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*Readiness: The Role of Family-School Connections in Supporting Student Success in Early Childhood*

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I am really delighted to be here. I think this is a wonderful conference. It brings together a really unique group of participants and as far as I know it's not a common occurrence to bring together researchers, practitioners, policymakers, administrators, so it's really exciting for me and I'm hoping—I know they said I have until 11:30 to talk—but I don't want to just be talking at you so I have some things to present but I want to invite you to at any time to interrupt me to share your insights. A lot of you have been working in the field for years and so I think we will all benefit from hearing what you have to say and also at the end in your groups you'll be able to have some time to really discuss what I'm sharing with you today--how it has implications for what you are doing in your school.

To get started, I worked with Elena Lopez to come up with this title. I think we had a different title in the beginning, but readiness was part of the title when she sent it to me and I think that having it there actually has some neat implications. When we traditionally think of early childhood and we think of readiness, we think of school readiness and we think of school readiness in relation to children, and what I want us to think about as I'm presenting this information is that on the other side of the coin, we have families and schools, so it is really important when we're talking about the early childhood period to realize that everybody is getting ready. The children are getting ready, the parents are getting ready, and the schools are getting ready, and so I want to emphasize that point because it has implications for the notion of connections later on.

Dr. Mapp said some wonderful things which I am going to repeat in my presentation but maybe in a little different framework. I hope it's not too repetitive. I am encouraged that there are repetitive things being said because that means a lot of us are on the same page.

Today what I want to do is to provide you with a really brief overview of the parent involvement literature. I mean briefer than Dr. Mapp did, and then I want to talk about the research I was involved in when I was at Penn. I've only been at NYU for about a year and a half so most of my research experience in Head Start was at the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia and I worked on two partnership-based studies. Then, I want to spend some time talking with you all, based on what we know, where we do need to go? And, I hope, that is what will be the discussion at your tables during the last 20-30 minutes of this session.

So this is basically what we know—that most of the research on parent involvement has really emphasized the

relationship between what parents are doing to be involved in their children's education and academic achievement. Particularly, we know a lot about how it relates to math and reading and that's across the grades for the most part. We know that some studies have linked parental beliefs and expectations about children's learning to children's own beliefs and expectations of themselves. And that these parental beliefs and expectations are also related to children's achievement. But fewer studies have linked parent involvement to children's outcomes for vulnerable groups, such as low income preschool children. I also think we have a pretty good knowledge base of elementary school parent involvement, and we're building a knowledge base of middle school and high school parent involvement. But preschool parent involvement, although it's emphasized rhetorically and politically, and in practice, it is not as well researched and there are some problems with the research that exists. So I want to address those briefly and then talk about how we tried to address some of those limitations in our studies.

The research that does exist supports that family involvement is important during the preschool years. I don't think that anyone here would argue that. But here are some of the findings. The number of volunteer hours and the number of workshops or meetings attended actually relate to children higher levels of school readiness competencies - specifically, behavioral compliance and peer social competency. That's one finding that has actually been repeated in a few studies. Parent involvement in children's education at home is also related to their motivation and their sense of self-efficacy, so their sense of themselves as learners and as competent learners. When parents report that they feel their involvement is somehow inhibited (and I'll talk more about that a little bit later) that relates to children's poor social relationships as rated by both their parents and their teachers. And parents' understanding of children's pro-social behavior at home actually relates to a variety of school readiness outcomes. So how parents are observing their children respond to their peers at home and in the neighborhood relates to school readiness outcomes as measured by teachers.

Qualitative studies also give us some information that quantitative studies can't, just because of the nature of the methodology. For instance, qualitative studies suggest that parent involvement practices may manifest in culturally specific ways. I don't think that is a surprise to people, but I'd be interested in hearing from you all - in your work with different family members, how you've seen that occur in your program. These practices are typically invisible to school personnel. They are happening at home and therefore they are not as recognized and not as documented. So, this is an important piece that I think played out in our research. Traditional conceptualizations of family involvement are inadequate for some groups because we have expectations based on the expectations we've always had. As someone pointed out earlier, a lot of times we do more of the same and we haven't adjusted those expectations based on what families are doing and really trying to understand what families are doing well already; we need to know more about that.

Barriers exist with respect to the types of family involvement expected by the mainstream school culture. A lot of qualitative studies that have been conducted have been conducted with Latino families. There are other groups that have been studied but the majority of these studies have occurred with Latino families. What I want to present to you just so you understand where I am coming from in approaching our research and our research partnership with Head Start is to present you a child-centered strength based model of how we think about research and how it informs practice and how practice informs research because as many of you know, we talk a lot about evidence-based practices, best practices in education, and a lot of folks look to the research to find out about that, but I don't ever want the people to forget where we get that research from. We get it from the educators who are doing best practices. So it's really important that when we are thinking about the issue of family involvement that we consider the *theory of the whole child*, particularly in early childhood that we don't forget that there are really four multiple when it comes to thinking about the whole child. Children have multiple competencies that they demonstrate; they have multiple contributors to the development of those competencies; they develop in multiple contexts—the home and school are the

most profitable contexts in most cases, and there are multiple courses that we experience children developing through, so there's the issue of children's development over time. And I think it's helpful to think about family-school relationships in those same terms - they are influenced by multiple people, can take multiple courses, and change over time.

If we start out with the theory of the whole child, we have to have a way to get *quality information* to substantiate that theory, to develop that theory, to grow that theory, and one way we do this is to ensure that we are using reliable and valid constructs. So what is family involvement? There is a lot of research out there that speaks to the issue of family involvement; but how did they measure it; how did they look at it; how did they define it? And everyone defines it a little bit differently. So this issue is really important: that whatever conclusions we are drawing from studies, that we understand how the core constructs were actually measured. And that the constructs that we develop and validate are culturally appropriate. Currently, in New York City I'm working to help establish valid constructs for the Latino families we are working with in Head Start because we think, based on the information we have so far, that family involvement behaviors might manifest differently. It might not be that the construct of family involvement per se is different for this group, which is made up of many subgroups, but that the operationalization or the specific behaviors of parents may be very different than what we've assumed. When we develop measures, and particularly when we're collecting information from teachers who have a very busy day and a full schedule already, we have to be mindful to develop measures that are ecologically sensitive. So if we are collecting information from parents it has to take into account where parents are, the kinds of language that they use, so that the information we get is quality.

Finally, if we start with the theory of the whole child we gather quality information about whatever construct we are interested in, in this case family involvement, then we're working toward making *beneficial connections*, and in this case the connections are between the family and the school. This is just a kind of visual picture of the partnership-based model that I engage in, and the students that I work with engage in and the base of this whole notion is that we have to establish partnership and it's just what Dr. Mapp said earlier that it's all about relationships and real relationships that are reciprocal. For example, as equal partners with our Head Start folks, we help to build capacity within their programs to collect the kind of information they are interested in. So the Head Start programs we are working with right now are interested in assessing the family involvement practices in their center. So we are helping them to build that capacity to systematically examine the family involvement practices of their families. Then we utilize that information which we work really hard to ensure is quality and then at some point along the way, if we get the information that we think we're needing, we might construct and conduct interventions and then test their impact. But you can kind of see that this is the bulk of what we're doing [building capacity], so a lot of researchers, and maybe some of you have had experiences with this, come in at this stage [immediately conducting research]. And they don't spend time working with programs to do build essential capacity, and I think that has large implications for the findings we have in the field. It is really important that we spend the time here and our resources here before we go here. And just to reiterate, this is an ongoing process so every step informs the other and a lot of times we go back before we go forward.

*(Question from audience):* When you do the test impact at the top, the last step so to speak, do you do follow-up with that. I mean, do you test the effect and move on? Or do you then work with the educators and the people to do the follow-up?

McWayne: Absolutely. Good question. I have to repeat it for the camera. Jennifer Lapine asked if we do follow-up after we get to the top of that triangle where we are testing impact. What is the nature of that follow-up and is it done.

"Yes" is the answer to that question. The work that I've been involved with for the last eight years has been mainly at the building capacity level. We worked a lot of years trying to develop valid measurement constructs for the families we're working with in Head Start. The school district's program is a large program, so we were fortunate to have the numbers we needed statistically to develop measurement that we developed with them. Even at that stage it was going back and checking and we did our statistical stuff back at U Penn, and then we would take it to them and ask, "Does this make sense?" The Head Start folks would reflect on what we shared with them and we would modify the measures based on their feedback. So yes, and I have not up to this point been involved in an intervention so that's kind of the next logical step. That's where we're moving but certainly our Head Start partners would be involved in every aspect of that; it's for their program. The idea is that this is something they could conduct on their own with the consultants' help or with our help but this would be something they would own and take over. That's our approach - to work ourselves out of a job.

*(Question from audience):* I have a question about your basic use of the word "school." Are you now talking about a public school or are you still talking about the early childhood environment?

*McWayne:* Good question. Are we talking about public school or the early childhood environment? For me, coming from Philadelphia, they are one and the same in many respects, because the Head Start program we worked with was housed within a school district, a public school system, so it happened to be the largest service of Head Start families in that city. Now that I am in New York, I am working more with individual centers and so I am adjusting to a new system of early childhood education and I don't know how many folks are familiar with New York City, but there are a lot of early childhood providers, and so it has taken me a while. I still don't have a good cognitive map of the early childhood land in New York City, but I expect I'll be working with both private Head Start and public school centers at some point.

So to move along, when these measures were developed, Epstein's typology of parent involvement was used. (And I use parent involvement and family involvement interchangeably.) Specific items were created that would reflect behaviors parents engage in. Those who are familiar with her work will recognize these components. I will summarize them. Parents are involved by helping to meet their children's basic needs, establishing a positive learning environment at home, conversing with their teacher or other personnel at school about their child, participating in classroom school activities, participating in the school's decision-making process, and engaging in political action relating to the child's education. This is where we started, so I want to throw out either rhetorically or for you to respond to, what's missing from this typology, not to criticize Joyce Epstein's work but to get us to think about because of her work we can actually move forward. What's missing from this?

*Audience response:* I think one of the things that's missing is taking the learning outside the classroom to the community.

*McWayne:* Other ideas?

*Audience response:* The piece that I call parent engagement and it occurs there somewhere between point 1 and point 2, in that establishing the positive learning environment is not interactive enough for me, and so I prefer to use the term parent engagement so that would be the parent interacting with the child around the education that is occurring in the school as well as the education at home.

*McWayne:* Okay, good. So the notion of parent engagement and learning both at school and at home with the child.

*Audience response:* Lack of support is missing. Many parents don't have the tools to create that learning environment at home or need support. So I think that that is the key piece of it.

*McWayne:* So lack of support and not having the necessary tools to engage.

*Audience response;* I think what is missing for me, looking at this, is the school. What is the school doing? What is the teacher doing? This is all about what the parents are doing. What is the school doing to reach out to the parent, to be welcoming, ready and all that?

*McWayne:* Great, so that is really the thing that is missing here and I don't think that it was intentional. I think this was meant to be a typology from the family side. But it's the issue of the transaction between family and school. So what is the school doing, going back to that title "How is the School Ready to Engage Parents?" and the studies I am going to present to you do not address that, so I just want to say that as a disclaimer but I want you to keep that in your mind, because that is really important for you to talk about in relation to these findings and in relation to the literature at large in your groups at the end.

In the first study we validated the Family Involvement Questionnaire, and it was a multidimensional instrument so we really wanted to get at the multiple ways that families are involved, not using a survey item in a larger research protocol to just ask how many times they've done this or this or this, but really looking at what are the different ways they are involved in their child's education. The measure was co-constructed with Head Start parents and Head Start teachers. So they were at the table telling us what kinds of things both parents and teachers are doing and also reflecting with us when they would write the items, you know, is this something that parents are going to respond to honestly or is this question maybe a little too sensitive or maybe the language is inappropriate or maybe it's not a culturally relevant item? So we worked really hard in the beginning to make sure that this measure would work with our population. It was based on Epstein's family involvement typology, so it's asking what families are doing with their kids on a Likert type scale, where for each item the parent rated whether they "rarely," "sometimes," "often," or "always" engaged in a particular behavior. It is a 42-item scale.

For the development and validation of this measure we worked with 641 Head Start parents in Philadelphia's school district program. The program serves a predominantly African American population...96% of the participants were African American. I don't remember the exact breakdown of mothers and fathers but it was also a predominantly single mother sample, which also reflects the demographics of the program.

Three family involvement dimensions emerged in our analyses. They were: school-based involvement, home-based involvement, and home-school conferencing, the last of which we were hoping would start to get at that transactional issue. And the alpha's over here are an indication of the reliability of each of these dimensions. They are all adequate in terms of their reliability. So you can get a flavor for what some of the items were—for the home-based involvement dimension it covered things like spending time at home with your child's reading, working on numbers, and creative activities, bringing home learning materials such as videos, talking about the parents' own experiences in school with their child, and taking the child to places in the community like the zoo, the museum, the public library.

The school-based involvement dimension asked things like, - which I think we probably consider the more traditional types of involvement—volunteering in the classroom, going on class trips, meeting with other parents to plan events, attending workshops for parents. And examples of home-school conferencing—talking with the child's teacher about their child's learning difficulties and accomplishments, discussing with the child's teacher ways to promote learning at home, and this is an exact item, "I feel that teachers and administrators welcome and encourage parents to be involved

at school." This last item gets at the transactional issue a bit more by asking how welcoming the school atmosphere was.

And these are the results. We looked at demographic differences within this population and we found that for the school-based dimension if parents had more than a high school education they had higher school-based involvement than parents with a high school education, who also had more school-based involvement than parents with less than a high school education. When they came to home-school conferencing, if they had more than a high school education then they evidenced a significantly higher levels of home-school conferencing than these two groups. But there were no differences between these two groups (i.e., parents with a high school education versus those with less than a high school education). Now what you notice is missing here in terms of education level is what? Home-based involvement. So this is really illustrating for you what was said earlier today—that home-based involvement is happening regardless of caregivers' education level. That's a really important point that will play out in later slides.

In terms of marital status, married mothers reported more involvement at home with their children than single mothers, and in terms of home-school conferencing the same pattern existed. It didn't matter whether they were single or married in terms of school-based involvement and I think that makes sense to me based on the particular sample in this school district's Head Start program. If we did this study now after welfare reform has taken effect, I think we might find that has changed. With respect to the number of children that the parent had, their employment status and child gender—there were no differences for the three dimensions of involvement.

Now let's take a look at the relationship between family involvement and school readiness. Family involvement was measured at the beginning of the year around November, so the children had been in the program for a few months. And then the outcomes were measured in May and June of the following year. Competence motivation, attention and persistence, attitude toward learning, conduct problems, and receptive vocabulary were the child outcome measures.

You can see the magnitude of correlations are low to moderate and in the expected directions. So, school-based involvement is relating to the positive outcomes for children and negatively relating to conduct problems. The same is true with home-based involvement, and the correlations are a little bit higher for home-based involvement. For home-school conferencing we didn't have as many significant relationships but we saw positive relationships with competence motivation and receptive vocabulary and negative relationships with conduct problems.

Any questions about these findings so far?

Okay. Next we took a multivariate look at our data and without showing you all the numbers I just want to summarize what these multivariate analyses revealed. In the bivariate correlations, you are looking at one-to-one relationships and that's what those numbers represent, but in multivariate analyses, we can put everything in there together; it takes care of some of the statistical redundancy, some of the overlap among the variables. And then we get, I think, a cleaner picture of what's actually going on. What we found is that home- and school-based involvement—those two dimensions—related with children's motivation, attention persistence, and positive attitude toward learning. So the home-school conferencing dimension kind of dropped out there. We also learned that home- and school-based involvement related with children's lower levels of conduct problems. So then you have the negative correlation there. When we ran simultaneous multiple regression and put all three of the family involvement dimensions in together—home-based, school-based, and home-school conferencing- and let them compete with each other in terms of each of the outcomes, we found that only home-based involvement, when controlling for the effects of the other two, related to child competencies and level of behavior problems. So what this is suggesting is that parents' presence at the center and parents' conferencing with their teachers is not as important as home-based involvement, for this

sample, when controlling for the effects of reported home-based involvement behaviors. Any thoughts about that?

*Audience Member:* One might argue then, is it even better for kids to be home with their parents in the early years than be in school programs?

There is research on that. I'm not as familiar with it. Other folks in this room might be. It's somewhat of a controversial issue.

*Audience Member:* Yes, it is. And what we've discovered, too, in the early childhood programs in Connecticut is that because the majority of parents are working parents today, and over half of our population are coming from wealthy homes, and more single parents raising children than ever before, that, is what the child doing in those early years, and thus the need for quality education and care programs. But interesting that that's what you discovered.

*McWayne:* I want to propose to you a couple of things to pull this out and to keep the debate alive. Because I think it's an important question. And we know the reality, so we have to deal with the reality. Our sample was comprised of mostly single moms, predominantly. Because remember, the home-based dimension didn't differentiate in terms of education level. We did find that single moms were doing less of this. But single moms were the majority of the population. So it would be interesting to break down that analysis to really look at that question and tease that out. But my bet is that there are some single moms in that group who are doing home-based involvement. And I think what we want to do is find out who they are and what they're doing. And in a program like Head Start and other preschool programs, we need to see schools as places where parents can come together and empower each other. There's a great study that was published, I think it was in 1999. Sally Canning Schwering was actually the author. She conducted an experimental study examining traditional parenting workshops and then empowerment workshops, where the parents actually designed them and ran them. And significant differences were found, not only with respect to parents' own sense of their parenting and their efficacy, but on child outcomes. So I think, we don't want to throw things out, which is, unfortunately the movement right now, nationally. Family involvement is a really important aspect of programming to keep in early childhood.

This is a correlational study, so the causal effects of things cannot be teased out here. I want to just emphasize that home-based involvement is a salient part of kids' experiences that we need to understand more about because we're in a position to intervene. And we have to be careful of the assumptions that we make that traditional parent involvement (parents volunteering at school) is the right or only way to go. We actually need to acknowledge that there's some stuff going on at home that we may not know about that's really important, particularly when we're talking about different cultural groups. What this says to me is that we need to pay more attention to what's going on at home and perhaps do things a bit differently at school (in terms of contact with families), so that it matters more with respect to child outcomes.

We developed an instrument for kindergarten parents that included a different dimension. The first two dimensions were very similar to the home-based involvement and school-based involvement dimensions. We added this Inhibited Involvement dimension, because we were interested in a measure of stress. Something that got at parents not being able to be as involved as they would like. And so really quickly, I'll go through those, in the interest of time. These were some of the items that appeared on that dimension:

- I worry that I don't spend enough time talking to my child about what he or she is learning at school.
- I have a tight schedule and don't have time to talk with other parents.
- Household tasks prevent me from having enough time to read to my child.

and,

- I am concerned that I am not involved enough in school activities.

There are many things that this could be tapping into, but you get the sense for that dimension. And these were the results. Supportive home learning environment came out on top in terms of significant relationships, with parent-rated child behavior, teacher-rated child behavior, and teacher ratings of parental encouragement. So, teachers' perceptions of parental encouragement also correlated with that dimension. Inhibited involvement was associated with parents' perceptions of their children's self-control. If parents felt they were experiencing inhibited involvement, then they rated children lower in terms of self-control. And in terms of teacher rating of parental encouragement, we find the same inverse relationship. So, pretty similar to what we found in the first study, just using slightly different family involvement dimensions and child outcome measures.

But what do we need to consider in terms of improving practice and research? I think we have to really talk about the tensions that exist in our programs. Talk about the tensions that exist in our understandings and acknowledge them. There's a phrase, "name the demons," if you will, that I think applies here. If you're familiar with this phrase, what do demons do? What do they get away with? They mess things up. And a lot of times they go undetected. And so by naming the demons, you're actually identifying them in a way that they can be dealt with and overcome.

If you work with that metaphor for a second, we have to consider these tensions that arise because of cultural and community discontinuities between the home and school contexts. We have to think about the ecologies of both families and schools, and we have to think about what's developmentally appropriate for the child. When we are developing our family involvement programs, we have to be sure that they fit some very realistic demands. They have to fit the mandates that are coming down from above. They have to fit the values of both the schools and the parents. They have to fit conceptualizations of what family involvement is, what's important about family involvement. And they have to fit resources.

So we have to be more creative about how we use our internal resources. This is just another picture to get at this issue. We know that both schools and families have rights. What is the school's right? What's your right as educators? To educate children, right? That's your right. You went to school for it, you're getting paid for it. It's your right. But what's the right of families? To impart their values on their child. To help their child understand their cultural background, their cultural history, the things that are important to their parents. Sometimes those things clash and this is the issue that you were getting at. A lot of times that creates tension because families and schools may not agree on what aspects of child development are important.

And that's a real tension. That's a demon that has to be named. And it has to be talked about. A promising solution to this is to acknowledge that families and schools have a shared responsibility, and to create interventions that work at helping folks come together and arrive at a mutual understanding.

When I talk about shared responsibility, and I think a lot of you would be able to add to this and expand it, but I think about three things. I think about reciprocal dialogue. I think about collaborative decision making. And I think about co-construction. And I think this has incredible implications for family involvement, how we're thinking about it, how we're developing our programs. It's really difficult to develop a successful family involvement program if you're not talking to the families that are going to be affected. You have to understand where they're coming from, what they need, what they value. And they have to understand what you value and what you see as your role with their child.

So it's reciprocal. It's two-way. It's bi-directional. And it's that conversation that creates the connection. But it's more than just talking. You really have to work toward a collaborative decision-making process in schools. Or wherever you're talking about these issues. Both sets of folks (parents and teachers) have to be at the table and have

to feel like they have equal influence in this process. And, finally, I think there's enough evidence out there, and growing evidence (and we need to do more work) to suggest that when we co-construct programs with communities, they're more successful. Because the ideas are coming out of a real partnership. They're telling us what they need. And we're able to respond to that.

So really quickly, I don't think I'm going to be able to get through all of this. But I just want to talk about future research for those of you who are interested in research or are conducting research. Qualitative studies have given us a lot of really rich information, particularly around issues of culture and the influence of culture on family involvement. But there are some limitations. Because of the small sample sizes that are involved in most qualitative studies, it's really hard to feel like it's representative of the population and that those findings can be generalized. So I believe that we need both qualitative and quantitative studies to really look at this. Generally, qualitative studies don't examine the relations between family involvement and child outcomes. They'll focus on one aspect or the other, in turn, to really tease it out.

Quantitative studies also have lots of limitations. Family involvement measures have traditionally been created with white middle-income parents. And that's true in just about everything we measure. So it's really important for us to start doing the work to develop measures with samples so that we can look at within-group issues. Individuals are often aggregated within large categories, like "Latino," for cross-group comparisons. And so there's no surprise that we find what we find. Because the measures were developed with one group and then we compare apples to oranges. So it's really important to do within-group work. And that's something that I'm committed to, and I know a lot of folks out there are. And, finally, we have to stop thinking about family involvement in a uni-dimensional way. We have to address the complexity of family involvement by including multiple dimensions of this construct in our research.

Related to the issue of capturing multiple dimensions of family involvement is the need to have a better understanding of the conceptualizations of family involvement within different groups, within different school districts, and creating measures that can be used to get that quality information that we need to inform systematic intervention. In summary, we need multi-dimensional measures, informed by culturally relevant constructs and operationalizations, using a co-construction process.

We also need to understand more about how family involvement changes across different developmental periods and the impact on children's school success. We need to know how it changes and how it stays stable (if it stays stable) using longitudinal designs and regression models that include other known correlates, because the skeptics out there are asking, "when you're just looking at family involvement, how do you know if you included this, this, and this, that those effects wouldn't wash away?" So it's really important that we're thoughtful about using research to look at family involvement in interaction with other variables. School variables also need to be examined, and their effects on family involvement. And this gets, again, back to that issue of transaction. What school characteristics are affecting whether or not parents are involved? And empirical investigations of programs that work, again using a strength-based perspective and informing best practices. There are lots of programs out there that are working; unfortunately, we don't necessarily know a lot about them.

With respect to the implications for practice and policy, I just want to put them up here for folks to reflect on a little bit. Some of the important tensions are the cultural discontinuities in current practice – related to the notion that parents and schools both have responsibilities. And the expert unilateral dictation of what family involvement is versus a reciprocal dialogue and collaborative action with families and schools. Important areas to address are cultural awareness and sensitivity, and I understand there's a nice session going on that deals with this issue. The exchange of

quality information on children's development in both school and home contexts is actually a really neat way to bridge home and school. Because when parents and teachers are talking about the child and how they're developing in those two different contexts, a lot of rich information can emerge.

In conclusion, establishing beneficial connections between families and schools helps to ensure the readiness of parents, teachers, and children. And I always express to my students that I start, or end, presentations with pictures of children, because this is why you all are in the room, this is why I chose the career I chose. She's who we're talking about, and she represents the children that we want to be successful. And I believe that it's a pretty easy formula. We use it in other aspects of our life. I don't know why we sometimes forget it professionally. Families and schools have to come together around their common purpose, which is helping children to be successful. A common language is then needed, so that you can talk with each other in a reciprocal exchange way. Really being able to engage, and be comfortable with different points of view, while working toward a common purpose. Finally, common procedures are needed. Again, this refers to collaborative action and shared decision making. So, I appreciate your attention today, and I hope that this can spur some exciting conversation.