

Pepperdine University
Graduate School of Education and Psychology

BUILDING HOME-SCHOOL PARTNERSHIPS WITH PARENTS OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE
LEARNERS IN A HIGH SCHOOL COMMUNITY: A MIXED METHODS
PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY OF ONE HIGH SCHOOL IN SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Educational Leadership, Administration, and Policy

By

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March, 2015

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DEDICATION

With all my love, I dedicate this dissertation to my family for all of their love, support, and encouragement. I could not have completed this journey without you.

Most importantly to my daughter Heaven, who proudly tells everyone that her mommy is becoming a *Doctor*. I hope I make you proud and serve as a role model of all the possibilities you can achieve.

To my mother; though you were in the distance you always seemed so close with your encouraging words and love. Thank you for all your frequent phone calls to keep me focused and on track.

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To my best friend, please know that I am very thankful for you and appreciate you. What I appreciate the most is your way of motivating me and helping to try to make myself a better person. I appreciate and thank you!

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“Your Legacy is Today.”

- Galford and Muruca

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VITA

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this mixed methods study was to examine home-school partnerships practices between the high school community and English Language Learner (ELL) parents. More specifically, this study examined the experiences and benefits, if any, of ELL parents who participated in 1 or more of the following four ELL parent engagement practices implemented at 1 high school in Southern California during the 2009-2012 school years:

1. ELAC Parent education meetings
2. ELL Parent Handbook
3. ELL Parent Orientation Day
4. ELL Guidance Counselor

The convergent parallel mixed methods design allowed for qualitative data of parent interviews and quantitative data of student performance scores to be used in parallel, analyzed separately, and then summarized separately, looking for contradictions or relationships between the 2 data sets. A total of 7 parents participated in the interview process. The parent interview responses were coded to highlight key words and statements, forming them into emerging themes in regard to the 4 implemented parent engagement practices. The quantitative data of student performance scores on the California English Language Development Test (CELDT), Math California Standards Test (CST), and English language arts CST were compared among the students whose parents participated in 1 or more of the engagement practices to the total population of identified ELL students at this one school site during the 2009-2012 school years. The quantitative data also compared ELL student performance scores from the year prior to the implementation of the parent engagement practices.

The findings of this study support the following conclusions. Existing ELL parent engagement practices are viewed by ELL parents as valuable; however, new means need to be explored to benefit a larger number of parents. ELL parents benefit from and place higher value on practices that provide opportunities for 2-way communication. ELL parents value sharing their personal experiences with other ELL parents in support of student learning. Specifically designed ELL parent engagement practices prompted parents to communicate with their children. Lastly, parent participation in 1 or more of the 4 implemented practices may have contributed to greater student success.

Chapter 1: The Problem

Background of Problem

California state achievement data show an existing achievement gap between limited English proficient students and native English speakers (California Department of Education, Assessment, Accountability, and Awards Division, 2010), but there is no consensus on what has caused the problem or how to resolve it. The demographic profile of the United States K-12 student population has noticeably changed over the last 25 years. Arias and Morillo-Campbell (2008) stated, “The fastest growing segment of the school-age population has been English Language Learners (ELLs), doubling their numbers from approximately 2 million in 1989-90 to more than 5 million in 2004-2005” (p. 3), representing 10.5% of the total public school student enrollment. By the year 2030, it is estimated that approximately one-fourth of the total K-12 school population in U.S. schools will be English Language Learners (ELLs; Gibson, 2002). Teaching ELLs successfully requires specialized knowledge, skills, and disposition on the part of educators and effective communication and partnerships with parents of ELLs in order to share responsibility for student achievement.

Federal, state, and local policies have strengthened support for school, parent, and community partnerships for all K-12 students. Laws and policies supporting parent involvement have been in existence since the 1960s with Project Head Start and supported by every administration moving forward as they advocated for sustainable models of parent involvement in schools. During the 1990s, the Clinton administration established home-school partnerships as a national goal for all schools with the Goals 2000: Educate America Act. “Most recently, the *No Child Left Behind* (NCLB) outlines a *nested* system of school, district, and state requirements for developing research-based programs that involve parents in ways that contribute to student

achievement and success in school” (Epstein, 2009, p. 9). The No Child Left Behind Act (U.S. Department of Education, 2002) implemented by the G. W. Bush administration, places great emphasis on involvement for all parents, especially for limited English parents. The following are guidelines for schools to qualify for and maintain federal funding:

NCLB defines parental involvement as “the participation of parents in regular, two-way, and meaningful communication involving student academic learning and other school activities” [*Section 9101(32)*]. Furthermore, Title III of the law requires that schools provide “an effective means of outreach to parents of LEP children to inform them of how they can be active participants in their child’s education to help them learn English and succeed academically” [*Section 3302(e)(1)*]. To communicate in a meaningful way with LEP parents, schools must “hold regular meetings for these purposes, and the information must be presented in an understandable and uniform format and, to the extent practicable, in a language that the parent can understand” [*Section 1118(e)(5)*]. (Virginia Department of Education-Division of Instruction, 2005, p. 5)

The language of NCLB asks schools to respect and value the contributions of all parents, as parents are the most influential teachers for their children. NCLB supports the concept of parents as *funds of knowledge* (Moll & Gonzalez, 1994) asking schools to make every effort to understand families and their culture and to utilize their knowledge to support their students’ learning.

Since his election into office in 2009, President Obama has consistently stressed the importance of accountability and increased parent involvement. The following statement addressing this issue comes from his remarks to the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce on March 10, 2009:

The bottom line is that no government policies will make any difference unless we also hold ourselves more accountable as parents. Because government, no matter how wise or efficient, cannot turn off the TV or put away the video games. Teachers, no matter how dedicated or effective, cannot make sure your children leave for school on time and do their homework when they get back at night. These are things only a parent can do. These are things that our parents must do. (Obama, 2009, para.44)

In 2010, President Obama supported the importance of parental involvement in the Race to the Top education reform, highlighting the need to give parents the knowledge and empowerment to be involved in decision making and reinforcing that parents and schools must be full partners in order for this process to be successful. Most recently, the Obama administration proposed to double federal funding for parent engagement to a total of \$270 million (The White House, n.d.). This increased funding proposal includes support for programs that survey families on their children's educational experience.

The core goal of education reforms such as NCLB and Race to the Top is to close the achievement gap between advantaged and disadvantaged students. Such reforms establish high expectations for all students with accountability for student achievement as their cornerstone. Accountability requires schools to disaggregate and disseminate data by subgroups, including the subgroup of students with limited English proficiency. These data contribute to the existing research on the academic achievement of ELL students, but schools often overlook such factors as parent involvement and the impact of parent involvement on student achievement.

A number of factors may negatively influence ELL parent participation in home-school collaboration, including: differences in perspectives about a parent's role in schooling, limited English fluency, cultural differences, and unfamiliarity with the school system. A school site can

be intimidating and be seen as a foreign environment, resulting in a culture shock that is difficult to overcome. ELL parents are often categorized as *marginalized* parents. Marginalized parents are perceived as not being involved in the same way as many White, middle-class parents, partly due to prior negative experiences or limited knowledge of U.S. school systems (Arias & Morillo-Campbell, 2008). Despite the fact that many ELL parents fall into the marginalized category, this does not mean they do not care about their children's education. ELL parents are commonly unsure of their role or what the teacher or school expects due to cultural differences (Shannon & Llojero Latimer, 1996), resulting in them being less likely to be involved in the way the school expects them to be.

Unfortunately, many educators in schools in United States perceive the diversity of their students and families as a deficit rather than an asset because the school's cultural foundation is based primarily on middle-class European values (Association for Supervision and Curriculum, 2005). Deficit thinking in such schools may result in the false assumption that students need to give up their home culture and language and assimilate in order to be successful. Since the 1970s, U.S. Federal education policy has emphasized cultural assimilation by excluding native languages and cultures from U.S. schools (Lipka, 2002), leaving many students and families feeling alienated from educational organizations. This cultural disconnect often results in discipline problems and poor academics among minorities in schools (Bazron, Osher, & Fleischman, 2005).

There has been a shift across the nation since the 1970s, starting with cultural awareness, moving toward cultural sensitivity the early 1980s, and then again in the late 1980s with and emphasis on cultural competence (Perso, 2012). Petty (2010) provided the following definition of cultural competence in education:

a set of values and principles, demonstrated behaviors, attitudes, policies, and structures that enable people to work effectively in cross-cultural settings; “demonstrated capacity to 1) value diversity, 2) engage in self-reflection on one’s own cultural reference points, conscious and unconscious assumption, biases, power, and areas of growth, 3) build cross-cultural understanding over time with an on-going commitment to continual growth, 4) build knowledge and understanding of historical and current systemic inequities and their impact on specific racial and other demographic groups, 5) adapt to the diversity and cultural contexts of the students, families, and communities served, 6) effectively manage the dynamics of difference, 7) support actions which foster equity (not necessarily equality) of opportunity and services; and “institutionalization, incorporation, evaluation of, and advocating for the above in all aspects of curricular development, instructional practice, leadership, policy-making, administration, practice, and service delivery while systematically involving staff, students, families, key stakeholders, and communities. (p. 15)

Once a school recognizes diversity and obtains the ability to become culturally competent, the outcome will be a culturally responsive school (Perso, 2012) that is continuously developing cultural competence and reassessing the organization as it evolves and becomes more diverse.

Besides the variables of cultural differences and barriers, parent involvement decreases substantially between grades 6 and 12 (Epstein, 1990). The organizational structure of secondary schools is one of the main factors that deters effective home-school interaction and communication (Sanders, Epstein, & Connors-Tadors, 1999). Generally, secondary structures are composed of teachers teaching several classes with large numbers of students and limited time, thus greatly diminishing the opportunities to interact and form home-school relationships.

While much is known about the positive impact of parent involvement in a child's education and the connection between parent involvement and positive educational outcomes, it is concerning as to why families of ELLs are less likely to be involved in their children's education than English only parents. There is a misperception by school staff and administrators that families of ELLs do not care about their children's education based on their lack of direct interaction and involvement with the school (Thoa, 2009). In contrast, research has shown that families of ELLs value education and have high expectations for their children's academic achievement but struggle with their understanding of the unfamiliar American schooling system (Reese, Balzano, Gallimore, & Goldenberg, 1995). If it is known that families of ELLs do value their children's education, how are schools reaching out to this population to increase parent involvement and build home-school relationships? Are traditional approaches appropriate for this population?

With the increased focus of NCLB and the Federal requirements to receive Title I funding, schools must effectively engage the parents of their ELL student populations and place research, practice, and policy design at a high priority. Schools must start this movement by evaluating their current practices and programs, then determining the key components that are effective in outreach and parental involvement for ELL families.

The Los Angeles area high school under study has seen its student population grow to include students from a wide range of cultural and linguistic backgrounds. The 33 languages spoken and the percentage of students (16.4%) who are ELLs represent the school's linguistic diversity. In 2007, a 1-day Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) visit highlighted the need to reevaluate current practices, programs, and curriculum related to ELL

students and students with disabilities based on data that reflected a discrepancy in achievement. This discrepancy is reflected in Table 1.

Table 1

Bay City High School 2007-2008 Percentage of Students Demonstrating Proficiency or above in California Standardized Test (CST) and California High School Exit Exam (CAHSEE)

Student Population	CST English Language Arts % Proficient or above	CST Mathematics % Proficient or above
All Students	60.7%	57.7%
EL Students	25.9%	32.7%
Students with Disabilities	24.5%	24%

ELL students were identified along with Special Education students as the subgroups experiencing the greatest need at Bay City High School (BCHS)¹. WASC identified strengthening and expanding collaboration among parents, community, and school to create a more supportive learning environment as a focus area. To address these gaps, BCHS implemented the target goal of increased student achievement and proficiency for all underperforming subgroups in a 3-year School Site Action Plan. High level collaboration among teachers, administration, staff, and parents allowed for the development of practices and strategies that would support BCHS students in becoming proficient in California's academic content and performance standards.

WASC also advised that the current BCHS mission statement be revised to reflect the current study body and focus of the school. The revised mission statement reads as follow; "Bay City High School is an engaged and caring academic community where diversity is valued and respected. We are committed to educating and inspiring all students to become life-long learners and contributing members of our global society."² The WASC recommendation of increased

¹ All proper names of sites, locations, and individuals will be pseudonyms used to protect the anonymity of the participants.

² Information was obtained from the website of participating institution and is therefore confidential.

awareness of cultural and linguistic diversity at BCHS has led to the self-evaluation of their current policies, procedures, and programs.

Problem Statement

One outcome of BCHS WASC self-evaluation was the implementation of a parent involvement program with four specific parent engagement practices in efforts to build home-school partnerships and relationships with families of ELLs in support of student learning. The format of the English Language Advisory Council (ELAC) was revised to include a parent education and training component at monthly meetings. An ELL Parent Handbook available in both Spanish and English was developed and designed to be parent friendly and assist parents in navigating through the school's daily operations and educational system. Additionally, a Parent Orientation Day designed specifically for ELL parents was implemented to familiarize parents with the school culture and the English Language Development (ELD) program. Lastly, a guidance counselor was designated as an ELL counselor with a primary focus of communication and engagement strategies that promote ELL parent involvement in support of student learning.

However since the implementation of these parent engagement practices, BCHS has conducted no exploration of ELL parent experiences or benefits, if any, regarding the four implemented parent engagement practices, as well as exploration of possible student outcomes of the parent involvement program. Therefore, both an opportunity and a need existed to study the aforementioned areas of interest at BCHS and explore how, if at all, these practices and program have served to build home-school partnerships with ELL parents in support of student learning at BCHS.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine home-school partnership practices between the high school community and ELL parents at BCHS. This mixed methods study explored the perceptions of ELL parents at BCHS as they relate to the following four specific parent engagement practice that were implemented at BCHS during 2009-2012 in efforts to build home-school partnerships that support student learning: (a) the implementation of a revised ELAC format, (b) the development of an ELL Parent Handbook available in Spanish and English, (c) the implementation of a Parent Orientation Day designed specifically for ELL parents, and (d) having a designated ELL guidance counselor. The study used a convergent parallel mixed methods design in which qualitative and quantitative data were used in parallel, analyzed separately, and then summarized separately looking for contradictions or relationships among the two data sets. Collecting both qualitative and quantitative data brought greater insight into the problem than could be obtained by either type of data separately.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided this study:

- How do ELL parents who participated in one or more of the parent involvement practices implemented at BCHS during 2009-2012 describe their experiences and benefits, if any, in supporting their students' learning relative to the following;
 1. ELAC Parent education meetings?
 2. ELL Parent Handbook?
 3. ELL Parent Orientation Day?
 4. ELL Guidance Counselor?

- How, if at all, have language fluency level and academic performance of BCHS ELL students changed from 2009 until 2012 since the implementation of four specific parent involvement practices: ELAC Parent education meetings, ELL Parent Handbook, ELL Parent Orientation Day, and ELL Guidance counselor?

Importance of the Study

Practical significance. The topic of parental involvement has been at the forefront of numerous research studies in the education field for many years. Despite the fact that research presents findings that home-school partnerships are important for student success (Boethel, 2003; Epstein, 2001; Henderson & Mapp, 2002; Hiatt-Michael, 2010; Mapp, 2002), teachers, school districts and educational leaders give little attention to this topic (Epstein, 2009). As a result of the budget crisis in education, educational leaders are demanding more and better research on the connection between home-school partnerships and student achievement (Jordan, Orozco, & Averett, 2001) to make more informed decisions on using already limited funds to support this effort. Much of the existing research has focused on variables that the school can control, such as funding, class size, and curriculum (Marzano, 2003). Less research has focused on the strengths of the parents and their desire to connect with the school (Brooks-Gunn, Duncan, & Aber, 1997). Of equal importance is a need for additional studies on selecting and implementing practices to involve families in their children's education (Epstein, 2001) in a meaningful way. The findings of this study have the potential to build upon existing research, providing a focus on ELL parent involvement at the high school level that addresses the needs of culturally and linguistically diverse families.

The findings of this study offer insights regarding the perceptions of ELL parents in a real life setting, providing a different point of view that organizations sometimes overlook and or

of which they may not be conscious when implementing parent involvement practices and programs. The school's perspective and what they believe constitutes effective involvement have dominated the research field, with little to no input from one of the key stakeholders: the parents. Therefore this study brings to the forefront the parent perspective and highlights their concerns, issues, and needs in regard to ELL parent involvement.

BCHS has a large and diverse student population. Although ELLs represent a small percentage of the student population and may be considered a minority, this study will give insight into how minority groups require just as much attention as a majority group and focus on equal access and opportunity for all students and families. The findings and recommendations of this study could inform site and district level practices and policies, as well as influence changes of state and federal policies on a larger scale. This study's findings have their greatest significance at BCBS, where there is currently a strong desire to increase ELL parent involvement and build home-school partnerships with this population. This study offers BCBS valuable information about specific practices and outcomes that can guide further training, practices, policies, and programs to increase ELL parent involvement.

Theoretical significance. The contribution from this study's findings could potentially lead to a new model and framework of parent involvement that integrates Epstein's (1995) traditional types of parent involvement with Arias and Morillo-Campbell's (2008) non-traditional model that attends to the needs of diverse families. This study acknowledges the contribution of Epstein's six types of parent involvement framework, but also aims to generate a new conversation among educators around how to expand on this model to best meet the needs of ELL families at the high school level. Scribner, Young, and Pedroza (1999) emphasized the following five specific areas of focus when addressing the needs of ELL families while building

home-school partnerships: (a) build on cultural values, (b) maintain personal contact with families, (c) promote communication with families, (d) create a welcoming environment for families, and (e) provide structural accommodation for families. When these factors are achieved, a new level of involvement and culture emerges (Hiatt-Michael, 2007); this is the experience for which all school sites and districts should strive and keep in mind when evaluating current practices and implementing new ones.

The researcher hopes to advance research in this area by revising the existing Epstein (1995) model by incorporating the traditional model with a non-traditional model. This study will also provide guidance to educational leaders and administrators at high school sites with similar demographics in the implementation of new parent involvement practices that meet the needs of ELL families and value their contributions.

Definition of Terms

Throughout this study, the following terminology is used frequently:

- *English Language Advisory Council (ELAC)*: California state law requires that every school with a student population with more than 21 English learners must form an ELAC. An ELAC is composed of parents, teachers, and other community members that advocate for ELL student achievement and programs (California State Board of Education, 2009).
- *English Language Learners (ELLs)*: For the purpose of this study ELLs are students or adults whose first language is not English, “This includes ELLs who are just beginning to learn English and those who have already developed considerable proficiency” (Arias & Morillo-Campbell, 2008, p. 3).
- *ELL Guidance Counselor*: For the purpose of this study, an ELL guidance counselor is a certificated school counselor designated to serve the total population of students at BCHS

that are classified as ELLs. The ELL counselor also serves and assist the designated ELL students' families with a primary focus of developing and incorporating communication and engagement strategies between home and school.

- *High School*: A school that educates students between the ages of 14 and 18. For the purpose of this study, this high school serves students in grades 9-12.
- *Home-School Partnerships*: Partnerships that involve collaboration and support of school staff and families that have a positive effect on student achievement (Funkhouser & Gonzales ,1997).
- *Parent(s)*: Refers to all people who perform duties of parenthood. This can include biological parents, primary caretakers, legal guardians, mothers, fathers, grandparents, foster parents, or social workers.
- *Parental Engagement/Parental Involvement*: For the purpose of this study, these two key terms are used interchangeably. Both terms refer to parent support and participation at home, in the school, and in the community that encourage involvement focused on student learning and development. For the purpose of this study, both will also imply that the school's and parents' interests are valued equally in forming a home-school partnership.

Delimitations of the Study

This study is delimited to one urban comprehensive high school site, BCHS, in Southern California. This study was delimited to parents of ELLs and specifically a focus group of parents who are representative of parents of ELLs who participated in parent engagement interventions at BCHS during the 2009-2012 school years. Additionally this study was delimited to four interventions: ELAC, ELL orientation day, ELD parent handbook, and ELL guidance counselor.

Finally, this study was delimited to a specific time frame of the 2009-2012 school years when all four parent engagement interventions were implemented and in existence at BCHS.

Limitations of the Study

There are four limitations related to this study. The first relates to a small sample size at one high school; as a result, the findings may not be generalizable to other high schools and other levels of schooling. Second, focus group participants' responses may not be representative of all parents of ELLs in school. Third, the study was limited to the number of parents who are willing to participate in the study. Fourth, the study focused on selected interventions based on the needs of the ELL parents at one school site, and not all possible interventions.

Assumptions of the Study

This study operated under the following assumptions: (a) implementing parent engagement interventions would be of positive value to parents; (b) communication is the key to building home-school partnerships; (c) all parents, regardless of ethnic background and or culture, desire to be involved in their children's education and would be willing to participate in home-school partnerships; (d) parents who participated in the focus group would be open and candid and provide accurate information; and (e) teachers, staff, and administrators at the site under study are committed to building home-school partnerships and quality relationships in support of student learning.

Organization of the Study

This research study is presented in five chapters. This chapter introduced the study by providing background information, statement of the problem, purpose statement, practical and theoretical significance, and guiding research questions. Chapter 2 offers a comprehensive review of relevant literature summarizing current knowledge, key findings, and contributions

pertaining to parent involvement and specifically ELL parent involvement. Chapter 2 includes the following sections: historical background on parent involvement; theoretical frameworks and models that support and guide this study; parent involvement in education with focus at the high school level; and ELL parent involvement, including barriers and practices that promote involvement in high schools. Chapter 3 describes the research design, participants, data collection, instrumentation, analysis, protection of human subjects, and timeline of the study. Chapter 4 presents the findings, and Chapter 5 provides a summary of the entire study, discussion of key findings, summary, and recommendations for further study.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

The benefits of parent involvement have been well documented for over 30 years, connecting family involvement with higher student achievement, lower dropout rates, and a more positive attitude towards school (Henderson & Mapp, 2002). Although findings support family involvement, many schools struggle to engage families. This is even more common at the high school level, where parents experience conflict between being involved while still providing space for their student to gain independence. In addition to struggling with family involvement and building home-school partnerships, schools struggle even more so to implement practices to involve minorities and families who speak limited English. ELLs are the fastest growing student population in the U.S. (Arias & Morillo-Campbell, 2008), and schools are challenged to implement culturally and linguistically appropriate practices and policies to build home-school partnerships.

This study examined home-school partnership practices between the high school community and ELL parents. More specifically, this study explored ELL parent involvement practices implemented at BCHS, a high school in Southern California, by analyzing multiple forms of data. This study also investigated how ELL parent involvement at BCHS has evolved from a WASC visit 7 years ago to the present day, the perceptions of ELL parents at BCHS with respect to specific parent engagement practices and if the practices implemented had any impact on ELL student achievement. Therefore, the key variables in this study were parent involvement, parent involvement in high schools, and ELL parent involvement.

This chapter presents a review of the literature related to parent involvement. This chapter is divided into five parts: (a) the theoretical frameworks that support this study, (b) theoretical models that guide this study, (c) the historical context that explores the roots of

parent involvement, (d) parental involvement in education and the common practices that have emerged, and (e) ELL parent involvement including barriers and practices that promote involvement in high schools.

Theoretical Framework

Change theory. How does successful change happen? Many organizations find themselves asking this question. Change theory can be very powerful in guiding reforms when those involved have a deep understanding of identifying the factors needed to obtain specific results (Fullan, 2006). Ravitch (as cited in Jones, 2007) described the existing failure of many reform efforts as, “forgotten innovations [that] continue to live in schools where they were introduced with great fanfare...schools are like archeological sites; digging would reveal layer after layer of fossilized school reforms and obsolete programs” (p. 189). Over the years many change theories have been introduced to better understand the nature of change and the change process.

Lewin. Kurt Lewin (1951) introduced a change model that consisted of three steps analyzing the forces that impact change and helping to balance and shift these forces in the direction of the desired change. This model became known as the *unfreezing-change-refreeze* model. The following is a summary of the three steps:

- Step One (unfreezing) – Become motivated to change by adding new forces and removing some of the existing ones.
- Step Two (change) – Get moving! Identify what needs to be changed.
- Step Three (refreeze) – After the change has been implemented, refreeze to ensure that the change will be sustained.

Lewin's change model emphasizes that change will happen when the force to promote change is stronger than the opposing forces (Kritsonis, 2005). This model appears highly rational and straightforward—set a goal, plan, and implement—but it lacks the consideration of human behavior when implemented.

Lippitt. Lippitt, Watson, and Westley (1958) utilized Lewin's (1951) three step change model as a base and extended it to a seven-step change theory that focus more on the change agent than the change itself (Kritsonis, 2005). The seven steps are:

- Step One – Diagnose the problem
- Step Two – Assess the motivation and capacity for change
- Step Three – Assess the resources and motivation of the change agent. This includes the change agent's commitment to change, power, and stamina.
- Step four – Define progressive stages of change
- Step Five – Ensure the roles and responsibilities of changes agents are clear and understood.
- Step Six – Maintain the change through communication, feedback, and group coordination.
- Step Seven – Gradually remove the change agents from relationship, as the change becomes part of the organizational culture. (Lippitt et al., 1958, pp. 58-59)

This seven-step model empowers the change agent and highlights that change will be better rooted in the organization if it effects subparts of the system immediately.

Overlapping spheres of influence. Changes in patterns of partnerships between the home and school have required that theories change and evolve with time as well (Epstein, 2001). There has been a shift in involvement in children's learning from solely the responsibility

of the parent in the early 19th century to schools using their subject matter expertise to separate the role of school from the home in the early 20th century. Recent federal, state, and local policies have strengthened the collaboration between home and school. The *Goals 2000: Educate America Act* (U.S Department of Education, 1994) and NCLB (U.S. Department of Education, 2002) have recognized the importance of parent involvement in student achievement and encourage schools to implement practices that build home-school partnerships.

Epstein's (2001) Overlapping Spheres Of Influence theory provided a model that gives a holistic vision of partnership, encouraging communication between home and school (Deslandes, 2001). OSOI is the most widely used and notable theory in this field of study. The model consists of spheres that represent individuals that can influence student achievement through their attitudes and actions (Martin, 2009). The external model consists of spheres that represent the family, school, and community. For the purpose of this study, the focus is on only two spheres: *family* and *school*.

These two spheres may or may not overlap based on the following three forces: time (Force A); the characteristics, philosophies, and practices of the family (Force B); and the characteristics, philosophies, and practices of the school (Force C). The degree of overlap suggests student achievement and the influence that each sphere has on student motivation, attitudes, and achievement. Although the spheres should never fully overlap, the closer they are represents common goals and interest that will ultimately provide maximum benefits for students.

Epstein (2009) provided the following examples of dialogue between home and school to distinguish the differences between overlapping and separate spheres.

- Dialogue examples of separate spheres:

- If the family would just do its job, we could do our job – teacher
- I raised this child; now it is your job to educate her – parent
- Dialogue examples of overlapping spheres:
 - I cannot do my job without the help of my students’ families – teacher
 - I really need to know what is happening in school in order to help my child – parent. (Epstein, 2009, p. 11)

Educators frequently hear these statements, and it is important as well as helpful to identify and distinguish the concept of separate and overlapping spheres of influence.

With similar focus, additional frameworks have emerged with strategies to create successful home-school partnerships. Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler’s (1997) model of parent involvement focuses on the factors that influence parents to be involved in their children’s education and how parents choose specific types of involvement (Fan & Chen, 2001). This model expands on Epstein’s (2009) model by highlighting the importance of the parents’ philosophy. Bouchard (1998) designed an enabling and empowerment model around attitudes and behaviors of parent-teacher interaction. Both complement the spheres of influence theory by validating the importance of partnerships, but differ in their approach toward the issue.

Although evidence supports the efficacy home-school partnerships, some researchers disagree with Epstein’s (2009) model and are skeptical of parent involvement programs. Lareau (1996) raised concerns that schools use a *one-size fits all* approach when it comes to implementing parent involvement practices, which usually reflects White upper and middle-class values, placing students from other backgrounds at a disadvantage. This implies that there is a difference in parent involvement across socioeconomic, ethnic, and racial groups. These differences result in a divergence in beliefs between parents and school, which research has

shown to produce negative home-school relationships. Vincent and Tomlinson (1997) also noted that home-school partnerships are sometimes viewed as a means for the school to control the behaviors of parents and their children. “At school level, notions of *partnership* are still dominant” (p.5), thereby limiting parents’ input in the development and implementation of partnership practices.

Funds of knowledge. Moll and Gonzalez’s (1994) concept of *funds of knowledge* (FOK) brings a new perspective to home-school partnerships. FOK highlights the importance of the unknown resources and knowledge within the family that can be incorporated into the educational setting to benefit students. Tapping into these family resources would help build the bridge between home and school (Hiatt-Michael, 2007), forming an effective home-school partnership.

Visually, this concept is a replica of Epstein’s (2001) OSOI: two spheres representing school/teacher and home/family, with the student in the overlapping area gaining knowledge from both spheres individually and collectively. Both the school and home can contribute to a child’s development and learning through the concept of the FOK theory. Moll and Gonzalez (1994) defined FOK as:

Those historically accumulated and culturally developed bodies of knowledge and skills essential for household or individual functioning and well-being. As households interact within circles or kinship and friendship, children are “participant observers” of the exchange of goods, services, and symbolic capital which are part of each household’s functioning. (p. 440)

Schools often fail to realize and utilize the cultural resources within the home (Velez-Ibanez & Greenberg, 1992). FOK is seen as a mean by which teachers can gain meaningful

insight into their students' culture as well as useful assets for the classroom. "Since both teachers and family members possess funds of knowledge that should be shared for the benefit of the student, during any teacher-parent dialogue, bidirectional learning will occur for teachers and the parents as they share their knowledge of the student" (Hiatt-Michael, 2007, p. 4).

Hiatt-Michael (2007) discussed the common misconceptions and strategies in incorporating the FOK model in the sections of her book titled *Through the eyes of the teacher* and *Through the eyes of the family*. Both sections described common situations that lead to misreading the actions of teachers and family. Teachers mistook the lack of involvement as the parents not caring about their students' education. Research and numerous studies have revealed that parents do care about their students' education (Fan & Chen, 2001; Goldenberg, Gallimore, Reese, & Garnier, 2001; Mapp, 2002), but lack knowledge of how to support their students. Families commonly misunderstand the actions of teachers and because of their limited interactions with teachers, they often perceive the teacher as not valuing their contribution to their students' learning. When FOK is incorporated, both home and school value each other's differences and realize that variations of knowledge can be incorporated into the educational setting as well as in the home in day-to-day activities. These efforts can lead to increased student support .

Despite the noted benefits of FOK, teachers will tend to value traditional learning rather than learning that takes place outside of the classroom, the *extended zone of proximal development* (Moll & Greenberg, 1990). Another noted barrier to incorporating FOK is when parent involvement practices are implemented with a *deficit approach* (Hiatt-Michael, 2007; G. Lopez, Scribner, & Mahitivanichcha, 2001). A large portion of research continues to look at families through a *deficit* lens, which views some families as broken (Montemayor & Romero,

2000). This leads to labeling *good* vs. *not-so-good* family behaviors and actions. As a result, schools design programs to turn *bad parents* into *good parents*. This design is only aimed to teach parents skills instead of valuing and building on families' existing strengths. The FOK model capitalizes on the *hidden resources* that Moll and Greenberg (1990) describe as a major component in building home-school relationships. Therefore, this is the premise for utilizing this theory as one of the bases of this study, forming a theoretical bridge between home and school. This concept is innovative and provides for a continuous opportunity for implementing new strategies that address the needs of the targeted population.

Theoretical Models

Epstein's six types of parental involvement. To help educational organizations develop parent involvement and partnership programs, Epstein (1995) developed a widely used framework describing six main types of parent involvement. Epstein designed a model around the concept of overlapping spheres of influence discussed in previous section. Epstein (1995) belief is that children are best supported when family and school work together with common goals. This framework not only helps educators develop a more comprehensive program but also helps researchers define their questions and results in such ways to inform practice. Epstein (2009) identified the following six types of involvement:

- Type 1: Parenting – Help all families establish home environment to support children as student.
- Type 2: Communicating – Design effective forms of school-to-home and home-to-school communications about school programs and their children's progress.
- Type 3: Volunteering – Recruit and organize parent help and support.

- Type 4: Learning at Home – Provide information and ideas to families about how to help with homework and other curriculum-related activities, decisions, and planning.
- Type 5: Decision Making – Include parents in school decisions, developing parent leaders and representatives.
- Type 6: Collaborating with the Community – Identify and integrate resources and services from the community to strengthen schools programs, family practices, and student learning and development. (p. 409)

Epstein provided a chart of sample practices for each type of involvement as well as expected results, but suggested that each school must determine which types of involvement to implement and the most effective way to implement them.

Researchers have commonly used the model adopted by the *National Parent Teacher Association* (2008), although it comes with much criticism and suggested modifications. Kohl, Lengua, and McMahon (2000) noted that Epstein's (2009) model has a school-centered focus, with categories only measuring the behaviors of teacher and school with no focus on parent involvement. This raises the question that if Epstein's model is designed around a theory that promotes home-school partnerships, why does her framework focus only on that of teachers and schools?

Despite the questionable gaps in the model, many educators and researchers continue to use Epstein's (2009) model as a framework for building home-school partnership programs. Instead of criticizing the model, however, many choose to simply adapt and expand the model to include a more parent-centered focus. For example, Mattingly, Prislun, McKenzie, Rodriguez, and Kayzar (2002) added a seventh category of *parent academic education*. The National Center for Family and Community Connections with Schools (as cited in Hiatt-Michael, 2007)

expanded this model to include eight types of practices and behaviors initiated by family and school. The two additional categories are (a) fostering supportive home environments and (b) supporting youth development. These are just a few examples that explain why there is no *one size fits all* model. After all, Epstein did acknowledge and document that her six types of parent involvement model does provide challenges in reaching out to and engaging all families. She also provided redefinitions for each type of involvement to expand in new ways to engage all families.

Henderson and Mapp's eight types of parental involvement. Based on findings from the National Center for Family and Community Connections with Schools four synthesis, Henderson and Mapp (2002) expanded Epstein's six types of parent involvement to eight types of involvement in their publication, *A New Wave of Evidence*. The eight types describe involvement initiated by the family and school. Though it would be possible to implement all eight types, Henderson and Mapp suggested to start by focusing on a few types first, then incorporating in the remaining types over a period of time. The following eight types promote shared responsibility of students among home, school, and community:

- Fostering Parenting Skills
- Promoting Shared Decision Making
- Expanding Family, Community, and School Communication
- Coordinating Resources and Services
- Fostering Volunteer Support
- Supporting Youth Development
- Supporting Learning Outside School

- Expanding Community Development (National Center for Family and Community Connections with Schools, 2005, p. 12).

Hiatt-Michael (2007) adapted the model by including perspectives from the school and the family on the definition of each of the eight types.

Non-traditional models of ELL parental involvement. The literature on parent involvement models only produced one model that addressed the needs of ELL families. Arias and Morillo-Campbell (2008) contended that there is a need to incorporate both traditional and non-traditional models for ELL parent involvement. Trumbull, Rosthstein-Fisch, Greenfield, and Quiroz (2001) agreed with the combined approach to ensure that diverse culture and values are acknowledged. Arias and Morillo-Campbell (2008) stated:

It is very important to identify practices that may improve ELL parental involvement and thus student achievement. Yet many programs make little effort to promote ELL parental involvement, defining parental involvement only in terms of the schools' needs or in terms of a deficit-based perception of ELL families. (p. 21)

The non-traditional model aimed to incorporate parent empowerment as well as the cultural strengths of the family and community within the curriculum. The following is an example of a successful non-traditional approach:

Non-traditional approaches include the *Comite de Padres Latinos (COPLA)*, established by parents in California seeking to understand how the educational system worked. The program brought these parents together with teachers and administrators as the parents sought representation in the school system. It helped to promote dialogue between parents and school and fostered greater outreach, parent advocacy and participation in

decision-making. This process increased parent involvement in the school community. ("Parental Involvement," 2008, p. 2)

In accordance with this concept, the FOK theory supports the non-traditional model of parent involvement by focusing on family integration into school culture (G. Lopez et al., 2001), examining how migrant families taught their children the value of education by sharing their life experiences of hard work and labor. Sharing these real life experiences was viewed as the parents' approach to parent involvement. In order for schools to engage ELL parents more effectively, they must first acquire an understanding of diverse parent involvement approaches across various cultures and ethnicities and then incorporate both traditional and non-traditional models and approaches to parent involvement.

Historical Background on Parental Involvement

Parents have historically assumed the role of the educator in the home by enforcing discipline, basic skills, and ethics. As far back as the 17th century, children were educated by their parents in the privacy of their own homes. The shift from parent education to public education first occurred in Europe and then made a movement to America in the early 17th century (Hiatt-Michael, 2008a). The bureaucracy, organization, and structure of public schools created a distance between home and school by placing educational leaders and teachers in the role of expert educators. Parents were no longer valued in the education of their children or considered in the school's decision-making processes (Barton, Drake, Perez, St. Louis, & George, 2004).

In efforts to reconnect home and school, parent groups began to emerge to intervene and re-establish this relationship. In 1897, the *National Congress of Mothers* (NCM) formed to work with and support teachers while also providing a platform to express their concerns. The wide

spread of NCMs quickly influenced the development of the Parent/Teacher Association (PTA), founded in 1897. Butts and Cremin (1953) stated that this increased interest in PTAs was attributed to an increase in interest by families to improve schools in the 20th century.

Parent involvement is additionally supported by the *Civil Rights Act of 1964* (Coleman, 1966). Quality and equal education was highlighted on many political agendas, seeking research that focused on problems related to student achievement of disadvantaged students. The Coleman Study (Coleman, 1966) revealed the importance of parent involvement in student achievement. Findings showed that factors outside of school had a more significant impact on achievement than those inside of the school. Such findings led to parent involvement being included in educational legislation.

In 1984, *Project Head Start* became one of the first federally funded educational programs mandating parent involvement components (Hiatt-Michael, 2008a). Head Start required parent participation in schools and that parents serve on school advisory boards. Head Start enhanced the development of many early childhood programs across all social classes.

Although there was a focus to include parents in their children's education, research and studies in the late 1970s focused on families and schools as separate and competing factors in student achievement. It was not until the 1980s and 1990s that the focus changed from separate entities to the realization that neither family nor school alone can do the job of educating the whole child. The concept of *shared responsibility* emphasized the relationship that needs to exist between home and school, forming a partnership in the interest of student achievement.

As parent involvement moves into the 21st century, the role of parents will no longer be viewed only as being involved in fundraising activities or attending occasional parent meetings (Anfara & Mertens, 2008). *The Elementary and Secondary Education Act* (ESEA) and NCLB

were signed into law in 2002, mandating that meaningful partnerships with regular communication be developed and implemented for school improvement (Cowan, 2003).

Parental Involvement in Education

The increased demand for accountability in the education system have been reinforced by federal, state, and local policies mandating that all students achieve competence in core subjects. NCLB passed and was signed into law in 2001 (U.S. Department of Education, 2002). The accountability component of this law highlights increased parent involvement. Updating the federal Title I program, NCLB includes provisions regarding parent involvement by which school and districts receiving Title I funds must abide, including developing a written parent involvement policy that encourages and sustains parent involvement. This process must include parents and they approve the final product that is distributed. The plan should include procedures and components viewed most effective in building home-school partnerships. Additionally required by law, schools must utilize at least one percent of the school's Title I funds to develop a parent involvement program (Henderson & Mapp, 2002).

Although policies and programs reinforce the importance of parent involvement, it is unclear about what this really means. What really constitutes effective parent involvement? Parent involvement can include a broad range of activities at home and or at school, but consistently, the focus is on improving student learning. A. Baker and Soden (1998) explained that confusion about parent involvement arises because of the absence of research informing practice and policies.

The importance of parent and family support of student learning is not new to this field and is well documented. Sanders et al. (1999) cited the following sample study of parental involvement:

Duncan (1969) illustrated the importance of parent involvement in student success in a research comparing the attendance, achievement, and dropout rate of two junior high school classes. In one class, students' parents had individual meetings with counselors before their children entered junior high school. In the other class, students' parents did not meet with counselors. After three years, students whose parents had met individually with the school counselors had significantly higher attendance, better grade point averages, and lower dropout rates. (p. 1)

Parent involvement has a positive correlation with student outcomes, including academic and non-academic outcomes. Since the question is no longer whether or not parent involvement can improve student learning, there is a need for research that focuses on how involvement impacts student outcomes, whether parents get involved or not, effective parent involvement practices, and the role that schools play in creating and sustaining parent involvement.

Definition of parental involvement. What is the true meaning of the term *parent involvement* or *partnerships*? The Elementary and Secondary Education Act was the first law in history to include a definition of parent involvement:

The participation of parents in regular, two-way, and meaningful communication involving student academic learning and other school related activities including ensuring—that parents play an integral role in assisting their child's learning; that parents are encouraged to be actively involved in their child's education at school; that parents are full partners in their child's education and are included, as appropriate, in decision-making and on advisory committees to assist in the education of their child; and that other activities are carried out, such as those described in section 1118 of the ESEA (Parent Involvement). (U.S. Department of Education, 2004, sec. 20)

A wide range of activities and behaviors fall under the umbrella of parent involvement that connects home and school. “Often these activities are quite different from each other, yet they are lumped together as ‘parent involvement’ or ‘school-family connections’” (Jordan et al., 2001, p. 7). The majority of literature reviewed lacked consistency in defining parent involvement, making it difficult to progress in developing and implementing effective practices and models, as well as achieving the intended results. Studies cannot measure effectiveness accurately if definitions are vague and unclear. There is a need to define parent involvement in a school to better understand and identify what influences it (Epstein, 2001). However, the task of clearly defining parent involvement remains a challenge due the multidimensional construct of parent involvement (Sui-Chu & Williams, 1996).

Contributing to the issue of multiple and overlapping definitions are two key factors: perceptions of roles and school centered practices (Jordan et al., 2001). Schools and parents can have different and opposing views of involvement and their roles. Scribner et al. (1999) discovered that teachers and parents have contrasting views of parent involvement. Teachers defined parent involvement with an academic focus, whereas parents viewed involvement as supporting their *whole* child, including social and moral development.

A review of literature also revealed that the majority of existing definitions are school centered, reflecting the priority of the school and the outcomes they desire from parent involvement. Honig, Kahne, and McLaughlin (2001) stated,

the focus of many school-linked services efforts has been on *fixing* students so teachers can *really teach* and removing barriers to learning, rather than rethinking the learning and teaching that occurs for students-all day, in and out of school-and the conditions, resources and support that enable it. (p. 9)

The continued focus on student achievement influences teachers to utilize parents as teacher assistants rather than for their unique strengths and resourceful talents. School-centered definitions of parent involvement restrict the opportunities for collaboration, therefore limiting the impact on student outcomes (Jordan et al., 2001). If schools are truly going to move in a direction of meaningful relationships and partnerships between home and school, they must incorporate a more family centered definition of parent involvement.

Family centered definitions represent working with families in collaborative efforts. McWilliam, Maxwell, and Sloper (1999) defined family centered practices as respectful partnerships that support the family as well as the child. It is important for the family to view their role as key decision makers in their children's education and school services.

Research has reflected a need for definitions of parent involvement to expand and include culturally-appropriate definitions, including an understanding of the different types of parent involvement within various cultures and ethnicities. Minority families contribute to their students' learning in a different manner than mainstream parents. Many minority and low-income parents often use their own life experiences and struggles to motivate their children to succeed (G. Lopez et al., 2001). Schools often overlook these contributions, but they serve as an important resource to their students' success and building home-school partnerships.

Parental involvement in high schools. There is a large body of research on family involvement in elementary and middle schools, but very few studies have focused on parent involvement at the high school level (Simon, 2001). Dornbusch and Ritter (1988) conducted a study at six San Francisco area high schools through questionnaires given to teachers, parents, and students. The data revealed that regardless of parents' educational background, students of parents who attended school activities received higher grades than students whose parents that

did not. In contrast, Useem (1992) found that the educational background of parents does have an effect on the level of parent involvement. Sanders et al. (1999) noted, “The involvement of highly educated parents in their children’s placement at critical decision points in the tracking system is one mechanism by which educational advantage is transmitted from one generation to the next” (p. 2).

Although both studies produced contrasting findings on the role that a parent’s education level plays in parent involvement, both concurred that the lowest levels of parent involvement were found among low-income and minority students. Both also agreed that this trend will continue to persist if schools do not make more of an effort to intervene and develop quality partnership programs (Dornbusch & Ritter, 1988; Useem, 1992).

Epstein (2001) agreed with the need for quality partnership programs at the high school level, but disagreed that all schools can promote parent involvement for all families, including low-income and minority families. She stated:

Status variables are not the most important measures for understanding parent involvement. At all grade levels, the evidence suggests that school policies, teacher practices, and family practices are more important than race, parent education, family size, marital status, and even grade level in determining whether parents continue to be part of their children’s education. (p. 109)

Likewise, Lucas, Henze, and Donato (1990) concluded in their study of six high schools in California and Arizona that schools do play an key role in parents’ level of involvement in their children’s learning at the high school level. The findings acknowledged that schools that provided an environment that encouraged participation from parents through various activities and communication produced a high level of parent involvement from all families. Despite the

stereotype to the contrary, parents of high school students do have a strong interest in their students' academic achievement (Simon, 2001). Although some parents will be involved in their children's education without the school's guidance, high schools that have quality partnership programs will encourage more families across all levels of education, income, and diversity to become involved in their students' learning and academic success.

Decrease in parental involvement in high schools. Most parents are excited when their children start grade school and they make every effort to volunteer and participate in school activities. So, what changes in high school? Studies indicate that as children transition from elementary to middle and middle to high school, parent involvement declines (D. Baker & Stevenson, 1986; Epstein & Dauber, 1991). As children transition from one level of schooling to another, parent involvement and partnership practices need to transition as well, including age appropriate context and information on ways families can be involved in their adolescents' lives. Many parents pull away due to increased work schedules or the assumption that their students no longer want them to be involved. This is partly due to adolescents in high school seeking independence and therefore discouraging parent involvement. Parents then seek more guidance and information from the school on how to continue their involvement, but more often than no, parents will not ask the school for assistance.

Dornbusch and Glasgow (1996) argued that one of the major factors that causes a decline in involvement is the organizational structure of secondary schools. Students in high school have multiple teachers who are responsible for a large number of students. This structure does not allow for informal and personal relationships to develop between home and school, therefore a lack of resources and time discourages home-school relationship from forming. Parents are also intimidated and unsure of the best way to communicate with multiple teachers in different

subjects. In order to be able to stay connected with the school and support their students at home, parents need more information on the high school curriculum, policies, state tests, and requirements for students (Epstein, 2009). Home-school partnerships and parent engagement continue to present challenges for many high schools because the higher the level of schooling, the more complex and diverse the issues become. Educational leaders must take into consideration the changes that students as well as the parents at the high school level are experiencing and find a balance to support both effectively.

Ways in which parents are typically involved in high schools. Many parents lose the confidence to help their students as they learn specialized subject matter in high school such as algebra, science, and history. At this stage students are seeking independence and parents are trying to allow them room to grow, but at the cost of separating themselves from the school and teachers. Most parents view *being involved* at the high school level as checking in with their students on how their day went, attending sporting events, and attending back-to-school night.

Sanders et al. (1999) conducted a study in six high schools in Maryland to explore what types of activities influenced parent involvement at the high school level. Almost all parent participants surveyed agreed that parent involvement was important at the high school level, but 75% responded that the school had not contacted them regarding opportunities to volunteer or join parent organizations. Epstein (2001) also contended that parents influence career decisions and post-secondary educational choices, but there is a great need for more information and guidance from the school to assist in making these decisions.

Research and studies have repeatedly found that parent involvement is important and does impact student learning, attendance, and behaviors at the high school level. Implementation

of strong partnership programs help support parents and therefore improve parental attitudes toward the school and encourage involvement at home and school.

ELL Parental Involvement

All though ELLs represent a diverse group of cultures and ethnicities, the majority of literature reviewed for this study focused mainly on the Hispanic/Latino culture. The researcher assumes that the research focus in this area has been narrowed because Latinos arriving from Mexico and Central America represent the largest group of immigrants in the United States (Hiatt-Michael, 2007). “Studies find that compared to U.S. born parents, foreign-born parents are less likely to visit their children’s school, participate or attend school activities and events, help with homework, and talk to teachers and staff” (Thao, 2009, p. 1). Since many ELL students come from families of first and second generation immigrant parents, it is necessary to explore how ELL parents are involved in their children’s education and the barriers that might be discouraging their involvement.

While research has clearly established a correlation between parent involvement and positive educational outcomes, it is alarming that ELL parents are less likely to be involved in their own children’s education. Many ELL families are categorized as part of a marginalized group based on their class, immigrant status, and language proficiency. Researchers define *marginalized* as parents that are not involved at the same rate as White-middle class parents (Arias & Morillo-Campbell, 2008). Being classified as marginalized does not mean that ELL parents do not care about their students’ academic success; Fan and Chen (2001) found that most minority and low-income families have high aspirations and genuine concern about their children’s academic growth.

ELL families often view their role of involvement in a very different way than the mainstream English speaking community does. G. Lopez et al. (2001) conducted a study on four Latino immigrant families whose students graduated in the top 10% of their class. Although family involvement appeared to be low, each family perceived themselves as being highly involved in their children's education. The family's view of involvement was emphasizing the importance of school and good work ethics. G. Lopez et al. observed:

If seen through a traditional academic lens, all the families in this study would appear to be largely "uninvolved" in their children's education. In fact, in three of the four families, the parents did not regularly attend school functions, nor were they involved in other traditional sanctioned ways (e.g., PTA, back-to-school nights....) Nevertheless, the parents in this study strongly perceived themselves as being highly involved in their children's educational lives... For these families, "involvement" was seen as teaching their children to appreciate the value of education through the medium of hard work.

(p. 8)

It is interesting that there are frequent criticisms of ELL parent involvement compared to that of mainstream parents, but Boethel (2003) noted that there are no recent studies specific to comparing similarities and differences in the level or types of parent involvement between mainstream and ELL families.

This misperception that ELL parents do not care about their students is mostly due to ELL families often being underrepresented in school activities and the decision-making process, but this underrepresentation reflects the bigger issue of different needs, values, and levels of trust with the school more so than lack of interest in being involved (Trumbull et al., 2001). Therefore, it becomes important to ask the question, how are schools reaching out to ELL

families? Are traditional approaches appropriate and effective? There is a need to explore the barriers to ELL parent involvement to understand how best to implement effective practices.

Barriers to ELL parental involvement. A large portion of the literature reviewed noted specific barriers in terms of parent involvement among low-income, minority, and ELL students. The majority of the barriers were school initiated, but barriers within the home were discussed as well. The barriers most often discussed commonly fell into one of the following categories: (a) school-based barriers; (b) lack of English language proficiency; (c) disconnect between home and school culture; (d) cultural beliefs regarding the roles of parents and the school; and (e) families' lack of understanding of the U.S. school system, policies and daily practices (Arias & Morillo-Campbell, 2008; Starkey & Klein, 2000). Hiatt-Michael (2008b) discussed four forces that influence parent and family involvement: economic conditions, political pressures, social structures, and cultural values.

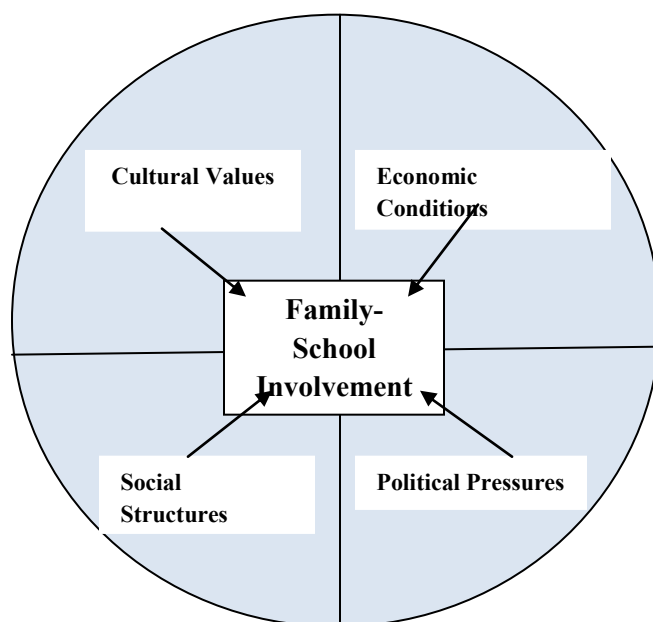


Figure 1. Four forces influencing family-school involvement. Adapted from *Teaching Curriculum and Community Involvement*, p.89, by D. B. Hiatt-Michael, 2008, Charlotte, NC: Information Age. Copyright 2008 by the author.

School-based barriers. The review of literature revealed some contradicting beliefs about the lack of ELL parent involvement and the attributes that contributes to these barriers.

According to some, the barriers exist due to the deficits in the parents: namely, that ELL parents do not value education and have limited English skills to provide meaningful participation and support. However, other research suggest a completely different view: that ELL parents greatly value education and are involved in their children's education in culturally-specific ways in the home that are often not seen by school staff (National Center for Culturally Responsive Educational Systems [NCCREST], 2008). It is true that ELL parents are limited in their ability to support their children's education as much as they would like to, but the same can be said about schools that are also limited in their ability to welcome and include parents of diverse backgrounds. Such barriers as the school's unfamiliarity with culturally and linguistically diverse families can hinder home-school partnerships.

The majority of U.S. schools follow the European middle-class cultural rituals of education (Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development [ASCD], 2005) ignoring the strength of their students' diversity. While studying Mexican-American high school students, Venezuela (as cited in ASCD, 2005) defined this approach as "subtractive-schooling whereas schools ignoring the students' knowledge of Spanish and even treated as a deficit" (p. 83). Discrimination in schools remains a major barrier to parent involvement. As Onikama, Hammond, and Koki (1998) stated, "It is difficult for families to want to become involved with institutions that they perceive are 'owned' by a culture that discriminated against them in the past" (p. 5). Schools must acknowledge and educate themselves on cultural diversity and consistently reassess the delivery of their services to meet the needs of all families, since their failure to be culturally competent and responsive creates barriers for ELL families.

Lack of English language proficiency. Adger (2001) and Pena (2000) identified language barriers as a key factor in promoting or discouraging involvement for ELL parents. Lack of English proficiency may make parents feel embarrassed when participating in school activities and communicating with staff. When schools promote an inviting and welcoming environment that utilizes various means of bilingual/multilingual communication, parents are more likely to be involved in schools (Arias & Morillo-Campbell, 2008).

The downside of language barriers is miscommunication and lack of communication by parents and school that can build tension and distrust. Educational leaders and teachers need to anticipate when translation will have a positive or negative effect. Schools must choose appropriate means of translation to which parents agree and through which they feel comfortable acquiring information. Bilingual interpreters and staff can be instrumental in communicating with and assisting immigrant and ELL families (Thao, 2009). This can create a sense of comfort when parents are able to communicate with someone who understands their background and culture. L. Lopez, Sanchez, and Hamilton (2000) validated this characteristic with their study that found that high levels of parent involvement among immigrant and Latino families when most teachers and staff were fluent in Spanish. Available translators will also alleviate the need for students to translate for parents, which can lead to misleading or incorrect information.

Disconnect between school culture-home culture. Parents are often unfamiliar with the U.S. school system and culture, particularly at the high school level. “A family member’s lack of understanding about policies, or practices, and expectations of the school can be a significant barrier to fully engaging in school-family efforts” (Hiatt-Michael, 2007, p.19). Parents can feel intimidated when they need to discuss issues regarding their student, especially in regard to curriculum issues. To help parents understand the school culture and academic requirements for

their students, some schools have implemented parent workshops or sessions for ELL families. The Parent Institute for Quality Education (PIQE) is one example of such a parent education program. PIQE provides ethnically diverse parents in California and Texas the opportunity to acquire the information and resources needed to be more familiar with the U.S. school system and how to be actively involved in their students' education (Hiatt-Michael, 2007).

Similarly, schools do not have a full understanding of ELL home culture. Schools must consider that ELL families may have a different focus than that of the school culture due to their own culture (de Carvalho, 2000). Hiatt-Michael & Purrington (2007) stated, "Differences in culture, language, prior educational experiences, and time constraints present obstacles" (p. 53).

Figure 2 illustrates a possible disconnect between home and school.

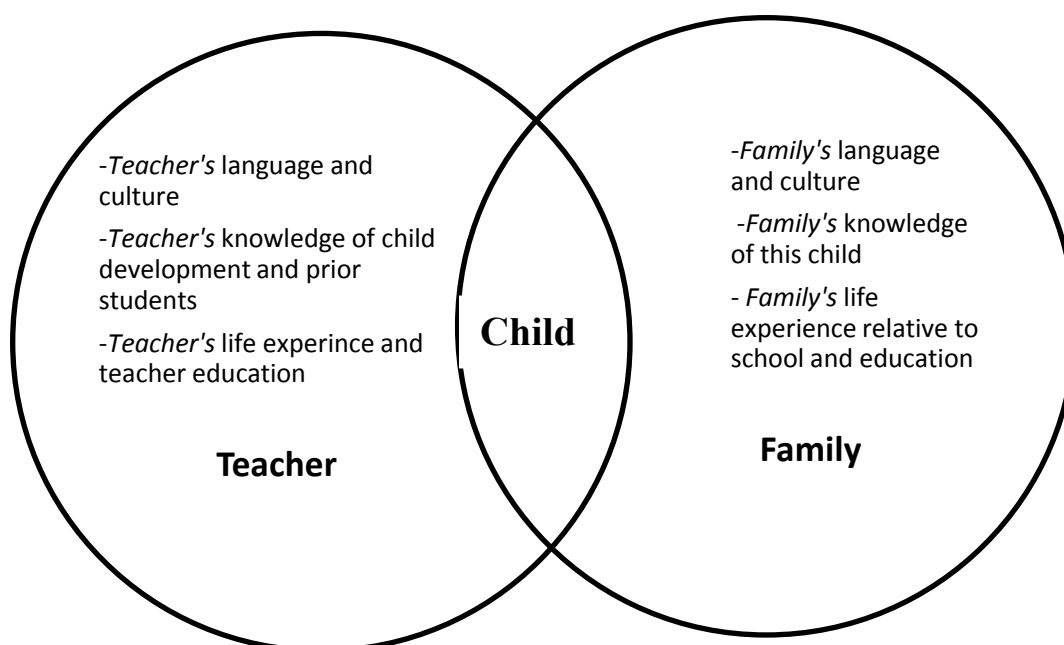


Figure 2. Funds of knowledge. Adapted from Practices for Family Involvement in Schooling across the Continents, p. 46, by D.B. Hiatt-Michael, 2005, Greenwich, CN: Information Age Publications. Copyright 2005 by the author.

In efforts to overcoming these obstacles and achieving increased parent involvement, school sites must reach out to all families and learn more about their home cultures. To explain common assumptions made by schools, Turner (2007) stated, "Culture is often overlooked in

understanding why or why not families become actively involved in their children's education" (p. 33). Frequently, it is assumed that ELL families want to and can easily assimilate to American school expectations. "Such assumptions can perpetuate negativity towards immigrant families when school staff does not sense a quick assimilation of the school expectations" (p. 33). The schools' focus needs to redirect from changing ELL parents to adjust to a focus on school's culture to more productive means of implementing practices that reach out to and include all families.

Consequently, ELL students are in the middle of two contrasting worlds with different cultural values and expectations. Validating and empowering home cultures within the school provides an opportunity for children to see that their families can be a part of school life, thus encouraging academic success. When the school culture embraces the home culture, this greatly benefits the students, allowing them to feel comfortable and bridge the two worlds (McCabe, 1994).

Cultural beliefs regarding the roles of parents, teachers, and school. Culture can be defined as:

A way of life, especially as it relates to the socially transmitted habits, customs, traditions, and beliefs that characterize a particular group of people at a particular time. It includes the behaviors, actions, practices, attitudes, norms and values, communications, patterns, traits, etiquette, spirituality, concepts of health, superstitions, and institutions of a racial, ethnic, religious, or social group. It is the lens through which we look at the world. (Edwards, Ellis, Ko, Saifier, & Stuczynski, 2011, p. 11)

Culture plays a key role in ELL parents' beliefs in the roles of parents, teacher, and school. Their expectations are often different than the school's. Schools often assume that parents will assist

students with academic work at home. In contrast, many ELL parents believe that their primary role as a parent is teaching their child values and good behaviors (Arias & Morillo-Campbell, 2008). Teachers and the school are viewed as the *experts* and ELL parents do not wish to interfering with those experts. The unfamiliarity with the U.S. school system and differences of cultural practices results in ELL parents misunderstanding the school's expectations of parents being *involved* in their children's education (NCCREST, 2008).

Arias and Morillo-Campbell (2008) stated, "ELL families value collectivism, which focuses on interdependent relations and the well-being of the group, schools often stress individual competition" (p. 10). Respect for elders and including extended family is also a common value of ELL families. Schools do not usually acknowledge and include extended family in parent conferences and school activities. Schools could benefit by acquiring the knowledge and understanding of various cultures and values.

Families' lack of understanding of the U.S. school system, policies, and procedures.

ELL parents often experience confusion and frustration with the U.S. educational system. Many ELL parents have limited schooling and exposure to the school system (Arias & Morillo-Campbell, 2008). Many school staff members have little understanding of their culturally diverse families' life experiences, which fuels parents' feelings of embarrassment and intimidation by staff.

Many U.S. schools use report cards to initiate communication with parents, but ELL parents have limited experience and knowledge of report card components. This results in many ELL students being at a disadvantage of parents being involved in supporting their academic progress. Simply receiving information does not help ELL parents overcome the barrier of being

unfamiliar with the U.S. school system. Information sent home to communicate with parents needs to be respectful and culturally responsive to all families (NCCREST, 2008).

Practices that Promote ELL Parental Involvement in High Schools

Many studies have been conducted to identify the various barriers to parent involvement, but whether and how schools implement involvement programs and practices to be equitable to families from all backgrounds still remains an issue to be investigated further (Thao, 2009). Schools may need to step away from the *one-size fits all* approach to family involvement policies and practices and take the time to determine the needs and concerns of all families, specifically the underrepresented cultures of their school.

Henderson and Mapp (2002) identified the following three key factors in engaging families from diverse backgrounds:

1. Focus on building trusting, collaborative relationships among teachers and families.
2. Recognize, respect, and address family needs, as well as class and cultural differences.
3. Embrace a philosophy of partnership where power and responsibility is shared (p. 7).

The following four practices incorporate one or more of Henderson and Mapp's key factors.

ELAC. State and Federal law require that every public school in the state of California, grades K-12, with 21 or more ELLs form an English Language Advisory Council (ELAC; California State Board of Education, 2009). Parents are elected to this committee and should be viewed as a valuable resource in making connections with other parents and the community (Davies, Burch, & Johnson, 1992; Pena, 2000). The purpose of the ELAC is to advise school administrators and staff on the programs and services for ELLs as well as the school site council on the development of the *Single School Plan for Student Achievement*. This also provides for an opportunity to present new ideas on how best to involve ELL parents. In reviewing the literature,

no previous research studies were found on the effectiveness or impact of ELAC on parent involvement or home-school partnerships. Exploring various district and school websites, the researcher found that many public schools have ELACs; some are very simple and generic, whereas others are much more detailed and descriptive of their duties and contributions. The researcher assumed that the higher the percentage of ELL students at a school site, the more ELAC is valued for its input in decision making for ELL services and programs.

Parent handbook. The review of literature did not reveal any studies or previous research on the effectiveness or impact of a parent handbook on parent involvement or building home-school partnerships. The researcher explored many district and school websites that incorporate parent handbooks as a means of providing resources and communicating with parents. Boise School District in Boise, Idaho had a very detailed parent handbook specifically for ELL parents. This handbook included information about the school system, the ELL programs, and resources, as well as contact information. The handbook is translated in nine different languages and available in hard copy as well as electronically on the school's website. It was encouraging to see the handbook translated into more than one language, but in reviewing the information in the handbook, it seemed overwhelming and not presented in parent-friendly language or reader-friendly format.

Parent orientation. Literature on the effect or impact of parent orientations on parent involvement or home-school partnerships is additionally limited; only one such study was found. Although many schools including K-12, colleges, universities, and trade schools utilize parent orientations as means to communicate and form relationships with parents, little to no research has been conducted on their impact or effectiveness on enhancing parent involvement.

In efforts to improve communication and home-school connections at Hampstead Middle School in Baltimore, Epstein and Herrick (1991) examined the reactions of parents, students, and teachers to middle school orientation days. Their analysis found that the orientation days fulfilled their purpose in providing valuable information at a critical time of transition for parents and students new to the sixth grade. This event provided an opportunity for parents and students to familiarize themselves with the school facilities, teachers, staff, policies, and procedures. Survey responses reflected that parents and students were grateful for the chance to ease their anxiety about attending a new school. Teachers also commented that they appreciated being able to make connections with families and students prior to the beginning of the school year and were able to present their expectations for the new school year. Although the event was viewed as a success, parents, teachers, and students provided recommendations to improve future orientations. Recommendations mainly focused on planning strategies, timing, communication, and publicizing the future orientation days. Although this study focused on orientations at the middle school level, findings, conclusions, and recommendation were useful in how orientations might be resourceful at the high school level. One of the recommendations made by the participants in this study was to expand and implement such orientation days at the local high schools.

ELL counselor. ELLs comprise approximately 25% of California's school-age population (California Department of Education, Assessment, Accountability, and Awards Division, 2010). School counselors play a key role in bridging the gap between American culture with the cultures of ELL students (Goh, Wahl, McDonald, Brissett, & Yoon, 2007) and promoting the success for all students. Most bilingual language programs in schools focus primarily on developing English proficiency and give little attention to other factors that affect

student learning such as personal and social issues. Therefore, it is imperative for school counselors to understand their role in helping ELLs to overcome these obstacles.

For school counselors to work effectively with a diverse student population, they must possess cultural competency of such factors as migration, ethnicity, discrimination, and language (Holcomb-McCoy, 2007). Cultural competency is achieved through multicultural counseling: incorporating cultural identities with the counseling process. Goh et al. (2007) suggested that school counselors seek assistance from community members, colleagues, or families that can provide insight into the similarities or differences between the students' country of origin and the United States.

School counselors must also be aware of various interventions implemented across diverse student populations because the same techniques will not be effective for every student. Several authors have also noted that one important factor by which counselors can connect with ELL students is to create school-family-community partnerships (Lee, 2001). Schools need to take responsibility and support school counselors and programs that serve the ELL student population through collaboration and partnerships.

Summary and Implications for ELL Parental Involvement in High Schools

The trend of continuous growth of ELL students in U.S. schools will continue to challenge schools to reevaluate current policies and practices of parent involvement. Evidence is consistent in finding that when schools and families work together to support student learning, children tend to do better and have a more positive attitude toward school. Therefore, while ELL parents face barriers to parent involvement, they play a key role in their children's learning by reinforcing the importance and value of education. Schools must develop practices that will offset the negativity that ELL families might be experiencing due to traditional English-only

policies and procedures (Arias & Morillo-Campbell, 2008). Additionally, with the increased rigor of student standards and accountability, effective communication and partnerships between home and school may be the key component to ELL student success.

Equally important is the factor of implementing age appropriate practices and taking into consideration the transition that students and parents experience at the high school level. Schools must acknowledge the adolescent phase that students experience in high school and support families with information and ways to be engaged in their students' lives while still allowing room for growth and independence.

The majority of literature reviewed reflects that schools are the gatekeepers to encouraging or discouraging parent involvement. Schools are the starting point to providing opportunities for parent involvement and home-school partnerships to evolve. Comprehensive partnership programs that offer various types of involvement are more likely to encourage relationships with more families, including low-income, minority, immigrant, and ELL families.

As parent involvement evolves away from one-way communication and school-centered definitions, it is important to consider implications that will create a bridge between home and school, forming effective home-school partnerships. When considering implications for ELL parent involvement in high schools, it was first thought to discuss implications directly at the school site level involving the key stakeholders; parents, teachers, principals and staff. However, Epstein (2001) started at the top when discussing implications, which brought a different perspective to the forefront. Epstein began by exploring policy implications at the federal, state, and district levels, noting that leadership and funding at the highest levels is needed to ensure that parent involvement reaches out to all families in various ways that will benefit all students. Policies and actions at the federal, state, and district levels are most valuable in supporting the

day-to-day work at the site level in implementing effective parent involvement programs and practices.

The literature highlighted many implications for parent involvement at the site level. The following is a summary of some of the most pertinent implications. Schools should:

- Recognize that all parents, no matter income, education level, or cultural background want their children to succeed in school.
- Build trusting and respectful relationships with families of all students.
- Develop clear goals and objectives for increasing parent involvement.
- Define parent involvement and home-school partnerships in a way that is equally beneficial to home and school.
- Support the implementation of traditional and non-traditional parent involvement programs.
- Acknowledge the needs of families from diverse cultures and linguistics.

The review of literature revealed a promising direction for parent involvement and home-school partnerships. Discussions and studies have generated a new way of thinking, valuing all stakeholders and what they can contribute to student success, even if their contributions differ from traditional mainstream practices. This new way of thinking will set the bar high for new research to expand and further current understanding of connections and outcomes of parent involvement and home-school partnerships.

Chapter 3: Methodology

This mixed methods study explored the perceptions of ELL parents at BCHS regarding to the following four specific parent engagement practice that were implemented at BCHS during 2009-2012 in efforts to build home-school partnerships in support of student learning: (a) the implementation of a revised ELAC format, (b) the development of an ELL Parent Handbook available in Spanish and English, (c) the implementation of a Parent Orientation Day designed specifically for ELL parents, and (d) having a designated ELL guidance counselor. The study used a convergent parallel mixed methods design in which qualitative and quantitative data were used in parallel, analyzed separately, and then summarized separately looking for contradictions and or relationships between the two data sets. The collection of both qualitative and quantitative data brought a greater insight into the problem than would have been obtained by either type of data separately.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided this study:

- How do ELL parents who participated in one or more of the parent involvement practices implemented at BCHS during 2009-2012 describe their experiences and benefits, if any, in supporting their students' learning relative to the following;
 1. ELAC Parent education meetings?
 2. ELL Parent Handbook?
 3. ELL Parent Orientation Day?
 4. ELL Guidance Counselor?
- How, if at all, have language fluency level and academic performance of BCHS ELL students changed from 2009 until 2012 since the implementation of four specific

parent involvement practices: ELAC Parent education meetings, ELL Parent Handbook, ELL Parent Orientation Day, and ELL Guidance counselor?

Research Design

This mixed methods study used a convergent parallel strategy in which a phenomenological method using semi-structured in-depth interviews was employed in order to better understand the perceptions and lived experiences of BCHS ELL parents, as well as a descriptive method in which student academic and language fluency student outcomes on Math/English CST and CELDT measures were compared for the purpose of looking for contradictions or relationships between the two data sets and determining what changes, if any, occurred over time.

The mixed methods approach emerged in the late 1980s, prompting the idea of collecting multiple forms of data for a single research study. Tashakkori and Teddlie (2003) called the mixed methods approach the *third methodological movement* following the quantitative and qualitative methods. Due to the fact that mixed methods is a fairly new research approach, the definition has evolved over the years and expanded in its worldview. An early definition of mixed methods came from Greene, Caracelli, and Graham (1989), who stated that mixed methods included one quantitative method collecting numbers and one qualitative method collecting words. Almost 10 years later, Creswell and Plano Clark (2007) defined mixed methods from a philosophical approach as well as a methods inquiry approach, combining quantitative and qualitative approaches to better understand a problem than either approach used alone. In 2011, Creswell and Plano Clark asserted that the mixed methods definitions should include a more diverse viewpoint and expanded their earlier definition to focus more on the core characteristics of mixed methods research:

In mixed methods, the researcher:

- collects and analyzes persuasively and rigorously both qualitative and quantitative data (based on research questions);
- mixes (or integrates or links) the two forms of data concurrently by combining them (merging them), sequentially by having one build on the other, or embedding one within the other;
- gives priority to one or to both forms of data (in terms of what the research emphasizes);
- uses these procedures in a single study or in multiple phases of a program of study;
- frames these procedures within philosophical worldviews and theoretical lenses; and
- Combines the procedures into specific research designs that direct the plan for conducting the study. (p. 5)

Mixed methodology is often viewed as the bridge between quantitative and qualitative research designs. Early researchers operated from the assumption that that all methods have bias and weaknesses (Creswell, 2013), and mixed methods provide strengths that offset the weaknesses of both qualitative and quantitative research. Another advantage of using mixed methods is the array of data collection tools available that can be utilized instead of being restricted to tools that are typically associated with either the quantitative and qualitative method. Mixed methods discourage narrow approaches and encourage collaboration and the use of multiple beliefs and values. Mixed methods present a sense of the *practical* (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011) and allow the research the freedom to use all methods possible to address a research problem.

There are challenges in using the mixed methods approach, such as skills, resources, and time. The researcher must be skilled and knowledgeable in several areas, including the data collection and analysis of both quantitative and qualitative research as well as having a solid grounding in mixed methods research. Time and resources also come into question, as the researcher has to determine if this approach is feasible in the given time for the study. The researcher will need sufficient time to collect and analyze two different data sets. For this study, the data were collected and analyzed in one phase so the time frame would be feasible for the researcher.

There are several reasons why a mixed methods approach may be chosen for a research problem. Creswell and Plano Clark (2011) suggested that researchers should design their mixed methods studies with at least one clear reason for combining methods. For this research, a mixed methods approach was selected because there were two different research questions, each requiring a different method. RQ1 required a qualitative phenomenological method and RQ2 required a quantitative descriptive method. Bryman (2006) listed *different research questions* as a reason to combine methods and justify a mixed methods design. To best understand the research problem, different but complementary were be collected on the same topic (Morse, 1991), following the convergent parallel design of mixed methods studies (Figure 3). The convergent parallel design allowed the researcher to collect and analyze both quantitative and qualitative data at the same time, giving them equal value. The two strands of data remained independent until the interpretation of results, looking for contradictions and relationships. In addition to matching the study's purpose, the convergent parallel design was deemed most appropriate because the researcher collected both sets of data in a limited time (one phase) to compare and contrast results for corroboration and validation purposes.

A phenomenological methodology was utilized in this research to directly address RQ1, describing the experiences of ELL parents at BCHS in regard to implemented parent engagement activities. Phenomenology best addresses a question about meaning: “what is the experience of...” (Richards & Morse, 2007, p. 31)? Phenomenological research, as defined by Creswell and Plano Clark (2007), describes the meaning and perceptions of several individuals in terms of their lived experiences of a phenomenon. Phenomenology focuses on common experiences, lessening the individual experiences and highlighting the universal essence of the phenomenon. This study focused on the experiences of the participants, therefore employing a transcendental phenomenology approach opposed to the hermeneutical approach that focuses on the interpretations of the researcher (Richards & Morse, 2007). The phenomenological method best assisted the researcher in understanding the common experiences of ELL parents at BCHS through semi-structured interviews to develop a deeper understanding of the phenomenon. Due to the fact that the researcher has personally experienced the phenomenon at BCHS, the researcher suspended any preconceived notions, sometimes called bracketing, to gain a fresh perspective of the phenomenon.

As part of the mixed methods approach, a quantitative descriptive method was applied in this research study to address RQ2. Leedy and Ormrod (2010) defined descriptive quantitative research as a type of research that describes the characteristics of the phenomenon being studied. This method is best applied to this study because the researcher did not modify the situation and examined it *as is*. Existing student test scores were examined to compare student performance before and after the implementation of parent engagement activities at BCHS. The data compared were collected from a time period of 3-4 school years based on the students’ grade

levels. A developmental longitudinal design of descriptive method was utilized in collecting the data from various time periods for this one single group of student test scores sample.

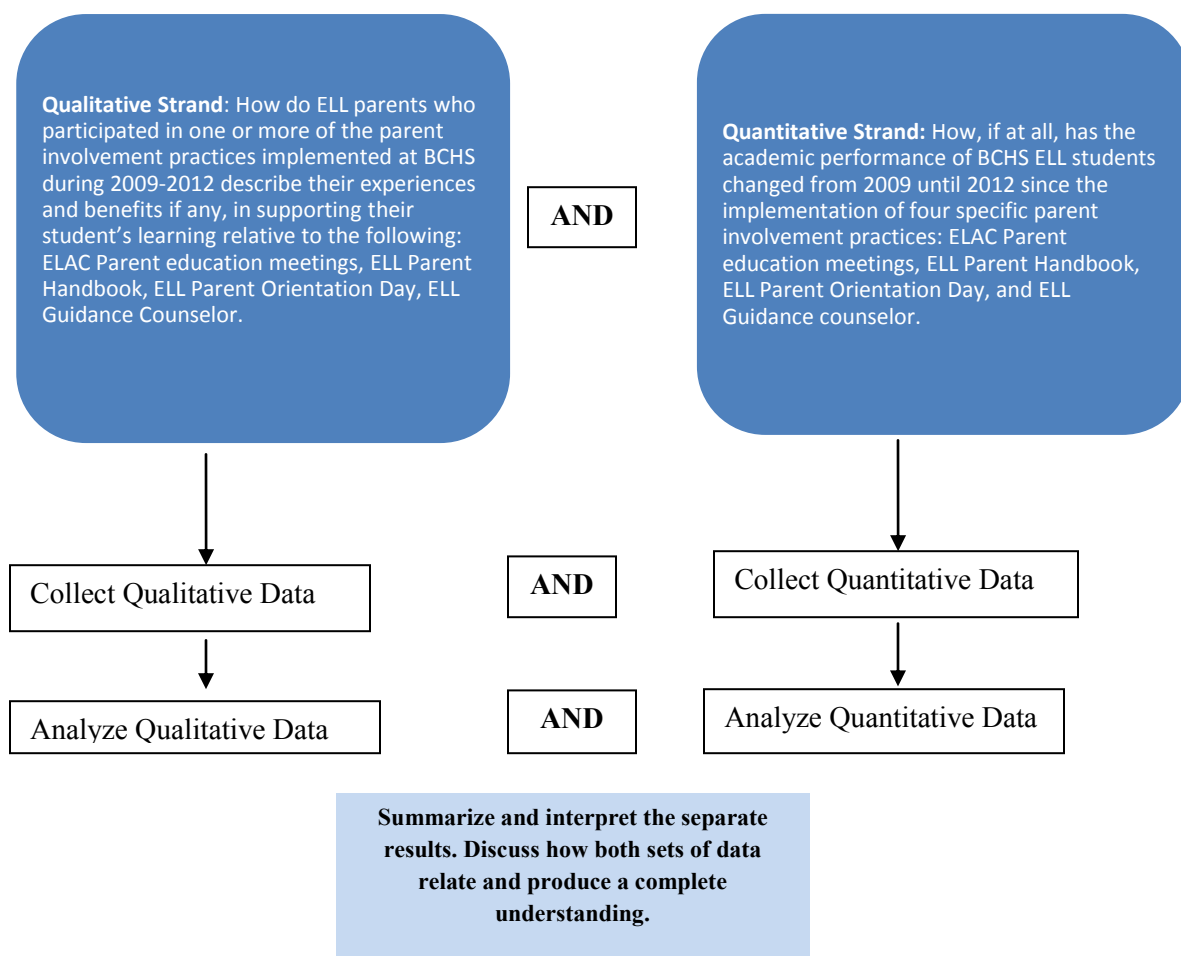


Figure 3. The mixed methods convergent parallel design.

Setting

This research took place at BCHS, the only traditional ninth-12th grade high school in the Bay City Unified school district. The 2011-2012 school year began with over 2,200 students enrolled. This number fluctuated throughout the year and ranges from 2,200 students to 2,300 students. BCHS's student population at the time was as follows: Hispanic, 38.8%; African American, 23.6%; White, 21.6%; Asian, 11.2%; Filipino, 2.1%; and Pacific Islander, .8%. The

school's diversity provides for 33 languages to be spoken on campus; 16.4% of the students are English language learners³. This percentage has increased steadily over the past 4 school years.

The last year that all variables of the parent engagement interventions were in place, BCCHS's *Academic Performance Index (API)*⁴ score based on the 2011-2012 school year was 821⁵, representing a dramatic increase from the 2008 API score of 750. Even though BCCHS subgroups have shown significant improvements, the achievement gap continues to exist among subgroups in the areas of English Language Arts and Mathematics. Table 2 illustrates the achievement gap in English Language Arts and Mathematics at BCCHS between the total student population and the English Learner subgroup.

Table 2

Percent of BCCHS Students Scoring Proficient or Advanced on the 2011-2012 CST

Group	English Language Arts	Mathematics
All students at BCCHS	63	36
English Learners	7	20

BCCHS is located 5 miles northeast of Los Angeles International Airport with a population of about 40,500 residents. During the day, the city's population triples due to the fact that it is home to Sony Studios and other smaller production studios⁶. The school enjoys a student body from a wide range of social, ethnic, and cultural origins and experiences. The fact that the schools' neighborhood includes the largest Muslim mosque on the West Coast and Sony Studios contributes to this diversity.

³ Information was obtained from a source that would reveal the identity of the participating institution; therefore, this source is confidential.

⁴ Academic Performance Index is a single number ranging from a low 200 to a high of 1000, which reflects a school's or a student group's performance based on results of statewide assessments (California Department of Education, 2011).

⁵ Information was obtained from a source that would reveal the identity of the participating institution; therefore, this source is confidential.

⁶ Information was obtained from a source that would reveal the identity of the participating institution; therefore, this source is confidential.

With the influence and support of the surrounding community of the arts, BCHS takes pride in keeping the *Arts alive* through the school's Academy of Visual and Performing Arts. This academy provides a unique and quality secondary and college courses in the areas of art, music, theater, film, and dance. All of the various programs have gained recognition and prestigious awards for their high caliber performances and projects. The theater department was recently recognized for their adaptation of the *Laramie Project*, the story of the aftermath of the 1998 murder of Matthew Sheppard in Laramie, Wyoming.

BCHS has also distinguished itself by its language immersion programs in Spanish and Japanese. The immersion program is incorporated district-wide from grades K-12. Students have the opportunity to learn and utilize a foreign language in their day-to-day curriculum in elementary grade levels and continue to enhance their language skills in specialized classes at the middle and high school. In addition to immersion courses at the high school, students can take Advance Placement (AP) classes that can lead to earning college credit by passing the AP exam with a qualifying score. By offering such diverse programs as Academy of Visual and Performing Arts and language immersion, the school exemplifies its commitment to valuing diversity and inspiring all students.

Population, Sample, and Sampling Procedures

Phenomenological method. Participants in this study included seven BCHS ELL parents. Identified ELL parents had a student who attended BCHS from 2009-2012 and participated in at least one or more of the parent engagement activities implemented during the 2009-2012 school years. It is imperative that the researcher selected participants purposely because in a phenomenological study all participants should have experienced the same phenomenon. In a convergent mixed methods design the researcher must also consider whether

to use the same sample of individuals and the same sample size of both the qualitative and quantitative data. For this study, the size of the sample was the same for both. The researcher chose to use the same size and sample for both data forms because the primary purpose was to compare and relate the findings as opposed to synthesizing a topic from different groups of participants (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011).

In recruiting parent participants, the researcher first identified parents of ELL students that were freshmen or sophomores at BCHS during the 2009-2010 school year. This ensured that if the student remained at BCHS until his/her senior year, parents were exposed to all four practices and had an opportunity to participate in at least one or more of the four parent involvement practices over a 3-year period. All identified parents were invited to participate with an invitation letter presented in Spanish and English introducing the researcher and describing the purpose and process of the study (see Appendix A). The letter outlined their participation and what would be required of their time. The informed consent to participate in the research study form (see Appendix B) was presented in Spanish as well as English. The researcher's contact information was included and participants were asked to contact the researcher within a week time frame. Polkinghorne (1989) suggested that phenomenological study should consist of interviews with five to 25 participants. Ideally, the researcher wanted to have at least seven to 12 BCHS ELL parents to participate in the individual interviews. Based on the number of responses from the invitational letter, the researcher determined that the next step of the selection was not needed to narrow the number of participants. If the researcher had received more than 12 responses, a selection process would have been utilized to limit participants to those that fit most or all of the descriptors listed in Table 3.

Table 3

Parent Participant Descriptors

Parent/Student Name	Descriptor #1 Identified ELL Parent YES/NO	Descriptor # 2 ELL student 9 th or 10 th grader during the 2009-2010 school year YES/NO	Descriptor #3 ELL Student remained at BCHS until senior year YES/NO	Descriptor #4 Parent participated in one or more of the four parent involvement practice (ELL Parent Orientation Day, ELL Parent handbook, ELAC, EL Guidance Counselor) List all involved in
#1				
#2				
#3				
#4				
#5				
#6				
#7				
#8				
#9				
#10				
#11				
#12				

After acquiring the desired number of participants, the researcher contacted eligible participants by phone to review the consent form, obtain verbal agreement to participate, and schedule a convenient time and place for a face-to-face interview or phone interview.

Participants were instructed to bring their signed consent form with them to the agreed upon interview time. Phone interview participants were required to review and sign the consent form and return it to the researcher by mail or email prior to the agreed upon phone interview date. A Spanish translator was available and offered to all participants for the interview and all communications. The researcher used Table 3 to identify eligible participants.

Descriptive method. Extant student data from 2009-2012 were used for comparison of student performance and language fluency scores before and after the implementation of parent engagement practices at BCHS. Student performance scores of all identified ELL students during

the 2009-2012 school years were reviewed for the quantitative descriptive process, yielding a larger sample size. A smaller quantitative subset was then developed, including only the student performance scores of ELL parents participating in the interview process. Therefore, the size of the qualitative sample was much smaller than the quantitative sample. This factor provided the researcher an opportunity to have a more in-depth qualitative exploration and a rigorous quantitative examination of the topic (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). Math and English CST scores were described and compared by proficiency level. CELDT scores for language proficiency were also reviewed for any changes, if at all, observed during the implementation of parent engagement practices at BCHS. The three performance scores were gathered for each parent participant's student for each school year during the implementation (2009-2012) and compared to scores 1 year prior to the implementation (2008-2009 school years).

Human Subjects Considerations

Phenomenological method. This study was submitted to Pepperdine University's Graduate and Professional Schools Institutional Review Board for review and approval. Permission was obtained by the researcher from the site's district office (see Appendix C) and site principal (see Appendix D). This study adhered to all Pepperdine University Institutional Review Board and site mandated protocols and guidelines to protect human subjects. Participants volunteered at every phase of the study. The researcher provided participants with a consent form to sign (see Appendix B) that included the nature of the study, description of participation, contact information, and statement regarding confidentiality. All data collected were kept confidential and pseudonyms were used to identify and code participants. The identities of the participants were known only to the researcher and kept protected. All data collected were kept

on the researcher's personal home computer, to which only the researcher had the password to access files. Data will be properly destroyed 5 years after the study has been completed.

Parent participants faced no more than minimal risk. The consent form disclosed all foreseeable risk in this study, such as emotional discomfort. If participants felt emotional discomfort, they were provided an opportunity for a break before questioning resumed. Psychologically, parents could perceive that the school or the researcher is judging their parenting skills and or involvement. Participants were notified that they could withdraw from the study at any time without any negative consequences. Participants were informed that they could also refuse to answer any question that they did not want to answer and still remain in the study. Participants were notified that they would not be compensated for their participation. The researcher provided a light snack and beverage for participants during the face-to-face interviews.

All participants received a personal thank you note from the researcher that included information on how they could acquire the study's findings. Findings were made available to participants upon request. Requests could be made by contacting the researcher via phone, email, or in person. Upon request, the researcher would email or mail findings to the participants and offer to discuss the findings.

Descriptive method. No human subjects were involved in the descriptive method component of this research. Extant student test score data were described, reviewed, and compared over a specific time period. Identity of the students associated with the data were protected and kept confidential by the researcher. Each student was assigned a letter (A-Z); this is the only identification code associated with each student. Identification and performance scores were protected by the researcher and kept in the researcher's personal computer. Only

aggregated data were reported. Data will be destroyed properly 5 years after the study has been completed.

Instrumentation

Four instruments were utilized during this research study. An original interview instrument was developed and used for the phenomenological method component. The descriptive method component of the study utilized existing student performance data related to three instruments: the Math CST, the English CST, and the CELDT.

Phenomenological method instrument. An original interview instrument was developed by the researcher used for the phenomenological component of the study (see Appendix E). The interview instrument consisted of 10-12 semi-structured questions. In qualitative research it is important to gain information from the participants' point of view. If structured instruments and methods are used, there is a risk that they will guide participants' responses, therefore not reflecting accurate and honest responses. Open-ended, semi-structured interviews were conducted, allowing the researcher to develop questions ahead of time, but mostly allowing the participants to tell their stories. Providing this opportunity to tell their story should have revealed true emotions and feelings about their experience. A BCHS school administrator overseeing the ELL program and services and the BCHS ELL guidance counselor reviewed the interview questions for accuracy of representation of the four implemented practices. For translation purposes, a BCHS bilingual guidance office technician and bilingual classroom aide that had direct involvement with the parent involvement practices and ELL parents during 2009-2012 reviewed the interview questions for cultural awareness, sensitivity, and use of parent-friendly language that is parent friendly. To ensure that the interview instrument was reliable and measuring what it was intended to measure, the questions were

piloted with the current BCHS ELAC president who had knowledge and some personal experiences with the parent involvement practices. The current BCHS ELAC president did not meet the all descriptors needed to participate in the study, but was able to provide valuable feedback from a BCHS ELL parent perspective in the piloting of the interview instrument. The interview questions were grouped into themes and aligned with the two research questions and relevant literature citations (see Appendices F & G.)

Descriptive method instrumentation.

California Standardized Test (CST) English language arts/mathematics. The CST was one of the instruments used to collect data for RQ#2, specifically addressing student academic performance in the core content areas of English language arts (ELA) and mathematics. The California Department of Education (2014b) gives permission on their website for reproduction of the instrument for educational purposes. The CST is one of the four components/assessments of the Standardized Testing and Reporting program (STAR) that is designed to measure student achievement toward California's adopted content standards in the subjects of ELA, mathematics, science, and history. CSTs are fully standards-based achievement test. For more information and detailed description of the content standards refer to California Department of Education (2014a). CST ELA and mathematics scores were selected for this study because of their alignment with California ELA and mathematics content standards that measure student performance and categorization of performance levels.

The STAR program was established by state legislature in 1997 to measure how well Local Educational Agencies (LEAs) were providing instruction and how well students in California public schools grades two through 11 were achieving in the following subject areas: ELA, mathematics, science, and history. ELA and mathematics became a part of the STAR

program in 1999. The STAR program is the foundation of the statewide assessments of students in California. The purpose of STAR testing is to: (a) communicate with parents by providing individual student results; (b) produce level results to schools, district, and counties to inform decisions needed to support student achievement; (c) evaluate school programs; and (d) provide results for federal government to monitor school's progress toward meeting accountability targets for federal funding (California Department of Education, 2013). Interpretation of scores' validity evidence has only been gathered for these four purposes.

CSTs are criterion-referenced test that assess California content standards. According to Leedy and Ormrod (2010), criterion validity is the extent to which the results of an assessment instrument correlate with one another. To assure meaningful measurements of student achievement and instruction, strong alignment between assessment and standard is imperative. In 2004, the convergent validity of CSTs was tested by examining the relationship between CSTs and their counterpart CAT/6 survey, a norm-referenced assessment testing students in reading, language, spelling, mathematics, and science. It was expected that the two assessments would relate closely when measuring similar constructs and less likely when measuring different constructs. As expected, the CSTs in all grade levels correlated highly with the CAT/6 reading language test because they measure similar skills. The ELA CST correlated less with the CAT/6 spelling test because they measured different skills. Additionally, the mathematics CST correlated highly with the CAT/6 mathematics test.

In 2007, the Human Resource Research Organization (HumRRO) conducted an alignment study for CSTs. HumRRO evaluated the alignment of 2006 CSTs to content standards utilizing the Webb alignment methods. The Webb method requires the following as stated by the California Department of Education (2011):

A set of raters to evaluate each test item on two different dimensions: (1) the standard(s) targeted by items and (2) the depth of knowledge required of students to respond to items. These ratings form the basis of the four separate Webb alignment analyses: categorical concurrence, depth-of-knowledge consistency, range-of-knowledge correspondence, and balance-of-knowledge representation. (p. 380)

The results showed good alignment for CSTs in ELA, mathematics, science, and history.

The CST's reliability refers to consistency in differences in test scores truly reflecting differences in knowledge, skill, and ability rather than fluctuations due to chance or random factors. The CST's reliability is based on internal consistency, measuring consistency of individuals' performance on test items. Internal consistency reliability is utilized for both the ELA and mathematics CSTs. The blueprint and test length for each CST are based on the complexity each is intended to measure. The number of items varies across grade levels and content areas. The CST ELA for grades four through 11 includes 81 total items and a written essay. All CST mathematics test have a total of 71 items. Before items are placed in the item bank content experts and external review organizations to ensure they meet the specifications of Educational Testing Services extensively review them. After final review, the items are delivered to CDE by means of an electronic bank. The items are then field tested by CDE to obtain information about item performance. Every year 35% of the items are replaced with new ones but remain in the bank for future use (California Department of Education, 2011).

CST raw scores report the total number of multiple choice questions answered correctly. Raw scores provide a number of correct answers but cannot be compared meaningfully because the scores are affected by ability and difficulty of the test taken. The CST sub score is calculated to report a percentage of questions answered correctly in a reporting subgroup such as ELA and mathematics. A scale score allows for comparisons of a student's scores in different grade levels

and content areas. To acquire a scale score, the number correct score (raw score) is changed into a 3-digit number correct scale score ranging from 150-600. A CST raw-to-scale score conversion table is utilized to transform a raw score to a scale score. The scale score is then categorized into one of the following performance levels: far below basic, below basic, basic, proficient, and advanced. Students must achieve a cut score of 300 to be classified at basic performance, and a cut scale score of 350 defines a performance level of proficient. Table 4 shows the level proficiency as defined by scale score for the 2011 ELA and mathematics CST. School accountability is based on students classified as proficient in content areas. For the purpose of this study, the scale score and performance levels were evaluated to determine if ELL students' academic performance changed during 2009-2012 after the implementation of parent involvement practices.

Table 4

2011 Grade 9-11 CST ELA and Mathematics Scale Score Ranges for Performance Levels

CST	Far Below Basic	Below Basic	Basic	Proficient	Advanced
ELA					
Grade 9	150-264	265-299	300-349	350-396	397-600
Grade 10	150-262	263-299	300-349	350-391	392-600
Grade 11	150-258	259-299	300-349	350-395	396-600
Mathematics					
Algebra I	150-252	253-299	300-349	350-427	428-600
Geometry	150-246	247-299	300-349	350-417	418-600
Algebra II	150-256	257-299	300-349	350-415	416-600
H.S. Summative Math	150-234	235-299	300-349	350-419	420-600

Scoring variations can occur when a student is classified as ELL or has an Individualized Educational Plan (IEP). This study focused on the ELL student population only, and the CST test variations for ELL students are listed in Table 5. The researcher noted if a student score report reflects any test variations for CST ELA and mathematics.

Table 5

CST Matrix of Test Variations for English Language Learners

Variation	Allowed/Not Allowed
#1 Hear the test directions printed in the test administration manual translated into the student’s primary language. Ask clarifying questions about the test directions in the student’s primary language.	Variation Allowed
#2 Additional supervised breaks within a testing day <i>or</i> following each section (STAR) within a test part provided that the test sections is completed within a testing day. A test section is identified by a “STOP” at the end of it.	Variation Allowed
#3 English learners (ELs) may have the opportunity to be tested separately with other ELs provided that the student is directly supervised by an employee of the school who has signed the test security affidavit and the student has been provided such a flexible setting as part of his/her regular instruction or assessment.	Variation Allowed
#4 Access to translation glossaries/word lists (English-to-primary language). Glossaries/Word lists shall not include definitions or formulas	Variation Allowed Math, Science, History-Social Science Not Allowed ELA

CSTs are standardized in their policies, administration, security, and confidentiality. All students in public school participate in the testing, but English learners and some students with IEPs may require assistance. Accommodations change the way the test is given, but not the content tested. Modifications fundamentally change what is being tested and may interfere with what is being measured. Modifications and accommodations are implemented to enable the student to take the test, not to give an unfair advantage or report inaccurate scores of knowledge, skill, or ability.

California English Language Development Test (CELDT). The CELDT was developed to identify students with limited English proficiency and determine their level of English language proficiency. The CELDT was chosen as an instrument for this study to address RQ#2 in regard to the language fluency levels of BCHS ELL students. CELDT scores were reviewed

for any changes in English fluency level of BCHS ELL students after the implementation of the parent involvement practices. Each of the four parent involvement practices implemented at BCHS had some form of parent educational piece that focused on the language fluency program and the CELDT test.

Federal and state law requires public schools statewide to administer the CELDT test to all students in kindergarten through 12th grade whose primary language is other than English. Schools are also required to administer the CELDT test annually to previously identified ELL students who have not been reclassified as fluent English proficient (RFEP) during the July 1 to October 31 testing window (National Center for Research on Evaluation, Standards, and Student Testing, 2008).

The purpose of the CELDT is to identify students with limited English proficiency, determine the level of English language proficiency for those students, and assess the progress of limited English proficient students in acquiring the skills related to four domains: listening, speaking, reading, and writing in English. The CELDT assesses these four domains and is aligned with the English Language Development (ELD) standards adopted by the State Board of Education. The test was designed on the basis of California's English Language Proficiency (ELP) standards, which focus on language proficiency in social and academic settings (National Center for Research on Evaluation, Standards, and Student Testing, 2008).

In 2007, the Assessment and Accountability Comprehensive Center (AACC) conducted an evaluation of the technical evidence of the CELDT. The CELDT was evaluated across all types and phases and received a rating of meeting or exceeding technical quality expectations in 27 of the 64 evidence method elements (for more information on the criteria used, refer to the AACC/WestEd report titled *Evaluation of the Technical Adequacy of Evidence of Assessments of*

English Language Proficiency: Body of Evidence Summary). The CELDT's validity was evaluated in terms of the following areas: construct validity, content validity, consequential validity, and criterion validity. AACC/WestEd found that, overall, the technical evidence of validity for the CELDT met or exceeded quality expectations. For reliability, the test design and development and scoring met the quality expectations. The analyst did note that although no information presented in any CELDT documents had a clear explanation of a process, administering the annual and initial forms to the same student may be technically a kind of test-retest or an alternate form of reliability (AACC, 2007).

Data Collection

The data collection process focused on two strategies: individual interviews and review of performance data. Table 6 illustrates the research questions and the aligned data collection strategy. The convergent parallel design involved the researcher collecting the qualitative (interviews) and quantitative (existing performance scores) data concurrently and ideally prioritizing them equally.

Table 6

Data Collection Strategies

Research Question	Data Collection Strategy
RQ#1: How do ELL parents who participated in one or more of the parent involvement practices implemented at BCHS during 2009-2012 describe their experiences and benefits, if any, in supporting their students' learning relative to the following; <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) ELAC Parent education meetings? b) ELL Parent Handbook? c) ELL Parent Orientation Day? d) ELL Guidance Counselor? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews
RQ#2: How, if at all, have language fluency level and academic performance of BCHS ELL students changed from 2009 until 2012 since the implementation of four specific parent involvement practices: ELAC Parent education meetings, ELL Parent Handbook, ELL Parent Orientation Day, and ELL Guidance counselor?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of Test Documents <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ CST ELA ○ CST Mathematics ○ CELDT

Phenomenological data collection. Parent interviews were conducted with seven BCHS ELL parents. Each participant was interviewed once. Interviews were digitally recorded, transcribed, and translated if needed. These meetings were scheduled at the school site, in a quiet location free from any distractions (Creswell, 2007) and at a time that was convenient for the participant. Spanish translation was made available upon request. The translator signed a confidentiality form provided by Pepperdine University. The arranged interview translator was a qualified, experienced district employee and had passed the district verbal and written translation test.

Prior to the start of the interview, the researcher covered the ethical issues related to participation and assured confidentiality with each participant. The researcher discussed the purpose of the study and reviewed the consent form. Each interview lasted no longer than 45 minutes. As each interview proceeded, the researcher reminded herself of Creswell's (2007) most important advice when interviewing; "This last point may be the most important, and it is a reminder of how a good interviewer is a good listener rather than a frequent speaker during an interview" (p. 134). Being a good listener required being an attentive interviewer, which limited the researcher's ability to write any notes during the interview, so the researcher doubled and triple checked her recording device prior to each interview.

1. Checked digital recording device.
2. Checked to see if translation was requested.
3. Greeted and welcome participant.
4. Verified if translation was needed.
5. Provided light snack and beverage.
6. Asked the participant for the hard copy of the signed consent form.

7. Asked if there are any questions about the consent form.
8. Reviewed the study's purpose and how the results of the interview would be used.
9. Reviewed the format, and timing of the interview.
10. Reminded participant that their interview would be recorded and the interviewer would be taking a few notes.
11. Reminded participant that he/she could request to stop audio recording at any time or refuse to answer any question.
12. Started the recorder and identified the participant by predetermined pseudonym.
13. Asked one question at a time and allowed time for participant to tell his/her story related to the phenomenon.
14. Took quick written notes and key points on the interview protocol (see Appendix E) in the event the recording device did not work.
15. Prepared for unplanned probes to gather further information at the appropriate time that would not interrupt the flow of the participant's responses.
16. Upon completion of all planned interview questions, asked the participant if there were any other comments he/she would like to add that is relevant to BCHS parent engagement practices or their experiences.
17. Thanked the participant and made sure he/she had a copy of his/her signed consent form that included contact information for further questions or comments.
18. Recording of interview was translated if needed, and transcribed via Dragon software.

Descriptive collection. With permission from the school administrators, the researcher reviewed student performance documents such as test scores of the students whose parents participated in the study.

1. The researcher identified all ELL students during the 2009-2012 school years through the current database.
2. The researcher created a list of all parent participants interviewed and identified their BCHS students from the list (step 1) and created a second list for the smaller sample. (Steps 3-7 would be conducted for both sample lists.)
3. First, the researcher reviewed identified student records from the school year prior to the implementation of the parent engagement practices (2008-2009).
4. For each student the researcher recorded the student's CST ELA score, CST Math score, and CELDT score. Data were recorded on an excel spreadsheet.
5. Next, the researcher reviewed the student records database for each school year the parent engagement practices were implemented (2009-2010, 2010-2011, 2011-2012).
6. The researcher recorded the CST math, CST ELA, and CELDT score for each student for each of the 3 years.
7. Notations were made of any reasons for which a student did not take a test for any of the given years.

Data Management Procedures

It is imperative that the researcher manage the collected data efficiently. Proper planning prior to collecting data minimized potential setbacks (Richards & Morse, 2007). The researcher first systematically approached a data collecting process and then developed a plan for managing and storing the data collected. Richards and Morse (2007) stated that qualitative research can allow for an enormous volume of data to be managed, which can lead to the problems of how to manage the amount of data and how to manage the data records. To ensure that data were not

over collected, the researcher regularly checked for saturation and was confident that adequate data had been obtained.

To ensure that data were processed and organized efficiently, the researcher implemented a data management process. With regard to physical handling of data, all interview recordings were clearly labeled and stored in a secure area by the researcher. Pseudonyms and coding were used to maintain confidentiality of participants and the institution. Identifying codes were placed on tapes and all transcripts to keep them well organized and sorted, allowing them to be retrieved in a timely and efficient matter. The researcher's personal computer was used to help manage the research data. The computer was password protected and only the researcher had access to the password. Hard copies of forms were scanned and stored on the computer as a soft back up and all files were backed up on an external hard drive. All gathered data were kept confidential in a locked file cabinet stored in a secure location off campus.

Data Analysis

Phenomenological data analysis. The data analysis process is generally similar in most phenomenological studies: review the data, highlight significant statements or quotes providing an understanding of the experience of the phenomenon, and then develop clusters of meaning from the significant statements (Creswell, 2007). Creswell (2007) gives a representation of this process in his *data analysis spiral*. The process is described as moving through analytical loops and exiting the last loop with a narrative of the story. The data management process is at the base of the spiral and the beginning loop, followed by reading through the data, then classifying and lastly presenting the data.

For the purpose of this study, the researcher followed a similar process as described in Creswell's (2007) data analysis spiral. After interview data were transcribed and organized, the

researcher continued to analyze the data in their entirety, reading over the transcripts several times in order to gain a complete sense of the interviews before dissecting the data (Agar, 1980). As Creswell suggested, the researcher then began to write memos in the margins of the transcripts and interview notes, highlighting significant statements and quotes. The researcher took detailed reflective memos and categorized them into themes (Richards & Morse, 2007). The themes were entered into a spreadsheet and analyzed based on how many times related statements made during the parent interviews. The themes were used to identify core factors about the specific parent engagements practices implemented at BCHS. The researcher then stepped back from the detailed data and viewed them from a larger perspective of interpretation of meanings in relations to RQ#1, existing literature, and personal experiences (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007). These findings are discussed further in Chapter 4.

To ensure validity of the qualitative data, the researcher asked at least two peers from her work that have completed a doctoral program recently and that were familiar with the research process and qualitative research to review transcripts, coding, and themes. Their input helped identify any gaps or missing themes and also validated identified themes. Reliability plays a minor role in qualitative research (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007) and depends greatly on the reliability of multiple coders. For the purpose of this study, the researcher was the primary coder and only gained insight from peer reviewers of the data.

Descriptive data analysis. Leedy and Ormrod (2010) suggested that before a researcher starts employing an analytical procedure for quantitative data, he/she should first look closely at the data and explore various ways to organize it with an open mind. The researcher employed this step by first charting the data for each student by year (2008-2009, 2009-2010, 2010-2011, and 2001-2012) and each specified test (CST math, CST ELA, and CELDT). The researcher

observed the data and conducted a descriptive analysis by taking notes of any trends or distributions among students or tests observed. Creswell and Plano Clark (2007) also suggested a similar phase of observation and exploring data in their detailed outline of quantitative data analysis procedures. This outline was utilized to further guide the researcher through the analysis procedure. After observation of data, the researcher determined if the data needed to be recoded or new variables identified. The data were then organized and input into a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet. Then the researcher determined if the data accurately answered RQ#2, determining how, if at all, language fluency level and academic performance of BCHS ELL students have changed from 2009 until 2012 since the implementation of four specific parent involvement practices: ELAC parent education meetings, ELL parent handbook, ELL parent orientation day, and ELL guidance counselor.

In representing the data, the results were presented in a detailed statement along with tables and figures produced by the Excel computer program. The final step involved interpreting the results, discussed in detail in Chapter 4, by explaining how the results address RQ#2 and comparing them with past literature, theories, or explanations.

Positionality

On a personal level, my biracial Hispanic and African-American background played a critical part in my choice of my profession and research focus. As an adult, looking back on my childhood, I realized that I never had the opportunity to explore the Hispanic part of my ancestry. Exposure to my Hispanic culture was limited and I often felt deprived of valuable and meaningful cultural history. My grandmother made a decision early not to expose her children to their Hispanic culture and language, out of fear of them being isolated and labeled in school as being different. My father was never exposed to the Spanish culture or language. I now realize

that this personal experience has silently driven my passion to ensure that culturally diverse students and their families embrace their individuality (i.e., culture, language) and value their diversity. Schools must respect and be aware of cultural diversity when engaging ELL families in their students' education.

Professionally, I have always had a special interest in students and programs that involve at-risk interventions and special programs. I have been in the education field for almost 15 years, serving as a guidance counselor and most recently as an Interim Principal, and I have found that some of the most challenging but most rewarding days and events have involved working with students that are perceived or labeled as at-risk. The ELL student population and services offered at my school site were previously unexplored and unclear to me, but noticeably and frequently ELL students fell into the categories of at-risk and or special programs. I noticed the ELL student population at my school site increasing year-to-year, but the school's knowledge and services offered were not growing to meet the needs of ELL student and their families. In efforts to increase awareness and assess current ELL practices, my school site assigned all ELL students to my counseling caseload. At the time I did not understand why one counselor needed to acquire all ELL students, but now years later I recognize the benefits that ELL students and families gained by having one counselor to deliver services and focus on the ELL population.

The role of ELL counselor forced me to dig deeper and be open to new experiences, walking in the footsteps of those of a different culture and background than myself. I had to become vulnerable and open to a new way of thinking. I realized that understanding our ELL population would require me to go beyond the students themselves and explore their various cultures and family dynamics. This change and shift in my career guided me into this area of research of how to more ELL parents fully engage to become partners in their students'

education. This research is important to me because the results and findings can potentially change the infrastructure of not only BCHS but other schools as well.

Chapter 4: Results

This study explored perceptions of ELL parents at Bay City High School with respect to parent engagement practices that were implemented at BCHS during the 2009-2012 academic year in efforts to build home-school partnerships in support of student learning: (a) the implementation of a revised ELAC format, (b) the development of an ELL parent handbook available in Spanish and English, (c) the implementation of a parent orientation day designed specifically for ELL parents, and (d) having a designated ELL guidance counselor. The following research questions guided this study:

- How do ELL parents who participated in one or more of the parent involvement practices implemented at BCHS during 2009-2012 describe their experiences and benefits, if any, in supporting their students' learning relative to the following;
 1. ELAC Parent education meetings?
 2. ELL Parent Handbook?
 3. ELL Parent Orientation Day?
 4. ELL Guidance Counselor?
- How, if at all, have the language fluency levels and academic performance of BCHS ELL students changed from academic years 2009 until 2012 since the implementation of four specific parent involvement practices: ELAC Parent education meetings, ELL Parent Handbook, ELL Parent Orientation Day, and ELL Guidance counselor?

To achieve the purpose of this study, a convergent parallel mixed methods design was used. Semi-structured interviews were conducted and quantitative student academic and language fluency student outcomes on math/ELA CSTs and CELDT measures were collected. Each set of data was analyzed separately then compared for the purpose of looking for

contradictions or relationships between the two data sets to determine what changes, if any, occurred over time.

Research question one was addressed by conducting parent interviews with seven parents that had students at BCHS during the 2009-2012 academic school years and had participated in one or more of the implemented parent engagement practices. The interviews were analyzed using a similar process to Creswell's (2007) data analysis spiral, reviewing the transcripts several times to highlight significant statement and quotes with memos that were then categorized into themes. The themes identified core factors about the specific parent engagement practices implemented by BCHS.

Research question two was addressed by collecting student performance data of all identified ELL students (not differentiating between parents that participated in parent engagement activities or not) during the 2009-2012 academic school years on math and ELA CSTs and the CELDT. The 2008 scores were also collected to compare scores before and after implementation of practices with all ELL students. Once the data were analyzed by year and by test, trends were noted. Student data of the seven parents interviewed were then separated and analyzed independently to note trends of students whose parents identified as participating in one or parent engagement practices at BCHS. Detailed statements, tables, and figures were used to interpret the results and compare the results to past literature, theories, and explanations.

This chapter is organized in terms of the two guiding research questions presented in Chapter 1. The first section addresses guiding research question one and presents the findings from the parent interviews. The second section addresses guiding research question two and presents the descriptive analysis of student academic and language fluency outcomes in terms of math/ELA CSTs and CELDT measures.

Research Question One Findings

The first research question explored ELL parent perceptions of their experiences and benefits, if any, in supporting their students' learning relative to the following parent involvement practices implemented at BCHS: (a) ELAC parent education meetings, (b) ELL parent handbook, (c) ELL parent orientation day, and (d) ELL guidance counselor. From seven verbatim transcripts, 110 significant statements were extracted, which were then analyzed and categorized to create Table 7.

Table 7

Parent Participants' Interview Responses, Key Words, and Statements

Parent	ELAC Educational Meetings	ELL Parent Orientation Day	ELL Parent Handbook	ELL Guidance Counselor	Closing Comments
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learned from other parents. • Speak to parents about my experiences. • Help parents help their student at home. • Information about college. • Have information • Help their student. • Very helpful in providing information. • It was helpful. Getting good grades are very important. • I would like to see more parents attend and be involved. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Helpful to know things about the school. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very helpful to parents. • Parents don't have time to read everything but they must. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very often. • Talk to counselor about helping. • Very comfortable. • Support for my son. • Provided information. • Share my feelings. • Express my concerns. • In person communication. • I need people to see my face and expressions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Important for parents to help their child at home. • Students learn from parents. • Most important is how you feel as a parent when you come to meetings. • Parents need to communicate with each other. • Parents must show by example that school is important.

(continued)

Parent	ELAC Educational Meetings	ELL Parent Orientation Day	ELL Parent Handbook	ELL Guidance Counselor	Closing Comments
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have to help other parents. • Volunteer to translate for Spanish speaking parents. • Parents don't know the system or language. • A lot of information provided. • Able to connect and get to know other parents. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excited to know more about the school. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information for college. • Provide information. • Parent friendly. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understood their situation. • Comfortable in communicating. • Encouraged more parents to be involved. • Communicate with the counselor. • Trust. • Translation provided. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Third generation everything is new so it is helpful to have the school provide such involvement opportunities and information. • Counselor very helpful for the ELL community. • Parents familiar with counselor and comfortable in communicating with counselor.
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Helpful to find out information. • Talk with other parents. • Get information. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To be more helpful to my student. • Campus tour, becoming familiar with school. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was helpful. • Graduation requirements. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet often. • Very helpful. • Informing me. • Phone and in person communication. • Comfortable. • Language difficulties. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to provide information to ELL parents. • Parents need to be constantly informed on how to help their student.
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wished that more parents supported the group. • Support to other parents. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information. • Need to be involved. • Collect information. • Ways for parents to be involved and what resources the school has. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Translated in Spanish. • Ways to be involved. • Clear and parent friendly. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pretty often. • Available. • Comfortable in communicating. • Information was helpful. • Mostly in person. • Communicate information with my son. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Getting familiar with the school system and meeting parents from different cultures and getting to know each other as a community. • I figured out that it was very important as a parent to get involved in school activities. • Our kids were here and sharing the facilities with other cultures in the school. At the same time it was very wonderful experience seeing the parents unite helping each other.

(continued)

Parent	ELAC Educational Meetings	ELL Parent Orientation Day	ELL Parent Handbook	ELL Guidance Counselor	Closing Comments
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To get information. Help my son. Talk to other parents. Spoke Spanish. Translate. Shared information with my son. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Did not attend 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information also in Spanish Contact page to call and ask questions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In person. Often. Communicate. Translations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It was unfortunate that many parents did not support and become familiar with the school system. Maybe due to 1. Work schedule. 2. Have other kids at other schools and go to those meetings. 3 some families needed child care. The school eventually did provide when they saw the need. It was important to have ELL counselor and ELAC meeting to get information and ask questions.
6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Valuable information. Meet other parents. A lot of information about college and grades. Like to see more parents attend. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not able to attend. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The information was helpful To contact counselor and office. Go over graduation information with my daughter. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Very often. Get information. Available. In person. Communicate often. College. Information helped me support my student at home. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appreciated the helpful information. Enjoyed communicating with other parents. Parents discuss their own experiences. School should address all cultures.
7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Get information. Grades and college. Help my daughter. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Find out about the school. Daughter new to the school and waned to support her. Meet people. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If I had questions I could call the people on the contact page. Share the information with my daughter. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Talk to me about grades and the test. Talk over the phone. Information about the ELL program. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ELL counselor and information very helpful. School needs to continue to encourage ELL parents to be involved.

Arranging the key words and statements into clusters resulted in seven themes that emerged from their associated meanings. Tables 8-12 display the emerging themes from the

seven parent interviews for each parent involvement practice, giving an overall *essence* of the phenomenon.

Table 8

Themes Emerging from Parent Responses to ELAC Educational Meeting Questions

Experience and Benefit Themes	Coded Responses
Information	15
Communication	4
Relationship Building	3
Student Support	5
Shared Experiences	5
Involvement	4

Table 9

Themes Emerging from Parent Responses to ELL Parent Handbook Questions

Experience and Benefit Themes	Coded Responses
Information	7
Student Support	2
Involvement	3

Table 10

Themes Emerging from Parent Responses to ELL Parent Orientation Day Questions

Experience and Benefit Themes	Coded Responses
Information	4
Communication	2
Student Support	2
Involvement	2

Table 11

Themes Emerging from Parent Responses to ELL Guidance Counselor Questions

Experience and Benefit Themes	Coded Responses
Information	11
Communication	12
Relationship Building	1
Student Support	1
Involvement	2

Table 12

Themes Emerging from Parent Responses to Closing Comment Question

Themes	Coded Responses
Information	4
Communication	5
Relationship Building	3
Student Support	1
Shared Experiences	3
Culture	4
Involvement	1

Table 13 displays the collective emerging themes and the parent engagement practices from which they emerged based on the participating parent interview statements.

Table 13

Collective Emerging Themes

Theme	ELAC Meetings	ELL Parent Orientation Day	ELL Parent Handbook	ELL Guidance Counselor	Closing Comments
Information	X	X	X	X	X
Communication	X		X	X	X
Relationship Building	X			X	X
Student Support	X	X	X	X	X
Shared Experiences	X				X
Involvement	X	X	X	X	X
Culture					X

Theme 1: Information. Table 14 displays each parent's key statements in regard to theme one, information.

Table 14

Parent Statements Regarding Theme 1: Information

Parent	Related Statements
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information about college was very important because parents often don't know or have the information on how to help their student. So ELAC was very helpful in providing information. • It was important to be at the meeting because sometimes the school does not provide good information. • Yes it helped me a lot because the counselor provided information not only about learning in the classroom but also about personal issues and how to deal with my son. • Yes I was able to get information from the counselor for resources within the school and outside of the school such as personal counseling.
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A lot of information was giving and I made sure they understood in understanding how things work. • Yes because all the information for college requirements and classes was included. Also community service requirements. Pretty good. • It wasn't overwhelming. • Yes and my daughter was able to provide information to her friends about the language program and how they get reclassified. • Of course the information was helpful because as a third generation everything is new so it is helpful to know about such things as the parent portal and some people don't have computers and I remember we had workshop in the school's tech center.
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was helpful to find out information especially about subjects and test for my student. • I did get the handbook because it helped me figure out what subjects and classes she needed. It was helpful. I always looked at the handbook and the school's parent handbook. I would check every year the information. Sometimes I would go through with my daughter especially for classes needed to graduate. • I think just continue to provide information about college. • I think that they are doing a good job. The most important is to get information at the meetings. Especially around testing time to prepare my daughter for test. When I missed meetings I felt like I missed information and did not know how to get after meeting.
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appropriate information without overwhelming. As a parent we need to be involved to figure out ways to help our kids and see if the school provides other help as well. Just being here to collect information and come back to pick up more info. • I do remember the handbook....it was clear and it was good that it was in Spanish too. Yes most important was club organizations for students because I would encourage my son to be involved. • Information was helpful for me and my family. I would communicate the information with my son after meeting with counselor.

(continued)

Parent	Related Statements
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To get information about the school, teachers and how to help my son with school and the EL program. • I went to ELAC to get information and ask questions • Information was translated in Spanish. • Yes the information was easy to read and it was also in Spanish. It provided information about grade and test. Yes I would discuss graduation requirements with my son. I remember having some question and I used the contact page to call and ask questions. • It really helped to have the ELL counselor and ELAC meetings to get information. That is the most important to have information to help your student.
6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was a chance to get valuable information because my daughter does not always tell me all the information about school. • I got a lot of information about college, grades, and the different test that my daughter took. • The information was helpful and easy to read. I would go over graduation requirements with my daughter. I would often use the directory to contact counselor and office • I really appreciated the information provided to help my daughter and I enjoyed coming to the ELAC meetings.
7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I needed to get information about the school so I could help my daughter or make sure she knew the information • Yes, I would go through the handbook when I had questions and then I could call the people in the book to ask. I would share the info with my daughter. • I remember the resources and counselor being very helpful and it was good to have someone to contact directly when I had questions.

This theme emerged when parents discussed the benefits of participating in BCHS ELL parent engagement activities specifically in response to the interviewer's questions, Why did you attend ELAC and or ELL Parent Orientation day? For example, parent #1 stated "ELAC was very helpful in providing information," and parent #6 stated, "It was a chance to get valuable information because my daughter does not always tell me all the information about school." When asked whether the information provided was helpful and if so, in what way, responses suggested that the information provided by activities, meetings, and counselor was very helpful and resourceful in assisting their students. As parent #5 stated, "It really helped to have the ELL counselor and ELAC meetings to get information. That is the most important to have information to help your student." The responses suggest that ELAC and the ELL counselor were the primary sources of helpful information for ELL parents. The ELL parent orientation day and ELL Parent handbook were seen as supplemental informational resources.

Theme 2: Communication. Table 15 displays each parent’s key statements in regard to theme two, communication.

Table 15

Parent Statements Regarding Theme 2: Communication

Parent	Related Statements
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I helped contact parents about meetings with phone calls to parents and to hand out flyers to encourage parents to attend. • I was able to share my feelings with the counselor and express my concerns. • In person. I don’t like over the phone because they cannot see my expressions and really understand how I feel. I need people to see my face and expressions. • Parents need to communicate with each other and support each other.
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I love to volunteer for the people that do not speak the English language and I am really happy to translate for them. • Yes, because parents have to feel comfortable in communicating with the counselor and trust. • Yes, I remember we used to ask parents to help with making phone calls with other parents about meetings and parents were able to connect and get to know other parents from making these phone calls.
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To get information and talk with other parents • Phone and in person comfortable doing both. I prefer in person because of language difficulties.
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicated pretty often because I was concerned about my son behavior and academics. Counselor was always available and I was comfortable in communicating with counselor. • Mostly in person, because I like to deal face to face about sensitive issues and things with my son. In my case because I felt comfortable and my work schedule allowed. Some parents may prefer phone because of work schedule.
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I prefer to talk in person to counselor
6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I also got a chance to meet other parents • The counselor was always available but I would email to make appointment. If I emailed she usually returned my email right away. The information was very helpful. I would communicate often through email and show up in person when I could. I prefer to meet in person, but because of work I would email often.
7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I was able to meet people that worked there and get a tour of the school. • Yes. I would mostly call because I would be at work during the day. I would call a lot and she would usually return my call right away. • I prefer to talk over the phone although I would be able to talk to the counselor at ELAC meetings.

In several of the transcripts parents expressed the importance of communication with each other and the school, as well as the various forms of communication used to do so. Every parent commented on his/her communication with the ELL counselor. Parent #1 stated, “I was

able to share my feelings with the counselor and express my concerns,” which led to her follow up statement with regard to her preferred form of communication; “In person. I don’t like over the phone because they cannot see my expressions and really understand how I feel. I need people to see my face and expressions.” These responses indicate that ELL parents view the ELL counselor at BCHS as the primary form of communication between home and school. Indications of their preferred form of communication can be seen in several other parent statements, as they preferred in-person communication with the counselor but would also use email and phone calls as alternate means when at work. Parent #4 stated that she communicated fairly often with the ELL counselor because “I was concerned about my son behavior and academics. The counselor was always available and I was comfortable in communicating with counselor.” This response suggested that the parent felt a level of comfort in communicating with the ELL counselor.

Theme 3: Relationship building. Table 16 displays each parent’s key statements in regard to theme three, relationship building.

Table 16

Parent Statements Regarding Theme 3: Relationship Building

Parent	Related Statements
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I was able to share my feelings with the counselor and express my concerns. • Parents need to communicate with each other and support each other • Parents need to connect and form a support group to help each other.
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes, because parents have to feel comfortable in communicating with the counselor and trust. • Yes, I remember we used to ask parents to help with making phone calls with other parents about meetings and parents were able to connect and get to know other parents from making these phone calls.
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I also got a chance to meet other parents.
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No statements applied.
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No statements applied.
6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I also got a chance to meet other parents
7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I was able to meet people that worked there and get a tour of the school.

The parent comments about communication directly related to the theme of relationship building with each other and school personnel. This was illustrated in statements from parents #1, 2, 3, 6, and 7:

- “Parents need to communicate with each other and support each other”
- “I remember we used to ask parents to help with making phone calls with other parents about meetings and parents were able to connect and get to know other parents from making these phone calls”
- “I also got a chance to meet other parents”
- “To get information and talk with other parents”
- “I was able to meet people that worked there and get a tour of the school”

Theme 4: Student support. Table 17 displays each parent’s key statements in regard to theme four, student support.

Table 17

Parent Statements Regarding Theme 4: Student Support

Parent	Related Statements
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes, it is very important for parents to know how to help their students at home. The school should educate ELL parents more on what to do at home and support their student. Students learn from the parents and the parents have to set example. Parents need to check on the student often about things like homework and study. If a parent doesn’t show their child they have time they can take the wrong path and get in trouble and not do well in school. • Information about college is very important to help their student. • I also liked the meeting that explained about grades. It was helpful to understand what the grades stand for and how my son receives credit. I didn’t know how to read the grades and what they meant.

(continued)

Parent	Related Statements
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The benefit I see is the kids learn so much stuff and we can help them in their language not only in English but also their language to understand. • I believe we have to help the people; this is my priority to help them because they don't know the system or language. They do not know how the school operates and how they can help the kids so the kids can benefit. • Once I attended so many meetings I was able to be resourceful to other parents because I knew the information and I was glad to help other parents that did not know or speak the language. I knew this was going to help them in helping their kids.
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No statements applied.
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I would encourage my son to be involved. • Parents need to be involved to figure out ways to help our student.
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No statements applied.
6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information about the ELL program and how to go to college. I was really important for me to have this information, this way I could better help my student do well in school.
7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I needed to get information about the school so I could help my daughter or make sure she knew the information.

The theme of student support arose when parents were asked about the value and benefits of participating in the BCHS ELL parent engagement activities, but differed from basic information or support. The repeated use of such words as *school*, *grades*, and *college* made it evident that this theme had a focus of student support. Parent #1 stated, “I also liked the meeting that explained about grades. It was helpful to understand what the grades stand for and how my son receives credit. I didn't know how to read the grades and what they meant,” emphasizing the importance of understanding the school grading system to better understand her son's progress. Parent #6 also confirmed the importance of educational information, stating, “Information about the ELL program and how to go to college. I was really important for me to have this information, this way I could better help my student do well in school.” The ELL parents interviewed highlighted the ELL counselor and ELAC as their main sources of educational support.

Theme 5: Shared experiences. Table 18 displays each parent's key statements in regard to theme five, shared experiences.

Table 18

Parent Statements Regarding Theme 5: Shared Experiences

Parent	Related Statements
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I enjoyed the meetings because I learned from other parents and I speak to them about me experiences. • I like to share with the other parents, especially about education. • Yes, it is very important for parents to know how to help their students at home. The school should educate ELL parents more on what to do at home and support their student. Students learn from the parents and the parents have to set example. Parents need to check on the student often about things like homework and study. If a parent doesn't show their child they have time they can take the wrong path and get in trouble and not do well in school. • They can learn a lot from each other and our experiences. Parents need to connect and form a support group to help each other and share information.
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I believe we have to help the people; this is my priority to help them because they don't know the system or language. They do not know how the school operates and how they can help the kids so the kids can benefit. • Once I attended so many meetings I was able to be resourceful to other parents because I knew the information and I was glad to help other parents that did not know or speak the language. I knew this was going to help them in helping their kids.
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No statements applied.
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I figured out that it was very important as a parent to get involved in school activities. Our kids were here and sharing the facilities with other cultures in the school. At the same time it was very wonderful experience seeing the parents unite helping each other.
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was helpful to talk to other parents. There were some helpful parents that spoke Spanish and would translate.
6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No statements applied.
7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I encourage parents to always communicate with the school and attend meetings and activities.

Several parents mentioned that the support of other ELL parents and their ability to share sharing their own experiences with each other was beneficial in supporting their children. Parent #2 made two key points about this theme:

- “Yes, it is very important for parents to know how to help their students at home. The school should educate ELL parents more on what to do at home and how to best support their student. Students learn from the parents and the parents have to set example. Parents need to check on the student often about things like homework and

study. If a parent doesn't show their child they have time they can take the wrong path and get in trouble and not do well in school.”

- “Parents need to communicate with each other and support each other. They can learn a lot from each other and our experiences. Parents need to connect and form a support group to help each other and share information.”

These responses illustrate perceptions of the importance of the role that a parent plays in his/her child's life. This parent also shared that it was important to share this information with other parents to inform them of how to best support their own children. ELAC was the one implemented parent engagement practice that was mentioned by every parent interviewed as providing the opportunity for parents to share their experiences.

Theme 6: Involvement. Table 19 displays each parent's key statements in regard to theme six, involvement.

Table 19

Parent Statements Regarding Theme 6: Involvement

Parent	Related Statements
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I was upset when I didn't see a lot of parents at the meetings. I would like to see more parents attend and be involved.
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It has everything you need to know and how to get involved. • This cause to be more involved because they were comfortable with the counselor.
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No statements applied.
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I figured out that it was very important as a parent to get involved in school activities. • I wished more parents attended and were involved. • Included clubs and organizations for me to encourage my son to be involved.
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ways to encourage my daughter to be involved in school activities.
6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I would like to see more parents attend.
7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage parents to attend meetings and be involved in the school activities.

Theme 7: Culture. Table 20 displays each parent's key statements in regard to theme seven, culture.

Table 20

Parent Statements Regarding Theme 7: Culture

Parent	Related Statements
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I like to meet with other parents and the most important is how you feel as a parent when you come to a parent meeting and information from school. Parents must feel comfortable with the surroundings and accepted.
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> But there were issues with times because some parents work mornings and some late and we try to accommodate by having meeting in mornings and evenings. Parents were excited and were grateful that the counselor understood their situation and was comfortable in talking to the counselor. This caused to be more involved because they were comfortable with the counselor. A lot of parents didn't understand because they came maybe 1-2 years and don't understand the system.
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I prefer in person because of language difficulties
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yes and it was a wonderful experience throughout that time. Getting familiar with the school system and meeting parents from different cultures and getting to know each other as a community. Our kids were here and sharing the facilities with other cultures in the school. I noticed because of our culture there was a change in one parent ELAC meeting that changed the attendance. That change was parents were invited personally by the ELL Counselor by phone. My opinion it's culturally how you invite to meetings but we have to remember that we are not the only culture here. This school is diverse in many ways and the school should address all cultures. I just wish more parents would be involved. The key is communication and make connections with parents.
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No statements applied.
6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is really important for the school to continue to address parents of different cultures and encourage them to be involved. BCHS is very culturally diverse and all parents need to be involved in helping their child.
7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No statements applied.

The word *culture* was not mentioned in the interviewer's questions, but the theme of culture was mentioned intentionally and unintentionally in several parent responses and statements. Parent# 4 intentionally responded with the theme of culture in his closing comments that addressed the role culture plays in engaging parents:

I noticed because of our culture there was a change in one parent ELAC meeting that changed the attendance. That change was the ELL counselor invited parents personally by phone call. My opinion it's culturally how you invite to meetings but we have to remember that we are not the only cultural here. This school is diverse in many ways and

the school should address all cultures. I just wish more parents would be involved. The key is communication and make connections with parents.

Parent #4 summed up all the themes in one statement with a focus of culture. Other parents unintentionally mentioned culture when responding to communication-based questions. For example, parent #2 stated, “A lot of parents didn’t understand because they came maybe 1-2 years and don’t understand the system,” whereas parent #3 mentioned culture in regard to language; “I prefer in person because of language difficulties.”

Research Question Two Findings

The second guiding research question explored how, if at all, language fluency level and academic performance of BCHS ELL students have changed from academic years 2009 until 2012 since the implementation of four specific parent involvement practices: ELAC parent education meetings, ELL parent handbook, ELL parent orientation day, and ELL guidance counselor. In order to address research question two, descriptive data on all identified ELL student performance CELDT, CST math, and CST ELA scores were collected from the 2009-2012 academic school years during the implementation of the parent engagement activities and compared with the 2008 academic year student performance scores on the same test, 1 year prior to the implementation. After all ELL student scores were analyzed, the performance scores of the students of the seven parents interviewed were extracted and analyzed separately and compared before and after the implementation of ELL parent engagement interventions.

Table 21 displays CELDT performance scores of all identified ELL students at BCHS during the 2008-2012 school years. The number of students decreased in three out of the five proficiency levels from 2008, the year prior to implementation of parent involvement practices to 2012. Two of the proficiency levels had a year of increased number of students after 2008 but

decreased by 2012. The 58% decrease in the total of ELL students taking the CELDT from 2008 to 2012 indicates that more students were reclassified as fluent English proficiency and no longer identified as ELLs.

Table 21

All Identified BCHS ELL Students' CELDT Performance Scores 2008-2012

Proficiency Level	# of Students 2008-2009 CELDT	# of Students 2009-2010 CELDT	# of Students 2010-2011 CELDT	# of Students 2011-2012 CELDT
PL1: Beginning	12	10	7	9
PL2: Early Intermediate	19	16	12	5
PL3: Intermediate	59	39	60	34
PL4: Early Advanced	53	56	46	42
PL5: Advanced	21	18	8	6
Total Students	164	139	133	96

Table 22 displays math CST performance scores of all identified ELL students at BCHS during the 2008-2012 school years. Proficiency Levels 1-3 had an up and down pattern in the number of students from the 2008 school year before the implemented parent engagement practices to the 2012 school year, but the total number by 2012 was less than that in 2008. Proficiency levels 4 and 5 had a drop in the total number of students from 2008 to 2011, but by 2012 the number remained the same as the 2008 total number. With regard to the total number of ELL students taking the Math CST, the total number decreased 64% from 102 students in 2008 to 66 total students in 2012.

Table 22

All Identified BCHS ELL Students' CST Math Performance Scores 2008-2012

Proficiency Level	# of Students	# of Students	# of Students	# of Students
	2008-2009 CST Math	2009-2010 CST Math	2010-2011 CST Math	2011-2012 CST Math
PL1: Far Below Basic	13	13	7	10
PL2: Below Basic	41	42	21	23
PL3: Basic	34	23	30	19
PL4: Proficient	12	4	9	12
PL5: Advanced	2	1	0	2
Total Students	102	83	67	66

Table 23 displays ELA CST performance scores of all identified ELL students at BCHS during the 2008-2012 school years. Proficiency Levels 1-3 had an up and down pattern in the number of students from the 2008 school year before the implemented parent engagement practices to the 2012 school year, but the total number by 2012 was less than that in 2008. Proficiency levels 4 and 5 had a slight increase in the total number of students from 2008 to 2011, but by 2012 the number remained the same as the 2008 total number. Regarding the total number of ELL students taking the English CST, the total number decreased 53% from 139 students in 2008 to 77 total students in 2012.

Table 23

All Identified BCHS ELL Students' CST English Performance Scores 2008-2012

Proficiency Level	# of Students	# of Students	# of Students	# of Students
	2008-2009 CST English	2009-2010 CST English	2010-2011 CST English	2011-2012 CST English
PL1: Far Below Basic	42	26	21	9
PL2: Below Basic	49	27	26	34
PL3: Basic	44	37	24	26
PL4: Proficient	4	6	0	4
PL5: Advanced	0	1	0	0
Total Students	139	97	71	73

Table 24 displays interview participants' students' CELDT scores during the 2008-2012 school years. Four of the seven students increased one proficiency level and one student, student #5 increased, two proficiency levels from the 2008 to the 2012 school year. Two students remained at the same proficiency level from 2008 prior to the implementation of ELL parent engagement interventions to 2012 after the implementation of the practices at BCHS.

Table 24

Interview Participants' Students' CELDT Performance Scores 2008-2012

Student	2008-2009 CELDT Proficiency Level	2009-2010 CELDT Proficiency Level	2010-2011 CELDT Proficiency Level	2011-2012 CELDT Proficiency Level	+/- No Change
#1	3	2	2	3	No Change
#2	3	3	3	4	+ 1
#3	3	4	4	4	+ 1
#4	3	3	2	3	No Change
#5	2	3	3	4	+ 2
#6	4	4	5	5	+ 1
#7	2	3	3	3	+1

Table 25 displays interview participants' students' math CST scores during the 2008-2012 school years. Three students increased one proficiency level from 2008 to 2012. One student increased proficiency by two levels from 2008 to 2012. Two students dropped one or more levels, while one student remained at the same proficiency level of 3 throughout the school years from 2008 prior to implementation of parent engagement practices until 2012, 3 school years after implementation.

Table 25

Interview Participants' Students' CST Math Performance Scores 2008-2012

Student	2008-2009 CST Math Proficiency Level	2009-2010 CST Math Proficiency Level	2010-2011 CST Math Proficiency Level	2011-2012 CST Math Proficiency Level	+/- No Change
#1	1	1	2	NS	+1
#2	3	3	2	2	-1
#3	4	1	2	NS	-2
#4	1	1	3	3	+2
#5	3	3	3	3	No Change
#6	2	3	3	3	+1
#6	2	2	3	3	+1

Table 26 displays interview participants' students' English CST scores during the 2008-2012 school years. Every student increased proficiency level on the English CST. Six out of the seven students increased by one proficiency level since the implementation of the parent engagement practices at BCHS. One student increased by two proficiency levels after the implementation of the parent engagement practices.

Table 26

Interview Participants' Students' CST English Performance Scores 2008-2012

Student	2008-2009 CST English Proficiency Level	2009-2010 CST English Proficiency Level	2010-2011 CST English Proficiency Level	2011-2012 CST English Proficiency Level	+/- No Change
#1	1	2	2	3	+2
#2	2	3	3	3	+1
#3	2	1	3	3	+1
#4	1	2	2	2	+1
#5	2	2	3	3	+1
#6	3	3	3	4	+1
#7	2	3	3	3	+1

Summary of Key Findings

The first research question dealt with parent's perceptions of their experiences and benefits, if any, of participating in four specific BCHS ELL parent involvement practices. The results of the study indicate that parent experiences with each of the parent engagement practices were similar in that they were perceived to be helpful and beneficial to the parents as well as in supporting their students. Parent interview responses and statements regarding the four implemented ELL parent engagement practices revealed seven key themes: information, communication, relationship building, student support, shared experiences, involvement, and culture. The seven parents interviewed shared no indications that any of the four parent engagement practices at BCHS was not helpful or beneficial in supporting their students' learning.

ELAC educational meetings and the ELL counselor were mentioned more frequently by parents than the other implemented practices, indicating that these two practices were viewed by these parents as most valuable and beneficial to ELL parents in supporting their students' learning. ELAC educational meetings were mentioned in over six of the seven emerging themes, while noticeably being the only practice that corresponded to the *shared experience* theme. The ELL counselor also found commonly among five of the seven themes, only excluding the *shared experience* and *culture* theme. The implementation of the ELL parent handbook was evidently beneficial in providing information, means of communication, student support, and involvement, but noticeably excluded means to the more personable experiences of building relationships, share experiences, and culture themes. The ELL parent orientation day was mentioned by a smaller number of parents that participated and was connected to fewer themes than the other

implemented practices, only crossing over three of the seven themes (mainly informational based themes).

The results for research question two were analyzed on two different levels, the first being the performance scores of all identified ELL students at BCHS during the 2008-2012 school years. In 2008, 164 students were classified as ELLs. By the 2012 school year that total decreased by 58% to 96 total students classified as ELLs and taking the CELDT test. The CST math and ELA performance scores were inconsistent over the years since implementation, not showing an obvious trend with regard to performance level. One trend that did indicate consistency with the CELDT performance scores was that the total number of identified ELL students taking the CST math and ELA tests decreased year by year since the implementation of the parent engagement practices. The total number of identified ELL students taking the math CST decreased 64% from 102 in 2008 to 66 in 2012. A similar trend reflected in the number of ELL students taking the ELA CST, which decreased 53% from 139 in 2008 to 73 in 2012.

When examining the performance scores of the seven parents' students that participated in the interviews, the data gave a clearer picture of the results addressing research question two:

- Five out of the seven students increased one or more proficiency levels on the CELDT. The remaining two students stayed at the same proficiency level prior to and after the implementation of the practices.
- Four of the seven students increased one or more levels on the math CST. Two students dropped one to two levels. One student remained the same before and after the implementation of the parent engagement practices.
- All seven students increased proficiency levels by one or more levels on the ELA CST.

- In comparison to the total ELL student population at BCHS—as the total population number of identified ELL students decreased over the implementation years, implicating more students being reclassified as English fluent—none of the seven parent interview participants' students' was reclassified during the implementation of the parent engagement practices.

The next chapter will contain a discussion of the results, implications of this study, and ideas for further research based on the results found of this study.

Chapter 5: Discussion of Findings, Conclusions, and Recommendations

ELLs are the fastest growing student population in U.S. schools, estimated to represent one-fourth of the total K-12 school population in the U.S. by the year 2030 (Arias & Morillo-Campbell, 2008). Successfully teaching ELLs requires specialized knowledge, skills, and disposition on the part of the educators and effective communication and partnerships with parents of ELLs in order to share responsibility for student achievement. A shift occurred across the nation from the 1970s, starting with cultural awareness, moving to an emphasis cultural sensitivity and competence in the 1980s. This shift emphasized the need for schools to recognize diversity and implement a set of values, principles, attitudes, policies, and structures that enable people to work effectively in cross-cultural settings (Petty, 2010) in order for schools to become culturally responsive.

Besides the variables of cultural differences and barriers, the organizational structure of secondary schools deters effective home-school interactions and communication (Sanders et al., 1999). With students having several teachers with a large number of students and limited time, opportunities diminish for interaction with families and home-school partnerships.

Much is known about the positive impact of parent involvement on a child's education and the connection between parent involvement and positive educational outcomes, but it is of concern as to why families of ELLs are less likely to be involved in their children's education than English-only parents. Current educational reforms and policies stress the importance of schools evaluating current practices and programs then determining the key components that constitute effective outreach and parental involvement for ELL families.

The purpose of this study was to examine home-school partnerships practices between the high school community and ELL parents at BCHS. This mixed methods study explored the

perceptions of ELL parents at BCHS with respect to the following four specific parent engagement practice that were implemented at BCHS during 2009-2012 in efforts to build home-school partnerships in support of student learning: (a) the implementation of a revised ELAC format, (b) the development of an ELL Parent Handbook available in Spanish and English, (c) the implementation of a Parent Orientation Day designed specifically for ELL parents, and (d) having a designated ELL guidance counselor. The following research questions guided this study:

- How do ELL parents who participated in one or more of the parent involvement practices implemented at BCHS during 2009-2012 describe their experiences and benefits, if any, in supporting their students' learning relative to the following;
 1. ELAC Parent education meetings?
 2. ELL Parent Handbook?
 3. ELL Parent Orientation Day?
 4. ELL Guidance Counselor?
- How, if at all, have language fluency and academic performance of BCHS ELL students changed from 2009 until 2012 since the implementation of four specific parent involvement practices: ELAC Parent education meetings, ELL Parent Handbook, ELL Parent Orientation Day, and ELL Guidance counselor?

Once these questions are answered, schools and parents can work together to bridge the gap between home and school among ELL families at the high school level. Understanding the parents' perceptions is the first step for schools in achieving a relationship with ELL parents that can truly benefit ELL students' academic success.

To achieve the purpose of this study, a convergent parallel mixed methods design was used. Qualitative semi-structured interviews were conducted and quantitative student academic and language fluency student outcomes on math/ELA CSTs and CELDT measures were compared for the purpose of looking for contradictions or relationships between the two data sets to determine what changes, if any, occurred over time.

This chapter presents a summary of the study in five sections. The first section will discuss the key findings according to the guiding research questions. The second sections will go beyond the key findings and discuss evidence-based conclusions. Recommendations for policy and practice as a result of this study will be presented in section three. Section four will consist of recommendations for further research, and finally section five will present final thoughts of the study's key points and personal reflections of the researcher.

Discussion of Key Findings

Research question one. This section is organized by key findings for each of the four parent involvement practices implemented at BCHS during 2009-2012: (a) ELAC parent education meetings, (b) ELL parent handbook, (c) ELL parent orientation day, and (d) ELL guidance counselor. The discussion relative to the seven emerging themes will be integrated within the findings for each practice. Additionally, key findings from parent closing comments will be discussed with emerging themes.

ELAC parent education meetings. Every public K-12 school in the state of California with 21 or more identified ELL students is required by state and federal laws to form an ELAC. The purpose of school site ELACs is to advise school administrators and staff on programs and services for ELLs and how to best involve ELL parents. In reviewing the literature, no previous research studies could be found on the effectiveness or impact of ELAC on parent involvement,

home-school partnerships, or ELL student learning. The findings of this study indicated that all parents interviewed perceived that ELAC educational meetings at BCHS during the 2009-2012 school years were helpful and beneficial in supporting their students' learning.

As a result of the parent responses to questions regarding ELAC parent educational meetings, six of the seven themes emerged, suggesting that parents viewed this practice as means to communicate, gather information, acquire means to support their students, build relationships with other ELL parents through shared experiences, discover ways to be involved, and emphasize the importance of involvement. The structure and purpose of ELAC at BCHS demonstrates the concept described by Arias and Morillo-Campbell (2008) of combining such traditional models of parent involvement as Epstein's (1995) six types of involvement with the non-traditional models that incorporate the cultural strengths of the family. Additionally, ELAC was the only practice referred to in the *shared experience* theme.

Every interview participant expressed that the parent engagement practices implemented were valuable, beneficial, and effective, and that BCHS must continue to implement to engage and support ELL parents and their students via these means. Participant comments imply that they were appreciative and happy with the efforts of the school in holding ELAC educational meetings.

ELL parent handbook. In researching parent involvement, no prior research or studies were found on the effectiveness or impact of a parent handbook on parent involvement or home-school partnerships. It was discovered that many school district do utilize parent handbooks as means of providing information and communicating with parents, but very few districts utilize a handbook that is specific to ELL parents. The findings of this study unexpectedly supported the reason why many districts implement a parent handbook. Parent responses to interview questions

regarding the ELL parent handbook implemented at BCHS were only reflected in four of the seven emerging themes. Six of the seven parents interviewed made statements that referred to the ELL parent handbook. Many of the parent statements expressed a similar sentiment that the handbook was resourceful in providing a hard copy of information that they could refer to easily when questions arose. They also noted that the information was parent friendly, utilizing terms and explanations that were easy to follow. Many of the parents interviewed also stated that the phone directory page in the handbook was helpful in directing further communication to address questions and concerns.

The parents interviewed viewed the ELL parent handbook as a resourceful tool. Based on parent statements, the handbook provided the convenience of having information readily available at home. The primary reason this practice was well received by parents was for information only. The reason for this practice not occurring in other themes could be attributed to it being viewed by parents only as a one-way communication tool. The information provided in the handbook is in hard copy format and does not provide an opportunity to engage in two-way communication, although it does encourage two-way communication, which many parents commented on regarding the phone directory page in the handbook. Epstein (2009) stresses two-way communication when building partnerships so that each party is knowledgeable of the each other's intent and expectations.

ELL parent orientation day. In reviewing the literature, only one study was found on the effect or impact of parent orientations on parent involvement or home-school partnerships. Although many K-12 schools, colleges, universities, and trade schools utilize parent orientations as means of communicating and forming relationships with parents, little research has been conducted on their effectiveness in terms of enhancing parent involvement. The ELL parent

orientation day at BCHS was referred to by only three of the seven parents interviewed, all of whom were parents of ninth graders. Their responses to questions regarding the ELL parent orientation day emerged in the themes of *information*, *student support*, and *involvement*. These results are consistent with the results of the one study at Hampstead Middle School in Baltimore. Epstein and Herrick (1991) examined parent reactions to orientation days and found that the practice fulfilled its purpose in providing valuable information at a critical time of transition for parents and students new to the school. Parent responses reflected that they appreciated the opportunity to ease their anxiety of being at a new school, becoming familiar with facilities, staff, and policies. These responses were similar to the sentiments expressed by ELL parents interviewed in this study. One participant stated, “I was able to meet people that worked there and get a tour of the school,” and another said, “It was my daughter’s ninth grade year and I knew that my daughter was going to need assistance so I wanted to attend to be more helpful to her.”

One surprising outcome or lack thereof was that the ELL orientation day was not mentioned in the *relationship building* theme. The limited research on parent orientation days did indicate that one of the main intentions of parent orientation days was to form relationships with parents. Although this may be true and maybe even did occur during BCHS’s parent orientation day, it was evident that it did not have a significant enough impact on relationship building for parents at BCHS, or at least those interviewed in this study.

ELL guidance counselor. With ELLs comprising approximately 25% of California’s school age population (California Department of Education, 2010), school counselors play a key role in bridging the gap between not only home and school but also between American culture and other cultures of ELL students (Goh et al., 2007). In this study every parent expressed

positive comments regarding their experience with the ELL counselor and was grateful for the information and educational support the ELL counselor provided. No parent responses to questions regarding the ELL counselor emerged in the *culture* and *shared experience* themes. This may be a result of parents not connecting with the ELL counselor on a personal level where personal experiences and cultural values would be shared. Although participants might not have had a sense of comfort to share personal experiences, most parents expressed that they were very comfortable speaking with the counselor about their children's academic issues. For school counselors to work effectively with a diverse population, counselors must demonstrate cultural competency of such factors as migration, ethnicity, discrimination, and language (Holcomb-McCoy, 2007). A possible lack of cultural competency on behalf of the BCHS ELL counselor would present a barrier between the counselor and the parent in shared experiences and culture themes.

Closing comments. At the closing of the interviews, parent participants were given the opportunity to make any general or last comments regarding the implementation of the ELL parent engagement practices. The closing comments were the only responses that emerged in all seven themes, which may be due to the freedom to express themselves or the open questions that allowed them to comment on any topic regarding the implementation. It was surprising to hear the consistent comments of the disappointment of not seeing more ELL parents involved in the interventions. Many of these comments followed with possible explanations of conflicting work schedules and child care issues.

Research question two. In reviewing the student performance scores of all BCHS identified ELL students during 2008-2012, it was difficult to identify any trends or key factors in change of performance levels on the CELDT, CST math, and CST ELA tests. This was mainly

due to the inability to look at students individually. Reviewing a large number of students' scores year by year only provided a general overview and presented possible explanations, but no clear evidence. One trend that was evident and clearly presented in the data was the decrease in the total number of identified ELL students taking the performance test every year. The data collected allowed for a comparison of the total number of students taking the test prior to implementation to the 3 years that the parent engagement practices were implemented at BCHS. Every year after the implementation of practices the total number of identified ELL students taking the performance test was lower than the number of students in 2008 prior to implementation, and by the 2011-2012, school year the number of students was significantly less than that of 2008, the year before implementation. These unexpected results emerged while exploring student performance levels trends, but revealed another possible outcome of the impact of ELL parent involvement on ELL student reclassification to fluent English proficiency.

The student performance scores of the seven parents that participated in the interview process were analyzed and interpreted individually and by test. The performance scores for CELDT and ELA CST reflected either an increase of at least one performance level or stayed at the same performance level pre and post implementation of the parent engagement practices. The Math CST showed some inconsistencies, with four students increasing at least one proficiency level, two decreasing by at least one proficiency level, and one staying at the same level pre and post implementation of parent engagement practices. The ELA CST and CELDT scores in this study showed steady improvement of performance level or remained the same from 2008-2012, but showed no decrease in levels. This could be due in part to the primary English language focus of the ELL program, support, and parent engagement practices at BCHS. Knowing that all of these students' parents also participated in one or more of the parent engagement practices

implemented at BSHC could also explain the trends of increased language proficiency, especially in reference to the CELDT and ELA CST. The CELDT was commonly a focus and educational piece at ELAC meetings, during ELL parent orientation days, and in most printed informational handouts, including the ELL parent handbook. These findings would confirm the majority of the research on parent involvement that parent involvement does have a positive impact on a child's education and that there is a connection between the two.

The main goal of all of these practices and programs is to improve ELL students' language proficiency and to be successful academically. The sustained focus on improving English skills among ELL students could be explain the increased levels of proficiency at a higher rate on the CELDT and ELA CST than on the math CST.

Conclusions

A total of seven conclusions resulted from an analysis of the findings related to data collected for this research study. Six conclusions resulted from the findings for research question one and one conclusion resulted from the findings for research question two.

Conclusion one. Existing practices for engaging ELL parents at the high school level are valuable; however, new means to benefit a greater number of ELL parents need to be explored. Parents in this study found the engagement practices implemented at BCHS to be beneficial and valuable, but noticeably identified that fewer parents than expected were present or involved in these practices. The lack of participation may be due to such barriers as work schedules and child care, so the exploration of such innovations as the use of technology would help get valuable information and resources to parents that are unable to get to the site for such parent activities as ELAC or parent orientation day. Olmstead (2013) conducted a study on the use of technology in parent involvement, concluding that parents placed high value on proactive involvement, which

included acquiring information and communication that did not require them to be physically at their children's school site. For parents to continue to support their children's academic achievement and:

as access to technology continues to expand, it will be imperative that teachers and administrators stay current with the tools that families are using to communicate...

Keeping parents involved in their children's schooling is just as much a responsibility of the school as it is of the parent. (p. 28)

Additionally, parents may be intimidated by the school location itself. An unwelcoming school environment often discourages ELL parents from being involved (Arias & Morillo-Campbell, 2008). Exploration of other means to benefit a greater number of ELL parents could also include alternate sites and locations that are welcoming for parent engagement practices and or activities.

Conclusion two. ELL parent engagement practices must provide an opportunity for two-way communication, whether it is between home and school or between ELL parents themselves. This study found the practices at BCHS most referenced by ELL parents as being beneficial and valuable were the ELAC parent educational meetings and the ELL guidance counselor. Both practices allowed for many opportunities for two-way communication, unlike the ELL parent handbook and orientation day, which were primarily informational based. The importance of two-way communication is discussed in both Epstein's (1995) traditional parent involvement model and Arias and Morillo-Campbell's (2008) non-traditional parent involvement model. In the traditional model, two-way communication is described as communicating with families about school programs and student progress, which is noted as being highly important, but the non-traditional model also incorporates cultural strengths of the family within the school

community. Schools that provide opportunities for ELL parents to have conversations with other ELL parents and the school regarding their children's education empower parents and validate the cultural strength of the family.

Conclusion three. Parent participation in these specially designed engagement practices prompted them to communicate with their children about their learning, areas of success, and areas for growth. Zarate (2007) study examined Latino parent involvement in education. College bound high school Latino students that participated in this study placed emphasis on parental involvement that included communication with their parents that was academic and non academic. These students described valuable parental involvement as:

- Telling contrasting stories of examples of failure and success
- Asking questions about student's day
- Giving general encouragement
- Establishing trust with the student
- Encouraging siblings to look out for each other
- Providing discipline
- Monitoring attendance
- Offering incentives/disincentives for proper behavior (p. 14).

ELL parents talking with their student is a key component of the non-traditional parent involvement model that contributes to student success (Arias & Morillo-Campbell, 2008).

Conclusion four. Parent engagement practices need to provide opportunities for parents to share their experiences with one another and the school. These opportunities establish a sense of collaboration between parents and the school, sharing information and experiences that are viewed valuable in sharing with others in support of student learning. Epstein (1995) stated that

collaboration among parents and with the school is key to building communities with family-like settings where families are supportive of other families. Parents that participated in this study commonly stated that they “love to help other parents” and wanted to share their stories with other ELL parents to help them support their children. Providing parents opportunities to share their experiences builds a sense of community and parents working together.

Conclusion five. The one conclusion that resulted from an analysis of the findings related to data collected for research question two was that parent participation in implemented parent engagement practices at BCHS may have contributed to greater student success. There was an overall trend at BCHS of increased numbers of reclassified rates of ELL students during the time of the implemented practices. However, further study and data analysis would need to be undertaken with a larger sample of participants to produce more definite conclusions. Although this study’s conclusion that participation in parent engagement practices may have contributed to student success, parent participation in such programs as PIQE have reported its effectiveness in promoting parent participation in support of student learning. Arias and Morillo-Campbell (2008) stated, “Recent findings revealed that the children of Latino parents who graduated from the PIQE achieved a 93% high school graduation rate and 79.2% student enrollment in a college or a four-year university” (p. 14).

Conclusion six. School counseling programs are collaborative efforts benefiting students, parents, teachers, administrators and the overall community (American School Counselor Association [ASCA], n.d.) School counselors should be a key part of students’ daily educational experience, and be partners in student achievement. With the various challenges that many ELL students and families may be challenged with, school counselors are in unique positions to be a liaison between home and school. School counselors have a responsibility to themselves and to

their diverse clientele to have the ability to meet their needs of all their students and families. According to Lee (2001), culturally responsive counselors should be able to help students from a variety of racial/ethnic backgrounds in setting educational, career, and personal goals. The ELL guidance counselor in this study emerged in five of the seven themes and was frequently mentioned by parent interview participants in this study as main sources of information, communication, and support in their children's education. Having a designated ELL guidance counselor to service the needs of ELL students and families was proven to be an effective parent engagement practice implemented at BCHS.

Conclusion seven. The cultural disconnect between home and school can often lead to poor discipline and academic outcomes for ethnic minorities (Bazron et al., 2005). Unfortunately, the majority of U.S. school culture is built upon middle class European values and many teachers and school personnel are unfamiliar with their students' diverse backgrounds and cultural differences. Parent participant responses in this study acknowledge and valued the parent engagement practices that addressed the needs of ELL students and families by incorporating both traditional and non-traditional approaches of valuing cultural differences, diversity, and the strength of the home culture. To promote the success of all students, schools must embrace the strengths of a diverse student population and be culturally responsive in their practices and policies. In committing to cultural competency, an organization ensures that this commitment can be seen throughout all levels of the hierarchy, including the organization's philosophy, mission statement, policy, structures, procedures, and practices (NCCREST, 2008). Such culturally responsive practices should include but not be limited to parent outreach, communication, information, and counseling. The key to being successfully culturally responsive

depends greatly on being knowledgeable of one's students' families' needs. When this is achieved, the more powerful are the outcomes of parent engagement and student success.

Recommendations for Policy and Practice

The purpose of this study was to examine home-school partnerships between the high school community and ELL parents at one Southern California high school. The study's findings can be used to inform parent engagement practices, school policies, and procedures to improve the quality and effectiveness of parent engagement practices at the high school level. Key findings and conclusions from the study support the following recommendations.

Recommendation one. It is recommended that BCHS explore means of benefiting a greater number of ELL parents, including the use of technology. Many of the participating ELL parents in this study noted the significant absence of ELL parents that could benefit from the engagement practices, but noted that the conflict of work schedules and childcare may be a barrier to participation. Exploring other means, specifically the use of technology that does not require parents to be physically at the school site, could result in a larger number of parents benefiting from these practices. Technology resources such as YouTube videos, webcasts, emails, blogs, etc. could be used to engage and provide information to ELL parents.

Recommendation two. Since BCHS has already implemented four specific ELL parent involvement practices, it is highly recommended that they review the results of this study and determine which practices should and could still be implemented and what, if any, changes needs to implemented to continue to increase ELL parent involvement. Epstein (2009) discussed three questions that every high school should consider when attempting to strengthen home-school partnerships:

1. What do school and family partnerships look like in high school?

2. How do school-family connections influence high school students' success?
3. When high schools reach out to families, how do families respond? (p. 211)

These questions can help guide the conversation about and evaluation of current practices and quality of implementation. It is imperative to continue the evaluation process year after year, reviewing the quality of the program plans, activities, and results. This process will help such ELL parent engagement programs and practices be sustainable.

To conduct successful evaluations of the ELL parent involvement practices at BCHS and obtain the most accurate and effective results from the evaluation, standard practices and policies for program evaluations needs to be designed and implemented immediately. Research has shown that parent involvement is important for student success and when schools implement well-planned programs, all families can be involved in their students' education, regardless of race, ethnicity, socioeconomic, educational, or linguistic background (Epstein, 2009). It is highly recommended that BCHS establish an evaluation team to review the implemented practices and acquire results that represent the benefits for the school, parents, and students. Results from this study should be used to inform the evaluation practice, in particular the importance of collecting, analyzing, and utilizing both qualitative and quantitative data to inform ELL parent involvement practices to be more structured and focus on the needs of their ELL parent population.

Recommendation three. It is recommended that BCHS increase their accountability for the implementation of parent engagement practices by implementing policies that include reasonable measurement of ELL parent involvement and establishing clear goals and objectives for increasing ELL parent involvement (Zarate, 2007). BCHS should continue to solicit feedback and data from ELL parents on the effectiveness of the implemented parent engagement practices. Ongoing evaluations and plan revisions are critical to the sustainability of parent engagement

practices. Additionally, it is recommended that a very specific longitudinal analysis be conducted to follow and assess the progress and performance of students whose parents are participating in these practices and to compare the results to those whose parents are not participating.

Recommendations for Further Research

Findings from this study provided some insight into the experiences and benefits of ELL parent engagement practices at the high school level. Recommendations for further study were determined based on interpretations of the key findings.

1. Conduct a replica or similar study with different groups of parents at the same school site to compare and contrast the various parent engagement practices utilized among different sub-groups.
2. Add to the body of research by studying a model of combined traditional and non-traditional practices.
3. Add to the body of research by exploring other options of parent involvement practices at the high school level.
4. Conduct a similar study using longitudinal analysis in which performance scores can be studied over a period of time to be compared accurately.

Final Thoughts

As noted in Chapter 1, Arias and Morillo-Campbell (2008) stated “The fastest growing segment of the school-age population has been English Language Learners” (p. 3). It is estimated that by the year 2030 one-fourth of all k-12 school populations will be ELLs (Gibson, 2002). As schools in the United States are becoming more diverse, it is imperative that schools focus on building effective partnerships with ELL parents in order to share in the responsibility for student achievement. During the 2009-2012 school years, BCHS implemented specifically designed ELL

parent engagement practices to engage parents in their students' learning. Prior to this study, there was no follow up or collection of data after the implementation of the four specific parent engagement practices. Therefore, the opportunity and need emerged to explore the experiences and benefits, if any, of these specially designed ELL parent engagement practices at BCHS, as well as the exploration of possible student outcomes of the parent involvement program.

The benefits of parent involvement and its connection with higher student achievement, lower dropout rates, and a more positive attitude towards school (Henderson & Mapp, 2002) has been well documented, as noted in Chapter 2 of this study. Although prior research highlights this positive connection between home and school, schools struggle to implement not only effective parent engagement practices but also parent engagement practices that involve minority and families who speak limited English. Literature suggests that schools cannot take the *one size fits all* approach in developing parent involvement practices. Implementing practices through this approach can in fact produce negative home-school partnerships with an increased gap between differences of values and beliefs between home and school. In the review of literature, only one model was found that addressed the needs of ELL families. Arias and Morillo-Campbell (2008) described a model of incorporating traditional practices of Epstein's (1995) six types of parent involvement with a non-traditional model of parent engagement practices that incorporate parent empowerment through cultural and family strengths. This study enhances these literature findings and supports exploring new means of parent engagement practices specially designed for ELL families.

With the implementation of common core, current reforms and 21st century education will require increased home-school partnerships in support of student learning, especially within such sub-groups as ELLs. Now that this study's findings have shown that ELL parents value and

benefit greatly from various forms of two-way communication engagement practices as well as combining traditional and non-traditional parent engagement practices, schools must take this knowledge into account and incorporate models that value cultural difference and the strength of the family. As a current high school principal, I am personally experiencing the shift of instructional practices in the classroom and the increased need of parents to be well informed and involved to support their children's learning.

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APPENDIX A

Invitation to Participate-Parent Letter

August 1, 2014

Dear Parent:

My name is Lisa Cooper. I was your student's guidance counselor at Bay City High School during 2009-2012. I am currently a doctoral student at Pepperdine University and in the process of conducting my research study to complete my degree requirements. I would like to invite you to participate in my study entitled "Building Home-School partnerships with parents of English Language Parents at the High school Level." The professor supervising my work is Dr. Linda Purrington. My study is designed to investigate parent involvement practices at Bay City High School that were implemented to support English Language Learner (ELL) students and families. Specifically, I will be investigating practices that were implemented at BCHS during 2009-2012 when your student attended. The parent involvement practices examined will include ELAC meetings, ELL Parent Orientation day, ELL Parent handbook, and ELL Guidance Counselor. If you attended or participated in one or more of these practices you will be the perfect participant for this study. The outcomes of this research will better assist Bay City High School and other schools alike in evaluating their current parent involvement practices, future policies and procedures in supporting ELL students and families.

It is important to have parents like yourself that had students attend BCHS during the time the parent involvement practices were implemented to participate to validate the research. Participation in the study will only require you answering a series of questions during a one-to-one interview with myself that will take no longer than 45 minutes. We can conduct this interview in person at your convenience or over the phone. Spanish translation will be available upon request. Your participation is completely voluntary and you may discontinue your participation from the study at any time.

If you interested in participating or have further questions please feel free to contact me at [REDACTED] or [REDACTED]. You may also receive a phone call from me to just check to see if you received the letter and answer any questions. If you don't have any questions at the time and would like to participate, please contact me within the next week to set up a convenient interview time. I look forward speaking with soon.

Sincerely,

Lisa Cooper,
Doctoral Student
Pepperdine University

August 1, 2014

Estimado Padre:

Mi nombre es Lisa Cooper. Yo fui la consejera de guianza de su estudiante en Bay City High School durante 2009-2012. Actualmente soy una estudiante de doctorado en la Universidad Pepperdine y estoy en el proceso de conducir mi investigación de estudio para completar mis requisitos para mi título. Me gustaría invítale a participar en mi estudio titulado "La creación de asociaciones hogar-escuela con los padres de habla Inglés, padres a nivel de escuela secundaria." La profesora supervisando mi trabajo es la Dra. Linda Purrington. Mi estudio es examinar las prácticas de la participación de padres en Bay City High School que fueron implementadas para apoyar a estudiantes y familias que son Aprendices del Idioma Ingles (ELL). Específicamente, estaré investigando prácticas que fueron implementadas en Bay City High School durante 2009-2012 cuando su estudiante atendió. Las prácticas examinadas de la participación de padres incluirán juntas de ELAC, Día de Orientación de padres de ELL, el manual para padres de ELL y el consejero de guianza de ELL. Si usted atendió o participo en una o más de estas prácticas, usted será el participante perfecto para este estudio. Los resultados de esta investigación asistirán mejor a Bay City High School y otras escuelas para evaluar sus prácticas actuales para la participación de padres, pólizas futuras y procedimientos apoyando estudiantes de ELL y familias.

Es importante contar con padres como usted que tuvieron estudiantes que asistieron BCHS durante el tiempo que se implementaron las prácticas de participación de padres a participar para validar la investigación. La participación en el estudio, sólo será necesario que conteste una serie de preguntas durante una entrevista conmigo que no se llevará más de 45 minutos. Podemos realizar esta entrevista en persona con usted o por teléfono. Traducción al español estará disponible a petición. Su participación es completamente voluntaria y usted puede terminar su participación en el estudio en cualquier momento.

Si está interesado/a en participar o tiene más preguntas siéntase libre de llamarme a [REDACTED] o escribir a [REDACTED]. También puede recibir una llamada de mía para ver si recibió la carta y contestar cualquier pregunta. Si no tiene preguntas y le gustaría participar, favor de contactarme lo más pronto posible para establecer un tiempo conveniente para la entrevista. Espero hablar con usted pronto.

Sinceramente,

Lisa Cooper
Estudiante Doctorado
Universidad Pepperdine

APPENDIX B

Informed Consent to Participate in Research Study

October 1, 2014

Dear Participant,

My name is Lisa Cooper, and I am currently a doctoral student at Pepperdine University and in the process of conducting my research study to complete my degree requirements. I would like to invite you to participate in my study entitled “Building Home-School partnerships with parents of English Language Parents at the High school Level.” The professor supervising my work is Dr. Linda Purrington, Dissertation Committee Chair. My study is designed to investigate parent involvement practices at Bay City High School that were implemented to support English Language Learner (ELL) students and families. Specifically, I will be investigating practices that were implemented at BCHS during 2009-2012 when your student attended. The parent involvement practices examined will include ELAC meetings, ELL Parent Orientation day, ELL Parent handbook, and ELL Guidance Counselor. If you attended or participated in one or more of these practices you will be the perfect participant for this study. Please understand that your participation in my study is strictly voluntary. The following is a description of what your study participation entails, the terms for participating in the study, and a discussion of your rights as a study participant. Please read this information carefully before deciding whether or not you wish to participate.

If you should decide to participate in the study, you will be asked to participate in a one-on-one interview with myself. During the interview, you will be asked to answer a series of interview questions. The entire process should take no longer than 45 minutes. This may be done in- person or by phone. I will tape record the interview for accuracy, but at any point, you may ask me to turn off the tape recorder or refuse to answer a question. After the tape has been transcribed, the tape will be erased and your identity will remain confidential. Through this data I hope to learn about the experiences and benefits, if any, of ELL parent involvement practices at the high school level.

Although minimal, there are potential risks that you should consider before deciding to participate in this study. The only foreseeable risks associated with participation in this study are emotional discomfort, boredom, and fatigue. In the event you do experience emotional discomfort, boredom, or fatigue at any point during the interview, you will be provided a break. Furthermore, at any point you can request for the recording device to be turned off, refuse to answer any question you choose not to answer, or to end the interview. Participation is strictly voluntary. Your child will not be penalized based on your decision to participate or not participate.

The potential benefit to you for participating in the study is the opportunity to express your concerns and tell your story of your experiences with the parent engagement practices of BCHS in regards to ELL parents and families. The outcomes of this research will better assist Bay City High School and other schools alike in evaluating their current parent involvement practices, future policies and procedures in supporting ELL students and families.

If you should decide to participate and find you are not interested in completing the interview in it's entirely, you have the right to discontinue at any point without being questioned about your decision. You also do not have to answer any of the questions during the interview that you prefer not to answer--just inform me that you do not wish to answer.

The purpose of this research is to learn what parent involvement strategies at the high school level promote involvement among English Language Learner parents. The information generated may be used for academic research or publication. Should I decide to do so as I pursue my studies, I will contact you again and obtain your permission to do so. For the moment, this is only for training purposes. All information obtained will be treated confidentially. The data will be kept in a secure manner for at least five years at which time the data will be destroyed.

If you have any questions regarding the information that I have provided above, please do not hesitate to contact me at the address and phone number provided below. If you have further questions or do not feel I have adequately addressed your concerns, please contact Dr. Linda Purrington, Dissertation Chair, at [REDACTED] or [REDACTED]. If you have questions about your rights as a research participant, contact Dr. Thema Bryant-Davis, Chairperson of Pepperdine University Graduate, and Professional Schools IRB, at [REDACTED] or [REDACTED].

By signing below and returning it to me, you are acknowledging that you have read and understand what your study participation entails, and are consenting to participate in the study.

Sincerely,

Lisa Cooper, M.S.
 Doctoral Student,
 Pepperdine University
 [REDACTED]

I have explained and defined in detail the research procedure in which the subject has consented to participate. Having explained this and answered any questions, I am cosigning this form and accepting this person's consent.

 Principal Investigator

 Date

I understand to my satisfaction the information of this consent form. All of my questions have been answered to my satisfaction. I have received a copy of this informed consent form which I have read and understand. I hereby consent to participate in the research described above.

 Printed name of participant

 Signature of Participant

 Date

Consentimiento informativo para participar en el estudio de investigación

Estimado Participante,

Mi nombre es Lisa Cooper. Yo fui la consejera de guianza de su estudiante en Bay City High School durante 2009-2012. Actualmente soy una estudiante de doctorado en la Universidad Pepperdine y estoy en el proceso de conducir mi investigación de estudio para completar mis requisitos para mi título. Me gustaría invitalte a participar en mi estudio titulado “La creación de asociaciones hogar-escuela con los padres de habla Inglés, padres a nivel de escuela superior.” La profesora supervisando mi trabajo es la Dra. Linda Purrington, presidenta del comité de disertación. Mi estudio es examinar las prácticas de la participación de padres en Bay City High School que fueron implementadas para apoyar a estudiantes y familias que son Aprendices del Idioma Inglés (ELL). Específicamente, estaré investigando prácticas que fueron implementadas en Bay City High School durante 2009-2012 cuando su estudiante atendió. Las prácticas examinadas de la participación de padres incluirán juntas de ELAC, Día de Orientación de padres de ELL, el manual para padres de ELL y el consejero de guianza de ELL. Si usted atendió o participo en una o más de estas prácticas, usted será el participante perfecto para este estudio. Por favor, comprenda que su participación en mi estudio es estrictamente voluntaria. La siguiente es una descripción de lo que implica su participación en el estudio, las condiciones para participar en el estudio, y una discusión sobre sus derechos como participante en el estudio. Por favor, lea atentamente esta información antes de decidir si desea o no participar.

Si usted decide participar en el estudio, se le pide que participe en una entrevista uno-a-uno conmigo. Durante la entrevista, se le pedirá que conteste una serie de preguntas. Todo el proceso debe no toma más de 45 minutos. Esto se puede hacer en persona o por teléfono. Voy a grabar la entrevista para la precisión, pero en cualquier momento, puede pedir que apague la grabadora o negarse a responder a una pregunta. Después que la cinta ha sido transcrita, la cinta se borrará y su identidad se mantendrá confidencial. A través de estos datos espero aprender acerca de las experiencias y los beneficios, si los hubiere, de las prácticas de participación de los padres de ELL en el nivel de secundaria.

Aunque mínimo, existen riesgos potenciales que usted debe considerar antes de decidir participar en este estudio. El único riesgo previsible asociado con la participación en este estudio es el incomodidad emocional. Si usted siente incomodidad emocional en cualquier momento durante la entrevista, se le proporcionará un descanso antes de continuar con el cuestionario. Por otra parte, en cualquier momento puede solicitar que el dispositivo de grabación se desactive, optar por no contestar alguna pregunta, o terminar la entrevista.

El beneficio potencial para usted por participar en el estudio es la oportunidad de expresar sus inquietudes y contar su historia de sus experiencias con las prácticas de participación de los padres de BCHS en lo que respecta a los padres y las familias que están aprendiendo inglés. Los resultados de esta investigación ayudarán mejor Bay City High School y otras escuelas similares en la evaluación de sus prácticas actuales de participación de los padres, las políticas y los procedimientos futuros en apoyo a los estudiantes que están aprendiendo inglés y familias.

Si usted decide participar y encuentra que no está interesado en terminar la entrevista en su totalidad, usted tiene el derecho de interrumpir en cualquier momento sin ser interrogado acerca de su decisión. También usted no tiene que contestar ninguna de las preguntas durante la entrevista que prefiera no contestar - sólo informarme que no desea responder.

El propósito de esta investigación es conocer cuáles son las estrategias de participación de padres en el nivel de la escuela secundaria que promueben la participación de los padres aprendices del Idioma Inglés.

La información generada puede ser utilizada para la investigación o publicación académica. Si decido hacerlo como yo persigo mis estudios, me pondré en contacto con usted de nuevo y obtener su permiso para hacerlo. Por el momento, esto es sólo para fines de capacitación. Toda la información obtenida será tratada confidencialmente. Los datos se guardarán de forma segura durante al menos cinco años, en cuyo momento los datos serán destruidos.

Si usted tiene alguna pregunta con respecto a la información que he proporcionado anteriormente, por favor no dude en ponerse en contacto conmigo en la dirección y número de teléfono a continuación. Si usted tiene más preguntas o no se siente que he abordado adecuadamente sus preocupaciones, por favor comuníquese con la Dra. Linda Purrington, Presidente Disertación, en Linda.Purrington@pepperdine.edu o [749-223-2568](tel:749-223-2568). Si usted tiene preguntas sobre sus derechos como participante en la investigación, comuníquese con Dr. Thema Bryant-Davis, Presidente de Pepperdine University Graduate, y escuelas profesionales IRB, correo electrónico thema.bryant@pepperdine.edu o [818-501-1632](tel:818-501-1632).

Al firmar a continuación y devolverme la forma, usted reconoce que ha leído y entendido lo que implica su participación en el estudio, y da su consentimiento para participar en el estudio

Sinceramente,

Lisa Cooper, M.S.
Estudiante Doctorado,
Universidad Pepperdine

Le he explicado y definido en detalle el procedimiento de la investigación en el que el sujeto ha dado su consentimiento para participar. Una vez explicado esto y respondió a las preguntas, estoy firmando este formulario y aceptando el consentimiento de esta persona.

Investigador Principal

Fecha

Entiendo a mi entera satisfacción la información de este formulario de consentimiento. Todas mis preguntas han sido contestadas a mi satisfacción. He recibido una copia de este formulario de consentimiento informando que he leído y entendido. Doy mi consentimiento para participar en la investigación descrita anteriormente.

Imprima nombre del participante

Firma del Participante

Fecha

APPENDIX C

District's Permission to Conduct Study

[REDACTED]

APPLICATION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

Culver City Unified School District initiated a research approval process in October 2013. The district will accept up to four projects for the school year from September to June each school year cycle. Please complete the following information and attach copies of surveys or process materials.

Completing this application does not guarantee approval to conduct this project. You will be notified of approval within five days of the completed application.

Date: 10-18-2013

Name of Supervising Educator for the Project: Dr. Linda Purrington

Address: Pepperdine University

Home Telephone: lpurring@pepperdine.edu

Cell phone: 949-223-2568

University/Organization: Pepperdine University

How did you select CCUSD as a place to conduct your project: My project will be a Case Study of CCHS. As ELD Counselor from 2007-2012 various strategies were implemented and a new structure of meeting and activities to improve ELD parent involvement.

Under what subject area _____

- 1) Education
- 2) Psychology
- 3) Statistics
- 4) Demographics
- 5) Other

What is the anticipated time required to complete this project: January 1, 2014- June, 2014

Please summarize a description of the research project and describe the materials that would be requested for your research such as surveys, interviews, etc.:

My name is Lisa Cooper and I am a doctoral student at Pepperdine University, conducting my dissertation research in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the doctorate degree in education. The purpose of the research is to examine Home-School partnerships between high school communities and ELD parents. I am writing to request permission and assistance in conducting my study at [REDACTED]. The information gathered will be included in my final report and can be shared with your community throughout the research process beginning January 2014 and ending in June 2014.

I will share the purpose of the study and explain why the particular site was chosen with all participants. Interviews will be scheduled at mutually convenient times with current and past EL parents. Pseudonyms will be used. Tape recordings and transcribed materials will be locked and secured. Participant's identities will remain confidential and the interview notes and recordings will not be shared with others. Participation in this study is voluntary. Participants who decide to participate are free to withdraw their consent or discontinue participation at any time.

I am certain that the results of this study will provide informative data in regards to home-school partnerships with English Learner parents/families.

Describe the potential benefit to [REDACTED] district students or the educational system:

Purpose statement is listed below... (Bay City High School is pseudonym for [REDACTED] School).

The purpose of this study is to examine home-school partnership practices between the high school community and ELL parents at BCHS. This study will explore ELL parent involvement practices implemented at BCHS by analyzing multiple forms of data. This case study will also investigate how ELL parent involvement at BCHS has evolved from WASC visit to current time

Note: The district does not reproduce forms or other paperwork for research projects, and does not collect and monitor materials. Research projects may not dispense medications or recommend parents or children to physicians or agencies. They must remain a research project. A copy of the results must be submitted to [REDACTED] District, Educational Services, [REDACTED]

Applicant's Name (please print): Lisa Cooper

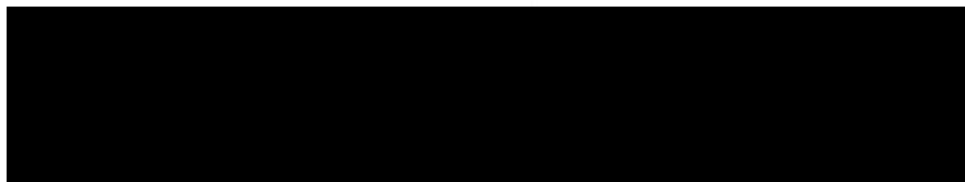
Applicant's Signature: Lisa Cooper Date: 10-17-2013

Date: 10/18/13

[REDACTED]
Educational Services

APPENDIX D

Principal's Permission to Conduct Study



APPENDIX D

PRINCIPAL'S PERMISSION TO CONDUCT STUDY



FROM: Lisa Cooper

DATE: July1, 2014

SUBJECT: Principal's Permission to Conduct Study



My name is Lisa Cooper and I am a doctoral student at Pepperdine University, conducting my dissertation research in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the doctorate degree in education. The purpose of the research is to examine parent involvement of English Language Learner (ELL) students when specific parent involvement practices have been implemented at the high school level and the influence, if any on ELL student achievement. I am writing to request permission and assistance in conducting my study at the [redacted] School site. The information gathered will be included in my final report and can be shared with your community throughout the research process beginning July 2014 and ending in December 2014.

I will share the purpose of the study and explain why the particular site was chosen with all participants. Interviews will be scheduled at mutually convenient times for the participants. Pseudonyms will be used for the school and parent participants. Tape recordings and transcribed materials will be locked and secured. Participant's identities will remain confidential and the interview notes and recordings will not be shared with others. Participation in this study is voluntary. Participants who decide to participate are free to withdraw their consent or discontinue participation at any time.

I am certain that the results of this study will provide valuable data that can further assist in future policies and practices related to ELL parent involvement.

If you have questions concerning this research, please direct them to Lisa Cooper, Responsible Investigator at [redacted] or [redacted] org or you may also call my dissertation chair Linda Purrington, Ed.D. at [redacted] [redacted]

Your signature indicates that you have read and understood the information provided above, that you willingly agree for me to participate in this study, and that you have received a copy of this form.

Respectfully,



Lisa Cooper

I hereby consent to my school district's participation in the research described above.

[Redacted]

Name of High School 210

[Redacted]

Principal's Signature /

[Redacted]

Please Print Principal's Name

7-1-14

Date

APPENDIX E

Interview Protocol

Pseudonym of interviewee: _____

Location of interview: _____

Translation needed: _____

Pseudonym of Translator: _____

Greet the participant. Review the purpose of the study and thank the participant for their time. Remind the participant that you will be recording the interview with an audio recording device in addition to taking notes. Remind the participant that they can request to stop the audio taping at any time or refuse to answer any questions.

Interview Question	Response YES	Response NO
<p><i>Opening question:</i></p> <p>During the time that your student attended BCHS, did you attend or participate in any parent engagement activities, meeting or programs specifically for ELL students and their family?</p>	<p>In general, why did you participate in these activities and what value/benefit did you see in doing so? (value/benefit to student/parent)</p>	
	<p>Now I am going to ask you about specific activities and meetings. Please respond by telling me first if you participated or not and if you did your experience?</p>	
<p>Did you attend ELAC parent meetings?</p>	<p>Why did you participate? (if not mentioned in response, will ask participant: how often, translation provided, information provided helpful) Anything you would like to see done differently? Why?</p>	<p>Can you explain or tell me why didn't you participate? What barriers (time, language, level of comfort, knowledge of/communication, no value, parent/school role) tell their personal story on their parent involvement.</p>

<p>Did you attend ELL Parent Orientation Day?</p>	<p>Why did you participate? (if not mentioned in response, will ask participant: how often, translation provided, information provided helpful) Anything you would like to see done differently? Why?</p>	<p>Can you explain or tell me why didn't you participate? What barriers (time, language, level of comfort, knowledge of/communication, no value, parent/school role) tell their personal story on their parent involvement.</p>
<p>Did you receive the ELL Parent Handbook? (will have copy to show)</p>	<p>Was the information provided helpful? In what ways? Was it parent friendly? Did you share information with your student? Did you have questions on information and if so did you use the contact page to reach out to staff? Anything missing from the handbook that would have been helpful to you?</p>	<p>Did you ever see the Handbook? Or did you choose not to take one? Would you have liked to have had such a handbook as a resource? What information would you like to have in such a resource?</p>
<p>Did you have any interaction with your student's ELL Guidance Counselor?</p>	<p>How often? Counselor availability? Comfortable communicating with? Information provided helpful? Did you discuss with your student their communication with counselor? Communication phone/in-person? Knowledgeable about ELL classes, programs, testing, and resources? What forms of communication would you prefer from a counselor? What information/resources would you like an ELL guidance counselor to provide to you as a parent?</p>	<p>Can you discuss with me some reasons that maybe prevented you from meeting with or interacting with your student's ELL guidance counselor? What information/resources would you like an ELL guidance counselor to provide to you as a parent? Did the counselor ever reach out to you? How? Why?</p>
<p>Thank you for taking the time to meet with me today and discuss your experience at BCHS. Do you have any other comments or experiences that you would like to share with me?</p>		

APPENDIX F

Interview Questions Categorized by Theme

Interview Question	Theme	Response YES	Theme	Response NO	Theme
<p><i>Opening question:</i></p> <p>During the time that your student attended BCHS, did you attend or participate in any parent engagement activities, meeting or programs specifically for ELL students and their family?</p>	PARENT ENGAGEMENT	In general, why did you participate in these activities and what value/benefit did you see in doing so? (value/benefit to student/parent)	PARENT ENGAGEMENT		
		Now I am going to ask you about specific activities and meetings. Please respond by telling me first if you participated or not and if you did your experience?	PARENT ENGAGEMENT		
Did you attend ELAC parent meetings?		<p>Why did you participate? (if not mentioned in response, will ask participant: how often, translation provided, information provided helpful)</p> <p>Anything you would like to see done differently? Why?</p>	PARENT ENGAGEMENT/ COMMUNICATION	Can you explain or tell me why didn't you participate? What barriers (time, language, level of comfort, knowledge of/ communication, no value, parent/school role) tell personal story on parent involvement.	PARENT ENGAGEMENT BARRIERS

Interview Question	Theme	Response YES	Theme	Response NO	Theme
Did you attend ELL Parent Orientation Day?		Why did you participate? (if not mentioned in response, will ask participant: how often, translation provided, information provided helpful) Anything you would like to see done differently? Why?	PARENT ENGAGEMENT/ COMMUNICATION	Can you explain or tell me why didn't you participate? What barriers (time, language, level of comfort, knowledge of/ communication, no value, parent/school role) tell their personal story on their parent involvement.	PARENT ENGAGEMENT BARRIERS
Did you receive the ELL Parent Handbook? (will have copy to show)		Was the information provided helpful? In what ways? Was it parent friendly? Did you share information with your student? Did you have questions on information and if so did you use the contact page to reach out to staff? Anything missing from the handbook that would have been helpful to you?	PARENT ENGAGEMENT/ COMMUNICATION	Did you ever see the Handbook? Or did you choose not to take one? Would you have liked to have had such a handbook as a resource? What information would you like to have in such a resource?	PARENT ENGAGEMENT BARRIERS
Did you have any interaction with your student's ELL Guidance Counselor?		How often? Counselor availability? Comfortable communicating with? Information provided helpful? Did you discuss with your student their communication with counselor? Communication phone/in-person? Knowledgeable about ELL classes, programs, testing, and resources? What forms of communication would you prefer from a counselor? What information/resources would you like an ELL guidance counselor to provide to you as a parent?	PARENT ENGAGEMENT/ COMMUNICATION	Can you discuss with me some reasons that maybe prevented you from meeting with or interacting with your student's ELL guidance counselor? What information/resources would you like an ELL guidance counselor to provide to you as a parent? Did the counselor ever reach out to you? How? Why?	PARENT ENGAGEMENT BARRIERS

Interview Question	Theme	Response YES	Theme	Response NO	Theme
Thank you for taking the time to meet with me today and discuss your experience at BCHS. Do you have any other comments or experiences that you would like to share with me?					

APPENDIX G

Interview Questions Aligned with Research Questions

Research Question	Interview Question	Literature Sources
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RQ1: How do ELL parents who participated in one or more of the parent involvement practices implemented at BCHS during 2009-2012 describe their experiences and benefits, if any, in supporting their students' learning relative to the following; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) ELAC Parent education meetings? b) ELL Parent Handbook? c) ELL Parent Orientation Day? d) ELL Guidance Counselor? 	<p>-During the time that your student attended BCHS, did you attend or participate in any parent engagement activities, meeting or programs specifically for ELL students and their family?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">-Did you attend ELAC parent meetings? If yes, Why did you participate? What value/benefit did you see in doing so? Anything you would like to see done differently? Why?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">-Did you attend ELL Parent Orientation Day? If yes, Why did you participate? What value/benefit did you see in doing so? Anything you would like to see done differently? Why?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">-Did you receive the ELL Parent Handbook? If yes, Was the information provided helpful? In what ways? Was it parent friendly? Did you share information with your student? Did you have questions on information and if so did you use the contact page to reach out to staff? Anything missing from the handbook that would have been helpful to you?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">-Did you have any interaction with your</p>	<p>Adger, 2001; Anfara & Mertens, 2008; Arias & Morillo-Campbell, 2008; Barton, Drake, Perez, St. Louis, & George, 2004; Boethel, 2003; California State Board of Education, 2009; Chrispeels & Rivero, 2001; Davies, Burch, & Johnson, 1992; de Carvalho, 2001; Dornbusch & Glasgow, 1996; Epstein & Dauber, 1991; Epstein, 1990, 2009; Guo, 2006; Hiatt-Michael, 2007; Hiatt-Michael & Purrington, 2007; Holcomb-McCoy, 2007; Jordan, Orozco, & Averett, 2001; Lareau, 1996; Lee, 2001; Martin, 2009; National Center for Culturally Responsive Educational Systems, 2008; National center for Family & Community Connections with Schools, 2005; National Parent Teacher Association, 2008; Pena, 2000; Sanders, Epstein, & Connors-Tadors, 1999; Scribner, Young, & Pedroza, 1999</p>

	<p>student's ELL Guidance Counselor? If yes, How often?</p> <p>Counselor availability?</p> <p>Comfortable communicating with?</p> <p>Information provided helpful?</p> <p>Did you discuss with your student their communication with counselor?</p> <p>Communication phone/in-person?</p> <p>Knowledgeable about ELL classes, programs, testing, and resources?</p> <p>What forms of communication would you prefer from a counselor?</p> <p>What information/resources would you like an ELL guidance counselor to provide to you as a parent?</p>	
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APPENDIX H

IRB Approval Letter

PEPPERDINE UNIVERSITY

Graduate & Professional Schools Institutional Review Board

September 19, 2014

Lisa Cooper

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Protocol #: E0714D04

Project Title: Building Home-School Partnerships with Parents of English Language Learners in a High School Community: A Mixed Methods Phenomenological Study of One High School In Southern California

Dear Ms. Cooper:

Thank you for submitting your application, *Building Home-School Partnerships with Parents of English Language Learners in a High School Community: A Mixed Methods Phenomenological Study of One High School In Southern California*, for exempt review to Pepperdine University's Graduate and Professional Schools Institutional Review Board (GPS IRB). The IRB appreciates the work you and your faculty advisor, Dr. Purrington, have done on the proposal. The IRB has reviewed your submitted IRB application and all ancillary materials. Upon review, the IRB has determined that the above entitled project meets the requirements for exemption under the federal regulations (45 CFR 46 - <http://www.nihtraining.com/ohsrsite/guidelines/45cfr46.html>) that govern the protections of human subjects. Specifically, section 45 CFR 46.101(b) (2) states:

(b) Unless otherwise required by Department or Agency heads, research activities in which the only involvement of human subjects will be in one or more of the following categories are exempt from this policy:

Category (2) of 45 CFR 46.101, research involving the use of educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures or observation of public behavior, unless: a) Information obtained is recorded in such a manner that human subjects can be identified, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects; and b) any disclosure of the human subjects' responses outside the research could reasonably place the subjects at risk of criminal or civil liability or be damaging to the subjects' financial standing, employability, or reputation.

Your research must be conducted according to the proposal that was submitted to the IRB. If changes to the approved protocol occur, a revised protocol must be reviewed and approved by the IRB before implementation. For any proposed changes in your research protocol, please submit a **Request for Modification Form** to the GPS IRB. Because your study falls under exemption, there is no requirement for continuing IRB review of your project. Please be aware that changes to your protocol may prevent the research from qualifying for exemption from 45 CFR 46.101 and require submission of a new IRB application or other materials to the GPS IRB.

A goal of the IRB is to prevent negative occurrences during any research study. However, despite our best intent, unforeseen circumstances or events may arise during the research. If an unexpected situation or adverse event happens during your investigation, please notify the GPS IRB as soon as possible. We will ask for a complete explanation of the event and your response. Other actions also may be required depending on the nature of the event. Details regarding the timeframe in which adverse events must be reported to the GPS IRB and the appropriate form to be used to report this information can be found in the *Pepperdine University Protection of Human Participants in Research: Policies and Procedures Manual* (see link to "policy material" at <http://www.pepperdine.edu/irb/graduate/>).