

2019- 2020 Executive Summary of Parent Mentor Program Evaluation

Parent Engagment Institute of Southwest Organizing Project and
the Logan Square Neighborhood Association

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I. INTRODUCTION

Background

In the mid 1990s, school linked services and parent engagement movements emerged amid a growing recognition of the poverty, social exclusion, and violence experienced by many of the nation's children (Lawson & Briar-Lawson, 1997), the fragmented human service delivery system (Chaskin & Richman, 1992), and the alienation and marginalization felt by minority parents in their children's schools (Williams & Sanchez, 2011; Pérez Carreón, Drake, & Calabrese Barton, 2005). In Chicago, during this same period, the Logan Square Neighborhood Association (LSNA), an advocacy organization founded in 1962, initiated an organizing campaign that built on the growing recognition of schools as potential sites for the integration of community institutions and organizing parents to develop their capacity for leadership in their children's education and larger community context. In 1995 LSNA, based in a predominantly Latino under-resourced community, initiated this campaign in the form of a Parent Mentor Program in eight schools that focused on parent leadership development as well as school and community engagement as catalysts for social change (Warren, Hong, Rubin, & Sychitkokhong, 2009).

In 2005 LSNA joined forces with the Southwest Community Organizing Project (SWOP) to expand the program to the southside of Chicago and subsequently form the Parent Engagement Institute (PEI) to house the program. Twenty-five years later, with the support of the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE), the program has grown to a network of 144 schools and 32 community-based organizations in Illinois African American and Latino communities. Through an Ecological Model for Parent Engagement, the program facilitates parents in 1) developing skills and strategies that will support their students in improving academic outcomes, engagement and persistence and 2) promoting transformative forms of mutual engagement, integration, and investment between families, schools, and communities (Hong, 2011).

Current Study

This report provides a summary of the findings from the evaluation of the Parent Mentor Program of the Parent Engagement Institute (PEI) for the 2019-2020 academic

year. Due to the COVID pandemic, 2019-2020 was an extraordinary year for public education in the United States, in the state of Illinois, and for the Parent Mentor Program.

In a typical year Parent Mentors (PM) are assigned a classroom to assist teachers for two hours per day, Monday through Thursday. On Fridays, the Parent Mentors participate in trainings that support their capacity to assist in the classroom, engage other parents in the school, and provide leadership in the school and broader community. After reaching 100 volunteer hours, Parent Mentors are eligible to receive a \$500 stipend, with a two-stipend maximum per school year. The Parent Mentor Program is implemented in partnering schools through a network of community based organizations that are coordinated and supported by the Parent Engagement Institute that is collaboratively operated by the Southwest Organizing Project and Logan Square Neighborhood Association.

The 2019-2020 was not a typical year. The first semester of the academic year was marked by an 11-day Chicago Public School teacher strike in October and ended with distance learning for the balance of the school year following spring break. The move from a classroom-based to distance learning educational scheme was a tremendous challenge for students, parents, teachers, school administrators, and the Parent Mentor Program. The school system literally had to remake itself in a matter of weeks. On March 27, 2020 the Illinois State Board of Education issued guidance for this process in the [Remote Learning Recommendations During COVID-19 Emergency](#) document.

The Parent Mentor Program moved to respond to this new education reality. Many of the communities where the Parent Mentor Program operates have been disproportionately impacted by COVID-19. Chicago has a COVID-19 mortality rate that is 2.5 times the national average and African American and Latinx Chicagoans have COVID-19 mortality rates that are at least twice as high as whites (City of Chicago, 2020; Johns Hopkins University, 2020). Furthermore, students in these communities have been found to face additional barriers to remote learning due to several social and educational inequities (Issa, May 27, 2020). Consequently, many African American and Latino students were found to logon to the Chicago Public School e-learning platform at significantly lower rates than other groups during this transition period (Issa, May 27,

2020). These combined issues have raised concern that they can exacerbate long standing inequities in educational outcomes for students of color in Chicago.

Clearly, the closing of schools as a social distancing measure during the COVID-19 pandemic presents additional challenges in maintaining parent and school engagement and consequently, the associated academic and socioemotional benefits for students. This evaluation documents the efforts and outcome of the Parent Mentor Program to adapt to continue parent-school/and community engagement in light of the stay-at-home order and shift to remote learning during the period of this evaluation study.

II. REVISED EVALUATION RESEARCH FOCUS AND DESIGN

In previous years the effectiveness of the Parent Mentor Program was assessed from several program participant vantage points: parents, teachers, principals, and community-based organization program coordinators, with pre and post program participation surveys for some groups. This was not possible this year due to the instructional changes associated with the pandemic.

While pre-program participant surveys were conducted with teachers and parent mentors as originally planned, post program participant surveys were not completed because the in-school instruction was disrupted before the end of the academic year and many of the survey questions were not relevant for a distance learning context. In the original design, Principals and Teachers were to be surveyed at the end of the academic year, but this was determined to be too taxing for them given the overwhelming planning and coordinating responsibilities they had in association with the transition to distance learning. Rather than administering a post program questionnaire to the Parent Mentors and Community Based Organization (CBO) Program Coordinators at the end of the year, the evaluation design was modified to include focus groups with these two stakeholder groups in April and May. The revised evaluation design also included a secondary data analysis the Parent Mentor Program CBO Program Coordinators and Parent Mentor Program School Coordinator program logs for the months of March through May.

Because of the extraordinary nature of the change in the instructional model in the spring semester due to COVID-19, the researchers and the Parent Engagement Institute staff decided that it was important to pivot the evaluation to examine how a classroom-

based parent-school-engagement program, such as the Parent Mentor Program, had adapted in response to a rapidly changing education context during a public health crisis. We felt that this was of critical importance because the communities in which the Parent Mentor Program operates were unequally impacted by the pandemic. Specifically, we turned our attention to consider how the Parent Mentor Program had adapted to maintain parent, school, and community engagement during remote learning and social distancing measures in communities that are disproportionately impacted by COVID-19. We revised the design to explore the nature and means parent-school-community engagement in this context, as well its potential benefits for the academic progress and socio-emotional well-being of youth. This revised phase of the evaluation study was guided by four main research questions:

How do/can Parent Mentors use the knowledge, skills, and school and community relationships formed through the Parent Mentor Program to support the educational and socio-emotional development and well-being of their own children in remote learning contexts?

How does/can the Parent Mentor Program foster continued school-family-community engagement during a time of social distancing and remote learning?

How does/can the Parent Mentor Program support the educational efforts and goals of teachers and families in their school community while remote learning and social distancing practices are in effect?

How do/can Parent Mentors use the knowledge, skills, and relationships formed through the Parent Mentor Program to identify and respond to the health, social and economic impact of COVID-19 on the families in their school and broader community?

Data Sources

The Parent Engagement Institute partnered with 32 community-based organizations in Illinois to implement Parent Mentor Program in 144 schools in Chicago metropolitan and downstate areas during the 2019-2020 academic year. The participating organizations were: Blocks Together, Brighton Park Neighborhood Council, Centro de Trabajadores Unidos, The Support Group, Community Development Sustainable Solutions- East St. Louis, Decatur Family YMCA, ELL Niles Parent Center-Niles Township, Elmhurst, ENLACE Chicago, Family Focus Aurora, Family Focus CPS,

Garden Prayer Youth Center, Hispanic American Community Education and Services (HACES), Peoria Friendship House, Logan Square Neighborhood Association, Moline-Coal Valley Schools, Northwest Side Housing Center, ONE Northside, Southwest Suburban Immigrant Project (Bolingbrook), Southwest Organizing Project, The ACE Project, The Resurrection Project, Teamwork Englewood, Westside Health Authority, Arab American Family Services DreAAm House, Family Focus Englewood, Family Focus North Lawndale, Future Ties, Project Vision, and Opportunities for All. Parent Mentors, Teachers, and school and community-based Program Coordinators from all 32 organizations and 144 schools participating in the program were included in the evaluation study.

The revised evaluation design includes primary data from the Parent Mentor and Teacher surveys that were conducted prior to program initiation at the beginning of the academic year and focus groups conducted in the final month of academic year with a sample of Parent Mentors and Program and School Coordinators. The revised design also includes secondary data from the Parent Mentor Program CBO Coordinator and School Coordinator program logs. The Coordinators started keeping these logs in March when the schools transitioned to remote learning as a result of COVID-19.

In summary, this evaluation study included primary and secondary data sources. The primary data was collected through the administration of two surveys and 12 focus groups: (a) Parent Mentor pre-program participation survey (all parent mentors in all participating schools were asked to complete the survey), (b) Teacher volunteer pre-program participation survey (all teachers with a parent mentor in their classroom were invited to complete the survey), (c) eight Parent Mentor focus groups, and (d) four Parent Mentor Program School Coordinator focus groups. The secondary data was derived from Program Coordinator (a) Work Activity Logs, (b) Parent Mentors Check-in Logs, and (c) Weekly Workshop Logs.

For a complete presentation of the study and its findings, please see the complete evaluation report. This executive summary is limited to a presentation of the findings from the focus groups and Program Coordinator logs.

Sample

Focus Groups: A purposive sample of Parent Mentor and Parent Mentor Program CBO and School Coordinators were recruited for the focus groups. These two groups of program participants were selected for the focus groups because of the first-hand knowledge and information they possessed regarding how the PEI Parent Mentor Program was adapting to maintain parent, school, and community engagement during remote learning, as well as the program's ongoing benefit for the academic progress and socio-emotional well-being of youth in this new learning context. The sample was recruited from eight partner community-based organizations that represented the diverse ethno-racial, urban/suburban/downstate, and program participation tenure of current program participants. The CBOs included in the sample were: [Logan Square Neighborhood Association](#), [Southwest Community Organizing Project](#), [Future Ties, Community Development Sustainable Solutions](#), [Family Focus Aurora](#), [Active Children Excel \(ACE\) Project](#), [ENLACE Chicago](#), and [Peoria Friendship House](#).

Forty-three Parent Mentors participated in the focus groups. Twenty-four indicated that this was their first year in the program, while the others had two or more years of involvement. Forty-one participants identified as female and two as male; 22 as Latino, 19 as African American, and two as White; and 31 indicated that they were born in the U.S. and 12 in Mexico. Eleven participants were bilingual (English/Spanish), 20 were English speaking and 12 spoke Spanish. All of the participants had one to four children, with an average of 1.5. Their children were in pre-K to high school grade, and four Parent Mentors indicated that they had a child in Special Education and nine in bilingual education. Fifteen CBO and School-based Program Coordinators from the eight organizations participated in focus groups. Eight participants identified as Latino and seven as African American. The length of time that they had been Coordinators ranged from one to more than five years.

Secondary Data: The secondary data derived from all 32 of the Program and School Coordinator Work Activity Logs and Parent Mentors Check-in Logs was included in the content analysis. A sample of the Program and School Coordinator Work Activity Logs, Parent Mentors Check-in Logs, and Weekly Workshop Logs was analyzed in more detail to understand: 1) the types of assistance by recorded category indicated in the

logs: financial assistance, educational assistance, social distancing and safety assistance, social-emotional assistance, census, and other assistance; 2) how Parent Mentors were participating in community care; and 3) the focus of weekly workshops. The sample consisted of the eight CBOs that were selected for the focus groups because the communities and schools with which these organizations work represent the diverse ethno-racial, urban/suburban/downstate, and program participation tenure of current program participants and because the data from the logs could be used to triangulate the data from the focus groups. The eight organizations included in the sample were: Logan Square Neighborhood Association, Southwest Community Organizing Project, Future Ties, Community Development Sustainable Solutions, Family Focus Aurora, Active Children Excel (ACE) Project, ENLACE Chicago, and Peoria Friendship House.

Data Collection and Analysis

The CBO and School Coordinators recruited Parent Mentors to participate in the focus groups. Parent Engagement Institute staff recruited CBO and School Parent Mentor Program Coordinators for focus groups. The focus groups were conducted by the evaluation team members in a virtual format using the Zoom video conferencing platform and an interview guide. The focus group interview guides and participant demographic form were developed by the researchers and PEI staff in collaboration (see Appendices III-IV). The focus groups were conducted in English, Spanish, or in a bilingual format, as indicated by the participant group. The focus groups were recorded and transcribed for analysis. An inductive transcript-based analysis with open and axial coding of the focus group data was used to identify themes and their interrelationships (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Strauss & Corbin, 2008). Dedoose, a web-based application that facilitates the coding and analysis of qualitative data was used to aid in this process.

CBO Program Coordinators and school Program Coordinators checked in with Parent Mentors during the COVID-19 school closures. Coordinators were provided a script and an EXCEL entry forms to utilize during the check-in calls in order to gauge needs and challenges experienced by Parent Mentors, as well as to learn how Parent Mentors were engaging with their community and their schools during school closures (see Appendices VI-VII). Coordinators were asked to use call logs to track information

regarding the assistance they provided the Parent Mentors during their check-ins. Call logs commenced in March and ended in June 2020, but there is a variation of call log dates across organizations. Data from the logs were entered in EXCEL files by the Program Coordinators for each of the 32 participating organizations. The data from the 32 organization-based logs were collated into one file using the EXCEL power query feature. A content analysis was conducted using an online utility called Text Analysis to identify the most frequently appearing words and themes appearing in the Work Activity Logs and Parent Mentors Check-in Logs. Using that output, the evaluators identified several illustrative quotes that reflected the phrases that appeared most frequently in response to each of the questions presented in the log. An inductive transcript-based analysis with open and axial coding of the several items of the eight-organization sample of Program Coordinator logs was conducted to identify themes and their interrelationships.

III. SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

For a complete presentation of the study findings, please see the complete evaluation report. This executive summary is limited to a thematic summary of the findings from the focus groups and Program Coordinator logs.

It is well established that parent involvement has a positive impact on student academic outcomes. Research consistently demonstrates when parents are involved in their children's education, students are more likely to attend school regularly, to complete homework, to receive higher grades, and to exhibit more positive behaviors and attitudes. Previous research has also found that in many schools located in low-income communities, parent involvement is low because of real and perceived class, race, cultural, linguistic, and historical barriers (Mapp and Kuttner, 2013). The Parent Mentor Program of the Parent Engagement Institute has demonstrated success in addressing these barriers and in increasing parent leadership capacities and parent-school-community engagement (Hong 2011; Vidal de Haymes et al., 2019). Previous studies and evaluations of the Parent Mentor Program have documented its efficacy in advancing these goals. The current evaluation study documented the program's continued success in the promotion of parent-school-community engagement and educational and emotional

benefits for students, even in the context of the rapid shift to remote learning due to a public health crisis.

In addition, we also found evidence that the Parent Mentor Program supported the realization of many of the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) essential instructional recommendations and guiding principles as outlined in the *Remote Learning Recommendations During COVID-19 Emergency* (March 2020) monograph. The Parent Mentor program provided Schools and families direct support in promoting the following practices and principles delineated in the ISBE monograph:

- Districts must seek to implement remote learning that addresses the needs of all students and families by taking into consideration language, diverse learning needs, home living situation, legal status, access to technology, access to parental support, and access to transportation. Our most vulnerable student populations still need us most (p. 8).
- Practicing consistent communication with students, families, and staff to understand how the health emergency is impacting them. (p.2)
- Support the whole child -- their mental health, nutritional needs, and safety needs (p.8)
- Parents will need access to clear information and ample resources (p.8).
- Since home will be the new classroom, it is critical that remote learning must work in a multitude of family and home contexts. In this time of rapidly changing public health and economic uncertainty, districts must ensure that their method of remote learning accounts for...Students whose parents speak a language other than English and cannot assist with homework; Students who have special education needs (e.g., children with an IEP, twice exceptional students); Students who are coping with the illness or loss of a family member; and Students who are struggling with anxiety or depression (pp 9-10).
- Survey families to identify needs and follow through to provide for those needs. (p. 11).
- Encourage parent and child communication about health and wellness: diet, sleep, mental health, and good hygiene (pp. 12-13).
- In addition to providing activities appropriate to students' language proficiency levels, it is recommended that educators consider how to leverage the culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds of the families. To the extent possible, communication with families of multilingual students should be shared in the home language as well as English. (p. 21).
- Uplifting Family and Community -There are great funds of knowledge within multilingual families and communities that are often overlooked or undervalued as sources to inspire and support learning (p. 22).
- Take the lead on setting up “mutual aid” groups -- networks for families to both say what they need and say what they can offer -- to provide support to each other or set up swaps (e.g., exchanging recipes, books, games) (p. 23).

In short, we found ample proof that the Parent Mentor Program was supporting Illinois schools in meeting the guidance of the State Board of Education in considering the particular family and home context of their students and bridging the family-community-school connection in this moment when the home has become the new primary site for instruction. Findings from the 12 focus groups that were conducted with Parent Mentors and School and CBO program coordinators, as well as the analysis of a sample of School and Program Coordinator Work Activity, Parent Mentors Check-in, and Weekly Workshop Logs indicated that the Parent Mentor program played a critical role in keeping parents informed about school changes and distance learning, protecting their families health and emotional well-being, and accessing material and financial resources to address the needs caused by COVID relates job losses, furloughs, and reduced hours.

Educational Support and School Engagement

The educational needs identified, and assistance offered through the Parent Mentor program were many, varied, and in high frequency. Including:

- *Hardware:* Many families needed assistance in accessing tablets and laptops for their children. Many had difficulty in understanding the process for securing equipment from the schools. Some that had secured equipment needed assistance in having it replaced when they found it to be inoperable/damaged. While many had secured some equipment from the school, it was still insufficient for the number of children in the household.
- *WIFI:* Coordinators helped families that did not have access to internet get WIFI service established and helped those that had insufficient WIFI capacity to secure sufficiently stable and fast service to manage the on-line learning requirements.
- *Use of Technology:* Many families had difficulty accessing and using many of the distance learning platforms and programs, such as Class Dojo, Zoom, Google classrooms, and GroupMe. The Program Coordinators and Parent Mentors helped parents access and use these platforms and programs. Other parents needed assistance: in setting up email accounts and learning how to use them;

learning how to submit assignments; basic computer use; how to establish and manage passwords, and how to make and upload videos.

- *Accessing School Websites and Forms:* Others did not know how to access the CPS web-based resources such as remote learning guides, daily learning plans, calendar and deadlines, and communications to parents. Parents also reported difficulty in completing forms such as those used to request equipment loans and mobile device use agreements. Parent Mentors and Coordinators helped them access the web-based resources and complete forms.
- *Homework Packets:* Many parents were unaware of how to access homework packets. Once provided with the information, some were able to pick up them up, while others needed help to get them. Parent Mentors and CBO and School PMP coordinators provided needed information and/or helped them with this process.
- *Communication with Schools:* Some parents reported that they were not receiving communication from the schools and the Coordinators and Parent Mentors helped to correct this. The problems ranged from parents not knowing how to access communications to not have a current phone number or email registered with the school and not knowing how to update contact information. Because of this many were missing automated calls and emails from the school, as well as individual teacher communications. The Parent Mentors and Coordinators helped correct this problem on a case by case basis.

Teachers, Assistant Principals, School Counselors, and Principals frequently reached out to parent Mentors and CBO program Coordinators for assistance in contacting parents for which they did not have current information or for those that they had not been able to successfully contact. Again, Parent Mentors and Coordinators were successful in bridging this communication gap.

Many Parents had questions regarding graduation and parent teacher meetings but did not know how to get the information needed to participate. The Parent Mentors and Coordinators helped them to access this information and participate in these activities.

- *Coordinating Parent Committee Meetings:* School administrators and teachers reached out to Parent Mentors and Coordinators for help with contacting parents to set up PAC, Bilingual Committee, and Title 1 Parent meetings. They did this and also responded to parent committee member requesting help in preparing PowerPoint presentations and materials for meetings.
- *School Registration:* Some parents had questions about how to go about registering their younger children for Pre-K and Kindergarten classes, while others had questions about enrolling their children in new schools because they had or were moving. Again, Parent Mentors and CBO and School PMP coordinators helped them with this process.

- **Accessing School Lunches and Supply Distributions:** Many parents were unaware of how to access school lunches during distance learning. Once provided with the information, some were able to pick up the lunches, while other needed assistance in signing up for delivery. There were some instances where schools distributed supplies such as paper, and many parents were either unaware of the distribution or had questions about how to access the needed supplies. Again, Parent Mentors and CBO and School PMP coordinators provided needed information and/or helped them with this process.
- *Concerns Regarding Students with IEPs and Special Needs:* Some parents of students with IEPs or special needs indicated concern regarding the securing of support to continue their child's academic progress in a distance learning context. Some expressed the difficulty they experienced with a virtual IEP process. The parent Mentors and School Coordinators were able to share these concerns with the school staff and administrators and advocate for additional support for families.

Material and Financial Assistance

Parent Mentors and Program Coordinators received many inquiries regarding housing assistance, food assistance, health care access and insurance, assistance with utility bill payment, assistance with prescriptions and on-going medical care for chronic health conditions, rental and mortgage assistance, assistance for essential home repairs, assistance in finding employment, and information about COVID-19 CARES Act and other social welfare supports. The support offered by the coordinators ranged from providing information, making referrals, helping to complete applications for programs, to transporting individuals to food pantries, or delivering food to homes.

Health

Parent Mentors and Program Coordinators provided information regarding social distancing, hygiene practices, and wearing of face coverings to curb the spread of COVID. They also provided information about where to get testing and treatment, including information for individuals that are undocumented and and/or do not have insurance, and assistance with prescriptions and on-going medical care for chronic health conditions. They also provided information on how to secure masks and protective equipment. In some cases, they distributed masks, cleaning supplies, and hand sanitizer to families.

Mental Health

Parent Mentors and Program coordinators indicated that parents were expressing anxiety, depression, feeling overwhelmed, incapacitating worry, feelings of isolation, sadness, loss (death of family members due to COVID), anger, fear, and an inability to cope. Some expressed that the added health concerns, financial strain, and distance learning factors associated with the pandemic were causing family conflict and a crisis in confidence in their ability to parent effectively. Some parents reported physical symptoms associated with stress and anxiety such as headaches, migraines, debilitating exhaustion, and in one case even fainting spells. Some cases required medical attention. Anxiety was related to fear that they or a family member would contract COVID as many were essential workers and many expressed concern regarding the safety of their work contexts and the availability of PPE; others feared exposure if they left their homes to buy groceries; other worried about doctor visit for chronic illness such as asthma, hypertension and diabetes.

Others expressed a generalized worries about the state of the world given the pandemics, the continued reports of police killings and use of excessive force, the social protest; and property destruction in their communities. Others expressed fear and anger regarding the structural racism, risk of violence, and the excessive use of force by police, particularly for their husbands and sons.

Parent Mentors and coordinators indicated that other many parents expressed worries about their children falling behind in school and were worried about the social emotional well-being of their children during distance learning. Some expressed feeling very overwhelmed with the responsibilities of on-line teaching, managing all of the children at home, combined with worries about health and economic implications of the pandemic for their families. Indeed, some had contracted COVID themselves or had family members that had tested positive, and some had lost family members to COVID. Others questioned their ability as parents. They expressed fear that would fail in supporting their children in distance learning despite their efforts. Some questioned their ability to attend to their children's socio-emotional needs during this extraordinary time. Some were worried about their adolescent children that were wanting to go out, see friends, and had grown weary of the social distancing and stay home measures. They

said it was causing conflict and arguments, particularly when the parents of some of their children's friends did not follow the social distancing measures as closely.

Parent Mentors and Coordinators were able to provide information about how to access mental health services if needed, as well as providing informal socio-emotional support, and promoting practices to reduce stress such as setting a schedule or order for the day, exercise, rest, and healthy diet.

IV. CONCLUSION

The Parent Mentor Program prepares, places, and supports Parent Mentors in classrooms with the goal of enhancing parent engagement in schools, which in turn contributes to academic success of children and youth. These programmatic goals align with state and federal education priorities, as well as considerable research that has demonstrated that parental engagement supports improved academic outcomes and school persistence for children and youth. While the program model is grounded in classroom-based placement of Parent Mentors, for this academic year the model had to quickly modify in response to the instructional changes associated with the COVID-19 pandemic. Clearly, the closing of schools as a public health social distancing measure presented additional challenges in maintaining parent-school-community engagement and the associated academic and socioemotional benefits for students. Yet, this evaluation found that the Parent Mentor program was remarkably flexible, nimble, and resilient in response to this change and in its ability to continue advancing the goals of parent-school/and community engagement and educational and emotional benefits for students, even in the context of the stay-at-home order and shift to remote learning.

Parent Mentors described the difficulty adapting to a new educational environment due to COVID-19 but shared how involvement and experience with the Parent Mentor Program had provided them networks, resources, information, and collaborative relationships and networks within the Parent Mentor Program, the school and community. Their perspectives as parents of students and Parent Mentors provided insights into the realities of their communities, households and schools. Parent Mentors and Coordinators shared how they have adapted their work to continue with the Parent Mentor Program

objective of parent, school, and community engagement. Although their work has shifted because of the current public health crisis, they continued to foster engagement with parents, schools, and communities, which increased their understanding of what Parent Mentors and the extended community has had to navigate during COVID-19 and distance learning. Parent Mentors and Coordinators reported that they were able to utilize and build on the parent-school-community engagement they had already cultivated through the program to play important roles as connecting bridges between parents, schools, and community resources.

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