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Parent Involvement Plan for Lincoln Elementary

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Parent Involvement Plan for Lincoln Elementary



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Purpose

The purpose of this capstone project was to create a parent involvement plan for Lincoln Elementary using research based information. The information gathered during the literature review will be used to gain a better understanding of parent involvement along with evidence based strategies to improve parent involvement. This plan will then be used by the school to work to increase the amount of involvement parents during the 2012-13 school year. Creating a strategy to increase parent involvement has been identified as a need by the school. It is also part of the school's Adequate Yearly Progress plan which was submitted to the Minnesota Department of Education in February 2012. Due to the belief of the importance of parent involvement, it is mandated under the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 for elementary schools.

Methodology

A search of the Minnesota State University, Mankato's journal data bases (ERIC, social service abstracts, and ProQuest) was completed in February 2012. The time frame used in the search was 1985-present. The search was restricted to scholarly journal articles. A search of parent involvement organizations was also completed using the internet. This search was completed using a Google search using the terms parent involvement organizations. The information gathered includes definitions, programs, information for parents, and information for educators. Some organizations have also completed research regarding parent involvement which was obtained to be used in the project.

Literature Review

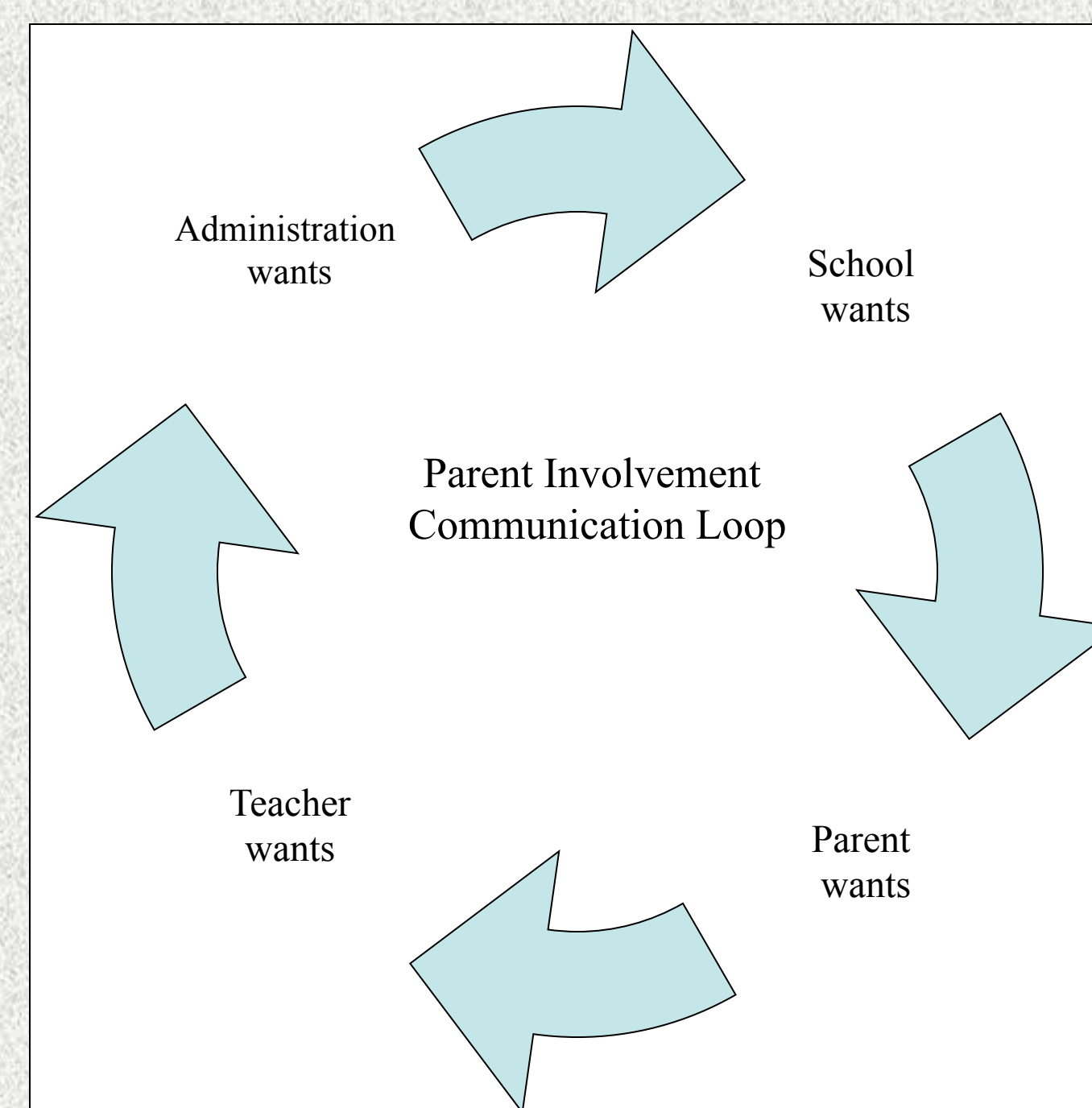
The research states that parent involvement is important to a child's academic success. Increased parent involvement can also be associated with increased achievement, better attendance, increased motivation to achieve, reduced dropout rate, better emotional adjustment and improved social behavior and interactions with peers (Wong & Hughes, 2006, p.646). However, the research shows that the impact of parent involvement occurs before 8th grade, thus making it most important in the elementary school years (Altschul, 2011). In order to best understand parent involvement and create a plan, there needs to be a consistent definition. This is important because parent involvement can mean different things to different people. According to the Minnesota Parental Information and Resource Center (2011), the federal government defines parental involvement as the participation of parents in regular, two ways, meaningful communication involving student academic learning and other school activities. These activities include the parents playing an integral role in assisting with their child's learning, being encouraged to be involved, and being full partners in their child's education. The relationship between the school and family are important to increasing parent involvement. There are many different activities the school, staff and parents can do to increase parent involvement. There is also some research that shows involving the community by bringing services to the school can affect parent involvement.

References

References are available from the author upon request.

Acknowledgements

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Parent Involvement Plan needs:

- Consistent definition
- Education of staff
- Education of parents
- Work to overcome barriers
- Consider diversity of population

Activities to increase Parent Involvement

Parents	Teachers	School-wide
Attend school meetings	Maintain ongoing communication with parent	Brochures which explain state testing system and expectations
Attend student performances	Create a welcoming environment which fosters a culture of welcoming all	Create a welcoming environment which fosters a culture of welcoming all
Attend school social events	Create structures which encourage family involvement	Hold training activities for parents
Maintain ongoing communication with teacher –in person, phone, email, letters	Instruct parents how to help their child with homework	Create structures which encourage family involvement
Join Parent Teacher Association (PTA)	Maintain high expectations	Involve parents in advisory committees
Volunteer in small ways	Home visits	Survey parents in decision making
Ask students about their school day	Nonacademic communications with parents	Have a parent coordinator
Provide books	instruct parents on how to help their child	Increase cultural competencies
Provide rich oral language environment	Assign activities that help parents encourage learning at home	Have an active PTA
Help with homework		Educate parents on the value of parent involvement
Maintain high expectations		

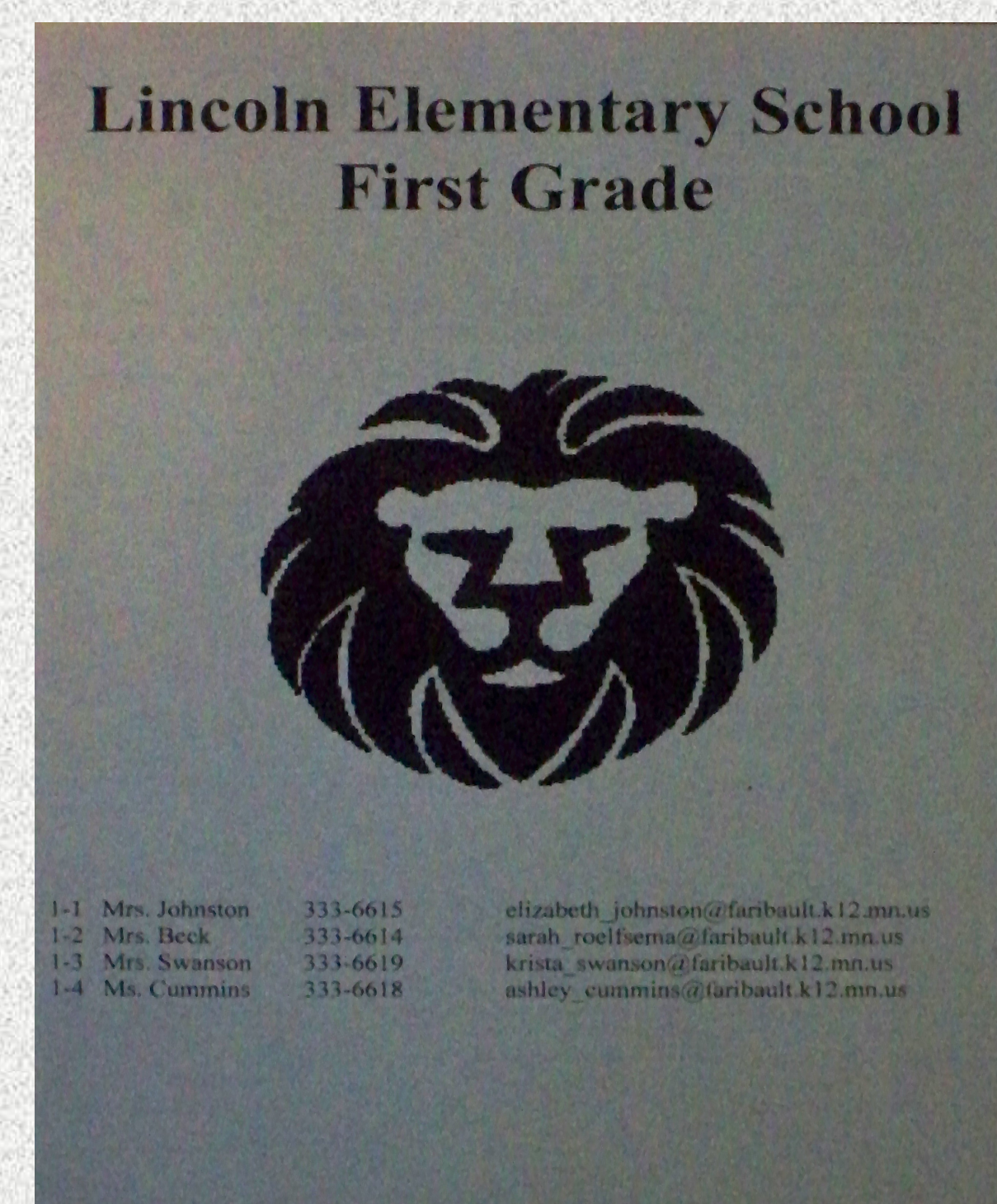
Grade Level Guide books

For grades 1-5

Located in student planners

Give guidelines for

- Homework/assignments
- Classroom behavior plan
- Classroom parties
- Birthday Parties
- Communication with staff
- Grade level curriculum



Implications for Practice

The social worker is able to:

- be a bridge between the school, staff, parents and students.
- gain an understanding of the beliefs of each group while also understanding the goal of increased parent involvement.
- look at the school and classroom procedures which can effect parent involvement from an outside perspective.
- understand and work to eliminate barriers for parents to be involved in their child's education.
- incorporate information regarding all of these populations in the school.
- look at all levels (micro, mezzo and macro) to understand the plan and implement changes as necessary.

Recommendations

- Implement the parent involvement plan during the 2012-13 school year.
- The focus of the first year is to educate staff and parents about parent involvement.
- Evaluate for effectiveness and implementation at the end of the first year.
- Use this information to make changes as needed.
- Incorporate more activities into the next year.
- Continue to gain staff and parent input.
- Look into possible funding for other curriculums available for future years.
- Implement the plan in the other elementary schools in the Faribault School District.

Conclusion

The parent involvement plan for Lincoln Elementary works to incorporate research based information about parent involvement while also being appropriate for the school and its client population. The plan focuses on educating both Lincoln staff and parents about parent involvement and activities they can do to increase involvement. The plan is also school wide in order to be most effective for all students and families. The school social worker is taking a lead in the implementation of the plan due to the role the social worker plays in the school. However, the SITE team is also involved in the implementation due to the need of staff to buy into the program and implements it with fidelity. This will assist in the plan being most effective. Information given to parents will be translated into Spanish and Somali so parents can access the information. The parent involvement will be evaluated at the beginning of the year to obtain a baseline. There will be another evaluation at the end of the year to compare the differences.

