* as a pretest in September and then again as a posttest in January. Parents were given a letter at the beginning of the year with guidelines and expectations for homework and daily reading. The expectations and guidelines were again reiterated at the fall open house.

#### Summary

The research literature clearly showed the positive relationship between parental involvement and the student's literacy success. Improvement in student achievement occurred when parents and families had been actively involved in the education of the students. Furthermore, when parents continued with an education or read in front of the children, the parents became the main role model for the student.

The use of DIBELS to assess students has been given to students in kindergarten through third grade. DIBELS was created in Oregon and has been used to measure a student's reading progress. This assessment has been used throughout the United States and has identified "at risk" students. This assessment has also provided early reading intervention as needed.

In September 2007, the *Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills* was given to a second grade class of 19 students. The second grade students received the same

reading instruction in class throughout the semester. Weekly homework was assigned which was due on Friday. Students were also expected to read 20 minutes a day. The minutes were recorded on a reading log and the reading logs were signed by the parents. At the school's open house in September, the parents were given information dealing with ways to support the students with homework assignments as well as support with daily reading. A posttest using the *Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills* was given to the second grade class on January 15, 2008. The scores from the posttest were compared to the pretest scores. The reading achievement was compared to the amount of time the students spent reading at home.

### Conclusion

The results indicated all of the students had made progress in ORF as measured by the DIBELS assessment. There were significant statistical gains made by the students who had met the reading goal from September through January. Most of the students who had not met the reading goal had not made significant gains in the DIBELS fluency scores. Students who had met the reading goal had parents who had supported the daily reading and had also helped the student complete and return the daily reading logs.

### Recommendations

The researcher recommends that a more in depth study could be done to analyze the quality of the reading done at home. The study could analyze the amount of reading done with the parents or by the parents compared to the amount of time the children read alone. Parents have been told that reading aloud to young children is beneficial in helping the children develop early literacy skills. Once the skills are developed the children need to be able to practice the skills independently.

The study could also focus on different types of literacy training or workshops available for families. Some schools already promote family literacy nights which provide some training and materials for families.

Overall, educators and parents agree that a positive relationship between school and home contributes to a child's academic success. Keeping these lines of communication open is the best way to continue to improve our student's literacy.

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Table 3: *t*- test DIBELS Pre and Post test Scores

Student	Pre-test	Post-test
1	16	39
2	25	61
3	14	19
4	25	64
5	21	35
6	35	68
7	36	48
8	40	77
9	30	64
10	31	59
11	39	68
12	65	80
13	46	83
14	44	78
15	56	102
16	59	93
17	84	128
18	48	75
19	88	132
Median	42.21	72.26

Table 4: *t-test* Pre and Post DIBELS Scores and Time Read at Home

Student	ORF Sept.	ORF Jan.	ORF Gains	Days Read	Rdg. Goal
1	16	39	23	7	Not met
2	25	61	36	88	Met
3	14	19	5	23	Not met
4	25	64	39	37	Met
5	21	35	14	24	Not met
6	35	68	33	15	Not met
7	36	48	12	24	Not met
8	40	77	37	12	Not met
9	30	64	34	7	Not met
10	31	59	28	89	Met
11	39	68	29	13	Not met
12	65	80	15	85	Met
13	46	83	37	66	Met
14	44	78	34	75	Met
15	56	102	46	50	Met
16	59	93	34	73	Met
17	84	128	44	91	Met
18	48	75	27	55	Met
19	88	132	44	21	Not Met
Median	42.21	72.26			

Table 5: Results of Parent Survey

Question	Yes	No	Percent w/Yes
1	15	0	100%
2	14	1	93%
3	8	7	53%
4	0	15	0%
5	0	15	0%
6	13	2	87%
7	15	0	100%
8	0	15	0%
9	13	2	87%
10	15	0	100%



## Homework Survey

Parent Name  
(Optional) \_\_\_\_\_

Language Spoken in the Home: English \_\_\_\_\_ Spanish \_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

	Yes	No
I support and encourage my child to complete their homework.		
I help my child complete their homework.		
I need to remind my child to return their homework to school.		
I believe my child receives too much homework.		
I believe my child receives too little homework.		
I provide a quiet, well lit space for my child to do their homework.		
I provide the necessary supplies for my child to complete their homework.		
Language makes it difficult for me to help my child with their homework.		
I look over my child's completed homework before they return it to school.		
I believe my second grade student should receive homework.		

Additional  
comments: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**HOMEWORK POLICY FOR 2<sup>ND</sup> GRADERS  
2007-2008 SCHOOL YEAR**

1. Your child is expected to read every night for at least 20 minutes.
2. Spelling lists will be sent home every Monday (spelling tests are on Friday).
3. Homework packets will be sent home on Monday and will be due on Friday. This will start the first full week of school.
4. You can help your child by:
  - A. Establishing a regular time and place for doing homework.
  - B. Inviting your child to share finished work.
  - C. Not assuming control of the work yourself. I need to assess your child's strengths and weaknesses.



Thank you for your support with my reading and homework policies. Please sign and return.

Child's name

Parent's Name

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## FIVE THINGS PARENTS CAN DO TO ENRICH THEIR CHILD'S EDUCATION

1. Review all paperwork sent home with your child, including homework, newsletters, and completed work. Then respond as requested.
2. Share concerns, issues and ideas with teachers. These could be issues regarding the home and child or ideas for the classroom. Attend open houses and special events.
3. Make sure your child gets enough sleep and eats breakfast, so they can fully concentrate on learning during the school day.
4. Read to and with your child for at least 20 minutes. Turn off the TV and video games at a set time in the evening and dedicate that time for reading.
5. Ask your child open-ended questions about their day in school. Ask about what they did at recess, how their lunch was, or what their favorite part of the day was.