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Promoting Parent Partnership in Head Start: A Qualitative Case Study of Teacher Documents From a School Readiness Intervention Project

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To advance the field of children's services, implementation and generalization studies are needed to help us reveal the inner workings of intervention projects and how they do (or do not) achieve their outcomes. This paper provides a case study of Head Start teachers' uptake of the *Getting Ready* school readiness intervention, intended to strengthen professionals' capacity to support parental engagement in young children's development and learning. The qualitative method of document review was used in scrutinizing home visit reports and classroom newsletters as a source of authentic evidence about teachers' implementation and generalization

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of an early intervention model. Home visits were a focus of training and coaching, and the analysis provided strong evidence of treatment group teachers implementing *Getting Ready* strategies of collaborative planning and problem-solving with parents around academic learning and social-emotional goals. In contrast, newsletters were not the focus of the intervention; their analysis provided clear evidence of spontaneous change (hence, generalization) made by teachers on their own as they sought to strengthen home-school collaboration, form strong and trusting relationships, and spotlight and acknowledge child and parent competence. Beyond finding evidence of teachers' uptake and generalization of the *Getting Ready* strategies, the study suggests the utility of analyzing teachers' everyday documents to uncover patterns of behavior change of teachers seeking to implement an early childhood school readiness intervention.

Key Words: home-school collaboration, school readiness, early intervention, Head Start teachers, classroom and home visit documents

Introduction

Collaborative home-school relationships are important at all stages of a child's schooling including the early years when parents are establishing strategies for engaging in their child's education (Raffaele & Knoff, 1999). These relationships can create a pattern for ongoing parental involvement that carries across transitions and educational experiences. In contrast, when home and school are incongruent, as when school situations are unfamiliar and unrelated to home activities, children and their families find communication more challenging (Moles, 1993). School readiness interventions that espouse a partnership orientation focus on promoting family strengths and building positive home-school relationships to produce changes in the family environment, parent-child relationship, and family involvement (Caspe & Lopez, 2006). The interventionists recognize that parents are a child's first teacher, and that active and meaningful parental engagement influences positive child outcomes (Henderson & Mapp, 2002). Family partnership programs differ from traditional approaches of working with families (Sheridan, Marvin, Knoche, & Edwards, 2008); they seek to be: (1) *collaborative,* structured around mutually determined goals; (2) *strengths-based,* aimed at building on family and child competencies rather than remediating professionally identified deficits; (3) *individually responsive,* appropriate to children's needs across the developmental spectrum; and (4) *intentional,* focused on specified objectives negotiated through collaboration.

Efforts to promote parental engagement and family partnerships are considered best practice in the field of early childhood education and intervention (NAEYC, 1993; Winton, McCollum, & Catlett, 2007) and complement the family-centered philosophies and performance standards of most community-based early childhood programs, including Head Start and Early Head Start, yet are difficult to implement. Partnership-oriented teachers must think and operate not merely dyadically ("How do I connect with this other person, either child or adult?") but also systemically ("How do I enter this family system and support the learning and development of its members?"). Indeed, community agencies and schools face a host of challenges, including competing demands, uneven levels of education and training of their in-

coming personnel, high levels of staff turnover, time and paperwork pressures, and issues of program morale and authority, that may interfere with best intentions to implement partnership practices. Thus, practitioners' capacity to adopt specific partnering techniques is always an issue for policy makers, administrators, and community-based researchers (Zaslow & Martinez-Beck, 2006).

To advance the field, we need careful evaluation studies that help us assess the extent and depth of implementation and generalization of best practices. Currently, there are limited studies in education broadly, and early childhood specifically, that address these issues around program adoption—studies often described as *implementation fidelity* by educational researchers (e.g., Zvoch et al., 2007). Methods for measuring implementation fidelity are emerging but not prevalent in the early childhood field (O'Donnell, 2008). Implementation fidelity is considered to be a multidimensional construct characterized along five dimensions (Dusenberry et al., 2003; O'Donnell, 2008): (1) *adherence,* the implementation of intervention strategies as designed by program developers; (2) d*osage,* the amount of intervention delivered to participants; (3) *quality of intervention delivery,* a step beyond adherence indicating the quality, or effectiveness with which intervention strategies are delivered; (4) *participant responsiveness,* the participants' level of engagement in and receptiveness to intervention programming; and (5) *program differentiation,* whether the characteristics of the intervention distinguish treatment from control groups during the implementation of the intervention in studies evaluating the effectiveness or efficacy of interventions. This paper uses qualitative methods to assess aspects of teachers' adoption of a school readiness intervention intended to strengthen parental engagement in children's development and learning and partnerships with school professionals. In the language of implementation fidelity, it addresses implementation adherence, participant responsiveness, and program differentiation.

The purpose of the larger project is to test the effects of a federally funded school readiness intervention implemented for up to a 2-year period for each child and family, using experimental procedures (i.e., random assignment to treatment [Group A] and control [Group B]) to draw causal inferences. The intervention seeks to promote parent engagement and family-school partnerships on behalf of children's learning and development. The present paper evaluates implementation of specific partnering techniques through a close examination of teacher documents that authentically track their daily interactions and communications with parents. Other findings to date address socioemotional outcomes for children (e.g. Sheridan, Knoche, Edwards, Bovaird, & Kupzyk, in press), the quality of the professional development training and coaching (Brown, Knoche, Edwards, & Sheridan, in press); and implementation fidelity assessed through a quantitative study of home visit videotapes coded for practitioners' implementation of specific targeted behaviors (Knoche, Sheridan, Edwards, & Osborn, in press).

There are two major questions to this study:

1. What themes of parent engagement and home-school partnership are evident in different types of documents of Head Start teachers as they communicate with parents? Is there a difference between teachers who are trained in parent engagement and partnerships, and those who are not?
2. To what extent do preschool teachers implement and generalize specialized training in parent engagement and partnerships, as exhibited by their authentic communications with families?

Methods

The context for this study was a 5-year early childhood intervention project called the *Getting Ready Project,* conducted in

a Midwestern state. The present study employs a qualitative case study design, defined as the in-depth study of a phenomena bound in space and time (Creswell, 2003; Stake, 1995). The case study method was chosen to capitalize on the ample collection of documents that the early childhood teachers were providing regarding their work with parents (described below). Qualitative document review is an established part of program evaluation methods (Patton, 2001), and we expected that teachers' ordinary documents would provide detailed information about aspects of program adoption. Although limited in many ways, teacher documents have the merit of being less subject to the self-consciousness that teachers may feel when a researcher videotapes them at work or they are asked to discuss their behavior with others or rate themselves on project questionnaires. The document review thus contributes to a multi-layered process of program evaluation of the intervention project.

The Case: The Getting Ready Project

This case study of teachers' documents is part of a larger, longitudinal, randomized clinical trial evaluating the effects of the *Getting Ready Intervention* for promoting school readiness among disadvantaged children aged birth to five and their families, carried out from 2003 to 2008. Outcome measures for children include social, cognitive, and language indicators (teacher reports, parent reports, and objective assessments), and for parents, skills indicative of increased parental warmth and sensitivity, support for child autonomy, and support for child learning (Edwards, Sheridan, & Knoche, in press), as three dimensions critical to child readiness for schooling. The intervention is composed of an integrated set of relational, ecologic strategies that provide opportunities for educators to use natural contacts with parents (home visits, parent-teacher conferences, and family events) to support and strengthen the quality of parent-child interactions and learning experiences and create a shared responsibility between parent and professional to influence children's school readiness. The intervention model integrates *triadic* (parent-child-professional; McCollum & Yates, 1994) and *collaborative* (family-school) strategies (Sheridan & Kratochwill, 2008). Triadic strategies prompt warm, supportive parent-child interactions; affirm parents' competence; focus parents' attention on child development or skills; provide developmental information; and model and/or suggest parent actions that can support child learning. Collaborative strategies identify child strengths, determine important social-emotional and learning goals, assess current levels of child performance, brainstorm plans that parents and teachers can use to support a child's growth, and check back to monitor child progress. The active, seamless integration of triadic and collaborative strategies constitutes the *Getting Ready Intervention* (Sheridan et al, 2008). The intervention was congruent with the family-centered philosophy and practices of the agencies in our university-community partnership and was intended to augment, rather than replace, existing services. Indeed, the partnership provided the opportunity to rigorously evaluate an intensified approach to working with children and families congruent with the agencies' own goals and directions, and the intervention achieved strong endorsement by the administrators, advocates, and educators who were involved in its implementation (see Brown et al., in press; Knoche et al., in press).

Participants and Setting

This study focuses on 27 Head Start teachers (Table 1) who constituted the preschool-level early childhood practitioners participating in the intervention. They were assigned based on their schools (n = 23) to the treatment (Group A) and control (Group B) conditions, resulting in 12 Group A and 15 Group B teachers. All held at least a bachelor's degree, and 12.5% held an advanced

Table 1. Number of Teacher Documents Collected From Each of the 13 Teachers in Group A (Treatment) and14 Teachers in Group B (Control), Classified into 6 Document Categories

Teachers by Group A and B		Categories of Teacher Documents					
Teacher ID	Group	Classroom Newsletters	Home Visit Forms	Collaborative Planning Worksheets	Home-School and Summer Planning Forms	Records of Meaningful Contacts	Family Participation Records
1	A	6	33	13	12	75	23
2	A	9	48	8	11	46	14
3	A	15	59	56	35	62	18
4	A	8	33	22	12	42	11
5	A	16	48	16	14	45	17
6	A	48	56	73	34	55	12
7	A	13	44	30	14	55	18
8	A	26	31	38	17	57	16
9	A	11	42	33	16	43	14
10	A	9	6	2	0	21	3
11	A	16	119	71	46	118	22
12	A	17	61	57	38	78	18

(continues)

Table 1. *(continued)*

Teachers by Group A and B		Categories of Teacher Documents					
Teacher ID	Group	Classroom Newsletters	Home Visit Forms	Collaborative Planning Worksheets	Home-School and Summer Planning Forms	Records of Meaningful Contacts	Family Participation Records
13	B	10	6	0	0	0	9
14	B	10	8	0	0	0	5
15	B	15	13	0	0	0	12
16	B	2	3	0	0	0	0
17	B	2	0	0	0	0	2
18	B	11	39	0	0	0	22
19	B	1	20	0	0	0	17
20	B	0	5	0	0	0	5
21	B	24	13	0	0	0	9
22	B	2	0	0	0	0	5
23	B	21	7	0	0	0	5
24	B	6	6	0	0	0	14
25	B	24	3	0	0	0	0
26	B	6	5	0	0	0	0
27	B	9	1	0	0	0	1

graduate degree. All were female, and their mean age was 36.05 years (SD = 11). Ninety-one percent self-reported to be Caucasian; 9% Hispanic/Latino. Teachers had an average of 112.71 months experience working in early childhood (9.4 years; SD = 99.97 months). As participants in the larger project, they gave informed consent to take part in professional development experiences and provided monthly records of formal and informal contacts with parents on a monthly basis. Their project work was compensated, and they were aware of the study goals and agency partnership in the intervention and research. They worked in 23 schools operated through a public school system in a medium-sized city. The classrooms followed the public school calendar and were in session 4 or 5 days each week, for 4 hours each day. All classrooms were NAEYC-accredited and utilized the *High/Scope* curriculum (Hohmann & Weikart, 2002). Classroom size averaged 18 to 20 children from ages 3 to 5 years. Children in the study sample were 32% White/non-Hispanic, 25% Hispanic/Latino, 18% African American/Black, and 24% other. The primary home language for 76% of children was English, 19% Spanish, and 4.5% other/mixture; 98% of homes reported some form of public aid and 60% had two adults present; 77% of reporting parents had a high school degree, and 70% were employed or students.

As part of "business as usual," all teachers had ample opportunity for regular interaction and communication with families during child drop-off and pick-up, during regularly scheduled parent-teacher conferences and group socialization activities, and during home visits that occur 6 times each academic year and are conducted according to agency guidelines. They also were expected by their agency administrators to communicate with families through weekly classroom newsletters, as well as occasional informal notes or telephone calls. Beyond these regular modes of interaction and communication, furthermore, Group A teachers employed specific planning forms to facilitate their collaborative interactions with families, as described below.

Head Start teachers in Group A were supported in the implementation of the intervention through formalized coaching with a project coach twice per month. Coaching involved video-mediated feedback and reflection in the context of both small group one-on-one interactions. Coaching followed a session format involving initiation, observation/action, reflection, and evaluation (Hanft, Rush, & Shelden, 2004). In each session, the project coach focused on one or more specific *Getting Ready* strategy, asked reflective questions, highlighted professional strengths, and helped Head Start teachers set goals for strategy use in their work between coaching sessions. Control teachers in Group B continued to receive supervision on their work with families and children through agency-provided means, on average, monthly.

Qualitative Design

We used the three components delineated by Stake (1995) for analyzing data in a case study. First, a complex description of the case being studied is presented (see above). This includes the theoretical model and specific components of the intervention. Second, we used thematic analysis to look for patterns in the data. The results are described below and summarized in Table 2. Third, the interpretations and assumptions of the researchers were explored through naturalistic generalization. This occurs as we step back and make generalizations that we have learned from the case and speculate about how others may apply the findings to different cases or populations.

Coding and Data Analysis

The documents were analyzed for themes (Creswell 2003; Stake, 1995). Categorical aggregation of the data was used to

Table 2. Authentic Evidence of Teacher Strategies and Examples of Group Differences in Newsletters and Home Visit Documents

Getting Ready Intervention Strategies (Sheridan et al., 2008)	Strategy Use Demonstrated by Teachers in Group A (Treatment)	Contrasts Demonstrated by Teachers in Group B (Control)
Establish warm and supportive relationship with both child and parents	Incorporated emotion-focused content (e.g., personal touches, welcomes/goodbyes) in Newsletters	Provided more factual information content in Newsletters; less emotion-focused content
Focus parental attention on individual child strengths as related to developmental expectations	Included spotlights in Newsletters (often with photos or child quotes) to call attention to meaningful or learning moments at school	Provided few or no spotlights in Newsletters
Affirm parent competence and confidence in his/her child rearing and teaching behaviors	Fostered home-school collaboration in Newsletters; provided spotlights on parent involvement in Newsletters	Demonstrated little emphasis on home-school collaboration in Newsletters
Mutually negotiate goals between teacher and parent for the child, with special focus on cognitive, socioemotional, and language/literacy domains	Increased collaborative planning on Home Visits, especially in child-oriented domains of academic and socioemotional learning	Provided relatively more emphasis on physical-motor development and health and nutrition in Home Visits
Share developmentally appropriate information in the context of ongoing naturalistic interactions	Reduced "expert approach" in Newsletters by decreasing parenting tips	Emphasized parenting tips in Newsletters
Identify parent behaviors and natural learning opportunities in the home that can support targeted learning	Increased amount, elaboration, and specificity of child-oriented planning and goal setting on Home Visits	Provided some attention to child-oriented goals on Home Visits, but without substantial elaboration and detail
Engage parent in noting children's progress and measuring growth toward individualized developmental expectations, cycling to new goals when appropriate	Increased amount, elaboration, and specificity of child-oriented planning and goal setting on Home Visits	Provided some attention to child-oriented goals on Home Visits, but without substantial elaboration and detail

find collections of instances where meaning was revealed. This is presented through themes using examples from the documents as evidence. We wanted to identify basic themes that emerged from the documents and then determine on a *theme by theme* basis whether they seemed to be represented differently in Group A versus B in ways

that were related to the goals and strategies of the *Getting Ready Intervention* (fidelity adherence). In this way, we established general patterns across the entire sample as well as specific patterns that differentiated teachers in the treatment and control conditions (program differentiation).

Two graduate and one undergraduate research assistants were guided in the qualitative training by the first author. All authors of this paper were members of the *Getting Ready* project; they approached this inquiry with few if any preconceptions about what might be found in teacher documents. These documents were identified by random codes to facilitate blind review. The first and last authors were project principal investigators with most familiarity with the theory and practice of the intervention, whereas the graduate assistants were collaborators in several phases of data collection, including gathering documents at schools and going on home visits. Two coders (first author and undergraduate assistant) were completely blind to teachers' experimental condition, whereas the two others (graduate assistants) were aware of which teachers/sites were Group A versus B. We believe that minimal confounding was present as we approached the study with few expectations and took special care to look for counterexamples to findings that emerged (e.g. to look for evidence of the Spotlighting theme in Group B).

An initial inventory of documents was conducted to identify specific forms of documents that had been provided by the teachers, and in what quantity. We counted each document type for each teacher across each year of the study and found that Newsletters were available for 26 of the 27 teachers and Home Visit (HV) reports for 25 teachers (see Table 1). Thus, these two types of documents, Newsletters and HV reports, provide the focus of this study. Together, they provide an interesting window into program adoption, for two reasons. First, targeted teacher behaviors during home visits (*Getting Ready Intervention* strategies) were the focus of training and coaching sessions, and thus the home visit reports offer us the ability to examine teacher strategies directly taught and practiced (i.e., participant responsiveness, or uptake of specific targeted behaviors). In contrast, newsletters were not an aspect of teacher behavior addressed in the intervention. Teachers were asked to submit at least two examples every year to the *Getting Ready* project staff, but they were not trained in writing them. Thus, Newsletters offer the opportunity to examine documents for spontaneous change made by teachers on their own, without any kind of prompting from the research project and coaching staff (and thus provide evidence of generalization).

Second, newsletters were written by teachers with the whole classroom group of children and families in mind; they illustrate how teachers approached their classroom holistically. In contrast, HV reports result from teachers' individual visits with children and families; they illustrate how teachers approached their children and parents individually. The focus of this multiple case study is differences between Groups A and B, and these differences became readily apparent as we examined both kinds of documentary evidence through a thematic analysis.

Newsletter Analysis

The Newsletter analysis was conducted prior to the study of HV reports. The 27 packets were divided into four sets, one for each member of the coding team, who without any prior discussion about what we might find or expected to see, first read the newsletters for overall understanding, then took notes regarding the meanings derived from the newsletters, identified recurrent themes (i.e., "codes") evidenced in the newsletters, located relevant segments of the newsletters that corresponded with the distinct themes, and gave the themes tentative labels. Researchers then met as a group to compare initial codes and arrived at a master list of 37 categories (each researcher generated approximately 9). We discussed the 37 initial codes and readily grouped them into meaningful overarching themes based on content.

This resulted in a final list of five overarching Newsletter themes, as follows: (1) *Important Information*; (2) *Parenting Tips*; (3) *Home-School Collaboration*; (4) *Emotion Focused*; and (5) *Spotlights*. Each initial code was represented in the overarching theme such that it could be re-coded to fit within the new more comprehensive schema. We then returned to the documents and relabeled the segments according to the five themes. Researchers worked in pairs to check each other's work and discussed to consensus any disagreements. The five overarching themes met each of the following requirements: first, participants across Groups A and B demonstrated the theme in their newsletter in order to draw comparisons; and second, the theme was demonstrated in Newsletters of more than 25% of all participants (Table 3). We encountered examples of variant styles among participants of evidencing the themes. To ensure validity, negative case analysis is presented in these instances to provide a full range of the diversity of responses.

Home Visit Report Analysis

A thematic analysis of all the reports resulting from the home visits was next conducted. Initially, researchers reviewed several reports to identify relevant and important information that appeared similar across forms. Goal-setting was investigated because all teachers in the agency were expected to address parent and child goals during their home visits. Specifically, Head Start is a federally funded intervention program intended to improve young children's school readiness, and therefore, setting goals for children's learning and development was expected to be prominent. Yet it is also a comprehensive program that is intended to promote school readiness by enhancing the social and cognitive development of children through the provision of educational, health, nutritional, social and other services to enrolled children and families (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration of Children and Families, Office of Head Start Purpose Statement). Therefore, both child-oriented and parent-oriented goals would be expected to be part of home visit discussions. An analysis of the content of goal-setting documents provides a generative and authentic source of evidence about whether and how Head Start teachers established both child- and parent-oriented goals, and whether the content of goals differed for teachers in Group A versus B.

All teachers in the agency were required to use a particular HV Report form that ended with a small box for describing "Parent Goals" and "Child Goals"; they left a copy with parents at the end of each visit. Beyond forms that the agency required, Group A teachers

Table 3. Percentage of Teachers in Intervention and Control Groups Whose Newsletters Contained the Following Five Themes

	Important Information	Parenting Tips	Home-School Collaboration	Emotion-Focused	Spotlights
Group A Intervention ***n*** **= 12**	12 (100%)	7 (54%)	12 (100%)	10 (83%)	8 (67%)
Group B Control ***n*** **= 15**	14 (93%)	11 (73%)	13 (87%)	7 (47%)	4 (27%)
Total ***n*** **= 27**	26 (96%)	18 (67%)	25 (93%)	17 (63%)	12 (44%)

were requested to employ additional planning forms at all home visits with *Getting Ready* children. These forms (also left with parents) provided specific ideas for follow up. The Collaborative Planning Worksheet included sections to take notes on several phases of the home visit, including gathering parent's observations on the child, setting the agenda, having an interactive activity, and formulating action steps. The Home-School Plan provided space for parents and teachers to articulate specific commitments related to plans for carrying out learning activities at home and school, and in collaboration with one another (e.g., "At home we will ____," "At school we will _____," "As partners at home and school we will _____."). The Summer Plan (used at the last home visit of the school year) was similar but involved the parent stating commitments for the coming months. (e.g.,"At home we will ____," "In the community we will ____.").

The research team gathered goal-setting information from all of these planning forms. Home Visit reports were divided among members of the research team. Each member reviewed a subset of the forms, and made an electronic file of all goals found, grouped by school, teacher, and parent/child codes) into a master list on a word processor template. The team discussed the material and themes that emerged from our initial independent reading of our subset of teacher files. On the basis of this discussion, we decided to focus on the *content and complexity of goal-setting* as the themes for analysis because the documents revealed more concrete information about the number and nature of goals set than on any other aspects of the home visit.

Planning goals found in the documents were categorized into the following five broad themes that were readily apparent in the material: (1) *Academic Learning,* intended to promote the child's readiness for kindergarten; (2) *Social-Emotional,* intended to promote the child's self-reliance, social skills, emotional self-regulation, and family well-being; (3) *Physical-Motor,* intended to promote fine or gross motor skills; (4) *Health and Nutrition*, intended to promote the child's healthy eating, potty training, and good dental and medical care; and (5) *Adult-Focused,* intended to promote the parent's capacity to fulfill his or her role as a provider or home manager. Each researcher color-coded her portion of the home visit reports according to these categories, and then exchanged her set of data with another team member to establish reliability, discussing any disagreements to consensus. Once recoded, the entire corpus of materials was compiled into a master list and divided into sections grouped by A and B teachers for content analysis. Each theme was utilized by at least 25% of all participants (Table 4).

Table 4. Percentage of Teachers in Intervention and Control Groups Whose Home Visit Documents Contained the Following Five Themes

	Academic Learning	Social-Emotional	Physical-Motor	Health and Nutrition	Adult-Focused
Group A Intervention n = 12	12 (100%)	12 (100%)	11 (92%)	6 (50%)	11 (92%)
Group B Control n = 15	11 (73%)	11 (73%)	7 (47%)	5 (33%)	11 (73%)
Total n = 27	23 (85%)	23 (85%)	18 (67%)	11 (41%)	22 (81%)

Member Check. Validation was conducted by taking the paper back to three participants (one teacher, one coach, and one agency administrator) for review. All three confirmed the accuracy of the themes and agreed with links found between the intervention and the experimental groups. The agency administrator expressed mild surprise that the group differences were not stronger than we reported. Their various minor suggestions for interpreting and communicating findings have been taken fully into account.

Results

Newsletter Themes

Important Information

The theme of Important Information was composed of the following categories: Head Start program information; gentle reminders; weather-related reminders; notes about lost items; reminders of upcoming events; school policy reminders; upcoming community events; and useful community resources. Important information was included in the newsletters to inform and remind the parents of ongoing events in the schools and the community they might want to attend, things they should remember to do, and resources of which they might want to take advantage. This theme was prominent in the newsletters but was not conceptually related to the *Getting Ready* intervention; indeed, providing important information would seem to be a necessary activity of any school and teacher regardless of philosophy. The theme of Important Information was used by almost all of the teachers (96%) in their newsletters and approximately equally by teachers in both Groups A (100%) and B (93%). The only group difference was that while both included important information about school and classroom events, only Group A teachers included information about upcoming community events, community resources, and changing weather and its effect on children. Thus, the Group A teachers broadened the scope of their Newsletters to orient families to the larger picture of community and environment. One Group A teacher used the triadic strategy of affirming parent competence in responding to winter weather by stating, "I am glad so many children have been wearing their boots!"

Parenting Tips

The Parenting Tips theme was composed of the following categories: child development information; recipes; limit-setting advice; suggestions for particular child behaviors (e.g., healthy eating, getting enough sleep); commercial pages depicting home-learning activities or calendars laying out a schedule for possible family activities; specific ideas for seasonal activities outdoors; ways to practice self-help skills with coats and mittens; and parenting tips woven throughout the newsletter. This theme depicted efforts of teachers to share with parents, in a chatty and interesting way, information about important life skills that would help their students learn better and enjoy more well-being. Tips were used by two-thirds (67%) of the teachers in one or more newsletter, and were found in one or more newsletter of almost three-quarters (73%) of Group B, but about half (54%) of Group A. The greater frequency in Group B is perhaps not surprising in that Tips typically flowed from an "expert" model of teachers dispensing knowledge to parents (as opposed to the *Getting Ready* strengths-based approach of parent-teacher collaboration). In the most elaborate case, one Group B teacher had a 5-page newsletter with three pages attached showing families how to role-play an important life skill in an enjoyable way. The three pages depicted a set of comic strips to portray the steps of opening mail, writing it, and sending it, including careful notes on "What you need, words to use as you talk together, and what to talk about." The pages had been photocopied from a commercial

source, and the teacher used three different colors of paper to add liveliness. Many teachers included recipe pages with clearly labeled steps sometimes illustrated with line drawings so that parent and child could easily engage in activities together. Teachers who did not include an entire page of Parenting Tips typically placed their advice section in a specific corner of their newsletter as a regular feature. Topics included encouraging the child's curiosity and positive attitude toward learning, reading to children, ideas for seasonal activities with the family, practicing self-help skills with coats and mittens, helping the child get to bed on time, giving choices, talking about art, and providing good nutrition (encouraging child to try new foods).

Home-School Collaboration

Newsletters can play a prominent role in promoting the home-school connection by encouraging parental participation at home and school (Reichel, 2006). We called this theme, Home-School Collaboration. The Collaboration theme was composed of teachers sharing a variety of information including: classroom activities, classroom songs/poems, cultural event information, ideas and information pertaining to family literacy portfolios, classroom stories, invitations to the classroom, and requests for supplies. The Collaboration theme promoted Head Start goals of increasing continuity between home and school so that what is learned in school might be reinforced at home. This theme is also related conceptually to the *Getting Ready* training in collaborative planning strategies (see Table 2). It was used by 93% of all teachers (100% of Group A and 87% of Group B), but showed an important qualitative difference among Group A and B teachers with respect to the density and elaboration of use. Group A teachers averaged 10 instances of Collaboration per newsletter, whereas Group B averaged 4 per newsletter, and Group A typically provided more elaborate descriptions of classroom activities and ways for parents to incorporate this activity into the home environment.

Most often, teachers had one or two sections of their newsletters devoted to sharing information about what was going on in the classroom, with titles like, "Guess what we've been doing?" "A peek at the week," "Did you know . . . ?" and "We are learning everyday!" Group A and B teachers were distinguished in the amount of detail they provided and suggestions for how parents could incorporate similar activities at home. For example, one Group B teacher shared: "We worked on how to undo knots and worked on problem solving ways to pick up Q-tips without using our hands." In contrast, a Group A teacher shared:

> Starting Monday, we will start two weeks of color days. Attached you will find a schedule of Color Days so you know what color we will be discussing each day. Please put it somewhere you will see (refrigerator, your child's dresser, bathroom mirror, etc.). If your child has clothing that is the color of the day, please dress them in it—we will take a group picture each day. However, please don't go and buy anything new. A note will go home each day to remind you what color comes next.

In this elaborate example, not only did the teacher share classroom information, but she suggested an activity that would allow the parents to get involved in it with their children. This teacher even attached a separate calendar page to act as a prompt for the parents.

Other prominent topics of the Collaboration theme were centered on family literacy portfolios, completed by all families in this particular Head Start system, and invitations to parents to come visit the classroom. Group A teachers were especially found to phrase their invitations in specific, enticing ways that were intended to feel welcoming to parents. For example, one Group A teacher sent home the following invitation in a newsletter:

Our House Area is blooming with flowers and garden planting activities. We will

be planting some flowers of our own soon along with studying about all types of bugs. Come in and spend some time with us because there is only nine weeks of school left. Can you believe it?

Emotion-Focused

Teachers' newsletters often included emotionally-focused content that appeared designed to create a bridge with families and foster relationships. The emotional-laden material helped verbally express teachers' commitment to school-home partnerships. The Emotion-Focused theme was composed of the following subcategories: affirming parental competence; acknowledging child competence; personal information about the teacher; personal touches; teacher disclosure; fostering sense of community; thank-you messages; and welcomes/goodbyes to new and leaving students. This theme is directly related to the strengths-based approach of the *Getting Ready* intervention and triadic and collaborative strategies of establishing a relationship with families, building trust and rapport, and affirming parental competence (see Table 2). The theme was used by 63% of all teachers, but with striking group differences: 83% of A versus 47% of B teachers used the Emotion-Focused theme; and most of the examples below come from Group A teachers. One group B teacher was the exception in having 15 incidents of Emotion-Focused content with many instances of affirming parents' competence and thanking parents for their unique contributions to the classroom and to their children's learning.

Classroom newsletters that had high incidences of Emotion-Focused information tended to highlight personal information about the teacher to invite a two-way relationship with parents, including teacher disclosure of biographical information and their personal passion for teaching and education. For example, a Group A teacher wrote,

> I am so excited to begin a new school year. I would like to introduce myself. This is my second year teaching Head Start at ____. I have been married to my husband, Y, for 24 years and we have two children.

Along with providing personal information about themselves in newsletters, many teachers included personal touches in the newsletters. These personal touches came in the form of hand-written notes and personal testimonies of their enjoyment of teaching young children. One Group A teacher wrote, "I am looking forward to this school year, getting to know you and your child and working together to create a nurturing/caring learning environment."

Within the Emotion-Focused theme, teachers' depictions of the school as a community helped bridge the gap between school and home. Teachers often conveyed this sense of community by thanking parents for their volunteering efforts and involvement in the school. One Group A teacher wrote, "We would like to thank all of the families that made it out to the Pumpkin Patch. I wish everyone could have made it, but we are so happy that 14 families from our class were there." In this way she affirmed those who did participate without indirectly criticizing those who did not—a difficult job for the teacher trying to promote parent involvement.

Spotlights

The Spotlight theme was composed of categories that included: photos of children's activities; photos of parent-child group meetings (socializations); children's names and what they did; quotes from children; and birthday wishes to individual children. The Spotlights were one way that teachers used newsletters to put a positive focus ("Hey, take a look at this!") on the manner in which individual children and/or parents became involved in various learning activities that had been organized by the teachers. This theme was directly related to the *Getting Ready* training in affirming parent competence and helping parents notice and build on their children's successes (see Table 2). Spotlights were used by 44% of the

teachers but strongly distinguished teachers from Groups A and B. Spotlights were utilized by 67% of Group A teachers versus 27% of Group B. All of the examples described below come from the files of Group A teachers. Fewer B teachers used Spotlights, and those who did used them infrequently and usually with clip art, cartoons, or some other impersonal method of adding liveliness, as opposed to the more personal use of photographs in Group A Spotlights.

The Group A teachers typically selected ordinary or everyday moments to Spotlight that modeled or represented the kinds of moments they liked seeing in their classroom. Spotlights, especially when accompanied by photographs, gave these moments special attention in a way that implicitly communicated larger concepts about the important things that children were learning through play and social interaction, as well as through their parents' support and involvement in the early childhood classroom ("See what we are doing!"). The Spotlights implied approval without explicitly stating it.

For example, in her first newsletter of the school year, one Group A teacher inserted photos showing the following: five children playing together around the water table; a student teacher using building blocks with one little girl; two children working together on a visual matching game; a boy playing alone and intently with an intriguing looking toy; and a group of children enjoying the role play area. All of these photos of educational moments were large enough to clearly see what each child was doing, and labels named the children (first names only). The use of Spotlights communicated in a visual language that this classroom was a place for happy children to enjoy learning and to focus and concentrate on different materials and kinds of activity. Because they were part of a newsletter, they invited readers at home to talk together about what was happening at school. In a similar way, throughout the year, this particular teacher continued to put approximately five or six photos in each newsletter to provide glimpses not only of children but also of parents participating in the learning process. This teacher was exceptionally intentional and elaborate in her use of the spotlighting theme.

Many other teachers presented their Spotlights in similar but more limited ways. For example, another Group A teacher typically placed three or four photos in each newsletter with labels describing the important learning going on (e.g., "Play is Learning!!"), but without labeling the individual children. She usually included one dominant photo, however, that did name a particular child and spotlighted, for example, how the child was interacting with recycled materials. In this way the teacher both reinforced the child and her special classroom focus on the theme of recycling. Another teacher composed the front side of her 2-page newsletters almost entirely of photos with explanatory bands of text. Individuals were occasionally spotlighted by name; and in many cases the faces of the children were too small to identify the individuals. However, the photo content spotlighted memorable classroom moments and would have served to draw parents' and children's attention at home, revive children's memories of the events depicted, and be a good subject for parent-child conversation, for example, by arousing memories of a demonstration of use of a stretcher by two class visitors (fire fighters).

Home-Visit Planning Themes: Content and Goals

The Head Start teachers in our sample demonstrated similarity in the content areas (themes) on which they developed goals with parents during home visits. There were some differences (described below) in the percentages of Group A versus B teachers (favoring Group A, see Table 4) displaying the themes. The primary differences between teachers in Groups A and B were seen in the quality, depth, and specificity of child-oriented (though not adult-oriented) goals, with teachers in Group A demon-

strating more complex, complete goals than those in Group B.

Academic Learning

The content analysis of goals set together by teachers and parents on home visits indicated Academic Learning to be the most frequent theme, comprising more than a third of the total file of goals extracted from the documents. This was in accord with both agency and *Getting Ready Intervention* goals for promoting school readiness. Within Academic Learning, literacy was the preeminent subject matter of concern to teachers and parents, followed by speech and language. These findings may reflect the contemporary U.S. context and public concern about school failure, with widespread concern and pressure on early childhood teachers to help children achieve the language and literacy skills believed critical for later school success.

Academic Learning goals featured in the HV reports of all but four of the teachers (100% of Group A, but 73% of Group B), and in sheer quantity comprised about one-half of all the goal statements culled by the research team from the planning documents. HV reports of Group A teachers contained more extensive and detailed goal-setting with families than did the files of Group B. Although the two groups of teachers recorded the same general types of Academic Learning goals (e.g. literacy, mathematics), Group A included many more activities and skills to be practiced and also put much more specificity into their planning with parents. For example, a typical Group B teacher wrote down, "Continue working with numbers and letters." In contrast, a typical Group A teacher recorded the following plan:

> Work on letters in C's name. Mom got some magnetic letters [she procured on her own], and she will have C. spell her name, then mix up the letters and have her put them in order. [C. will] point out letters that are in her name.

In general, a very heavy emphasis was placed by teachers and parents on *literacy* goals. Teachers encouraged parents to work on their literacy portfolios but then went much farther by helping parents enhance their child's learning at home through everyday activities. Many of the suggestions in the plans were creative and yet also easy to carry out using the resources and toys available in that particular home. (The following examples are selected from Group A teachers, illustrating their relatively greater specificity and detail.) Some teachers focused on specific instructions about which words or letters to work on next; they usually stressed important words (e.g., the child's own name) or provided short lists of lower and/or upper case letters. Other Group A teachers focused less on what to teach and more on how to teach it, for instance, encouraging parents to help children learn their letters by recognizing the print in their environment, picking letters out of alphabet soup or breakfast cereal, putting magnetic letters in order, singing alphabet songs, doing letter searches on unimportant papers such as cash register receipts and magazines, practicing writing with chalk on the sidewalk, practicing writing on a small pad during down time spent at sports events or church, or writing a letter to Grandpa. Besides writing, *reading* with children was equally stressed, with many specific ideas about how often to read (at least every day), or for how long (at least a half hour), where to read (go to the library), what to read (classics like *Cat in the Hat* and *Brown Bear,* alphabet books, phonics books, rhyming books), what to notice in the books (talking about certain letter sounds and finding other words with the same sound, working on blending sounds, working on small words). In one case, there was a mention of reading with enjoyment. *Speech and language* goals were also part of the planning for many children, particularly those children who were experiencing difficulties. Teachers and parents developed goals that included teaching sign language, retaining their native Spanish language, practicing speaking skills at home,

pronouncing difficult sounds, speaking in longer sentences, and speaking more clearly and distinctly, and acquiring vocabulary related to color names, directional words, and shape terms. In contrast to the heavy emphasis on literacy and language, the attention directed to other areas of curriculum seemed much lighter. For example, *mathematics* goals received markedly less attention than literacy goals, but included such activities as practicing counting (with individualized goals such as counting to 5, or to 10, or to 20, or to 30), working on counting skipping numbers, making sensory numbers with glitter and glue, or counting things around the house and writing down the answers. *Visual-spatial* skills and focus on *time* appeared for a few children: playing with puzzles, talking about the calendar, the days of the next, what comes next, how long until a birthday or holiday. Playing *memory* games featured into a few summer plans.

Social-Emotional

Besides being important for academic learning, preschool education offers young children opportunities for social and emotional development. Children need support to help them develop their social skills, including self-reliance, and emotional self-regulation and awareness. Because these skills are an important component of every child's development, and also because socialization is considered vital by teachers for a child to function independently in the classroom, almost all teachers in our sample provided Social-Emotional goals for at least one family (100% of Group A, 73% of Group B); and the corpus of Social-Emotional goals comprised almost a third of the total file of goals extracted from the documents. The two teachers without Social-Emotional goals did almost no goal-setting of any kind. There was a group difference in that Group A teachers produced a much larger corpus of Social-Emotional goals than did Group B teachers with more activities elaborated in greater detail. Many Social-Emotional goals were centered on the development of self-help skills, or *self-reliance*. Because children in Head Start programs typically are in the 3- to 5-year-age range, reoccurring goals of the home visits were toilet training, getting dressed independently, following simple directions, taking care of personal hygiene, accepting more responsibility, and learning their address and telephone number. Although most teachers' HV reports included these goals, some teachers also provided specific activities that parents and teachers could do at home and school to support the goals. Teachers and parents also defined a variety of *social skill* goals. These goals typically dealt with making friends, sharing with peers at school and siblings at home, taking turns, joining in social play activities, using words to solve conflicts, not worrying what others are doing, and controlling their behaviors. Suggested ways for parents to help foster this goal were to take their children to events where they would interact with same-aged peers, facilitating play dates with classmates, and helping them use their words instead of their hands when upset. At school, one Group A teacher suggested including more socializing during work time and modeling at large group time what it looks like to join in. Goals also centered around *self-regulation* skills, such as helping children become aware of their feelings and manage their negative emotions of anger and frustration. One Group A teacher included making a "feelings wheel" and a "feelings book." Last, *family involvement* goals were found for several teachers. These were intended to promote the child's happiness as part of the family, and included the family spending quality time together and attending the end of the year celebration at school.

Physical-Motor

The needs of young children for healthy physical development and outdoor time are increasingly being recognized, but they captured much less attention during goal setting than did either academic or social-emotional domains, and were *not* the focus of *Getting Reading* training or coaching. The theme of

Physical-Motor was found for two-thirds of the teachers (92% of Group A, 47% of Group B), but was used rather sparingly, with typically one goal per child across all of the home visits for that child, for both groups of teachers. Gross motor and fine motor skills were about equally balanced. The gross motor goals focused most heavily around swimming and bicycle riding, with some mention of other sports such as dance, T-ball, and weight lifting. The fine motor skills focused on shoe tying, cutting with scissors, holding a pencil correctly, and practicing handwriting skills.

Health and Nutrition

Health and nutrition are topics important at both home and school, but did not call forth as much goal setting as the other areas of children's learning and development, and were not the focus of *Getting Ready* training and coaching. The content of this theme was not very elaborate in the planning documents, even for Group A, and the theme was found in the files of less than half of the total group (Group A, 50%; Group B, 33%). Working on potty training was most frequently mentioned (especially by Group B), followed by discussion of getting the child to the doctor or dentist, dealing with issues of health insurance, or helping the child get enough sleep and eat a good variety of foods.

Adult-Focused

Teachers often formulated adult-oriented goals, intended to promote parental self-sufficiency, along with child-oriented goals, in their planning with parents during home visits. These goals, again, were not a model component of the *Getting Ready* intervention but were part of the overall Head Start mission to provide comprehensive child development services to economically disadvantaged children and families. Head Start seeks to support parents' growth so that they can identify their own strengths, needs and interests, and become more self-sufficient as economic providers and home managers. The Adult-Focused area was the one that least distinguished Group A and B teachers. A slightly greater percentage of Group A than B teachers wrote adult goals (92% versus 73%), but the overall quantity and quality of Adult-Focused goal setting seemed quite similar for the two groups. No teachers undertook the kind of elaborated and detailed planning that had been seen in many instances for the child goals, but their goal-setting with parents did cover an impressive array of practical concerns, suggesting that they were talking seriously with parents. For example, one Group A teacher included the following Adult-Focused goals in her planning with four different families: "Get caught up on my computer class," "Improve English," "Get out of my depression," "Keep up with counseling," "Get my car fixed," "Get into a small business with a friend," "Do my CPR class," "Get taxes figured out," and "Get a bigger house." Some Group B teachers appeared to be particularly consistent in their documentation of adult goals on each home visit, and their carefully noted, sometimes repetitive listing of the same goal month after month (e.g., "Get home daycare started") suggested many parents' recurrent struggles. The specific goals outlined by Group B teachers paralleled those of Group A, and they indicate much about the challenging quality of the parents' lives, with such pragmatic and self-improvement goals as "Improve on time balancing," "Pay bills," "Organize office," "Get reliable transportation," "Get to bed earlier," "Get GED," "Look for a job," "Complete community college classes," and "Find a new home in the same area." It is unclear from the written documentation how much support and guidance that teachers actually provided parents in attaining their goals in either Group A or B. Nevertheless, the inclusion of adult goals on home visit planning forms suggests that teachers, as well as the school district, believe in the importance of goal setting not just for the child, but also for the larger family system in which the child is a part.

Discussion

Head Start is a federal program intended to improve young children's success in school and their families' ability to support their learning and development. The community agency that is the subject of this study brought a strong commitment to the values of home-school partnership and parent engagement when they entered into a 5-year experimental study and collaboration with university researchers. Within this context, the present study employs an established approach to qualitative case study research in scrutinizing teacher documents as a source of authentic evidence about teachers' capacities to implement with fidelity an early intervention model, that is, to demonstrate fidelity components of *adherence, participant responsiveness,* and *program differentiation*. We investigated specific themes of parent engagement and home-school partnership that were evident in the various types of documents collected from Head Start teachers, as well as the differences between teachers who were and were not trained and supported in techniques of promoting parent engagement and parent-school collaboration.

The analysis of Newsletters revealed at once that they were a medium of communication that most teachers took seriously. Newsletters appeared to have been prepared with care and attention to visual appearance as well as quality of content. Each teacher's documents conformed to an individualized style that was consistent from week to week in format, layout, and organization, thereby creating expectations in families about what to look for. Although the teachers in our particular sample had not received inservice training in newsletter preparation from their school system (Personal communication, 2008), they all used newsletters to share important information with parents and to build community with them, as is generally recommended by early childhood experts (e.g., Reichel, 2006).

Five themes were discerned in the Newsletters according to our analysis guided by grounded theory: (1) *Important Information*; (2) *Parenting Tips*; (3) *Home-School Collaboration*; (4) *Emotion-Focused*; and (5) *Spotlights*. Each theme met the criterion of being present in newsletters of more than 25% of participants. Important Information and Parenting Tips were the two most prevalent and certainly represented the traditional content of parent newsletters in any quality early childhood setting. Group B teachers actually surpassed Group A in the elaborateness and quantity of Important Information and Tips, perhaps indicating that they more clearly saw themselves in the role of "experts" conveying information and advice to parents, rather than in the role of partners, as was stressed in *Getting Ready* training and coaching sessions.

Striking differences (program differentiation) were evident between Treatment (Group A) and Control (Group B) teachers in the other three Newsletter themes: Home-School Collaboration, Emotion-Focused, and Spotlights, all of were more characteristic of Group A than B. Because the intervention did not involve any teacher training around newsletter preparation (only a bit of support to a few teachers who spontaneously asked for it), the findings suggest uptake and generalization (adherence to the intervention strategies, responsiveness of participants) on the part of teachers in Group A in their learning of parent engagement strategies. These three themes are related conceptually to strategies teachers were learning and practicing through the *Getting Ready* intervention (see Table 2). The first theme, home-school collaboration, involved generalization of strategies teachers were learning to promote collaborative planning on home visits; for example, informing parents about what was going on in the classroom and suggesting ways they could follow up and extend it if they liked, thus creating a "curriculum of the home" (Walberg, 1984) that would support school readiness. The second, Emotion-Focused theme, consisting of personal touches and disclosures, acknowledging parent and child competence, and emotional messages of welcome and

goodbye, was directly related to the integrated triadic and collaborative strategies teachers learned in the *Getting Ready* intervention, with its methods for establishing communication, building rapport and trust, and affirming confidence and competence. Likewise, the third, Spotlight theme, provided a subtle but perhaps powerful way for teachers to acknowledge parent and child competence.

The analysis of Home Visit reports allowed a close look at the content of the goals negotiated by parents and teachers. These findings speak to the teachers' uptake of strategies (again, adherence and participant responsiveness) they were learning in the *Getting Ready* intervention because collaborative planning was an explicit component of the training and coaching for Group A teachers. The most striking finding from the Home Visit report analysis was the difference (program differentiation, favoring Group A) in amount, depth, and detail of child-oriented goal-setting with families, even though the same content areas were addressed. The data revealed four easily coded categories of child-oriented goals (*Academic Learning, Social-Emotional, Physical-Motor,* and *Health and Nutrition),* all of which met the criterion of being used by at least 25% of teachers in both groups. Of these four child-oriented categories, academic-learning and social-emotional goals clearly predominated, together taking up more than two-thirds of the space of the entire file of goals extracted from the Home Visit reports. Within the academic learning area, literacy prevailed as by far the most important topic for goal-setting, followed by speech and language, mathematics, visual-spatial, time, memory, and community knowledge. Within the social-emotional area, the most important topics were balanced relatively equally among self-reliance, social skills, emotional development, and family involvement goals.

In contrast to the case of child-oriented goals, however, teacher group differences were not seen with respect to goal-setting around parental needs (*Adult-Focused* goals), either in quantity or quality. This negative finding may relate to the fact that the *Getting Ready* intervention did not focus on adult sufficiency skills. The finding of no group differences suggests the intervention neither improved nor impaired the teachers' ability to add balance of attention during home visits to the needs of the parents as well as the children.

Finally, this study highlights the utility of analyzing teachers' everyday documents as a means of learning about teachers' attempts to implement with fidelity an early childhood school readiness intervention. To advance the field of early education and intervention, we need a variety of methods for uncovering the ways in which practitioners do or do not take up new material presented to them and make it their own in their ongoing work. The present study suggests many commonalities of themes across the documents of both treatment and control groups of teachers, but at the same time certain striking differences. Moreover, the teacher group differences were revealed just as clearly in the products of activities outside the purview of training and coaching (newsletters) as in those produced under the direct guidance of the project team (Home Visit reports), thereby suggesting not only uptake of skills directly taught but also an encouraging internalization, generalization of learning, and personal responsibility by project teachers for the practices of parent engagement and home-school partnership, clearly indicating a high level of participant responsiveness. The findings suggest that teachers were maintaining the school district's stress on the academic content of literacy in preschool education while at the same time incorporating emotion-focused content and spotlights on children's competency into their more usual newsletter formats. Improving early childhood practice is a journey for individuals as well as for school systems, and the findings of this study suggest that practitioners can use everyday instruments of reporting and documentation to show how they bridge old and new in their work with children and families.

Implications for Practice

The present study has many implications for practice. For Head Start teachers and administrators, it provides examples of how everyday strategies of preparing classroom newsletters and conducting home visits can serve as tools for fostering parental engagement in their children's learning and home-school partnership. In addition, the study provides direction for ways that early childhood teachers can improve their practice. Although teachers in both groups demonstrated good use of documents to communicate generally with parents, the depth and complexity with which teachers connected with and engaged parents on a personal and meaningful level was greater for those involved in a project to learn methods for parent-professional collaboration. This natural generalization of family-focused practices is encouraging as it suggests that teachers may have assumed responsibility independently to reach out and provide meaningful and personal communications through written documents and structured goal-setting opportunities. Specifically, teachers in the treatment group appeared to spontaneously incorporate many effective strategies for fostering parent engagement and home-school partnership through the use of emotion-focused language and spotlights that reinforced child and parent competence. Even more strikingly, with the help of planning documents such as Home-School Plans, Collaborative Planning Worksheets, and Summer Plans, they appeared to use extensive and elaborate collaborative goal-setting with parents, especially with respect to the child-oriented domains of academic learning and social-emotional development.

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