

**Do family and high school partnerships increase parental homework involvement  
leading to student success?**

Paul North

Counseling Program

Department of Professional Studies, Chadron State College

Dr. Ann Petersen

April 25, 2021

**Table of Contents**

<b>Abstract.....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Introduction.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Statement of the Problem.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Statement of Hypothesis/Research Questions.....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Method.....</b>	<b>6</b>
Participants.....	6
Instruments.....	7
Research Design.....	7
Procedure.....	9
Data Analysis.....	9
Time Schedule.....	10
Budget.....	10
<b>References.....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Appendix A (Parents/Guardian Letter).....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Appendix B (Parent Survey).....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Appendix C (Student Assent Letter/Form) .....</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Appendix D (Institutional Review Board).....</b>	<b>17</b>

### **Abstract**

This study will investigate whether family and high school partnerships increase parental homework involvement leading to student success. It is widely assumed that high levels of parent involvement in their children's education always leads to student success. The hypothesis for this study will suggest this is not always the case and that there are other factors that help student achieve academic success. In addition, the hypothesis spawns a number of other questions which this study will explore. These questions include how do school partnerships aid parental involvement and student outcomes and whether more family orientated schools contribute to student success.

In order to conduct this proposed study, the researcher will spend one academic year investigating whether family and high school partnerships do affect student success. The researcher as selected two schools, Gering and Scottsbluff High Schools. It is proposed that at the start of the school year, the parents of all sophomore students at each school be mailed a survey asking about levels of parental involvement in their children's schooling. The researcher will then spend the school year monitoring students' grades and academic performance to see if there is any link between those students who are actively involved in their students' learning and those who are not actively involved. At the end of the school year all data will be correlated and statically analyzed to see whether or not the data supports the hypothesis.

### **Introduction**

It is generally agreed family and high school partnerships positively affect parental homework involvement and student outcomes. Most of the evidence suggests parental involvement in students' homework results in better grades and increased chances of graduation from high school. Recent studies suggest it is the quality of the homework, together with promoting more family friendly schools, which results in increased student success with homework and better grades in school.

The purpose of this research is to investigate whether family and high school partnerships contribute to increased parent involvement leading to greater student success or whether there is no significant statistical difference. In this study, the researcher will investigate whether parental involvement in students' homework leads to greater student success through improved grades in school. The researcher will also investigate if well designed homework and more family friendly schools are what actually promotes students' success in school.

The researcher proposes spending one academic year tracking the progress of sophomore students at two high schools in the Panhandle of western Nebraska. At the end of the academic year, the data from the study will be correlated and analyzed to see if there is any significant difference in student success as a result of parental involvement in students' homework.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The purpose of this study is to investigate whether family and high school partnerships affect parental homework involvement and student outcomes. It as traditionally been

believed that family and high school partnerships have an enormous impact on parental homework involvement and student outcomes. Recent evidence suggests that while this is true, what is also important is the quality of the homework that is provided to the student. If the homework is well thought out and designed, and meets specific learning goals, then homework can be beneficial alongside parental and school support.

What is also important is that schools create an environment that is supportive of the students and their parents. In a partnership, parents, “teachers and administrators create more family-like schools” (Epstein, 2010, p. 82). In such schools there is a partnership between administration, parents, and students and each child is made to feel included. This study will attempt to discover if such partnerships enhance student outcomes. The key terms to consider in this study are homework, parent involvement, and partnerships.

### **Statement of Hypothesis/Research Questions**

The hypothesis for the study is that increased family and high school partnerships have no statistical difference in student success. This hypothesis poses the following questions that this study will wish to explore:

1. Does parental homework involvement improve students' completion of homework and school assignments?
2. How do school partnerships aide parental involvement and student outcomes?
3. Does making a school more family friendly and community based help students achieve success?
4. Does well thought out and planned homework assignments make a difference in student achievement?

5. In what ways do parents get involved in their child's educational experience?

### **Method**

It is proposed that in this study a group of sophomore students and their parents from Gering and Scottsbluff High Schools be selected in order to carry out the study. Shortly before the start of the school year the parent of each student will be mailed a cover letter and survey and asked to participate in the research. Based on the responses to the survey, students will be monitored during the school year to see if parental involvement does make a significant statistical difference for those students who's parents are actively involved in their children's homework.

### **Participants**

For this study it is proposed that the parents of sophomore students be asked to participate in the study. Sophomore students were selected for this study because they are established in the high schools they attend and because the results of the study could be used to make changes to the school environment before they graduate from high school. The schools that will be used for the study are Gering High School and Scotsbluff High School located in the Panhandle of Western Nebraska.

A total of 385 students from both schools will be involved in the study with the plan to ask the parents of every sophomore to complete a survey to measure their level of involvement in their child's homework and how involved they are in the school. The students and parents come from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds and

a variety of ethnicities although the majority of students in the study are of Caucasian decent.

### **Instruments**

For this study, a survey will be used consisting of 25 statements asking parents a variety of questions about their involvement in their students' homework, how involved they are in the school, and whether their school encourages parent involvement. The survey instrument is based on a Likert rating scale ranging from 1 to 5 with 1 being strongly disagree and 5 being strongly agree. Parents will be asked to rate each statement 1 through 5, on the survey with the option of putting a 3 for neutral on a particular statement. The survey statements were based on a mix of statements developed by the researcher and statements from previous studies on the subject. There will be no measure of validity or reliability because the survey instrument was created specifically for this study.

In addition to the survey, the students' grades during their sophomore year will be tracked as a measure of student performance during the study. If family and high school partnerships do increase parent involvement in students' homework, then it would be expected to see a significant improvement in students' grades and grade point average by the end of the sophomore year.

### **Research Design**

The survey research design for this study will be a cohort survey. This will be because the study will track "one population selected at a particular time period"

(Mills & Gay, 2019, p. 203). In this case, a class of sophomores will be tracked from the start of the school year to the end of the school year to see if there is any statistically significant change in their grades as a result of parent involvement in students' schoolwork.

A correlation design will be used in this study. Correlation design is used when "collecting data to determine whether, and to what degree, a relationship exists between two or more quantifiable variables"(Mills & Gay, 2019, p.224). In this case, the variables to be considered are the parents and the students. The level of parent engagement will be measured using the survey while student success will be measured using the ACT test scores, grade point average, and graduation levels.

The parents and students will be selected for the study based on cluster sampling as the parents and students form "an intact group of population members with similar characteristics" (Mills & Gay, 2019, p.153) which form a cluster. The parents and students represent an intact population at Scottsbluff and Gering High Schools, which is suitable for study.

During the course of the study, the permission and cooperation of both school districts and parents would be required in order to complete the study. This would be necessary in order to track parents' level of involvement in student homework and to track student grades and grade point average at school during the course of the school year.



**Procedure**

Before the start of the academic school year, contact will be made and permission will be sought from the school districts to carry out the study. At the start of the school year, parents will be mailed the survey and accompanying cover letter explaining the survey and the purpose of the research. Parents will be given two weeks to return the survey. A follow up letter will be sent to those parents who do not return the survey in the allotted time. A permission form will also be mailed with the survey giving permission for each child to be included and to participate in the study, and also giving permission for the researcher to access student grades and grade point averages during the course of the school year.

During the school year, each participating student's grades will be monitored. This will be done at the end of each of the four quarters of the school year to see if any significant changes have occurred due to higher levels of parent engagement with their student's homework and school activities. Once the school year ends, the data will be analyzed and compared over the course of the school year to investigate if there is any significant difference in grades due to parent engagement in homework.

**Data Analysis**

Once the data is collected, it will be analyzed using descriptive statistics, such as mean and standard deviation and through the use of the Pearson correlation statistical test. Since this study will be a correlation study, Pearson  $r$  will be the most appropriate statistical test. This is because two variables are to be measured to see if

there is a relationship between the two. The paired scores will be correlated and the result “expressed as a correlation coefficient that indicates the degree of the relation between the two variables” (Mills & Gay, 2019, p.225).

According to the null hypothesis, parent involvement in homework should make no difference to student success. It is expected, based upon the hypothesis, that the results of the study will show no significant difference to student homework and student success in school as a result of family-high school partnerships increasing parent involvement in students’ schoolwork.

### **Time Schedule**

The time schedule for this study will be one academic year. Before the start of the school year permission will be sought from the school districts to conduct the study. At the beginning of the school year, the researcher will mail the survey and accompanying cover letter to sophomore parents at the two high school selected to participate in the research. During the course of the school year, students’ grades will be monitored by the researcher to see if there is any relationship between the variables being studied. Once the school year is complete, the researcher will tabulate the data and when write a research report outlining the findings of the study.

### **Budget**

The total amount budgeted for this study is conservatively estimated at \$400. This includes costs for postage, paper, and envelopes. Over ancillary expenses may push the cost above \$400 and this would include the cost of transportation for the

researcher and the possible costs incurred from use of communication devices such as email and phone. It is estimated that at most the total cost of the study will not be more than \$500.

### References

- Epstein, J. (2010). School/family/community partnerships: Caring for the children we share. *Phi Delta Kappan* 92 (3).
- <http://eds.b.ebscohost.com.ezproxy.chadronstatelibrary.com/eds/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=1&sid=42221d74-9a11-4141-8e57-1db6be61fd4f%40sessionmgr103>
- Grover, K.A. (2015). *A Validation of the Family Involvement Questionnaire-High School Version*. (PHD Thesis, Minnesota State University, Mankato)
- Mills, G. E., & Gay, L. R. (2019). *Educational research: Competencies for analysis and applications*. New York: Pearson.
- Rahman, J.L. (2001) *The effects of parental involvement on student success* (Master's Thesis, University of Wisconsin-Stout)
- <http://www2.uwstout.edu/content/lib/thesis/2001/2001rahmanj.pdf>

**Appendix A**

Dear Parents/Guardian,

The attached survey is part of a study designed to explore the effects of parent involvement on student success. I am asking you to help with this study by completing this attached survey; You are not required to complete this survey; your participation is completely voluntary. All information obtained by this survey will be anonymous. No one will know that you completed this survey.

The results of this survey will be used in a report, a copy of which will be made available to the Principal of your child's school and will be made available to you. By completing the survey, you are giving informed consent to be a voluntary participant. Thank you for your help in completing this survey. If you have any questions may contact me by emailing me at [paul.north@eagles.csc.edu](mailto:paul.north@eagles.csc.edu) or calling at 308-635-0204.

Sincerely:

Paul North

**Appendix B****Parent Survey**

The purpose of this questionnaire is to investigate the effect of parental involvement on student success. Please answer the following questions as accurately as you can. Do not leave any blank. Thank you for taking part in this survey.

**Directions:**

Please answer the following questions using the scale below. If you strongly agree with a question or statement please enter a 5. If you disagree with a question or statement please enter a 1. If you are neutral on a question or statement please enter a 3. This survey is anonymous; please DO NOT put your name or your child's name on the survey.

1

2

3

4

5

Strongly Disagree   Slightly Agree   Neutral/Undecided   Slightly Disagree   Strongly Agree

\_\_\_ 1. I attend conferences with teachers to talk about my child's learning and behavior.\*\*

\_\_\_ 2. I expect my child to complete high school.\*

\_\_\_ 3. I contact my child's teachers about my child's progress in school.

\_\_\_ 4. I talk to teachers and staff about school and classroom rules.\*\*

\_\_\_ 5. I ensure that my child completes their homework.

\_\_\_ 6. I often help my child with their homework.

- \_\_\_ 7. Helping my child with homework is important.\*
- \_\_\_ 8. Monitoring my child's homework is an important part of their education.\*
- \_\_\_ 9. It is important to be involved in a school organization (e.g. PTA, Booster Club).
- \_\_\_ 10. Time should be set aside for homework.
- \_\_\_ 11. I believe that volunteering at my child's school is very important.
- \_\_\_ 12. I feel that the school encourages parents to be involved.
- \_\_\_ 13. I help my child with academic skills.
- \_\_\_ 14. I provide assistance for my child when they are completing homework.
- \_\_\_ 15. Teachers explain to parents how to best help their child with homework assignments.
- \_\_\_ 16. I talk with my child about career options and college opportunities.
- \_\_\_ 17. I participate in family and community activities at my child's school.
- \_\_\_ 18. It is important for my child to see that I am involved in school activities.
- \_\_\_ 19. Homework is completed before participating in other activities.\*
- \_\_\_ 20. I expect my child to graduate from vocational school or college.
- \_\_\_ 21. I discuss with school staff my child's disciplinary issues and problems.\*\*
- \_\_\_ 22. I talk with my child about how education has helped me.
- \_\_\_ 23. I talk with my child's teachers on the telephone and though through email.
- \_\_\_ 24. I ask my child how their day was at school and what they learned in class.
- \_\_\_ 25. I talk with my child's teachers about homework my child is expected to complete at home.

### End of Survey

\*Questions courtesy J.L. Rahman (Please see References)

\*\*Questions courtesy of Katlyn A. Grover (Please see References)

### Appendix C

Dear Student:

My name is Paul North and I am a graduate student at Chadron State College. I am asking you to take part in a research study to assess if increased parental involvement in homework leads to greater student success in high school.

If you agree to take part in this study, your grades will be tracked for the academic year to see what impact your parents involvement with your schoolwork has on your grades. Your parents have consented to be a part of this study. All information in this study will be strictly confidential and no one except your parents and myself will know you are involved in this study. You can choose not to participate at anytime and no one will be upset with you if you choose not to participate. The results of this study will be made available to your Principal and you may review them at anytime once the study is complete.

If you agree to participate in the study, please sign the consent below. If you sign the consent, it means you have read this letter or have had it read to you and you are willing to be a part of this study.

Thank you for your help and I look forward to your participation in this research.

Sincerely:

Paul North

.....

**Print Student's Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature of Student:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature of Researcher:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_



## Appendix D

### Chadron State College Institutional Review Board Request for Administratively-Reviewed Exempt Certification

*Submit one complete copy to IRB Chair – allow at least two weeks for review*

<b>Research Project Title:</b>  Do family and high school partnerships increase parental homework involvement leading to student success?		
<b>Principal Investigator (must be a full-time faculty or professional staff member):</b>  Dr. Ann Petersen		
<b>Department:</b>  Education	<b>Telephone:</b>  308-430-1513	<b>Email:</b>  apetersen@csc.edu
<b>Co-Principal Investigator (student researcher):</b>  Paul North		
<b>Department</b>  Counseling	<b>Telephone:</b>  308-635-0204	<b>Email:</b>  paul.north@eagles.csc.edu
<b>Date Project Activity to Begin:</b>  August 6 <sup>th</sup> , 2021		
<b>Source of Funds (if any):</b>  Personal Funding (about \$400-\$500)		

As the investigator submitting this proposed research and signing below, I agree to conduct the research involving human participants as presented in the protocol or modifications to it and as approved by the School/Unit and the Institutional Review Board.

Principal Investigator Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Co-PI Signature: Paul A. North Date: 4-24-21

As School Dean/Unit Head, I certify that the proposed research meets School policies and complies with the requirements for Exempt Status Certification.

Dean/Unit Head Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**(application form continued on next page)**

CSC Administratively-reviewed Exempt Application, continued

**Using the following format and numbering, please submit the following:**

Principal Research Credentials:

1. **Attach copies of current certificate of training in ethical issues involving human subject research for the all investigators** (including student researchers and principal investigator(s); not required if the administratively-reviewed exempt project is conducted by a unit of CSC with the intent to assess and improve unit performance.)

*In the event that the study gets to go ahead, the researcher would provide copies of certificates of training in ethical issues.*

Overview and Objectives of Research Project:

2. Concisely describe the purpose and methods of the research, including the following:
  - research methodology
  - participant population

*It is proposed that in this study a group of sophomore students and their parents from Gering and Scottsbluff High Schools be selected in order to carry out the study. Shortly before the start of the school year the parents of each student will be mailed a cover letter and survey and asked to participate in the research. Students will also be given an consent form to gain their permission for participation in the study. Based on the responses to the survey, students will be monitored during the school year to see if parental involvement makes a significant statistical difference for those students whose parents are actively involved in their children's homework. The participant population for this study will be sophomore students and their parents.*

3. Include a brief description of all procedures to be conducted.

*Before the start of the school year, permission for the study will be sought from the administrations of each high school selected to participate in the study. Once permission is obtained, each parent of a sophomore student will be mailed the cover letter and survey and asked to take part in the study. The students of the parents who agree to participate in the study will receive a letter/consent form asking for their permission to be involved in the study. From there, student grades will be monitored during the school year. At the end of the school year, student grades will be collected and analyzed and compared to levels of parent involvement in students' homework. The data will be correlated and placed into a report to be written by the researcher.*

4. Attach all instruments (surveys, recruitment documents, interview protocols, informed consent forms, questionnaires, demographic forms, phone screens, etc.) that will be used.

*Please see Appendixes A, B, and C ( attached).*

Review Category and Criteria:

5. Cite which exempt category you believe this research falls under, and explain why you believe it falls under this category.

*The category the research falls under is the Expedited Review Category. The reason this research falls under this category is that the participants in the research are under the age of 19 but over the age of eight, and appropriate permission needs to be obtained both from the parents of the students and the building administrators.*

Consent Procedures:

6. Provide a copy of the written informed consent form to be used and signed by participants (see Appendix IV). If no consent form will be used, the research must qualify for a waiver of informed consent; explain how the research meets **each** of the following criteria required for such waiver:
- Research involves no more than minimal risk to participants;
  - Waiver will not adversely affect the rights and welfare of the participants;
  - Research could not practicably be carried out with the waiver or alteration; and
  - Subjects will be provided with pertinent information in some other format.

*For this study, informed consent forms will be required of the participants. Please see appendixes A, and C.*

Confidentiality:

7. Specifically describe if and how participant privacy and confidentiality will be maintained.

*For the parent survey and the student consent form, only the researcher will know who chooses to participate in the research. The researcher will maintain strict confidentiality of the participants and will not disclose information to outside sources.*

Benefits of Study:

8. Describe the potential benefits of the research, for the participant and for society. Summarize your analysis of the risk/benefit ratio for this particular research, including participant benefits for participating.
- Note: participation financial/course grade incentives are not considered a benefit, and must be used cautiously so as to not coerce participation or to skew participation from potential population of interest.

*The benefits of this research involve learning about how parent involvement in students' homework leads to greater student success in school. Students who are more successful in school will benefit academically and professionally from such success. Society will benefit from this research because we will gain a greater understanding of how student success in school is influenced by their parents. The*

*risk to the participants in this study is low and the benefits of the study far outweigh the risks.*

**Collaborations and Partnerships:**

9. If access to research participants is gained through cooperating institutions not under the control of Chadron State College, provide evidence that the authorized official of that institution has approved the research application and collaboration.

*Permission for the study will be sought by the researcher prior to the start of the academic year in which the study will be conducted. Evidence that permission is obtained will come in the form of written communications, such as emails and letters.*