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The Involvement of Parents of High School Students in a Positively-Oriented Seminar Directed at Increasing Academic Achievement

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THE INVOLVEMENT OF PARENTS OF HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS IN A POSITIVELY - ORIENTED SEMINAR DIRECTED AT INCREASING ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

by

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Literature concerning parental involvement, while very limited at the high school level and very weak in terms of design quality, points to the importance of such involvement, especially in reference to student achievement. This study examines parent involvement with high school guidance services, particularly the relationship between academic achievement and parent participation in a structured school based seminar, entitled: Grade Booster Night.

The hypotheses tested include: 1) There will be no difference between Grade Booster (GB) and non-Grade Booster (non-GB) parents in terms of their perception of their frustration and aloneness in facing the problem of high school underachievement. 2) There will be no difference between GB and non-GB parents on their awareness of and their perceived success of the academic improvement strategies. 3) There will be no difference between GB and non-GB parents with regard to their perception of school staff concern. 4) There will be no difference between students whose parents attend Grade Booster Night and students whose parents do not attend Grade Booster Night when examining their grades, attendance and disciplinary

steps. 5) There will be no difference across grade levels and sex when examining GB or non-GB status, grades, attendance and disciplinary steps. 6) There will be no difference between students in Project Success or Reading relative to their grades, sex, grade level, and status of their parents as GB or non-GB parents.

Central to this study are the results of the Very Important Parent (VIP) Survey matched with student profile data. The results largely show Grade Booster Night attendance not significantly related to the myriad of factors tested. Several trends, however, favor GB parents and their children. F grades improved for 72% of the children of GB parents. The range of days absent is much smaller for children of GB parents. Most students in this study had no disciplinary steps, but for students who had steps, they clustered at a lower level for children of GB Parents than for children of non-GB parents. Feelings of frustration/confidence for 48% of the GB parents showed positive change, while the percentage for non-GB parents was 26.42%. On the feeling alone/not alone scale 28% of GB parents and only 7.55% of non-GB parents showed a positive change in attitude. Both parent types felt that school staff showed a moderate level of concern about their underachieving students. The difference between GB and non-GB parents' knowledge of academic improvement strategies was expected. However, there was no difference between the perceived success of strategies used by GB or non-GB

parents. No strategy seemed clearly effective for GB or non-GB parents. In fact almost none of the GB parents found any of the strategies very successful. Measuring the additional effects of Project Success or Reading on children of GB and non-GB parents was not possible due to very small numbers in this study.

The present study, exploratory and descriptive, with stringent restraints on the analyses, is limited in its ability to substantiate previous research. However, future research following the recommendations provided may more adequately validate the trends seen in this study.

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VITA

The author, Mary E. O'Reilly, is the daughter of the late Patrick and the late Beatrice (Cummins) O'Reilly. She was born in Chicago, Illinois on September 30, 1946.

Ms. O'Reilly attended parochial schools in Chicago, completing her secondary education at Alvernia High School in June of 1964, a Bachelor of Arts Degree in psychology at Mundelein College in June of 1968 and a Master of Education in Counseling/Guidance at Loyola University in June of 1971.

Of her 23 years in the field of education she has worked 20 years as a high school counselor. She is currently employed by Lake Park High School in Roselle, Illinois as a freshman counselor. She is a National Certified Counselor, a National Certified School Counselor, a past president of the DuPage County School Counselors Association and a member of Phi Delta Kappa. She has given 14 convention/conference presentations for such organizations as: Illinois Association for Counseling and Development, Illinois Pupil Personnel Services Conference, American Association for Counseling and Development and Illinois Association of College Admissions Counselors. Among these presentations four were related to the Grade Booster Seminar, including one at the 14th International

Roundtable for the Advancement of Counseling in Dublin, Ireland. She has organized and participated in a cable TV series of 63 programs on college information. She has also had an article published in College Prep, a publication of the College Board.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

While many researchers and writers extol the value of parent education and parent involvement programs, they indicate varying degrees of success with such programs. The success of these programs, or lack thereof, has usually been described in terms of parental attitude/action changes and/or in terms of student achievement/attitude/behavior/ attendance changes. To a large extent, these parent programs have focused upon parents of elementary and junior high school students. In some instances they have focused upon specific subject areas, while in other cases they have centered on underachievement, attendance or behavior.

According to the research available, little focus has been placed upon helping parents deal specifically with underachievement at the high school level. Parents of underachieving high school students are under added pressure created by the demands for excellence in education today. Their ability, as well as their children's ability, to successfully handle this pressure can be enhanced by appropriate education, involvement, encouragement and support.

Underachievement and its Ramifications

Counselors, in their work with high school students, must attempt to address a myriad of issues. Some of them are problems over which counselors can have very little control: substance abuse, pregnancy, home situations, etc. Teachers and counselors have some influence over the school days of students, but they cannot exert any control over out-of-school situations such as those just mentioned. They can counsel students, asking them to examine their attitudes/behaviors and the consequences of their actions. They can encourage and praise positive attitudes/behaviors.

While parents realize educators' limitations, they do expect them to influence their children's achievement at school. When school faculty cannot seem to motivate their youngsters, parents are not only frustrated and angry with their children, but also with counselors and teachers. They feel educators are not doing their jobs.

In fact, both parents and teachers expect the counselor to be able to solve the problem of underachievement. Their view of it in simplistic terms makes the counselor feel "a great deal of pressure to produce an accurate diagnosis and an effective treatment plan. Then if the treatment plan doesn't work, parents and teachers question the counselor's competency" (Bleuer, 1989, p. 1).

Often parents say their children are lazy; students may also say they are lazy. At these statements parents seem to

throw their hands up in the air, indicating they do not know what to do and at the same time, expecting counselors to have the solution at their fingertips. The students who say they are lazy expect their conversations with counselors to end with their "admission of guilt." That is it, they are just lazy, and this fact should be accepted as though nothing can be done about it.

Bleuer (1989) reviewed underachievement literature which led her to believe that some underachievers operate from a cost/benefit frame of reference, choosing what seems most appealing at the time. "The costs of achieving may include expended effort, possible frustration, time away from other activities (friends, hobbies, entertainment), and potential alienation from friends who are non-achievers. The benefits of achieving may include higher grade point average, impressing friends, teacher and parent approval, increased educational opportunities, expanded career development options, and self-satisfaction. On the other side, the benefits of not achieving would be the positive aspects of the achievement costs (e.g., relaxing, being with friends), while the costs of not achieving would be the negative aspects of the achievement benefits (e.g., lower grade point average, parent disapproval)" (p. 9). She also pointed out that underachievement may be a result of ineffective learning techniques and study skills, may be influenced by psychological and family factors, peer

influences, and school factors. She provided a rating scale to rank those factors which could be assets or barriers to achievement: academic ability, specific prerequisite knowledge, past learning experiences, study skills/learning style, task/course difficulty, family/community support, peer support, school support, general mood/disposition, psychological development, values/career goals, and risk taking propensity.

In many cases parents and previous school personnel have been dealing with these children through elementary and junior high school. Perhaps, the youngsters have been passed on to the next level without really achieving the necessary skills of the previous grade. By the time they reach high school, the problem is exacerbated.

In a handout from her Back to School Seminar, Moersch (1989) described underachievement as a chronic problem which students do not outgrow, which, in fact, "persists into adulthood where it creates serious problems with job performance, economic independence and relationships with significant others" (p. 1). In Lebenbaum's (1980) study, discussed in Chapter II, he was also concerned about the ramifications of underachievement in the job world and in its relationship to antisocial behavior. Bleuer (1989) reported the consequences as costly to both students and society. Moersch continued by characterizing underachievers into various categories which may or may not be mutually

exclusive. These categories can be summarized into the following descriptive adjectives for underachievers: inconsistent, self-sabotaging, unreliable, unmotivated, passive, apathetic, deceptive, defensive, unrealistic and vague.

Underachievement is a difficult and pervasive issue. (Further discussion on it follows in Chapter II.) Understanding underachievement and attempting to combat it are both very challenging and time consuming tasks; however, they are crucial for counselors as they help students grow and develop. By enlisting the help of parents, counselors make use of a vital resource while also saving another scarce commodity: time. Walberg (1984) said that parents have control over 87% of students' time, while schools have control over only 13% of their time. If Walberg's statement is even close to being true, then it behooves us to gain the support and cooperation of parents. According to the Gallup Poll (PDK), parents have repeatedly shown interest in working with schools. On the issue of attending one meeting per month to improve their child's interest and behavior at school, 81% of the parents in 1971 and 77% in 1976 were interested. On the issue of meeting with faculty before each semester, 84% of the parents in 1980 were interested.

Creating a partnership with parents is not without barriers, but there is strong rationale for involving parents and far-reaching benefits from such a coalition.

The sections to follow examine these barriers and benefits, after which the background for one such program of parent involvement, Grade Booster Night, will be explained.

Barriers to Parent Involvement

In conjunction with their descriptive reports and research studies, several authors discussed barriers to successful parent programs/involvement. They also attempted to establish a rationale for parent programs/involvement and guidelines for success in such endeavors. The next segment of this review concentrates on sorting out barriers and benefits of parent programs/involvement for academic achievement.

Numerous barriers to parent involvement are found in recent literature. Some barriers are insurmountable in the sense that no alteration of a program can eliminate the barriers. They are hurdles that create challenges for parents, schools and, most importantly, the children. However, other barriers are surmountable; therefore, knowledgeable organizers can redesign their programs to accommodate or alleviate them. Barriers might be classified into three divisions: parent, teacher and administrator barriers and two types: perceptual and behavioral barriers.

The most common barrier reported seems to be attendance of parents. Tennies (1982) was concerned about the turnout at parent programs, especially at series-type programs where attendance dwindles as the weeks continue and where missing

a week breaks the continuity of the material. Both Moles (1982) and Swap (1987) mentioned parents' time limitations, trying to juggle home and school. Swap added parents' commitments to their professional and individual responsibilities and interests. Riley (1984) explained that parents' time is taken up with their work schedules and hence, they do not have time for or are too tired to be involved in their children's school. Curran (1989) said that "Parents are too busy to learn parenting" (p. 13).

Tennies (1982), Curran (1989), and Bleuer (1987) all reported that the parents who attend parent programs are those who do not need them and those who do not attend could benefit from them. Riley (1984) said that parents who could learn the most are least likely to attend "because they do not value education for themselves or their children" (p. 115). Along the same line, Riley explained further that parents with limited education do not feel at ease in a school setting and lack the confidence that their involvement is important. Some parents, according to Moles (1982) feel inadequate when they do not understand their youngsters' homework.

Some of the barriers to parent programs/involvement are logistical or personal. Riley (1984) commented on travelling distance from the school and the fact that some families live in neighborhoods too dangerous to travel to night time school programs/events. Both Moles (1982) and

Riley (1984) reminded us that parents' native language and cultural background may be another barrier. Parents experiencing personal problems, such as divorce, may be unable to make school involvement a priority (Riley, 1984).

Parent attitudes influence their willingness to work with the school. Parents' prior negative communications, feelings of fear and suspicion (Moles, 1982), indifference to school communications (Riley, 1984) and the traditional assumption that parents do not care about their children's progress (Curran, 1989) create barriers which take time and concentrated effort to overcome.

Other barriers seem to fall into the categories of criticism of parents and parent expectations. Some parents assume that schools take care of educating their children and that they do not need to be involved (Riley, 1984). Similarly, Curran (1989) said that parents "transfer responsibility to the professional" (p. 13). In doing so parents expect a faculty member to provide one simple solution to a problem. Some parents tend not only to be more critical than supportive of their children's school, but also seem to intentionally sabotage school efforts (Curran, 1989).

Some traditional and false assumptions reflect barriers to parent involvement. One false assumption is that parents have not structured their children's home situation, when the school is unable to get the youngsters to perform well

within the school structure. Another false assumption is the fear that parents will react by punishing their children if their assistance is enlisted (Barth, 1979). Some traditional assumptions which need to be revised include: "Parents naturally understand child development because they have children." "Parents believe what we say because we are educated authorities." "Parents should be mature enough to accept criticism gracefully" (Curran, 1989, pp. 21-22, 26-27, 30-31).

The fears and insecurities of teachers and parents create barriers to communication and programs with parents. Rather than viewing themselves as allies with teachers, parents view teachers as rivals (Curran, 1989). For example, when parent-teacher communication does not go well, mutual blame may be the attitude of choice (Swap, 1987). Teachers may not expect parents to accomplish very much when they make an effort to help their children (Moles, 1982). Parents and teachers may each fear "that they will be judged incompetent, that they will be blamed, that they will not be heard" (Swap, 1987, p. 19). Furthermore, Swap went on to say that "both parents and teachers must struggle with a personal sense of loss and disappointment when children are having difficulty in school" (p. 21).

Certain barriers are a direct result of teacher perceptions and behaviors. Similar to parents, teachers are limited in the amount of time they have to devote to family,

school (Moles, 1982), and their own professional and individual responsibilities and interests (Swap, 1987). Teachers may hold the traditional assumptions that they know the youngsters better than parents and have more answers than parents (Curran, 1989). Many teachers, according to Moles (1982), have not been trained to work with parents and, in particular, find it difficult to deal with parents of other cultural backgrounds.

Administrative barriers reported by Riley and Tennies bring to the fore issues of time and funding. Tennies (1982) felt that it would be difficult for a teacher to put into practice a parent program, if it is not school-wide or district sponsored, or if it is not funded appropriately. Furthermore, Riley (1984) acknowledged the fact that many principals are already too overextended to organize and execute any parent program.

Support for Parent Involvement

Besides presenting barriers to effective parent involvement, writers showed their support for parent programs by proposing significant reasons for garnering parent support through involvement and by making recommendations to improve the quality and quantity of that involvement.

"Thanks to the mounting research of the last decade a growing number of us are recognizing that the home is the determining academic educational institution in the lives of

children" (Rich, Mattox & VanDien, 1979, p. 509). Over ten years later, Jones (1991) reiterated a similar point when she said, "Research strongly supports parent involvement in schools. When parents are meaningfully involved in their children's education, children achieve at a higher level and have more positive attitudes toward school" (p. 7). Since this is true at both the elementary and secondary levels of education, parent involvement should not decrease significantly as youngsters grow older, but rather should continue during the high school years. Jones' statement above is of particular importance for poor and minority families where they have the most to gain from parent involvement (Jones, 1991).

Swap (1987) reported three reasons for involving parents in the education of their children. The first reason is, plain and simply, that parent involvement is good for children. The second reason is that each party in the parent-teacher collaboration benefits personally from the coalition. Teachers receive support and appreciation from parents. They also renew their sense of enthusiasm for problem-solving. Parents get to see teachers as people. They appreciate the commitment and skills in the teaching profession. Depending on the type of collaboration, parents may also develop new parenting skills.

"...(C)ooperative partnerships between the home and the school can dramatically raise educational productivity."

Through the end of high school, "parents nominally control 87% of a student's waking time" while the school controls only about 13% of that time (Walberg, 1984, p. 397). In a reference to a previous work, Walberg synthesized 2,575 empirical studies of academic learning, which demonstrate that parents influence learning either directly or indirectly in eight ways. The eight determinants of affective, behavioral and cognitive learning which they influence include: "student ability, student motivation, the quality of instruction and the amount of instruction" and indirectly, "the psychological climate of a classroom; an academically stimulating home environment; a peer group with academic interests, goals, and activities; and a minimum exposure to low-grade television programs" (p. 398). In discussing partnership programs for academic success, Walberg referred to "'the curriculum of the home'" as being twice as good a predictor of learning as socioeconomic status. "This curriculum includes informed parent/child conversations..., encouragement and discussion of leisure reading..., deferral of immediate gratifications to accomplish long-term goals.... In twenty-nine controlled studies conducted during the past decade, 91% of the comparisons favored children in programs... to improve the learning environment of the home over children not participating in such programs" (p. 400).

Overcoming the barriers to successful home-school

cooperation are worth the effort when listing the rewards of working with parents: Parents are motivated and will never stop trying. They are humble, grateful and affirming. Parents can laugh at themselves and are not afraid to try new things (Curran, 1989).

Efforts of schools to collaborate with parents can be successful if they:

- Provide for direct service and an individualized approach with the family setting;
- Mesh with parents' aspirations for their own children;
- Assume that parents care and have the capacity to do what's right for their children, regardless of their economic and educational backgrounds;
- Make sure that parents know how important they are in determining their child's school success (Rich, Mattox & VanDien, 1979, p. 509).

Heiser (1979) suggested four critical elements for any parent program:

1. Participants must be motivated to learn and must be actively involved in the learning process.
2. Curricula must be specific and relevant to the needs and concerns of the learners.
3. A critical element of the success of the program is the actual functioning of the group process itself. Groups which build cohesiveness and foster mutual support are more likely to be successful.
4. The role and relationship of the teacher/leader is an essential element of any group educational process (p. 23).

Spahr (1982) reported that parent activities could be more successful if they gave parents personal attention and were conveniently scheduled. Buckland (1972) seemed to be opposed to single facet parent programs, thinking that while they were good, they fostered "competition for funds, for

public support, for allegiance on the part of practitioner and parent alike. Such discontinuities are dysfunctional in an era when inter-systems thinking and planning have become both feasible and mandatory" (p. 161).

Jones (1991), with the help of Fredericks, Rasinski, and Blendinger, concluded her fastback with a list of strategies for successful parent activities:

1. Provide parents with a constant flow of interesting and timely information about upcoming events and activities....
2. Make parent involvement a schoolwide effort....
3. Maintain a warm and friendly school environment and, above all, make it a place where parents feel comfortable, needed, and respected.
4. Involve students in recruiting parents....
5. Whenever possible, develop activities and projects that involve the entire family.
6. Make your outreach efforts contagious by involving as many parents, teachers, students, administrators, and community members as possible.
7. In planning activities, provide parents with a number of scheduling options...
8. Make daily efforts to communicate with parents through a brief phone call or note...
9. Provide parents with many opportunities to discuss their children's interest and achievements....
10. Do not plan activities that are a repetition of school activities but rather that extend the natural relationship between parents and children...
11. Use the telephone frequently for brief messages of good news....
12. Find out why parents who are not involved choose to distance themselves.... Sometimes parents just need information and encouragement.
13. Consider home visits...
14. Consider holding parent meetings in locations other than the school....
15. ....Enlist parents in a telephone tree to spread the word about special school activities and projects.
16. Coordinate with local community organizations and agencies that offer services to families....
17. Demonstrate to parents that the school cares about issues affecting their welfare by becoming

involved in such neighborhood projects...
18. ...(P)rovide child care and transportation if needed.
19. Be patient with parents.... Keep trying and do not give up on any parent.
20. Make sure parents are recognized for their efforts.... (pp. 41-43).

Swap (1987) felt it was important for educators and parents to be able to choose from a variety of activities and to plan and problem-solve together. She thought a program was more successful if good relationships between teachers and parents were initiated, than if it was a program large in size or scope.

The importance of the agenda and solutions coming from parents is a notion also stressed by Curran (1989) in what she called the parent empowerment process. She suggested that the facilitator's purpose was to discern the pressing issues from the group of parents attending the program, providing professional content relevant to those issues. To this end she proposed a series of "do's and don't's":

1. The facilitator gets off the pedestal early.
2. The agenda and solutions arise from the group or, in one-on-one situations, from the parent....
3. Content lies chiefly with the facilitator....
4. The facilitator is responsible for controlling the agenda and the empowerment process....
5. Humor is valuable in bonding the group and defusing tension....
6. Positive precedes negative, and strengths precede stresses....
7. Handouts and simple outlines are helpful in hooking parents into the process; follow-up materials and information help sustain interest....
8. Professional jargon distances us from parents....
9. Controversial attitudes on the part of the facilitator diminish effectiveness; it's the facilitator's responsibility to handle controversy

objectively....
10. The process should be abandoned if it isn't working.... (pp. 49-50).

Contrary to Swap (1987) mentioned above, Lombana and Lombana (1982) felt it was important to weigh counselor times versus number of parents served. They divided home-school partnerships into four categories using a pyramid diagram. At the bottom they placed parent involvement, which benefitted the largest number of parents and required the least time and skill on the part of the counselor. At the second level was parent conferences involving several parents, the teachers and the counselor's communication skills. At the third level they placed parent education programs, benefiting a small group of parents and needing substantial counselor time and skill. At the fourth and top level was parent counseling, involving the smallest number of parents and the most counselor time and skill. They suggested an annual needs assessment to determine how best to use counselor time and expertise. Since their diagram shows an inverse relationship between the number of parents served and the amount of time and skill expended by counselors, they encouraged emphasis be placed at the involvement and conference levels. At these levels they could serve the total parent population.

While there are several barriers described above, many of them can be overcome with the use of appropriate methods and the development of relevant programs. Even where

barriers remain, a greater percentage of parents can be served with organized parent involvement than without it. As will be seen in the Grade Booster program description in Chapter III, the benefits of parent involvement in terms of assistance to students, parent support, counselor visibility and credibility, as well as conservation of counselor time, far outweigh the barriers.

Background of the Grade Booster Seminar

The seriousness of the problem of underachievement has been seen in the discussion earlier in this chapter. It is a problem for administrators, teachers, counselors, parents, and, most importantly, students. The problem can become exacerbated as students go through high school and enter into the work world.

The importance of parents in addressing the issue of underachievement has also been discussed earlier and will be the major focus of the review of the literature in Chapter II. Parents care about their children's academic achievement. Parents control more of students' time that schools do. Parents, when involved with the school and knowledgeable of teacher expectations, will help their children. Therefore, it behooves the school to take advantage of parents as a resource.

> Teachers and administrators have too often ignored the parent as a resource possibility because of the potential it creates for conflict and because of the added work it requires. Though some liabilities may be involved with close interaction with parents, it just may be a great untapped resource, not only in

> facilitating tasks in the school setting, but also a tremendous force in increasing achievement and decreasing behavior problems (Tennies, 1982, p. 3).

Parents as a resource become even more important when looking at the task of high school counselors who must address the needs and concerns of 300-500 students. A near impossible task, it can become somewhat more manageable if parents are involved in the process and even more manageable if several parents are seen together in a group. By presenting a topic to a group of, perhaps, 50 people at once, the counselor has saved maybe 50 hours of time which can then be devoted to other equally pressing needs.

Like counselors, parents may feel they face an impossible task, dealing with and keeping track of their youngsters. Over the years they have expressed to this investigator several needs with regard to their high schoolers:

1) They may need to remain nearly as informed as they were in the elementary grades. This is a more difficult goal to achieve at the high school level. Progress reports (grades) are mailed home every six weeks. However, not all parents see these grades; some of those who see the grades may be surprised and thereafter feel the need for a bi-monthly or mid-six week monitoring process.

2) They may need the reassurance that their attitudes, requests, and actions are appropriate. If they know they have realistic expectations for their children, and that the

consequences they have supported are logical, they can continue to hold to them with confidence.

3) They may need to feel comfortable calling upon the school or community when assistance is needed. Greater familiarity with people and services can increase their willingness to seek help.

4) They may need to know they can still help their children even though they may, at times, appear "all grown up." The kind and degree of help may change, but the need still remains.

Discussing these concerns with individual parents can be very fruitful but also very frustrating because it is so time consuming. It could be handled so much more efficiently, with the same effectiveness by a parent night program such as the one under investigation here, Grade Booster Night.

The Purpose of this Study

This study focuses on parent involvement with the high school guidance services. In particular, this study examines the relationship between academic achievement and parent participation in the Grade Booster Seminar. Central to this study are the results of the Very Important Parent (VIP) Survey in coordination with certain basic student data. Attempts will be made to do the following:

1) To substantiate previous studies which positively correlate parent involvement with student achievement.

2) To clarify the nature and degree of parent involvement with their underachieving high school students and their school in the hope of showing, over a short period of time, that increased involvement increases the likelihood of improved grades.

3) To study the effectiveness of the Grade Booster Program in terms of:

a) Parent frustration and aloneness

b) Parent awareness of strategies and their effectiveness

c) Parent awareness of staff concern

Parents attending Grade Booster Night should report reduced frustration and aloneness, greater awareness of Grade Booster strategies and staff concern, and greater success with the strategies.

4) To examine the relationship, if any, between parent involvement with Grade Boosters and improved grades while controlling various factors which impact upon the situation: number of parents in the home, rank in the family, grade level, sex, attendance, disciplinary steps, course load, number of F grades, attitude toward school/teachers, friends, extracurricular involvement, student employment, number of school transfers and enrollment in Project Success or Reading.

5) To understand more about how well the school is communicating with these parents, how that communication can

be improved, and how the Grade Booster Program, in particular, is meeting the needs of these parents.

The questions to be addressed for Grade Booster (GB) and for non-Grade Booster (non-GB) parents include the following:

1) Will GB parents feel any less alone or less frustrated in facing the problem of underachievement?

2) Will GB parents be more likely to be aware of strategies directed at increasing student achievement?

3) Will GB parents be more or less aware of school staff concern?

4) Will students of GB parents have grades, attendance and disciplinary steps that differ from students of non-GB parents?

5) Will students in Project Success or Reading whose parents attended Grade Booster Night perform at a differing level from other students?

This study is intended to be explorative and descriptive in nature, hopefully providing enough information for future, more controlled studies, as well as for further development of the Grade Booster Seminar. It proposes that parents can and will become more successfully involved with the school and their children if the school provides a vehicle such as Grade Booster Night.

Definition of Terms

Grade Booster (GB) Parent

A Grade Booster Parent is a parent who has attended the Grade Booster Night Program in either 1984 or 1985 and has received a packet of materials.

Non-Grade Booster (Non-GB) Parent

A Non-Grade Booster Parent is a parent who has not attended the Grade Booster Night Program in 1984 or 1985. This parent may have received a copy of the program packet at a parent conference or by mail.

Parent Involvement

For purposes of this study, parent involvement is defined as the degree to which parents participate in parent/school activities. This includes Grade Booster Night in 1984 or 1985, attendance at Freshman/Sophomore Parent Night in 1984 and/or 1985, and attendance at a principal's breakfast.

Total Parent Participation

Total parent participation for purposes of this study is a label for parent involvement plus the following: contacts with teachers, contacts with the counselor and requests for Grade Booster materials.

Parent Night

The parent nights referred to in this study are programs held each fall following the end of the first six weeks. Parents receive their children's grades and follow

their children's schedules in order to meet their teachers.

Principal's Breakfast

Principal's breakfasts are informal coffee/roll meetings with the principal for small groups of interested parents. They are held both day and evening periodically during the year. Parents are given a guided tour of the building and meet with the principal to discuss any issues of concern to them.

Parent Education

Parent education can be described as an ongoing process provided by the school both formally and informally. Formally, it involves parent participation at programs designed, for example, to enhance parenting skills, to improve parent attitudes and/or teach strategies for tutoring. Informally, parent education may involve information shared with the parent about the student's performance in class, class expectations, etc.

Academic Underachievement

For purposes of this investigation it is assumed that students have been placed properly in their courses. Their test scores and teacher recommended placement are assumed to be accurate. Hence, underachievement in any course is a grade of F. Exclusions from the study account for F grades not associated with underachievement, i.e. English as a Second Language placement, Special Education and homebound.

Disciplinary Steps

A disciplinary step is a number recorded on students' log cards to denote a disciplinary referral. The seriousness of the referral determines the number of steps recorded. Students who exhibit inappropriate school behavior may reach a major step, which involves at least a parent contact and perhaps a suspension, or a minor step, which only involves a student conference with the Dean. The major steps are 5, 8, 11, 14, 17, 19, 20. Students who reach step 20 during a school year are referred to the Board of Education for possible expulsion for the semester or year. This system is not without remediation. For every ten school days students are good (days without any referrals) they can go back down the steps. Students are also allowed to repeat the same major step twice in a school year.

In this study, disciplinary steps are considered a possible factor relevant to student achievement. Students very high on the step system may have poorer grades and less involved parents, while students very low on the step system may be more likely to have fewer low grades and more involved parents.

Project Success

Project Success, also called Study Skills, is a tutoring class available to students experiencing academic underachievement. Generally, if they have two or more F's at the first six week marking period of a semester, and

there is room in the program, they will be strongly encouraged to enroll. It is a non-credit class (taking the place of a regular study hall) of 10 to 15 students with two teacher aides providing individual attention, helping students study for tests, organize their homework, etc.

Reading

Reading is a credited course designed to enhance comprehension and vocabulary skills. Students are assigned to a reading class if they are approximately two years behind on vocabulary and/or comprehension.

Six Week Progress Report

Six times a year grades are mailed home. Grades in January and June are final grades. Progress reports, the six week and 12 week reports are notifications to parents of students' achievement in academic course work. If the grades are low on the first six week progress report, they provide a signal or warning to parents and students. The second six week progress report, however, is actually a report of 12 weeks worth of work, whereupon a failing grade is very difficult to raise in the final six weeks of the semester.

Parent Frustration

Parent frustration is the expressed feelings of parents to a Likert type scale on the VIP Survey. It describes the level of frustration they felt upon receipt of the first six week progress report and as they felt upon receipt of the

semester grades.

Very Important Parent (VIP) Survey

The VIP Survey is the 25 question instrument designed by the investigator and used in this study to assess parent attitudes, opinions and activities. It is mainly a multiple choice type survey with a few open-ended questions.

Assumptions of this Study

The assumptions made for this study include:

1) Parents with fairly limited assistance want to and will help their children achieve some level of academic success at the high school level.

2) Positive interventions will assist parents in learning successful strategies to help their children academically.

3) A brief program, such as Grade Boosters, will have a positive effect.

Limitations of this Study

The following limitations are noted for this study:

1) The survey sample is a self-selected group from one public high school district. Within this group the GB parents are a further self-selected group, the size of which limits the generalizability of the data. However, considering the particular sample under study, parents of underachievers, and the fact that they had to respond to a mailed survey, a 38.4% response rate (131 out of 341 surveys were returned) is acceptable.

Since the participants in this study volunteered to complete the VIP Survey, they may represent a particular segment of the population, i.e. supportive, involved, caring parents.

2) Inherent in the survey method are limitations of analyses and interpretations. The data collected also relies heavily upon parents' feelings, opinions and recall. Whether these parents would respond similarly on another occasion is unknown.

3) The Grade Booster Seminar, currently being a one night program, may not be sufficient to produce any significant changes in parents or students.

4) No attempt was made to control for a variety of demographic factors such as ethnic/racial background, socioeconomic status, religious affiliation, age, and previous educational background.

5) Since the VIP Survey was mailed home, it is impossible to determine who actually filled it out. There was strong evidence that one student did fill out a survey, which has been excluded from the study.

6) The actual course failed at the first six week progress report versus what course was failed at the end of the semester was not considered. It could have been the same course or a different course. Of concern to this study is only the change in the number of failures.

Organization of this Study

Chapter I has provided an introduction, background of the Grade Booster Seminar, purpose of this study, definition of terms, assumptions and limitations of the study. The review of the literature found in Chapter II examines underachievement and parent involvement in the education/ achievement of their children. Within this broad framework this review is limited to: parent attitude/behavior studies, parent involvement studies and comparative studies, followed by a summary and the hypotheses for the present study. Chapter III describes the setting, the sample, and the procedures followed in the study. Chapter IV provides the results and discussion of the data, while Chapter V contains a summary, conclusions/implications, and recommendations for further research.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Numerous studies discuss parent involvement in elementary and junior high school; however, very few studies involve parents of adolescents (Hammond & Schultz, 1980; Lessa, 1983; Mince-Ennis, 1980; Riley, 1984; Spahr, 1982). Even fewer studies focus on the involvement of underachievers' parents. With reference to studies done across the United States, Nardine and Morris (1991) found that "With the possible exception of parent involvement in special education, only a few limited studies have attempted to ascertain the level of parent involvement activities now occurring or being planned by the states" (p. 364).

This chapter first presents a brief overview of the concept of underachievement and then examines literature related mainly to parents of high school students. It reviews studies on: the effects of parent attitudes/ behaviors, parent education studies, parent counseling programs, combination (parent-high school student) programs and studies which compare several parent involvement studies.

Underachievement

In the literature students who do not perform as well as they should have been called underachievers, low achievers, discouraged learners, anti-achievers, reluctant learners and, the latest term, at-risk students. Metcalf and Gaier (1987) provided an initial definition of the underachiever as "the student whose academic performance falls considerably below his measured ability or potential; that is, there is a discrepancy between actual performance and intelligence test scores" (p. 919). Bleuer (1989) saw the complicated nature of underachievement, that it is "not simply a 'they can, but they won't' situation, but a complex problem with both cognitive and affective dimensions produced by factors that are both internal and external to the student" (p. 1).

In her review of the literature on counselor interventions with low and underachieving students, Wilson (1986) distinguished between low and underachieving students. She described underachievers as having "a discrepancy between ability and academic performance as measured by standardized tests and GPA" (p. 628). Low achievers did not show disparity between test scores and GPA but were failing at least one academic subject.

In a round table discussion, Conrath (1988) preferred the term discouraged learner. "Discouraged learners are youngsters without self-pride who easily give up on

themselves as learners, says Conrath. They think the reason they lag in skills is because they lack the so-called 'intelligence' of more successful students. And most seriously, they have a strong sense of impotency about their lives. School success appears to be outside their control. Trying makes no sense to them" (p. 27). Later Conrath explained that these students are not reluctant or slow learners but rather "'reluctant schoolers'" (p. 28).

Sherman, Zuckerman and Sostek (1975) used the term anti-achiever to describe "the child who won't accept adult values, adult goals, adult forms of competition, adult dress habits, or adult social codes" (p. 311).

The term "at-risk" is used as a broad term to point out numerous factors which put students at-risk of several consequences. Frymier and Gansneder (1989) understood children to be at-risk if they were in danger of failing at school or in life. They said "'At-riskness' is a function of what bad things happen to a child, how severe they are, how often they happen, and what else happens in the child's immediate environment" (p. 142). Sartain (1989) reported that certain disadvantageous factors put students at-risk "of being unsuccessful in school and/or in danger of becoming enmeshed in personally debilitating social, emotional, physical, or economic difficulties currently or in the near future" (pp. 6-7). These disadvantageous factors "are the following:

Limited Background Attainment....

Personal Development Difficulties....

Physical Deprivation....

Disease and Illness....

Neglect or Abuse....

Emotional Handicaps....

Nonscholarly Tendencies....

Substance Addiction....

Antisocial Tendencies...." (pp. 6-7).

Phi Delta Kappa (PDK), through its chapters, conducted a study of students at-risk. With 100 typical fourth, seventh and tenth graders in each of 276 schools (for a total of 22,018 students), they collected data on 45 risk factors and 13 instructional strategies. They concluded that between 25 to 35% of these students were at-risk, having had six or more risk factors against them (Frymier & Gansneder, 1989).

The terms for underachievement and the definitions for underachievement may vary, but in essence, they point to a serious issue of concern to students, parents, teachers, counselors and administrators. Counselors are in a unique position where they can effect change (to varying degrees), with the support of students, parents, teachers, as well as administrators. However, this task is not an easy one. It requires some perspective on the issue. A broad based approach may be too difficult for counselors to spearhead,

due to numerous other responsibilities. However, targeting areas of crucial need and tackling them first, may provide impetus for further program development. The target in the studies which follow is an understanding of the role of parents and parent involvement in the academic achievement of their children. Included among these studies are: studies evaluating parent attitudes/behaviors, parent education studies, parent counseling studies, parent/student combination studies and comparative studies.

Studies Evaluating Parent Attitudes/Behaviors

The attitudes and resulting behaviors of parents have a strong influence on their children. (Summary of selected studies can be found in Chart 1 in Appendix A.) Riley (1984) drew 10 conclusions from his synthesis of the research on parental influence on students' academic aspirations, motivation and performance:

1. Parental encouragement is more influential on children's academic aspirations, motivation, and performance than sex, IQ, socioeconomic status, or past performance of children.
2. Parental influence is stronger than peer influence on the development of children's academic aspirations, motivation, and performance, and parent and peer agreement on academic and occupational goals produces an even stronger influence on children. Furthermore, through the expression of their aspirations for their children, parents seem to affect the children's choice of peers.
3. ....When the parents' expectations are made clear to their children, they will have more influence as expectancy conveyors than as role models; however, when the children are unclear about their parents' expectations, the parents have more influence as role models.
4. The greater the frequency, consistency, clarity,

and persuasiveness of parental encouragement over time the greater the likelihood children will agree with their parents' aspiration for them.

5. ...(T)he strength of agreement between parents and children seems to be positively related to the accuracy of the children's understanding of their parents' real goals.
6. As children become older and better informed about their parents' goals, they tend to adopt these goals.
7. Mothers and fathers may differ in the way in which they influence their children; however, parents of both sexes have a significant impact on their children's academic orientation.
8. The quality of the parent-child relationship is not a significant factor in determining the extent to which the child accepts the parents' academic goals.
9. The antecedents of parental expectations are school feedback, parents' own aspirations, and parental knowledge.... Parents who have unfulfilled educational and occupational aspirations for themselves and/or parents whose children receive low grades are likely to broaden the range of their values in order to compensate for their own failure and that of their children to excel at academic pursuits. This increased range of values may impede the frequent, consistent, clear, and persuasive communication of goals by parents to children which is related to the likelihood that children will accept their parents' goals.
10. ....Parents who encourage their children to earn high marks, pay attention to their children's school related matters, stress the connection between good school performance and higher occupational status, and discuss various occupational opportunities with their children produce children who have more specific educational and occupational goals, work harder in school, think more about their futures, and are more confident about overcoming obstacles which block their goal attainment than children whose parents fail to exhibit these attitudes and behaviors (pp. 37-39).

From his review of previous research Riley concluded that it is to a school's advantage to establish a partnership with parents, so that they can work with the school, instead of,

against it. In addition, he believes that since we know how parents influence their children we should be able to teach those attitudes and behaviors. Parents should be able to learn to promote school performance by giving their children "frequent, consistent, clear and persuasive encouragement" (pp. 40-41).

Riley (1984) conducted a survey of Chicago Catholic high school principals. Of the 59 archdiocesan schools to which he sent a parent involvement/responsibility questionnaire 49 responded (83% response). In addition, he did in depth interviews with seven of these high school principals. He concluded that the principals were in strong agreement on several areas where parents influence student achievement: the importance of encouragement and discipline, academic success not without sacrifice, and a vision for the future. Riley found that these high schools had certain targeted practices, but they did not have comprehensive programs for parent involvement. There was one school which had a psychologist conduct four sessions on parenting with attendance going from 75 on the first night to seven by the fourth session. Another school had a program for 30 low achieving students. Otherwise, the schools reported the usual open houses, phone contacts, newsletters, deficiency notices, parent club activities, etc.

Other conclusions from Riley's study included: the

impression that "these schools are more effective at communicating with parents than they are at changing or manipulating parent behavior" (p. 204). They were less successful "at getting parents to provide a proper home study atmosphere, supervise homework, or set high aspiration levels for their children" (p. 204). He also noted that at some schools parents were unable to focus on education because they were concentrating on financial survival. Often parent involvement in these schools really means communication, preferably one-to-one and in person with the goal of garnering parent cooperation.

In a Phi Delta Kappa study of 22,018, (of which 7,417 were high school sophomores) at-risk students (at-risk meaning, likely to fail in school or in life), Frymeier and Gansneder (1989) reported that conferring with parents was effective. Ninety-four percent of the teachers and 99% of the principals said that they talked with parents about their at-risk students, with 81% of the teachers and 74% of the principals reporting that it was effective.

Communication was also an issue addressed by Sporakowski and Eubanks (1976). They found that among 80 ninth grade girls, divided evenly into positive school adjustment and negative school adjustment groups, there was a correlation with their communication with their parents. Those experiencing school adjustment problems were also having problems communicating at home. The group identified

as exhibiting positive school adjustment "were more likely to see their relationships with their parents as characterized by trust, respect, positive feedback, interest in each other, involvement in decisions, open lines of communication, empathy, and willingness to interact" (p. 188). However, these girls only reported communicating well with mothers, not with fathers. The negative school adjustment group reported being unable to communicate well with either parent. While this was not a well controlled study, it points to another aspect of parent attitudes/ behavior.

In a small suburban parochial high school, Wood, Chapin and Hannah (1988) studied a matched group of 52 achievers/ underachievers using the Family Environment Scale. They concluded that the achievers perceived their family environment as "cohesive, open to expression, and emphasizing cultural and religious values" and underachievers perceived their family environment as "conflicted and placing an emphasis on achievement" (p. 288). While this may be a study with limited generalizability, it substantiates other similar studies.

Dornbusch et al. (1986) reported on their study of 3,000 matched student and parent questionnaires. They found that students, whose parents had more education, were more likely to have better grades. There was a positive correlation between students' grades and parent

participation in school programs, even with less educated parents who participated less often. Parents who were involved said that they became more aware of what teens face in their high school world. Dornbusch et al. also investigated parent response to grades. Rather than negative emotional responses, extrinsic rewards/punishments, or no response at all, it is better for parents to praise, encourage and offer to assist their children.

Conklin and Dailey (1981) studied the effects of parent expectations on public and parochial students in the southern third of New York. From their surveys of 1,686 students using a 4-wave longitudinal method, they assessed the relationship between perceived parent encouragement and student actual school attendance the year after high school graduation. They concluded that

> 1. Consistency of parental encouragement is positively associated with college entry; 2. Consistency of parental encouragement is positively associated with attendance at a four-year college.... When the adolescent did not perceive parental educational support...at any one time point, he or she had a higher probability of going to a two-year college or not attending college at all (p. 261).

Similar to Conklin and Dailey, Zollweg (1984) observed that with higher parent and teacher perceived expectations, tenth graders achieved higher standardized reading scores.

Child rearing practices were examined by Hilliard and Roth (1969), Singer (1978), and Metcalf and Gaier (1987). Hilliard and Roth used the Mother-Child Relationship Evaluation with mothers and their junior and senior boys, 24

of whom were designated achievers and 21 designated underachievers by their test scores and GPA. The results indicated that mothers of achievers were more accepting and less rejecting than mothers of underachievers. Underachievers were found to be sensitive to their mothers' rejection and lack of acceptance. The achievers seemed to not be aware of their mothers' attitudes. They concluded

> the underachiever presents a picture of dependence which is organized around attempts at maintaining relationships with the parents as a primary motivation. Their immaturity is well documented. Therefore, this underachievement can be viewed as instrumental not only in maintaining parental relationships on a dependent level but also as a way of warding off adolescence with its demands for independence strivings (p. 428).

Singer (1978) also investigated the effects of child rearing attitudes on 40 underachieving and 40 achieving ninth graders. While he could not postulate one pattern for underachievement, he found that discipline and protectiveness on the part of mothers was significant for achievers but not for underachievers. Locus of control for academic success was not significant for achievers and only marginal for underachievers.

Metcalf and Gaier (1987) surveyed parenting patterns used with suburban New York eleventh and twelfth graders, of which 43 were determined underachievers and 44 were considered achievers. In their study they classified four common categories of middle class parenting: upward striving, overprotective, indifferent and conflicted. Of these four patterns the upward striving parenting pattern

was significantly related to underachievement. With this style there was pressure for good grades, criticism for failure to meet parental standards, anxiety, inadequacy, hostility, futility of concerted effort and, possibly, passive aggressive resistance. Besides being not conducive to academic achievement, Metcalf and Gaier observed the same result as Hilliard and Roth when they noted that this parenting style helps underachievers avoid becoming mature and independent.

Of the ten selected studies evaluating parent attitudes/behaviors five can be classified as basically descriptive since the instruments are surveys/questionnaires and since there are no control/comparison groups. Their sample size varies from 49 to 22,018 subjects. Their results are based upon the subjective responses of the participants which are, at times, weighed against more objective data such as reading test scores or GPA. While there are some inherent limitations attached to descriptive research, these selected descriptive reports, for the most part, have provided well documented results which support the theory that parents can influence their children.

The other five studies evaluating parent attitudes/ behaviors are comparative in the sense that two groups are being evaluated. These experimental type studies involve between 45 and 87 subjects, manageable but large enough numbers to lend credence to their conclusions about parents

and students.

The correlation between parent attitudes/behaviors and student performance, whether the attitudes/behaviors are just assessed or taught to parents, can be well established by the selected studies above. Under a variety of conditions with some decent size samples but limited controls, the results indicate that parents influence their children into the high school years by their attitudes and behaviors. Dornbusch et al. (1986) concluded that "more than two decades of studies have demonstrated rather conclusively that much of a student's academic success or failure is determined by characteristics of the home" (p. 1).

Parent Involvement Studies

The next series of studies to be examined involve various kinds and levels of parent involvement. They include parent education studies, parent counseling studies, and parent/student combination studies.

Parent involvement has already been defined in Chapter I for purposes of the research to follow in Chapters III and IV. However, for purposes of this review the variations in definition should be noted. Spahr (1982) viewed parent involvement as "any communication between the parents of a student and a staff member of the school program or any school related activity involving parents and students" (p. 7). She cited examples of parent involvement including:

attendance at meetings, messages sent to teachers and volunteer work of varying kinds. She said it "can be translated as the freedom for parents to communicate with the school and a willingness of teachers to respond" (p. 114).

Cervone and O'Leary (1982) created a parent involvement continuum they found useful for classification of programs/ activities. The continuum runs from parents as passive participants to parents as active participants, both horizontally and vertically. Using a chart they gave examples of activities in four categories: reporting progress, special events, parent education and parents teaching. Their continuum showed the wide variety of activities for a wide range of parent interests/abilities/ talents. They commented "A good parent involvement program therefore includes strategies for keeping less visible parents 'connected' as well as strategies to stimulate and tap the potential of highly visible parents" (p. 49).

Thornburg (1981) assessed parent involvement through the results of her questionnaire. She saw parents as: supporters and learners, volunteers, and decision makers. Schmerber (1974) described the levels of parent involvement in terms of: parent education meetings, group consultation and counseling, home demonstrations, school visitation and observation, and task committee and contact persons. Rich, Mattox and VanDien (1979) alluded to four traditional models

including: volunteerism, parent school communication, policy making, and parent education and training.

Chrispeels (1991) described the dichotomy between the views of administrators and teachers relative to parent involvement. She said:

> Administrators often equate parent involvement with fundraising or with participation on school advisory groups. Teachers think of parent involvement as seconding children to school on time, attending parent/teacher conferences, helping with homework, and responding to teacher requests (p. 368).

The parents of 280 eighth and ninth grade parents were given a parent involvement questionnaire by Wilson (1976). He found that there was a relationship between parent involvement and student achievement, but he could not conclude that, if parents got involved, grades would improve. In his study he determined that there was a connection between parent involvement and the sex of the parent, but no connection with one versus two parent homes.

Parent Education Studies

Within the category of parent involvement studies, the next series of studies to be examined are parent education studies and reports (See Chart 2 in Appendix A for summary of selected parent education studies.) Heiser (1979) summarized parent education as "any group-based educational program or activity designed to help parents increase their competence and effectiveness in childrearing" (p. 5). Croake and Glover (1977) defined parent education as "the purposive learning activity of parents who are attempting to

change their methods of interaction with their children for the purpose of encouraging positive behavior in their children" (p. 151). Lessa (1983) described three kinds of parent education programs: 1) those designed to improve the teaching skills of parents; 2) those developed to teach behavior modification; and 3) those offered to strengthen general parenting skills such as communication skills, discipline, and family problem solving. Riley (1984) thought that when used for improving student achievement parent education "involves workshops, counseling sessions, or classes in which parents are given instruction on how to help their children become more productive students" (p. 58). From these three definitions alone the reader can see philosophical differences which are noticeable in the literature to follow.

Harris (1983) reported on a behavior modification program that included homework scheduling, homework behavior charting, rewards and two parent meetings. The program, called Parent-Aided Homework (PAH), was facilitated by the counselor and was seen to be successful even without teacher involvement. While the description of the program showed promise, there was no research data to substantiate its successfulness.

Olson (1980) created a parent education program focusing on the parent child relationship using the theories of Adler, Dreikurs, Berne, and James. The manual describes

in detail each of the six 1 1/2 hour sessions that centered on three concepts, rather than the usual 10-20 concepts of other parenting programs: special time, encouragement and family councils. Once again no data was provided by Olson as to its measure of success.

At an alternative high school of sixty students, Hammond and Schultz (1980) developed a communication workshop using Parent Effectiveness Training. The goals of the workshop were

> to improve parent-adolescent relationships through (a) learning and practicing effective communication skills and problem-solving skills; (b) sharing with others important parent issues, concerns, and suggestions; and (c) providing parents and adolescents an opportunity to have positive experiences together (p. 301).

Thirty-five parents, guardians or significant others participated in two hour weekly sessions for five weeks, with the last two sessions also involving the students. An informal evaluation of the workshop was the only data indicating successfulness. Parents were willing to recommend the program to others. Students helped encourage their parents' attendance. Communication between parent and child was more open. The workshop gave people the opportunity to see each other as equals, rather than in their usual roles.

In a study by Dodley (1981) pretest/posttest results were compared for 30 parents of seventh-twelfth graders with maladaptive school behavior. These parents completed a two hour a night, nine week Systematic Training for Effective

Parenting (STEP) Program. He found that at an 0.01 level of significance parents came to understand their children's behavior better. However, there was no significant difference in parents after the program relative to having a more positive attitude toward their children's behavior. Likewise, there was no significant improvement in parents' perception of their family social climate.

Smith (1984) studied the effects of the STEP/Teen Program on a group of 26 parents whose youngsters had been placed in foster care. Using a pretest/posttest, experimental/control design he found no significant differences on the following; authoritarian attitudes, communication skills, confidence, trust, environmental/ parental causation, and perception of their own generation gap with their children. STEP/Teen was significant in changing parental acceptance and understanding of their adolescents, perception of family communication and of the American generation gap in general. The major limitation to this study was the fact that these parents were answering questions based upon their limited time and involvement with their children. They were not allowed to spend more than 48 hours at a time with their youngsters. They had little opportunity at the time of the study to practice what they learned in the program.

Clemmer (1987) in her review commented that the STEP/Teen Program had certain inherent limitations. It

would appeal mainly to parents of middle class status with at least a high school education. In fact, some college education would make the concepts easier to understand. She also was concerned about its applicability with autocratic parents, seeing parents open to democratic methods more likely to benefit from the program.

Mince-Ennis (1980) evaluated an eight week parent training program which attempted to improve the self-esteem, self-concept of academic ability (SCAA) and academic achievement (GPA) for seventh, eighth and ninth grade underachievers. Due to a dearth in the literature, he chose these parameters for his study. The studies he reviewed in his investigation showed mixed results and often dealt with younger children. Later, he reported that parent program leaders, trying to improve children's self-esteem, met with mixed success.

In laying the groundwork for his investigation, he commented on the importance of parenting skills:

> The parents of early adolescents are at an important stage in their own development as parents.... they will need to feel secure in their knowledge of parenting as well as in their relationship with their child. They will need to know what to expect of their early adolescent, which behaviors and demands are reasonable and which are unreasonable. They should be able to rationally discuss issues and set parental expectations before negative situations develop. They should be knowledgeable and competent in discussing sex, drugs, dating, home responsibilities, school responsibilities, etc. (p. 9).

In Mince-Ennis' study parents of 108 underachieving seventh-ninth graders, in a white, middle class Long Island

junior high, were invited to the parent training program. Twenty-four parents agreed to participate, with a matched control group of 24 selected from the remaining 84 parents. Nineteen parents were judged to have completed the eight week parent training program which used a thematic approach in its 2 1/2 hour meetings weekly. His goals for the program were to teach parents:

a. To accept their low-achieving children and communicate that acceptance through the use of empathetic responses.
b. To send positive parental messages to their children in the form of praise, encouragement and affection.
c. To understand their own influence on their children's academic self-concept, and to identify ways in which they may be helping their children maintain a low self-concept of ability.
d. To set clearly defined limits but encourage a wide variety of behaviors within those limits for their children (p. 12).

Using a compromise pretest, posttest, control group design, he found that there was no difference between those who participated in the training and those who did not participate on the issues of students' self-esteem, SCAA and GPA. However, a weak positive trend in the parent training group was seen on self-esteem and SCAA. The change in GPA was slightly higher for the control group. Mince-Ennis concluded that since self-esteem and SCAA are stable variables, testing a month or two later might have shown improvements.

Gerler and Merrill (1985) investigated the use of a parent training program with 21 parents whose children, ages

4-14 seemed to be having behavioral problems. The 90 minute sessions over an eight week period were eclectic in style and included instruction on: observing, defining and recording behaviors, applying consequences to behaviors, weekly assignments, effective communication, as well as family fun activities. Gerler and Merrill used the Becker Bipolar Adjective Checklist with parents in their pretest/posttest design. Three of the five factors changed in a positive direction, but only the withdrawn-hostile factor reached statistical significance.

While the authors point to two reasons for the lack of significant results: concentration on annoying and overt behavior and group size, this writer notes other flaws or lack of information in their report:

1. No reference was made to other variables that could have been controlled in the study such as gender, academic grades, age, and socioeconomic status, to mention but a few.
2. There was no control or comparison group.
3. Teachers were not asked for their perceptions of any changes in their students.
4. As recommended in the Mince-Ennis study, a posttest one to two months after program attendance might have shown more significant results. Noticeable changes may not have been observable immediately.

Cox and Matthews (1977) reported on the use of the Downing Program for Parent Training in Family Relationship and Management Skills with parents of Virginia alternative public high school students. One hundred twenty-four parents were randomly selected for the treatment and control groups, with posttest and follow-up data collected eight weeks later. Fifty- eight parents achieved an average attendance at this weekly program for its six week duration and were able to provide data for the posttest, while 52 participated in the follow-up evaluation. From this data and the data also collected on their children, they found that teachers noted significant differences between the control and treatment group students both at the end of the program and eight weeks later. On the Behavior Rating Form (completed by teachers) and the Behavioral Coding Categories (completed by undergraduate volunteers), the differences between groups were significant at the follow-up evaluation but only marked at the posttest. Frequency of inappropriate behavior was reduced and appropriate behavior was increased for children of parents who attended the Downing Program, thus pointing to the value of the parent program for changing student behavior.

Unlike previously mentioned research based programs, Cox and Matthews employed no pretest; however, common to all the students was the fact that they all had behavioral problems, otherwise, they would not be enrolled in that

particular school. On the other hand, their use of an eight week follow-up lends more credence to their work and provides an answer to the question raised in the two previously mentioned studies, where a follow-up could have shown measurable gains not seen immediately upon completion of a parent education program.

In Haas' study (1978) of a weekly Performance Observation Report (POR) mailed to parents of tenth grade algebra students, he noted that the parents receiving the POR became more cognizant of their children's class performance and as a result communicated more with them. They also offered more suggestions, encouragement and supervision of homework. More immediate feedback to parents reduced the need for information when it was too late to make needed improvements. While not educational in the same sense as other programs described, it certainly improved parent awareness by reporting attendance, tardies, participation, grades, assignments, use of class time, etc.

In his research, Tennies (1982) also used the concept of frequent communication with parents in a project called the Parent Communication Plus Program (PCPP). In his review of the literature he found that parent communication programs varied in terms of significant results. However, he pointed out that "when coupled with progress reporting and specific tasks given to parents it is was hypothesized that this would be a winning combination" (p. 57).

Ninety students in grades 6-12 from the Boca Raton Christian School were selected for three groups in the study by Tennies. Using a randomized stratified sample the students with GPA's below the 40th percentile were placed in two treatment groups and a control group. Group A parents received a phone call once a week which covered progress reporting and parent education. Group A parents also received a written progress report weekly. Group B parents alternately received a written progress report one week and phone call the next week. Each call to Group B parents involved progress reporting and a condensed version of the parent education curriculum. Tennies described a very structured format for each call which included; rapport building, progress reporting, parent education curriculum and specific task given. Twenty-one faculty members were involved in calling the parents of 60 students (Groups A and B) with each family called by a different class teacher on a rotating basis over the 14 weeks. Pertinent information was recorded on a 3 x 5 card for each student and passed along to the next teacher/caller for reference.

Data was gathered for students and parents in all three groups with surveys to the parents of Groups A and B at the end of the 14 week program. The PCPP treatment used by Tennies had a significant effect on GPA but not on standardized test results. As one might expect, with greater frequency of contact for Group A parents, GPA was

more improved for Group A than Group B, with the control group showing the least change. Fourteen weeks was not a long enough period of time for a significant improvement of California Achievement Test (CAT) scores. The effect on areas measured by the Survey of Study Habits and Attitudes was not significant, although a positive trend could be seen on the subtest category, delay avoidance.

Tennies' PCPP program had some interesting by-products for teachers. He found that because teachers attended 1/2 hour training sessions weekly and learned the curriculum they discussed with parents, "It was surmised that these helpful techniques would eventually show up in the classroom as the parent curriculum became a part of the teachers' educational thinking" (pp. 119-120).

Tennies offered several suggestions for further research, one of which is of interest for the present investigation. He suggested that his PCPP might not be as successful with raising the GPA of high school students as it was with junior high school students. His data was not broken down by grade level. He only referred to the mix as being 59.5% middle school and 40.5% high school students.

Of the ten parent education programs discussed above, three were purely descriptive in nature, and while they may have had a demonstration group, no real data on the effects of the programs could be noted. Two other descriptive studies employed a pretest/posttest design and showed

improvement in parents' understanding of their children's behavior and improvement in the youngsters' withdrawn-hostile behavior. The five remaining comparative studies vary in number of subjects from 26 to 120, with four studies making use of a pretest/posttest design and one doing only a posttest with a follow-up eight weeks later. Parents showed some improved attitudes in one study. Students also improved in four studies (weak trend in one of the four studies) where their attitudes, grades and behavior were assessed.

Researchers seem to know the value of parent education intuitively, however, they have not been as successful at quantifying its value in their studies. In the studies just examined, some of which employed good sound research techniques, the results showed some significant changes on the part of students or their parents, but no significant difference/change was noted for many of the research questions in the studies.

Parent Counseling Studies

The programs reviewed below involve parents of high school underachievers in some kind of counseling sessions. (See Chart 3 in Appendix A for summary of parent counseling studies.)

A parent group in Newton, Massachusetts used Dr. John V. Gilmore's book, Suggestions for Parents, as the foundation for their approximately 11 sessions (Grossman,

1971). Parents were invited based upon their tenth, eleventh, or twelfth grader's IQ, reading and mathematics scores, GPA and absence of emotional problems. Of the six couples signing up for the program five essentially participated in enough of the conferences over a seven month period. The format of each session included time to review the past week's events, oral reading from the text, and assignment of tasks to work on during the next week. The basic concept of the program was to make the home situation more positive, supportive and less critical, so that the child could have a greater capacity for success in school and thereby improve self-esteem and general well being.

Besides the five pairs of parents in the Gilmore sessions, there was a control group providing a comparison. By the end of the sessions only four pairs remained in the experimental group, with one pair deleted from the control group to match the size of the experimental group. Of the four students whose parents attended the program three improved their grades significantly (.10 level) over the control group. For all four students both parents and teachers noted improvements from a rating scale completed before and after the program.

Grossman recognized the extremely small sample size in her study and while she described her results as very encouraging, her conclusion that counselors should work with parents of low achievers lacks credibility and

generalizability from such a small study with very limited controls and a .10 level of significance.

A support group for parents of New York City alternative high school students was described by Berman, Freeman and Siegmund (1987). Using an evolutionary model, they allowed the group of 8-10 parents to determine what the sessions would cover. They included such topics as: communication, teen lifestyles, letting go, college information and personal adult concerns. The group provided an opportunity for parents, who were not willing to participate in outside therapy, but who were at least willing to be involved in a school sponsored program. While not a research based report, they did comment that after a year

> The children of group members show a pattern of improvement in behavior, attendance and grades. It is not a steady pattern, but more like a crash diet, with sudden spurts of achievement and then periods of regression as stresses, peer pressure and force of habit bring students back to familiar ways of living their lives (p. 14).

While the above undocumented report pointed to the value of parent counseling groups, Berman (1977) viewed parent counseling as ineffective in raising GPA, improving parent-adolescent communication and adolescent self-esteem. However, it should be noted that her pretest/posttest, experimental/control designed study involved a very limited population, namely: 12 adolescents (from two natural parent homes) attending one private coeducational, resident/day

school and their 24 parents.

Of the three parent counseling studies just described, one is descriptive with no supporting data, and the other two involve very small samples and contrary outcomes. Additional parent counseling studies are addressed in the next section since they involve some combination of parent student activities.

Parent/Student Combination Studies

The following studies involve a combination of approaches dealing with underachievement. They include parent groups, student groups, parent/student groups, older student support, parent contacts, student contacts, tutoring, PET, educational videotapes, homework lab, home visitation, educational parent/student groups, etc. (See Chart 4 in Appendix A for summary of parent/student combination studies.)

Nowhere in the literature explored for this study has any author made the far-reaching comments that Lebenbaum (1980) did when he said that academic underachievement is related to underachievement on the job and related to anti-social behavior. Looking at underachievement with these encompassing effects provides added impetus to find solutions to the problems with some sense of urgency and priority.

Lebenbaum (1980), after completing his review of the literature, selected what he thought were the most

successful techniques for his treatment. His study, conducted at a turmoil-laden junior high school in New York, included the use of parent groups, daily report cards and home-based reinforcement. Fourteen underachieving average junior high school students (Initially there were 15, 11 ninth graders and four eighth graders, but two dropped out and one was added late.) and their parents were selected for the experimental group. There were two control groups: the first consisted of two seventh graders, five eighth graders and eight ninth graders, average students all considered underachievers; the second group was comprised of 14 honor roll ninth graders.

Lebenbaum's basic premise was that parents, given the daily report cards, could operantly condition their children to do their homework and be more successful in school. Parents could reward appropriate school and home behaviors with choice of dinner, increase in allowance and/or TV time, sleepover with a friend, etc.

> Academic underachievement was conceptualized as operant behavior, and therefore subject to the laws governing operant behavior... Therefore, the probability of the occurrence of academic underachievement will be strengthened or weakened by the nature of the events which immediately follow it. Since attention was defined as the primary reinforcer, it was theorized that more attention was given underachievers for this behavior than for more productive, achievement oriented behavior (p. 113).

Over the ten week treatment period parents met weekly for one hour for education and support. They also used the time to discuss their frustrations with and hostility toward

the school. Students were given an IQ test, questionnaire and participated in an exit interview. Parents too were given a questionnaire and participated in an exit interview. Teachers completed an evaluation form.

Lebenbaum's study provided support for the use of operant conditioning to reduce underachievement. When compared with the control groups he found that the experimental group improved in English, social studies and mathematics. They also improved in overall GPA. When their performance was again charted ten weeks later, he found that there was still improvement in mathematics and GPA. Maintaining the effect over time in all subjects might have been more likely, he speculated, had there been a "structured 'fading-out'" (p. 98) of the reinforcement. He also found that students in the experimental group changed their perception of their parents' behavior. They saw their parents as more attentive to them and their mothers, specifically, as more loving. He noted that to use the comments section of the ten week report card in his research, he had to show fewer comments when the students improved, due to the negative skew of teachers' comments. He learned that teachers' lack of enthusiasm for the project was not due to a lack of commitment but rather due to a lack of information regarding student reports brought home and parent involvement in the weekly meetings.

Among the problems Lebenbaum encountered were the

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User Name:    VCOLLIER (9)                Queue:  WTC-EDU/HPII
File Name:                                Server: WTC-EDU
Description: LPT1 Catch
             APRIL 08, 1992                       2:53  pm
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V   V  CCC   OOO  L     L     IIIII EEEEE RRRR
V   V C   C O   O L     L       I   E     R   R
V   V C     O   O L     L       I   E     R   R
V   V C     O   O L     L       I   EEEE  RRRR
V   V C     O   O L     L       I   E     R R
 V V  C   C O   O L     L       I   E     R  R
  V    CCC   OOO  LLLLL LLLLL IIIII EEEEE R   R
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V   V  CCC   OOO  L     L     IIIII EEEEE RRRR
V   V C   C O   O L     L       I   E     R   R
V   V C     O   O L     L       I   E     R   R
V   V C     O   O L     L       I   EEEE  RRRR
V   V C     O   O L     L       I   E     R R
 V V  C   C O   O L     L       I   E     R  R
  V    CCC   OOO  LLLLL LLLLL IIIII EEEEE R   R
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following: students not bringing home the daily report cards, parents not using the weekly record for long term reinforcers, and teachers varying in their willingness to fill out daily report cards.

The most helpful part of the program for both students and parents were the daily report cards and the resulting feeling of "being watched" (pp. 82, 84). By having the information from these cards parents could do what Bleuer (1989) said is their most important job with underachievers, that of monitoring time doing homework. Having begun Lebenbaum's program doubting its value, students and parents became more positive in their attitudes. Interesting though, students' positive attitudes were tied to their improved GPA, whereas their parents' attitudes were positive regardless of GPA.

The concept of frequent progress reporting was also used by Kerr (1983) but on a weekly basis with students individually and with parents by phone. In her study of 120 juniors and seniors at Shawnee Mission North High School, Kerr explored the use of tutoring, parent contact and student contact with the goal of improving GPA and attendance. Two experimental groups were formed from the 120 students with 1.9/4.0 GPA or below and with five or more unexcused absences. The first experimental group received the contacts and tutoring for nine weeks, while the second experimental group received the treatment nine weeks later.

parent contact involved progress reports by phone each Friday with any other assistance deemed necessary. The student contact (1-5 hours per week) involved a review of the weekly progress checks but could have also included career information, school information, personal counseling, encouragement, follow-up on absences, etc. Group tutoring (1-5 hours per week) varied in terms of the type of help needed, from organization and planning skills to learning strategies and clarifications from subject teachers. In her study and in a replicated version Kerr found that there was a significant improvement in academic achievement and attendance as a result of the parent contact, student contact and tutoring.

Spahr (1982) completed a descriptive study of parent involvement in a middle class suburban high school in Pennsylvania. The parents involved in the study were parents of ninth graders in their Intensive Education Program. During the first three periods of the school day these 52 underachieving students were enrolled in science, social studies, English and reading with the same four teachers.

The parents in Spahr's study attended monthly meetings, received bi-weekly academic reports, could volunteer for committee work, recorded time spent on the family reading program, were invited to monthly student fieldtrips, and shared with students and teachers at the end of year

conferences. While most of these facets of the program are self-explanatory, the monthly meetings require some description. These meetings were intended to establish and improve communications between parent and the school, and between parent and child. Some meetings were devoted to explanation of school programs such as the sports, activities or lunch programs. Other meetings were focused on testing, Parent Effectiveness Training, addictive diseases, services available from school personnel, etc. Appropriate handouts were also provided. Parents were encouraged to suggest topics for the meetings. While they did not make any suggestions, parents found the topics presented worthwhile.

One might get discouraged when attendance is tallied for all the facets of parent involvement in Spahr's study. However, that was not the focus of her research. She said,

> Parent involvement programs based on attendance at meetings have been unsuccessful at the secondary level. There is a need to define parent involvement as something more than attendance at meetings. There is a need to establish effective and purposeful ways for involving parents in the educational experience of their child (p. 34).

She went on to say later in her report that

> Teachers should not regard limited attendance at meetings, per se, as a sign of limited parent concern, but should be consistent in their efforts to involve parents and offer a variety of activities that will fit a multitude of family schedules (pp. 116-117).

From her work as participant observer, taking notes, doing interviews, reading student journals, summarizing data

from the parent survey, etc. Spahr drew the following conclusions:

1. The ninth graders were generally favorable toward teachers contacting their parents.

2. Teachers' attitudes and behavior need to be persuasive and convincing for parents to really see that their involvement is desired. She pointed out that

> there is a direct relationship between the positive personal attention given parents by teachers and their willingness to become involved.... The study further reveals that many parents want the freedom to contact teachers when they need support or feel their child is encountering difficulty, but frequently feel they don't have that freedom.... the impetus for parent involvement comes from teacher enthusiasm (pp. 114-115).

3. There was a difference in how willing and able the teachers were to encourage parents to become involved. Her research suggested that "teachers at the secondary level may avoid or be uncomfortable with parent contact" (p. 120).

> Those teachers who did not heavily support parent involvement revealed the following characteristics:
>
> They avoided personal involvement in another teacher's problems.
> They avoided extra demands on their time beyond those covered in their contract.
> They participated in in-service programs only as required by the district.
> They did not initiate parent contact unless required by the program.
> They appeared more comfortable discussing their content area or academic achievement than they did discussing the social or emotional development of the student.
> They did not give parents the option of contacting them after school hours (pp. 119-120).

4. The end-of-year conferences which included

students, parents and teachers were rated successful. Reactions from all three groups was positive. Seventy-six percent of the parents participated in the conferences with 22% not responding and 2% refusing to attend.

5. The bi-weekly reports received by parents were appreciated by them. As a result parents were eager to help improve the situation. She revealed that "parents are willing to accept partial responsibility for their child's success or failure. They are willing to change established patterns in the home if they believe it will accommodate learning" (p. 115). Her work reported that "teachers can usually expect support from parents when negative reports are necessary if positive and constructive reports have preceded the negative reports" (p. 118).

Another conclusion worth mentioning from Spahr's study was that when parents were personally invited to conferences or activities or when the students participated in such events, the attendance of parents was higher.

Spahr reiterated her point that parent involvement is more than attendance at meetings. She said that

> It is a model of cooperation between teachers, students and parents. To create this model or triad a willingness on the part of staff to extend themselves beyond the realm of the classroom content and district obligations must exist (p. 120-121).

Starr (1978) discussed the use of positive and negative phone contacts with parents (as well as home visits) in terms of a home-school partnership which developed well

enough that they received an 87% Yes vote for their last tax levy. While the author was not reporting on a research study and could only speculate on any causal relationship, the vote was concrete evidence of parent support.

Some of the research concentrates on the use of parent groups and student groups, separate from each other. Albert (1976) reported that counseling with parents or with tenth graders was not successful in improving attendance, GPA or school behavior. Counseling with students did, however, improve their self-concept. Contrary to Albert's work, Perkins (1969) reported an increase in GPA and self-acceptance after counseling, whether it was with the mothers or with the ninth grade boys.

Perkins and Wicas (1971) commented that although use of parents in the treatment of underachievement had been a long standing suggestion, research had not followed up on that recommendation. Hence, this was the focus of Perkins' dissertation and Perkins' and Wicas' article. Perkins' research was done with 120 bright underachieving ninth grade boys and 60 of their mothers at five schools in Rhode Island. At each school four treatment conditions were established:

1. Twelve weekly one hour counseling sessions with the boys,

2. Twelve weekly one hour counseling sessions with the boys and their mothers in separate groups,

3. Twelve weekly one hour counseling sessions for mothers only, and

4. No counseling for the boys nor for their mothers (control group).

Perkins and Wicas concluded that GPA showed a significant improvement for each of the three treatment groups over the control group. The effect was the same, whether the counselors worked with the boys' groups alone or with the mothers' groups alone, or with the mothers' groups and students' groups. Where the differences between treatment groups occurred was in terms of self-acceptance. On the Interpersonal Check List the boys whose mothers participated in group counseling showed improvement in self-acceptance over the control group and the boys only counseling group. In fact, the boys only counseling group was no different than the control group with respect to self-acceptance. They concluded that mothers could still influence ninth grade boys' self-image. Students were reevaluated five months after the treatment with the initial results not well maintained. While some logistical dimensions may have clouded these longer term results, they suggested future studies involve longer treatment periods or periodic revival of the groups to sustain the positive results.

Similar to Perkins' study was the research of McCowan (1968). His experimental design employed 32 tenth grade

boys matched for IQ, age, past achievement, reading scores and socioeconomic status and then divided into four groups:

1. Control group (no counseling)
2. Parents counseled
3. Students counseled
4. Parents and students counseled in separate groups.

The 45 minute student group counseling sessions were held weekly for 15 weeks, whereas the parent sessions (involving fathers and mothers) were 60 minutes weekly for 12 weeks.

Unlike Perkins' results, McCowan found that for groups 2 and 4, where parents were involved in counseling, student midterm averages were significantly higher than averages of the control group or the students only counseling group. Also unlike Perkins' results, this improvement in groups 2 and 4 was maintained in the final grades, five months later. McCowan determined that counseling with students only did not improve student achievement, although it was successful at improving study skills and school attitudes. From the data in this study it was more effective to provide parent counseling than student counseling in order to increase student achievement.

Gurman (1970) reported on underachieving sophomore male student groups and concurrent parent groups. Unlike Perkins' and McCowan's research, Gurman chose a group of 18 students exhibiting a wide range of IQ's, temperament behavior, religion and socioeconomic background. He used no

counseling parents and/or students as a treatment" (p. 52).

In their review of the literature, Navin and Bates (1987) found no studies of reading improvement programs involving simultaneous counseling of parents and direct services to students. Hence, they chose 14 remedial reading students, grades 4 through 9, and their parents for their study, divided in half for an experimental group and a control group. The students were already receiving tutoring three hours per week for seven weeks. Parents joined together for 1 1/2 hour weekly sessions for five weeks to discuss a variety of pertinent topics. Before and after the treatment both experimental and control students were tested on reading attitude and comprehension. In both areas the experimental group scored significantly higher. Since both experimental and control groups showed no difference on reading attitude and comprehension before the treatment and since both groups received the tutoring, they concluded that counseling the parents could account for the significant differences after treatment. They, however, also pointed out another factor which may have influenced the results, namely an increase in parent student interaction and the quality of that interaction for the experimental parents. Their results were also limited by the small number of participants.

Miles (1974) reported on the effectiveness of Parent Effectiveness Training (PET) sessions for parents with or

without Verbal Reinforcement Group Counseling (VRGC) sessions for potential dropout students. She divided the sixty students and their parents into four groups for comparisons. She found that PET alone and PET with VRGC produced improved classroom behavior and attitudes toward parents, but no treatment improved self-esteem or attitude toward school. Changes in academic achievement were not explored.

In the studies which follow parents and students are directly involved together, be it in counseling groups, educational experiences, home visits, etc.

Williams, Robison and Smaby (1988) offered a model for working with parents and youngsters, applicable from elementary through high school age. The two facets of the Family Problem Solving and Communication Skills (FPSCS) Model were:

1. Curtailing the disruptive behavior and learning appropriate behavior by using assertive, confrontational and contracting skills;
2. Improving empathic communication, building positive relationships leading to a higher moral climate in the family.

The counselor's purpose was to model and teach appropriate problem-solving and communication skills to the family, while also trying to help them apply these skills in their everyday home experiences.

This FPSCS Model would seem to fit the family systems approach as Zuccone and Amerikaner (1986) described it. They viewed underachievement as "symptomatic of and often symbolic of disturbances in overall family functioning" (p. 590). They, however, were not saying that "the child's school difficulties are the fault of the parents or that family (i.e., parental) behavior causes underachievement" (p. 590).

> Rather than seeing a problem as resulting from a linear cause-effect process, systems theorists emphasize circular causality in which feedback loops in the system contribute to a complex network of communication, with all parts of the system continually influencing and being influenced by all other parts (p. 591).

Similar to Zuccone and Amerikaner's point of view, Getz and Gunn (1988) avoided the concept of linear cause and effect; and instead, they proposed a process of mutual influence within the parent-child relationship. Rather than define or support another model, they reminded readers that one parent education program does not fit all and that special attention should be paid to family systems: past family attitudes and behaviors, family enmeshment or disengagement, and family leadership and roles. They were particularly concerned about the possibility of division within the family if only one parent attends a parent education program and the possibility that such a program, instead of building parent confidence and power, might actually do the opposite.

Rauschberg and Binegar (1988) describe a model for a family centered study skills workshop. In three two hour sessions two instructors attempted to teach students better study skills and their parents better communication and goal setting skills. Students received a study skills booklet written by National Honor Society seniors. Part of the time parents spent in a group separate from their children and part of the time they participated together. As a result of their participation the 12 families learned that they could work together and feel they had accomplished something positive. Students felt less pressure for grades and improved their attitudes toward study. Parents learned practical techniques to help their underachievers.

Weissman and Montgomery (1980) reported on another family style model. Their family enrichment model was educational rather than therapeutic, but unlike other models, it fostered: "(a) participation of multiple families, (b) children and parents to develop skills together, and (c) educational skill-building techniques that are practiced by children and parents using videotape feedback" (p. 113). Seven families with a total of ten children (ages 2-14) attended the two hour sessions over a ten week period. Session format included a mini-lecture, exercises, videotaped role playing and family skill practice. The participants in the Multiple Family Training (MFT) Program were positive in their comments about the

program. Families felt confident of their new skills and were willing to recommend the program to other families. The children not only learned and shared honestly, but they also had fun role playing, and using the video equipment and games. They quickly gave up their initial notion that it would be a parents against children experience.

From Castagna and Codd's (1984) experience with a study skills program taught in English classes, they recommended a similar program for parents with their first step being a study skills handout given to parents at the following parent night.

Getting parents involved in any kind of educational or counseling program, in some districts may be very difficult to accomplish. An old adage may apply, "If they do not come to you, then go to them." This is just what Urich and LaVorgna (1980) did in a large urban high school. Teams of two teachers spend three hours on a weekend doing home visits which lasted 15-20 minutes each. The gains they were able to measure included:

> -Student disruptions, cases of false alarms and vandalism, and the number of teacher assaults decreased.
> -More parents volunteered time and energy to participate in school associated activities.
> -Parents involved in the initial Parent Involvement Weekend acted as support system for the school. School efforts and activities became noteworthy enough to be discussed in churches, newspapers, television, and radio.
> -When disagreements took place between teachers and students it was more likely that discussion or dialog would take place rather than disruptive, acting-out behavior on the part of both teacher and student (p.

38).

What they were not able to measure but felt sure parents learned were that:

1. Teachers cared about their youngsters.
2. Trust and cooperation could be developed.
3. Teachers did the home visits on their own time in order to improve school climate.
4. Parents learned terminology and techniques to deal with school bureaucracy.
5. Parents were not alone in trying to solve school related problems.

Teachers learned that parents could be allies, that they were appreciated for their efforts and that parents were interested in their children's school progress. Students learned that the school had access to their parents, but that the school could also provide a warm, caring atmosphere like their homes. Students also learned that their teachers were really interested in them as individuals. Fostering this kind of partnership can only enhance the chances of improving student academic performance.

Chapman (1991) was also guided by the theory that if parents are unable to come to school, then the school should be brought to them. Since the preponderance of homes in an Illinois racially diverse suburban junior high school community had VCR's, they developed a parent education series on video, covering such topics as motivation and

study habits. Another series of tapes, called "Critical Lessons" were supplementary to topics covered in class. For example, parents watching the video on writing a research paper could provide more knowledgeable assistance to their children.

The videos Chapman described were only one part of a three part project. The other components were a homework lab and improvement contracts. Some students were assigned to the homework lab after school, while others came of their own volition. Individual grade improvement contracts were signed by individual students, their teachers and their parents and became impetus for increased communication between teachers and parents and improved homework monitoring.

Phillips and Rosenberger (1983) reported on the efforts of an inner city high school in Indianapolis to curb school problems. They cited improved test scores and attendance, fewer failures and more honor roll students, and fewer disciplinary referrals and less violence. While causality could not be established, there were several changes in practices and programs made at the school that year. Called the Quest for the Best Program the changes included:

1. Parent/student/staff groups who met with ninth graders once a week "to help the students improve academic achievement, attendance, and social adjustments, and to increase participation in activities at school" (p. 31).

2. Parents who volunteered to help teachers supervise or to assist them with paperwork.

3. Big brother/big sister for each ninth grade group.

4. School-parent contact made regularly.

5. Positive modeling behavior of teachers.

6. Task forces to improve attendance, building appearance, cafeteria food, etc.

7. School expectations and the importance of each student stressed.

8. Student ownership and responsibility for the school as a whole and their classrooms in particular--With greater ownership of school and classroom, students held more responsibility, power, influence and pride.

9. Parent involvement was individualized to accommodate family differences.

10. Peer group power was harnessed as a positive influence.

11. Compliments and recognition of achievements were emphasized.

12. Business/industry partnership was developed.

13. Teachers increased their sense of ownership of their own inservice as well as their programs.

14. Administrators functioned more as participatory leaders, managers and resource links.

The largest number of studies addressed in this review of the literature are those which involve some combination

of efforts for parents and students. Of these 18 combination type studies, nine of them are descriptive models. While it is fascinating to read about new approaches and techniques, if they have not been at least piloted or at best experimentally studied under varying conditions, there is little sound basis for their potential success except "It sounds good," "I like it," and "I'll try it." Of these descriptive models three did not offer any data as to outcomes. Spahr, however, provided probably the most outcome information through her very detailed descriptions.

Gurman's work might not be considered descriptive in the same sense as the other nine studies; however, it also lacks credibility in terms of sample size, meaning of 'wide range' as a representative sample, and measurable data, with the suggestion that such testing and quantification would cloud the issue of underachievement, as a symptom in the family system, rather than clarify it. Gurman's work also offered no data on outcomes, thus providing no clear indication of the prognosis as a method of addressing underachievement.

Two of the remaining eight reports (Perkins and Perkins & Wicas) discussed the same project. Therefore, there are really only seven parent-student combination studies reported here which used some kind of comparison group, five using more than one comparison group and one using a delayed

treatment group. Perkins (Perkins & Wicas) is the only study reporting use of a pretest/posttest design, also making use of a delayed posttest.

With the exception of Albert's work it seems that parent involvement has had significant influence over students' attitudes and behaviors. The counseling in Albert's study was only successful in improving self-concept, not attendance, GPA or behavior. Several of these combination studies seem to have involved parents in some kind of group. At times, however, it seems the distinction between counseling and informational groups is blurred, but in either case, they seem to have been successful.

The variety of techniques used in these combination studies seem to hold the most promise for underachievers and their parents. Covering all the bases with, for example, parent contacts, tutoring, home visits, study skills programs, parent counseling/informational groups, student counseling groups, etc., success is bound to occur. One part of a program may be the trigger for one student, while another aspect of a program may provide impetus for another youngster.

Comparative Parent Program Studies

The next series of studies offers comparisons between or among different parent involvement, education or counseling programs. In some cases they are more historical or descriptive in nature, while in other instances they are

research based comparisons. (See Chart 5 in Appendix A for summary of selected studies comparing various parent programs.)

Brown (1976) discussed Gordon's PET, the Parent Involvement Program, an adaptation of Glasser, the Responsive Parent Training Program, a behavior modification program and the Adlerian Children the Challenge study group. She pointed out several similarities between these programs, but commented that they usually only attract white middle class women. She saw them as simplistic in content but lacking in general information on normal child development. She also questioned the few techniques provided to deal with the multitude of child behaviors.

Curran (1989), who has her own empowerment process that she uses with parents, was not opposed to programs such as STEP, Responsive Parenting, Active Parenting and Positive Parenting. However, she cautioned that groups leaders may lack the flexibility to move away from the program material when appropriate. She said, "Programs are developed to serve us, we aren't required to serve them" (p. 53).

O'Dell (1974) reviewed 70 behavior modification studies completed after 1965 with only four of them meeting his criteria for evaluation. The value of these studies to the body of literature, at that time, was in describing the connection between parent and child behavior. The difficulties with these studies, in his view, included: a

lack of hard data on parental changes and the maintenance and generalizability of those changes, focusing on child behavior to the exclusion of studying parent behavioral change, and the lack of research studies comparing results of the techniques used in the various programs.

Moles (1982) summarized a previous review he and other researchers did on 28 home-school partnership programs. Connected with upper elementary and secondary schools, programs included such facets as: parent conferences, home visits, phone calls or workshops. "Eighteen of the 28 programs expected parents to tutor their children at home; 21 sought to use parents in broader socializing roles; and 19 helped parents plan their children's home and community educational experiences" (p. 46). Results included: better attendance, achievement and behavior on the part of students, and improved confidence and involvement on the part of parents. "Eighteen saw greater parent support and communication with the schools, and 11 reported greater parent participation in their children's learning and development" (p. 46).

Croake and Glover (1977) gave an historical perspective (Mothers' study groups found as early as 1815 in Maine) of parent education and a summary of the research conducted on it. Typical programs were more likely to attract mothers of young children from higher socioeconomic backgrounds. The research conducted over the years, they contended, was

historically insufficient and lacking in terms of controls. They found many descriptive reports with no measurable data to substantiate the outcomes, no control groups, a lack of instrument reliability and validity, as well as possible contamination from the researcher also acting as teacher/ counselor/participant. They seemed particularly concerned that studies did not control for one and two parent homes. Where posttests were used, they tended to be used immediately after treatment without allowing for resultant changes over time. Where both pretests and posttests were used, their criticism, inherent to the design, was that participants might have skewed the results to please the investigator. Content of the research reports, they claimed, also created problems for those interested in replicating or expanding the studies.

Henderson (1988) reported on parent involvement studies described by the National Committee for Citizens in Education (NCCE). For the first 35 studies on which they reported, she said that almost any type of parent involvement produced measurable improvements in academic achievement. From 18 additional new studies the evidence continued to support parent involvement as a critical variable.

> Children whose parents are in touch with the school score higher than children of similar aptitude and family background whose parents are <u>not</u> involved. Parents who help their children learn at home nurture (in themselves and in their children) attitudes that are crucial to achievement. Children who are failing

> in school improve dramatically when parents are called in to help (p. 149).

Not only is there improved grades in both the short term and long term, but also higher test scores, better attitudes and behavior, and more overall success for schools and their programs. She explained the importance of involvement further by saying,

> When parents show an interest in their children's education and maintain high expectations for their performance, they are promoting attitudes that are critical to achievement--attitudes that can be formed independently of social class or other external circumstances. Schools can help by encouraging parents to work with their children and by providing helpful information and skills. The studies show clearly that parent involvement--whether based at home or at school and whether begun before or after a child starts school--has significant, long-lasting effects (pp. 150-151).

Henderson also made two other points not mentioned often by other writers. She reminded the readers that parent involvement is not only highly beneficial at the elementary level but also at the intermediate and high school levels as well. She also emphasized that parents can make a difference even when they are not well educated themselves. "Not a luxury or quick fix," she concluded that parent involvement "is absolutely fundamental to a healthy system of public education" (p. 153).

In her study Heiser (1974) attempted to fill a void in the research on understanding the process of parent education, comparative reviews of parent education programs, and general classification of programs. Nearly ten years

earlier than Henderson's (1988) similar comment, she believed that most programs result in parental changes in attitude and behavior. However, there was a dearth in the research when it came to comparing approaches in a systematic way and even less when searching for studies on specific component parts of parent education programs as O'Dell (1974) had reported a few years earlier.

Heiser proposed a continuum with three learning models for classifying parent education programs: from acquiring content to problem solving to self-actualization.

> For example, self-actualization programs focus mainly upon parents' better understanding of themselves, problem solving programs emphasize the development of more effective techniques for resolving difficulties and acquiring content models stress the parents' better management of their child's behavior. These differences in emphasis result in some important differences in the nature and scope of the content included in the programs. If a problem solving model is adopted, the material introduced into the course relates more or less directly to finding resolutions to conflicts. On the other hand, self-actualization programs are more likely to have a broader range of content, while acquiring content models probably even narrowly define the topics of inquiry (pp. 29-30).

Heiser's study involved 12 programs, 11 program leaders and 60 mothers. The programs had to meet the following criteria to be chosen for her study:

a. Be a social system with well-defined roles.
b. Be deliberately established.
c. Have duration over time, i.e., is not a one-time occurrence.
d. Facilitate learning, i.e., increase parental competence and effectiveness.
e. Involve more than one learner, i.e., is a group process, <u>not</u> a home-based intervention (p. 88).

For the programs to be considered, the leaders also were

required to complete program questionnaires and to have some parents willing to fill out questionnaires as well.

Heiser identified 40 program and parent variables of which 19 program variables and six parent variables were deemed worthy of further evaluation. Her goal was not to focus on program differences but to access the effects of various components of the programs. She was attempting to quantify the components and determine how they were related to parent outcomes. While mothers in general showed significant changes from pretest to posttest, when data from mothers in different programs was examined separately, significant change was observed in only one of the 12 programs. No significant results were noted from the 19 program and six parent variables, although some trends were apparent. Heiser noticed mothers answering questions in the same item variable category differently. She also found significant interactions to cloud the picture but to provide opportunity for further research.

While Heiser recognized the limitations of her study and its results, she was able to categorize numerous facets of programs, breaking them into identifiable and quantifiable variables which enhance the credibility of program comparisons. Heiser's study is particularly important because it points to the importance of not just making general comparisons of different programs, but rather looking at the valuable facets of each program for

particular audiences. Powell (1986) reflected on this point in reference to further research:

> More research is needed to develop a clear picture of what types of parents gain the most and the least from what types of programs....need to be sensitive to the hidden prerequisites (such as social skills) necessary for productive program participation (contributing to group discussion) (p. 51).

Dropping ineffectual facets and combining successful components into new and better programs could certainly be an outcome of further study along this line.

Because Heiser's contribution to the literature is noteworthy and extensive enough and because her study analyzed program components and parent characteristics rather than student outcomes, this writer's focus on research studies involving high school age students was bypassed in this instance.

Wilson (1986) charted 19 studies which involved some type of counseling, underachieving elementary through high school students, improvement measured by GPA and a control group. Unique to this writer's review of the literature, her table summary of these studies was clear, concise and well organized. However, what she found was similar to other investigations cited elsewhere in this chapter:

1. Research quality was generally poor.
2. Sample sizes were sometimes so small that significant differences could not possibly be detected.
3. Matched groups were employed in only seven of the

19 studies.

4. In eight of the studies the design was one experimental and one control group.
5. Only five of the 19 studies had provision for follow-up assessment.

Based upon preliminary evidence from the 19 studies reviewed, she suggested that future programs were more likely to be effective at raising student achievement if they had the following components/characteristics: group counseling rather than individual counseling; structured, directive and behavioral rather than unstructured, person-centered approach; long length of treatment; volunteer student participants; counseling supplemented with study skills discussion; and parent involvement.

Wilson also observed that only two (11%) of the 19 studies were completed during the 1980's. All others were from previous decades, leading to her concern that research had not been continuing at the pace it should. Ending her report on a reassuring note, she commented that later studies seem to show greater sophistication in terms of design, leading to more meaningful results for the researchers and, more importantly, for the underachievers.

While some authors may refer to teachers specifically in their studies or may intend the term to be more inclusive, to refer to all faculty members/educators. In either case, one might speculate that the results of their

studies could probably be generalized to include counselors. Bleuer (1987) specifically mentioned the role of counselors as liaison between school (especially junior high and high school) and family. She noted that besides increasing their own visibility, counselors, who conduct meetings for parents, create an opportunity for parents to interact with each other, something they seem to have fewer opportunities to do as their children get older.

These seven selected studies comparing various parent programs provide some historical perspective, discuss several different programs, and involve a wide variety of programs. In several instances the authors point out the limitations of previous research: the lack of experimentally designed, well controlled studies with sufficiently large samples, adequate instruments and follow-up data. O'Dell suggested that research look at comparisons of techniques across programs, while Heiser pointed out that mothers in different programs were not likely to show significant changes and still another author, Brown, noted the similarities among programs. If the programs were broken into their component parts and studied systematically, perhaps within program differences could be noted where between program differences have not surfaced. While this was done by Heiser nearly 20 years ago, perhaps a replicated and updated study would delineate more significant findings.

Two of these comparative studies, Moles and Henderson, rather than centering on the absence of quality research, focused on the positive contributions made by home-school partnerships. They recognized a significant correlation between parent involvement and student attitudes and performance.

Summary

Over the years several parent involvement/education/counseling studies have been conducted. However, many of them only involved parents of young children. Very few involved parents of high school students. Very few of the studies were well controlled. Often they lacked a comparison/control group. Often they involved very small samples. Some studies made use of a pretest/posttest design, but few included a delayed posttest. Some studies were purely descriptive to the exclusion of any group upon which the model was tested. Furthermore, some reports were, perhaps, called studies only in a loose definition of the term. For purposes of the study at hand, attempt was also made to access studies involving parents of underachievers. Again, success was limited at best.

Deficits in the literature were pointed out in virtually all of the studies examined. The present study attempts to address some of these deficits by examining the effects of one parent program on the grades, attendance, and discipline of high school ninth and tenth grade

underachievers and on the attitudes and behaviors of their parents.

Hypotheses

On the basis of the concepts examined in the review of the literature, the following hypotheses have been generated:

1. There will be no difference between GB parents and non-GB parents in terms of their perception of their frustration and aloneness in facing the problem of high school underachievement.

2. There will be no difference between GB and non-GB parents on their awareness of the academic improvement strategies. There will also be no difference between the perceived success of those strategies by GB or non-GB parents.

3. There will be no difference between GB and non-GB parents with regard to their perception of school staff concern.

4. There will be no difference between students whose parents attend Grade Booster Night and students whose parents do not attend Grade Booster Night when examining their grades, attendance and disciplinary steps.

5. There will be no difference across grade levels and sex when examining GB or non-GB status, grades, attendance and disciplinary steps.

6. There will be no difference between students in

Project Success or Reading and those not enrolled in Project Success or Reading relative to their grades, sex, grade level, and status of their parents as GB or non-GB parents.

The design of the study used to test these hypotheses is described in Chapter III which follows. The design of the study includes descriptions of the setting, the program, the sample, the procedure, the instrument and the statistical procedure.

CHAPTER III

DESIGN OF THE STUDY

In this chapter the design of the study is described. Included in this discussion are the following: the setting, description of the program, description of the sample, procedure, instrument, and a description of the statistical procedure.

The Setting

The public high school district involved in this study is a one school district serving seven northwest suburban Chicago communities. The communities range from upper middle class white collar workers to temporary welfare recipients. While the population is racially and ethnically diverse, it is primarily (90.0%) of white European extraction. Many families are first or second generation in the suburbs. Parents' goals for their children are college and a continuation of the "good life." The actual percentage of students pursuing higher education at either two or four year colleges averages 65-70% (see School Profile in Appendix I).

The high school district serves approximately 2,700 students at its three campus sites. One campus houses

freshmen and sophomores, another accommodates juniors and seniors, while the third is an alternative education site. It is a comprehensive high school offering about 200 electives as well as half-day vocational/technical training (open only to juniors and seniors) at the area county vocational center. The district is staffed by 182 certified faculty, 75% of whom hold a master's degree or higher. The Pupil Personnel Services Department consists of two psychologists, two social workers, eight counselors, one department administrator, two nurses and one speech therapist. (Not all of these individuals are full-time faculty.)

The Program

The Grade Booster Night Seminar is a program, designed primarily by the investigator with assistance from a colleague, to meet needs of both parents and high school counselors. It focuses on the important role parents play in helping their high school students deal with the pressures created by society's demands for academic excellence. It is a positively oriented, inexpensive and easily adaptable program involving parents in the process of increasing student achievement. It is an opportunity for parents: a) to realize they are not alone, b) to reduce their frustration, c) to redirect their energies into selecting appropriate strategies with their children, and d) to emphasize staff concern and available resources in both

school and community. A by-product of the seminar is further credibility for the pupil personnel services department, improved community public relations and added administrative support.

Currently a 2-2 1/2 hour one night seminar, Grade Booster Night is held in late October/early November, when the potential for grade improvement is best. It is usually held two weeks after the first six week progress reports (grades) are available.

The format of the evening has varied from year to year but has always featured skits and lecture/discussion. Presented early on the agenda by drama students, the skits illustrate, in a humorous and exaggerated manner, examples of underachievement, which parents find remarkably similar to their own home situations. Creating a little levity and empathy, hopefully, secures their attention for the "meat" of the program and insures a renewal of energy, enthusiasm, determination and tenacity upon completion of the evening.

The lecture/discussion portion of the evening varies to some extent depending on the speakers, but always covers: parent frustration, problem ownership, parent strategies, school/community resources and the Grade Booster packet of handouts. Presentations by counselors, and at least one of the following: a social worker, a psychologist or special education director, are short (10-20 minutes), often interactive with the audience, humorous and practical in

nature. The speakers are positive and collaborative; no one displays a condescending or authoritative attitude. The issues discussed with the audience are based on concerns parents have most often mentioned on an individual basis. (See Appendix B for program agendas.)

In addition, parents are given a set of handouts which attempts to provide them with a few excellent articles, as well as some useful charts and strategies to help them better understand and work with their teens. Some items are just for parents; other items are for parents and teens together; and a few are for teens only. Updated yearly, the packet includes such items as:

Grade Booster Pencils are distributed to parents for their use during the evening and for them to give to their children when they return home. They are imprinted, "Be a Lake Park Grade Booster" in school colors, blue and white.

Special Person Placemat with the school mascot on it is suggested for parents who wish to recognize, at dinner time, any small achievements their children have had.

Grade Booster Coupons parents can give to their children also to acknowledge small achievements. These coupons are a favorite among the student aides who assemble the packets. Coupons may be redeemed for such things as extra time on the phone, a favorite dinner, time with friends, and a trip to the amusement park.

Grade Booster "Lunch Box" Notes provide an alternate

method of communication for parents. During the teen years it may be difficult for parents and teens to communicate love and appreciation verbally, but a note in a sock or taped to the mirror can be the more effective approach.

Grade Booster Assignment Pad is small and simple. Students can record assignments and due dates and carry it home in their pockets.

Community Resource List is for parents' reference if they wish to consult outside academic resources or if they need counseling assistance on other serious interfering problems.

Student Excuse List is a list of sample excuses students give their parents and appropriate intervention strategies parents can use. The student aides assembling the packets report having used many of the excuses rather successfully with their own parents.

Study Skills Ideas are included because parents often request this material to help them get started with their youngsters.

Progress Report Forms offer parents and students a strategy on which they can negotiate. They can choose a daily progress form, a weekly progress form or the counselor initiated mid-six week progress check.

Homework Expectations in Academic Subject Areas is a chart showing the courses in which freshmen and sophomores are enrolled. It also shows parents how much homework to

expect, how many test/quizzes to anticipate, and how much time students should spend studying.

After Grade Booster Night is over, parents throughout the year are offered the Grade Booster packets in conjunction with individual conferences regarding their teens' underachievement.

The Grade Booster packet contains a variety of information and strategies; so, parents can pick and choose what they feel most comfortable using. They can also select items which they feel will work best with their children.

From the beginning the program has been supported by the school administration. The investigator and one other counselor were given two full days summer project time in 1984 to organize and outline the topics to be covered. This permitted uninterrupted time to determine the basic format of the program. The continue administrative support has certainly been very important to the program and to the study at hand.

Possible inhibitors to the successful operation of a Grade Booster Program are: a condescending and authoritative attitude displayed by the presenters of the program, and the assumption of school personnel that parents of underachievers will not attend this kind of program. Grade Boosters organizers, aware of these problems, have made attempts to prevent them.

The Sample

The 1985-1986 freshman and sophomore classes in this public high school district comprised approximately 1,400 students. When the first six week progress reports were mailed in October of 1985 approximately 750 of these students received at least one D. Three hundred and forty-one of these 750 received at least one F. The parents of all 750 students were invited to the Grade Booster Night Program. However, the final sample was limited to include only the 341 parents whose children had received at least one F at the first six week marking period. Of these families 131 (38.4%) returned surveys which provide the data for this study.

Exclusions from this sample include students with the following classifications: Homebound, Special Education and English as a Second Language students. The F grades of homebound students might be related to their lack of regular class attendance. Special education students have learning or behavioral difficulties being already addressed by their programs. The problems of the regular education students and their parents' involvement are the focus of this study. The grades of English as a second language students may reflect language deficiencies rather than underachievement. These exclusions hopefully provide better control over certain factors that might skew or inflate the results.

A profile of a typical family in this study can be

derived from the frequency data in Chapter IV, Part I. While fair distributions of freshmen and sophomores, both male and female, are represented, a typical student might more than likely be a tenth grader. The student is probably the oldest or youngest in a family of one to three children and lives with two parents. The average youngster in this study has one F at the end of the first six weeks and zero or one F at the end of the semester. More than likely, whatever the number of F's the first six weeks, the typical student has fewer F's at the semester. The child probably has six courses, no disciplinary steps and no assistance from a reading class or from a Project Success study hall. The student is not employed, not involved in extracurricular activities, and has between zero and five days absence for the semester.

Additional information is provided by the parents in this study, who are usually mothers. They say that the child in this study usually receives no help on homework from siblings. After the first six week F('s) the student gets the same amount of help from parents and spends the same or more time studying. Parents generally report no increase in absence and no change in attitude toward school. They perceive their child liking some/most teachers and having some/many friends. Their youngster has probably transferred schools once and has been moderately successful in grade school and junior high school and not very

successful in high school.

Parents report generally that they have had some contact with teachers and counselors following receipt of the first six week grades. They sense a moderate level of concern on the part of school staff as a whole. Their feelings are scattered, but they are frustrated, worried and disappointed due to their child's low academic achievement. Change in parent feelings over the semester is frequently positive or none. They indicate some involvement in parent programs at the high school. They are often unfamiliar with the academic improvement strategies or find them unsuccessful; otherwise, they are familiar with the strategies and do not report using them.

The Procedure

Three initial procedures were involved with the VIP Survey: a phone call, the survey itself and a postcard. Approximately one week before the survey was mailed attempt was made on two consecutive evenings to call all 341 parents to interest them in the coming survey. Families were electronically called with a tape recorded message (See Appendix D for VIP Survey Phone Introduction Message).

The following week, February 5, 1986, a business envelope containing a cover letter (See Appendix E), a VIP Survey (See Appendix F) and a self-addressed stamped return envelope was mailed to the 341 parents.

The VIP Surveys were coded by grade level and number.

surveys were returned anonymously; however, the coding provided a method to match the surveys with a basic information sheet on each student. The student information included: sex, number of first six week F's, number of semester F's, course load, absence, disciplinary steps, enrollment in Project Success or Reading (See Appendix G for Student Data Sheet).

Approximately one week after the survey was mailed, a reminder postcard was mailed by first class mail (See Appendix H for VIP Survey Remainder Postcard).

The Instrument

The Very Important Parent (VIP) Survey is the instrument used in this study. This 25 question survey, designed by the investigator and field tested among doctoral students and parents not in the study, attempts to provide both descriptive information about the parents and their ninth or tenth grader. The majority of the questionnaire requires only a check mark by the appropriate response. Only two questions at the end are open-ended, one of which is optional.

The VIP Survey attempts to produce a profile of parents and students after receipt of at least one F at the first marking period. How do they handle the situation: Do the parents call the school, come to Grade Booster Night, help the students more, etc.? How do they feel upon receipt of the first six week progress report and after the semester

grade report? Do the parents who attend Grade Booster Night handle the situation differently or feel differently than those parents who do not attend Grade Booster Night?

Statistical Procedure

Data from the VIP Survey and corresponding student information sheets have been coded and entered into the IBM computer for the 131 survey respondents. The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSSx) computer program (1985) is used for data analyses.

Due to the categorical nature of most of the data, the choice of statistics is limited. Frequency distributions, including mean and standard deviation, are formulated for all items studied, while crosstabulations are drawn to examine several possible relationships, central among these are the crosstabulations (crosstabs) which compare GB parents and their children with non-GB parents and their children.

Crosstabs produce the joint distribution of two variables while controlling for other variables. It subdivides the frequency distribution of one variable by the values of another variable. Crosstabs also show the extent of association among the variables using the Chi-square statistic and its associated degrees of freedom and significance level (SPSS, Inc., 1984). The alpha level acceptable for this study is 0.05. A level of less than 0.05 describes variables which are not independent. To

determine how the cases distributed over the cells are significantly different from expected cell sizes, the residuals are calculated. Adjusted residual scores at the ± 1.96 level describe the source of significance for this study.

The results of these statistical procedures are reported in Chapter IV. Significant associations between questionnaire items and student data are also cited.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

PART I: ANALYSIS OF FREQUENCIES

In this chapter the results of the survey and student profile sheets are presented. The first section includes frequencies of the data to provide a basic perspective. Following this section, the comparison data is presented. This includes data on GB and non-GB parents and their respective children. Additional comparisons involve other important variables such as, grade level, sex, course load, absence, disciplinary steps, and enrollment in Project Success and Reading. Finally, comparisons from the first six week grades to the semester grades are reported as change scores. Focus will be placed upon those factors which show significant relationships to each other.

Student Profile Sheet

Grade

Of the 341 parents sent the survey, 126 ninth grade students (37%) and 215 tenth grade students (63.1%) are represented. The completed parent survey group of 131 is similar to the composition of the target sample of 341. Of the 131 students in this study, 52 are ninth graders (39.7%)

and 79 are tenth graders (60.3%).

Sex

Seventy-five students in this study are male (57.3%) while 56 students are female (42.7%).

Table 1

Student Grade Level and Sex

Sex	Ninth Grade	Tenth Grade
Male	23 17.6%	52 39.7%
Female	29 22.1%	27 20.6%

Number of First Six Week Progress Report F's

The preponderance of students in this study (76 students, 58%) have received one F at the first six week progress report. Twenty-four students (18.3%) have received two F's, and 23 students (17.6%) have three F's. The final eight students (6.1%) have four, five or six F's (see Tables 2, 3, and 4).

Number of Semester F's

At the end of the first semester the 131 students grades are examined again for F's. At this time 47 students no longer have any F's (35.9%), while 36 students (27.5%) have one F; 26 students (19.87) have two F's, and 13 students (9.9%) have three F's. The nine remaining students (6.9%) have four, five or six F's (see Tables 2, 3, and 4).

Table 2

Number of F's at the First Six Week Progress Report and at the End of the Semester

Number of F's	First Six Weeks		Semester	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
0			47	35.9
1	76	58.0	36	27.5
2	24	18.3	26	19.8
3	23	17.6	13	9.9
4	5	3.8	6	4.6
5	2	1.5	2	1.5
6	1	0.8	1	0.8
	131	100.0	131	100.0
Mean:	1.748		1.27	
Std.Dev.:	1.055		1.319	

Table 3

Number of F's at the First Six Week Progress Report and at the Semester Listed by Sex

Number of F's	First Six Weeks		Semester	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
0	--	--	24	23
1	42	34	23	13
2	15	9	15	11
3	14	9	8	5
4	3	2	4	2
5	0	2	1	1
6	1	0	0	1

Table 4

Number of F's at the First Six Week Progress Report and at the Semester Listed by Grade Level

Number of F's	First Six Weeks		Semester	
	Ninth Grade	Tenth Grade	Ninth Grade	Tenth Grade
0	--	--	25	22
1	35	41	12	24
2	7	17	7	19
3	7	16	5	8
4	1	4	1	5
5	2	0	1	1
6	0	1	1	0

Change in the Number of F's

The number of semester F's is subtracted from the number of first six week F's in order to obtain a change score for each student. If a student has had five F's at the first six weeks and has raised two grades by the semester, the change score would be 3 (5-2=3). If, on the other hand, a student has had two F's at the first six weeks and has produced less work as the semester progressed, with the result being five F's at the semester, the change score would be a value of -3 (2-5=-3). Therefore, there are fewer semester F's as the change score becomes more positive, and more semester F's as the change score becomes more negative. For 36 students (27.5%) there is no change in their number of F's over the semester. For 73 students (55.7%) their grades have improved, while for 22 students (16.9%) their

grades have declined by the end of the semester (see Tables 5 and 6).

Table 5

Change in the Number of F's From The First Six Weeks to the Semester

Change in F's	Frequency	Percent
-3	1	0.8
-2	4	3.1
-1	17	13.0
0	36	27.5
1	60	45.8
2	10	7.6
3	2	1.5
4	1	0.8

Mean: 0.473
Std.Dev.: 1.062

Table 6

Change in the Number of F's From the First Six Weeks to the Semester by Grade Level and Sex

Change in F's	Ninth Grade		Tenth Grade	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
-3	0	0	1	0
-2	0	1	2	1
-1	4	2	7	4
0	6	5	16	9
+1	13	19	17	11
+2	0	2	6	2
+3	0	0	2	0
+4	0	0	1	0

PE Only F

The category of students with only one F the first six weeks and that F being in PE is extrapolated from the total number of F's to determine the number and percentage of students involved. PE is seen as a performance class, a class on which the Grade Booster Seminar would have limited effect. PE is usually a matter of dressing for class and participating. The homework is minimal and the written tests few. Good skill and participation should result in an A or B for a student. Passing skill is measured on the basis of the student's development of the skill over the three to six week period of the activity. It is not based on the ability of one student versus another.

Table 7

Number of Students with Physical Education as Their Only F the First Six Weeks, Listed by Grade Level and Sex

Sex	Ninth Grade	Tenth Grade
Male	4	1
Female	13	5

The number of students who only have an F in PE is small. Only 18 of the 131 students (13.7%) have a solitary F in PE. This is not a significant number to warrant special treatment or discussion.

Absence

The number of student absences for the first semester ranged from 0 to 36 days. There are approximately 90 school days each semester. The average number of absences for this sample is 6.385 with a standard deviation of 6.841 (see Tables 8 and 9).

Table 8

Student Absences for the First Semester of the 1985-86 School Year

Absences	Frequency	Percent
0	13	9.9
1-5	64	49.0
6-10	31	23.6
11-15	11	8.6
16-20	5	3.9
21-25	3	2.4
26-30	1	0.8
31-36	3	2.4

Mean: 6.385
Std.Dev.: 6.841

Table 9

Absence by Grade Level and Sex

Days Absent	Ninth Grade		Tenth Grade	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
0	1	4	6	2
1-5	10	15	30	11
6-10	7	5	11	6
11-20	3	4	4	6
21-30	0	1	1	1
31-36	2	0	0	1

Mean: 6.385
Std.Dev.: 6.841

Course Load

Students with parent approval are allowed to decide whether they carry a normal course load of six with one study hall or seven courses with no study hall. Students in this study are enrolled as follows: 81 students (61.8%) in six courses and 50 students (38.2%) in seven courses. Table 10 shows the course load by grade level and sex.

Table 10

Course Load by Grade Level and Sex

Course Load	Ninth Grade		Tenth Grade	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
6	16	17	32	16
7	7	12	20	11

Project Success

Ten students (7.6%) in this study are enrolled in this study hall for tutoring, while 121 students (92.4%) do not have this assistance.

Reading

Only four students (3.1%) are enrolled in this credited remedial reading class. This small number does not warrant special treatment or discussion in this study.

Highest Disciplinary Step

Students in this study after the first semester have received anywhere from 0 to 19 steps for their behavior, with the highest percentage of students (63.4%, 83 students) having received no steps at all (no referrals to the Dean's Office). Students who reached the first major step (5) account for the next largest group of 22 students (16.8%) (see Tables 11 and 12).

Table 11

Highest Disciplinary Step After Completion of First Semester

Disciplinary Step	Frequency	Percent
0	83	63.4
2-3	9	6.8
5*	22	16.8
7-8*	11	8.4
11*	3	2.3
14*	1	0.8
17*	1	0.8
19*	1	0.8

*Major Step

Table 12

Highest Disciplinary Step After Completion of First Semester Listed by Grade Level and Sex

Disciplinary Step	Ninth Grade Male	Ninth Grade Female	Tenth Grade Male	Tenth Grade Female
0	19	20	27	17
2-3	1	1	7	0
5	0	7	11	4
7-8	3	1	3	4
11	0	0	2	1
14	0	0	1	0
17	0	0	1	0
19	0	0	0	1

VIP Survey

Question 1: Person Responding to the Survey

Of the 131 respondents 74 mothers (56.5%) and 15 fathers (11.5%) responded to the survey. In 37 cases (28.2%) both parents completed the survey. In three instances a step-mother completed the survey, and in one other case a legal guardian completed the survey. There is one missing response.

Question 2: Time Spent Studying

After the first six week progress report parents report that: 45.8% of their reluctant learners (60) spend more time studying, 44.3% of their children (58) spend the same amount of time studying, and 9.2% of their children (12) actually spend less time studying. There is one missing response.

Question 3: Time the Parent Spent with the Student on Homework

This question did not specify how the parent was helping the student, but rather it is used to elicit any changes in parent behavior resultant from the first six week F grade(s). Parents report the following: 23 parents (17.6%) report that they spend more time with their child, 89 parents (67.9%) say that they spend the same amount of time and 16 parents (12.2%) report spending less time. There are three missing responses.

Question 4: Help with Homework from Siblings

Parents were asked to indicate if their underachiever has received help from siblings. In 38 cases (29%) there are no older siblings at home from whom to request help. In 16 instances (12.2%) their child is an only child. The highest percentage, 34.4% is reported for 45 students who never ask siblings for help. In only two instances (1.5%) do parents report the child "often" asking for help from siblings, and in 29 cases (22.1%) students "sometimes" asked for help. When all the "no-help-from-siblings" students are combined, there are a total of 99 students (75.5%) who do not or can not get help from any siblings. There is one missing response for this item.

Question 5: Student Absence Rate

Unlike the Student Profile item which provides exact data on attendance, this item inquires about any change

after the first six week progress report. In 15 instances (11.5%) absences have increased, while in 26 cases (19.8%) absences have decreased. For the vast majority, however, attendance has remained the same, that is, 89 cases (67.9%). One missing case is reported for this question.

Question 6: Student Attitude Toward School

For half the students in this study (53.4%, 70 students), their attitude has remained the same after receiving at least one F at the first six week grading period. The other half of the students in this study (46.6%) are divided into those whose attitude has improved (42 students, 32.1%) and those whose attitude has deteriorated (19 students, 14.5%).

Question 7: Student Feelings About Teacher

Parents report that their children either like some of their teachers (63 students, 48.1%) or like most of their teachers (63 students, 48.1%). Only four parents (3.1%) report that their children in this study like none of their teachers. One response is missing.

Question 8: Number of Friends

Parents in this study report that their children have either some friends (63 students, 48.1%) or many friends (68 students, 51.9%). No one reports that their children have no friends.

Question 9: Extracurricular Activities

Parents are asked to estimate the number of hours per

week that the child in this study has participated in extracurricular activities. The preponderance of students in this study, namely 89 students (67.9%), have not participated in any outside activities connected with school. The remaining 38 students (29%) spend anywhere from one hour to 30 hours per week on outside activities. Of these 38 students, the most frequent pattern of time is between one and five hours per week (19 students), followed by six to 10 hours (eight students). Four responses are missing.

Question 10: Student Job

The overwhelming majority of students, namely 111 students (84.7%), are not employed. As most freshmen and beginning sophomores are not yet 16 years of age, this is the expected response. For the 20 students who do work, their hours range from one to 20 hours per week. The most frequent number of hours is six to 10 hours and involves ten students in this study.

Question 11: Number of School Transfers

The number of times that parents have reported the children in this study transferring schools ranges from zero to five times. The largest percentage are those who never transferred (55 students, 42%). Thirty-seven students (28.2%) have transferred once, while 13 students (9.9%) have transferred twice, and 16 students (12.2%) have transferred three times. Only 10 students (7.6%) have transferred four

or five times.

Question 12: Previous Academic Success

Parents in this study generally report that their children are moderately successful in grade school and junior high school but not very successful in high school thus far.

Table 13

Previous Degree of Academic Success

Success	Grade School		Junior High School		High School	
Very Successful	36	(27.5%)	19	(14.5%)	4	(3.1%)
Moderately Successful	76	(58.0%)	80	(61.1%)	51	(38.9%)
Not Very Successful	18	(13.7%)	30	(22.9%)	71	(54.2%)
No Response	1	(0.8%)	2	(1.5%)	5	(3.8%)

Question 13: Student Rank in Family/Number of Children

The ordinal position of the young people in this study varies; however, the largest percentage (35.%, 46 in number) of students are youngest in their families. The second largest group comprises the oldest children, those being 34 in number of 26% of the total. The remaining 38.9% is distributed over the following categories: second oldest, third oldest, only child, adopted or foster child and other. There is only one response missing. Fourteen children

(10.7%) are only children. The size of the families in this study ranges from one to six. See Table 14 for the breakdown on family size in this study.

Table 14

Number of Children in The Families in this Study

Number of Children	Frequency	Percent
1	14	10.7
2	43	32.8
3	27	20.6
4	24	18.3
5	13	9.9
6	3	2.3

Question 14: Single or Two Parent Home

Of the 131 parents who completed the questionnaire, 108 (82.4%) of them identify their home as a two parent home, while only 23 (17.6%) report a single parent home. Not identified by this question are homes where there are two parents, one of whom is a step-parent. Also not requested is the length of time that the home has been a one parent or a one parent-one step-parent home.

Question 15: Contacts with Teachers

More than half of the parents, 78 of them (59.5%), in this study report having had some contact with the teacher of the class in which the child has received an F the first six weeks. Still 51 parents (38.9%) report no contact, while two parents have not responded to this item. Table 15

shows the frequency of contact.

Table 15

Frequency of Contacts with Teachers, Listed by Grade Level and Sex of the Study

Number of Contacts	Ninth Grade Male	Ninth Grade Female	Tenth Grade Male	Tenth Grade Female
0	10	13	17	11
1	7	11	15	7
2	5	4	7	7
3	1	1	5	1
4	0	0	4	0
5 or more	0	0	2	1

Missing Cases: 2

Question 16: Contact with the Counselor

Parents in this study more often than not also report contact with the counselor following receipt of the first six week grades. There are 73 parents (55.7%) who report at least one contact with the child's counselor, while 55 parents (42%) report no contact.

Table 16

Frequency of Contact with the Counselor, Listed by Grade Level and Sex of the Student

Number of Contacts	Ninth Grade Male	Ninth Grade Female	Tenth Grade Male	Tenth Grade Female
0	8	17	19	11
1	4	3	13	4
2	3	5	7	4
3	2	2	5	2
4	5	2	4	2
5 or more	1	0	2	3

Missing Cases: 3

Question 17: School Staff Level of Concern

The level of concern of the staff (teachers, counselors, administration) as perceived by parents in this study varies from low to high with the moderate level being reported most frequently:

High level of concern: 27 parents (20.6%)

Moderate level of concern: 59 parents (45.0%)

Low level of concern: 38 parents (29.0%)

No response: 7 parents (5.3%)

It is interesting to note that although 38.9% of parents report no contact with the teacher of the class after their child received an F and although 42% of parents report no contact with the counselor after the first six week grading, 94.7% are able to respond to Question 17. Their perceptions must be based upon other contacts or information.

Question 18: Parent Feelings at the End of the First Six Weeks and at the Semester

Parent feelings are difficult to ascertain from Question 18. Their responses are very seldom clustered on this scale. At the end of the first six week grading period, the most frequent and noteworthy responses are given on the scales: frustrated/confident, worried/relieved, and disappointed/pleased, satisfied. On these scales the number of parents (percentage) who put a T (then) by the number 1 are as follows:

Frustrated: 57 parents (43.5%)

Worried: 53 parents (40.5%)

Disappointed: 65 parents (49.6%)

On the scale, Rejected/Appreciated, the predominant response is 3, indicating neutrality. There are 61 parents (46.6%) who have recorded a T by the number 3 on the Rejected/ Appreciated scale. The percentage of missing responses on this question is high. It ranges from 17 responses (13.0%) to 27 responses (20.6%) at the first six week grade report. Missing responses at the semester (N for Now) ranges from a low rate of 37 responses (28.2%) to a high rate of 46 responses (35.1%). A total of 35 parents (26.7%) have responded to none of the scales on Question 18 at the end of the first six week grading period, while 53 parents (40.5%) have responded to no items at the semester. No really noticeable clustering is seen on any scale at the semester.

The largest percentage of responses occurs on the Rejected/ Appreciated Scale where 43 parents have responded with 3, indicating neutrality (32.8%).

Parents may have been perplexed by this question. They may not have been able to discern any difference in their feelings from the end of the first six week grading period to the end of the semester. They may also have found the choices lacking clarity. It is noted that the mean response for each feeling at the end of the first six week grading period tends to rise at the end of the semester, indicating a more positive outlook. The calculation of total frustration figures also reveals a general improvement on the part of those who responded. However, the significant lack of responses to this question limits the value of the results reported in Tables 17 and 18. Change in parent feelings from the end of the first six weeks to the end of the semester are reported in Table 19. Only small percentages of parents report feeling more negative feelings: from 3 "rejected" parents (2.3%) to 16 "angry" parents (12.3%). Of those responding, between 37 parents (28.2%) and 66 parents (50.4%) show no change in feelings. The highest percentage of improvement occurs on the Disappointed/Pleased Scale: 40 parents (30.6%). Again, the high percentage of missing responses limits the generalizability of the results.

Table 17

Parent Feelings at the End of the First Six Week Grading Period

Mean		Parent Feeling Score 1	2	3	4	5		Missing
2.03	Frustrated*	57 (43.5%)	20 (15.3%)	21 (16.0%)	9 (6.9%)	7 (5.3%)	Confident	17(13%)
2.54	Angry	32 (24.4%)	20 (15.3%)	29 (22.1%)	15 (11.5%)	10 (7.6%)	Calm	25 (19.1%)
2.94	Inadequate, Helpless	17 (13.0%)	15 (11.5%)	49 (37.4%)	10 (7.6%)	16 (12.2%)	Competent Capable	24 (18.3%)
3.55	Alone	8 (6.1%)	9 (6.9%)	39 (29.8%)	15 (11.5%)	34 (26.0%)	Not Alone	26 (19.8%)
1.99	Worried*	53 (40.5%)	23 (17.6%)	23 (17.6%)	4 (3.1%)	7 (5.3%)	Relieved	21 (16.0%)
3.49	Without Hope	9 (6.9%)	8 (6.1%)	41 (31.3%)	21 (16%)	29 (22.1%)	Hopeful	23 (17.6%)
3.51	Hurt, Victimized	8 (6.1%)	7 (5.3%)	40 (30.5%)	24 (18.3%)	26 (19.8%)	Strong, Determined to Succeed	26 (19.8%)
3.56	Guilty, Responsible	7 (5.3%)	13 (9.9%)	29 (22.1%)	29 (22.1%)	29 (22.1%)	Clear Conscience	24 (18.3%)
1.87	Dissappointed*	65 (49.6%)	17 (13.0%)	21 (16%)	4 (3.1%)	7 (5.3%)	Pleased, Satisfied	17 (13.0%)
3.18	Rejected	7 (5.3%)	9 (6.9%)	61 (46.6%)*	12 (9.2%)	15 (11.5%)	Appreciated	27 (20.6%)
2.90	Impatient	23 (17.6%)	16 (12.2%)	34 (26%)	10 (7.6%)	21 (16%)	Patient	27 (20.6%)

*Worth noting.

Table 18

Parent Feelings at the End of the First Semester

Mean		Parent Feeling Score 1	2	3	4	5		Missing
2.73	Frustrated	27 (20.6%)	14 (10.7%)	21 (16%)	21 (16%)	11 (8.4%)	Confident	37 (28.2%)
3.01	Angry	17 (13.0%)	17 (13.0%)	21 (16%)	20 (15.3%)	16 (12.2%)	Calm	40 (30.5%)
3.25	Inadequate, Helpless	11 (8.4%)	12 (9.2%)	31 (23.7%)	19 (14.5%)	19 (14.5%)	Competent Capable	39 (29.8%)
3.75	Alone	7 (5.3%)	5 (3.8%)	24 (18.3%)	19 (14.5%)	33 (25.2%)	Not Alone	43 (32.8%)
2.65	Worried	27 (20.6%)	16 (12.2%)	20 (15.3%)	17 (13.0%)	11 (8.4%)	Relieved	40 (30.5%)
3.68	Without Hope	7 (5.3%)	7 (5.3%)	22 (16.8%)	27 (20.6%)	28 (21.4%)	Hopeful	40 (30.5%)
3.93	Hurt, Victimized	3 (2.3%)	2 (1.5%)	27 (20.6%)	23 (17.6%)	34 (26.0%)	Strong, Determined to Succeed	42 (32.1%)
3.99	Guilty, Responsible	2 (1.5%)	4 (3.1%)	20 (15.3%)	30 (22.9%)	33 (25.2%)	Clear Conscience	42 32.1%)
2.61	Dissappointed	33 (25.2%)	9 (6.9%)	24 (18.3%)	13 (9.9%)	13 (9.9%)	Pleased, Satisfied	39 (29.8%)
3.42	Rejected	4 (3.1%)	6 (4.6%)	43 (32.8%)	14 (10.7%)	18 (13.7%)	Appreciated	46 (35.1%)
3.31	Impatient	15 (11.5%)	8 (6.1%)	25 (19.1%)	23 (17.6%)	22 (16.8%)	Patient	38 (29.0%)

Table 19

Change in Parent Feeling Scores From the First Six Weeks to the Semester

	-Change	No Change	+Change	No Response	
Frustrated	13 (10.0%)	38 (29.0%)	40 (30.5%)	40 (30.5%)	Confident
Angry	16 (12.3%)	37 (28.2%)	33 (25.5%)	45 (34.4%)	Calm
Inadequate, Helpless	11 (8.5%)	49 (37.4%)	27 (20.6%)	44 (33.6%)	Competent Capable
Alone	4 (3.1%)	66 (50.4%)	15 (11.5%)	46 (35.1%)	Not Alone
Worried	8 (6.2%)	41 (31.3%)	39 (29.8%)	43 (32.8%)	Relieved
Without Hope	10 (7.7%)	54 (41.2%)	23 (17.6%)	44 (33.6%)	Hopeful
Hurt, Victimized	6 (4.6%)	54 (41.2%)	26 (19.9%)	45 (34.4%)	Strong, Determined to Succeed
Guilty, Responsible	4 (3.1%)	58 (44.3%)	24 (18.3%)	45 (34.4%)	Clear Conscience
Dissapointed	7 (5.4%)	42 (32.1%)	40 (30.6%)	42 (32.1%)	Pleased, Satisfied
Rejected	3 (2.3%)	62 (47.3%)	16 (12.3%)	59 (38.2%)	Appreciated
Impatient	11 (8.4%)	48 (36.6%)	27 (20.6%)	45 (34.4%)	Patient

Question 19: Parent Nights and Breakfasts

Attendance at parent nights, principal's breakfasts and Grade Booster Nights are noted in Tables 20 and 21. Overall attendance by parents in this study is displayed in Table 20, while Table 21 illustrates the attendance breakdown by student grade level and sex. Attendance of parents of male children is higher than for female children in this study. Attendance by grade level must be examined with caution: Parents of tenth grade students have had 1 1/2 years to become involved in their school, while the parents of freshmen have only had one semester (unless they have had older children in the school). The percentage of attendance is low for the special events, such as the principal's breakfasts and Grade Booster Nights.

Table 20

Attendance at Parent Nights and Breakfasts

	Attendance		Absence		No Response	
Parent Night 10-85	74	(56.5%)	54	(41.2%)	3	(2.3%)
Parent Night 10-84	56	(42.7%)	72	(55.0%)	3	(2.3%)
Principal's Breakfast	12	(9.2%)	116	(88.5%)	3	(2.3%)
Grade Booster Night 10-85	17	(13.0%)	111	(84.7%)	3	(2.3%)
Grade Booster Night 11-84	9	(6.9%)	120	(91.6%)	3	(1.5%)

Table 21

Attendance at Parent Nights and Breakfasts, Listed by Their Children's Grade Level and Sex

Activity	Ninth Grade		Tenth Grade	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Parent Night 10-85	16	17	27	14
Parent Night 10-84	4*	8*	29	15
Principal's Breakfast	2	3	3	4
Grade Booster Night 10-85	5	5	5	2
Grade Booster Night 10-84	0	1*	6	2

*Ninth Grade parents who came in 1984 must have come for another child, since the child in this study was in eighth grade at the time.

Grade Booster Parents (GB Parents)

This category is created from responses in Question 19. Those parents who attended Grade Booster Night either in 1984 or 1985 are included. They total 25 parents. The one parent or one set of parents who came both years are counted only once. The actual parent attendance at Grade Booster Night was 69 in 1984 and 51 in 1985. However, these figures represent actual attendance, not number of children represented. The sign-in sheets from those nights provide a more accurate estimate of children represented. In 1984, 45 families signed in and in 1985, 39 families signed in, for a total of 84 families. Counting the family who came both

years only once, leaves the total at 83 families. Since a few people did not sign in, this figure of 83 cannot be considered an absolute figure, but rather a close estimate.

It should also be noted that some of the 45 families who attended Grade Booster Night in 1984 were not sent the VIP Survey for one of two reasons: their sophomore did not have any F's in the fall of 1985 or their child now held junior standing. The calculation of 83 Grade Booster families is then an educated estimate with a few additional families not signing in and a few families being self-excluded from this study. Of the 83 estimated GB families there are 25 families responding to this questionnaire.

Table 22

Grade Booster and Non-Grade Booster Parents by Their Children's Grade Level and Sex

Parents	Ninth Grade		Tenth Grade	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Grade Booster	5	6	10	4
Non-Grade Booster	17	23	41	22
Totals	22	29	51	26

Missing Cases: 3

Parent Involvement

The parent involvement category for this study is a tally of the number of parent nights and breakfast attended

by each parent. The total number of these academically related events that parents could attend is five.

Table 23

Parent Involvement--Total Number of Events Attended by Parents, Listed by Their Children's Grade Level and Sex

Number of Events	Ninth Grade		Tenth Grade	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
0	6	11	15	8
1	10	5	11	3
2	4	10	20	14
3	3	3	5	2
4	0	0	1	0

Question 20: Material from Grade Booster Night

Parents unable to attend Grade Booster Night are given Grade Booster materials upon request. They may also be given materials after a conference with the counselor. There are 33 parents in this study who report receiving these handouts.

Total Parent Involvement

Total Parent Involvement for this study is a count for each parent of their attendance at parent nights, principal's breakfast, and Grade Booster Nights (Parent Involvement category), plus their contacts with teachers/ counselors and requests for Grade Booster materials. A positive answer for any of these activities was given one point with the highest score possible being eight. Most

parents in this study report being involved at least to some degree. Only 13 parents (9.9%) report no involvement. The mean point value for Total Parent Involvement is 2.73. Table 24 shows a breakdown for this category.

Table 24

Total Parent Involvement--Parent Involvement + Question 15 + Question 16 + Question 20

Parent Participation	Number of Parents	Percent
0	13	9.9
1	20	15.3
2	19	14.5
3	29	22.1
4	33	25.2
5	12	9.2
6	2	1.5

Missing Cases: 3 (2.3%)

Question 21: Programs Attended Outside the School

Sixteen parents (12.2%) report attending some program outside the high school designed to assist them with their children's growth and development. Eight parents report participation in outside counseling. One reports tutoring and one lists teaching as the outside assistance. Three parents list DAVEA as a source of help. (DAVEA is a vocational training center open only to juniors and seniors. It is surmised that these parents are using DAVEA as a goal for their freshmen or sophomores to aim towards. If they can survive ninth and tenth grades, then they can spend half

each school day learning a skill in which they are interested.) The parent who specifies SASED as a source is a puzzle since SASED is the special education cooperative in the area. No students in this study are special education students. One parent reports participation in a community college study hints summer course. One parent responds affirmatively, however, does not specify the name or kind of program. The goal of this question is to ascertain if parents are seeking/getting assistance outside the school with the child in this study and to determine what programs are being held. Little, if any, significant information is obtained from this question.

Question 22: Academic Improvement Strategies Learned from Grade Booster Night

In this question parents are basically asked what grade boosting strategies they have learned from Grade Booster Night. If they have not attended Grade Booster Night, they are to indicate the strategies with which they are unfamiliar. A fair percentage of parents indicate familiarity with the strategies, having learned about them at Grade Booster Night. The percentage of familiarity ranges from 11.5% on the Special Person Placemat to 36.6% on the Calls to Teacher/Counselor Strategy. It is noted, however, that the percentage of response on this section may reflect both attendance at Grade Booster Night as well as, request for Grade Booster materials. It is recalled that of

Table 25

Academic Improvement Strategies

Strategy	Learned From Grade Boosters	Unfamiliar With This Strategy	Missing*
Daily Progress Sheet	32 (24.4%)	54 (41.2%)	45 (34.4%)
Weekly Progress Sheet	34 (26.0%)	52 (39.7%)	45 (34.4%)
Counselor Report (3 week	34 (25.2%)	56 (42.7%)	42 (32.1%)
Teacher/Counselor Conference	39 (29.8%)	42 (32.1%)	50 (38.2%)
Calls to Teacher/ Counselor	48 (36.6%)	36 (27.5%)	47 (35.9%)
Rewards at Home	36 (27.5%)	46 (35.1%)	49 (37.4%)
Loss of Privileges at Home	41 (31.3%)	41 (31.3%)	49 (37.4%)
Behavioral Contract	29 (22.1%)	54 (41.2%)	48 (36.6%)
Set Study Time at Home	37 (28.2%)	39 (29.8%)	55 (42.0%)
Tutoring by Class Teacher	19 (14.5%)	62 (47.3%)	50 (38.2%)
Tutoring by Non-Lake Park Person	17 (13.0%)	63 (48.1%)	51 (38.9%)
Counseling	31 (23.7%)	47 (35.9%)	53 (40.5%)
Grade Booster Coupons	19 (14.5%)	69 (52.7%)	43 (32.8%)
Special Person Placement	15 (11.5%)	69 (52.7%)	47 (35.9%)
Other, Please Specify: _____	--	5 (3.8%)	126 (96.2%)

*Those parents who have not responded to this question are the missing responses. They should reflect parents familiar with the strategy who have not learned about that strategy from GB Night/GB materials.

the 131 parents in this study, 25 have attended Grade Booster Night (19.1%) and 33 parents have requested materials (25.2%). The percentage of parents unfamiLiar with these strategies (27.5% to 52.7%) is significant enough to warrant discussion in Chapter V under issues and future directions. Suffice it to say here: Can parents help their children improve academically, if they are not familiar with at least some grade boosting strategies? Can the school help parents to learn and use these strategies? The percentage of parent responses reported as missing (32.1% to 40.5%) should show those parents who are familiar with these strategies, but their source of familiarity is not the Grade Booster program. All surveys (except three: one filled out by a student, one returned with the code removed and one returned two months too late) are considered acceptable in this study, even though some parents have not completed all five pages. Some parents may have reached this item and just not responded to it. Hence, it is speculated that the percentage of missing responses may not be entirely due to familiarity from another source. Rather, some parents may have decided the survey is too long, while others may not have understood the question.

Question 23: Success of Academic Improvement Strategies

Parents are asked to describe the successfulness of the same list of strategies as in Question 22. The number of parents reporting the strategies very successful or even

moderately successful is not too encouraging. The most successful strategies for parents in this study are: calls to the teacher/counselor, loss of privileges at home and set study time at home. The least successful strategies, as reported by these parents, are: rewards at home, loss of privileges and set study time. The survey does not ask how long parents have tried the various strategies before they have decided that they are not successful or only moderately successful. Table 26 shows the levels of success for each strategy, as well as the number of missing responses for each strategy. This question also may have been misunderstood by parents or seen as too complicated to answer. Anywhere from 52.7% to 89.3% of the parents have not responded to this question.

Table 26

Success of Academic Improvement Strategies

Strategy	Very Successful	Moderately Successful	Not Very Successful	Missing Responses
Daily Progress Sheet	3 (2.3%)	14 (10.7%)	11 (8.4%)	103 (78.6%)
Weekly Progress Sheet	1 (0.8%)	16 (12.2%)	13 (9.9%)	101 (77.1%)
Counselor Report (3 week)	7 (5.3%)	10 (7.6%)	16 (12.2%)	98 (74.8%)
Teacher/Counselor Conference	2 (1.5%)	14 (10.7%)	14 (10.7%)	101 (77.1%)
Calls to Teacher/Counselor	7 (5.3%)	25 (19.1%)	21 (16.0%)	78 (59.5%)
Rewards at Home	9 (6.9%)	18 (13.7%)	23 (17.6%)	81 (61.8%)
Loss of Privileges at Home	13 (9.9%)	26 (19.8%)	23 (17.6%)	69 (52.7%)
Behavioral Contract	3 (2.3%)	9 (6.9%)	12 (9.2%)	107 (81.7%)
Set Study Time at Home	9 (6.9%)	29 (22.1%)	23 (17.6%)	70 (53.4%)
Tutoring by Class Teacher	3 (2.3%)	5 (3.8%)	13 (9.9%)	110 (84.0%)
Tutoring by Non-Lake Park Person	3 (2.3%)	5 (3.8%)	12 (9.2%)	111 (84.7%)
Counseling	2 (1.5%)	13 (9.9%)	9 (6.9%)	107 (81.7%)
Grade Booster Coupons	1 (0.8%)	1 (0.8%)	12 (9.2%)	117 (89.3%)
Special Person Placemet	1 (0.8%)	1 (0.8%)	14 (10.7%)	115 (87.8%)
Other, Please Specify: _____	1 (0.8%)	1 (0.8%)	--	129 (98.5%)

Question 23 raises several questions: 1. How long have parents friend the strategies? 2. Why is the percentage of non-strategy using parents so high? 3. Are some of the "low success" strategies truly inappropriate, or are there other reasons for their minimal success? 5. Are there other strategies that parents are using instead of these?

Questions 24 and 25: Open-Ended Comments

All other questions on this survey have been designed to reduce parent time and effort. Surprisingly, 79 parents (60.3%) feel the need to make many comments and offer several suggestions. The number of parents making comments is displayed by grade level and parent type in Table 27. It is interesting to note that of the 11 ninth grade GB parents six (54.5%) make comments; of the 14 tenth grade GB parents 13 (92.9%) make comments. The percentage of Non-GB parents making comments is 65.9% at the ninth grade level (27 out of 41) and 50.1% at the tenth grade level (33 out of 65). The overall percentage of GB parents making comments is 76%, whereas of overall percentage of non-GB parents making comments is 56.6%.

Table 27

Open-Ended Comments by Grade Level and Parent Type

Student Grade Level	GB Parents	Non-GB Parents	Totals
Ninth Grade	6	27	33
Tenth Grade	13	33	46
Totals	19	60	79

Parent statements provide insight without which this study would be incomplete. Some parents share their pain and anguish over their underachieving children. Some feel the school needs to address the issue differently. Others find an opportunity to vent their feelings. Their thoughtful and thought-provoking comments are probably the most interesting part of the survey results. Some parents even sign their comments and give their phone numbers. The discussion that follows will highlight their important concerns and feelings. Several parents discuss their children's individual situations. Of the ninth grade parents in this study, their comments are the following:

1. "When (a boy)* understands what he is doing he is quite eager to complete his work assigned. (He) has a hard time understanding and learning."

   *Note: For reporting purposes, names have been deleted to insure anonymity.

2. From a girl's "past performance in grade school, her

first six week report was superb even though she had an F. She is doing very well in high school and has accepted the challenge with maturity. Our daughter went through a great deal of testing both psychologically and academically in grade school and was found to be a slow learner with a problem of taking tests also. She needs a lot of confidence building not only at home, but at school also...still needs a great deal of help and self confidence."

3. A parent is "very pleased with daughter's progress at school and work/study habits at home."
4. A girl's grades are not due to her lack of effort.
5. "We talk--remove privileges--instill hope. I believe freshmen need time to settle into high school, especially when they are overwhelmed with social success, such as Fresh/Home/Queen! (homecoming court) Time will tell. Students have responsibility too."
6. A girl's situation is related to the fact that her father may be gone up to 1 1/2 years traveling on his job.

The frustration of some of the tenth grade parents in this study are reflected in their statements:

1. A girl was poorly prepared in the lower grades, especially in math. "Too much emphasis is placed with students who have ability to make their achievement even higher. Students who are having difficulties tend

to frustrate us and we say, 'They're just not good at this.' When we take this attitude, it's easier for us and the child for the short term. But the fact remains, the student needs certain subjects to get through high school, and enter a higher collegiate institution. Then it's a question of lower level/ remedial learning which for our daughter was embarrassing and pretty ineffective."

2. "I feel her main problem is low self-esteem, not feeling like she fits in, etc. Her first year was a disaster and the hardest year of both of our lives. This year she admitted all her missed classes, etc. were a result of this. This year she is feeling good about herself, communicates with me now, which was impossible last year. It has been a much better year for her, but, she has a long way to go. She had a problem with math, didn't understand or like the teacher. She is well aware that she better get going if she wants to go to college and she very definitely does."

3. "...I asked the class be dropped end taken in summer school. I was told there was no other place to put him and request was rejected. He went for help after school, but continued to have trouble. At that time teacher, counselor and dean told him to take an F and put efforts elsewhere. If the school had helped in the

beginning he would not have to contend with failure. Your system is more to blame than the child. He didn't understand the class...No one cared, but me!"

4. "...(a boy) went through an adjustment period after we moved here. He seems to have a much better attitude about school."

5. "I am a single parent, female, no emotional support from other parent, other parent not interested in child very much. I feel my child is cheated by his parents. I am so tired when I get home from work, I try not to think of these problems--am selling and moving to apartment--think I will lave more time for my son with less home responsibility."

6. "He had some trouble for awhile with a student in class and that didn't help. The teacher was understanding when I talked with her and he did try in this class."

7. "Our problem is complex; it encompasses psychological problems from childhood (abuse, neglect, etc.), to motivation, drugs, alcohol, authority problem, etc."

While grades can be examined by objective computerized data analyses, the individual factors involved in each case vary. Certainly, these situations can have their adverse effects on grades. Some situations, perhaps, can be addressed differently, while others cannot.

While not addressed by the V.I.P. Survey nor the Grade Booster Program, tenth grade parents express their concerns

about the influence of drugs, and alcohol on their children. These parents feel that the school should be aware of these problems and should provide assistance to them. They say:

1. "I'd like to see some kind of help--which would let children know doing grass and drugs isn't cool. My son is the sixth child--I have seven. His father smokes a lot of pot and does coke. We are divorced four years. Largely because our older children were allowed to participate in this activity with him--my child thusly knows the family track record and sees nothing particularly damaging about it--though I do try to tell him my true feelings--which are basically 'Leave it all alone.'"
2. A parent hopes the high school will help students with drug problems like other high schools are doing.
3. "The biggest problem we have here in the (subdivision) is DRUGS. Kids from good families are just all of a sudden turning to DRUGS, then turning off adults and school work."

These are certainly issues of concern to the high school and addressed in courses of study, athletics, special events and individual counseling. The needs of students involved with alcohol and drugs are not intended to be part of the Grade Booster Program; however, parents are encouraged to contact the students' counselors and are given a list of community/ hospital programs of assistance. They are advised and

encouraged to seek this assistance if their children are drug or alcohol dependent.

Some parents' comments are pointed toward student responsibility, motivation and attitudes. Ninth grade parents respond as follows:

1. "My daughter could do B and C work. She needs motivation and always has. So far, no one has been able to really get her going. I would help her study at home but I don't know what to do. (most subjects) Her father checks her math... I have helped her make some breads for Foods... I have helped her to research on her speeches..."
2. "I am spending a lot of time and energy and ... (our daughter) is working against me because the motivation is not there. She resents having to report to her teachers, and so getting her to cooperate is like pulling teeth."
3. "(A girl) has no interest in school or future."
4. "My daughter is learning to be responsible for her actions without sophisticated parental manipulation."
5. "We have gotten little or no cooperation from my son..."

Tenth grade parents report the following:

1. "I realize it is the student's responsibility for his or her grades but when you have a child that hasn't reached his academic potential, it can be very

frustrating.... But when you ask a teacher what can be done to help motivate my child and the response is--if I knew I'd be rich--you feel you just can't rely on anyone! Learning how to motivate a child and help them to reach their potential is what I feel is an open and continuous dilemma and in much need of an answer."

2. "(A boy) seems not to care whether he passes or not. He does not want to put forth any effort to bring up his grades despite our trying to help him with homework."

3. "(A boy) is very capable. He could be a B student with not too much effort. His problem is and has always been motivation. He is lazy and admits it. How do we get him and students like him to see the knowledge he's missing out on and get him to desire this education??? (He) has never had a behavioral problem, which usually goes with the academic situation he is in!"

4. "(A boy) has no desire to do well in school and plans to drop out at age 16."

5. "Our child's problems stem from his attitude and this is what we are working on. When his mind is set in the right direction he will succeed. Just recently he realized that his grades would affect his future learning progress and he has taken upon himself a process of turning this around. He has always wanted to work alone and we can only offer our support and

encouragement."

6. "Some teenagers just refuse to communicate or cooperate or explain to parents. Of four children, this child, my youngest is most uncooperative in discussing verbally any problems he may have no matter how we approach him on the subject of grades. We know and he knows he can do better, but we cannot find out why he is not working at this capacity. We have no problems with him at home..."

A few parents make reference to concerns about the high school that are unrelated to the V.I.P. Survey and the Grade Booster Program. These tenth grade parents discuss the following:

1. "Your grade step (step system) is ridiculous in suspending kids. It just teaches kids to get suspended and enjoy being home... Stop making (the high school) a prison. Make it a place where kids learn. When it's lunch time let them relax. And don't give a lot of homework.... You're creating drugs and drinking by giving too much homework. Wake up now. When a child swears, discipline, but don't suspend them and above all teach. Stop making the student be so miserable."
2. "...the deans aren't there to help problems, they rule over them (the students) like kings and cause more problems."
3. "Something should be done to improve the lunches at

school. They are terrible--so most of the kids eat french fries.... Also the lettuce is brown and wilted. Kids at this age don't want to pack a lunch, so something should be done about your lunches to make them better. The food looks disgusting and tastes disgusting. Can't you remember what you used to eat when you were this age?"

4. "...the parents need to know their kids are in good hands with teachers and bus drivers too."

These comments, while mostly irrelevant to the limited scope of this study, reflect a few parent concerns which may indeed influence the progress of their children. These parents may feel some need to change the focus of the questionnaire. Speculations on this need may be addressed by a future researcher.

Several parents are not satisfied with some teachers or counselors or with the school in general. The most frequently expressed concern of parents (17 parents) is that they have not received any calls about grades from teachers/counselors, or that they should get calls more often or sooner. Two parents report not receiving grade reports in the mail. Five parents indicate that they feel teachers do not care about their children. Ninth grade parents point out:

1. "Teacher was not interested! However, the administrators were very helpful in solving what

appeared to be a lack of interest on the science teacher's part."

2. "Dissatisfied with English teacher, I called him at his office twice and even offered to hire a tutor for my student (daughter). I did hire one although she didn't seem to be very steady. I wish the school would have recommended someone."

3. "I have never been offered <u>any</u> help of any kind and I sure could have used it. The closest that I came was on parent night. At that time, I was able to learn a little about my daughter's classes, however, there was not ample time to talk with any of the teachers at any length. The teachers did offer to contact us if we gave our name to them after each session. I gave my address to two of the teachers but never heard from one and only got a note in the mail from the other. <u>Very Poor</u>!"

4. "In my particular case the teacher was very negative and not very helpful. Due to the large size of classes it is difficult for students to be helped. I believe there should be some emphasis made on study skills to help the student."

5. "This (a daughter's knee problem) has been a steady problem with the (physical education) teacher."

6. "I feel the school and teachers don't care one way or another. I have heard from my children attending (the

high school) and numerous other students that the counselors are impossible to see unless you spend several class periods just sitting there to see them. I have heard this is at all times and not just an occasional thing."

7. "We were so totally unaware that our children were having problems that we are feeling lost and frustrated in dealing with your school personnel. The teachers and the counselor are very cold and unresponsive to our situation .... I would like to see some indication that my children are having 'academic difficulty' before the grades are sent home to us! We haven't had one single shred of communication from your school regarding this situation."

8. "We have gotten little or no cooperation from my son and little from counselor/teachers. Questions don't get answered. Promises don't get kept. Goals are not met.... My son wasn't even aware that he had to STUDY for finals. No one TOLD him!"

9. "Question: Counselors overworked, too busy? Teachers overworked, too busy? Or simply too much trouble?"

10. "I received one notice for English, called the teacher and wished to have papers and also expressed desire to have special help for her. No reaction and only after counseling with her counselor did I receive help. My daughter has become a resentful person and does not

want to attend (the high school); however this is the only school I can send her to."

11. "My children try to make appointments to see their counselor but are unsuccessful 80% of the time. When they do get a chance to see him, they say he spends most of the time talking on the phone about other matters or making remarks about how he is sick of changing schedules and there is not enough time to do all he had to do!.... Whenever I talk to the counselor on the phone, I feel his attitude is that he is overworked and underpaid!"
12. "Even when I have called counselor-she is not aware if a child is failing in academic achievement. Shouldn't parents be made aware?"

Interspersed with tenth grade parents' comments are their suggestions:

1. "Teachers should be more involved in improving the student's academic progress <u>in school</u>."
2. "I think some of your teachers are acting just like 15 year olds."
3. "Talked to counselor and teachers, asked to be contacted on child's work and grades. Never was contacted. Your teacher in the computer class is, I feel, teaching at a level above the students' understanding...."
4. "I am very disappointed in both teacher...and

counselor's...concern over my daughter's academic progress. Teacher, counselor and parent should work together more with student!...Teacher and/or counselor should notify parent and student immediately when student shows first signs of failure or lack of interest in subject. Some parents do want to get involved! I have wanted to have more contact with teachers, but they have not been very cooperative! (I have a telephone answering machine, so there is no excuse!)"

5. "I think if any teacher sees that a student is not getting fair grades, only a D or F, I would like to see the teacher put more of an effort to find out why. Either the student isn't interested in the subject or the teacher can't get it across to him or her. Why? Especially if the student is trying and is conscientious. A teacher should want more for each of the students than a D or F. There's a reason for a D or F, if he's getting good grades in his or her other subjects."

6. "Teachers should be more patient and more understanding. There are a lot of teachers at (the high school) who are not dedicated teachers. Their bad attitude reflects on the kids."

7. "We feel some teachers should be more understanding of individual needs. They could be more personal and try

to relate on an individual basis."

8. "...do not have the teachers be so involved with outside activities that they do not have the time for a student after school--when that student is having trouble and needs extra help."

9. "They (the teachers) can send out progress reports to inform parents that their child is experiencing difficulty in a subject. I find it hard to believe that a teacher fails to do this when they are aware that a student is in a 'College Prep' program. How can they get into college if a student continues to get C, D or F's in classes. It's always 'news' to me when I see the report card. (A foreign language teacher) is the only teacher who sent out a progress report recently, for which I am grateful. My daughter has expressed discouragement a number of times both this year and last year at being unable to get help in troubled classes. Teachers were not available when they said they would be. I find this unacceptable when we are supposed to be getting these students prepared for college entrance!"

10. "It's your job to teach. I have to work. You're getting paid to teach."

11. "More understanding of teacher/student personality conflicts, where possible student should be assigned a different instructor where problems exist."

12. "When the child is doing poorly, the teacher should inform parents. A parent assumes all is going well when all of a sudden the progress report comes in and then what? I also realize that the teacher has many students but if that person is truly a teacher, they would show concern for that child that isn't doing well!...."

13. "I find, for the most part, uncaring teachers, teachers who do not tell the truth unless confronted and teachers who use foul language and insinuate a student is High on something because they aren't performing up to the teacher's expectations .... Besides, who is always right regardless of the situation? We all know it's the teacher and the student doesn't have a prayer.... Our child used to be punished, yelled at, sometimes slapped and generally made to feel worthless until we realized she was only half at fault. Our general attitude is one of congratulations to our daughter for attending school regardless of the teachers."

14. "We have called (the teacher) and never had calls returned."

15. "I feel teachers and counselors don't care one way or another if students succeed. There have been times my son has tried to see his counselor but feels it a waste of time to only sit waiting while he should be in

class."

16. "Your counselor does not follow up on students."

17. "I wish that the counselor would make more of an effort to keep appointments with her students. I do not feel it should take four phone messages to receive a return call from someone and at that time it was not returned from the student's counselor, but another counselor who took the time to help the student."

18. "My son, during his first two years, has always been a D-F student. Yet I have never received any communication regarding his grades from either his teachers or his counselor. When I have had occasion to try and call (the counselor), my calls are not returned and she has been very difficult to get a hold of. Is it not the job of a counselor to be more in tune with marginal students? Also, there is no rapport between my son and (the counselor). I have been given the feeling that she is biding her time for tenure. You need someone in those positions that CARE. I have more theories/ideas regarding marginal students and the lack of school involvement with them, more than I can relate here. It is wonderful for a school to be academically attuned to the college bound, but does that mean the marginal students must be caught in that shuffle when they have not expressed an interest in it?"

A few somewhat unique problems surface in the comments

of two sophomore parents and one freshman parent:

1. "I asked (the high school) to give my son some tests for learning disabilities; it took two weeks for them to decide to give him two ability tests. I feel when a student is doing poorly some kind of group therapy or counseling be made available. I feel parents need to know if the problem is motivation or lack of ability.... When my son got his first report card with four F's and two D's not one teacher sent a letter or called." (Comments refer to previous school year.)
2. "When my student was off school following surgery I wanted a tutor to help with the school work. I was told it wouldn't be necessary, the teachers were aware of the situation and they would help. This was not the case and most of the classes were failed. Now I have to pay for two summer school classes this year, and night school next year. This puts an added expense on me that causes financial difficulty for the entire family."
3. "Our child has had severe medical problems this year resulting in rare attendance. The school's coping mechanism left a lot to be desired. Three calls from student, two from parent equaled one returned call. Hostility from the teacher when assignments were requested. No follow-up after one call when absence went on. We have the problem being dealt with

professionally but (the high school) has done no follow-up. The child could have been well months ago and simply not attending school.... I am merely alerting you that there are holes in the system. Counselor was helpful when child returned to school."

Two freshmen parents are not all that worried. "Since the class she got an F in was Foods and the rest of her grades were A-B-C's and she did end up with a C in the class, we knew it was just a matter of her realizing this was not a class she could glide through." For a boy, a mother says: "Because the F was in PE, I wasn't all that concerned--the academic grades have been the important items and those I've been pleased with." Another freshman parent also distinguishes PE from other courses: "Her F grade has been brought to a C in Physical Education, but in the process, other grades fell, and I'm more concerned about getting D's in her major subjects although I certainly don't want an F."

While some suggestions can be gleaned from the above comments, parents offer specific ideas to address student underachievement. Freshmen parents suggest the following:

1. "I feel some incentives could be shown to the average achiever. Every school recognizes the overachiever and the underachiever--the majority average get lost in the shuffle. If a child excels in one or two things he's held back--because in order to take a certain course,

it conflicts with his average courses--while the honor courses all flow together. I'm going by things that occurred in junior high. I hope it's not that way in high school."

2. "I question how a student who failed the first semester could be expected to do well in the second semester (of Algebra).... I feel the extremely bright students and slow learners are taken well care of; however, the average student, like the 'average man' can be having all sorts of difficulty and no action or positive planning is attempted until the parent contacts the counselor."
3. "Let the parents be more aware of the problems the student is having and what can be done to help them."
4. "Perhaps, a motivation seminar or program--for the students. A special personality to talk with the kids. Emphasis on the importance of succeeding in school to further succeed in the real world."

Sophomore parents make the following recommendations:

1. "When a child is doing poor work, D and F, in a class, I think the parents should be made aware of it before the six weeks. The student doesn't always let the parent know that things are as bad as they are."
2. "If a student's grades should decline to a level below a C, the parent should be notified by telephone or mail."

3. "System is set up to help F students instead of D students, which is a little too late. We were wondering where all this help was last year when our son was getting D's."

4. "Start a program/class on 'How to Study Effectively and Take Tests Without Choking.'"

5. "A better understanding as to how a grade is given. Also a more detailed list and more recommendations as to how to help the student on progress reports."

6. "We would like to be more involved with our child's education, but he feels this is an invasion on his life. Therefore, the only suggestion I would have would be that the school also work on student attitudes. When the students realize why they are in school and what they can get out of it, they will do better. At least we hope this is what will happen."

7. "I believe that waiting for the first grading period to determine that a student is having difficulty is too long. By the time the grades reach the home the next semester is already two weeks old. Night school should not only be for a student who fails at a semester, but an ongoing therapy for any student who is having difficulties. After three weeks, if a grade of D or F is deserved, it should be mandatory for that student to attend night school."

8. "You should check into it and see why he got an F. I

don't think it was all his doing."

9. "Some help would be appreciated in knowing how to motivate a student who wants to go to college but who doesn't seem to understand the direct relationship between good grades in high school and acceptance into college."

10. "Help students choose subjects which they can conceivably handle based on past school performance."

11. "Constant communication is the key, constant communication between teacher, parent and student. Somewhere in time, a spark should ignite some motivation to a desire for better grades and understanding. At least, that's what I'm hoping."

12. "It would be helpful if teachers would contact the parent right away instead of waiting until it is too late. I feel students should be graded on their own ability and not the ability of all students in that class. Some students may have the ability to learn but due to emotional problems are unable to learn as their fellow students can. In many ways the grading system is unfair. A student needs a certain amount of 'points' to pass a class.... If a student is having an emotional problem, he cannot do his school work like the 'average' student. He, therefore, fails his classes. After awhile this student will give up on school and himself. The end result is he <u>quits</u> school.

I was one of those students that quit...."

One ninth grade parent takes the time to do some evaluating of the V.I.P. Survey itself. He questions the value of the information supplied by parents after their children have only completed one semester in high school. He thinks they should be contacted after two semesters are finished. Furthermore, he believes that the researcher should review students' other grades as well as the F's because the problem might be specific to the course and the teaching methods. He closes with: "All in all, this is an excellent feedback tool, and it demonstrates the high school's interest in maintaining and improving our academic environment."

Both ninth and tenth grade parents are willing to share their positive experiences with teachers, counselors and the school in general. Their encouragement and appreciation is typical of their responses on other parent activity evaluations. Ninth grade parents make the following remarks:

1. "I have been very pleased with the concern her teachers have shown and their contact with me. I do believe it helped."
2. "Just by being on call when we really need them (school personnel)."
3. "I think the breakfast with the principal is a super idea."

4. "All I can say is keep doing what you're doing. It's working."
5. "My contact with his counselor and teachers has done much to help me understand my son's problem, but cannot understand his 'doesn't care attitude,' as everyone is concerned and wants to help him.

Tenth grade parents respond similarly:

1. "I am satisfied basically with your strategies--there will always be personality conflicts somewhere."
2. "The times I have felt a need to talk to one of the faculty--I have received a phone message back that same day. They have been most prompt and helpful with any information regarding my child. Their interest and concern has been great. Thanks."
3. "Keep doing what you are doing--we are trying to do our part by reassuring (our daughter) that she can succeed and she must keep trying."

Several parents make comments directly related to the Grade Booster Program. The most frequent statement is that they are unaware of the program or the strategies or that they were unable to attend. From their written comments eight parents indicate they are unfamiliar with Grade Booster Night. Six parents request Grade Booster materials here. A few parents describe the value of the program to their situation, what they have learned from it or how it does not apply to their children. A few parents also report

a lack of understanding of the academic achievement strategies, or they find that these strategies do not work with their children. Ninth grade parents share the following insights:

1. "The Grade Booster Program was/is a step in the right direction... but what my child needs is motivation. When I showed her the placemat, she laughed!!"
2. "...I feel at a loss as to what to do, how to actually implement some of the strategies. I feel like I've been through these strategies, particularly teachers progress sheets...in junior high. I appreciate your interest and I want you to know that I got a lot out of Grade Boosters. I'm glad I went." "...one point that impressed me at the Grade Booster Night was that sometimes the student has to fail and that as parents we need to remind ourselves that after all, they are her grades, it is her homework, etc., not ours. Learning who really owns the problem has helped me a lot. Her semester report card was another disappointment to us.... But instead of getting really upset and grounding her...we made it clear that even though we are disappointed and very concerned, it's still her problem and only she can do something about it. I think our relationship has improved in the past few months because I (her mother) have learned to stop feeling hurt, guilty and victimized when she does not

do well in school.... I have noticed an improvement in her attitude since the beginning of this semester...she is showing interest in the learning material itself and spending more time on homework."

3. "Although I did not attend the Grade Boosters some of these strategies are very immature for high school students."

Tenth grade parents respond as follows:

1. "Grade Boosters is an excellent approach for failing or poor students who are disinterested. Our daughter is motivated...we really felt Grade Boosters is not for our situation. While we have all the typical problems --boyfriends, phone, poor use of time, etc. our daughter is not a problem with discipline or any other way. She loves to have fun, but she also really wants to do well in school. We feel she puts out good effort. She never asks to stay home, is not habitually tardy and really enjoys school. When it gets difficult...she works harder, but the results are often negative. I don't think Grade Boosters answers that problem."

2. "You can have all kinds of 'Grade Boosters' programs, but if you don't get down to the <u>real</u> reason why a student isn't performing, your programs aren't any good."

3. "...Grade Booster Night helped us handle our son's poor

grades and realize that academic success was up to him and not us."

4. "Grade Boosters is a fine program for some students." The program does not address all the complexities of this family situation.

5. "I want to know if these strategies are for student or parent?"

A few parents of sophomores enrolled in Project Success advise us of the valuable assistance provided by this program:

1. "I think your Project Success is very good. But I would like it to expand. Not just for children after they're in a mess with their grades. It should help prevent it before it gets that far.... They really do a good job, but not enough of them for all the children who need it."

2. "Project Success is a very worthwhile part of (a girl's) day. Teachers here deal on an individual basis which gives a student self-confidence. These teachers really care about her progress. They try hard to help a student achieve!"

3. "...Study Skills teacher (Project Success)--I feel I wouldn't know about <u>90%</u> of what is going on without her phone calls. She seems to be aware at all times as to what is going on with my son."

Summary of Important/Recurring Issues Presented by Parents on Open-Ended Question 24 and Question 25

Parents in this section are very willing to share their candid opinions, insightful suggestions, and honest, caring concerns. At times their comments are lengthy and cathartic. Their criticisms may be pointed but do not display rudeness. Several parents further demonstrate their interest in their children by offering the researcher the option of contacting them to discuss their situations in greater detail. From the data in this chapter it might be surmised that the parents in this study contradict the stereotypical image of parents of underachievers usually presented.

The concerns expressed by the responding parents are summarized below and organized into areas upon which the district can focus:

1. General school concerns
    a. Parent discomfort with school rules/policies
    b. Parent perception of staff as uncaring
    c. Parent need to be informed
    d. Parent need for encouragement/education
2. Individual concerns
    a. Influence of home problems, medical problems, drugs and alcohol
    b. Need for motivational strategies, attitude improvement and goal setting

3. Grade Booster concerns

   a. Need to better publicize the Grade Booster Seminar

   b. Need to clarify the purpose of the Grade Booster Seminar

   c. Extension of Grade Booster information to non-Grade Booster parents

   d. Increased number and better use of academic improvement strategies.

PART II: ANALYSIS OF CROSSTABULATIONS

Several crosstabulations are performed on the data in order to ascertain any related factors. Of primary interest are influences on grade change and characteristics of GB and non-GB parents and their children. Both the statistically significant and non-significant results are examined here. Special note is taken of trends that appear in the statistically non-significant data, as well as any instances of small numbers observed in significant results.

The crosstabulations are computed in the SPSSx format in a straightforward manner. Each response for one factor is paired with each response for another factor. For example: Student absence is crosstabulated with parent type. Absences which range from 0 to 36 are not grouped in the crosstabulation. Hence, although the second factor has only two options, it would be difficult to produce a significant relationship due to a wide range of responses for absence.

For purposes of this study, the significance level of 0.05 is accepted for any crosstabulation performed as indicated above. However, reporting will be limited to arbitrary and selective groups of factor responses, i.e., absences grouped: 0, 1-5, 6-10 etc. Percentages are reported as appropriate and usually shown in terms of column percentages, rather than row or total percentages.

The value of crosstabulations involving more than two

factors becomes more limited in this study as the number of cells increases. Where large numbers of cells occur, the number of cases per cell decreases and in some cases become zero. In these cases statistical analyses may be of limited value or may not be computable.

Number of Student Absences by Parent Type

This crosstabulation compares the children of GB vs. non-GB parents in this study in terms of attendance for the first semester, 1985-86 school year. (Total days attendance is approximately 90 days.) Absences range from 0 to 14.5 for children of GB parents and from 0 to 36 for children of non-GB parents. While the 0.05 level of significance is not even close to being met, these absence rates are different in range but fairly close between each group.

Table 28

Student Absences by Parent Type

Absences	GB Children		Non-GB Children	
0	3	12%	10	9.7%
1-5	13	52%	50	48.5%
6-10	6	24%	24	23.3%
11-15	3	12%	7	6.8%
16-20	0	0%	5	4.9%
21-25	0	0%	3	2.9%
26-30	0	0%	1	1.0%
31-36	0	0%	3	2.9%
Total	25	100%	103	100%

Missing Cases: 3

In the GB families 64% of the students (16) have less than

five days absence in the semester, while in the non-GB families 58% of the students (60) have five or less days absence. In the GB families 80% of the students (22) have less than ten days absence, while in the non-GB families 81.6% of the students (84) have ten days or less absence from school. One hundred percent of children of GB parents have less than 15 days of absence. Less than three-quarters of the children of non-GB parents (71.1%--91) have 15 or less days absence. In both groups the most frequently seen absence is between one and five. Three cases are missing due to lack of response to the GB/non-GB questions.

When attendance is further broken down by grade level in Table 29 below, no other patterns seem to emerge.

Table 29

Student Absence by Parent Type and Grade Level

Absences	Children of GB Parents		Children of Non-GB Parents	
	Ninth Grade	Tenth Grade	Ninth Grade	Tenth Grade
0	2	1	3	7
1-5	6	7	16	34
6-10	2	4	12	12
11-15	1	2	4	3
16-20	0	0	2	3
21-25	0	0	0	3
26-30	0	0	1	0
31-36	0	0	2	1

Missing Cases: 3

Change in the Number of F's by Absence from School

Due to the large spread of absences (0-36) and spread of change in number of F's (-3 to +4), no significant relationship exists between these two factors. Most of the cells in this crosstabulation are very small, providing little clue to any trends. When absences and change in F's are grouped, however, the distribution centers around low absences coupled with reduction in number of F's. Most students have between one and ten days absence. Of these students, 61.1% have fewer F's at the semester. These 58 students represent 44% of the total number of students in this study.

Table 30

Change in the Number of F's by Absence from School

Change in F's	Absences 0	1-5	6-10	11-20	21-30	31-36
-3 to -1	0 0%	8 12.5%	6 19.4%	5 31.2%	1 25%	2 66.7%
0	5 38.5%	16 25%	7 22.6%	6 37.5%	1 25%	1 33.3%
+1 to +4	8 61.5%	40 62.5%	18 58.1%	5 31.2%	2 50%	0 0%
Totals	13 100%	64 100%	31 100%	16 100%	4 100%	3 100%

Change in Number of F's by Sex

For the crosstabulation using only sex and the change in number of F's over the semester, no relationship is found. Overall, the female students have a greater percentage of decrease in F's, a smaller percentage of increase in F's and a smaller percentage of no change in

number of F's.

Table 31

Change in Number of F's by Sex

Change in F's	Male		Female	
- 3 to -1	14	18.7%	8	14.3%
0	22	29.3%	14	25%
+1 to +4	39	52%	34	60.7%
Totals	75	100%	56	100%

Change in the Number of F's by Grade Level

No significant relationship is observed when examining the factors: grade level and change in number of F's. A fair distribution is seen in several cells even when cells are grouped together, although the largest percentage of students at both grade levels have reduced their number of F's.

Table 32

Change in the Number of F's by Grade Level

Change in F's	Ninth Grade		Tenth Grade	
-3 to -1	7	13.5%	15	19.0%
0	11	21.2%	25	31.6%
+1 to +4	34	65.4%	39	49.4%
Totals	52	100%	79	100%

Change in the Number of F's Controlling for Grade Level and Sex

No significant relationship is observable when crosstabulation is done for grade level, sex and change in the number of F's. Some cells are so small and some tables have few cells making statistical analyses impossible. However, the largest percentage of students falls into the category: male, tenth grade, fewer F's at the semester; followed closely by, female, ninth grade, fewer F's at the semester. The smallest group consists of the ninth grade, female group, increased F's at the semester.

Table 33

Change in Number of F's Controlling for Grade Level and Sex

Change in F's	Ninth Grade Male		Ninth Grade Female		Tenth Grade Male		Tenth Grade Female	
-3 to -1	4	17.4%	3	10.3%	10	19.2%	5	18.5%
0	6	26.1%	5	17.2%	16	30.8%	9	33.3%
+1 to +4	13	56.5%	21	72.4%	26	50%	13	48.1%
Totals	23	100%	29	100%	52	100%	27	100%

Change in the Number of F's by Course Load

No significant relationship exists between the change in the number of F's at the 0.05 level of significance. This study is composed of 81 students (61.8%) enrolled in six courses and 50 students (38.2%) enrolled in seven

courses.

Table 34

Change in Number of F's by Course Load

Change in F's	Six Course Load		Seven Course Load	
-3 to -1	13	16%	9	18%
0	26	32.1%	10	20%
+1 to +4	42	51.9%	31	62%
Total	81	100%	50	100%

The percentage of students in this study whose grades dropped is similar whether their course load is six or seven courses. However, the percentage of students with no change in number of F's is greater when they have six courses (32.1%). Also, the percentage of students with fewer F's at the semester is greater if they are enrolled in seven courses (62%). One might expect that students in seven courses would find it more difficult to improve their grades; however, students who choose seven courses are usually the more academically capable students at this high school.

Change in the Number of F's by Parent Type

When the number of F's per student at the semester is subtracted from the number of F's at the first six weeks the resulting scores ranging from -3 to +4: the higher the score, the fewer the number of semester F's.

The crosstabulation by parent type results in no significant relationship. However, it is interesting to note that for students of GB parents the change in number of F's ranges from -1 to +4, while the group having non-GB parents have a somewhat wider and less positive range of change in number of F's, that is from -3 to +3. Five students (20%) with GB parents show no change in number of F's, while 28 students (27.2%) with non-GB parents also show no change over the semester. If changes in number of F's are grouped according to negative change (more F's), zero change (same number of F's) and positive change (fewer F's) the profile of GB vs. non-GB families favors the GB families. Of the GB families, 72% of the students improved their grades by the end of the semester, while only 53.4% of the non-GB families have students who have reduced their number of F's. In GB families only 8% show an increase in F's over the semester while 19.4% of the non-GB families do. GB and non-GB families, however, have students who are close in percentage of no change in number of F's.

Table 35

Change in the Number of F's by Parent Type

Change in F's	GB Children		Non-GB Children	
-3 to -1	2	8%	20	19.4%
0	5	20%	28	27.2%
+1 to +4	18	72%	55	53.4%
Total	25	100%	103	100%

Missing Cases: 3

Change in Number of F's by Grade Level and Parent Type

No significant difference is noted in the change in number of F's for ninth or tenth grade students whose parents are GB or non-GB parents. When the data is grouped by negative change, positive change and no change in Table 36, the percentages favor tenth graders with positive change and GB parents.

Table 36

Change in Number of F's by Grade Level and Parent Type

Change in F's	Children of GB Parents				Children of Non-GB Parents			
	Ninth Grade		Tenth Grade		Ninth Grade		Tenth Grade	
-3 to -1	0	0%	2	8%	7	6.8%	13	12.6%
0	3	12%	2	8%	7	6.8%	21	20.4%
+1 to +4	8	32%	10	40%	26	25.2%	29	28.2%
Missing Cases: 3								

In the following table the change in number of F's further broken down by sex with 32% of the sons of GB parents being tenth graders with a positive change in F's and 15.5% of the ninth grade daughters and 17.5% of the tenth grade sons of non-GB parents with a positive change in F's. However, 13.6% of the tenth grade sons of non-GB parents also have no change in number of F's.

Table 37

Change in Number of F's by Grade Level, Sex and Parent Type

Change in F's	Children of GB Parents				Children of Non-GB Parents			
	Ninth Grade		Tenth Grade		Ninth Grade		Tenth Grade	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
-3 to -1	0	0	1	1	4	3	9	4
0	2	1	1	1	3	4	14	7
+1 to +4	3	5	8	2	10	16	18	11
Missing Cases:	3							

Disciplinary Steps by Parent Type

There is no significant relationship between the disciplinary steps of the students whose parents are GB or non-GB parents. The majority of the students in this study have no disciplinary steps at all: 68% for children of GB parents and 62.1% for children of non-GB parents. Twenty-eight percent of children of GB parents and 22.4% of children of non-GB parents have between two and five steps. In examining the tables below, however, there are patterns in terms of range, grade level and sex. The disciplinary steps of children of non-GB parents range over the whole spectrum of steps (0-20), whereas the steps of children of GB parents cover a much smaller range (0-8). Tenth graders, especially boys, are more likely to have steps since they have been in the school over a year and are more experienced

with the system. Ninth graders have only been in the school two months.

Table 38

Disciplinary Steps by Parent Type

Step	Children of GB Parents		Children of Non-GB Parents	
0	17	68%	64	62.1%
2-5	7	28%	23	22.3%
7-8	1	4%	10	9.7%
11	0		3	2.9%
14	0		1	1.0%
17	0		1	1.0%
19	0		1	1.0%

Missing Cases: 3

Table 39

Disciplinary Steps by Grade Level, Sex and Parent Type

Step	Children of GB Parents				Children of Non-GB Parents			
	Ninth Grade		Tenth Grade		Ninth Grade		Tenth Grade	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
0	5	4	7	1	13	16	20	15
2-5	0	2	3	2	1	6	14	2
7-8	0	0	0	1	3	1	3	3
11	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	1
14	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
17	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
19	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1

Missing Cases: 3

Changes in Number of F's by Disciplinary Steps

The relationship between disciplinary steps and the change in the number of F's over the semester is significant (0.0051). Most students in this study (83--63.4%) do not have any disciplinary steps at all. Of this group of 83 there are 53 (63.9%) students who have fewer F's at the end of the semester; 22 students (26.5%) still have the same number of F's; and only eight students (9.6%) increased their number of F's. Over the whole range of steps, the 53 students with no steps who have decreased their F's form a significant percentage of the total, that is, 40.5%. The next highest percentage is 16.8% for the 22 students whose steps are zero and whose change in number of F's is also zero. That leaves the remaining 40.7% distributed over 13 cells with seven cells empty. While many students' grades have improved (73--55.7%) they are more likely to improve in combination with no disciplinary referrals--not an unexpected outcome.

Table 40

Change in Number of F's by Disciplinary Steps

Change in F's	Disciplinary Steps 0	2-5	7-8	11	14	17	19
-3 to -1	8	7	4	2	0	0	1
	9.6%	22.6%	36.4%	66.7%	0%	0%	100%
0	22	11	0	1	1	1	0
	26.5%	35.5%	0%	33.3%	100%	100%	0%
+1 to +4	53	13	7	0	0	0	0
	63.9%	41.9%	63.6%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Total	83	31	11	3	1	1	1
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Project Success by Grade Level, Sex and Parent Type

When examining the number of students in Project Success by grade level, sex and parent type, the only situation resulting in a significant relationship (0.0226) is for tenth grade, male children of non-GB parents. All 41 tenth grade males are not enrolled in Project Success. Since only 10 of the 131 students in this study are enrolled in Project Success and since only four of the 10 have GB parents, these students are overwhelmingly without formal, daily homework assistance during the school day.

Table 41

Project Success by Grade Level, Sex and Parent Type

Project Success	Children of GB Parents				Children of Non-GB Parents			
	Ninth Grade		Tenth Grade		Ninth Grade		Tenth Grade	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Yes	0	0	2	2	2	0	0	4
No	5	6	8	2	15	23	41	18
Missing Cases:	3							

Change in the Number of F's by Enrollment in Project Success

The effect of enrollment in a Project Success study hall on the change in the number of F's over the semester is not significant, largely due to the small percentage of enrollment (7.6%). Of the ten students in Project Success, 70% have fewer F's, while 54.5% not in the program have fewer F's. No one in this study and in Project Success has more F's at the end of the semester, while 18.2% of those not in the program have more F's at the end of the semester.

Table 42

Change in the Number of F's by Enrollment in Project Success

Change in F's	Project Success Study Hall		Regular Study Hall	
-3 to -1	0	0%	22	18.2%
0	3	30%	33	27.3%
+1 to +4	7	70%	66	54.5%
Total	10	100%	121	100%

Change in Number of F's by Project Success Enrollment by Parent Type

When change in number of F's is crosstabulated with Project Success enrollment and parent type, no significant relationship is found. In the summary table below, the numbers in Project Success are too small for meaningful conclusions, although none of the Project Success students' grades deteriorated any further.

Table 43

Change in Number of F's by Project Success by Parent Type

Change in F's	Children in GB Parents Project Success	Children in GB Parents No Project Success	Children of Non-GB Parents Project Success	Children of Non-GB Parents No Project Success
-3 to -1	0	2	0	20
0	2	3	1	27
+1 to +4	2	16	5	50

Missing Cases: 3

Further definition of Project Success students is shown in Table 44 by grade level below. No significant results are noted here either.

Table 44

Change in Number of F's by Project Success, Parent Type and Grade Level

Change in F's	Project Success Students: Children of GB Parents Ninth Grade	Children of GB Parents Tenth Grade	Children of Non-GB Parents Ninth Grade	Children of Non-GB Parents Tenth Grade
-3 to -1	0	0	0	0
0	0	2	0	1
+1 to +4	0	2	2	3

Table 44 (continued)

Change in F's	Students Not Enrolled in Project Success: Children of GB Parents, Ninth Grade	Children of GB Parents, Tenth Grade	Children of Non-GB Parents, Ninth Grade	Children of Non-GB Parents, Tenth Grade
-3 to -1	0	2	7	13
0	3	0	7	20
+1 to +4	8	8	24	26

Missing Cases: 3

Number of Students in Reading Course by Parent Type

This crosstabulation of Reading by parent type results in no significant relationship due to the small number of students in this study enrolled in Reading. The real effect of enrollment in Reading can hardly be estimated on the basis of four cases.

Table 45

Number of Students in Reading by Parent Type

Reading Course	Children of GB Parents		Children of Non-GB Parents	
Enrolled	1	(4%)	3	(2.9%)
Not Enrolled	24	(96%)	100	(97.1%)

Missing Cases: 3

Change in Number of F's by Enrollment in Reading Course

Of the participants in this study, only four are

enrolled in the remedial reading course. Two each have one fewer F's at the semester, while one student has one more F and the other student has two more F's at the end of the semester. Further crosstabulations using Reading as a factor are not necessary since it is unlikely that these four cases could have any appreciable effect on the other 127 cases.

Question 2: Student Time Spent on Studying by Change in Number of F's

No significant results are evident when examining parent response to Question 2 and student change in number of F's over the semester. If the cells are reduced in number, the trend is toward the same or more study time resulting generally in the same or fewer F's.

Table 46

Student Time Spent on Studying by Change in Number of F's

Change in F's	More Study		Same Study		Less Study	
-3 to -1	7	11.7%	10	17.2%	4	33.3%
0	17	28.3%	15	25.9%	4	33.3%
+1 to +4	36	60%	33	56.9%	4	33.3%
Totals	60	100%	58	100%	12	100%

Missing Cases: 1

Question 3: Parent Time Spent with Student on Homework by Change in Number of F's

The parent response to Question 3, when correlated with the change in number of F's, results in a significance level of 0.0262. Across all levels of change in number of F's, the majority of parents in this study spend the same amount of time with their students as they have prior to the first six week notice of the F('s). Of this subgroup over half of the students have improved their grades without additional parental assistance. Although only 18% of all the parents responding to this question report increased time with their children, the preponderance of their students have fewer F's at the semester. Even for the few parents reporting less assistance with homework, half of their children's grades show fewer F's at the semester.

Table 47

Parent Time Spent with Student on Homework by Change in Number of F's

Change in F's	More Assistance		Same Assistance		Less Assistance	
-3 to -1	2	8.7%	17	19.1%	2	12.5%
0	5	21.7%	23	25.8%	6	37.5%
+1 to +4	16	69.9%	49	55.1%	8	50%
Total	23	100%	89	100%	16	100%

Missing Cases: 3

Question 3: Parent Time Spent with Student on Homework by Absence by Change in Number of F's

The only significant relationship (0.0357) is noted in this crosstabulation where the change in number of F's is +1, that is, where students have reduced their number of F's by one at the semester. The preponderance of cases (26) in this instance fall into the category of one to five days absence with the same level of parent assistance on homework.

Table 48

Question 3: Parent Time Spent with Student on Homework by Absence by +1 Change in Number of F's

Absence	More Assistance		Same Assistance		Less Assistance	
0	1	9%	6	13.6%	0	0%
1-5	4	36.4%	26	59.1%	1	20%
6-10	4	36.4%	9	20.5%	3	60%
11-20	2	18.2%	2	4.5%	1	20%
21-30	0	0%	1	2.3%	0	0%
31-36	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Totals	11	100%	44	100%	5	100%

Table 49 below summarizes absence, change in number of F's and parent time on homework. The cases cluster in the one to five day absence range with a pattern of improved

grades and the same or more parent time invested.

Table 49

Parent Time Spent with Student on Homework by Absence by Change in Number of F's

Change in F's	Absences 0			1-5			6-10			11-20			21-30			31-36		
	M	S	L	M	S	L	M	S	L	M	S	L	M	S	L	M	S	L*
-3 to -1	0	0	0	0	6	1	1	5	0	0	3	1	0	2	0	1	1	0
0	2	1	2	2	13	0	0	4	3	1	4	1	0	1	0	0	0	0
+1 to +4	1	7	0	9	29	2	4	10	4	2	2	1	0	1	1	0	0	0
Totals	3	8	2	11	48	3	5	19	7	3	9	3	0	4	1	1	1	0

Missing Cases: 3

*M S L stands for: More Parental Assistance, Same Parental Assistance, and Less Parental Assistance, respectively.

Question 4: Help with Homework from Siblings by Change in Number of F's

No significant relationship is noted between sibling assistance and improvement in grades. The parents in this study report only 23.8% (31) of their children receive at least some help from a sibling, while 76.2% (99) receive no assistance. Of those receiving assistance, 15 have fewer F's and 16 have either the same number or more F's at the semester. For those not receiving assistance, 58 have fewer F's at the semester and 41 have either the same number or more F's at the semester.

Table 50

Question 4: Help with Homework from Siblings by Change in Number of F's

Change in F's	Often		Sometimes		Never		Not Applicable*	
-3 to -1	0	0%	7	24.1%	5	11%	10	18.5%
0	0	0%	9	31%	12	26.7%	14	25.9%
+1 to +4	2	100%	13	44.8%	28	62.2%	30	55.6%
Totals	2	100%	29	100%	45	100%	54	100%

Missing Cases: 1

*Not Applicable is the category for students who have: no siblings available, only younger siblings or are only children.

Question 3: Parent Time by Question 4: Sibling Time Spent with Student on Homework by Change in the Number of F's

There is no significant relationship between responses to Question 3, Question 4 and the change in F's over the semester. The 126 cases in this set of crosstabulations are fairly well spread out, although there are clusters within the "same" amount of parent time with some or no sibling assistance time. Where there is "more" parent assistance, there seems to be little, if any, sibling assistance; where there is "less" parent assistance, there also is no sibling assistance. The number of F's frequently remains the same or decreases over the semester.

Table 51

Question 3: Parent Time by Question 4: Sibling Time Spent with Student on Homework by Change in the Number of F's

Change in F's	More Parental Assistance Sibling Assistance Often	Some	Never	Not Applicable
-3 to -1	0	0	0	2
0	0	0	0	4
+1 to +4	0	3	3	10

Change in F's	Some Parental Assistance Sibling Assistance Often	Some	Never	Not Applicable
-3 to -1	0	6	4	7
0	0	8	8	7
+1 to +4	2	10	19	17

Change in F's	Less Parental Assistance Sibling Assistance Often	Some	Never	Not Applicable
-3 to -1	0	0	1	1
0	0	0	4	2
+1 to +4	0	0	5	3

Missing Cases: 5

Question 3: Parent Time Spent with Student on Homework by Parent Type

There is no significant relationship between parent response to Question 3 and designation as GB or non-GB parent. Although the number of GB parents in this study is small, it is interesting to note that the non-GB parents report both a higher percentage of more parent assistance and a higher percentage of less parent assistance than GB parents following receipt of a first six week F('s) grade(s). This, perhaps, says that the GB parents have not altered their behavior after the first six weeks or that their assistance has already been consistent and sufficient.

Table 52

Question 3: Parent Time Spent with Student on Homework by Parent Type

Parental Assistance	GB Children		Non-GB Children	
More Help	4	16%	19	19%
Same Amount of Help	19	76%	69	69%
Less Help	2	8%	12	12%
Totals	25	100%	100	100%

Missing Cases: 6

Question 4: Help with Homework from Siblings by Parent Type

No significant relationship is observed when help from siblings is compared by parent type. A similar majority of

GB and non-GB parents have children in this study who get no assistance from siblings either because: 1) It is never given, 2) Siblings are younger or not available, or 3) These children are only children. Seventy-six percent of the GB families and 77.5% of the non-GB families fall into this category. In only 24% of GB families and 24.5% of non-GB families do children in this study receive assistance with homework from siblings. The distributions are nearly identical. Therefore, for these two family types, the possible influence of sibling assistance on student grade improvement is no different.

Table 53

Question 4: Help with Homework from Siblings by Parent Type

Sibling Assistance	Children of: GB Parents		Non-GB Parents	
Often	1	4%	1	1%
Sometimes	5	20%	24	23.5%
Not Applicable	19	76%	77	75.5%
Totals	25	100%	102	100%

Missing Responses: 4

Question 5: Parent Perception of Student Absence After Receipt of First Six Week Grades by Number of Absences for the Semester

This crosstabulation merely attempts to identify the

relation, if any, between parent perception of absence level for the last 12 weeks and actual absence for the semester. A majority of parents (68.5%) reported no change in absence rate, in addition to which another 20% of the parents reported decreased absence. Accounting for 88.5% of families, one might conclude that absence rate is fairly consistent and not increased after a low grade(s) has appeared the first six weeks. While the 0.0013 level of significance is reached for the 130 cases in this crosstabulation:

1. It might also be easily predictable due to the close association between the two items.
2. It is partially based upon perception, rather than fact.
3. It might have been more appropriate to compare parent perception of absence rate for the last 12 weeks with actual absence for the last 12 weeks.
4. Again, the absences are so spread out that the number of cases per cell is very small except at the lower end of the absence scale.

Hence, the real value of the significant relationship here is limited.

Table 54

Question 5: Parent Perception of Student Absence After Receipt of First Six Week Grades by Number of Absences for the Semester

Parent Perception of Absence Rate	Actual Semester Absence 0		1-5		6-10		11-20		21-30		31-36	
Increased	0	0%	4	6.3%	4	12.9%	6	40%	0	0%	1	33.3%
Same	12	92.3%	52	81.3%	17	54.8%	5	33.3%	2	50%	1	33.3%
Decreased	1	7.7%	8	12.5%	10	32.3%	4	26.7%	2	50%	1	33.3%
Totals	13	100%	64	100%	31	100%	15	100%	4	100%	3	100%

Missing Cases: 1

Question 5: Parent Perception of Absence by Parent Type

The relationship between parent perception of student absence after receipt of the first six week grades and status as a GB parent is significant (0.0537). The majority (88%) of GB parents report that their children in this study continuing to have the same absence rate after receipt of a first six week F. Along with the 4% whose absence has decreased, 92% of the GB families have students whose perceived absence rate has not increased. For the non-GB families, the percentage reporting consistent absence is 64.7%, which when added to the 24.5% reporting decreased absence rate amounts to 89.2%. It is, perhaps, more significant to wonder the factors influencing the 24.5% with perceived decrease in absence for children of non-GB families.

Table 55

Question 4: Parent Perception of Absence by Parent Type

Parent Perception of Absence	Children of: GB Parents		Non-GB Parents	
Increased	2	8%	11	10.8%
Same	22	88%	66	64.7%
Decreased	1	4%	25	24.5%
Totals	25	100%	102	100%

Missing Cases: 4

Question 6: Parent Perception of Change in Student Attitude Toward School After Receipt of First Six Week F by Parent Type

GB parents appear to be no different from non-GB parents in describing their students in this study. About half of the parents report their students' attitude toward school remaining the same after receipt of a first six week F. About a third of the parents report their students' attitude improving over the semester. Student attitude does not appear to be a significant factor when comparing children of GB and non-GB parents.

Table 56

Question 6: Parent Perception of Change in Student Attitude by Parent Type

Parent Perception of Student Attitude	Children of: GB Parents		Non-GB Parents	
Improved	9	36%	33	32%
Same	14	56%	55	53.4%
Worsened	2	8%	15	14.6%
Totals	25	100%	103	100%

Missing Cases: 4

Question 6: Parent Perception of Student Attitude Toward School by Change in Number of F's

Parent perception of student attitude toward school after receipt of the first six week grades, when compared with the change in number of F's at the semester, is not significant. However, when cells are grouped together, the trend is for grades to remain at the same number of F's or to improve, while attitude remains constant or improves. For students whose attitude improves and whose number of F grades remain constant or whose F's actually increase (15), other factors must intervene since this is certainly not an expected result.

Table 57

Question 6: Parent Perception of Student Attitude Toward School by Change in the Number of F's Over the Semester

Change in F's	Improved Attitude		Same Attitude		Worsened Attitude	
-3 to -1	5	11.9%	13	18.6%	4	21.1%
0	10	23.8%	18	25.7%	8	42.1%
+1 to +4	27	64.3%	39	55.7%	7	36.8%
Totals	42	100%	70	100%	19	100%

Question 7: Parent Perception of Student Feelings About Teachers by Change in Number of F's

No significant relationship is seen between parent perception of student attitudes about their teachers after receipt of the first six week grades and the change in the number of F's over the semester. Nearly all students (126) in this study are reported to like at least some of their teachers. All but five students who list most of their teachers have either reduced their F's or maintained the same number of F's by the semester.

Table 58

Question 7: Parent Perception of Student Feelings About Teachers by Change in Number of F's

Change in F's	Likes Most Teachers		Likes Some Teachers		Likes None	
-3 to -1	5	7.9%	16	25.4%	1	25%
0	19	30.2%	14	22.2%	2	50%
+1 to +4	39	61.9%	33	52.4%	1	25%
Totals	63	100%	63	100%	4	100%

Missing Cases: 1

When the number of F cells in this crosstabulation are reduced to three categories, the resulting table--above shows high percentages of positive changes in number of F's when students like some or most of their teachers. However, liking their teachers seems to be no guarantee for improvement.

Question 7: Parent Perception of Student Feelings About Teachers by Parent Type

No significant difference is noted in the crosstabulation of student attitude about teachers and parental status as GB or non-GB. Student attitude about teachers seems to be evenly split between liking some teachers and liking most teachers. Therefore, these two parent types are not distinguishable by this factor.

Table 59

Question 7: Parent Perception of Student Feelings About Teachers by Parent Type

Attitude About Teachers	Children of: GB Parents		Non-GB Parents	
Likes Most	13	52%	49	48%
Likes Some	12	48%	50	49%
Likes None	0	0%	3	2.9%
Totals	25	100%	102	100%

Missing Cases: 4

Question 8: Parent Perception of Student's Number of Friends by Change in Number of F's

No significant relationship is noted when the number of friends is compared with the change in the number of F's. All parents in this study report that their children have some or many friends. One-half or more of these student also have improved their grades by the end of the semester. Student friendships apparently have not adversely affected their improvement in grades.

Table 60

Question 8: Parent Perception of Student's Number of Friends by Change in Number of F's

Change in F's	Many Friends		Some Friends	
-3 to -1	9	13.2%	13	20.6%
0	19	27.9%	17	27%
+1 to +4	40	58.8%	33	52.4%
Totals	68	100%	63	100%

Question 8: Parent Perception of Student's Number of Friends by Parent Type

Parent perception of their students' number of friends is similar whether the parent is a GB or a non-GB parent. The percentages are split evenly into each of four categories.

Table 61

Question 8: Parent Perception of Student's Number of Friends by Parent Type

Friends	Grade Booster Parent		Non-Grade Booster Parent	
Many	13	52%	52	50.5%
Some	12	48%	51	49.5%
Totals	25	100%	103	100%

Missing Cases: 3

Question 6: Parent Perception of Student Attitude Toward School by Question 7: Parent Perception of Student Feelings About Teachers by Question 8: Parent Perception of Student's Number of Friends by Change in Number of F's

This is probably the most detailed set of crosstabulations requested, describing the combination of these four factors. Of the resulting 81 possible cells, 46 are empty and the distribution over the remainder of cells is sparse. In only one instance does a significant relationship (0.0439) show up with only seven cases involved. While it may be statistically significant, it is not significant when one considers the fact that there are a total of 130 cases responding. No student is described as having no friends, and very few (4) are described as liking none of their teachers. Several students in this study have decreased their number of F's or at least, have not increased their F's at the semester, like at least some of their teachers and maintain a consistent or improved attitude toward school. Of the students described as having improved attitude toward school, those with fewer F's at the semester (27, 64.3%) have some or many friends and like some or most teachers. Of the students with improved attitude, those with no change in number of F's, having some or many friends and liking some or most teachers amount to 10 (23.8%). Only five students (11.9%) described as having improved attitude turn up with increased number of F's while

also having some or many friends and liking some or most teachers. Certainly, friends do not seem to be a factor adversely affecting grades for the students in this study. Similarly, attitudes about teachers and school have not adversely affected most students as described by their parents in this study.

Table 62

Question 6: Parent Perception of Student Attitude Toward School by Question 7: Parent Perception of Student Feelings About Teachers by Question 8: Parent Perception of Student's Number of Friends by Change in Number of F's

Change in F's	Friends	Attitude Toward School: Improved M	Improved S	Same M	Same S	Same N	Worsened M	Worsened S	Worsened N*
-3 to -1	Many	1 3.3%	1 8.3%	0 0%	5 13.2%	0 0%	0 0%	1 7.7%	1 33.3%
	Some	1 3.3%	2 16.7%	2 6.5%	6 15.8%	0 0%	1 50%	1 7.7%	0 0%
0	Many	4 13.3%	1 8.3%	7 22.6%	3 7.9%	0 0%	1 50%	2 15.4%	1 33.3%
	Some	4 13.3%	1 8.3%	2 9.7%	5 13.2%	0 0%	0 0%	2 15.4%	1 33.3%
+1 to +4	Many	11 36.7%	4 33.3%	12 38.7%	8 21.1%	1 100%	0 0%	4 30.8%	0 0%
	Some	9 30%	3 25%	7 22.6%	11 28.9%	0 0%	0 0%	3 23.1%	0 0%
Totals		30 100%	12 100%	31 100%	38 100%	1 100%	2 100%	13 100%	3 100%

*M S N stands for: Likes most teachers, Likes some teachers, Likes none of the teachers.

Missing Cases: 1

Question 6: Student Attitude Toward School by Question 7: Student Feelings About Teachers by Question 8: Number of Friends by Parent Type

This series of crosstabulations produces no significant results for children of GB parents; however, for children of non-GB parents the results reach the acceptable level of significance. When non-GB parents report their children having many friends, the significance level is 0.0242 for the 52 cases in this crosstabulation. They cluster around improved or stable attitude toward school and liking most or some teachers. When non-GB parents report their children having some friends the significance level is 0.0066 for the 50 cases in this crosstabulation. The number of students (19) falling in the middle category here, that is, stable attitude, liking some teachers, is more than a chance occurrence.

It might be concluded that for children of GB parents, no noticeable association can be drawn between attitude toward school and teachers and number of friends. The results seem random as noted in Table 63. The significant relationship noted for children of non-GB parents may deserve investigation; however, the large number of cases (102) may be an influential factor.

No children in this study of either parent type are reported to have no friends and very few are reported to like none of their teachers. Low grades for children of

non-GB parents cannot be related to these students having no friends or liking none of their teachers.

Table 63

Question 6: Student Attitude Toward School by Question 7: Student Feelings About Teachers by Question 8: Number of Friends by Parent Type

Number of Friends	Children of Grade Booster Parents: Improved Attitude			Same Attitude			Worsened Attitude		
	Most	Some	None*	Most	Some	None	Most	Some	None
Many	2	3	0	4	3	0	0	1	0
Some	3	1	0	4	3	0	0	1	0
None	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Number of Friends	Children of Non-Grade Booster Parents: Improved Attitude			Same Attitude			Worsened Attitude		
	Most	Some	None*	Most	Some	None	Most	Some	None
Many	14	3	0	14	13	1	1	5	1
Some	11	5	0	8	19	0	1	5	1
None	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Missing Cases: 4

*Most, Some, None stands for: Likes most teachers, likes some teachers and likes none of the teachers.

Question 9: Parent Estimate of Student Hours Spent on Extracurricular Activities by Parent Type

No significant relationship is seen between students

with both GB and non-GB parents in this study are not involved in any activities which might or might not interfere with study time and grade improvement. Non-GB families have students with more hours of involvement; however, they form only a small percentage of the total.

Table 64

Question 9: Parent Estimate of Student Hours Spent on Extracurricular Activities by Parent Type

Activity Hours per Week	Children of: Grade Boosters		Non-Grade Boosters	
0	16	66.7%	70	70%
1-5	6	25%	13	13%
6-10	2	8.3%	6	6%
12-15	0	0%	6	6%
18-20	0	0%	4	4%
30	0	0%	1	1%
Totals	24	100%	100	100%

Missing Cases: 7

Question 9: Parent Estimate of Student Hours Spent on Extracurricular Activities by Change in Number of F's

Student activities seem to have no significant relationship to change in grades at the end of the semester. The range of activity time and change in F results in a crosstabulation with 112 cells, of which 82 are empty. A

composite of the results shows half of the students involved in no activities with some improvement in grades, while the other half with no activities is split between increase in F's or no change in the number of F's. Of the 38 students reported to participate in some level of extracurricular activity, 27 students (71.1%) show reduction in the number of F's, while 11 students (28.9%) either show no change in F's or show an increase in F's at the semester. It seems reasonable to conclude that extracurricular activities, or lack thereof, for students in this study does not adversely affect grade improvement.

Table 65

Question 9: Parent Estimate of Student Hours Spent on Extracurricular Activities by Change in Number of F's

Change in F's	Extracurricular Activity Hours 0		1-5		6-10		12-15		18-20		30	
-3 to -1	20	22.5%	0	0%	1	12.5%	1	12.5%	0	0%	0	5%
0	25	28.1%	6	31.6%	1	12.5%	0	0%	1	25%	1	100%
+1 to +4	44	49.4%	13	68.4%	6	75%	5	83.3%	3	75%	0	0%
Totals	89	100%	19	100%	8	100%	6	100%	4	100%	1	100%

Missing Cases: 4

Question 7: Parent Perception of Students Feelings About Teachers by Question 8: Parent Perception of Student's Number of Friends by Question 9: Parent Estimate of Student Hours Spent on Extracurricular Activities by Change in the Number of F's

The crosstabulations produced from responses to Question 7, Question 8, Question 9 and change in the number of F's do not show any significant results except in two instances. Seven students reported to have many friends and a change in F's of -1, show evidence of liking some teachers and of having no activity hours (0.0073). Sixteen students reported to have some friends and no change in the number of F's show evidence of liking some or most of their teachers and of having no activity hours (0.0124). Since only 23 students (18.5%) are represented in these two significant crosstabulations, they are hardly significant for the overall group of 124 students shown in Table 66. Of the 162 possible cells available in the crosstabulation of these four factors, 129 cells are empty and only 33 are used. The four factors shown in Table 66 provide easily recognizable trends: 1) Students across the change in F levels like some or most teachers and have some or many friends; 2) Most students having any activity hours show a decrease in F's over the semester.

Table 66

Question 7: Parent Perception of Student Feelings About Teachers by Question 8: Parent Perception of Student's Number of Friends by Question 9: Parent Estimate of Student Hours Spent on Extracurricular Activities by Change in the Number of F's

Change in F's	Friends	Extracurricular Activity Hours: 0			1-5			6-10			12-15			18-20			30		
		M	S	N	M	S	N	M	S	N	M	S	N	M	S	N	M	S	N*
-3 to -1	Many	0	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Some	4	8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
0	Many	6	5	1	4	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Some	5	7	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
+1 to +4	Many	11	7	1	5	5	0	2	2	0	1	2	0	3	0	0	0	0	0
	Some	10	15	0	2	1	0	2	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Missing Cases: 7

*M S N stands for: Likes most teachers, likes some teachers, likes none of the teachers respectively.

Question 10: Student Hours on a Job by Change in the Number of F's

This crosstabulation is provided to rule out any possible influence a job might have upon grade improvement. It is noted that since students in this study average 14 to 15 years of age, they are not usually employed, or if employed, they work very few hours per week. For 131 students, the results are significant at the 0.000 level. As expected, most students (111, 84.7%) in this study are not employed. Of those not employed, 21 students (18.9%) show an increase in their F's; 30 students (27%) have no

change in their number of F's; and 60 students (54.1%) show a decrease in their number of F's at the semester. Of the 20 students employed, 13 show a decrease in their number of F's; six show no change in F's; and only one student has more F's at the semester.

Table 67

Student Hours on a Job by Change in the Number of F's

Change in F's	Student Hours on a Job				
	0	1	6-10	11-15	16-20
-3 to -1	21	0	1	0	0
0	30	1	2	1	2
+1 to +4	60	0	7	4	2

Question 10: Student Hours on a Job by Parent Type

No significant difference is seen between children of GB parents and non-GB parent in terms of student part-time employment. A similar majority of both groups are not employed at all. The hours of the few children of non-GB parents who do work range anywhere from one to 20 hours per week.

Table 68

Question 10: Student Hours on a Job by Parent Type

Student Hours on a Job	Children of: GB Parents		Non-GB Parents	
0	22	88%	87	84.5%
1	0	0%	1	1%
6-10	2	8%	8	7.8%
11-15	0	0%	5	4.9%
16-20	1	4%	2	1.9%

Missing Cases: 3

Question 9: Parent Estimate of Student Hours Spent on Extracurricular Activities by Question 10 Student Hours on a Job by Change in the Number of F's

Examination of Question 9, Question 10 and change in the number of F's in a crosstabulation addresses the issue of possible activity/job interference with grade improvement. An acceptable level of significance (0.0101) is reached in the crosstabulation of activities and job when the change in number of F's is +1. For the 59 students with +1 grade improvement, they have a better than average chance of being students with no job and no activities. Thirty-one of these 59 students (52.5%) have no job and no activities. According to Table 69, only three students have either jobs or activities and an increase in F's, while 19 students with

no job and no activities have an increase in F's at the semester. For students with no change in number of F's, only 14 have jobs and/or activities, while 20 with no job nor activities have no change in F's at the semester. It seems appropriate to conclude that grades in this study are not adversely affected by jobs or activities.

Table 69

Question 9: Parent Estimate of Student Hours Spent on Extracurricular Activities by Question 10: Student Hours on a Job by Change in the Number of F's

Change in F's	Job	Extracurricular Activities None		Some	
-3 to -1	Yes	1	1.1%	0	0%
	No	19	21.6%	2	5.1%
0	Yes	5	5.7%	1	2.6%
	No	20	22.7%	8	20.5%
+1 to +4	Yes	8	9.1%	4	10.3%
	No	35	39.8%	24	61.5%

Missing Cases: 4

Question 11: Number of School Transfers by Parent Type

School transfer patterns could be a distinguishing characteristic for families in this study. In this crosstabulation, however, the acceptable level of significance is not reached. GB and non-GB families seem indistinguishable when examining the number of school transfers.

Table 70

Question 11: Number of School Transfers by Parent Type

Transfers	Children of: GB Parents		Non-GB Parents	
0	11	44%	42	40.8%
1	9	36%	28	27.2%
2	0	0%	12	11.7%
3	4	16%	12	11.7%
4-5	1	4%	9	8.7%

Missing Cases: 3

Question 11: Number of School Transfers by Change in the Number of F's

No significant relationship is noted in the comparison of school transfers and change in F's. Seventy-six students in this study have transferred schools at least once. Of these students 41 (53.9%) show an improvement in their grades at the end of the semester, while 35 (46.1%) either have no change in their number of F's or have increased their F's. While no dramatic differences are observed here, in counseling sessions students often point to school transfer as a reason for lack of success. In addition, Question 11 does not ask when a student transferred. Was it in first grade, seventh grade, freshman year? A recent transfer might show a greater lack of success while

adjusting to the new surroundings.

Table 71

Question 11: Number of School Transfers by Change in the Number of F's

Change in F's	Number of School Transfers 0		1		2		3		4-5	
-3 to -1	6	10.9%	8	21.6%	0	0%	5	31.3%	3	30%
0	17	30.9%	7	18.9%	5	38.5%	4	25%	5	30%
+1 to +4	32	58.2%	22	59.5%	8	61.5%	7	43.8%	4	40%

Question 11: Number of School Transfers by Question 14 Number of Parents in the Home by Change in Number of F's

A significant relationship shows up only for school transfer status and number of parents in the home at the -1 change in F's (0.0426). However, since only 17 cases are involved, the value of this relationship is limited. For two parent families students who have not moved tend to have fewer semester F's than those who have moved. For two parent families where students have moved during the course of their education, a higher percentage of students have increased their number of F's at the semester than those who have not moved. In one parent families where students have moved, six show an improvement in their grades at the semester, while five either show no change in F's or have actually increased their F's. A similar division occurs for

students in one parent families who have not moved; five students have improved their grades, while seven either remain the same or have increased their F's. No really clear distinctions can be drawn from the data in this crosstabulation.

Table 72

Question 11: Number of School Transfers by Question 14: Number of Parents in the Home by Change in the Number of F's

	Two Parents in the Home School Transfers			
Change in F's	0		1-5	
-3 to -1	2	4.7%	14	21.5%
0	14	32.6%	16	24.6%
+1 to +4	27	62.8%	35	53.8%
	One Parent in the Home School Transfers			
Change in F's	0		1-5	
-3 to -1	4	33.3%	2	18.2%
0	3	25%	3	27.3%
+1 to +4	5	41.7%	6	54.5%

Question 12A: Parent Perception of Grade School Success by Parent Type

GB parents seem more likely to report that their children were not very successful in grade school according to this statistically significant crosstabulation (0.0161).

Non-GB parents tend to report that their children in this study were either moderately successful or very successful in grade school. Non-GB parents may, in part, have chosen not to attend Grade Booster Night because their children had been successful and would probably bring up their grades without participation in this program. Those who attended Grade Booster Night may have done so as part of their continual search for ways to help their children to be more academically successful.

Table 73

Question 12A: Parent Perception of Grade School Success by Parent Type

Grade School	Children of: GB Parents		Non-GB Parents	
Very Successful	6	24%	28	27.5%
Moderately Successful	11	44%	64	62.7%
Not Very Successful	8	32%	10	9.8%

Missing Cases: 4

Question 12B: Parent Perception of Junior High School Academic Success by Parent Type

Once again GB parents are more likely than chance to report their children to be less successful in junior high school than non-GB parents do (0.0076). For both groups it seems that their level of success has decreased from grade

school. Where six students from GB families (24%) and 28 students from non-GB families (27.5%) are reported as very successful in grade school, no children of GB parents (0%) and only 17 children of non-GB parents (16.8%) are reported as very successful in junior high. Not so much difference exists between the moderately successful groups. However, an increase can be seen in both groups for the not very successful.

Table 74

Question 12B: Parent Perception of Junior High Success by Parent Type

Junior High School	Children of: GB Parents		Non-GB Parents	
Very Successful	0	0%	17	16.8%
Moderately Successful	14	56%	65	64.4%
Not Very Successful	11	44%	19	18.8%
Missing Cases: 5				

Question 12C: Parent Perception of High School Academic Success by Parent Type

The number of students in both groups reported very successful has decreased again from junior high into high school. However, an acceptable level of significance is not reached in this crosstabulation. The decline in success is noticeable in the children of non-GB parents, but more

dramatic in children of GB parents. The GB parent perception of their children's lack of success could certainly be a strong and logical impetus for their attendance at Grade Booster Night.

Table 75

Question 12C: Parent Perception of High School Success by Parent Type

High School	Children of: GB Parents		Non-GB Parents	
Very Successful	0	0%	4	4%
Moderately Successful	7	29.2%	44	44.4%
Not Very Successful	17	70.8%	51	51.5%

Missing Cases: 8

Table 76

Parent Perception of Success in Grade, Junior High and High School by Parent Type (Summary of Tables 73, 74 and 75

School Success	Children of: GB Parents Grade		Jr. High		High		Non-GB Parents Grade		Jr. High		High	
Very Successful	6	24%	0	0%	0	0%	28	27.5%	17	16.8%	4	4%
Moderately Successful	11	44%	14	56%	7	29.2%	64	62.7%	65	64.4%	44	44.4%
Not Very Successful	8	32%	11	44%	17	70.8%	10	9.8%	19	18.8%	51	51.5%

Question 12A: Parent Perception of Grade School Success by Question 12B: Junior High Success by Question 12C: High School Success

The results of this crosstabulation are significant for the 50 moderately successful cases at all three levels of education (0.0124) and for the 70 moderately successful cases in grade and junior high who have now in high school become not very successful (0.0000). Table 77 shows the trends toward progressive underachievement as perceived by the parents in this study.

Table 77

Parent Perception of Success in Grade School by Junior High and High School

Grade School	Junior High	High School Very Successful	High School Moderately Successful	High School Not Very Successful
Very Successful	Very Successful	2	5	8
	Moderately Successful	0	10	8
	Not Very Successful	0	1	1
Moderately Successful	Very Successful	0	3	1
	Moderately Successful	1	25	29
	Not Very Successful	0	3	9

Table 77 (continued)

Grade School	Junior High	High School Very Successful	High School Moderately Successful	High School Not Very Successful
	Very Successful	1	0	0
Not Very Successful	Moderately Successful	0	1	1
	Not Very Successful	0	2	13

Missing Cases: 7

Question 12A: Parent Perception of Grade School Success by Question 12B: Junior High Success by Question 12C: High School Success by Parent Type

The crosstabulations on perception of grade, junior high and high school academic success by parent type show some significant results. For the 17 students perceived as not very successful in high school, whose parents are GB parents, the significance level of 0.0011 is reached. For the 43 students perceived as moderately successful in high school, whose parents are non-GB parents, the significance level of 0.0271 is reached. For the 50 students perceived as not very successful in high school, whose parents are non-GB parents, the significance level of 0.000 is reached.

A question arises from these crosstabulations of previous school success and parent status: Are GB parents

inherently more likely to view their children as less successful than non-GB parents would? The data in this study cannot be used to address this question.

Table 78

Parent Perception of Success in Grade School by Junior High by High School by Parent Type

Children of Grade Booster Parents

Grade School	Junior High	Very Successful	High School Moderately Successful	Not Very Successful
Very Successful	Very Successful	0	0	0
	Moderately Successful	0	2	3
	Not Very Successful	0	1	0
Moderately Successful	Very Successful	0	0	0
	Moderately Successful	0	2	6
	Not Very Successful	0	1	1
Not Very Successful	Very Successful	0	0	0
	Moderately Successful	0	0	0
	Not Very Successful	0	1	7

Missing Cases: 1

Table 78 (continued)

Children of Non-Grade Booster Parents				
Grade School	Junior High	Very Successful	High School Moderately Successful	Not Very Successful
	Very Successful	2	5	6
Very Successful	Moderately Successful	0	8	5
	Not Very Successful	0	0	1
	Very Successful	0	3	1
Moderately Successful	Moderately Successful	1	23	22
	Not Very Successful	0	2	8
	Very Successful	0	0	0
Not Very Successful	Moderately Successful	0	1	1
	Not Very Successful	1	1	6

Missing Cases: 9

Question 13A: Student Rank in Family by Change in the Number of F's

Although the crosstabulation of student rank and ability to improve F grades over the semester is not significant, a noticeable number of oldest and youngest

children improved their F grades by the end of the semester.

Table 79

Question 13A: Student Rank in Family by Change in Number of F's

Change in F's	Rank in Family						
	Oldest	Second	Third	Youngest	Only	Adopted Foster	Other
-3 to -1	4	4	0	8	4	1	1
0	5	5	3	13	4	0	6
+1 to +4	25	7	6	25	6	1	2
Totals	34	16	9	46	14	2	9

Missing Cases: 1

Question 13B: Number of Children in the Family by Change in Number of F's

No significant relationship is seen in the crosstabulation of number of children in the family and change in the number of F's over the semester. Out of 124 students, 43 of them (34.7%) are in two children families.

Table 80

Questions 13B: Number of Children in the Family by Change in Number of F's

Change in F's	Number of Children in Family					
	Only	2	3	4	5	6
-3 to -1	4	8	3	3	3	0
0	4	8	9	8	5	0
+1 to +4	6	27	15	13	5	3
Totals	14	43	27	24	13	3

Question 13A: Student Rank in Family by Parent Type

This crosstabulation of student rank in family by parent type shows a significant relationship (0.0446). For the children of GB parents, 20% are the oldest in the family; 24% are the youngest in the family; and another 24% are only children. For children of non-GB parents, 28.4% are oldest children, and 37.3% are youngest children. Oldest and youngest children appear in the majority for both groups. It is noted, however, that the 25 children of GB parents are dispersed over the seven categories. Whether another group of GB children would be dispersed similarly is doubtful. One might theorize that the students with no improvement or with an increase in F's might be more than likely to be the youngest in their families and less likely to be the oldest in the families. While this is true by

only an 8.9% margin for the non-GB families, the numbers in the GB group are too close and too small to substantiate this theory.

Table 81

Question 13A: Student Rank in Family by Parent Type

Rank	Children of: GB Parents		Non-GB Parents	
Oldest	5	20%	29	28.4%
Second	2	8%	14	13.7%
Third	1	4%	8	7.8%
Youngest	6	24%	38	37.3%
Only	6	24%	7	6.9%
Adopt/Foster	1	4%	1	1%
Other	4	16%	5	4.9%

Missing Cases: 4

Question 13B: Number of Children in Family by Parent Type

No significant relationship is seen in the crosstabulation of number of children and parent type. The number of children in GB families cover the range of 1 to 6, but 54.2% of them are from one child or two children families. Non-GB families more frequently have two, three or four children (80.4%) but also cover the range well.

Table 82

Question 13B: Number of Children in Family by Parent Type

Number of Children	Children of: GB Parents		Non-GB Parents	
1	6	25%	7	7.2%
2	7	29.2%	35	36.1%
3	4	16.7%	23	23.7%
4	3	12.5%	20	20.6%
5	3	12.5%	10	10.3%
6	1	4.2%	2	2.1%

Missing Cases: 10

Question 14: Number of Parents in the Home by Change in the Number of F's

According to the crosstabulation of number of parents in the home and change in the number of F's, it is more likely than chance that the number of parents be two and that the change in F's be a +1 (54 students, 41.2% of the 131 cases). The significance level reached for this group is 0.0396. For both groups, improved F grades occur nearly half or more than half of the time. However, the percentage of students with more F's is higher for the single parents.

Table 83

Question 14: Number of Parents in the Home by Change in Number of F's

Change in F's	Single Parent Home		Two Parent Home	
-3 to -1	6	26.1%	16	14.8%
0	6	26.1%	30	27.8%
+1 to +4	11	47.8%	62	57.4%
Totals	23	100%	108	100%

Question 14: Number of Parents in the Home by Parent Type

The results of the crosstabulation of the number of parents in the home by parent type is not significant. The majority of students from both parent types responding in this study are in two parent homes. This question does not inquire if the parents are natural parents, step-parents or guardians. It is recalled, however, that Question 1 asks who is responding to the survey. Of the 130 respondents to this item, only three are step-mothers and one is a legal guardian. Whether the non-responding parent is a natural parent or not is unknown.

Table 84

Question 14: Number of Parents in the Home by Parent Type

Home Situation	GB Parents		Non-GB Parents	
Single Parent	1	4%	22	21.4%
Two Parents	24	96%	81	78.6%
Totals	25	100%	103	100%

Missing Cases: 3

Question 15: Number of Parent Contacts with Teachers by Change in Number of F's

The relationship between improvement in grades and parent contacts with teachers is not significant, whether contacts are enumerated (0-5) or recoded none and some. However, the percentage of students with improved F grades and some parent contact with teachers is high (60.3%), while the percentage of students with increased F's and some parent contact with teachers is very low (10.3%). This is certainly not an unexpected outcome. The 29.5% for whom no change in F's has occurred and for whom parents have contacted teachers might require further investigation to explain.

Table 85

Question 15: Number of Parent Contacts with Teachers by Change in Number of F's

Change in F's	Contacts with Teachers None (0)		Some (1-5 or more)	
-3 to -1	14	27.5%	8	10.3%
0	13	25.5%	23	29.5%
+1 to +4	24	47.1%	47	60.3%
Totals	51	100%	78	100%

Missing Cases: 2

Question 15: Number of Parent Contacts with Teachers by Parent Type

The difference between GB parents and non-GB parents is notable in the significant relationship (0.0045) between contacts with teachers and parent type. Only two of 24 GB parents (8.3%) have failed to contact the teachers of the classes their children are failing, while 47 of the 102 non-GB parents (46.1%) have not. It is understood that the GB parents could be more likely to contact teachers because the GB program has encouraged it, or just because it is part of their normal parenting style. The number of contacts with teachers varies for both groups, with most people reporting one or two contacts during the 12 weeks following receipt of the first six week grades.

Table 86

Question 15: Number of Parent Contacts with Teachers by Parent Type

Teacher Contacts	GB Parents		Non-GB Parents	
0	2	8.3%	47	46.1%
1	8	33.3%	32	31.4%
2	9	37.5%	13	12.7%
3	2	8.3%	6	5.9%
4	2	8.3%	2	2%
5 or more	1	4.2%	2	2%
Totals	24	100%	102	100%

Missing Cases: 5

Question 15: Number of Parent Contacts with Teachers by Parent Type by Change in the Number of F's

For the crosstabulations of GB and non-GB parent contact with teachers, an acceptable level of significance is reached only for the 58 cases where the change in the number of F's is +1 (0.0356). Otherwise, no clearly significant relationship is shown for the other values of change in the number of F's. This crosstabulation results in several small cells, even with responses recoded (0 = no contact with teachers; 1 = some contact with teachers). In the summary table below, Table 87, it is noted that almost none of the GB parents report no contact with teachers

(8.3%), while several non-GB parents report no contact (46.1%). It is also noted that non-GB parents reporting no contact with teachers are more likely to have students whose grades show no change or show a decline (53.2%). For non-GB families, the distribution of change in F's is skewed toward improved grades; however, the percentage of students with parents having teacher contact is greater than the percentage without contact.

Table 87

Question 15: Number of Parent Contacts with Teachers by Parent Type by Change in the Number of F's

	GB Parents				Non-GB Parents			
Change in F's	No Teacher Contact		Some Teacher Contact		No Teacher Contact		Some Teacher Contact	
-3 to -1	0		2	9.1%	14	29.8%	6	10.9%
0	0		5	22.7%	11	23.4%	17	30.9%
+1 to +4	2	100%	15	68.2%	22	46.8%	32	58.2%
Totals	2	100%	22	100%	47	100%	55	100%

Missing Cases: 5

Question 16: Number of Parent Contacts with Counselors by Parent Type

The relationship between contacts with counselors and parent type is significant for the 125 cases (0.0458). Nearly half of the non-GB parents (48.5%) report no contact

with the counselor after receipt of a first six week F. Only 16.7% of GB parents report no contact with the counselor during the following 12 weeks of the semester.

For parents having contact with the counselor, the number of contacts varies. The highest percentage of non-GB parents (19.8%) report having one contact, followed by 12.9% reporting two contacts. The GB parents appear to be more evenly distributed over the range of one to five or more contacts. This is, perhaps, related to the small number of GB parents.

Table 88

Question 16: Number of Parent Contacts with Counselors by Parent Type

Counselor Contacts	GB Parents		Non-GB Parents	
0	4	16.7%	49	48.5%
1	4	16.7%	20	19.8%
2	6	25%	13	12.9%
3	4	16.7%	6	5.9%
4	4	16.7%	9	8.9%
5 or more	2	8.3%	4	4%
Totals	24	100%	101	100%

Missing Cases: 6

Question 16: Number of Parent Contacts with Counselors by Change in F's

The relationship between parent contacts with the counselor and a change in the number of F's over the semester is not significant. This particular crosstabulation is performed in two different ways: number of contacts enumerated, zero to five or more, and contacts recoded, none and some. Either way, no clear relationship is observed. As in the crosstabulation involving teacher contacts, the percentage of improved grades and some parent contact with the counselor (50.7%) is higher than the percentage with poorer grades (15.1%). However, the percentage with no change in F's (34.2%) and some parent contact with the counselor is unexpectedly high. Similar frequencies appear for no parent contact with the counselor where grades have declined or improved. Interestingly enough, the place where a difference is notable is a lower frequency of no change in the number of F's for parents with no counselor contact. Is that a chance occurrence or, perhaps, an indication that the counselor contacts prevented 25 students from receiving even poorer grades?

Table 89

Question 16: Number of Parent Contacts with Counselors by Change in F's

Change in F's	No Counselor Contact		Some Counselor Contact	
-3 to -1	10	18.2%	11	15.1%
0	11	20%	25	34.2%
+1 to +4	34	61.8%	37	50.7%
Totals	55	100%	73	100%

Missing Cases: 3

Question 16: Number of Parent Contacts with Counselors by Parent Type by Change in the Number of F's

The crosstabulation of counselor contacts, parent type and change in the number of F's provides no significant relationship, except where the change in F's is +1. As in other crosstabulations in this study, the +1 change in F's shows an acceptable level of significance for 58 cases (0.0422) here. It is more likely than chance at the +1 change in number of F's that GB parents have some counselor contact and that non-GB parents have no counselor contact.

Table 90

Question 16: Number of Parent Contacts with Counselors by Parent Type by Change in the Number of F's

Change in F's	GB Parents: No Counselor Contact		GB Parents: Some Counselor Contact		Non-GB Parents: No Counselor Contact		Non-GB Parents: Some Counselor Contact	
-3 to -1	0		2	10%	10	20.4%	9	17.3%
0	0		5	25%	9	18.4%	19	36.5%
+1 to +4	4	100%	13	65%	30	61.2%	24	46.2%
Totals	4	100%	20	100%	49	100%	52	100%

Missing Cases: 6

Question 15: Number of Parent Contacts with Teachers by Question 16: Number of Parent Contacts with Counselors by Change in Number of F's

In this crosstabulation of teacher contact, counselor contact and change in number of F's, the results are limited due to the number of cells and the number of cases per cell. Even though some recoding has simplified the number of possible cells, the only area where an acceptable level of significance is reached is for the 58 cases at the +1 change in number of F's (0.0112). In this situation 72.4% of these 58 parents have had contact with either the counselor, the teacher or both. From the whole group of 128 cases, 74.2% responded similarly. For students whose grades improved,

40.6% of their parents have contacted the teacher, counselor or both, while only 14.8% have not contacted either.

Overall, this data does not provide strong evidence to link grade improvement to parent contact with counselor/teacher. Perhaps, other variables need to be addressed in future studies that may account for the apparent link between some grade stagnation or grade decline and parent contact. Where grades have declined, 5.5% of parents have not contacted teacher or counselor, while 10.9% of these parents have contacted the teacher, counselor or both; where F grades have remained constant, 5.5% of parents have not contacted teacher or counselor, whereas 22.7% of these parents have contacted thee teacher, counselor or both.

Table 91

Question 15: Number of Parent Contacts with Teachers by Question 16: Number of Parent Contacts with Counselors by Change in the Number of F's

Change in F's	No Teacher Contact / No Counselor Contact		No Teacher Contact / Some Counselor Contact		Some Teacher Contact / No Counselor Contact		Some Teacher Contact / Some Counselor Contact	
-3 to -1	7	21.2%	6	35.3%	3	13.6%	5	8.9%
0	7	21.2%	6	35.3%	4	18.2%	19	33.9%
+1 to +4	19	57.6%	5	29.4%	15	68.2%	32	57.1%
Totals	33	100%	17	100%	22	100%	56	100%

Missing Cases: 3

Question 17: Parent Perception of Level of Staff Concern by Parent Type

While the results of this crosstabulation are not significant, the largest percentages of both GB and non-GB parents feel the staff shows a moderate level of concern about student progress. However, the percentage of difference between GB and non-GB parents is approximately the difference between perceived moderate and low levels of concern. Ten and six tenths percent more GB parents than non-GB parents feel that the staff concern is moderate, while 11% more non-GB parents than GB parents feel the staff concern is low. While the majority of GB and non-GB parents

indicate either high or moderate staff concern, the GB parents have had an extra opportunity to observe this staff concern by their attendance at the GB Night.

This crosstabulation raises the question of how to improve parent perception of staff concern. Is it possible that their perception is a function of their children's F grades immaterial to staff actions? (Recent district surveys of the general community show positive attitudes about the staff.)

Table 92

Question 17: Parent Perception of Level of Staff Concern by Parent Type

Perceived Staff Concern	GB Parents		Non-GB Parents	
High	5	21.7%	21	21.4%
Moderate	13	56.5%	45	45.9%
Low	5	21.7%	32	32.7%
Totals	23	100%	98	100%

Missing Cases: 10

Question 17: Parent Perception of Level of Staff Concern by Change in Number of F's

No significant relationship is evident between the perceived level of staff concern and change in number of F's. Parent perception of this question generally gravitates toward the middle response, that is, moderate

level of staff concern. Change in grades tends to be in a positive direction, regardless how their parents perceive the level of staff concern. For students with a positive change in the number of F's (+1 to +4), 52.2% of their parents perceive a moderate level of staff concern while the other 41.8% of their parents are divided between those perceiving a high level of staff concern (23.2%) and those perceiving a low level of staff concern (24.6%). While the number of cases with no change in F's and a negative change in F's is smaller, the percentage of parents perceiving a high level of staff concern is lower (23.5% and 14.3% respectively), and conversely, the percentage of parents perceiving a low level of staff concern is higher (41.2% and 33.3% respectively) than the percentages for parents of students with positive changes in their number of F's.

Further research is needed here to ascertain more meaningful information. It is speculated that parents in this study are more likely to be the more positive and involved parents. Why then are there not overwhelmingly positive responses? How do these parents arrive at their responses? Is it because a phone call was not returned? Is it because one teacher refused to help a student before or after school? How do the perceptions of parents in this study compare with the general population of parents in our high school?

Table 93

Question 17: Parent Perception of Level of Staff Concern by Change in Number of F's

Change in F's	Perceived Level of School Staff Concern: High		Moderate		Low	
-3 to -1	3	11.1%	11	18.6%	7	18.4%
0	8	29.6%	12	20.3%	14	36.8%
+1 to +4	16	59.3%	36	61%	17	44.7%
Totals	27	100%	59	100%	38	100%

Missing Cases: 7

Question 17: Parent Perception of Level of Staff Concern by Parent Type by Change in Number of F's

This crosstabulation with three components results in some small cells, as well as situations where the number of cells is too small to compute any significance level. Hence, the relationship between perceived level of staff concern, change in F's and parent type is not significant for the 121 cases. Table 94 shows the scatteredness of the cases. The most frequent combination for GB and non-GB families is the perception of a moderate level of concern on the part of school staff, with the students in these families improving their grades over the semester.

Table 94

Question 17: Parent Perception of Level of Staff Concern by Parent Type by Change in Number of F's

Change in F's	GB Parents High		GB Parents Moderate		GB Parents Low		Non-GB Parents High		Non-GB Parents Moderate		Non-GB Parents Low	
-3 to -1	0	0%	1	7.7%	1	20%	3	14.3%	10	22.2%	6	18.8%
0	3	60%	1	7.7%	1	20%	4	19.1%	10	22.2%	12	37.5%
+1 to +4	2	40%	11	84.6%	3	60%	14	66.7%	25	55.6%	14	43.8%
Totals	5	100%	13	100%	5	100%	21	100%	45	100%	32	100%

Missing Cases: 10

Question 15: Number of Parent Contacts with Teachers by Question 16: Number of Parent Contacts with Counselors by Question 17: Parent Perception of Level of Staff Concern

The crosstabulation involving teacher contact, counselor contact and parent perceived level of staff concern is significant at the perceived high level of staff concern (0.0491 for 27 cases) and at the perceived moderate level of staff concern (0.0183 for 57 cases). It is more likely than chance that parents' perception of the staff's concern for their children's achievement is enhanced by their contacts with teachers and counselors. Parent contact with the school and parent perception of the staff provides important support for educational achievement. While they may not be major factors, when they produce negative feelings on the part of parents, this negativism is communicated, however, subtly to the student. For the

parents and students in this study, this factor can be ruled out as an intervening variable.

Table 95

Question 15: Number of Parent Contacts with Teachers by Question 16: Number of Parent Contacts with Counselors by Question 17: Parent Perception of Level of Staff Concern

Perceived Level of Staff Concern	Parent Contact with School: No Teacher No Counselor Contact		No Teacher Some Counselor Contact		Some Teacher No Counselor Contact		Some Teacher Some Counselor Contact	
High	7	23.3%	4	23.5%	3	13.6%	13	24.5%
Moderate	13	43.3%	6	35.3%	12	54.5%	26	49.1%
Low	10	33.3%	7	41.2%	7	31.8%	14	26.4%
Totals	30	100%	17	100%	22	100%	53	100%

Missing Cases: 9

Question 17: Parent Perception of Level of Staff Concern by Total Parent Involvement

It is recalled that in this study total parent involvement is represented by a number from 0 to 8 derived from adding positive responses to Question 15, Question 16, Question 19A-E and Question 20, the questions regarding contact with teacher/counselor, attendance at parent activities and requests for GB materials. Total parent involvement is then crosstabulated with perceived staff concern here in order to assess any possible correlation

between parent attitudes and their involvement in the high school. The 0.05 significance level is not reached for this crosstabulation, perhaps, due in part, to the small cells created. The pattern seen, when responses are grouped, shows that the parents in this study frequently have scores between one and four on total parent involvement and commonly perceive staff concern to be at a moderate level.

Table 96

Question 17: Parent Perception of Level of Staff Concern by Total Parent Involvement

Perceived Level of Staff Concern	Total Parent Involvement 0		1-2		3-4		5-6		7-8
High	1	9.1%	10	27.8%	12	20%	3	21.4%	0
Moderate	3	27.3%	16	44.4%	33	55%	5	35.7%	0
Low	7	63.6%	10	27.8%	15	25%	6	42.9%	0
Totals	11	100%	36	100%	60	100%	14	100%	0

Missing Cases: 10

Question 17: Parent Perception of Level of Staff Concern by Total Parent Involvement by Parent Type

When total parent involvement is divided according to parent type and then compared with perceived level of staff concern, via crosstabulation, no significant relationship is noted. Even when responses are grouped together, parent attitudes vary. There is some tendency to gravitate toward

the middle, moderate level of staff concern with some level (1-4) of total parent involvement. The number of parents indicating some total parent involvement, who perceive a low level of staff concern is disconcerting and perhaps, deserving of further investigation.

Table 97

Question 17: Parent Perception of Level of Staff Concern by Total Parent Involvement by Parent Type

Perceived Level of Staff Concern	GB Parents 0	1-2	3-4	5-6	Non-GB Parents 0	1-2	3-4	5-6
High	0	0	2	3	1	10	10	0
Moderate	0	0	10	3	3	15	23	2
Low	0	0	3	2	7	9	12	4
Totals	0	0	15	8	11	34	45	6

Missing Cases: 12

Question 17: Parent Perception of Level of Staff Concern by Total Parent Involvement by Change in Number of F's

The relationship between perceived staff concern, total parent involvement and change in number of F's is not significant. Placing these three factors in a crosstabulation results in some very small and empty cells. When grade change and total parent involvement scores are grouped, the most frequently seen cases (25) fall into the category of perceived moderate level of staff concern with

one to four total parent involvement scores and positive changes in the number of F's at the semester. Since 25 cases is clearly not a majority of the 121 respondents, conclusions based on these cases would be presumptuous. Therefore, while there may indeed by a connection between parent attitudes about the staff, their level of participation and student achievement, it is not clear from this crosstabulation.

Table 98

Question 17: Parent Perception of Level of Staff Concern by Total Parent Involvement by Change in Number of F's

	Perceived High Staff Concern				Perceived Moderate Staff Concern				Perceived Low Staff Concern			
Change in F's	0	1-2	3-4	5-6	0	1-2	3-4	5-6	0	1-2	3-4	5-6
-3 to -1	0	3	0	0	1	5	3	1	2	3	2	0
0	0	2	4	1	0	6	5	1	1	5	5	3
+1 to +4	1	5	8	2	2	5	25	3	4	2	8	3
Totals	1	10	12	3	3	16	33	5	7	10	15	6

Missing Cases: 10

Question 18: Parent Feelings at the End of the First Six Weeks and at the End of the Semester

The scale assessing parent feelings apparently is difficult for parents to understand and fill out. Some parents evidently do not understand the directions, or they are unable to distinguish how they feel about their children's F grades after six weeks and at the end of the semester. The resulting responses must be examined with

this in mind. Any resulting interpretations of the data are limited in scope and value.

Question 18 A-K: Parent Feelings at the end of the First Six Weeks by First Six Week F's

It is recalled that in this question 11 negative feelings are paired with 11 positive feelings on a 1-5 scale. When the first six week feelings are crosstabulated with the number of first six week F;s, some results are significant:

1. On the alone-not-alone scale with 105 respondents and a significance level of 0.0088, the parents of 63 students with one F at the first six week grading period hold either neutral feelings (24 parents) or positive (not alone) feelings (34 parents).
2. On the guilty-clear conscience scale with 107 respondents and a significance level of 0.0001, the parents of 63 students with one F at the first six week grading period also hold either neutral feelings (15 parents) or positive (clear conscience) feelings (42 parents).
3. On the rejected-appreciated scale with 104 respondents and a significance level of 0.0247, 61 parents report neutral feelings across the range of F's with the majority of their children having one or two F's at the first six weeks (47

students).

While these results may be limited in generalizability, perhaps, it is important for parents to maintain a positive attitude or at least not to be taken in by feelings of rejection, guilt and aloneness.

Question 18 A-K: Parent Feelings at the End of the First Six Weeks by Question 18 .1A-K Parent Feelings at the End of the First Semester

When parent attitudes at the first six weeks are compared with their attitudes at the end of the semester, all the crosstabulations provide significant results within the acceptable 0.05 range for 81 to 94 cases. Most notable of these results are the numerous cases where parent feelings have not changed at all, especially if they responded 1, 3, or 5 (most negative feeling, neutral feeling, and most positive feeling respectively).

Question 18.1A-K: Parent Feelings at the End of the First Semester by Number of Semester F's

Several of the crosstabulations of parent feelings at the end of first semester and the number of semester F's are significant for 88 to 94 cases:

1. On the scale of frustration/confidence 25 parents of students with one to six semester F's feel high frustration. Thirty-six parents whose children have no F's at the semester feel confidence (23 parents), while a few feel neutral (8 parents) or

frustrated (5 parents). Twenty-six parents whose children have one F at the semester are spread out over the scale of frustration/confidence: 11 feel frustrated, nine feel neutral and six feel confident. The significance level of this crosstabulation is 0.0002 for 94 cases.

2. On the scale of angry/calm feelings only 16 parents whose children have one to six F's at the semester report very angry feelings. Thirty-five parents whose children have no F's at the semester vary in their feelings from seven angry parents to four neutral parents to 24 calm parents. Of the 24 parents whose children have one F, 10 of them show angry feelings, while eight feel neutral and six feel calm. The significance level of this crosstabulation is 0.0004 for 91 cases.
3. On the scale of inadequate/competent feelings, more often than not, parents report neutral or competent feelings across all levels of F (0-6). For the 36 parents whose children have no semester F's, 10 report neutral feelings, three report inadequate feelings and 23 report competent feelings. For the 25 parents whose children have one semester F, 12 report neutral feelings, six report inadequate feelings and seven report competent feelings. The significance level of

this crosstabulation is 0.0194 for 92 cases.

4. On the scale of alone/not alone feelings, parents generally report neutral or not alone feelings across all levels of F (0-6). Only 11 parents whose children have between one and six semester F's report feelings of aloneness. Of the 35 parents whose children have no semester F's, 26 report not alone feelings, eight report neutral feelings, and only one reports aloneness. Of the 23 parents whose children have one semester F, 14 report not alone feelings, six report neutral feelings and only three report aloneness. The significance level for the 88 cases in this crosstabulation is 0.0372.

5. On the worried/relieved scale the relationship between few/no semester F's and relieved/neutral feelings is easily recognizable. Thirty-seven parents whose children have one to six F's report worried feelings. Of the 34 parents whose children have no semester F's, six report worried feelings, five report neutral feelings, and 23 report relieved feelings. Of the 25 parents whose children have one semester F, 11 report worried feelings, 10 report neutral feelings, and four report relieved feelings. The significance level for the 91 cases in the crosstabulation is 0.0000

6. On the guilty/clear conscience scale, the relationship between parent feelings and the number of semester F's is different than most described above. Only five parents report guilty feelings across the range of semester F's. Fifteen parents report neutral feelings and 35 report clear conscience feelings across the range of semester F's. Of the 34 parents whose children have no semester F's, only one reports guilty feelings, while five report neutral feelings and 28 report clear conscience feelings. The significance level for the 89 cases in the crosstabulation is 0.0000.
7. On the disappointed/satisfied scale, the level of significance is 0.0000 for 92 cases. The relationship here between disappointed/satisfied feelings and the number of semester F's is generally inverse, that is, where students have F's, their parents are generally disappointed. Thirty-seven parents whose children have from one to six F's, report disappointed feelings. Of the 36 parents whose children have no semester F's, five report disappointment, 11 report neutrality and 20 report satisfaction.
8. On the impatient/patient scale, the level of significance is 0.0029 for 93 cases. The most

patient parents, as they describe themselves, are those 25 whose children have no semester F's. Another 25 parents across all levels of F's describe themselves as neutral on this scale. Parents describing themselves as impatient are 23 in number, with three of them having children with no semester F's.

Parent feelings at the end of the semester point to the following conclusions:

1. Negative feelings seem associated with F grades except for the inadequate/competent scale, the alone/not alone scale and the guilty/clear conscience scale.
2. parents whose children have no semester F's may report negative, neutral or positive feelings; however, they tend to gravitate toward the positive ends of the scales.
3. Neutral feelings are often voiced.
4. No significant relationship is observed for the following scales; hopeless/hopeful, hurt/strong, and rejected/appreciated.

Change in Parent Feelings by Parent Type

Change scores for each of the 11 paired feelings are computed by subtracting the parent feelings score of "Now" (at the semester) from "then" (at the first six weeks). Positive scores indicate improved feelings; zero scores show

no change in attitude; and negative scores indicate deteriorated feelings. When change scores are computed for all 11 paired feelings and crosstabulated with parent type, there are no significant results. Certain patterns, however, emerge:

1. The change scores of GB parents are more frequently zero or positive than the change scores of non-GB parents.
2. Over the 11 scales, high percentages of both GB and non-GB parents show no change in feelings. No change in feelings ranges from 32% of the 25 GB parents on the frustrated/confident scale to 49.06% of the 106 non-GB parents on the alone/not alone scale. For the non-GB parents the number of no change cases is over 33% on seven of the scales. For the GB parents the number of no change cases is over 50% on six scales.
3. The variation in change scores for non-GB parents is greater than the change scores for GB parents.
4. The number of missing cases ranges from 30.5% to 38.2% of the 131 families in this study, thus limiting generalizability.
5. Where feelings improve, it is usually by one point, rather than two or three points.

Table 99

Change in Parent Feelings by Parent Type

Feeling	Negative Change in Feeling		No Change in Feeling		Positive Change in Feeling		Missing Cases	Acceptable Level of Significance
	GB Parents	Non-GB Parents	GB Parents	Non-GB Parents	GB Parents	Non-GB Parents		
Frustrated/ Confident	1	12	8	30	12	28	40	
Angry/Calm	2	14	10	27	8	25	45	
Helpless/ Competent	0	11	13	36	8	19	44	
Alone/Not Alone	0	4	14	52	7	8	46	
Worried/Relieved	1	7	9	32	10	29	43	
Hopeless/Hopeful	1	9	12	42	8	15	44	
Hurt/Strong	0	6	13	41	8	18	45	
Guilty/Clear Conscience	0	4	14	44	7	17	45	
Dissappointed/ Satisfied	1	6	9	33	11	29	42	
Rejected/ Appreciated	1	2	14	48	5	11	50	
Impatient/ Patient	2	9	13	35	6	21	45	

Change in Parent Feelings by Change in the Number of F's

When change in parent feelings is matched up with change in the number of F's, only three of the resulting crosstabulation are significant: frustrated/confident scale, worried/relieved scale and hurt, victimized/strong, determined to succeed scale. On the frustrated/confident scale, where the level of significance is 0.0220, 49 parents with either no change or with a positive change in attitude, have children in this study with fewer F's at the semester.

There are another 18 parents with either no change or with a positive change in attitude, whose children have the same number of F's at the semester as at the first six week grading period. The overall frequency of no change in attitude (38) as well as the frequency of no change in number of F's (23) is also notable.

On the worried/relived scale, where the level of significance is 0.0060, 49 parents with either no change or with a positive change in attitude have children in this study with fewer semester F's. Anther 19 parents with either no change or with a positive change in attitude have children in this study who show no change in F's at the semester. The largest frequency of cases falls into the category of no change in attitude with a +1 change in F's at the semester.

On the hurt/strong scale, where the level of significance is 0.0010, 50 parents, whose children have fewer semester F's, show either no change or a positive change in attitude. Eighteen parents with either no change or with a positive change in attitude, have children in this study whose F grades at the semester show no change in number. The largest group of cases (25) are those where parents show no change in attitude and their children have a +1 change in F's.

Clearly observable in Table 100 are the following patterns in the scales:

1. Parents frequently show no change in attitude or show a positive attitude change.
2. Parents whose attitudes are more negative at the semester might have children whose grades either improve, decline or show no change. There seems to be no prevailing trend.
3. There are large numbers of missing responses, which, if supplied, could be sufficient to change the nature of the results.

Table 100

Change in Parent Feelings by Change in Number of F's

Feeling	Negative Change in Feeling			No Change in Feeling			Positive Change in Feeling			Missing Cases	Acceptable Level Significance
	-3 to -1*	0	+1 to +4	-3 to -1	0	+1 to +4	-3 to -1	0	+1 to +4		
Frustrated/ Confident	3	5	5	7	10	21	4	8	28	40	0.0220
Angry/Calm	2	7	7	9	5	23	2	9	22	45	
Helpless/ Competent	2	5	4	9	10	30	2	5	20	44	
Alone/Not Alone	0	1	3	12	15	39	1	4	10	46	
Worried/ Relieved	2	3	3	9	12	20	3	7	29	43	0.0060
Hopeless/ Hopeful	2	5	3	9	10	35	2	6	15	44	
Hurt/Strong	1	3	2	10	11	33	2	7	17	45	0.0010
Guilty/Clear Conscience	0	2	2	12	14	32	1	5	18	45	
Dissappointed/ Satisfied	0	3	4	11	12	19	3	6	31	42	
Rejected/ Appreciated	0	0	3	11	17	34	2	3	11	50	
Impatient/ Patient	2	4	5	8	12	28	3	4	20	45	

*Change in Number of F's

Question 19 Parent Attendance at Parent Nights/Breakfasts by Parent Type

Parent type is crosstabulated with the 1985 parent night, the 1984 parent night and principal's breakfasts to ascertain any difference between GB and non-GB parents. The results must be seen in light of the small number of GB parents (25) versus the large number of non-GB parents (103).

Eighty percent of the GB parents (20) and 52.4% of the non-GB parents (54) report attendance at the 1985 parent night. Forty-eight percent of the GB parents (12) and 42.7% of the non-GB parents (44) report attendance at the 1984 parent night. Some GB and no-GB parents would not be likely to have attended the 1984 parent night since they are currently only freshmen parents. Only 12% of the GB parents (3) and 8.7% of the non-GB parents (9) indicate they have taken advantage of the opportunity to meet with the principal for breakfast (informal discussion and tour of the school). While the percentages of GB parents participating in each of these three activities is higher than that of the non-GB parents, the results are only significant for the 1985 parent night (0.0227) for 128 cases.

Parent Involvement by Change in the Number of F's

It is recalled that parent involvement is a category created in this study to tally the number of parent nights and principal's breakfast attended by each parent. This

category also includes attendance at Grade Booster Nights.

While the crosstabulation of parent involvement and the change in the number of F's is not significant, it is interesting to see the differences that emerge when the change in F's data are grouped positive, negative, and no change. Where parents have attended no parent programs, the change in F's could be positive, negative, or none. There is no difference across changes in the number of F's. However, for the parents who report participation, more often than not their children's grades improve over the semester.

Apparently, there is some connection between parent involvement and student achievement in this study. Would these students' grades have improved anyway whether or not their parents attend programs? Are their parents already doing everything possible to help their children? In this study only grades from one semester are used. Would the same percentages be evident for these same students during other semesters? Are these parents doing other types of "grade boosting" activities? Why is there no real difference in the change in F's for parents not attending any program? Are some of the parents who have attended no programs doing other types of "grade boosting" resulting in a 37.5% improvement in grades?

Table 101

Parent Involvement by Change in the Number of F's

Change in F's	Number of Events 0		1		2		3		4	
-3 to -1	12	30%	5	17.2%	4	8.3%	1	7.7%	0	0%
0	13	32.5%	9	31%	11	22.9%	3	23.1%	0	0%
+1 to +4	15	37.5%	15	51.7%	33	68.8%	9	69.2%	1	100%
Totals	40	100%	29	100%	48	100%	13	100%	1	100%

Missing Cases: 0

Question 22: Academic Improvement Strategies by Parent Type

All of the crosstabulations involving academic improvement strategies and parent type are significant at the 0.05 level. These results are not unexpected since certain columns should, by design, be empty. The strategies mentioned in Question 22 are all discussed at Grade Booster Night. The 25 GB parents in this study should all be familiar with them, and, for the most part, they report having learned about them at the GB Night. The few GB parents, who report they are unfamiliar with these strategies, are probably no more than a normal percentage of people who learn things but do not retain them.

The non-GB parents who report learning about improvement strategies from a GB Night are either among the 33 parents who received the GB materials after the program

or who are mistaken about the source of their information. The large number of non-GB parents unfamiliar with these strategies is a cause for some concern. Would some of their children's grades improve if they use some of these strategies?

The number of missing responses here should represent those parents familiar with these strategies but who have learned about them through sources other than a Grade Booster Night. This question may have been easily misunderstood by some parents, hence, future research should include restructuring this item.

Any significance, attached to which strategies that parents seem more familiar with, is uncertain. Are certain strategies easier to understand? Is the difference due to parents' misunderstanding of the question? Are some strategies stressed in the Grade Booster program more than others? In relation to Question 23: With so many parents reporting familiarity with the strategies in Question 22, why have they apparently not used them, as evidenced by the missing responses in Question 23?

Table 102

Question 22: Academic Improvement Strategies by Parent Type

Strategy	GB Parents Learned from GB	GB Parents Unfamiliar	Non-GB Parents Learned from GB	Non-GB Parents Unfamiliar	Missing Responses
Daily Progress Sheet	20	1	11	52	47
Weekly Progress Sheet	20	1	13	50	47
Counselor Report	17	4	16	51	43
Teacher/ Counselor Conference	15	3	23	39	51
Calls to Teacher/ Counselor	18	1	29	35	48
Rewards at Home	19	1	17	44	50
Loss of Privileges at Home	18	1	23	39	50
Behavioral Contract	17	3	12	50	49
Set Study Time at Home	19	0	17	39	56
Tutoring by Class Teacher	12	8	7	53	51
Tutoring by Non-Lake Park Person	11	6	6	56	52

Table 102 (continued)

Strategy	GB Parents Learned from GB	GB Parents Unfamiliar	Non-GB Parents Learned from GB	Non-GB Parents Unfamiliar	Missing Responses
Counseling	16	1	14	46	54
Grade Booster Coupons	18	3	1	65	44
Special Person Placemat	14	5	1	63	48

Question 23: Success of Academic Improvement Strategies by Parent Type

When the successfulness of the 14 academic improvement strategies is crosstabulated with parent type, there are no significant results. For both parent types there are several missing responses also limiting discussion of this item.

The most successful strategies for the GB parents responding are: loss of privileges at home and set study time at home, followed by rewards at home. The most successful strategies for the non-GB parents responding are: loss of privileges at home and set study time at home, followed by calls to teachers/counselor.

The least successful strategies for the GB parents responding are: calls to the teacher/counselor and set study time, followed by rewards at home, loss of privileges

and the special person placement. The least successful strategies for the non-GB parents responding are: rewards at home and loss of privileges, followed by set study time and calls to the teacher/counselor.

Some of the strategies reported as more successful by some GB and non-GB parents are also reported as least successful by other GB and non-GB parents. There are apparently no winning strategies! At least for the parents in this study, no strategy (or strategies) is clearly effective for a significant number of parents. Likewise, no strategy is not without its critics. All the strategies are reported as not successful by at least some GB and some non-GB parents.

The number of GB parents reporting "not successful" strategies, at times, exceeds those reporting at least some success. Almost none of the GB parents find any of the strategies very successful. This is, perhaps, a question deserving further research. Are the GB parents more negative in their outlook? Are they more likely to say that nothing works with their child? Is their perception of the strategies based upon serious efforts to use them? Is their initial attitude that it won't work and therefore, it does not work? Does their initial negative attitude toward the strategies set them up for failure?

Some of the non-GB parents report several strategies very successful, or moderately successful. Other non-GB

parents report several strategies not successful. The number of non-GB parents reporting "not successful" strategies rarely exceeds those reporting some success. Do non-GB parents have a better initial outlook, or do they use the strategies with an optimistic attitude? The questions raised by Question 23 far exceed the answers provided by the participants in this study.

Question 23: Success of Academic Improvement Strategies by Change in Number of F's

None of the crosstabulations involving the successfulness of the intervention strategies and change in the number of F's prove to be significant. This is, perhaps, due again to the continuing occurrence of small/empty cells. Also, the number of missing responses is extremely high for this question (from 69 to 177 responses missing).

Responses may be missing for different reasons: 1. Some parents may not have tried these strategies; 2. Some may have found the Question 23 table too complicated and too long; 3. Others may have grown tired of filling out the questionnaire and just left it blank; 4. Still others may have decided to leave Question 22 and Question 23 blank in order to devote time to the optional comments section.

Of the 22 parents whose children show an increase in F's over the semester, few of them (0 to 12) give any responses to Question 23. The strategies upon which none of

Table 103

Question 23: Success of Academic Improvement Strategies by Parent Type

Strategy	GB Parents Very Successful	GB Parents Moderately Successful	GB Parents Not Very Successful	Non-GB Parents Very Successful	Non-GB Parents Moderately Successful	Non-GB Parents Not Very Successful	Missing Responses
Daily Progress Sheet	0	5	2	3	9	9	103
Weekly Progress Sheet	0	6	4	1	10	9	101
Counselor Report	1	2	5	6	8	11	98
Teacher/Counselor Conference	1	2	3	1	12	11	101
Calls to Teacher/ Counselor	1	3	7	6	22	14	78
Rewards at Home	3	4	6	6	14	17	81
Loss of Privileges at Home	1	8	6	12	18	17	69
Behavioral Contract	0	1	4	3	8	8	107
Set Study Time at Home	2	7	7	7	22	16	70
Tutoring by Class Teacher	2	1	2	1	4	11	110
Tutoring by Non-Lake Park Person	2	1	3	1	4	9	111
Counseling	1	3	3	1	10	6	107
Grade Booster Coupons	1	0	5	0	1	7	117
Special Person Placemat	1	0	6	0	1	8	115

these parents comment are: the GB coupons and the special person placemat. Of the 36 parents whose children show no change in F's over the semester, anywhere from three to 19 of them respond to Question 23. Of the 73 parents whose children show a decrease in number of F's over the semester,

anywhere from nine to 34 of them respond to Question 23. Across the three categories of change in F's the level of response to Question 23 is rarely more than half.

The four strategies with the highest response rate from parents across all three levels of change in F's are: calls to teacher/counselor, rewards at home, loss of privileges at home and set study time at home. The success of these four strategies, as seen in Table 93, is apparently low for these families.

For the parents whose children show an increase in F's over the semester, almost no strategy is very successful. Several strategies are moderately successful for some parents, but they are also not successful for other parents.

When comparing strategies across the three categories of change in F's, parents report more success as the grades improve. However, there are a sizeable number of parents who also report these strategies not successful across all three categories of change in the number of F's.

Table 104

Question 23: Success of Academic Improvement Strategies by Change in the Number of F's

Strategy	-3 to -1 Change in F's			No Change in F's			+1 to +4 Change in F's			Missing Responses
	Very Successful	Moderately Successful	Not Very Successful	Very Successful	Moderately Successful	Not Very Successful	Very Successful	Moderately Successful	Not Very Successful	
Daily Progress Sheet	0	1	1	3	4	3	0	9	7	103
Weekly Progress Sheet	0	0	1	1	3	5	0	13	7	101
Counselor Report	1	2	1	2	2	8	4	6	7	98
Teacher/Counselor Conference	0	1	3	1	4	6	1	9	5	101
Calls to Teacher/ Counselor	1	5	2	1	5	9	5	15	10	78
Rewards at Home	1	2	4	2	5	9	6	11	10	81
Loss of Privileges at Home	2	5	5	4	8	6	7	13	12	69
Behavioral Contract	0	1	1	0	6	3	3	2	8	107
Set Study Time at Home	0	3	5	3	8	8	6	18	10	70
Tutoring by Class Teacher	0	1	1	0	2	4	3	2	8	110
Tutoring by Non-Lake Park Person	0	1	1	0	1	2	3	3	9	111
Counseling	0	2	1	0	6	3	2	5	5	107
Grade Booster Coupons	0	0	0	1	1	3	0	0	9	117

Table 104 (continued)

Strategy	-3 to -1 Change in F's			No Change in F's			+1 to +4 Change in F's			Missing Responses
	Very Successful	Moderately Successful	Not Very Successful	Very Successful	Moderately Successful	Not Very Successful	Very Successful	Moderately Successful	Not Very Successful	
Special Person Placemat	0	0	0	1	1	4	0	0	10	115

From the questions raised by Question 22 and Question 23 alone, a future researcher could design an entire study. The data might provide greater insight into motivators for improved grades, if certain factors are under better control. These factors include: 1. Missing responses; 2. Length of time strategies used before determining successfulness or unsuccessfulness; 3. Short explanation of each of the strategies; 4. Simplification of the tables; 5. Addition of other strategies including parental assistance with study/homework, parental encouragement, parental nagging, and reduction in hours involved in extracurricular activities or job.

The need to address missing responses is crucial to any future study. Certainly, on Question 23 a higher response rate would immensely clarify the useful strategies. Parents not attempting to counter their children's poor achievement is a serious concern. Are they really not doing anything? Are they taking measures they don't feel are worth mentioning? Do they realize how much influence they can have on their children?

Summary of Crosstabulation Results

In several ways there is no difference between GB and non-GB families in this study. However, in some ways GB and non-GB families differ on important issues. Whether the differences are related to attendance at a Grade Booster Seminar or due to self-selection is unknown. The area where

no difference in parent perceptions are noted include:

1. Sibling assistance on homework;
2. Student's attitude toward school;
3. Student's feelings about teachers;
4. Student's number of friends;
5. Number of school transfers;
6. Involvement in parent programs;
7. Level of staff concern;

GB families differ from non-GB families in percentage in the following ways:

1. Students in GB families tend to have fewer absences.
2. Students with GB parents show more improved grades.
3. Most GB families are two parent homes.
4. GB parents are more likely to report contact with teachers and counselor.
5. GB parents report less grade school, junior high and high school success.
6. GB parents are more likely to have also attended a general parent night activity.
7. Variation in change in feeling scores is less for GB parents.

Other interesting and important results from the crosstabulation survey data in general include:

1. The percentage of students with no change in

number of F's or with increased number of F's is higher for single parents in this study.

2. Student grades are more likely to improve in combination with no disciplinary steps.
3. Distribution of students centers around few absences coupled with reduction in number of F's at the semester.
4. Of the ten students in Project Success in this study no one shows an increase in F's at the semester.
5. Fewer F grades at the semester are associated with some parent contact with teachers.

Summary

While there may not be as many significant differences found in the frequencies and crosstabulations in this study as the investigator would have liked, the significant results and trends are important to the study of parent involvement and its impact on student performance.

From the comparisons analyzed in this study, several significant results and trends are worth summarizing:

1. Children of GB parents (72%) reduced their number of F's at the end of the semester over the children of the non-GB parents (53.4%).
2. With most parents spending the same amount of time with their children on homework after the first six week grade reports, 55.1% of their children

show improvement in their grades.

3. GB parents report no change in absence rate from the first six weeks to the semester.
4. Non-GB families are significant in terms of improved/stable student attitude toward school and liking some/most of their teachers.
5. The trend for most students with extracurricular activity hours is in the direction of decrease in number of F's at the end of the semester.
6. Part-time job matched with activity hours is not a significant influence over grades. Most students (84.7%) in this study are not employed and are not involved in school activities (67.9%).
7. GB parents are more likely than non-GB parents to say their children have not been very successful in grade or junior high school.
8. Children of GB parents are predominately the oldest (20%), the youngest (24%) or only children (24%). Children of non-GB parents are frequently the oldest (28.4%) or the youngest (37.3%).
9. Children in two parent homes are more likely than chance to reduce their number of F's by one.
10. GB parents are more likely to contact counselors and/or teachers in classes where their children had first six week F's.
11. GB parents (72.4%) who report counselor and/or

teacher contact show a significant decrease in F's at the semester.

12. Perceived high/moderate level of staff concern is related to parent contacts with teachers and counselors.
13. Fewer F's is correlated with no change or positive change in three feelings on the attitude scale: frustrated/confident, worried/relieved, and hurt/strong.
14. Most GB parents did not find any strategies very successful with their children.

Some of the results might have been easy to predict. Other results, however, rather than answering questions, have caused several new questions to surface. Some questionable or inconsistent results are related to flaws in the survey, parents' misunderstanding of the questionnaire, the length of the survey, limitations of the statistical procedure, and/or low return rate (especially for GB parents).

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY

The purpose of this study is to explore the relationship between academic achievement of ninth and tenth graders and their parents' participation in the Grade Booster Seminar sponsored by the counseling department. The results of the Very Important Parent (VIP) Survey are matched with basic student information to provide measurable data about the relationship between parent involvement and academic achievement.

This study begins with an introduction (Chapter I) which includes some discussion of the nature of underachievement and its ramifications, the barriers and benefits of parent involvement, the background of the Grade Booster Seminar, the purpose of the study, definition of terms, and the assumptions and limitations of the study.

Chapter II, the Review of the Literature, provides a brief explanation of underachievement and then proceeds to discuss a selection of studies evaluating parent attitudes/ behaviors. This is followed by studies on parent involvement, which includes parent education studies, parent counseling studies and parent/student combination studies.

The final area for review is that of comparative parent program studies. The lack of well controlled studies involving parents of high school students is noted frequently. Many of the selected studies are purely descriptive, have no comparison group, little quantitative data and small samples. Some reports describe models without any research data provided. However, where adequate experimental/descriptive research techniques are used, the data generally supports the value of parent involvement. Where mixed results occur, the assessment methods may be in question rather than the importance of parent involvement. Chapter II ends with a series of hypotheses based on an understanding of the problem of underachievement and the research on parent involvement in the schools.

Chapter III contains a description of the setting, program, sample, procedure, instrument and statistical procedure. The Grade Booster Night is held annually in October/November at a large public suburban Chicago high school. It is a positively oriented seminar for parents of underachieving high school freshmen and sophomores. Three months after the second Grade Booster Night parents of underachieving ninth and tenth graders (students with at least one F on their first six week progress report) were mailed the Very Important Parent (VIP) Survey. The 131 questionnaires (38.4% response) along with student profile data were used to compare GB and non-GB parents.

An analysis of the results of the survey matched with student profile data is found in Chapter IV. Part 1 on Chapter IV contains an analysis of frequencies, while Part 2 reports an analysis of the crosstabulations. Within the framework of the review of the literature and the analyses of the data the results are summarized according to the hypotheses presented in Chapter II:

1) There will be no difference between GB parents and non-GB parents in terms of the perception of their frustration and aloneness in facing the problem of high school underachievement.

There is no significant difference between GB and non-GB parents in terms of their feelings of frustration and aloneness. Change scores were computed by subtracting the end-of-first-semester scores from the end-of-first-six-week scores. The change scores of GB parents are more frequently zero or positive than the change scores of non-GB parents over all 11 attitudes on the scale. For 32% of GB parents there is no change in their feelings of frustration/ confidence; for 28.3% of non-GB parents there is no change in their feelings of frustration/confidence from the first six weeks to the end of the first semester. On the feeling alone/not alone scale of 56% of GB parents show no change in attitude, while 49.06% of non-GB parents show no change in attitude. For 48% of GB parents there is a positive change in their feelings of frustration/confidence, while the

percentage for non-GB parents is 26.42%. On the feeling alone/not alone scale, 28% of GB parents and 7.55% of non-GB parents show a positive change in attitude. The trend is more favorable toward GB parents, however, it must be noted that the percentage of missing response is rather high on this scale.

2) There will be no difference between GB and non-GB parents on their awareness of the academic improvement strategies. There will also be no difference between the perceived success of those strategies by GB or non-GB parents.

There is a significant difference between GB and non-GB parents on their awareness of the academic improvement strategies. This result is not unexpected since certain columns on the crosstabulation, by design, should be empty. The 25 GB parents should be familiar with all the strategies presented at Grade Booster Night. The question on the survey addressing this hypothesis may have caused parents some confusion. They were asked if they had learned about each strategy at Grade Booster Night or if they were unfamiliar with it. If they had learned about the strategy from another source, they should be among the missing responses. A few GB parents report unfamiliarity with some strategies, but probably no more than the normal percentage of people who, three months later, have not retained all of what they have learned. The non-GB parents who report

learning about the strategies from Grade Booster Night are either among the 33 parents who report receiving GB materials after the program or who are mistaken about the source of their knowledge. It is unclear as to the level of misunderstanding of the question and the degree of fatigue experienced by participants as they progressed through the survey.

There is no significant difference between the perceived success of the strategies by GB or non-GB parents. For both parent types there are several missing responses. Again the question of misunderstanding and degree of fatigue may have contributed to lack of responses. From the responses supplied it appears that the most successful strategies for GB parents are: loss of privileges at home and set study time, followed by rewards at home. The most successful strategies for non-GB parents are loss of privileges at home, followed by set study time, and calls to teacher/counselor. What is most successful can also be least successful as seen in the following comparison. The least successful strategies for GB parents are calls to teacher/counselor and set study time, followed by rewards at home, loss of privileges and the special person placemat. For non-GB parents the least successful strategies are rewards at home, and loss of privileges, followed by set study time and calls to the teacher/counselor. No strategy (or group of strategies) is clearly effective for a

significant number of GB or non-GB parents. In fact, almost none of the GB parents find any strategies very successful.

Several questions arise from the data for this hypothesis. Are GB parents more negative in their outlook? Do they create self-fulfilling prophecies? Have both parent types been persistent enough in using the strategies to rule them out? Does the Grade Booster Night program need to spend more time and effort discussing academic improvement strategies?

3) There will be no difference between GB and non-GB parents with regard to their perception of school staff concern.

There is no significant difference between GB and non-GB parents on their perceived level of school staff concern. The trend seems to be that both GB and non-GB parents feel the staff shows a moderate level of concern about student progress, taking into consideration the fact that GB parents have had an extra opportunity to observe this staff concern. The questions that arise here include: How can parent perception of staff concern be improved? Are parent perceptions a function of their children's grades? How do parents arrive at their conclusions? Could more positive perception of staff concern have a residual effect on students?

4) There will be no difference between students whose parents attend Grade Booster Night and students whose

parents do not attend Grade Booster Night when examining their grades, attendance and disciplinary steps.

There is no significant difference between GB and non-GB parents in terms of change in number of F's. When looking at the range of change in F's, it is wider and less positive for children of non-GB parents. In the GB families 72% of the children in this study improved their F grades by the end of the semester as contrasted with 53.4% of the children of non-GB families. Only 8% of the children of GB parents show an increase in number of F's as opposed to 19.4% of the children of non-GB parents. Are there other factors/characteristics which could better identify the reasons for these differences?

There is no significant difference between GB and non-GB parents in terms of their students' attendance. However, the trend again seems to favor children of GB parents. Over the semester children of GB parents had from 0 to 15 days absence, while their counterparts had from 0 to 36 days absence. Students with less than five days absence for GB status amount to 64% and for non-GB status amount to 58%. For students with less than 10 days absence the percentage is nearly the same: 80% for children of GB parents and 81.6% for children of non-GB parents. The only real difference between the two groups is in terms of length of absence, and there may certainly be other factors influencing this result.

There is no significant difference between children of GB and non-GB parents when examining disciplinary steps. The percentages of students with no steps or low steps is similar for children of GB and non-GB parents. However, the range of steps for children of GB parents is much narrower than for children of non-GB parents.

5) There will be no difference across grade levels and sex when examining GB or non-GB status, grades, attendance and disciplinary steps.

Across grade levels, sex, and parent type there is no significant relationship with either change in number of F's, number of absences or discipline. In terms of change in number of F's, the results favor tenth grade males with a decrease in number of F's and parents who attended a Grade Booster Night. With respect to absence, no significant difference is seen due to the small numbers of students spread over the range of 0-36 days absence.

With regard to disciplinary steps, the lack of significant evidence is again related to small numbers across the several categories of crosstabulation. The majority of students in both parent types (68% and 62%) have not steps at all. Of the students with disciplinary steps, the 14 tenth grade sons of non-GB parents stand out as the largest group across the categories, but they only have between two and five steps, not a number that would impact upon school performance in general. No steps or low steps

found among ninth graders is not an unexpected outcome since they have only been in the high school two months. All steps for children of GB parents are at or under step five, except for one sophomore girl at step seven/eight; steps for children of non-GB parents cluster at or below step eight with four tenth grade boys and two tenth grade girls at or above step 11.

Is the grade improvement, better attendance and lack of steps noted for children of GB parents connected to parent attendance at a Grade Booster Night or is it more likely due to a pre-existing parenting style of parents who choose to attend a Grade Booster Night?

6) There will be no difference between students in Project Success or Reading and those not enrolled in Project Success or Reading relative to their grades, sex, grade level, and status of their parents as GB or non-GB parents.

When examining Project Success students by grade level, sex and parent type there is no significant relationship, except for tenth grade students not enrolled in Project Success with non-GB parents. Since there are only 10 Project Success students in this study the percentages of increased F's/no change/decreased F's are limited in importance, but worth noting; 70% of the Project Success students have fewer F's, and 30% have the same number of F's; no one in Project Success has more F's at the semester. For students not in Project Success the percentages are

distributed over increased F's (18.2%), same number of F's (27.3%), and fewer F's (54.5%). When parent type is added to the crosstabulation, there are only four students with GB parents, too small a number to assess the joint effect of these two variables.

The effect of a Reading course cannot be estimated from students in this study since only four are enrolled in this class. Reading is, therefore, ruled out as a factor in this study.

Conclusions and Implications

The need for parent involvement at the high school level has been recognized and, in some cases, documented as well. Parent involvement to reduce student underachievement has also been validated, but not well documented at the high school level.

The present study attempted to determine the effects of one parent education program on student underachievement. The student profile data and the VIP Survey data were not manipulated or grouped in any way to produce advantageous results. The results largely show Grade Booster Night attendance not significantly related to the myriad of factors tested. If the data had been grouped into intervals, more significant results may have been noted. However, if this had been done, the data might have not shown GB parents different from non-GB parents because they attended the program and acted upon our suggestions, but

because they had different attitudes and values before their attendance at a Grade Booster Night.

The VIP Survey attempted to provide information on GB and non-GB families. Numerous factors were examined, many of which were ruled out as significant factors for the subjects in this study such as: students having or not having friends; students liking or not liking their teachers, involvement in student activities or part-time jobs; student attitude toward school; and sibling assistance on homework.

As reported in the review of the literature, parents want to learn. They want to be informed about their youngsters' academic progress. The parents in this study contradicted the stereotypical image of parents of underachievers. When 38.4% of these parents responded to a six page mailed survey (The average response for a mailed survey is about 10%, with a range of 0% to 40% depending on the affinity to the product, service or company being studied.) and when 60.3% of the respondents also took the time to write comments or answer the open-ended questions, their concern is undeniable. Some of them even signed their names and provided their phone numbers.

Possibly, the most interesting and most disconcerting information to counselors was found in parents' comments at the end of the questionnaire. Some parents seemed tired and overwhelmed. Some parents showed their defensiveness, pain,

helplessness, anger and their need to explain. Parents did not always address the open-ended question that was asked, but only a few made irrelevant or derogatory remarks. Their comments are not easy to quantify but they offer insight for counselors who, in their work with underachieving students, wish to also address the concerns of their parents.

Both the review of the literature and the results of this study point to the need to make parents our allies. By addressing their concerns we garner their support and their children's grades are more likely it improve. In the present study, for parents who attended no parent programs, the number of F's at the semester varied, sometimes decreasing, sometimes increasing. But for parents who attended any parent program, the change in number of F's was more likely to be a positive change (fewer F's). Parent contact with teachers and counselors produced mixed results, but the trend of contact with teachers seemed to have had greater impact on grade improvement. When GB and non-GB parents were compared in terms of teacher contact and counselor contact, the results were significant in favor of GB parents with some teacher or counselor contact. It might be concluded then that parents who attended a parent program were more apt to contact school personnel as a follow-up and to have youngsters whose grades improved. It is recalled that in this study perception of staff concern was significantly related to parent contact with teachers/

counselor. It might also be surmised that parents who attended a parent program might improve their perception of staff concern and be more inclined to make better use of school services.

In addition to attendance at parent programs and perception of staff concern, parent feelings of frustration, aloneness, helplessness, etc. could have colored their approach to underachievement in this study. No conclusions can be drawn from the data here, but it is speculated that parents who have more positive attitudes, who feel more in control of the situation, are more likely to try the academic improvement strategies for appropriate lengths of time and find them successful. Counselors in their individual parent contacts and in planning for future programs should be cognizant of the effects of negative thinking and should plan their strategies to improve or at least stabilize parent feelings.

Grade Booster Night is, perhaps, only an initial step in addressing parent concerns and improving home-school alliances. Counselors need to help these parents stay informed, educated and encouraged. They may need to offer them more extensive ongoing help. Perhaps, counselor-student load needs to be reduced, so they can spend more time with these families. Opportunities for Project Success study hall may need to be doubled, with counseling support services provided for both parents and students. A four to

six week educational component could be added for parents. A one-day-per-week study skills unit might be added for Project Success students. If counselor-student load cannot be reduced or Project Success openings cannot be increased, perhaps, more referrals need to be made to outside educational and therapeutic agencies. For students not in Project Success, a voluntary/mandatory after school "study hall" could be offered.

Parent concern about having up-to-date information on student progress could be addressed as a follow-up to Grade Booster Night. Parent frustration on this issue was expressed by several parents in this study. Calling or mailing interim progress reports to parents could provide them with the information they need to enforce their expectations. This will become more easily accomplished for both teachers and counselors when all teachers have their day-to-day grades on the mainframe computer. Any F grades could automatically generate a weekly or bi-weekly mailer home. It seems reasonable to conclude from this study that it is very difficult for parents to see success in their work with underachievers; with more concrete, up-to-date information they would hopefully see that their strategies are working.

The characteristics of GB and non-GB parents and their children were noted throughout this study. Important differences were seen in children of GB parents and non-GB

parents in terms of attendance, discipline and reduction in number of F's. While these crosstabulations did not produce significant results due, in part, to the strict constraints placed upon the data, noteworthy trends include: reduction in F's for 72% of the children of GB parents as opposed to only 53.4% of the children of non-GB parents; narrower range of absence(0-15) for children of GB parents over the wider range of absence (0-36) for children of non-GB parents; and narrower range of disciplinary steps (0-8) for children of GB parents than the steps (0-19) for children of non-GB parents. Are the children of GB parents inherently different from children of non-GB parents? The question of GB status producing differences due to Grade Booster Night attendance or due to parents' prior attitudes could be raised again here in relation to the children of GB parents.

While several of the similarities and differences due to parent type may seem plausible and acceptable, one issue remains a question in the researcher's mind. Are GB parents more pessimistic? They reported their children were not very successful in grade school and by junior high none of them were very successful. GB parent perception of their children's success in school showed a more dramatic decline than did non-GB parent perception. They were also more inclined to say that none of the academic improvement strategies were very successful. Are their negative attitudes inhibiting the success of their children? Are

they less likely to try something because they already believe it will not work? Do they expect too much from children? These and other questions about GB parents need to be discussed and addressed in future programs.

Based upon the review of the literature in Chapter II the potential of the Grade Booster Program for improving academic achievement is considerable, especially in conjunction with follow-up efforts on the part of parents, teachers, counselors and students. As assessed by the student profile data and the VIP Survey discussed in Chapter IV, the importance of the program may seem objectively limited; subjectively, however, it is significant, if not in its current form, then in a more effective form with the suggestions in Appendix K: Revisions to Grade Booster Night Since 1984 and Appendix L: Recommendations to Other Districts Sponsoring Grade Booster Type Programs.

Recommendations for Future Research

Since the data in this study does not conclusively support Grade Booster Night as a parent involvement program to reduce academic failure and since this study is descriptive and exploratory, future experimental research could be designed using the following recommendations:

1) Although there was a 38.4% response to the VIP Survey, a second copy of the questionnaire could have been sent to those not responding to the first one. A call could have also been made to those families not responding.

2) The current survey focused on several factors, some of which needed to be ruled out as influential factors. Future research may wish to concentrate on fewer factors, while also exerting more controls over the sample. Researchers may prefer to limit their studies to one grade level instead of the two grade levels (ninth and tenth) used here. They may choose to limit their respondents to parents of an equal number at each grade level and an equal number of each sex. They may prefer to limit their respondents to an equal number of GB and non-GB parents.

3) In terms of student enrollment in certain classes/programs, future researchers may want to delete them from their studies. They may drop the cases where the student's only F is in physical education, since it is a performance class. Grade Booster Night really does not offer, nor does it intend to offer, a great deal of information relative to performance type courses. Attendance, dressing for class, and participating in class is different from doing worksheets, reading chapters and studying for tests. If future samples are large enough, researchers may want to control for the number of F's in performance oriented versus academic type classes. For subsequent Grade Booster Night invitations this researcher has not sent invitations to parents of students whose only F is in PE, typing, chorus, etc. Future researchers may decide to limit their studies to grade improvement in

required courses, excluding PE. For our ninth and tenth grade students this would be: English, mathematics, science, social studies, health, and driver education.

Other researchers may exclude Project Success students and Reading students because they receive special help at school. Their grades should improve with that help, regardless of their parents' attendance at a Grade Booster Night. In the present study, the number of Project Success students is ten and the number of Reading students is four from the total of 131 students.

4) Should other researchers wish to replicate this study they should consider shortening and revising the VIP Survey. As parents went through the survey and the questions in some cases got more complicated, they answered fewer of them. At the very least, Questions 5, 6, and 21 could be deleted. Question 18 was either too complicated or respondents had no change of feelings over the semester. Question 18 should be simplified. Questions 22 and 23 are probably the most important questions in terms of parent behavior and its influence over student achievement. These questions may also need to be altered for better parent understanding. Since Questions 22 and 23 address strategies to improve student achievement, perhaps, more time should be spend explaining them at Grade Booster Night. Perhaps, a flyer advertising them should be mailed home. Understanding the reasons parents do not use these strategies or give up

on using them could be an important part of future study. Are they using other strategies they find more effective? Do they give up too easily on various strategies? In some districts researchers may need to add a question on socioeconomic status, since some previous researchers have noted its effect on academic achievement.

5) In terms of evaluation of the data future researchers may notice more significant results if they group data in the analyses. For example, they could group absences into five day segments instead of counting each day separately; they could do the crosstabulations with change in the number of F's, grouping them into negative change (-1 to -3), zero change and positive change +1 to +4). The number of three and four factor crosstabulations need to be reduced or the number of cases needs to be increased. As the number of cells increases, the number of small or empty cells also increases, decreasing the possibility of any significant results. Increasing the number of cases and/or grouping the data should produce more significant differences.

Future researchers may wish to compare students' combination of grades and their GPA. Rather than focusing on only the change in number of F's, they may want to look at the change in GPA and the number of A's, B's, C's, and D's over a semester. They may also wish to assess the number of F's in elective vs. required courses.

6) The review of the literature indicates that some positive effects are produced over the long term. Future study could address this issue by examining more than one semester of student grades or by following up on students after four years in high school.

7) Future researchers may find another method of study more effective than the survey method. To have more control over the return rate they might use the interview method. This method may be especially useful with the population in this type of study. After completing, as best they could, five pages of the VIP Survey in the present study 60.3% of the respondents chose to make personal comments. They felt the need to tell us what they thought about themselves and/or their children, about the school and its faculty, about Grade Booster Night and about the survey itself. The interview method, however, is more difficult to quantify. Perhaps, a percentage of the respondents to the survey could be selected for in-depth interviews. Other researchers may add to their insight by matching the parent surveys with comparable student surveys.

8) Future researchers may find a pretest/posttest design more advantageous. Pretesting parent attitudes and beliefs before and after attendance at Grade Booster Night could easily be accomplished, but a delayed posttest might be more enlightening and more accurate. Pretesting/ posttesting of non-GB parents might be more difficult but

could provide comparative data on the source of their attitudes and values.

9) While Grade Booster Night is expressly limited in its focus on underachievement, other researchers may consider addressing intervening issues such as: self-concept of underachieving students, the nature of the parent/child relationship before and after Grade Booster Night, family adjustment problems, etc.

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APPENDIX A

CHART 1
SELECTED STUDIES EVALUATING PARENT ATTITUDES/BEHAVIORS

Author/Year	Issue	Methodology	Subjects	Outcome
Riley (1984)	Parent Involvement	Descriptive: Questionnaire	49 Catholic High School Principals	Parents influence student achievement; communication prevalent, rather than organized parent programs
Frymeier & Gansneder (1989)	Communication with parents on at risk behavior	Descriptive: Teacher Survey, Principal Interview, Case Study	22,018 4th 7th, & 9th graders	Talking with parents was effective
Sporakowski & Eubanks (1976)	School Adjustment & Communication with parents	Comparative: Positive & Negative School Adjustment Groups	80 Ninth grade girls & their parents	School adjustment correlated with communication at home
Wood, Chapin & Hannah (1988)	Student Perception of Family Environment	Comparative: Matched Achievers & Underachievers	52 Parochial high school students	Achievers had more positive perception of family environment
Dornbusch, et. al (1986)	Parent Attitudes/ Behavior & Student Academic Achievement	Descriptive: Questionnaires	3,000 high school students & their parents	Parent attitudes/behaviors & involvement correlated with student performance
Conklin & Dailey (1981)	Effects of Perceived Parent Expectations	Descriptive: Survey	1,686 9th, 10th & 12th graders	Positive correlation with college attendance
Zollweg (1984)	Perceived Parent & Teacher Expectations	Descriptive: Survey	283 10th graders	Perceptions of expectations correlated with readings scores

Author/Year	Issue	Methodology	Subjects	Outcome
Hilliard & Roth (1969)	Maternal Attitudes & Child Rearing Practices	Comparative: 24 Achievers & 21 Under-achievers	45 11th & 12th grade boys & their mothers	Positive relationships connected to achievement
Singer (1978)	Child Rearing & Achievement	Comparative: 40 Achievers & 40 Underachievers	80 ninth graders & their mothers	Discipline & protectiveness significant for achievers
Metcalf & Gaier (1987)	Parenting Patterns & Achievement	Comparative: 43 Underachievers 44 Controls	87 11th & 12th graders	Upward striving parenting related to underachievement

CHART 2
SELECTED PARENT EDUCATION STUDIES

Author/Year	Issue	Methodology	Subjects	Outcome
Harris (1983)	Parent-Aided Homework	Descriptive: Behavior Modification Program	Students & parents	No research data provided
Olson (1980)	Adlerian Based Parent Education	Descriptive: Manual	Parents & children	No research data provided
Hammond & Schultz (1980)	PET Communication Workshop	Descriptive: Workshop Assessment	35 parents & their high school students	Informal evaluation showed success
Dodley (1981)	STEP Program	Descriptive: Pre-test Post-test No Control Group	30 parents of 7-12th graders with maladaptive school behavior	Parents understood children's behavior better
Smith (1984)	STEP/Teen Program	Comparative: Experimental & Control Groups, Pre-test Post-test	26 parents with adolescents in foster care	Parents improved in acceptance & understanding of their children & in perception of family communication
Mince-Ennis (1980)	Parent Training on Self Esteem, Self Concept of Academic Ability & GPA	Comparative: Matched Groups (19 Experimental & 24 Control) Compromise Pre-test Post-test	43 parents of underachieving 7th-9th graders	Weak positive trend on student self esteem & self concept of academic ability; GPA slightly higher for controls
Gerler & Merrill (1985)	Eclectic Parent Ed. Program	Descriptive: Pre-test Post-test No Control Group	21 parents of 4-14 year olds with behavioral problems	Only withdrawn-hostile behavior improved

Author/Year	Issue	Methodology	Subjects	Outcome
Cox & Matthew (1977)	Downing Program for Parent Training in Family Relationship & Management Skills	Comparative: 62 Control & 58 Treatment, Post-test & Follow-up eight weeks later	124 Parents of alternative high school students	Treatment group students' behavior improved; at follow-up showed significant improvement
Haas (1978)	Parent Performance Observation Report	Comparative: 18 Control & 20 Experimental Pre-test Post-test	38 parents of 10th grade algebra students	Treatment group students had better grades, attendance, class participation; Parents assisted, offered support & supervised study more than controls
Tennies (1982)	Parent Communication Plus Program	Comparative: Randomized, Two Treatment, One Control (Three groups of 30 each) Pre-test Post-test	90 parents of of 6th-12th Graders with below average GPA	Significant effect on GPA for both treatment groups (but not on CAT test conduct or study habits

CHART 3
SELECTED PARENT COUNSELING STUDIES

Author/Year	Issue	Methodology	Subjects	Outcome
Grossman (1971)	Parent Group using Dr. Gilmore's Suggestions for Parents	Comparative: Treatment & Control Groups (four each) Pre-test, Post-test	Eight couples & their 10th-12th grade students	Three treatment group students improved grades; all four students improved on social interaction & communication
Berman, Freeman & Siegmund (1987)	Evolutionary Parent Support Group	Descriptive: Model	8-10 parents of potential high school drop-outs	No research data provided
Berman (1977)	Parent Counseling Program	Comparative: Experimental & Control Groups (Six students each) Pre-test, Post-test, case analyses	24 parents of 12 low achieving adolescents	For children in experimental group - no improvement in GPA, communication, or self esteem; GPA for controls improved

CHART 4
SELECTED PARENT/STUDENT COMBINATION STUDIES

Author/Year	Issue	Methodology	Subjects	Outcome
Lebenbaum (1980)	Operant Conditioning, Parent Educational & Support Group, Daily Report Cards	Comparative: One Experimental Two Control (14 Experimental Underachievers, 15 Control, & 14 Honor Roll Control)	43 8th & 9th graders & their parents	Experimental group students improved improved in English, social studies, math & overall GPA, & changed perception of parents
Kerr (1983)	Tutoring, Parent/Student Contact	Comparative: Two Experimental (Treatment & Delayed Treatment)	120 11th & 12th graders (with low GPA & class cuts) & their parents	Significant improvement in achievement & attendance
Spahr (1982)	Monthly Parent Meetings, Bi-weekly Academic Reports, Committee Work, Field trips, Family Reading Program, End of Year Conference	Descriptive: Ethnographic Study	Parents of 52 9th graders in Intensive Education Program (Reading 1-2 years below grade level)	Students receptive to parent contact; teacher commitment varied; bi-weekly reports & end of year conferences successful; Parents need reassurance that involvement wanted
Starr (1978)	Follow Through Program -IEP's, phone contacts & home visits; Home-School Partnership	Descriptive: Model	Two High Schools including teachers, parents & students	No research data except 87% voted YES on Tax Levy
Albert (1976)	Separate Group Counseling with students/ parents	Comparative: Two Experimental One Control (15 in each group)	45 10th graders & their parents	Not successful for attendance, GPA, behavior; improved self concept

Author/Year	Issue	Methodology	Subjects	Outcome
Perkins (1969)	Separate Group Counseling with mothers & sons	Comparative: Three Experimental & One Control Pre-test, Post-test, Delayed Post-test	120 bright underachieving 9th grade boys & 60 of their mothers	Increase in GPA & self acceptance, Mothers only group partial influence on GPA five months later
Perkins & Wicas (1971)	Separate Group Counseling with mothers & sons	Comparative: 3 Experimental & 1 Control, Pre-test, Post-test & Delayed Post-test	120 bright under-achieving 9th grade boys & 60 of their mothers	GPA improved for three experimental groups; when mothers involved improvement in self-acceptance; boys only counseling same as controls on self-acceptance
McCowan (1968)	Separate Counseling with Parents & sons	Comparative: 3 Experimental & 1 Control Groups (8 sets of 4 students each)	32 Matched 10th grade boys & their parents	Counseling with students only did not improve grades but did improve study skills
Gurman (1970)	Concurrent Parent/Student Groups	Descriptive: Wide Range of Students; No Control or Matched Group	18 10th grade boys & their parents	No research data offered; Under-achievers should be viewed in family systems context
Navin & Bates (1987)	Parent Groups, Tutoring	Comparative: Experimental & Control Groups (7 each)	14 Remedial Reading Students (4-9th grade) & their parents	Experimental group improved in reading attitude & comprehension
Miles (1974)	PET & Verbal Reinforcement Group Counseling (VRGC)	Comparative: 4 Groups (15 each)	60 Students & their parents	PET & PET/VRGC showed improved behavior & attitudes toward parents; No improvement in self esteem & attitude toward school
Williams, Robison & Smaby (1988)	Family Problem Solving & Communication Skills Model (FPSCS)	Descriptive: Model	Applicable Elementary through High School	No Research Data Offered

Author/Year	Issue	Methodology	Subjects	Outcome
Rauschenberg & Binegar (1988)	Family Centered Study Skills Workshop	Descriptive: Model	12 Families with Underachievers	Parents & students learned they could work together, students felt less pressure & improved attitudes Parents learned practical techniques
Weissman & Montgomery (1980)	Multiple Family Training Program (MFT)	Descriptive: Model	7 Families with total of 10 children	Parents & children learned skills & ideas
Castagna & Codd (1984)	Study Skills Program with extension to parents at Parent Night	Descriptive: Model	Students in 9th English classes	No research data offered
Urich & La Vorgna (1980)	Faculty Home Visitation Program	Descriptive: Model	One high school with 2,000 students & their families	Students improved discipline, discussed disagreements with teachers & learned teachers cared; Parents volunteered time & energy; Teachers learned parents could be allies & were interested in their children
Chapman (1991)	Parent Education on video, homework lab & contracts	Descriptive: Model	One junior high with 40% of students doing homework	Increased communication, improved homework monitoring
Phillips & Rosenberger (1983)	Quest for the Best Program	Descriptive: Model	One high school including students, parents & teachers	Improved test scores, attendance, grades, fewer disciplinary problems

CHART 5
SELECTED STUDIES COMPARING VARIOUS PARENT PROGRAMS

Author/Date	Issue	Conclusion
Brown (1976)	PET, Parent Involvement Program, Responsive Parent Training, behavior mod., Adlerian Children the Challenge	Similar, simplistic, lacking in information on normal child development & techniques to deal with behaviors
O'Dell (1974)	70 Behavior Modification Studies	Lack of hard data on parental changes -- focus on child; most studies demonstrations, need research to compare techniques from various programs
Moles (1982)	28 home-school partnerships	Better attendance, achievement, behavior for students; confidence & involvement for parents
Croake & Glover (1977)	Historical perspective of Parent Education including behavior mod., PET, Adlerian, group counseling approach	Studies lack controls, measurable data, reliable/valid instruments, may have researcher contamination; most are descriptive
Henderson (1988)	53 parent involvement studies evaluating approaches to: parent/child relationship, parent involvement & home-school partnership	Parent involvement crucial to achievement, higher test scores, better attitudes/behavior
Heiser (1974)	Systematic Comparison of 12 parent programs involving 11 leaders & 60 mothers	Significant changes in mothers from pre-test to post-test; significant changes for mothers in different programs only occurred for 1 of 12 programs
Wilson (1986)	Systematic Comparison of 19 counseling studies involving 3rd to 11th grade students, parents, control groups, & GPA	Poor quality research, small sample sizes, lack of matched/experimental/control groups, follow-up assessment

APPENDIX B

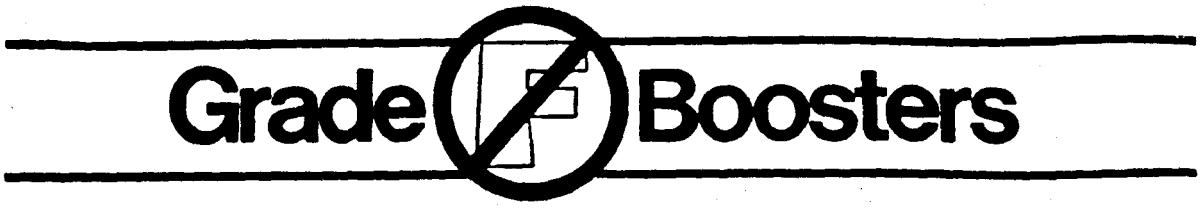
Grade F Boosters

LAKE PARK HIGH SCHOOL

EAST CAMPUS

November 7, 1984

TIME	PROGRAM	SPEAKER
7:30	Welcome	Mr. Pasquini East Campus Principal
7:35	Parent Frustration and Displaced Problem Ownership	Mr. Patrick East Campus Counselor
7:50	Parents Have Rights Too	Dr. Campagna School Psychologist
8:05	Motivation/Goal Setting	Mr. Grandt, Department Administrator Special Education
8:20	Strategies for Parents	Mrs. Lovelace West Campus Counselor
8:45	Study Tips and Homework Expectations	Ms. O'Reilly East Campus Counselor
8:55	School and Community Resources	Mrs. Clements, Department Administrator Pupil Personnel Services
9:05	Question and Answer Period	
9:15	Program Evaluation Coffee	



LAKE PARK HIGH SCHOOL

EAST CAMPUS

October 30, 1985

TIME	PROGRAM	SPEAKER
7:30	Welcome	Mr. Pasquini East Campus Principal
7:35	Parent Frustration and Displaced Problem Ownership	Mr. Patrick West Campus Counselor
7:50	The Power of Positive Parenting	Dr. Kroll School Psychologist
8:05	Motivation/Goal Setting	Mr. Grandt, Department Administrator Special Education
8:20	Strategies for Parents	Mrs. Lovelace East Campus Counselor
8:45	Study Tips and Homework Expectations	Ms. O'Reilly West Campus Counselor
8:55	School and Community Resources	Mrs. Clements, Department Administrator Pupil Personnel Services
9:05	Question and Answer Period	
9:15	Program Evaluation Coffee	

APPENDIX C

What do you think?

If you were asked to grade the program this evening, would you give it an A, B, C, D, or F?

What did you like most about the evening?

Do you have any suggestions for changes?

Did you come to Grade Booster Night last year? YES NO

Would you recommend this program to other parents? YES NO

From what you learned this evening, what changes in attitude or strategy do you think you will try with your child?

Would you come if this program were extended into a 2 to 5 night seminar?

_____I would come if it were _____nights.

_____I would prefer it remain as 1 night.

APPENDIX D

MILLETTA PHONE MESSAGE

"Hello./ This is Ms. O'Reilly from the Counseling Department at Lake Park High School./ Thought I'd try out our new automatic calling system./ Your help is really needed./ As a V.I.P. parent, we need you to participate in a survey/ which you will receive in the mail/ next week./ I know your time is valuable/ but please take the time to fill it out./ Remember/ your ideas and opinions are important to us and to future Lake Park parents and students./ If you have any questions,/ please give me a call at 529-4500 extension 342./ Thank you./

APPENDIX E

Lake Park High School
JAMES SLEZAK, SUPERINTENDENT

District 108
600 SOUTH MEDINAH ROAD, ROSELLE, ILLINOIS 60172

BLOOMINGDALE • ITASCA • KEENEYVILLE • MEDINAH • ROSELLE
312 529-4500

February 5, 1986

Dear Freshman/Sophomore Parent:

As a parent of a freshman or sophomore you are a V.I.P., a Very Important Parent! Your involvement with your student and Lake Park High School is vital to your student's success, as well as our success as educators. We would appreciate your response to the enclosed questionnaire on student achievement and parent involvement.

At the end of the first six weeks your student received at least one F. Since you now have your student's semester report, we would like you to review the past semester. Your responses on this questionnaire will be kept confidential and reported in summary form only. Surveys are coded in order that they may be correlated with school record information for data analysis. Your completion of this survey can help us better help other parents and students in similar situations. As the demand for excellence continues, your participation in this study is even more important to our goal of increasing the success achieved by our students.

Thank you for your assistance with this project. Please return the enclosed survey in the postage paid envelope by February 25, 1986. If you have any questions, please call Ms. O'Reilly in the Counseling Office at the West Campus, 529-4500, Extension 342.

Sincerely,

August Pasquini
Principal, East Campus

Jack Bils
Director of Special Services

Enclosures

APPENDIX F

DIRECTIONS: This survey is relatively simple to fill out. For most of the following items, you will only need to check (✓) the answer(s) that most closely describes your situation or feeling. For a few items, you will need to give a short answer.

V. I. P. PARENT SURVEY

1. The person responding to this survey is the student's:

   _____Mother _____Both parents together _____Step-mother

   _____Father _____Legal guardian _____Step-father

2. Since the first six week grade report how much time has your student been spending on homework or studying?

   _____More time _____Same amount of time _____Less time

3. About how much time do you find you are spending with your student regarding home work since the first six week grade report?

   _____More time _____Same amount of time _____Less time

4. How often does your student ask brothers or sisters for help with homework or when studying for tests?

   _____Often _____Never _____Brothers/sisters younger or not available

   _____Sometimes _____Not applicable, only child

5. Since the first six week marking period ended how would you describe your student's absence rate?

   _____Increased _____Stayed the same _____decreased

6. Since the first six week marking period ended how would you describe your student's overall attitude toward school?

   _____Improved _____Stayed the same _____worsened

7. How do you think your student generally feels about his or her teachers?

   _____Likes most _____Likes some _____Likes none

8. How many friends, if any, does your student have at school?

   _____Many _____Some _____None

9. Is your student involved in any extracurricular activities?

   _____Yes. Approximately, _____hours per week.

   _____No.

(Over)

10. Does your student hold a job? _____Yes. Approximately, _____hours per week.

_____No.

11. Since kindergarten how many times has your student transferred schools (from one district to another district; exclude the normal transition from elementary to junior high to high school)?

_____0 _____1 _____2 _____3 _____4 _____5 or more

12. Taking into account your student's abilities, how successful would you say your student has been academically during his or her years in school?

In Grade School?

_____Very successful _____Moderately successful _____Not very successful

In Junior High School?

_____Very successful _____Moderately successful _____Not very successful

In High School thus far?

_____Very successful _____Moderately successful _____Not very successful

13. What is your student's rank in the family?

_____Oldest of_____children _____Youngest of_____children

_____Second oldest of_____children _____Only child

_____Third oldest of_____children _____Adopted/foster child

_____Other, please specify_____

14. Is your home a single or a 2 parent home? _____Single _____2 parent

15. Since the first six week grade report how many times, if any, have you had occasion to contact the teacher of the class(es) in which your student received an F?

_____0 _____1 _____2 _____3 _____4 _____5 or more

16. Since the first six week grade report how many times, if any, have you had occasion to contact your student's counselor?

_____0 _____1 _____2 _____3 _____4 _____5 or more

17. Since the first six week grade report what level of concern have you felt from the school staff in general (teachers, counselors, administrators) regarding your student's progress?

_____High level _____Moderate level _____Low level

18. How did you feel about your student's academic situation when you received the first six week grade report? For each feeling on the scale below, place a T (for Then) in front of the number that shows how strongly you felt at the end of the first six weeks. A letter T in front of 1 shows you felt very strongly allied with a feeling on the left side of the scale. A letter T in front of the number 5 shows you felt very strongly allied with a feeling on the right side of the scale. A letter T in front of the number 3 shows you felt neutral about the feeling on the left as well as the feeling on the right.

How do you feel about your student's academic situation now that the semester is completed? Review the feelings below again and place an N (for Now) to show how you feel at the end of the semester.

	YOUR FEELINGS					
FRUSTRATED	____1	____2	____3	____4	____5	CONFIDENT
ANGRY	____1	____2	____3	____4	____5	CALM
INADEQUATE, HELPLESS	____1	____2	____3	____4	____5	CAPABLE, COMPETENT
ALONE	____1	____2	____3	____4	____5	NCT ALONE
WORRIED	____1	____2	____3	____4	____5	RELIEVED
WITHOUT HOPE	____1	____2	____3	____4	____5	HOPEFUL
HURT, VICTIMIZED	____1	____2	____3	____4	____5	STRONG, DETERMINED TO SUCCEED
GUILTY, RESPONSIBLE	____1	____2	____3	____4	____5	CLEAR CONSCIENCE
DISAPPOINTED	____1	____2	____3	____4	____5	PLEASED, SATISFIED
REJECTED	____1	____2	____3	____4	____5	APPRECIATED
IMPATIENT	____1	____2	____3	____4	____5	PATIENT

19. Check the following parent programs you and/or your spouse has attended at Lake Park High School.

____Freshmen/ Sophomore Parent Night this year on October 23, 1985

____Freshmen/Sophomore Parent Night last school year on October 24, 1984

____A principal's breakfast this past semester or last year

____Grade Booster Night this year on October 30, 1985

____Grade Booster Night last school year on November 7, 1984

(Over)

20. If you were not able to attend a Grade Booster Night, did you obtain a copy of the program materials?

_____Yes _____No

21. Have you attended any sessions or programs outside of Lake Park designed to assist you with your student's growth and development?

_____Yes. The program was called_____.

_____No.

22. Below is a list of strategies. Please look over this list and check (✓) those you learned about from Grade Boosters. If you are unfamiliar with any of the strategies, please place a check (✓) in the column marked "Unfamiliar with this strategy".

STRATEGY	LEARNED FROM GRADE BOOSTERS	UNFAMILIAR WITH THIS STRATEGY
Daily Progress Sheet		
Weekly Progress Sheet		
Counselor Report (3week)		
Teacher/Counselor Conference		
Calls to Teacher/Counselor		
Rewards at Home		
Loss of Privileges at Home		
Behavioral Contract		
Set Study Time at Home		
Tutoring by Class Teacher		
Tutoring by Non-Lake Park Person		
Counseling		
Grade Booster Coupons		
Special Person Placemat		
Other, Please Specify: _____		

23. Please look at the list of strategies again. After any strategy you have used with your student since the first six week grade report, please indicate by check mark (✓) how successful or not successful it was.

STRATEGY	VERY SUCCESSFUL	MODERATELY SUCCESSFUL	NOT VERY SUCCESSFUL
Daily Progress Sheet			
Weekly Progress Sheet			
Counselor Report (3 week)			
Teacher/Counselor Conference			
Calls to Teacher/Counselor			
Rewards at Home			
Loss of Privileges at Home			
Behavioral Contract			
Set Study Time at Home			
Tutoring by Class Teacher			
Tutoring by Non-Lake Park Person			
Counseling			
Grade Booster Coupons			
Special Person Placemat			
Other, Please Specify: _____			

24. If you wish to make any comments on the previous questions, please feel free to comment below. Indicate the question number before each comment.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

(Over)

25. Can Lake Park High School be of further assistance to parents of students experiencing academic difficulty?

Thank you for your patience in filling out this questionnaire. Remember the information you have given here will be kept confidential.

Together we can better help our high school students to achieve. Counselors are as close as your phone. Call us at 529-4500.

APPENDIX G

CODE_____STUDENT NUMBER_____

SEX MALE FEMALE

OF 1ST 6 WEEK F'S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

ABSENCES_____

COURSE LOAD 6 7

STUDY SKILLS YES NO

READING YES NO

DISCIPLINARY STEPS_____

APPENDIX H

Lake Park High School
600 S. Medinah Road
Roselle, Illinois 60172

Dear V.I.P. Parent,

Your help is really needed on the survey you recently received from Lake Park High School. If you have not already returned your survey, could you please do so this week?

Should you need another copy of the questionnaire, please call Ms. O'Reilly at 529-4500 X342.

Thank you for your time and effort.

Ms O'Reilly

APPENDIX I

Lake Park High School
JAMES SLEZAK, SUPERINTENDENT

District 108
600 SOUTH MEDINAH ROAD, ROSELLE, ILLINOIS 60172

BLOOMINGDALE • ITASCA • KEENEYVILLE • MEDINAH • ROSELLE
312 529-4500

SCHOOL PROFILE - 1985

COMMUNITY: Located approximately 30 miles northwest of the city of Chicago, Lake Park High School serves the suburban villages of Roselle, Itasca, Bloomingdale, Medinah, Kenneyville, and portions of Wood Dale and Hanover Park.

SCHOOL: Lake Park is a four-year, comprehensive school with the freshman-sophomore campus located at 600 South Medinah Road, Roselle, and the junior-senior campus located at 500 West Bryn Mawr, Roselle. An alternate school program is offered at the Lake Park Central campus located at 230 East Pine, Roselle. The approximate 1985-86 enrollment is 2,700. Lake Park is also a member school of the DuPage Area Vocational Education Authority (DAVEA).

FACULTY: Of the 182 certified staff members, 25% hold a Bachelor of Science Degree and 75% hold a Master of Science Degree or higher.

ACCREDITATION: Lake Park is fully accredited by the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools and the Illinois State Board of Education.

ADMINISTRATION: Principal, Assistant Principal, and a Dean of Students are located on each campus.

SCHOOL YEAR AND CLASS LENGTH: The school year is 36 weeks in length divided into two 18-week semesters. Class periods meet 50 minutes per day, five days per week.

CREDIT POLICY: One-half credit or .500 unit is granted for successful completion of a one period, full semester class. DAVEA courses meet for three periods and are granted 1.500 credits per semester. The on-the-job training (OJT) portion of the Cooperative Education program is considered equal to two periods of classwork and is granted 1.000 credit per semester.

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS: Twenty-two units of credit are required for graduation which must include the following:

English	- 4 credits
Physical Education	- 4 credits (includes 1 semester of driver education)
Social Studies	
Human Experience	- 1 credit
American Experience	- 1 credit (includes U.S. and Illinois Constitution tests)
Science	- 1 credit
Mathematics	- 1 credit (2 credits - Class of '88)
Consumer Education	- 1/2 credit
Health	- 1/2 credit

MARKING SYSTEM AND RELATED PROCEDURES:

The A, B, C, D, and F system is used to show success/failure in the in the classroom. Other marks include:

E - Excused from PE (no credit)
X - Excused from PE during course of semester (credit)
R - Removed from class (no credit)
W - Withdrawn from school (no credit)
Y - Audit (no credit)
P - Pass (credit)
F - Failure (no credit)

Courses labeled as Advanced Placement or Honors are weighted beginning School Year 1982-83. Grade point values are assigned in the following manner:

Letter Grade	Non-Weighted Courses	Weighted Courses
A	5	6.1
B	4	5.1
C	3	3
D	2	2
F	1	1

GUIDANCE STAFF: Two counselors are assigned at each grade level.

GRADUATE STATISTICS:

	'83	'84	'85
NUMBER OF GRADUATES:	556	559	515
GRADUATES PURSUING HIGHER EDUCATION:			
4 Year Colleges	38%	38%	44%
2 Year Colleges	27%	27%	26%
Taking SAT	4%	9%	6%
Mean SAT Verbal	504	490	520
Mean SAT Math	560	540	600
Taking ACT	58%	63%	67%
Mean ACT Composite	20.5	20.0	20.5
RECOGNITION:			
National Merit Finalists	3	2	3
National Merit Semifinalists	0	1	0
Commended Students-National Merit	10	5	6
Illinois State Scholars	46	45	50

APPENDIX J

Lake Park High School | District 108

DR. JAMES M. SLEZAK
SUPERINTENDENT

600 SOUTH MEDINAH ROAD, ROSELLE, ILLINOIS 60172

BLOOMINGDALE • ITASCA • KEENEYVILLE • MEDINAH • ROSELLE

312 529-4500

ATTENTION GRADE BOOSTER USERS:

We are very interested in the uses and variations of our Grade Booster Seminar. As we share our program with you and other school districts, in return, we would appreciate your comments, observations, additions, and deletions. This sharing will certainly contribute to the further development of Grade Boosters and thereby improve parenting skills and increase student academic achievement.

If you decide to host your own Grade Booster Program, would you please:

1. Respond to the following questions:
   a. What was the target population of your program?

      _____

   b. How many people were invited to the program?_____
   c. How many people attended the program?_____
   d. How long was the program? Hours? Nights?

      _____

   e. Did you feel it was successful?

      _____

      _____

      _____

   f. What would you change, if anything?

      _____

      _____

      _____

2. Acknowledge M. O'Reilly, L. Patrick and Lake Park High School District 108 as the source of your program and materials.
3. Provide us with a copy of your program outline and any handouts.
4. Send us a copy of the parent evaluations of the program or a summary, thereof.
5. Be reminded that Grade Boosters is copyrighted and part of a dissertation project.

Thank you for your interest in our program. We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Mary O'Reilly

Larry Patrick

APPENDIX K

REVISIONS TO GRADE BOOSTER NIGHT SINCE 1984

1. Number of program speakers reduced from six to two.
2. Program moved to a more conducive location.
3. Special Person Placemat dropped.
4. Three newspaper/magazine articles added.
5. Encouragement Pack added.
6. Grade Booster Pledge added.
7. Attitude Affirmations added.
8. Door knob sign added (DANGER! HIGH INTENSITY RELAXATION/GRADE BOOSTER AT WORK).
9. Intervention Strategies Sheet added.
10. Suggested Reading List increased from one to two pages.
11. Study Skills pages reduced from six to four.
12. Daily/Weekly Progress Sheets redesigned.
13. General Homework Guidelines added.
14. Grade Booster Puzzle added.
15. LANCERLAND Game added.

APPENDIX L

RECOMMENDATIONS TO OTHER DISTRICTS SPONSORING GRADE BOOSTER TYPE PROGRAMS

1) The district should send out a news release to local newspapers providing information about the program. Another way to publicize the program would be to present a sample at a preceding open house program to interest parents in attending. Whatever the choice of publicity, parents need to understand the who, what, where and why of the program.

2) Some kind of incentive for attendance should be provided. A certificate entitling the students whose parents attended GB Night to extra points in a D or F class might encourage parents to attend. These certificates (call them Grade Booster Bucks) could be handed out at the end of the evening. Teachers would need to publicize the availability of these extra points ahead of time.

3) More time needs to be incorporated into the GB program for parents to discuss with each other and learn from each other.

4) There are no written outlines for Grade Booster lectures; therefore, it is not easy for other districts to replicate. While this is done by design, consideration should be given to some kind of detail/summary of each topic. This is the kind of program that must be adapted to each district. Some topics appropriate to one district may

be inappropriate in another district.

5) Grade Booster Night, in its present form, tries to cover too much in one evening. Other districts may wish to spread it out over two to four nights or they may wish to offer it as a course through the community college.

6) Other districts may want to videotape the program and make it available to parents in their video library or at their community library. They may have access to cable TV and request that it be shown on a public access channel. Grade Booster counselors may want to host a special edition of Grade Booster Night on cable TV, a half hour or one hour in length or, perhaps, even a Grade Boosting series on cable.

7) To accommodate parent work schedules counselors may want to offer a day version of Grade Boosters or a Saturday version. They may wish to offer it twice a school year.

8) Parents should be asked to sign in at Grade Booster Night (their names and their children's names). With this list counselors can offer follow-up to these parents: study skills mailer, interim progress reports, motivational fliers, etc. They could call each of the parents in attendance one to two weeks after the program to ascertain how they were doing, if they needed further help or if they had questions.

9) Parents who attend a Grade Booster Seminar should go home feeling renewed, encouraged and supported. (They

already know there is a serious problem, otherwise they would not be there.) They should even feel they have had some fun that night. One way to have fun while learning to empathize with their youngster's situation is to play a nonthreatening game. Parents can share in the perspective of high school students by playing their roles in a game. A copy of the game could be part of the packet of handouts for parents to use with their children at home.

10) While this program has been designed for parents of ninth and tenth grade students, it could easily be adapted for parents of junior high school students.

APPROVAL SHEET

The dissertation submitted by Mary E. O'Reilly has been read and approved by the following committee:

Dr. Manuel S. Silverman, Director
Professor, Counseling and Educational Psychology, Loyola

Dr. Gloria J. Lewis
Associate Professor, Counseling and Educational Psychology, Loyola

Dr. John A. Wozniak
Professor Emeritus, Educational Leadership and Policy Studies, Loyola

The final copies have been examined by the director of the dissertation and the signature which appears below verifies the fact that any necessary changes have been incorporated and that the dissertation is now given final approval by the Committee with reference to content and form.

The dissertation is therefore accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education.

4/4/92
Date

Director's Signature