

Module 10 Assignment

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### Module 10 Assignment

When I graduate from the University of Mary I would like to teach in a public or private school. I'd like to teach in a primary grade, preferable kindergarten or first grade. I hope to teach at a school that has a smaller population/class size. Through this paper I will identify different strategies I will use for parent involvement in my classroom.

**Parenting**

The first type of parent involvement is the parenting type. Parents are the first teachers of their children. As teachers, we need to work with the parents in order to be successful. In this type of communication, the goal is to provide parents with information so that they can create a home environment and a parenting style that supports their child academically. All of the parents we are working with will have a different parenting style. According to Kimberly Kopko in her article *Parenting Styles and Adolescents* there are four parenting styles: authoritative, authoritarian, permissive, and uninvolved parents (2007). Often times these parenting styles are mixed. We will want to make sure all of the parenting styles are involved in our classroom. Some of these parenting styles will naturally want to be more involved whereas others won't. If we know the parenting styles of the parents we are working with we can tailor how we interact with them, such as having a variety of ways for them to be involved. Olsen and Fuller state, "teachers and parents have been called 'natural allies,'" (2012). Parents and teachers need to work together, because we are both working for the child's success. In regards to parenting we can learn so much from parents about their child such as their background, needs, and goals. We too then as teachers, can share information with parents. This information can be related to academics and development such as: what milestones your child is going to make in a year, what they are learning, and what is typical development. Teachers can also provide information on parenting or general education for parents.

One strategy I plan to implement regarding this type of communication is sending home information at the beginning of the school year that discusses the child development that occurs during that year as well as what the child will be learning in that grade. This way parents know what to expect for that year. The letter could also have information regarding how to help

develop those skills at home, some parenting tips. This information could either be sent out with or after the welcome letter or it could be handed out at the back-to-school night.

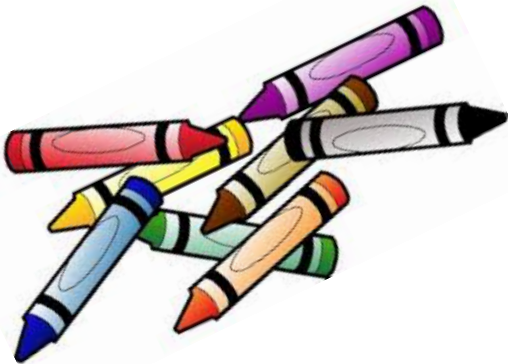
## What will your child learn in Kindergarten?

- Improved body coordination
- Enjoy dramatic play
- Enjoy exploring new materials and equipment
- Like responsibilities they can handle
- Understand language better than they speak
- Ask many questions
- Eager to learn
- Define things by their use
- Learn best with hands-on, active exploring



### Academics

- Notice words all around
- Identify letters and sounds
- Begin to read (CVC words, high frequency words)
- Begin to write CVC words and short sentences
- Simple addition and subtraction problems
- Identify and describe shapes and solids
- Weather, seasons, and plants
- Explore larger community
- Familiarity with numbers 11-19
- Count to 100 by ones and tens
- Concept of more/less



## **Communicating**

The second type of parent involvement is communicating. Communication between teachers and parents is so important. Teachers can communicate with parents how their child is doing, behaviors, what is coming up, etc. Parents can communicate with teachers what their child needs, their interests, anything they may be going through, etc. Parents and teachers need each other, so the communication between the two parties needs to be both ways, give and take. This means not just is the teacher giving information to the parent, but the parent has opportunities to give information back to the teacher. Olsen and Fuller identify some different barriers to communication, one of which is teachers waiting until issues are severe instead of contacting parents when it first starts (Olsen and Fuller, 2012). This could be avoided if teachers and parents are in regular communication, for both the good and bad. In her article, *Using Technology to increase Parent Involvement in Schools*, Christine Olmstead stated how, when teachers have well-organized communication with the parents there is a greater chance that they will be involved in their students learning (Olmstead, 2013, pg. 29). In our text Olsen and Fuller state different types of communication such as: verbal communication, home visits, parent-teacher conferences, written communication (welcome letters, newsletters), email, and class website (2012, pg. 110-123). Having good communication between teacher and parents allows the two parties to work together to achieve goals for the student.

In my classroom I want to have regular communication with the parents of my students. I want the parents to be involved in their child's learning, so they need to be informed about what is going on in the classroom. I will also need to communicate with them to learn about their child, because they know their child best. One of the main strategies I would use to communicate with parents is a class Facebook page. This would allow me to easily update all parents daily. Then

they also have a place where they can respond. Another way I would communicate with my parents would be monthly newsletters. The first way I would communicate with parents is a welcome letter. This would be sent out before the school year starts. It would contain information about myself, the class, information of how to contact me, as well as an invitation to the back-to-school night. Olsen and Fuller state, "It is very important to initiate communication with parents. (pg. 117, 2012). By sending out this letter I am initiating the communication as well as the relationship for the year.



Dear Parents,

Welcome to the new school year! My name is Krista Kreidt and this is my first year teaching. I graduated from the University of Mary with a Bachelor's in Early Childhood and Elementary Education. I am so excited to have your child in my class this year! I have many fun things planned for the year and can't wait to get it started.

I would like to work closely with you this year, I believe frequent communication is important. You know your child best. If you ever need to get ahold of me I can be reached at school. I arrive by 8:00am every morning and I am usually there until 4:00pm. The school phone number is 123-4567 and my extension is 1234. Please leave a message anytime with a number to return the call and I will get back to you as soon as possible. You can also reach me by email at [kkreidt@school.org](mailto:kkreidt@school.org)

Our class has a class Facebook page that will be updated often so be sure to keep up with that if possible. It is a private page, so I will go through how to access it at the open house. I will also be sending out a monthly newsletter with updates.

The Back to School Open House is Monday August 20<sup>th</sup> at 6:30-7:30pm. I look forward to meeting you and your child there!

**Volunteering**

The third type of parent involvement is volunteering. Volunteering can be done in many different ways. The typical thought is volunteering during the school hours in the classroom. Olsen and Fuller state, “70% of school-age children have all parents in the workforce,” (pg. 139, 2012). In order to address this teachers, need to offer a range of ways that volunteering can be done such as at different times and locations. Parent involvement and volunteering in the school has many benefits for themselves, the students, and the teacher. By parents being part of the school with volunteering their student can see that education is important to them.

The strategy I plan to implement is having a parent volunteer program. I will send out an information sheet at the beginning of the year that parents can fill out if they would like to volunteer. The sheet lists different volunteer opportunities, so the parents know what they will be doing. There are also options to volunteer from home to allow working parents opportunities to volunteer. The sheet also has options that are only occasionally or one time, which would hopefully be easier for working parents. Hopefully by sending out this sheet at the beginning of the year, parents could choose a one-time activity for a day they have off of work. I choose this strategy because it directly gives parents options, I thought by having a form like this maybe more parents would be likely to check something versus if I just asked for volunteers in general. I also hope by sending this out parents would feel welcome in the classroom. I would make sure to make parents aware of other volunteer opportunities throughout the year, such as chaperoning field trips, in case their schedule changed or they changed their mind. So even if they didn't fill out the volunteer form they have a chance to volunteer again.



# We Classroom Helpers!

I understand that many jobs and/or other life commitments don't provide parents or grandparents time to spend in the classroom. However, if you do have some extra time or your days are flexible, we would love to have you in the classroom! We would love to have you anytime, even just for special occasions! If you are interested, please take a moment to fill out the form below.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Child: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

I would like to help with: (Please check all that apply)

Send home work for me to do

Help with parties

Laminate

Copying

Work with small groups

Chaperoning field trips

Prepping Classroom materials

Guest reader (single time)

No preference

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

I would like to volunteer (please circle): weekly   monthly   other: \_\_\_\_\_

I am available (please circle): M   T   W   TH   F   In the: AM   PM

## THANK YOU!

### **Learning at Home**

The fourth type of parent involvement is learning at home. Like stated before, parents are a child's first teacher. They are at home with them when school is not in session. The time spent at home is greater than spent in school, which is why learning at home is important. Learning at home will enhance what the child is learning, provide more experiences, and reinforce what has been learned in school (Olsen and Fuller, 2012, pg. 142). Teachers can help this involvement type by providing information and ideas for families about what they can do at home. Providing activities for home learning allows for parents to be involved in the child's education. Olsen and Fuller state, "Most parents across all grades want more information about their children's homework, homework policies, and tools for helping their children," (2012, pg. 143). Some different ways learning at home can be implemented is a backpack reading program, home kits, and interactive homework.

The strategy I would implement in my classroom is sending home activities ideas for parents to do with their child. These ideas would be related to what we are covering at the time. Since I would like to teach in a lower elementary these activities could be a form of homework, but there wouldn't be a requirement to complete them. I would either send them home in the monthly newsletter or as a separate sheet monthly, like the one below. I would try to give activity ideas that do not require many extra materials or just use household materials. This way all parents could easily do the activities with their child. If needed once I know my families, I could send home materials with a child. I choose this strategy because I want to give parents specific ideas of how they can enhance their child's learning at home, since many may be willing and want to enhance their child's learning but may not know how. I also like it because even if

they do not complete the activities, the parents are informed about what their child is learning in school.

# Math At Home

Show your learner that math is in our everyday lives. Help your child to find enjoyment in basic math activities with some simple ideas.

## Concept Focus:

This month we are focusing on knowing number names, the counting sequence, and identifying and comparing shapes. By the end of the year a goal is to count to 100 by ones and tens, as well as count backward from 20 by ones.



## Try This!

- Count while doing basic activities.
  - Going up the stairs, setting the table, counting objects that are seen throughout the day.
- Start adding simple numbers through basic tasks.
- Read counting books.
- Identify shapes in your home.
- Sort shapes.
- Make numbers out of playdough. Then make that many playdough balls.

**Decision Making**

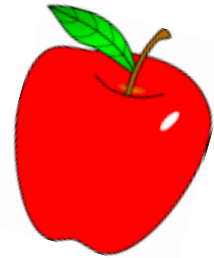
The fifth type of parent involvement is decision making. Parents can be involved in the decision making process in a few different ways. According to Olsen and Fuller, “Decision making involves a partnership process in which parents and educators come together and share their ideas and views, solve problems, and take actions toward a shared vision that contributes to school goals and policies,” (pg. 144, 2012). Parents can be involved by participating in the PTO, different advocacy groups, or by informing other parents of what is going on. By being a part of the decision making process parents have an awareness of what is going on, but also have a voice on what is happening. Teachers then know how the parents feel and what they want and can work that into their decisions.

The strategy I will use in my classroom is inviting parents to planning events and making them aware of the PTO. Parents may not be aware of the PTO or what it does, especially if it is their first child in school. I would make sure parents knew of the PTO meetings coming up, what is on the agenda, and why it is important for them to go. On a smaller scale I would want to involve parents in the decision making process within the grade level or my classroom. This could be done at the beginning of the year or quarterly, depending on the planning process. I would invite families to come and give suggestions on our ideas or ideas of their own. This planning meeting could be at night, so more parents have the opportunity to come. As the teacher, I would have planned before with my team so we have ideas to present to the parents and then they can give us their input.

Dear Parents,

You are welcome to attend our Kindergarten team planning meeting Wednesday, September 15<sup>th</sup> at 6pm. At the meeting we will be discussing curriculum and activity plans for October and November. We would love to hear your suggestions and ideas! We want you to have a voice in your child's education. We hope to see you there!

-The Kindergarten Team



**Collaborating with Community**

The sixth type of involvement is collaborating with community. Collaborating with the community can refer to the school reaching out the community for services for school programs, learning, activities, or resources for families. It can also be the school giving back to the community through service. Some results for students collaborating with the community are skills and talents gained from experiences, awareness of careers, benefits from programs, services, and connections to the community. Parents can benefit through knowledge of resources in the community and interactions with families. Teachers can use the community resources to provided experiences and activities with the curriculum, use skills of community members, and introduce families to needed resources (Epstein, pg. 6)

I want to have a big focus of service in my classroom. I would like to instill in my students a love for service and an understanding of why it is important. I think this can be done at a young age. Some simple things we can do are write thank you letters(pictures) to the community workers we know, recycle, and pick up garbage in the community. I would also like to use the community members as resources for my students learning. One strategy I would like to implement is a mystery reader program. I would ask for volunteers through parents and community members. I would allow anyone to participate, but I would put a main focus on community workers (nurses, construction, farmer, etc.). The mystery reader would write down clues about who they are that I would read throughout the week to the students, so they can guess who might be coming. These clues could be related to their career or a student they know in the class. I would implement this program throughout the school year, having mystery readers monthly or every other week.

# Mystery Readers!

Would you like to volunteer as a Mystery Reader in our classroom? As a Mystery Reader you will come into the class and read a book. You will give clues that I will tell the class before you come in so they can guess. So if you are a Mystery Reader you cannot tell anyone you are coming, even your own child so they can be surprised! ;) If you have a role in the community such as: doctors, nurses, construction workers, farmers, etc., it would be fun to relate your clues and books to that. Or you can just be yourself!

If you would like to be a Mystery Reader for our class, you may fill out the information below. I will contact you so we can schedule a date. I can also help you choose a book if you would like! You can return this paper to me in an envelope. Remember your identity is **Top Secret!**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Student: \_\_\_\_\_

Dates: \_\_\_\_\_



Clue #1 \_\_\_\_\_

Clue #2 \_\_\_\_\_

Clue #3 \_\_\_\_\_



## References

- Epstein, J. (n.d.) Epstein's Framework of Six Types of Involvement. *Partnership Center for the Social Organization of Schools*.
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- Olsen, G. and Fuller, M. (2012). *Home and School Relations: Teachers and Parents Working together*. New Jersey: Pearson Education, Inc.