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Family Engagement in Urban Education;
The Impact and Factors Affecting Engagement

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Much research has documented the importance of parental participation in education, but the findings are mixed in regards to what type of parental engagement yields higher academic achievement. For example, Hayes (2012) studies the effects of parental engagement that happens within the confines of the school and home-based parental engagement; those educational activities engaged in outside of the school environment. Hayes' report finds the only substantial predictor of academic success is home-based parental engagement. Similarly, Fan and Chen's (1990) study finds that parents' aspirations and academic expectations for their children has the strongest relationship to academic achievement. Fan and Chen's and Hayes' studies contradict other studies that have found a more positive relationship between school related parental engagement and achievement (Grolnick & Slowiaczek, 1994; Lee & Bowen, 2006). Lee and Bowen's (2006) study finds that parent engagement at school and parents educational expectations are the only two types of parental engagement that have significant effects on children's academic achievement. Likewise, Grolnick and Slowiaczek (1994) ascertain certain types of in-school parental engagement are effective in increasing student's intrinsic motivation and in turn, improves academic success.

As an educator, I have witnessed programs and ideas that are successful in a suburban setting completely fail or be unrelated to an urban school setting. For example, in two private schools, one urban and one suburban, on-site parental engagement is required or a fee is assessed as a penalty. At the suburban school, the program is flourishing and quite popular. At the urban school, the parents prefer to pay the fee and then when the parents do show up to participate; the level of engagement with the staff and students is quite different from that of their suburban counterpart. I realize that every school setting is unique and what works for one teacher or school may not work for another. As an urban educator it is my desire to discover the most effective

types of parental engagement relating to my students. To that end, the purpose of this research is to explore the types of parental engagement that demonstrate a positive impact on students in low-income, urban, elementary settings. I include reviews of studies that are specific to urban education, as well as race, socio-economic status, and single-family households. I have also extended the research to middle school and high school to see if practices put in place in elementary school demonstrate a lasting effect on future academic achievement.

Definition of Terms

Academic Achievement: The measure used to gauge school effectiveness.

Academic Socialization: “Socialization is the process by which parents help shape a child’s behaviors, attitudes, and social skills so that the child can function as a member of society. Academic socialization encompasses the variety of parental beliefs and behaviors that influence children’s school-related development” (Taylor, Clayton & Rowley, 2004).

Marginalization: “A social phenomenon that refers to being assigned low status or positioning within a social group or culture that is outside of central importance or function. This experience can apply to any individual, group, race, or culture whose qualities and norms are in contrast to that which is dominant in an environment” (Richards, Gaudreault & Woods, 2018).

Parent Engagement: “Parenting practices and behaviors that include activities at home (e.g., helping with homework and holding educational expectations), participating in activities at school (e.g., serving as a classroom volunteer and attending open houses), and communication with teachers, other school personnel, and other parents” (Pomerantz, Moorman & Litwack, 2007).

Parent Teacher Organization (PTO): “An organization of parents and teachers working together to improve schools and to help students.” Also commonly called Parent Teacher Association (PTA), Parent Teacher Groups (PTG), or Parent Volunteer Organization (PVO) (Merriam-Webster Dictionary, Parent-Teacher Organization).

Social Capital: The networks of relationships among people who live and work in a particular society, enabling the society to function effectively (Desimone, 2001).

Types of Parental Engagement

Parental engagement may be easy to define within the context of the school, for instance, a parent is “engaged” with the Parent Teacher Organization, or attendance at a conference indicates a parent’s engagement in their child’s education. However, parental engagement can also be seen in behaviors outside of physical contact with the school. According to Epstein and Dauber (1991), there are five types of parental engagement. As shown in Table, 1, the first type is a parent’s basic obligation as a parent, or their responsibility for providing for their child’s health and safety. At this level, parents are seen as supporting school learning. The second type relates to the school’s basic obligations to communicate with the parent about a child’s progress. This includes procedures like sending home memos, newsletters, or report cards, and holding conferences with the parent. The third type is how a parent interacts with the school. A parent may attend sporting events or concerts or may volunteer to assist teachers in the classroom. The fourth type of parental engagement refers to a parent becoming engaged with home learning activities as requested by the student or teacher or initiated by the parent. This may include helping with homework or any other task that supports the child’s classroom learning. The fifth type of parental engagement refers to a parent taking on decision-making roles within the PTO or

any other committee that works for school improvement. These roles may be at a local, district, or state level (Epstein & Dauber, 1991).

Table 1

Epstein's Types of Parental Engagement and Corresponding Behaviors

Epstein's Type of Parental Engagement	Corresponding Behaviors
Type I	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Making sure the child gets to school ● Setting up homework rules and expectations ● Motivating/supporting/praising ● Limiting TV or time on electronics
Type II	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Sending home newsletters, memos, or report cards ● Holding conferences ● Holding parenting classes ● Calling home to speak with parents
Type III	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Attending a school function, such as a concert, play, field trip, or sporting event ● Attending a conference with the teacher ● Serving as a homeroom parent ● Participating in fund raisers
Type IV	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Helping with homework ● Hiring a tutor ● Reading with the child at home ● Taking child on trips to extend learning (museums, zoos, library, etc.) ● Having parent/child conversations about school and the future
Type V	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Serving on the School Board ● Serving on the PTA/PTO ● Planning classroom activities or trips

While many studies rely on Epstein and Dauber's categories of parental engagement, other studies identify parent engagement differently. In her 1999 study, Desimone researches the effects of race and income on parental engagement and student achievement. She identifies 12 independent variables (collected from surveys) and then identifies the effects of each variable on

the math, reading and grades of students of four different races as well as students of middle-income and low-income families.

Desimone's 12 types of parental engagement are:

- Discussion with child about high school
- Talk with parents about post-high school plans
- Volunteering or fundraising
- Rules about homework, GPA expectations, and chores
- PTO involvement (more than just attending meetings)
- Parent attends PTO meetings
- Rules about TV, friends, and chores
- Parents check homework
- Contact school about academics
- Discussion with parents about school
- Talk with father about planning high school program
- Social capital: Knowing parents of child's friends

The benefit of breaking out the types of parental engagement is the ability to measure each variable independently to identify the most effective types of parental engagement.

Desimone's (1999) study compares each type of parental engagement to the math and reading scores for white, African American, Asian and Hispanic students as well as income levels. For white students, discussions with the child about school yield the highest increase in math and reading scores. For African American and Hispanic students, parental engagement in the PTO (more than just attending the meetings) yields the highest increase in math and reading scores.

For Asian students, parental engagement in the PTO is positively associated with increased math

scores, while rules about TV, friends and chores are associated with increased reading scores. The study also highlights the type of parental engagement that has the smallest impact or the largest negative impact on academic performance. For white students, rules about homework, GPA, and chores have a negative impact on math and reading scores. For African American students, parents attending PTO meetings has a negative impact on math grades and parents checking homework has a negative impact on math grades. For Hispanic students, parents attending PTO meetings shows a negative association with both math and reading scores. For Asian students, parents simply attending PTO meetings is negatively associated with math scores, while parents' rules about homework, GPA, and chores is negatively associated with reading scores.

In addition, five variables in Desimone's 2001 study are a stronger predictor for middle and low-income students:

- Parent talk about post high school plans has a more positive impact for middle-income students while results are insignificant for low-income students.
- Student reported discussions relate more positively for middle-income students than for low-income students.
- Parent reported contact with school has a more negative impact for middle-income students than for low-income students.
- Parent reported rules are associated with a decrease in achievement for middle-income students and is insignificant for low-income students.
- Student reported rules are associated with an increase in achievement for middle-income students but are insignificant for low-income students.

In their study, Fan and Chen (2001), identify the parental engagement variables slightly differently. Their criterion is based more heavily on the parents initiating and sustaining the engagement, with only one criterion allowing for an external party (teachers or school) to initiate or motivate the parent to be engaged.

Fan and Chen's variables of parental engagement are:

- Parent engagement – general
- Parent-child communication (interest in school, assistance with homework, discussion about school progress)
- Home supervision (time spent doing homework, time spent watching TV, creating a home environment conducive to studying, monitoring after-school activities vs. coming straight home)
- Educational aspirations for children (educational expectations, values placed on academic achievement)
- School contact and participation (contact with the school, volunteering at school, attending school functions)

Fan and Chen's variables are unique in that they point to whether a parent's own desire to be engaged in their child's education plays a greater impact in their child's academic success. The results of Fan and Chen's 2001 study show that a parents expectations and aspirations for their child have a more significant relationship to the child's academic achievements than do the parents supervision of the children at home (e.g., regulating homework and TV time, providing an environment conducive to studying and making sure student comes home after school).

Similarly, Jeynes' (2003) meta-analysis reports on components as compiled from 20 different studies. Jeynes' categories mirror Fan and Chen's (2001) categories with categories of

general parental engagement, parent-child communication, parent expectations, parental attendance, and enforcing rules with homework. Jeynes' results further qualify parental engagement by adding parental style and the specific activity of reading to the child. Jeynes finds that all of the reported components have a positive and significant impact on academic outcomes as measured by the teachers and those findings hold true across all ethnic lines.

Grolnick and Slowiaczek (1994) take a different approach to identifying parental engagement. They highlight three categories that parent engagement falls into: behaviors (when a parent overtly participates in school activities), personal engagement (when the child is able to experience that a parent cares about school and is able to enjoy interactions with them at school), and cognitive/intellectual (when a child is exposed to stimulating activities or materials that promote their cognitive development). Grolnick and Slowiaczek's (1994) categories support their belief that a parent's engagement does not affect the child through skills, and thus cannot be measured in academic achievement or tests. Rather, they believe that a parent's engagement will have an impact on a child's attitudes and will motivate them. Grolnick and Slowiaczek (1994) stress the importance of a child's experiences. According to Grolnick and Slowiaczek, in order for parental engagement to be meaningful it must include the child experiencing their parent allocating resources on their behalf. Defining parental engagement in this context redefines the child, taking them from a passive recipient to an active participant in their education. Grolnick and Slowiaczek (1994) find a correlation between two types of engagement factors to a child's motivational attitude. Behavior and cognitive/intellectual behaviors are related to a child's perceived competence and control understanding. The two motivational behaviors also predict school performance. The findings of the study show that a child's belief about themselves, their

perceived school ability, and in turn, their academic success are linked to their motivation which is a result of their environment and experiences.

A slightly different hierarchy of parental engagement is outlined by Kohl, Lengua, and McMahon (2000). Kohl et al. categorize parental engagement into six different types. The purpose of the study is to measure the effects of how often a parent contacted the teacher, the type of parental engagement performed at-home and at-school, the quality of the parent-teacher relationship, the teacher's perception of the parent's value of education and the parents' endorsements of the school. Kohl et al. emphasize that each type of parental engagement is important to the child's academic success by providing the parent and/or the child with additional skills. A parent's contact with the teacher provides parents with information about general school practices and programs, the school and teachers rules and expectations, as well as knowledge of their children's progress. Parental engagement at school is important because students see their parents modeling the importance of education and a commitment to their education by being present for school activities. Likewise, parental engagement at home allows parents to be engaged in their child's education by supplementing and enhancing the learning started at school. The quality of the parent-teacher relationship is important because it helps ensure that both the parent and the teacher are working toward the same goal. If a problem arises, both parties are able to talk openly and honestly to resolve the problem. The teacher's perception of the parent's views of education, while general, is based on a teacher's assessment of a parent's investment in their child's education. Lastly, the parent's endorsements of the school is important because a parent's feelings toward the school in general may affect each of the other types of participation. For instance, how they participate in at-school activities, or the amount of contact they have with the teacher.

Parent Engagement at Different Academic Levels

Many studies suggest that parental engagement is more prevalent in younger grades and find that parental engagement has a greater impact on younger children than older children (Ingram, Wolfe, Lieberman, 2007; Jeynes, 2015; McWayne, Downer, Campos, & Harris, 2013; Patall, Cooper & Robinson, 2008; Sheldon, 2003). However, one meta-analysis of 46 studies found that parental engagement with preschool children up to second grade has a weaker correlation to learning outcomes and the strongest correlation of learning outcomes to parental engagement happens with children in grades three through six (Ma, Shen, Krenn, Hu, & Yuan, 2015).

Hill and Tyson (2009) look at the types of parental engagement that are most associated with academic achievement at the middle school level. They find that students in the middle grades still benefit from parental engagement. However, some types of parental engagement are more effective than others at the older grade levels. According to Hill and Tyson (2009), the most significant impact comes from a parent's academic socialization; when parents discuss learning strategies, help plan for future successes, and have high expectations for their child's academic success. There are other home-based parental engagement attempts made by parents that are still associated with positive academic performance, such as providing structure at home conducive to learning and providing materials for learning at home. However, similar to Desimone (1999), Hill and Tyson find simply monitoring homework completion at home does not produce any increase in academic performance. Overall, Hill and Tyson find school-based parental engagement also has a positive impact on academic performance, but to a lesser extent than home-based engagement.

However, Gonzalez-DeHass, Willems, and Holbein (2005) argue that student achievement can be affected at any grade level when the parent is actively engaged with their child. Similar to Grolnick and Slowiaczek (1994), Gonzalez-DeHass et al. (2005) investigate the effect of parental engagement on student motivation as the measurable outcome; with the idea that a motivated student is a successful student. Gonzalez-DeHass et al. find students are more intrinsically motivated and feel more competent in their learning when their parents remove extrinsic rewards and over-bearing behaviors (e.g., monitoring of homework). Instead, when parents become engaged with and demonstrate an interest in their child's education, the students are more likely to be persistent in academic challenges, feel fulfilled in their school work, and are more willing to seek out challenging tasks, regardless of the grade level.

The findings of Gonzalez-DeHass et al. (2005), and Hill and Tyson (2009) that homework monitoring negatively effects student motivation and ultimately has a negative relation to academic success, is in direct contradiction with Patall, Cooper and Robinson (2008). Instead, Patall et al. (2008) suggests that parental engagement with homework has advantageous effects specifically for elementary students. In their study, Patall et al. researches the effectiveness of parents who are trained to help their students with homework. They find different results for students in elementary, middle and high school grades. At the elementary and high school levels, parents who are trained to help with homework have a positive correlation to academic success as homework completion rates go up and the frequency of homework related problems go down. Even parents without the training continue to have a positive impact on achievement when they enforce rules about homework, and directly supervise and aid in homework completion. However, merely monitoring homework completion has a negative impact on homework completion rates and achievement. The results for middle grades

differ in that there is a negative association between the parent training in relation to homework engagement and academic achievement. Patall et al. suggests that different types of parental engagement will yield different results at different grade levels.

Núñez, Suárez, Rosário, Vallejo, Valle, and Epstein (2015) also study the effects of parental engagement in homework. Specifically, they look at the connection between perceived parental homework control or perceived parental homework support and academic achievement. The results of Núñez et al. (2015) are that the effects of time spent on homework activities vary by grade level. For elementary school, there is a negative relationship between time spent on homework and academic achievement. For middle school, the results are null and for high school, the results are positive. Secondly, Núñez et al. finds that perceived parental control over homework has a negative effect on academic achievement, regardless of grade level. In relation to perceived parental homework support, the results are positive at each grade level. The results of Núñez et al. show that there is more of a positive connection between time on task with homework and academic achievement at the high school level, but not at the lower grade levels. As for the specific types of parental participation with homework, there is a positive relationship to academic achievement at all grade levels when parents support homework. Conversely, when parents are perceived as controlling homework there is a negative effect on academic achievement.

Similar to Patall et al. (2008), Sheldon's (2003) study demonstrates a positive relationship between parental engagement and student academic achievement at the elementary level. Sheldon's study of family, school, and community partnerships focuses on urban elementary schools and finds that a high quality parent participation program has positive effects on student achievement at the third grade level across all subject matters, except language usage.

At the fifth grade level the program is linked to higher scores in science and social studies.

Sheldon's results mirror the results of Hara and Burke (1998) in their implementation of a parent engagement program in an urban elementary school. Prior to Hara and Burke's program, the third grade students were performing below grade level in reading and vocabulary. After the second year of implementation, the scores for the students whose parents were participating in the program showed a significant improvement in reading (85% gain) and marginally increased vocabulary scores for the treatment group.

Jeynes' (2015) study focuses on urban elementary settings and focused on the effects of paternal engagement on specific groups (based on race and age). Jeynes' (2015) study differs slightly as he does not break out the study participants based on elementary, middle, or high school enrollment, instead by age groups. He finds that there was a slightly larger effect for children ages one to ten than children ages 11 to 20 across all the cases he examined in the study. Like Jeynes (2015), Hayes (2012) examines the relationship of a child's age and race to parental engagement. He finds that there is a statistically significant connection between parental engagement and an African American adolescent child. Specifically, Hayes finds that home-based parental engagement is the only predictor of academic achievement in older African American children. School-based parental engagement is a better predictor of academic achievement in younger African American students. Hayes demonstrates that not all types of parental engagement produce the same results for all students at all grade levels.

Kim and Hill (2015) shed light on parental engagement at different grade levels by looking at the level of parental engagement at the elementary level, the middle grades level, and high school level. They find that there is a shift in parental engagement as children progress to the upper grade levels. Kim and Hill find that at the elementary level there appears to be a great

expectation by both the school and home for parental engagement. As children enter middle school the opportunities for engagement decrease. As a result, many parents who are not experienced in parental engagement at the elementary level are challenged when trying to get engaged at the middle school or high school level. Whereas, parents who were engaged at the elementary level are more likely to continue to be engaged when their children enter middle school and high school.

The Effect of Parental Engagement on Academic Performance in Urban versus Suburban Settings

Studies are split on what is the most effective type of parental engagement in urban settings. Ingram, Wolfe, and Lieberman (2007) looks at three high-achieving schools that serve low-income, at-risk populations. The study identifies two of Epstein's typographies as being common practices in those schools; Type I, basic parenting, and Type IV, becoming engaged with home learning activities. In particular, the survey-based study shows that the specific parental engagement types of communicating with the school, participating in parent-parent socialization, volunteering, and attending school events has little effect on student achievement. The most common practices found in the three high performing, low income, at-risk schools are participating in parenting activities and at-home learning activities; with 53% and 40% (respectively) of the parents indicating that they "always" participate in the Level I and Level IV domains of parent engagement. Interestingly, in their survey, Ingram et al. (2007) ask the parents what impact they feel they have had in their child's education. Their responses do not include any ratings related to their child's grades or test scores, but rather all of the write-in responses relate to instilling self-confidence, improving self-esteem, motivating children for future successes, creating good character, and instilling the value of a good education.

A 2003 study done by Sheldon looks at the relationship of school, family, and community partnerships on student performance on academic achievement tests in 82 urban elementary settings. His study finds lower test scores in schools that have higher mobility and schools that have higher number of students qualifying for free and reduced lunches. His study also finds higher scores in schools that make a greater effort to reach out to families and the community to meet specific challenges (in line with the requirements of the National Network of Partnership Schools). Sheldon's study demonstrates the importance of a quality school partnership program and engaging families in children's education, regardless of the school setting.

Implications of Socio-economic Status

People from different economic groups have access to different opportunities in life. The same is true of students from different economic groups in relation to their educational opportunities and achievement. Gordon's 2016 study finds that students from lower income families have less academic success than students from higher income families. Identifying what works for students of different backgrounds, whether SES, race, gender, religion or any other marker, is important in helping to close the achievement gap between students from different backgrounds.

As mentioned earlier, Desimone's (1999) study identifies five types of parental engagement that are strong predictors for middle to low-income students' academic success. For instance, parents talking with their students about post high school plans have a positive effect with middle-income students while the same behavior demonstrates an insignificant value for low-income students. Similarly, students who report having conversations with their parents demonstrate a more positive effect for middle-income students than for low-income students.

Sheldon (2003) and Arguea and Conroy (2001) study the effects of parent teacher organizations on academic achievement in students from lower income families. According to Sheldon, schools with higher student mobility and higher percentages of students qualifying for free or reduced lunch have lower standardized test scores across all subject areas. Sheldon's study focuses on developing a quality school, family, and community partnership program. Sheldon finds that schools that make greater efforts to reach out to families and the community report higher scores in science and social studies and to a lesser extent, math and writing. Similar to Sheldon, Arguea and Conroy analyze the effect of PTO's on students' math scores. They find that a well-designed and implemented parent teacher organization has a positive effect on student's math scores. Yet in schools with high levels of free-lunch eligibility, there is a decrease in the positive effect. Arguea and Conroy demonstrate a negative relationship between socio-economic status/income and student achievement. The results of Sheldon and Arguea and Conroy demonstrate that at-risk children benefit the most by having their parents engaged in their education.

Dearing, Kreider, Simpkins, and Weiss (2006) also demonstrate the importance of parental engagement for students from low-income families. In their study, they find that parental engagement in school decreases during the middle and high school years. For low-income families, the level of parental participation decreases even earlier by as much as half before fifth grade; whereas the other families in the study show increases in parental engagement during the same time frame. Dearing et al. demonstrates that there is an achievement gap in scores between children of low income families and their counterparts but points out that the achievement gap is nonexistent if parental engagement levels are high.

Similar to Dearing, Kreider, Simpkins, and Weiss (2006), Bhargava and Witherspoon (2015) find that certain types of parental engagement declines over time. Bhargava and Witherspoon examine the trajectories of parental engagement as students move from middle school to high school. The study identifies trends in gender, race, SES, and neighborhood resources. They find that parental engagement in home-based activities declines at a similar rate regardless of gender, race, SES, and neighborhood resources. For volunteerism, Bhargava and Witherspoon find that African American parents and parents with lower incomes not only engage in less volunteerism, but they also decrease the amount of volunteerism at a faster rate. In regards to school-based communication, Bhargava and Witherspoon finds that more educated parents demonstrate higher levels of parental engagement than that of lower educated parents and they reduce their school-based communication at a slower rate than less educated parents. The same is true of parents from more disadvantaged neighborhoods. A higher level of school-based communication is seen in parents from more disadvantaged neighborhoods and they reduce their rate of parental engagement at a slower rate than parents living in less disadvantaged neighborhoods. In regards to academic socialization, the study finds that race, neighborhood resources, and socio-economic status do not have any relation to the rate of change in that type of parental engagement over time. Instead the study demonstrates that academic socialization increases in the higher-grade levels. Bhargava and Witherspoon's study highlights the importance of different types of parental engagement at different grade levels.

Implications of Race

Bhargava and Witherspoon's 2015 study tracks how the level of parental engagement changes from middle school to high school changes. They find that African American parents have initial higher rates of home-based engagement, school-based communication, and academic

socialization when compared to their European counterparts. However, when evaluating the rate of change, the rate of change did not vary by race. In reference to volunteerism, African American parents have less engagement and their levels of engagement decline at a faster rate than European American parents.

Similar to Bhargava and Witherspoon (2015), Wang, Hill & Hofkens (2014) finds that parents of different races participate in their children's education in different ways. For instance, European American parents tend to participate more with in-school activities, like volunteerism, than their African American counterparts while African American parents tend to be more engaged with at-home activities. Wang et al. and other studies mention that the decrease in African American parents' participation may be due to feelings of discrimination and mistreatment at school suffered by the African American parents during their own schooling (Wang, Hill & Hofkens, 2014; Hill & Craft, 2003, Yoder & Lopez, 2013). Yoder and Lopez (2013) find that African American parents are less likely to participate with in-school activities due to feelings of marginalization. Lastly, Wang et al. finds that European American parents tend to be more engaged in later years, perhaps because they are more familiar with the opportunities even after the types of opportunities change as the child enters middle and high school.

Ma, Shen, Krenn, Hu, and Yuan (2015) analyzed 46 studies and found there is a positive correlation between parental engagement and student academic outcomes, however, in relation to race when they compared minorities to their counterparts, they found that there was a weaker relationship between parental engagement and learning outcomes for minority children than for non-minority children.

Likewise, Hill and Tyson (2009) find that there is a positive relationship between parental engagement and academic achievement regardless of race. However it is stronger for white

students than for African American students. Jeynes (2003 & 2007) also finds that there is a positive relationship between parental engagement and academic achievement. However, in both of Jeynes' studies, he finds that the relationship remains consistent across races and across all measures of academic achievement. Jeynes' meta-analysis focuses on studies with only minority participants or mostly minority participants. The results of Hill and Tyson (2009) and Jeynes (2003) are significant because based on their findings; parental engagement can be a means of closing the achievement gap.

Supporting Jeynes' 2003 and 2007 findings, Arguea and Conroy's 2001 study on the effects of parental engagement in PTO's on student achievement finds that schools with higher ratios of African American students have lower mean scores. The overall result of their study is that getting parents engaged in a PTO can reduce the "poverty" effect on all student achievement regardless of race. Arguea and Conroy's results can be instrumental to schools serving African American populations.

One study that focuses solely on African American students is Hayes (2012). He studies the relationship of a child's age to parental engagement and found that there is a statistically significant connection between parental engagement and academic achievement in African American children. Specifically, Hayes finds that home-based parental engagement is a stronger predictor of academic success in older African American students and school-based parental engagement has a stronger connection to academic success in younger African American students. Similarly, Jeynes (2015) focuses on the effects of certain types parental engagement on African American students as well as those in urban settings. Jeynes finds that the effect for children of color is slightly stronger than the effects on the remainder of the study group.

As mentioned earlier, Desimone (1999) discovered that certain types of parental engagement yield different results on student academic achievement when race is the variable. Desimone finds that discussions with the child about school yield the highest increase in math and reading scores for white students. Whereas parental engagement in the PTO (more than just attending the meetings) yield the highest increase in math and reading scores for African American and Hispanic students. For Asian students, parental engagement in the PTO is positively associated with increased math scores while rules about TV, friends, and chores are associated with increased reading scores. Desimone's study also highlights the type of parental engagement that has the smallest impact or the largest negative impact on academic performance. For white students, rules about homework, GPA, and chores has a negative impact on math and reading scores. For African American students, parents attending PTO meetings demonstrates a negative impact on math grades and having parents check homework demonstrates a negative impact on math grades. For Hispanic students, parents attending PTO meetings predict a negative association with both math and reading scores. For Asian students, parents attending PTO meetings is negatively associated with math scores, while parents' rules about homework, GPA, and chores are negatively associated with reading scores. Desimone's findings are important because in light of Arguea and Conroy (2001), which demonstrates a positive correlation between student scores and a school with an organized PTO, it is easy for a school to encourage attendance at PTO meetings as part of their parental engagement program; however, Desimone demonstrates that attendance at PTO meetings can negatively impact African American and Hispanic student's scores. Instead as Desimone demonstrates, the emphasis should be on encouraging parent engagement in the PTO program.

Hill and Craft (2003) both supports and contradicts the findings of Desimone. Hill and Craft studies the effects of parental engagement in African American and Euro-American students and finds that parental engagement at school shows a positive relationship to African American student's math scores and has a negative effect for Euro-American math scores. Like Desimone, Hill and Craft find that parental engagement at home is positively related to the math scores of Euro-American students but not significantly related to the math scores for African American students.

The Relationship between Mothers and Fathers Engagement

We are quickly blurring the lines of the gender-labor roles of the past. Since more mothers are working outside of the house in paid work, the roles of household work and child rearing, previously more likely to be thought of as a mother's role, are being re-defined and re-assigned. The same is true of parental engagement. It is important to understand which, if any, strategies are more effective when implemented by the mother versus the father.

In their 2015 study, Kim and Hill examine whether the family-school relationship functions the same for fathers and mothers, and if any "type" of parental engagement demonstrates a more positive or negative effect on students' academic achievement. The study distinguishes between three types of parental engagement: school-based engagement (e.g., volunteering at school, attending conferences and parent-teacher meetings, or participating in the PTO), home-based engagement (e.g., homework assistance, enrichment activities, academic family trips, reading to the child), and academic socialization (e.g., parents' goals and expectations for their child, communicating with child about expectations, and parents' value of education). While both maternal and paternal engagement have a positive relation to achievement, the study finds that the level of paternal participation is slightly lower than that of

mothers across all three types. Yet even with the lower level of engagement, the effects of a fathers' engagement on their child's achievement is not only positive, but also just as effective as that of their parenting counterpart. These findings mirror the findings of Gordon's 2016 study in which she finds that fathers engagement in academic matters are relatively low when compared to mother's levels of engagement but the effects of a quality father-child relationship or limited paternal engagement at school can mediate the adverse effect of other factors affecting academic achievement.

Of particular interest are the results across student ethnicity of Kim and Hill (2015). They examine three types of parental engagement: school-based activities, home-based engagement, and academic socialization. Kim and Hill find that participation of mothers is higher than that of fathers. The biggest difference is found with school engagement and the weakest difference is found in academic socialization. When compared to mothers, fathers in the study are less engaged in school-based activities and, when they are, they tend to participate in a different role than the mothers. Specifically, a father is more likely to attend athletic events or intervene when children are facing disciplinary action. They are also more likely to use intellectually stimulating strategies and expose their children to activities outside of school. African American fathers are also more likely to participate in more childcare tasks than the fathers of other ethnicity in the study. Kim and Hill's findings shed light on ethnic differences that affect the father's type of engagement. Kim and Hill's study finds there is no significant difference in the effect of engagement when comparing ethnic minority fathers (African Americans and Latinos) and the ethnic majority fathers (Euro Americans). However, for the ethnic minority mothers, there is a marginally higher relationship between parental engagement and academic achievement.

Another study that focuses specifically on the relationship of African American fathers to academic achievement is Cooper's 2009 study. Cooper explores the connections of African American girls' feelings of self-esteem to their academic achievement; as well as the relationship of African American girl's fathers' engagement to their academic success. She finds there is a positive relationship between a quality father-daughter relationship and African American girls' academic achievement. Furthermore, Cooper finds that girls who experienced a higher quality relationship with their father also experience higher self-esteem and higher self-esteem is positively related with academic achievement.

Jeynes' 2015 study contradicts the findings of Kim and Hill (2015). In his meta-analysis of the relationship between father engagement and student academic achievement, Jeynes qualifies the effects of father's engagement in the lives of children of color and finds that the effects of a fathers engagement in this demographic is slightly higher than the general population. When comparing the effects of a minority mother's engagement and the effects of a minority father's engagement, Jeynes, Kim and Hill, Cooper (2009), and Gordon (2016) are all in agreement that paternal engagement does have a positive effect on academic achievement.

In another study, done by McWayne, Downer, Campos and Harris (2013) they research the effects of a father's engagement during a child's early years (three years of age to age eight). Due to the age of the participants, the study is not based on academic performance, but rather the outcome measured is the children's social skills and pre-academic skills. They find that both the quality and quantity of father engagement demonstrates a positive relationship to the child's outcomes. According to McWayne et al., the types of engagement that have been shown to have the most impact on children's outcomes are related to the quality of parenting (e.g., if the father is viewed as being warm, nurturing, responsive and reflective, or conversely, harsh, punitive,

nonresponsive or non-reflective) and the frequency (quantity) of engaging activities; both learning related, like reading to the child, and general activities, like playing.

Along each of the studies, a father's engagement in his child's education has been proven to have a positive effect. In one study, the mean level of engagement by fathers is found to be lower than that of mothers, but the research finds this impact to be just as strong as that of the mothers. Suggesting that even with less engagement, the effect of a father's parental engagement is stronger than that of the mother's increased levels of engagement. One possible reason may be due to the distinct roles each parent continues to take that are more complimentary to their genders. For instance, mothers tend to be more engaged in many aspects of their child's education ranging from helping with school work or attending school meetings while fathers tend to stimulate their child's learning by exposing them more to learning opportunities outside of the classroom and home environment (Kim & Hill, 2015). McWayne et al. (2013) finds the most significant results for fathers that reside in the same house as their child. If we assume that both residential and nonresidential fathers have the same quality of engagement, then the results of McWayne et al. may be due to the more opportunities for direct engagement that are presented to a parent residing with the child.

Another element of "parental" engagement is that of extended family and grandparents as caregivers who are engaged in a child's education. According to Simmons and Dye (2003) the number of children residing with their grandparents has increased by more than 1 million since the 1997 Census. Of the approximately 5.8 million grandparents living with their grandchildren, 52% are African American and list themselves as primary caregivers. When compared to non-Hispanic white grandparents, it is four times more likely for African American children to reside with their grandparents. There is limited research on the academic outcomes for students with

extended family engagement. Of the research found, there is evidence that students being raised by their grandparents face additional challenges due to their caregivers mental and physical health status and problems providing assistance with homework (especially assignments requiring digital literacy), leading to higher risks of repeating a grade, poor grades, and even higher drop-out rates (Peterson, 2016).

Other Benefits of Parental Engagement

Since most research suggests that parental engagement has a positive effect on academic performance, it is interesting to note that Barnard (2003) finds that the effects of parental engagement in school has lasting effects into high school and beyond. Barnard's longitudinal study looks at 1,165 predominately African American students, living in poverty in Chicago's inner city. Barnard finds there is a strong connection between teacher-rated parental engagement in earlier grades (up to sixth grade) with decreased rates of high school dropout, an increase in on-time graduation from high school, and even post-high school pursuits. In the study, parent-rated engagement is not significantly associated with any of the outcomes. This discrepancy suggests that parents and teachers have different definitions of parental engagement or different perceptions about what constitutes a high/low level of engagement. Given the extreme disadvantage and risk factors of the participants in Barnard's (2003) study and the statistically significant results of the lasting effects of parental engagement at the elementary level, the same results could be expected of other at-risk students.

There are other effects of parental engagement besides academic achievement. Many studies are designed to measure the impact of any one of a child's parents being engaged in the education process and the effects on their individual child's achievement. Park, Stone, and Holloway (2017) designed their study to measure the impact of parental engagement on the

entire school. They look at the relationship between the school-learning environment as a result of three forms of school-level parental engagement and school-level student achievement. The three forms of school-level parental engagement are:

- 1) Public - Engagement directed toward school improvement (creating a safe environment, securing more resources, supplementing teachers' instruction)
- 2) Private - Engagement directed toward parents' own children's schooling
- 3) Networking - The formation of social networks among parents (parent networking, social capital)

The goal of Park, Stone, and Holloway (2017) is to examine the potential school-wide benefits of aggregate school-based parental engagement. Park et al. find that schools with a higher level of public engagement are more likely to have a higher percentage of students scoring at or above the national standard in reading and math than the other schools in the study. The results of Park et al. demonstrate that types of parental engagement can have a greater impact on more students if those efforts are geared toward making the school a better place for all children, regardless of what other parents may or may not do at home; for instance, helping teachers, creating safe schools, and securing more resources.

Another study, Hara and Burke (1998), aims to demonstrate the effects of a parent engagement program on an urban elementary school community. The study shows an increase in academic performance as well as other outcomes for the students, parents, and school alike. The students demonstrate improved grades and test scores, but the parents report that the students also exhibit enhanced levels of self-esteem. In addition, parents who participated in the program report having a new interest and appreciation for the education process, their child's teachers, and a new level of interest in their child's school. They also report that their attitudes about

school and their respect for the role of teachers have changed dramatically. As a result of the program, the school now experiences an increase in participation at school activities and volunteer program, improved attendance, and a decrease in discipline referrals.

Alameda-Lawson (2014) demonstrates a similar effect as Hara and Burke (1998).

Alameda-Lawson seeks to demonstrate the limitations of traditional approaches to parental engagement in relation to schools serving low-income, children of color. An alternative model of parental engagement was designed and the results demonstrate that not only did the students whose parents participated in the new program demonstrate higher scores on the standardized tests, but the parents who participated also report feeling more empowered as a parent.

Another study that focuses specifically on African American children's academic success in relation to parental participation was Cooper's 2009 study. Cooper focuses only on adolescent African American girls and their relationship with their fathers. Cooper finds that not only does paternal participation have a positive relation to the girls' academic achievement, but the girls also experience higher levels of self-esteem. Cooper's literature review highlights the importance of adolescent girls having a positive self-esteem. This study demonstrates that parental engagement has other effects besides just improved academic achievement, just as Park, Stone, and Holloway (2017), Hara and Burke (1998), and Alameda-Lawson (2014) demonstrate that parental engagement benefits more than just one student or individual, and Barnard (2003) demonstrates that the effects of parental engagement are long lasting.

Factors Affecting Parental Engagement in the Education Process

While many parents express a desire to be engaged at the school, there are constraints that often keep parents from fulfilling their desires. Not having enough time or time constraints related to the start time of events, scheduling conflicts, lack of transportation and child care are

the most common reasons parents list as to why they cannot participate with in-school activities (Baker, Wise, Kelley, & Skiba, 1997; Ingram, Wolfe, & Lieberman, 2007).

In their focus group study of public housing residents, Yoder and Lopez (2013) categorize the results of parents' responses to questions about the barriers to parental engagement. They find that barriers to parental engagement fall into two categories: tangible barriers or marginalization. Tangible barriers are concrete obstacles that make engagement difficult (e.g., lack of technology, transportation, or child-care). Marginalization is a feeling of being ostracized or powerless in making changes in their child's education. Additionally, Yoder and Lopez find the responses of the parents in the focus groups include avenues to overcome the barriers. Parents state the need for resources and support; those mitigating factors that allow parents to be engaged despite the barriers (e.g., community agencies and family/friend support), their attempts at "jumping through hoops"; attempts to solve problems or assert their power, and school choice; the ability to pick a child's teacher, school, or classmates. Yoder and Lopez find that when parents are able to navigate around the obstacles of parental engagement they experience a feeling of power.

What is unique about Yoder and Lopez (2013) is that parents presented marginalization as a specific barrier to their engagement at school. In the study, low-income parents express feelings of frustration with the school, feelings of being ostracized, and a feeling of powerlessness in their child's education. These feelings of marginalization ultimately negatively impact the parent's engagement at the school. They find that African American and Latino parents report feeling unwelcomed at school. They also find that immigrant and ESL parents are less likely to be engaged at the school due to language barriers. Also unique to Yoder and Lopez is that the parents listed specific ways they have found to overcome their barriers that can be

overcome. For instance, parents have found community agencies that help them gain access to technology and tutoring programs that help them overcome the technology barrier. They also called on support networks for transportation and childcare for school events. Yoder and Lopez's findings point out that a lack of resources does not entirely limit parental engagement.

Another study that looks at barriers to parental engagement done by Kohl, Lengua, and McMahon (2000) compares African Americans and Caucasian parents and finds that African American parents generally have a lower level of education and are more likely to be single parents when compared to their Caucasian counterparts. And, although statistically insignificant, they are also more likely to suffer maternal depression. The factors were studied to see if they are tied to any effect on parental engagement. Both Kohl et al. and Bhargava and Witherspoon (2015) find that the amount of parental education effects the extent to which parents would engage in parent-teacher contact, in-school parental engagement, and the teacher's ratings of a parent's parental engagement. The findings suggest that parents with lower levels of education are less likely to be engaged in contacting the school to speak with the teacher and are also less likely to be in-school participating as a parent in activities. As a result of the parent not being on-site, the teacher's ratings of the less educated parents are lower in regards to the teacher's perceptions of the parent's value of education as well as their levels of parental engagement at home. Kohl et al. also finds the marital status of the parent affects parental engagement at school, the parent-teacher relationship, and the teacher's ratings of the parent's value of education but does not affect the amount of contact the parent and teacher have. The study finds that single parents lack resources such as time and childcare and thus are less likely to be engaged at school. But single parents do report the same levels of engagement at home as their married or dual parent households. Again, due to the lack of time spent in school participating, the teacher's

ratings of the single parents were lower in regards to the teacher's perceptions of the parent's value of education. Lastly, African American mothers in the study report higher levels of maternal depression. Mothers who suffer from depression are less engaged in almost every element of parental engagement. Depressed mothers are less likely to participate at school and at home, they have a poor relationship with their child's teacher, and get poor ratings from their child's teacher in relation to her value of education and levels of engagement. The only domain that depressed mothers do not score lower in than their non-depressed counterparts is their ability to ensure appropriate and timely contact with their child's teacher.

Kohl, Lengua, and McMahon (2000) propose that since a parents' marital status and lower education level are significantly associated with lower parental engagement, and African Americans are more likely to be both single and less educated than Caucasian parents, then perhaps the idea of race should be viewed as a better conception of a risk factor of parental engagement.

Problems in the Research

Of the studies found that focus on African American students, none were comprehensive taking into consideration the varying different family structures. For instance, the studies focus on underprivileged African Americans without consideration of upper-class African American families. Or a majority of the studies are limited to specific grades in a single class setting rather than spanning multiple settings or grade/age levels. There are limited studies that focus entirely on African American student's progress; instead a majority of the studies compare African American students to other races. And no studies were found that addressed the academic success of African American students living in multi-generational homes.

Given the intergenerational tradition of African American grandparents raising their grandchildren and the plethora of societal issues that oftentimes mandating African American grandparents to raise their grandchildren, there should be more research into how the students living in intergenerational homes are performing at school. Much of the research about intergenerational families focuses upon the effects on the grandparents and the struggles faced by all engaged. No studies were found that address how grandparents are able to help their grandchildren, how schools are accommodating the different family structures, or how students living with grandparents are performing academically.

Implications and Putting Research Into Practice

While the effects of each type of parental engagement may be hard to quantify from one study to the next, it is widely accepted that parental engagement does have a positive relationship to student's achievement, whether that achievement is demonstrated on an achievement test, through a student's grades, or through a student's feelings of value and worth. It is also widely accepted that there is an achievement gap based on socio-economic status and race. Wang, Hill, and Hofkins (2014) demonstrate that for various reasons, there is a decrease in parental engagement in parents of low SES and parents of color; which means that the at-risk populations are not receiving the same benefits of parental engagement as their majority counterparts. One way to close the achievement gap is to bring more families of the at-risk student population into the education process. Specifically, schools should focus on developing high quality programs to encourage parents who feel marginalized and fathers to become more engaged.

Recognizing that not all programs are created equal, nor can they be implemented identically across all schools, parent engagement needs to be redefined for many schools. Specifically in reference to a homework policy, Ingram et al. (2007) demonstrate a positive

relationship between academic performance and parental assistance with homework for the largely minority, low-income families that they studied. However, parents helping their child with the math homework will likely only help if the parent is familiar with the math concept. Otherwise it is possible that assigning homework may further increase the achievement gap because low-income, struggling students may not have access to the same assistance at home as their wealthy counterparts; whether it be a parent who is present for homework time or the ability to hire a tutor. These findings suggest that schools should work to create parent education classes designed to help parents help their children meet the expectations of modern-day educational programs. These classes should be aimed at equipping parents with the tools to help their children with homework, as well as enrichment ideas, review opportunities, and a list of age appropriate books that parents could use to start interactive novel studies with their children. Additionally, schools should provide parents with information about how to hire a tutor or help with locating low-cost or free community programs that offer tutoring, ideas on trips that can extend learning and ignite student's desire to learn; such as trips to local museums, theaters, or zoos, and information about how to apply for a library card. Teachers could also put together a list of free online resources relevant to their class and curriculum for students and parents to use outside of school.

The studies of Gonzales-DeHass (2005), Hill and Tyson (2009), Núñez et al. (2015), and Desimone (1999) further demonstrate that homework policies should be re-examined and perhaps redesigned. Each of the studies demonstrate that there is a negative relationship between parents simply monitoring or checking homework and academic performance of elementary school children. In the case of Desimone, the results are specific to African American students in an urban elementary school.

One study, Patall et al. (2008), contradicts the negative findings of homework help. Instead Patall et al. demonstrates a positive relationship between parent assistance with homework and elementary school student's academic performance. However, Patall et al. differed in that their study tracks the effectiveness of an intensive parent-training program aimed at parents helping students at home with their homework. In light of the findings, I believe my urban elementary school should examine the school's homework policy. If the policy of requiring nightly homework is to remain in place, then the school should investigate offering a training program to assist parents in helping their student with the homework in a fashion that will have a positive effect on their academic performance. One alternative to the current homework policy would be changing the type of homework assigned; switching instead to an interactive homework model.

As Sheldon (2003) demonstrates, a high quality parent partnership program is important to student success. This type of program may not be easy to achieve. It will require schools to address many challenges to parental engagement. At my urban school in particular, that means engaging non-English speaking family members, family members who have limited time and resources to dedicate to the school and their child, those who struggle with transportation issues, as well addressing feelings of anger, hurt, marginalization, and a perceived unwelcoming environment. I'd like to see my school attempt to bring more families into the school for purposeful interaction. This should be done on a monthly basis to encourage building more relationships between the home and school. Additionally, we need to make a shift in how we view parent engagement; to recognizing parent engagement includes what is done without showing up at the school.

While fathers may not be as engaged in school-based parental engagement capacities as mothers, the effect of their engagement is just as positive as mothers'. This makes exploring how to engage fathers more in their children's academics an avenue that should continue to be explored. Since the research shows that fathers interact differently with their children. Parental engagement programs should be designed to specifically meet all parents, mothers and fathers alike, where they are and encourage them to become engaged in their own way. With the changing dynamics of families, fathers and other family members are making themselves available and demonstrating interest in their student's education. Future parental engagement opportunities should be developed to purposefully encourage their engagement in school and with at-home learning opportunities. This would require schools to reform the "old" parental engagement approach and offer non-traditional opportunities, such as weekend and evening opportunities, as well as planned family outings, and even video conferencing as a way to overcome time constraints and transportation issues.

The results of Desimone (1999), Arguea and Conroy (2001) and Park, Stone, and Holloway (2017), when combined, point to the greater need for urban schools serving large African American populations to implement a quality Parent Teacher Organization (PTO). Desimone's research demonstrates that quality engagement in PTO organizations for the African American community is positively related to academic performance. However, Arguea and Conroy find that urban schools are lacking in PTO structure and participation. While Park et al. find that the efforts that parents put into school-level participation has a greater impact than on just the parent's individual student. These findings emphasize the importance of schools to implement a quality Parent Teacher Organization structure.

There are many obstacles to why parents are unable or unwilling to participate in traditional school-based opportunities. It may be easy for schools to identify barriers to parental engagement, but schools need to identify what they are doing to address the barriers of the individual families they serve. In order to facilitate forming relationships with some of their families, schools may need to be purposefully untraditional. Jones (2001) suggests one idea might be to initiate house calls. Visiting the homes of students will give the teachers and parents an opportunity to talk on the parent's turf and terms, as well as give the teacher insight into the personal struggles a student might have relating to their individual home environment. Additionally, Baker, Wise, Kelley, and Skiba (2016) identify many barriers to parent engagement and offer many ideas that could be useful to schools that are seeking to improve parental engagement. In particular, schools should follow the examples Baker et al. set and hold focus groups for parents and staff to identify the individual challenges for the school and discuss possible solutions in an environment that allows the parents to feel welcome and important as well as allows the parents' concerns to be heard. This idea may have implications for a pre-planned school calendar that may be designed and published prior to the start of school. However, this simple first step done during the early weeks of a school year could be seen by parents as a powerful first step to make them feel welcomed and give them a voice in their child's education.

Additionally, this research should encourage schools to plan more events for the whole family (e.g., pizza and movie nights, math game nights, academic nights, concerts, parenting classes, etc.). At each of the events, younger siblings should be welcomed or child-care, if needed, should be provided. The timing of each of these events should be prayerfully considered to allow for the greatest number of families to be engaged; a decision to be made after parents

and staff have an opportunity to discuss optimal times for such events. One particular event that has been placed on my heart is a mother/daughter, father/son course aimed at teaching fourth and fifth grade students about hygiene, their changing bodies, and friendships. Additionally, since we are located on a convenient public transportation route, I'd also like to see my school provide tokens for families who state financial constraints limit them from being able to attend activities at school.

Lastly, communication is listed as a reason why parents aren't engaged (Baker, Wise, Kelley, & Skiba, 1997; Ingram, Wolfe, & Lieberman, 2007). Some parents state that poor communication was what contributed to their feelings of the school not being welcoming or less family-friendly. It is important for schools to improve the quality and quantity of communication. School websites should have resources for the parents to use, links to upcoming opportunities in the local area as well as at the school. But as Yoder and Lopez (2013) points out, some families may have limited access to technology, so communications about upcoming opportunities should be distributed through multiple mediums (e.g., emails, texts, website updates, and paper flyer) and with plenty of advanced notice so they have adequate time to rearrange their calendar.

Conclusion

The research supports the usefulness of parental engagement as a means of improving academic performance of children from low-income or minority families. The research shows that parents of different ethnic backgrounds tend to participate differently in their child's education. Based on ethnicity, certain actions of the parents have been shown to improve academic performance, raise confidence, and motivate students toward future success. For instance, African American and Hispanic students demonstrate higher academic achievement in

reading and math when their parents take an active role in the parent-teacher organization (PTO). While Asian students only demonstrate an increase in math scores when their parents take an active role in the PTO. For white students, discussions about school have shown to have a positive impact on both math and reading grades, while rules about homework, GPA, and chores are linked to decreases in math and reading scores.

There are different types of parental engagement. They range from personal attention given to the student in school-related matters, attending school functions, communicating with school personnel, and setting expectations with the student in relation to school through serving in wide-scale roles like planning events or serving on the PTA or school board. The “parental” participant can be the mother, father, or any other authoritative figure acting on behalf of the student. Even though a mother’s level of engagement is usually higher than that of a father’s, a father’s level of engagement has the same impact as a mother’s. One study reports paternal engagement in their daughter’s education can yield greater results than maternal engagement (Cooper, 2009). Also, mothers and fathers tend to participate differently in academic endeavors, with fathers tending to be more engaged with discipline issues and attending sporting events.

In addition to the research documenting benefits of parental engagement based on race, research has been done to document the effects of parental engagement with children in different grade levels. The research shows that parental engagement is more prevalent in the younger grades, but continues to be beneficial at all grade levels. As a child progresses through the grades, the effectiveness of different types of parental engagement changes. For instance, in grades six through twelve, academic socialization and parent expectations have greater impact on academic success. One study (Núñez et al., 2015) finds that for elementary school, there is a negative relationship between time spent on homework and academic achievement; whereas, for

middle school, the results are null and for high school, the results are positive. This demonstrates that the traditional views of how a parent is engaged needs to be re-examined to encourage the best types of engagement based on the age/grade of the student.

Benefits of parental engagement can be seen beyond the immediate academic improvement of a targeted child. One study, (Park, Stone and Holloway, 2017) shows that the benefits can be far reaching and can include school-wide improvement. In addition to the added benefit for other students and the school community, parental engagement has been linked to increased on-time graduation and post-graduate academic pursuits, as well as increases in students' intrinsic motivation and confidence. Due to the many types and benefits of parental engagement, schools need to identify the best types of engagement for the age group they serve and work diligently to encourage and train parents in the ways that with benefit their child and the school community the best.

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