

The Role of Motivation in Changing Teacher Beliefs:

An Investigation of a Strengths Based Intervention

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**Abstract**

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The present study utilized a mixed-methods design to evaluate Dynamic Home Visits, a strengths-based home visiting intervention designed to increase teachers' self-efficacy for teaching culturally diverse students and strengthen home-school relationships. The main goal of this study was to conduct an initial evaluation of the logic model, fidelity, and generation of possible indicators for positive outcomes for the intervention. Specifically, this study sought to measure the effectiveness of DHV on teacher perceptions of culturally responsive teaching self-efficacy and family engagement as well as family motivation for engagement. Results indicated after the intervention teachers were significantly more confident teaching culturally diverse students and reported a change in their perceptions about students and families. Results regarding how the intervention impacted families' motivation for engagement were not as robust. While

teachers reported a significant increase in their relationship with families and a change in their understanding of family engagement, analysis of data from family participants produced mixed results as to whether it impacted their motivation for engagement. This initial pilot was investigated as a case study in order to understand the complex experiences of four teachers and six families. While results are not generalizable, the findings do contribute to a growing body of literature theorizing how to effect change in teacher perceptions and beliefs. Limitations of the study, recommendations for modification of the intervention and future directions for research are provided.

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## **DEDICATION**

For my mother and father, who always believed in my wild spirit, supported me to follow my dreams, and never wavered in their love.

For Philip, who gave me the courage, love and strength to succeed. You helped me keep everything in perspective and believed in me when I couldn't believe in myself. I would not be here without your unconditional love, support, patience and understanding. I am honored to know and learn alongside you.

## Chapter I: Introduction

The discourse surrounding mental health and educational achievement is often framed through the rhetoric of pathology, through discussion of negative symptoms or behaviors that prevent youth from succeeding. However, some recent research has shifted that orientation to instead focus on thriving not just surviving, on why youth overcome immeasurable odds, and how to cultivate strengths and assets instead of remediating deficits (Blackwell, L. Trzesniewski, K. & Dweck, 2007; Boykin & Noguera, 2011; Duckworth & Seligman, 2005; Gilman, Hueber, & Furlong, 2014). In addition to reframing prevention and intervention efforts through a constructive lens, over the last two decades practitioners and researchers have become increasingly interested in the value and impact of protective factors on positive mental health outcomes for youth (Catalano & Hawkins, 1996; Fraser, 2004; Kim, Gloppean, Rhew, Oesterle, & Hawkins, 2015). A longitudinal study of protective factors found that home and school are the two most critical contexts contributing to outcomes for students and that youth who perceive a strong relationship between home and school are less likely to engage in high-risk behaviors (Resnick et al., 1997). When educators and families cooperate to support the social and emotional well-being of youth, their coordinated efforts are likely to have a greater impact on outcomes than efforts of either school or home implemented in isolation (Weiss et al., 2009). To that end, research suggests that interventions are most effective when they match the culture and context of the school community and are integrated into existing school operations (Blankstein, 2011; Gottfredson & Gottfredson, 2002; Goldberg, 2003; Kress, Elias & Lowman, 2013).

Within a school setting, teachers embed academic and social-emotional interventions everyday into instructional and classroom management practices. However, even with the best intentions, schools often adopt “evidence-based” practices without considering cultural nuances

and contexts (Bridge, Massie, & Mills, 2008; Kirmayer, 2012). Considering that children from ethnically and racially diverse backgrounds are expected to comprise the majority of the public school population in the next decade, and already do in many states, it is not only a moral obligation, but an economic responsibility to validate and implement culturally responsive practices (US Department of Education, 2012). Even though the majority of the teaching population does not reflect the racial and linguistic diversity of the student population, research shows that teachers can work effectively with culturally diverse students when they have appropriate knowledge, skills and support (Futrell, Gomez, & Bedden, 2003; Lin & Bates, 2010). Many studies have evaluated strategies to support teachers in this capacity and among those, strengths based home visits have been found to be a beneficial cross-cultural learning experience in helping teachers better understand students and their families (Allen and Tracy, 2004; Boske & Benavente-Mcenery, 2010; Cowan, Bobby, St. Roseman, & Enchandia, 2002; Meyer & Mann, 2006; Meyer, Mann & Becker, 2011; Peralta-Nash, 2003; Stetson, Stetson, Sinclair, & Nix, 2012; Stuht, 2009).

Home visits are not a new practice in the educational arena. For decades teachers have conducted home visits for remedial purposes or to provide early intervention services, but strengths-based home visits are different. Strengths-based home visits aim to build trust and strengthen both teacher-student and teacher-parent relationships (Cowan et al., 2002; Gonzalez, Moll, & Amanti, 2005). Rather than focusing on behavioral or academic issues, the purpose is to authentically connect home and school environments, and to provide an opportunity for teachers to learn more about *funds of knowledge*, or “historically accumulated and culturally developed bodies of knowledge and skills,” of students and their families (Moll, Amanti, Neff, & Gonzalez, 1992, p.133).

Many studies have evaluated the effectiveness of home visiting programs that are educational and informative (Avellar, Paulsell, Sama-Miller, & Del Grosso, 2014), however, less have measured the impact of strengths-based home visits (Cowan et al., 2002; McIntyre, Kyle, Moore, Sweazy, & Greer, 2001; Meyer et al., 2011) and none have studied home visits through the lens of motivation. The most comprehensive study of strengths-based home visits, a longitudinal study of the Teacher Parent Home Visit Project in Northern California, found that the visits led to positive outcomes in teacher and parent beliefs and attitudes, home-school relationships, and potential positive effects on academic and behavioral outcomes (Cowan et al., 2002). In addition to the research on home-school partnerships, several studies conducted by González, Moll, and Amanti (2005) suggest that home visits grounded in a funds of knowledge approach have positive impacts on instructional practice, particularly for teachers working with youth from non-dominant backgrounds. However, none of these studies have considered what motivates teachers and families to participate in strengths-based home visits and how they impact classroom practice from a motivational perspective.

The current literature on strengths-based home visit programs consistently references the importance of attending professional development workshops that include modules on cultural responsiveness, equity focused family-school partnerships, and guidance on how to integrate newly learned information into instructional practice (Cowan et al., 2002; Gonzalez, et al., 2005; Johnson, 2014; Mapp & Kettner, 2013). Over the past four years, the family and community department in a Public School District<sup>1</sup> in Washington state has offered *Dynamic Home Visits*, a professional development opportunity that embodies each of these components through a

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<sup>1</sup> The name of the public school district and of all respondents are pseudonyms

motivational lens. Anecdotal evidence as well as preliminary data evaluating the impact on culturally responsive practices indicate that the combined training and experience of going on visits influences teacher-student relationships as well as teachers' attitudes and beliefs about cultural awareness (Zigarelli, Ginsberg, & Nilsen, 2013). However, a formal evaluation of this professional development has not yet been completed. The aim of this research study is to better understand if and how Dynamic Home Visits influence teacher perceptions and practice as well as how it impacts home-school relationships. To guide the evaluation, a theory of change model was developed to illustrate the relationship between variables of interest and outcome variables (See Figure 1). It also examined whether the professional development experience of Dynamic Home Visits impacts teachers' sense of self-efficacy for teaching culturally diverse students through the lens of the Motivational Framework for Culturally Responsive Teaching. Given the importance of coordinated efforts between home and school environments on positive outcomes for youth, the motivational conditions of Dynamic Home Visits from the perspective of families was also investigated.

## **Chapter II: Literature Review**

The purpose of this chapter is to review the literature that supports the study. It begins with a discussion of research and scholarship regarding protective factors for positive mental health outcomes and the importance of teacher-student relationships and family-school partnerships. The next section reviews culturally responsive practices as they relate to education and emotional well-being and discusses the Motivational Framework for Culturally Responsive Teaching. The chapter ends with a detailed description of a professional development, theory of change model, and the research questions that guided this study.

### **Protective Factors for Positive Mental Health Outcomes**

Social developmental theories such as Bandura's (1977) social learning theory posit that children are active contributors, rather than passive recipients in their development, and that it is through the transactional relationships within their social environments that learning occurs. In this model, feedback and reciprocity are central concepts as they inform the interactions between and among individuals of different contexts. Given that multiple social environments, including home and school, contribute to development and behavioral outcomes, interactions across settings provide a "collective socialization experience whereby children learn to cope with differing sets of activities, roles, expectations and relationships" (Black & Krishnakumar, 1998, p. 637). For the purposes of this discussion, protective factors are considered to be factors that reduce the likelihood of unhealthy behaviors or that promote health and wellbeing (Bridge, Massie, & Mills, 2008; National Research Council, 2009). There are many protective factors that have been identified in the literature for supporting the healthy development of youth including school bonding or connectedness (Blum, McNeely, Rinehart, 2002; Libbey, 2004; Resnick et al., 1997); family connectedness (Resnick et al., 1997; Stuart & Jose, 2014); and ethnic identity

(Barry, 2005; Smith, Walker, Fields, Brookins, & Seay, 1999; Stuart & Jose, 2014). The first protective factor, school bonding is reviewed in closer detail given the relevance to the present study.

Research suggests that when there is consistency across different social environments in the behaviors that are learned and expected, children are more likely to experience success (Grant & Ray, 2010). Given the benefits of aligning systems with regard to certain developmental and behavior expectations, Black and Krishnakumar (1998) argue “interventions that incorporate the values, culture, and norms of the community in their efforts to enhance children’s wellbeing are most likely to be successful because newly learned behavior is easier to implement in a culturally familiar and support environment” (p.639). To that end, Abbott et al. (2008) have shown that when school environments embody certain conditions such as a positive climate and teacher-student relationships, students are more likely to bond to the school and experience prosocial outcomes later in life.

**School bonding.** The literature identifies school bonding or connectedness as a protective factor against a variety of maladaptive behaviors and predictive of greater academic, social, and behavioral success (Hawkins, et al., 1999; Klem & Connell, 2004; Resnick et al., 1997; Resnick, Harris, Blum, 1993). A report from the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (2009) synthesizing the research on protective factors for youth defines school connectedness as “the belief by students that adults in the school care about their learning as well as about them as individuals” (p.3). One way to increase school connectedness is to ensure that students feel a part of the school and that there is at least one adult at school who cares about them (Libbey, 2004).

Though there have been many descriptions of school bonding in educational scholarship, there are two primary components that appear consistently across definitions: *attachment*,

considered as the affective relationship with individuals at school; and *commitment*, considered as the personal investment in school (Catalano et. al, 2004). Studies have shown the relationship between school bonding and both positive behavior outcomes, such as academic achievement and attainment of prosocial skills, as well as reduction in problem behavior outcomes, such as high school drop out and substance abuse during childhood and adolescence (Battin-Pearson et al., 2000; Catalano et al., 2004; Hawkins, Guo, Hill, Battin-Pearson, Abbott, 2001; Hawkins, Kosterman, Catalano, Hill, Abbott, 2008; Hawkins et al., 1997; Hill et al., 2004). Given that attachment is one of the primary indicators of school bonding, teacher-student relationships are one of the most important factors to ensuring positive outcomes for students. There are many ways in which student-teacher relationships form. However, research shows that when teachers make intentional efforts to connect to their students, particularly when they do not share the same cultural background, it has a direct effect on student achievement (Hughes, 2011).

Eccles and Roeser (2009) found that teachers' beliefs regarding their own self-efficacy to teach effectively, their expectations of students, and the quality of teacher-student relationships influence youth development in school contexts. When these conditions exist along with understanding who their students are culturally, youth are more likely to experience positive academic social, and emotional outcomes (Darling-Hammond, 1997; Deci & Ryan, 2002; Goodenow, 1993; Suarez-Orozco & Suarez-Orozco, 2001; Valencia, 1991; Wigfield, Byrnes, & Eccles, 2006; Wong, Eccles, & Sameroff, 2003).

### **Culturally Responsive Teacher-Student Relationships**

Studies across demographics and locales have shown that positive teacher-student relationship quality, characterized as warm and caring with low levels of conflict, is predictive of positive academic and social emotional outcomes for students across grade levels (Gurland &

Evangeslista, 2015; Hughes, Luo, Kwok, & Loyd, 2008; Hughes, 2011; Ladd, Birch, & Buhs, 1999; Pianta, Steinberg, & Rollins, 1995; Pianta, Hamre & Stuhlman, 2003). Given that the relationship between teacher and student is transactional in nature, expectations, prior knowledge, and experience all affect the quality of the relationship (Gurland & Evangeslista, 2015; Gurland & Grolnick, 2008). A study by Ladd et al. (1999) found that young children from advantaged, non-ethnic minority backgrounds formed closer and less conflictual relationships with their teachers than students from non-dominant ethnic minority backgrounds when there was no intervention implemented. However, when teachers intentionally formed positive relationships with students from non-dominant backgrounds, the quality of the teacher-student relationship impacted engagement and achievement for all students (Hughes, 2011). While these findings highlight the importance of student-teacher relationships, it is also critical to analyze the results embedded within the historical context of different relationships between students of color and their White teachers, including the influence of power and discrimination.

Although positive teacher-student relationships strongly predict academic and social emotional outcomes for students, such relationships partly depend on teachers' perceptions and beliefs about their students (Boykin & Noguera, 2011; Decker et al., 2007; Hamre & Pianta, 2001). In addition to establishing the benefits of positive relationships between teacher and student, studies have shown observable differences in the way teachers behave towards students of color for whom they have either high or low expectations (Boykin & Noguera, 2011). When teachers have high expectations for their students and believe in their ability to learn, teachers are more likely to provide reinforcement for learning (praising effort) and opportunities for students to be involved in the classroom (Brophy & Good, 1970; Good, 1981; Eccles & Roeser, 2011; Ferguson, 2003). For instance, Good (1987) and Ferguson (1998) found that teachers provide

low-expectation students with less opportunities to respond, are likely to give them less praise, and provide briefer, less informative feedback compared to high-expectation students.

Additionally, students are more likely to show greater achievement when their teachers have high expectations for their learning (Brophy & Good, 1970; Eccles & Roeser, 2011; Ferguson, 2003; Good, 1981).

Since the publication of Rosenthal and Jacobson's study examining the influence of teachers' expectations on student academic performance (1968), researchers have found that not only do teacher expectations impact student outcomes, but that there are differences in whether they have high or low expectations based on student characteristics including socioeconomic status, race and ethnicity (Hinnant, O'Brien, Ghazarian, 2009; Mistry, White, Benner, Huynh, 2009; Oakes, 2005). Specifically, empirical studies have found that teachers report lower expectations for African American, Latino, and lower- socioeconomic students when compared to their White or middle class peers (Dusek & Joseph, 1983; Ferguson, 2003; Jussim, Eccles & Madon, 1996).

“Unless we as educators understand our own culturally mediated values and biases, we may be misguided in believing that we are encouraging divergent points of view and providing meaningful opportunities for learning to occur when we are in fact repackaging or disguising past dogmas” (Ginsberg, 2015,p.17). One way to disrupt this cycle and encourage critical reflection on personal views and biases is through learning more about students' funds of knowledge. A study using strengths-based home visits as a tool toward this end showed that with a greater understanding of students' lives and priorities, teachers' attitudes towards and about students improved as did the teacher-student relationship quality (Cowan et al., 2002).

## Family-School Partnerships

Although schools are the primary institution charged with educating youth, children are formally and informally learning in multiple contexts outside of the school building. Similar to other developmental theories, Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological systems theory posits that development occurs through a transactional relationship between and among nested environmental systems in a child's life. Scholars suggest that the best approach to supporting the academic, social and emotional success of children is through a partnership between these systems in which families, community members, and educators form relationships of trust and respect, see one another as equals partners, and recognize a shared responsibility in for the learning and development of youth (Epstein, 2010; Ishimaru & Lott, 2014; Mapp & Kuttner, 2013; Patrikakou & Anderson, 2005).

There are many theoretical orientations discussed in the literature for understanding home-school partnerships. Epstein (2001) refers to the partnership between these different systems as *overlapping spheres of influence*, to describe how the relationship between three social systems (family, community, and school) impacts the educational and emotional experience of students. She suggests that the overlap between spheres correlates with student achievement, and a greater overlap between systems relates to higher student achievement. Building upon this model, Epstein identified six types of involvement efforts to support schools in developing effective models of parent involvement: parenting, communicating, volunteering, learning at home, decision making, and collaborating with community (Epstein, 1995; Epstein et al., 2009). However, family involvement, as defined by this model, is predominately academically motivated and school-based. While this model has offered a consistent, quantitative way of measuring family-school partnerships, it also encouraged a particular view of family

engagement which privileges middle and upper class families and those with social and cultural capital (Warren, 2005).

Studies using this framework have shown that families from low socioeconomic, high mobility and ethnic minority backgrounds are less likely to be involved (Kohl, Lingua, McMahon, 2000). In part, this is because the model fails to value what Auerbach (2007) describes as the *invisible strategies* that many families of color and low-income use to support their children. A common strategy that often goes unnoticed is the personal and professional sacrifice parents make so their children can attend better schools. Results such as these highlight that an approach which defines family engagement in this way is school-centered and does not account for the needs, experiences, and structural constraints of non-dominant families (Auerbach, 2007; Fine, 1993; Jordan, Orozco, & Averett, 2002). Instead of traditional models of involvement in which the schools' needs and expectations are the focus, a significant body of literature suggests that engagement should be considered through a model of family-school *empowerment* in which the power is shared between home and school (Auerbach, 2007; Delgado-Gaitan, 1991; Fine, 1993; Ishimaru, 2014; Jordan et al., 2002; López, Scribner, & Mahitivanichcha, 2001; Olivos, 2006).

Consistent with Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory, a model of empowerment ensures that family engagement practices reach multiple environmental systems related to a child's educational experience extending beyond parent-to-child interactions to improving relationships between teachers and parents as well as teachers and students. Conceptualizing family engagement in this ecological systems model helps to illustrate the many layers involved in partnering with families, particularly those from non-dominant communities. This multilayered systems approach moves away from a reductionist view of family engagement and

into a framework that supports dynamic relationships, shared responsibility and collaboration between families and educators (Downer & Myers, 2010). When these conditions are realized, family engagement improves student outcomes such as increasing student academic achievement, attendance, and school completion as well as less visible outcomes like strengthening students' self-esteem, positive attitudes towards school, and improved interpersonal skills (Albright & Weissberg, 2010; Epstein et al., 2009; Henderson & Mapp, 2002; Jeynes, 2005; Jeynes, 2012; Mapp & Kuttner, 2013; Patrikakou & Anderson, 2005; Warren, 2005).

**The influence of family engagement on mental health.** When educators and families partner to support the social and emotional well-being of youth, their coordinated efforts are likely to have a greater impact on outcomes than efforts of either school or home implemented in isolation (Weiss et al., 2009). As noted in the introduction, an analysis of a longitudinal survey of protective factors for adolescents showed that home and school are the two most critical contexts contributing to outcomes for students, and that youth who perceive a strong relationship between home and school are less likely to engage in high-risk behaviors (1997). This suggests that relationship between and among parents and educators plays a critical role in the healthy development of youth. In addition to the reduction of high-risk behaviors, family-school partnerships also foster the development of social emotional skills that in turn positively impact academic performance (Albright & Weissberg, 2010). The literature suggests that teaching and reinforcing these skills across contexts is much more effective than supporting them in each context independently (Christenson & Havy, 2004; Zins, Bloodworth, Weissberg, & Walberg, 2004). This indicates that partnering with families to support social emotional wellbeing produces positive outcomes for youth. By learning about students' cultural identities, schools are

better equipped to understand how to approach social emotional learning supports that are culturally sensitive and more likely to be effective (Albright & Weissberg, 2010; Christenson & Havy, 2004; Eccles & Harold, 1996; Henderson et al., 2007; Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1997; Patrikakou et al., 2005).

**Factors that enable or constrain partnerships.** There are many opportunities for engaging with families in school settings, however, the literature suggests that there are certain characteristics that either enable or constrain the realization of positive outcomes. The first element inherent in successful partnerships is a focus on equitable access and opportunities for outcomes. This requires a foundation of relational trust, cultural sensitivity, a willingness to address issues of race and power within the school community, and viewing one another as equal partners (Abrams & Gibbs, 2000; Bryk & Schneider, 2003; Clarke et al., 2010). In order to form strong relationships among and between educators and families all parties must acknowledge structural and systemic inequities, psychosocial factors, and personal experiences of those involved. Creating the foundation for equity-focused relationships offer opportunities for collaboration efforts towards improving the learning conditions and experiences for youth (Bryk & Schneider, 2003; Downer & Myers, 2010; Warren, 2005).

A comprehensive longitudinal study measuring the effects of relational trust on school improvement found that in schools with high relational trust, all stakeholders (educators, administrators, families, and community members) played an integral role in the achievement of positive outcomes (Bryk & Schneider, 2003). Furthermore, results indicated that when school personnel felt trusted and connected to others in the school community they felt safe to experiment with new practices, which in turn contributed to improvements in student learning (2003). Through building a trusting environment for school professionals, families and

community members to share insights and offer suggestions, these schools were able to establish a more equitable partnership between educators and families. However, in order to develop healthy home-school relationships, schools must also take intentional steps to provide outreach to the community (Sheldon, 2005). In addition to reaching culturally diverse families that may not feel comfortable or welcome in the school environment, studies show that efforts to reach out to families outside of the school context are particularly effective for families from economically disadvantaged backgrounds (Weiss et al., 2009). While some may perceive such efforts unattainable given the lack of resources to make additional efforts outside of the school day, the literature indicates that schools that systemically integrate these relational efforts find the benefits far outweigh the costs (Sheldon, 2005; Weiss et al., 2009; Mapp & Hong 2010).

***Beliefs and attitudes of families and educators.*** Research shows that parents from all social, cultural and economic backgrounds have dreams for their children and want them to succeed educationally (Valencia & Black, 2002; Lawrence-Lightfoot, 2003; Weiss et al., 2009). All families report caring deeply about the educational success of their children, however, “families of ethnic minority cultural backgrounds [also] report feeling misunderstood, disenfranchised, and that their cultural values are not respected in schools” (Jones, 2013, p. 276). One factor which may either enable or constrain partnerships with families from non-dominant communities is how schools approach families that have had adverse experiences with the educational system. The literature suggests that families of color are more likely to mistrust educational institutions due to the historical failure of the system to provide equal access and outcomes through persistent denigration of educational opportunities and discrimination (Cross, 2003; Clarke et al., 2010; Freng, Freng & Moore, 2006; Hill, 2010). Furthermore, families may resent the way the school treats them or their children, including feeling alienated due to

different cultural or language backgrounds (Clarke et al., 2010). In order to break this cycle of mistrust, and develop faith in the school families need to experience numerous positive encounters to overcome the many adverse interactions.

Research shows that teachers who involve parents in the educational process are less likely to stereotype families and their students in the classroom (Epstein, 2010). Through establishing trusted and connected relationships with parents from different cultural backgrounds, teachers are able to learn more about students and their families rather than relying on assumptions. Engaging with a range of culturally diverse families broadens the perspectives, beliefs, and attitudes of teachers, which in turn has a direct influence on student achievement (Amatea, Smith-Adcock, & Villares, 2006; Decker, Dona & Christenson, 2007; Pianta, 1999). Given how influential teacher attitudes and beliefs are on student experiences and learning outcomes, a key factor for engaging with families involves educators' perceptions of students and families (Lin & Bates, 2010; Palak & Walls, 2009).

Teachers with deficit-based views of students and families, particularly of families from ethnic minority and low socioeconomic backgrounds, constrain the ability for equity-focused partnerships to be developed (Clarke, Sheridan, & Woods, 2010). The literature cites problematic beliefs that inhibit the development of healthy home-school partnerships, including low expectations for families from economically disadvantaged backgrounds, stereotypes about families and students of color, a lack of understanding of the diverse ways families support their children, and failing to see differences as strengths (Christenson & Sheridan, 2001; Clarke et al., 2010; Esler, Godber, & Christensen, 2002). Henderson et al. (2007) suggest several core beliefs about parents that facilitate the development of healthy relationships between home and school including believing that all parents have the capacity to support their children's learning, want

the best educational outcomes for their children, and are equal partners in the education of their children.

***Structural inequities and school culture.*** National statistics show that overall students from economically disadvantaged and ethnic minority backgrounds are less likely to receive high quality instruction and have access to learning support resources and necessary mental health services (Weiss et al., 2009; Rothstein, 2004). Ladson-Billings (2006) refers to these structural barriers and educational inequities created by historical, economic, and sociopolitical decisions and policies as the “education debt” of the United States. She posits that as a result of the education debt, in addition to limiting the opportunity for historically marginalized youth to equal educational outcomes, there are less opportunities for ethnic minority and low income families to be involved in decision making mechanisms. Research shows that families without financial resources rely on their connections to others in the community for emotional support raising their children (Cochran & Davila, 1992). By bridging the gap between home and school environments, a connection can be established between educators and parents and they can collectively impact the educational experience for youth.

In order to enable positive outcomes of family engagement, student achievement must be approached as a shared responsibility, and families and educators must form respectful alliances that include shared power and a mutual recognition of one another as equal partners (Auerbach, 2010; Byrk & Schneider, 2002; Clarke et al., 2010; Lake & Billingsly, 2000; Jones 2013; Mapp & Kuttner, 2013). In an effort to build partnerships based on trust and respect, families and educators must be sensitive to cultural differences, acknowledge barriers enacted by structural inequities, and establish a shared balance of power. It is critical for schools to not only be sensitive to the array of diverse cultural values of families and students, but to recognize that the

school setting also has a set of cultural values and expectations (Boykin & Noguera, 2011).

When forming equity-focused partnerships, schools should seek to affirm and strengthen the cultural, racial, and linguistic identities of students and evaluate the consistency of the expectations across the two settings (Grant & Ray, 2010).

Given that public schools in the United States are socially constructed to privilege White middle class students, one of the key factors to enabling strengths-based partnerships is creating new programs and policies that challenge and defeat institutional inequities (Hill, 2010). Schools also need to understand how their school culture and the contextual factors within the building contribute to families and students feeling included or excluded. Some scholars suggest that for family engagement efforts to be successful, they must rectify the incongruence of contextual factors such as concepts of time and language between home and school environments (Bolívar & Chrispeels, 2011; Fine, 1993). In addition to balancing cultural values of students and the school, home-school relationships that are approached through a strength-based lens enable successful outcomes. When schools view parents as effective advocates, equal partners, and resources for enhancing learning opportunities, they enable the possibility for rich partnerships (Blitz et al., 2013).

To create an equitable partnership, community members and school staff should engage in shared decision making through collective power and collaboration, and be willing to confront tensions and conflicts constructively. Warren (2005) thinks school community efforts should approach collaboration with the intention of building relational power. In this way, partnerships rely on a framework of shared power between home and school, respecting that both parties have valuable contributions (Auerbach, 2007; Delgado-Gaitan, 1991). In addition to creating a system that recognizes power and privilege, schools efforts must embody cultural sensitivity and

awareness in order to enable strengths-based partnerships. Many teachers and schools consider poor and working class families as lacking the necessary supports and resources to support their children. These ideas are perpetuated by the assumptions accompanying myths of “uninvolved” ethnic minority parents. While research has debunked the myths of “hard-to-reach” and “uninvolved” parents, educators may retain these negative perceptions (Delgado-Gaitan, 1991; López, 2001; Mapp & Hong, 2010). They constrain the ability of schools to form productive partnerships, since family members are not viewed as equal partners.

As Fine (1993) explains, “the presumption of equality between parents and schools, and the refusal to address power struggles, has systematically undermined real educational transformation” (p. 684). Efforts to enable equity focused home-school partnerships must not only acknowledge that these unequal systems exist, but be willing to take action to alter the balance of power. Hill (2010) suggests that the incongruence between the cultural worldview of home environments of culturally diverse families and the “explicit and often invisible cultural framework of the American school system” (p.101) constrains the ability for schools and families to develop collaborative partnerships. The first step to addressing these differences is making “implicit values explicit and repairing trust and inclusiveness where it has been broken” (Hill, 2010, p. 122). To experience the incredible gains made possible through effective family engagement efforts schools must take intentional steps towards confronting and addressing power imbalance, increasing culturally responsive practices, and developing relationships grounded in trust and respect.

### **Cultural Responsiveness**

With the focus shifting from deficit to asset there is a delicate balance between advocating for the success all children and disregarding the impacts of societal and institutional

oppression (Fine, Weis, Powell, & Mun Wong, 1997; Sleeter & Grant, 2007). Understanding the resiliency and nurturing the emotional and academic success of students involves focusing on their abilities and strengths without minimizing the challenges they face. Over fifty years ago the Civil Rights Movements of the 1960s catalyzed reform efforts in educational institutions to eliminate discrimination based on race, ethnicity, sex, and class. The term *multicultural education* emerged in response to the demand of racially and ethnically diverse communities to include programs, practices, and curricula about the histories, cultures and perspectives of marginalized groups (Banks & Banks, 2010). Multicultural education should permeate all educational micro and macro systems to ensure that *all* students, no matter their race, ethnicity, gender or class, have access to equal education opportunities through eliminating bias, prejudice, and discrimination (Banks & Banks, 2010; Gay, 2000; Nieto & Bode, 2012; Sleeter, & Grant, 2007). It seeks to transform schools including the relationships among students, school personnel, and families to ensure all students have an equal opportunity to experience success (Cochran-Smith, Davis, & Fries, 2004; Gay, 2010; Nieto, 2005).

While the ideas of equality and equity are both essential in the efforts of social justice, how these concepts differ is critical in the pursuit of outcomes. Equity can be conceptualized as the process that must occur to enable students from all backgrounds to have equal opportunities and outcomes in learning (Banks & Banks, 2010; Nieto & Bode, 2012; Lee, Menkart, & Okazawa-Rey, 2006; Noguera & Boykin, 2011). Lee et al. (2006) explain, “Equity is the principle of altering current practices and perspectives to teach for social transformation and to promote equal learning outcomes for students of all racial, cultural, linguistic and socio-economic groups” (p.1). In other words, “equal education implies we are giving every student

the same thing and an equitable education provides students with what they need to achieve equality” (Nieto & Bode, 2012, p.9).

Students living with a mental health condition cannot gain entry to the instructional content before receiving care for their emotional and psychological wellbeing. Therefore, failing to address their social emotional and psychological needs is an injustice that is, in effect, perpetuating a cycle of discrimination for marginalized youth (Radliff & Cooper, 2013). Providing mental health care to *all* students is essential to ensuring equitable practices in school, and to that end practitioners must seek to embed cultural responsiveness into the provision of care (Green, Cook-Morales, Robinson Zanartu, & Ingraham, 2009).

While training programs have improved, the majority of educators remain insufficiently prepared to meet the needs of culturally and linguistically diverse students and families (Nieto & Bode, 2012). Individuals aspiring to enter the culturally rich field of education should expand their knowledge of historical perspectives from traditional marginalized communities, understand power and privilege, and recognize personal biases and stereotyping (Boykin, 2000; 2014; Cochran-Smith, Davis, & Fries, 2004; Gay, 2000). It is critical that practitioners not only engage in self-reflection, but also are provided with training and support for how to reshape their worldviews and take measurable steps towards advocating for change (Pitner & Sakamoto, 2005). With this type of multicultural training, educators would be more prepared to develop a therapeutic alliance with culturally diverse students and families.

Many scholars agree that practitioners who critically examine their own cultural backgrounds, prejudices, stereotypes and biases are more likely to have an appreciation for cultural diversity, and are less likely to impose their values on others and engage in stereotypical thinking (Diemer & Li, 2011; Hays, 2001; Lum, 2005). Critical reflection refers to a “critical

analysis of structural oppression, such as social, economic, and political conditions that limit access to opportunity and perpetuate injustice” (Diemer & Li, 2011, p.1815). Critically reflecting on ones’ own experiences and perceptions and how different ecological systems influence youth and families of diverse backgrounds is another crucial step in ensuring valid implementation of culturally responsive practices. This process is instrumental in developing a positive relationship with culturally diverse students.

Consistent with research findings that show improved student outcomes for educators who value and integrate diverse cultural norms and expectations, State and Federal guidelines have also established the importance of integrating cultural awareness and responsiveness into current practices (Washington State Legislature, 2015; United States Department of Education, 2014). According to the definitions put forth by the Washington State Legislature Model Standards for Cultural Competency (2009) “cultural competency includes knowledge of student cultural histories and contexts, as well as family norms and values in different cultures; knowledge and skills in accessing community resources and community and parent outreach; and skills in adapting instruction to students’ experiences and identifying cultural contexts for individual students.” Although evidence based instructional and behavioral practices are often taught to educators as being outside the context of diversity, it seems that these practices are missing a vital element to creating prolonged teacher success in working with culturally diverse students.

Multicultural curriculum and pedagogy emphasize culturally responsive teaching practices that use “cultural knowledge, prior experiences, frames of reference, and performance styles of ethnically diverse students to make learning encounters more relevant to and effective for them” (Gay, 2000, p. 31). This work is supported across psychological studies as well which

have shown that when learned content is meaningful to students they are more likely to be engaged and motivated in the learning process (Csikszentmihayli, 1997; Deci & Ryan, 2000; Ginsberg, 2011). This is critical to the overall success of diverse youth given that the literature identifies engagement as a key element to ensuring successful academic outcomes for students of color who have been placed at-risk [and at-promise] for academic failure (Borman & Overman, 2004; Tucker et al., 2002; Wenglinsky, 2004).

**Culturally responsive mental health care.** Even though the need for social-emotional support in schools is documented and well supported in the literature, there continues to be a lack of resources devoted to providing these services to all students, especially in the schools with the greatest need. Data collected from schools across the country indicate that, on average, urban schools located in neighborhoods with higher rates of poverty consist of 81% students of color and are likely to have less funding per student than schools located in communities with higher incomes (National Center for Education Statistics, 2011). In order to work effectively to meet the emotional and behavioral health needs of racially, linguistically and economically diverse children and adolescents, educators must include cultural responsiveness in their instructional practices. Transforming practices begins with conceptualizing the very core principles of practice through a multicultural lens. *Culture* should be considered as “a dynamic system of social values, cognitive codes, behavioral standards, worldviews, and beliefs used to give order and meaning to our own lives as well as the lives of others” (Gay, 2000, p.9).

***Multicultural definitions of wellbeing.*** Although educational systems have enormous potential to support the development of social and emotional skills through activating the strengths and talents of youth, it is critical to recognize the diverse definitions of what it means to be-well. The concept of *wellbeing* is complex and culturally rooted, and yet the term is used

ubiquitously and often without definition. Even with its fluid meaning it can be the basis for a variety of psychological theories as well as threaded into economic and educational policy. Indeed, how this concept is defined has significant theoretical and practical implications for how to govern, teach, parent, and preach (Ryan & Deci, 2001). According to some, wellbeing in the broadest sense refers to “optimal psychological functioning and experience.” The definition of *optimal experience* has been debated since the beginning of documented western intellectual history (Ryan & Deci, 2001, p. 142). Many scholars cite Aristotle’s eudaimonic definition of well-being which suggests that it is through the habituation of intentional acts leading to human growth and the expression of strengths that humans actualize their true potential and live “the good life” (Aristotle, 2000; Fromm, 1981; Keyes, 2009; Ryff & Keyes 1995). In this sense, strengths can broadly be conceptualized as “any psychological process that consistently enables a person to think and act so as to yield benefits to him-or herself and society” (McCullough & Synder, 2000, p.1). This view of wellbeing focuses on the functioning and flourishing individuals experience when abilities and capacities are realized (Keyes, 2009; Ryan & Deci, 2001).

While empirical studies have been conducted internationally in attempt to reach a shared definition of wellbeing, Lopez et al. (2005) emphasize the importance of multiculturalism and valuing diverse meanings of wellbeing. For instance, studies of subjective well-being conducted across individualist and collectivist nations found that individualist cultures which value autonomy, independence, and personal feelings had higher rates of subjective well-being than nations which value collective self-esteem and define the self in relational terms (Suh et al., 1998). In some cultures, the very concept of wellbeing cannot be considered as an individual’s experience, but is embedded within the social context and as living in harmony with nature

(Céspedes, 2010). In addition to recognizing the diverse meanings of wellbeing, Sandage et al. (2003) suggest that practitioners should be considerate of differences in cultural understandings of what constitutes virtues or strengths. In an educational setting, self-oriented strengths such as independence and self-determination are often valued over group-oriented strengths such as interdependence and role recognition despite how those might be understood in students' home cultures (Black, Mrasek, & Ballinger, 2003; Downer & Myers, 2010).

**Funds of knowledge.** Research shows that valuing and nurturing cultural strengths of students from marginalized groups improves teacher-student relationships which in turn helps to close the achievement gap for low-income, ethnic minority students (Hamre & Pianta, 2005; Stewart, 2006; Tenenbaum & Ruck, 2007). One way teachers can build authentic relationships with their students is through learning about their own and their families historical and culturally accumulated knowledge. Through integrating funds of knowledge into the classroom, teachers create to a more engaging learning experience for students and build stronger relationships. Evidence exists to suggest that when students feel supported by their teachers, they feel a greater connectedness to school which leads to increased positive social emotional outcomes (Blum, McNeely, Rinehart, 2002; Catalano, Haggerty, Oesterle, Fleming, & Hawkins, 2004; Libbey, 2004). Educators play an active role in developing this connectedness by ensuring the social context of school is safe, validating and supportive for all youth.

***Families' funds of knowledge.*** By embracing a funds of knowledge perspective, educators recognize the complex contexts in which development occurs and appreciate the diverse range of strengths of families from different social backgrounds rather than assuming they do not have the resources or abilities to support the success of their children. In fact, a growing body of scholarship supports the notion that the interactions between children and their

family members are more powerful predictors of school achievement than social class or family structure (Amatea et al., 2006). In comparison, deficit-based perspectives assume that there are more effective parenting practices than others, and generally view ethnic minority parenting practices as deficient (Baca-Zinn & Wells, 2000; Weiss, 2009).

Through learning about families' funds of knowledge, educators can use that information in building respectful and culturally sensitive relationships, and begin to replace the adverse interactions of families of color with positive experiences. Furthermore, engaging in this intentional process of critical reflection contribute to the establishment of shared resources and power between homes and schools (Delgado-Gaitan, 1991; Bolívar & Chrispeels, 2011). Indeed, studies have shown that schools maintain an important role in legitimating family resources including recognizing less visible strategies of non-dominant families (Delgado-Gaitian, 1992; Villanueva, 1996). Using culturally responsive practices and consistently integrating a strengths-based orientation into professional development and school practices increase the success of family-school partnerships and positive teacher-student relationships.

**Motivational framework for culturally responsive teaching.** Instruction that is relevant and meaningful, and relationships that are mutually respected and connected contributes to what Ginsberg and Wlodkowski (2000) describe as the motivational conditions for learning as measured by the Motivational Framework for Culturally Responsive Teaching (MFCRT). The MFCRT states that the following four motivational conditions contribute to meaningful learning experience: relationships that foster respect and connectedness; instruction that is relevant and offers choice; material that is rigorous and challenging; and learning that produces competency and effectiveness (Ginsberg & Wlodkowski, 2000). The MFCRT also provides a structure for examining the different constructs that contribute to school connectedness. While there may be

different ways to appeal to students' motivation, building trust and respect between teacher and student, and increasing the relevancy of instruction to students' lives are two significant conditions that support a motivating and stimulating learning experience (Ginsberg, 2011; 2015).

Findings from empirical studies suggest that by changing teacher practices, it is possible to promote student bonding to school as well as improve academic outcomes (Abbott et al., 1998; Gottfredson, Gottfredson, & Hybl, 1993; Slavin, 1991). Research also shows teachers' attitudes and beliefs about education, learning, and students greatly impact their behaviors and actions in the classroom (Cuban, Kirkpatrick, & Peck, 2002; Fullan, 2001; Fullan, 2003; Lin & Bates, 2010; Palak & Walls, 2009; Van Uden, Ritzen, & Pieters, 2014). For instance, a study by Pohan and Aguilar (2001) shows that teachers' beliefs act as filters for consumption of knowledge and have a direct influence on the way they interact with culturally diverse students. Other many studies have found that teacher beliefs regarding race, ethnicity, social class, and gender are associated with the differential treatment of students (Baron, Tom, & Cooper, 1985; Brophy & Good, 1970; Good & Brophy, 1987; Grant, 1985; Pajares, 1992; Sadker, Sadker, & Long, 1993; Tenenbaum & Ruck, 2007). This is an important factor given that teachers in the United States are predominately White, middle class females serving a growing population of economically, linguistically and racially diverse students (US Department of Education, 2012).

### **Teacher Self Efficacy for Teaching**

For decades scholars have argued for the importance of embedding culturally responsive teaching into instruction and curriculum in order to provide equitable opportunities for all students (Gay, 2000; Ladson-Billings, 1994). There are several factors beyond possessing culturally diverse knowledge that impact the implementation of culturally responsive practices including teachers' multicultural attitudes (Cabello & Burnstein, 1995; Gay, 2000; Villegas &

Lucas, 2002); skill level (Leavell, Coward, & Wilhelm, 1999); and feelings of confidence and competence (Pajares, 2003). Research indicates that the relationship between the student and teacher, and the teachers' own belief that they possess the ability to teach all students determine the level of success (Lee & Smith, 2001). In fact, there is some evidence to suggest that teachers' beliefs about their abilities more accurately reflect their behavior than other factors, a result that confirms Bandura's (1977) theory of *self-efficacy* (Pajares, 2003; Siwatu, 2007).

According to Bandura, *self-efficacy* is the "belief in one's capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to produce given attainments" (p. 3). Generally, the self-efficacy theory suggests that there are two sources of motivation: *outcome expectations* which are an individuals' beliefs that their behavior will lead to a specific outcome; and *efficacy expectations* which are feelings of competence and confidence to demonstrate behaviors necessary to achieve an outcome. Beginning in the 1980s scholars adopted the term *teacher efficacy* in describing teachers' level of confidence and competence in teaching (Ashton & Webb, 1982; Gibson & Dembo, 1984; Labone, 2004; Siwatu, 2007; Tschannen-Moran, Woolfolk Hoy, & Hoy, 2001). Building upon previous work on general teacher efficacy measures, Siwatu (2007) developed a scale specifically for use in assessing efficacy for teaching culturally diverse students. Research using this measure have uncovered valuable insights highlighting the importance of teacher professional development and preservice programs as well as efficacy building interventions (Chu & Garcia, 2014; Fitchett, Starker, & Salyer, 2012; Siwatu, 2011).

### **Culturally Responsive Evidence Based Practices**

Implementation of culturally responsive and empirically sound social and emotional intervention and prevention supports in schools is critical to reducing negative outcomes for

students and investing in the culture of the United States. However, with a national focus on other indicators of student success (e.g., scores on standardized tests and meeting academic standards) selecting interventions, strategies, and practices that are both evidence based and effective for meeting the needs of culturally diverse students is often over looked. The result of this irreverence is that youth who actually have unmet social emotional needs are identified for falling behind academically, and rather than receiving appropriate support, are referred and placed in remedial or special education classrooms.

In the 36th Annual Report to Congress on the Implementation of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (2014) children ages 6-21 who are American Indian or Alaska Native, Black or African American, and Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander children are 1.7, 1.4, and 1.6 times more likely respectively, to receive special education services than all other racial and ethnic groups *combined*. Furthermore, students of color disproportionately receive special education services for emotional disturbance, the disability category associated with the highest rates of dropout and out of school suspension and expulsion (2014). These systemic issues impact the experience of youth while in formal education, and their trajectory of life outcomes. Students with emotional and cognitive or learning disabilities are four to five times more likely to be incarcerated than their peers. Studies also have correlated exclusionary discipline practices with dropout, delinquency, and lifelong poverty (ACLU, 2008; IES, 2011; Fabelo et al., 2011; Orfield & Lee, 2005; WA Appleseed, 2012). In order to remedy these dysfunctions both educators and psychologists working in school settings must ensure that culturally responsive practices are embedded holistically in the educational experiences of youth.

Many practices and interventions have been found to be effective in the school context (Bear & Minke, 2006; Institute of Medicine, 2009). It is widely accepted that high quality

educational interventions should always be validated empirically, however, the qualifier of *culturally responsive* does not always rise to the same level of importance (Boykin & Noguera, 2011). Similar to academic interventions adopted school-wide because they are research based regardless of the population for which they were normed, social emotional interventions in schools are often adopted without consideration for cultural validity. Also, there is a well-documented gap between research findings and what actually occurs in practice (Bridge et al., 2008; Cappella, Reinke, & Hoagwood, 2011; Flaspohler, Meehan, Maras, Keller, 2012; Kazak et al., 2010; Maras, Splett, Reinke, Stormont, Herman, 2014; Noguera & Boykin, 2011).

Studies on protective factors and prevention science indicate that evidence-based practices that are grounded in theory, proven effective through scientific research, and integrative of clinical expertise are most beneficial to the social emotional health of youth in schools (IES, 2003, APA, 2006). Different agencies have developed standards for assessing whether a program is evidence-based, though most agree that evidence of program effectiveness must come from quasi-experimental or experimental design, with randomized control trials being the gold standard (Campbell & Boruch, 1975; Mihalic & Elliott, 2015; Shadish, Cook, & Leviton, 1991). In order to qualify as an effective evidence-based practice certain scientific standards must be met including: a) a clearly identified a logic model which includes the intended population and protective and risk factors; b) high fidelity and quality of implementation; c) rigorous reliable and valid findings; and d) dissemination readiness with the necessary materials and supports required for implementation (Blueprints Programs, 2015). Before programs reach this level of rigor, they must begin with initial stages of evaluation such as developing a strong design, ensuring fidelity, and producing indicators of positive outcomes (Haggerty, 2015). While Dynamic Home Visits, the program targeted in this study, is grounded in theory and driven by

evidence, the focus of this study was on the initial stages of evaluation including design of the logic model, fidelity, and generation of possible indicators for positive outcomes. The results from this study provide evidence for why this intervention should be studied through more rigorous methods to determine whether it qualifies as an evidence-based practice.

### **Strengths Based Home Visits**

Over the last decade a significant amount of attention has been given to home visits in early childhood education, thanks in large part to former President Obama's Race to the Top education reform initiative and the Education Begins at Home Act. Though there are many studies investigating the impacts of educational home visits during early childhood, a comparatively small number have investigated the impact of strengths-based home visits for in-service teachers and even less have been published through peer-reviewed journals (Boske & Benavente-Mcenery, 2010; Cowan et al., 2002; Gonzalez et al., 2005; Lin & Bates, 2010; Meyer & Mann, 2006; Meyer, Mann, & Becker, 2011; Sheldon & Jung, 2015; Stetson et al., 2012).

The origins of strengths-based home visits can be linked to community organizing efforts such as the Parent-Teacher Home Visit Project (PTHVP) in Sacramento, California. Studies have been conducted measuring the effects of the PTHVP in California (Cowan et al., 2002) as well as other projects around the nation which have adopted this practice model (Mapp & Kuttner, 2013). Results from these studies are promising and suggest a need to continue investigating the effects of such experiences on student outcomes and teaching practice. On a larger scale, nationwide studies investigating home visits as a family engagement practice by the National Center for Family and Community Connections with Schools have also found positive results related to student outcomes indicating the value and need to continue studying home visits (Mapp & Kuttner, 2013; Henderson & Mapp, 2002; Sheldon & Jung, 2015).

Results from both quantitative and qualitative studies indicate that teachers have a deeper connection and stronger relationship with their students after they visited them in their homes (Cowan et al., 2002; González et al., 2005; Johnson, 2014). Moll et al. (1992) explain that home visits allow teachers to learn more about the complex contextual activities that make the students whole persons rather than knowing them only from in-class performance. They posit that strengths-based home visits reduce the insularity of classrooms and increase the trust between student and teacher (1992). Through going on strengths-based home visits, teachers learn more about students from diverse backgrounds which shapes their attitudes and allows them to develop stronger relationships.

In a recent study by Lin and Bates (2010) teachers reported a change in attitude towards teaching culturally diverse students after going on home visits. Similarly, in their longitudinal study, Cowan et al. (2002) conducted focus groups at 19 schools to learn from teachers about the impact of strengths-based home visits. Specifically, they reported that the teachers felt that the “home visits allowed them to cross cultural and economic class lines in order to build healthy relationships” (p.13). Their results also indicated that teachers' attitudes toward their students were positively influenced by home visits, and that the visits strengthened student-teacher relationships through increased trust and comfort.

Although teachers and school leaders rank family engagement as one of the most important aspects of student improvement, they also consider it to be one of the top challenges of their work (Metlife, 2012). Teachers do not know how to approach building these partnerships (Mapp & Kuttner, 2013). This can, in part, be attributed to a documented lack of training in teacher education programs, as well as a dearth of coordinated efforts to develop adult capacity through appropriate adult professional development in school settings (Albright & Weissberg,

2010; Epstein, 1990; Mapp & Kuttner, 2013). By providing teachers with opportunities to participate in Dynamic Home Visits, Public School District offers an authentic approach to connecting schools with families and communities.

### **Theoretical Orientation**

The Motivational Framework for Culturally Responsive Teaching (Ginsberg & Wlodkowski, 2000) and the Social Developmental Model (SDM) (Catalano & Hawkins, 1996) guided this study. The SDM integrates elements from social learning theory (Akers, 1977; Bandura, 1977) and social control theory (Hirschi, 1969) to explain how children learn and develop patterns of behavior from the social environments in which they interact (Catalano, Haggerty, Oesterle, Fleming, & Hawkins, 2004; Kim et al., 2015). Consistent with other ecological systems theories, in addition to individuals' immediate social environments, other contributing factors are individual personality and the influence of broader social structures (Catalano & Hawkins, 1996). Results from studies guided by the SDM have confirmed that the interaction between individuals and their social environments (schools, families, community programs) conditions the development of either prosocial or problem behavior for youths of various backgrounds, ages, and locales (Hawkins, Catalano, Kosterman, Abbott, & Hill, 1999; Fleming, Catalano, Oxford, & Harachi, 2002; Roosa et al., 2011; Sullivan & Hirschfield, 2011). The measured outcomes in these studies are widely considered problem behaviors for *all* young people regardless of race, ethnicity or socioeconomic status (e.g., violent crime, sexual activity/unwanted pregnancy, and substance abuse) and efforts are made to intentionally address the variance in definitions for non-dominant racial, ethnic and low-income youth. However, the theoretical underpinnings of the second framework, the MFCRT, call upon intrinsic motivational theories of learning as well as principles and structures consistent with those of multicultural

education and Critical Race Theory. The following sections provide a description of each model and its relevance to this study.

**The social development model.** Through the Social Development Model social bonding is promoted by perceived and actual opportunities, skills, and reinforcement for interaction and involvement across different social contexts (Catalano et al., 2004; Catalano & Hawkins, 1996; Kim et al., 2015). Furthermore, it suggests that development of prosocial behavior depends on the norms, values, and behaviors of the individuals and institutions to which the child is bonded, including family, school, peers, and community. Accordingly, if a child is bonded to a social environment that encourages and reinforces prosocial behaviors, then the child is less likely to develop problem behaviors that are inconsistent with that context and might threaten their social bond.

This study focused on the prosocial pathway referred to as the *Social Development Strategy* (SDS) posited by the SDM. The prosocial pathway focuses on promoting positive development among youth through creating daily opportunities for prosocial involvement and interaction, reinforcing participation and interaction, and ensuring that youth learn skills to be successful (Kim et al. 2015; Hawkins, 1999; Hawkins et al., 1992). There has been significant support for this model across school and community settings, the most extensive of which was a longitudinal study by Hawkins et al. (2008). They found that an evidence-based intervention designed to increase opportunities to respond, develop skills, and provide reinforcement for interaction and achievement positively impacted youth mental health outcomes immediately *and* fifteen years after the intervention ceased (2008).

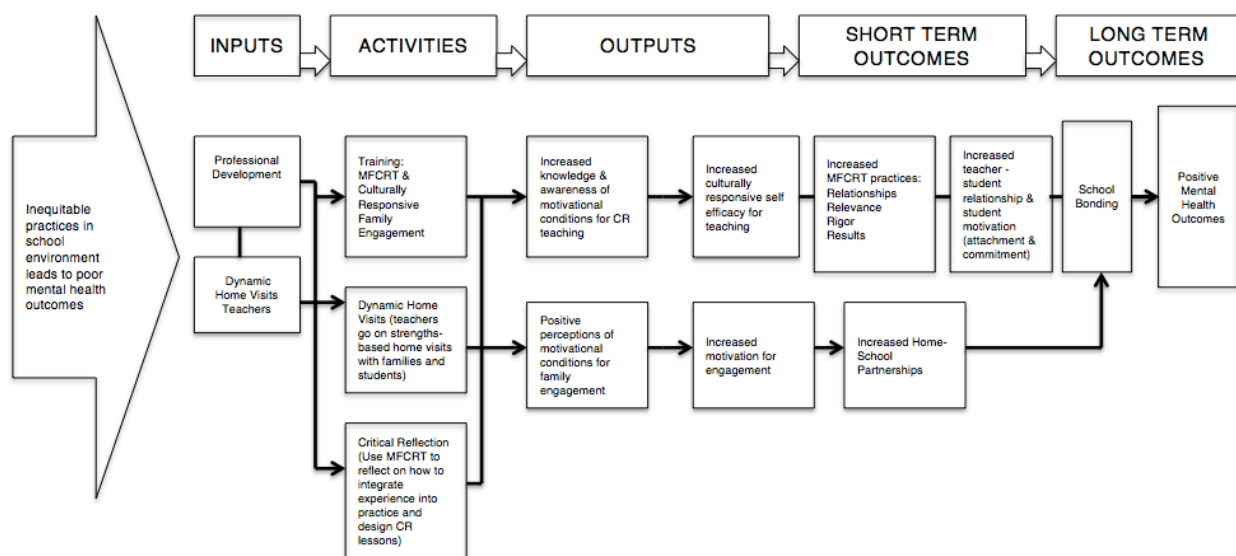
**Motivational framework for culturally responsive teaching.** The MFCRT embodies four motivational conditions that are essential to creating meaningful learning experiences:

establishing inclusion, developing a positive attitude, enhancing meaning, and engendering competence. As it relates specifically to classroom practice, the MFCRT integrates the four conditions by framing the conditions as: *establishing inclusion* by developing relationships that foster respect and connectedness; *developing attitude* by providing instruction that is relevant and meaningful; *enhancing meaning* by creating a rigorous and challenging learning experience; and *engendering competence* by creating an understanding that learning that produces competency and effectiveness (Ginsberg & Wlodkowski, 2000). Indeed, research in the field of positive psychology indicates that teachers who foster positivity in their classrooms and provide engaging and meaningful learning opportunities promote student acquisition of knowledge (Seligman et al., 2009; Cohen, 2006). Furthermore, teachers who recognize and cultivate student strengths are more likely to increase engagement among students (Peterson & Seligman, 2004; Lopez & Snyder, 2003). This illustrates the teachings of several scholars who have suggested that when teachers' respect cultural diversity, it influences students' motivation to learn (Ginsberg, 2015; Ladson-Billings, 1994; Merriam et al. 2007). That is, teachers who draw relevant connections for student between academic content and real world context, challenge *all* of their students academically, and seek to build meaningful relationships with their students are more likely to enhance student motivation.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study was to examine the effects of Dynamic Home Visits on teachers' beliefs and attitudes about students and families and their self-efficacy for teaching diverse students, as well as the impact of the experience for families. The theory of change model for this study suggests that the intervention will increase teacher knowledge and awareness of the motivational conditions for culturally responsive teaching and teacher self-

efficacy with racially diverse students. These two variables will result in increased culturally responsive motivational practices, including stronger relationships between students and teachers (attachment), and enhance student motivation (commitment). Both variables (attachment and commitment) have been empirically connected with improved school bonding and positive social emotional outcomes for students (Kim et al. 2014; Hawkins, 1999; Hawkins et al., 1992).



*Figure 1.* Logic Model. This figure illustrates how Dynamic Home Visits brings about change in mental health outcomes for youth.

Although the components of Dynamic Home Visits are grounded in theory and driven by evidence, the program itself is not yet evidence-based. Therefore, this study attempted to answer the following sets of research questions and related hypotheses:

*Research question set #1:* How do Dynamic Home Visits impact teacher-student and home-school relationships? What is different about teachers' relationships with students and families after a home visit?

*Hypothesis #1:* Dynamic Home Visits improve teacher-student relationships and both teachers and families will report an improvement in their relationship (e.g., increased communication, engagement or improved affective characteristics such as increased trust and comfort).

*Research question set #2:* How do Dynamic Home Visits affect teachers' sense of efficacy for teaching culturally diverse students? What do teachers report is different about their teaching after a home visit?

*Hypothesis #2:* Teachers' sense of efficacy for teaching culturally diverse students will increase significantly after participating in the full professional development training including the home visit and reflection than prior to the DHV professional development training.

*Research question set #3:* Do teachers implement the strengths based home visit as recommended and suggested in the Dynamic Home Visits training?

*Hypothesis #3:* Teachers will report high fidelity of implementation of the strengths based home visits as suggested in the Dynamic Home Visits training.

*Research question set #4:* How do Dynamic Home Visits affect the motivational conditions of families for engaging with their children's teacher?

*Hypothesis #4:* Families' will report that Dynamic Home Visits influenced their motivation (based on the motivational conditions) for engaging with teachers after participating in the home visit.

## Chapter III: Methodology

### Participants

Teachers of the Public School District were invited to participate in the professional development for this study. Elementary school teachers from one elementary school in the district who decided to participate in the professional development were also invited to participate in a focus group. Additionally, all families who were visited by the teachers in this study were provided with the opportunity to participate in an anonymous survey and a family focus group. There were no exclusion criteria other than families must have been visited by one of the teachers in the study. The four participating third year teachers taught second and third grade in the same elementary school. All families visited by participating teachers were invited to the study. Each of the four teachers visited two students from their classroom with a teacher partner. Teachers were asked to select one academically high performing and one low performing student and arrange the visitation by phone with the family. None of the teachers shared the same racial, ethnic, or cultural background of the families they visited. Of the eight families visited by the teachers, six consented. Each teacher participant had one or more families participate in the DHV process. The sample consisted of three female and one male teachers who self-identified as African American/Pacific Islander (1) Caucasian (2), and Japanese American (1). The family member participants included six females and one male who self-identified as Native American (1), African American (1), Hispanic (3), and Somali (2). Socio-demographic information for teacher and family participants is presented in Table 3. Data collection and analysis occurred over the course of three months.

**Population and sampling.** The study used a sequential mixed methods sampling technique (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009) in which both convenience and purposeful sampling were used. All teachers were invited to join the Dynamic Home Visits professional development and participate in the survey portion of the study. However, only elementary teachers from one school were asked to participate in the focus groups. Purposeful sampling for the focus groups allowed the researcher to intentionally conduct a case study where the school was considered one case (Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2014).

Four teachers participated in the more detailed part of the analysis. All of the teachers had at least one year of experience, and had never been on prior home visits before. The school was selected in part due to the strong interest of the teachers in participating in the program (convenience sampling) and the demographics of the student population. The majority of the school's population was living at or below the poverty line, and there was a racially diverse student population. The school had participated in Dynamic Home Visits for three years, over half of their staff regularly conducted home visits, and the principal strongly supported his staff and had participated in the training.

According to the Office of Superintendent Public Instruction (2014) the student racial demographics of the school were: 50.8% Hispanic/Latino, 14.3% White, 13.0% Black and African American, 9.4% two or more races, 6.8% Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander, 5.6% Asian, and 0.2% American Indian or Alaskan Native. Additionally, 75.1% of their students received Free and Reduced Lunch.

## Measures

Data collection for this study were collected from surveys and focus groups. Teachers rated their sense of efficacy before and after the professional development. They also assessed the fidelity of implementation by rating whether the visits were consistent with the recommendations in the training, including asking specific questions and completing the required reflection worksheet. The measure Sheldon & Jung (2015) designed for a different strengths-based home visits project was used and adapted for this study. Teacher focus groups occurred twice, the first before the professional development and the second after the completion of the visits and reflections. The focus group was audio-recorded, transcribed, categorized, and coded to identify themes and pertinent information related to the research questions (Hatchman & Rolland, 2001). The family focus group occurred after the home visits and was audio-recorded, transcribed, categorized and coded. The focus group protocols are presented in Appendix B.

**Culturally responsive teaching self-efficacy scale.** The Culturally Responsive Teaching Self Efficacy Scale is a self-administered questionnaire designed to assess teachers' beliefs about their own capabilities and confidence to promote desired outcomes of learning and engagement for culturally diverse students (Siwatu, 2007). The scale includes 40-items using Likert-type rating where 0 is no confidence at all and 100 is completely confident. Examples of items include teachers' efficacy to "Identify ways how students communicate at home may differ from the school norms," and "Identify ways that the school culture (e.g., values, norms, and practices) is different from my students' home culture." The Cronbach alpha for the CRTSE is .96 and has strong construct validity for the overall scale (Siwatu, 2007).

**Fidelity of implementation.** The fidelity of implementation was measured using the quality of home visits scale of the Family Engagement Partnership intervention (Sheldon & Jung,

2015). This measure was used for the evaluation of the professional development to determine how reliably teachers completed home visits based on their training (e.g., “I asked families what their hopes and dreams were for their child”). The 6-item questionnaire uses a two-point scale (Yes or No). The scale is presented in Appendix B.

**Family and community scale.** The motivation for engagement was measured using the Family and Community Scale. This Scale was designed by Ginsberg (2004) to assess the perspectives of families using the motivational framework as a guide. It has not yet been empirically validated. However, the questions were the most appropriate for this study and align best with research question four. The 12-item questionnaire is rated using a five-point scale ranging from (0) strongly disagree to strongly agree (4). The scale is presented in Appendix B.

## **Procedures**

Dynamic Home Visits (DHV) encourage educators to examine their professional practice through an equity lens. The visits support a reciprocal partnership and opportunities for teachers to learn about the contextual and cultural influences that impact student learning. The DHV program is grounded in the principles of culturally responsive teaching practices and focuses on the learning experiences of both teachers and students. The goal is to support teachers’ thinking about how cultural funds of knowledge can serve as a foundation for creating intrinsically motivating and academically rigorous learning experiences for diverse student groups. This study evaluated the effects of Dynamic Home Visits on teacher and family perceptions of home-school relationships and culturally responsive practices using an evaluative pre-test, post-test differences design and a descriptive case study approach (Mowery, 2011; Yin, 1994).

**Dynamic home visits training.** All participants attended a two-hour workshop designed to support teachers’ understanding of culturally responsive family engagement, and motivation,

and to prepare teachers for going on home visits. The training was based on the four motivational conditions (relationships: establishing meaning, relevancy: developing attitude, rigor: enhancing meaning, and results: engendering competence) in the Motivational Framework for Culturally Responsive Teaching (Ginsberg, 2011). Each activity was selected to foster adult motivation during the training as well as to ensure that the actual visits engendered the same principles. The training encouraged teachers to think about the home visits through the MFCRT lens, thereby creating experiences in which both families and teachers feel respected, and the visit was meaningful, relevant, and valuable for creating a partnership. The teachers were introduced to the MFCRT during the training and spent time thinking about how to create a dynamic home visit consistent with the values outlined in the Framework; engaged in conversations about and activities grounded in culturally responsive teaching; reflected on their own cultural identities and their relationships with students from different cultural backgrounds; and practiced skills for entering the homes of culturally diverse families. They also were provided with strengths-based questions to ask families, and engaged in role-play activities to prepare for unexpected questions and situations (see Appendix D for examples of activities from the training manual). After the workshop, teachers were asked to visit at least one family with a teacher-partner. The visits lasted for at least thirty to forty-five minutes, but teachers and families could choose to engage longer. Only one visit was required, however teachers could make return visits.

In addition to integrating the Motivational Framework for Culturally Responsive Teaching into the initial training with teachers and to plan interactions with families, the motivational framework required reflection after the visits (Ginsberg, 2011). Teachers in partner pairs were asked to sit and use a reflection worksheet based on the motivational framework to

discuss their experiences (see Appendix C for reflection worksheet). The reflection encouraged teachers to think about how the experience contributed to a stronger connection between themselves, families and their students (inclusion), and how to integrate families' funds of knowledge into lesson planning and classroom instruction (attitude and meaning). Finally, this part of the process also supported teachers in applying what they learn to their practice (competence).

**Study design.** In order to gain insights into this dynamic process, a deep understanding of perspectives could be best achieved by using a mixed methods case study design. This study used what Merriam (2009) described as a basic qualitative research approach as a way to understand teachers' perceptions and construction of their social worlds and the meanings they attach to their experiences (home visit) in the educational setting. The qualitative component allowed for a more flexible study in which the voice of the participants may support the data from the survey questionnaire (Berg, 2001).

**Data collection.** This study employed what Miles et al. (2014) described as an integrated mixed methods design in which quantitative and qualitative data are collected in parallel. The fieldwork involved collecting qualitative and quantitative data at the same time. Interpretation of both types of data occurred simultaneous at the completion of the study. In this way, the data set generated prioritized each of the methods equally, analyzed each separately, and then used both to inform the overall interpretation (Cresswell & Plano Clark, 2011). The complexity of measuring culturally diverse family engagement practices required both lines of inquiry to yield valuable findings. As Lodico et al. (2010) stated "a great advantage of a mixed methods research design is that it provides an in-depth look at context, processes, and interactions and precise measurement of attitudes and outcomes" (p. 282).

### **Data Analysis for Research Questions**

The data collected were subjected to both statistical analyses and qualitative analyses. A paired *t*-test was used to determine the differences in pre-test and post-test scores on the survey using SPSS Version 19.0.0. The quantitative data collection and analysis addressed H<sub>1</sub>: Teachers will report that Dynamic Home Visits improved teacher-student relationships; and H<sub>2</sub>: Teachers' sense of efficacy for teaching culturally diverse students will increase significantly after participating in the DHV professional development training including the actual home visit and reflection. These hypotheses were tested through analyzing mean differences in scores on the variable of self-efficacy for teaching diverse students and sub categories associated with the Motivational Framework (Relationships, Relevance, Rigor and Results). In addition, results from surveys regarding parent perceptions for research question one (How does Dynamic Home Visits impact home-school relationships?) and four (How do Dynamic Home Visits influence the motivational conditions of families for engaging with their child's teacher?) were also analyzed. However, the surveys were administered at only the completion of the visits so no changes could be predicted or measured.

Given that this study intended to evaluate the logic model of the Dynamic Home Visits professional development program and test for potential positive outcomes as an initial evaluation, an experimental design was not employed. Rather, the project was considered to be an evaluation of the pilot in which the same population of teachers was measured on each of the variables before and after receiving the training. Therefore, a paired *t*-test was most appropriate to measure and compare means differences on self-efficacy for teaching diverse students using the CRTSE. A paired *t*-test measures whether the means of a continuous variable from a within-

subjects test group vary before and after a treatment (Student, 1908). An analysis of paired *t*-tests for the mean differences of each subscale for the CRTSE (Relationships, Rigor, Relevance and Results) also was analyzed.

### **Qualitative Analysis**

The qualitative data collection and analysis of this study sought to provide insights into how Dynamic Home Visits impact teacher-student and home-school relationships; what teachers' report as different about their relationship with their students and families after a home visit (research question one); and how do Dynamic Home Visits affect teachers' sense of efficacy for teaching culturally diverse students (research question two). Each of these questions was addressed through focus groups led by the researcher and document analysis through the reflection worksheet teachers are asked to complete after each visit.

Merriam (2009) suggests that qualitative data be continuously analyzed even as it is being collected. Since the researcher was directly involved in the study, the data was collected using a constructivist grounded theory approach (Wells, Hirshberg, Lipton, & Oakes, 1995). This approach allows for flexibility as the study progresses, accepting information learned and the social environment studied may necessitate adaptations. It also acknowledges that everyone is influenced by his or her own personal cultural context, including the researcher. This approach regards the researcher as part of the process rather than an objective outsider, recognizes the relationship between the researcher and the participants, and asserts that the researchers' values must also be acknowledged and included in the research results (Guba & Lincoln, 1989; Hayes & Oppenheim, 1997; Mills, Bonner, & Francis, 2006; Strauss & Corbin, 1994).

The transcription of each focus group was analyzed using leveled coding by first identifying themes and units of meaning through the following steps suggested by Stake (1995,

p.53): 1) review raw data under various possible interpretations, 2) search for patterns of data, 3) determine connections among responses, 4) organize according to issues and themes, and 5) review data to seek confirmation or disconfirmation. The next level of coding involved analyzing the data to evaluate for coherence and differences to develop categories and themes. Coding involved both deductive and inductive processes as well as axial coding in order to establish specific categories and to identify themes across responses (Cresswell, 2007). The final analysis used data from two focus groups (one before the professional development and one after with the same participants), document analysis of reflection worksheets from teachers and quantitative survey data to triangulate the data (Merriam, 2009).

A mixed methods approach allowed the researcher to address the research questions through collecting, analyzing and combining both qualitative and quantitative methods and data (Cresswell & Plano Clark, 2008). A combined analysis provided greater insights into the complex process of Dynamic Home Visits through an “in-depth look of the context, process and interactions and precise measurement of attitudes and outcomes” (Lodico et al., 2010, p.282). Quantitative analysis sought to answer the research questions of whether teachers’ report changes in their attitudes and perceptions and self-efficacy for teaching diverse students, while the qualitative analysis sought to enhance, expand, and answer the process questions of *how* this experience impacts teacher-student and home-school relationships.

## Chapter IV: Results

During the progression and simultaneous triangulation of data, several significant themes and subthemes emerged. The four research questions examined in this study served as the foundation of analysis. Data were initially categorized into the motivational conditions and then further analyzed for detailed themes within each category. Because data were continuously analyzed throughout the duration of the study, results are presented for each research question separately.

### Teacher-Student Relationships and Home-School Relationships

Research Question 1: How do Dynamic Home Visits impact teacher-student and home-school relationships? What is different about teachers' relationships with students and families after a home visit?

**Quantitative results.** The variable of Relationships on the CRTSE measure was analyzed using the pretest and posttest change scores. Descriptive statistics including means, standard deviations, and ranges for each variable composite for the sample population are presented in Table 1. Results indicated that participants were significantly more confidence in their relationships with students and families as measured by change scores from pre-to post intervention ( $M= 23.25$ ,  $SD= 8.54$ ),  $t(3) = 5.45$ ,  $p = .012$ . Due to the small sample size, there were issues with regard to statistical power which could make it more challenging to detect change from pre-to post. This is discussed further in Chapter V.

**Teacher-student relationships qualitative results.** Teacher and family focus group transcripts and documents were analyzed alongside survey data to understand what changes occurred regarding teacher-student relationships after the intervention. Themes of *student and teacher behavior*, *emotional language* and *trust/comfort* emerged from the analysis.

***Student and teacher behavior.*** Written and verbal statements compared before and after the intervention revealed thematic changes in the quality of the teacher-student relationship as well as teacher perceptions of responsibility and behavior. Analysis of written data before the intervention revealed that teachers anticipated the visits would have an impact on student behavior. However, data after the intervention indicated that the intervention had the most impact on teacher, rather than student, behavior. Specifically, before the intervention the dominant theme discussed among teacher participants was the expectation that students would *change their behavior* and *work harder* in the classroom. Teachers felt that after students developed a relationship, there would be a higher level of *respect* for the classroom and *increased compliance* with their classroom requests. While teachers reported an increase in work production and improvement in classroom behavior after the intervention, they attributed the change to how they modified their teaching behavior by increasing *safety*, *positivity*, and *encouraging students to take risks* instead of student behavior changing. One teacher participant explained that she felt building this relationship was more beneficial to her classroom than other professional development experiences, or even lesson planning, due to this shift in her awareness of her own teaching, she said, “I realized that my classroom doesn’t represent my kids so how could they feel safe enough in a classroom that wasn’t even theirs? It’s more productive to think of them as humans and not just as students.”

***Emotional language.*** Analysis of transcripts and reflection worksheets revealed a change in the emotional language used by teachers. When teachers were first interviewed about Dynamic Home Visits and asked about their expectations of how they might impact their relationships with students, distant and vague emotive descriptions were used. The word “excited” was used eleven times by various members of the group and only four other emotion

words were each included once (happy, joyful, kind, embarrassed). However, after the visits, teachers used 20 different descriptive emotions such as timid, calm, withdrawn, empathy, scared, and relaxed to describe these relationships. Furthermore, data coded for emotional language indicated that teachers' perceptions of student participation shifted from *students' taking ownership* for their participation to *teachers showing their students they are valued and encouraging them to participate*. As one teacher participant explained after the intervention, "I recognize it's my job to help students to shed the mindset of being unimportant and to know they belong."

***Trust and comfort.*** Before the intervention, there was very little language surrounding the concept of trust between teacher and student. Data produced the theme of families' comfort in coming to the school, but students' comfort coming to school or within the classroom was not present in the pre-intervention focus group. After the intervention, trust as it relates to bonding with school became a central theme in the teachers' focus group. One teacher participant declared, "The deeper the relationship there is, the deeper the trust is, the more they want to come to school." Subthemes included *sharing problems and concerns with teachers*, *feeling safe to come to adults*, and *increased attendance*. Similarly, data from the family focus group indicated that an increase in trust/comfort between teacher and student contributed to increased comfort among families. One teacher participant explained, "It's like we have a secret between us," in describing how one student started coming to her when she had confrontations with other students or personal issues. The family participant of the same child also noted this shift in her child's perception of the teacher. She explained that before the visit she went to the school to speak with the administrators several times, but since the visit her daughter had confidence in the

teacher, and she could “call just to ask, ‘Is my daughter okay’ and it takes the stress off of me as a parent because I know the teacher is looking out for my daughter.”

### **Home-School Relationships**

All four teachers reported an improvement in their relationship with families. However, responses from families varied from having little impact to strongly improving the home-school relationship. According to family survey results, 50% of families “strongly agreed” and 33% “agreed” that they felt closer to their child’s teacher after the visit and comfortable calling the teacher if the child was having a problem, but 17% felt “neutral” in response to the question of quality of relationship with the teacher. 67% of families “agreed” or “strongly agreed” that their family had a good relationship with the teacher while 33% were neutral. These themes were explored further through qualitative data analysis. The results revealed that the intervention impacted home-school relationships by improving *trust/comfort*, *communication*, and *engagement*.

**Trust and comfort.** Data analysis revealed a change in the way teacher participants described trust with families of their students. Before the intervention, trust was referenced vaguely and without clear definition. When asked to describe what trust means, teacher participants described a school-centric and parent-initiated model by stating that families would come to the school and communicate with the teacher more regularly. However, after the intervention, teachers described specific ways they felt trust had increased including having more *honest conversations* with families and *sharing real issues*, and more *intimate experiences*. They also extended the definition to include how their role influenced the *reciprocal relationship* by providing examples such as *taking action to support families* within the school system and shifting from *needing to make the families feel comfortable* to recognizing their *own level of*

*comfort*. For instance, before the intervention one teacher participant noted, “It takes courage for them to come to the school and I hope that can change.” After the intervention when she was asked what, if anything, changed, she explained, “I realized I was intimidated by families and it was actually me who was uncomfortable.”

A significant subtheme among families related to the historical significance of public education and the role of a teacher. One family participant said, “I know that if this situation would have been offered to my parents, they would have been like, no! We don’t need them [teachers] in our house! So, growing up like that I was a little skeptical from the beginning. Why do they need to come to our house? Everything is fine.” Several parents discussed their discomfort initially and that their level of comfort and trust did not increase until the visit was complete. Another family participant explained, “Once they came and I saw that the teachers really were there just to better my child’s education and experience, to get to know us, it made it seem like something to be a lot less suspicious of. It was really altruistic and it was a helpful thing instead of being suspicious.” This was a small but meaningful step towards building trust, rather than the outright establishment of trust. A family participant declared, “Now I feel like the teacher is there for me and I feel more comfortable with her since she knows about our family and our culture.” Another family participant explained, “When the teacher brought the family liaison with her and we could communicate in my native language, I immediately felt much more comfortable in the moment and have felt more comfortable contacting her in the future.” Data indicated the theme of comfort was particularly salient for families who spoke English as their second language.

***Communication.*** The data showed that both parents and teachers felt that communication increased after Dynamic Home Visits. According to family survey results, 50% of families

“strongly agreed” and 33% “agreed” that after the home visit they felt more comfortable communicating with the school and the teacher. Themes within the teacher data indicated that they felt more connected to the families after the intervention due to the content of the conversations with families rather than just an increase in the number of contacts. One family participant explained, "Before the teacher did not understand our culture so it did make it difficult for us to understand [how to communicate]. Now since she got to know a little bit about my culture and I know she is interested to learn, I know I can call." Results from the family focus group indicated that the teachers' *interest in understanding different cultures* and the *efforts made to reduce language barriers* that made a significant impact on communication from the parents' perspective.

**Engagement.** Teachers' understanding of family engagement as it relates to home-school relationships changed according to comparative data analysis. Three subthemes were not present in the pre-focus group dialogue that frequently occurred in the post focus group discussion were: *varied definitions of family engagement, reaching out to families, and partnership is rooted in culture*. Before the intervention, three out of four teacher participants thought family engagement involved coming to the school, and all of them included the concept of families supporting their children's formal education and academic tasks as part of engagement. After the intervention, all teacher participants agreed that *family engagement* must be defined differently for each family, and that it does not always involve academic based tasks. Additionally, reflections after the intervention indicated that teacher perceptions changed from believing it is the family's responsibility to come to school to believing it is the school's responsibility to invite families to be part of the community. Finally, coded data revealed a shift in teacher participants' awareness that cultural values and norms are essential to home-school relationships. Before the

intervention, teacher participant data included interest in learning about students and families, but no distinct reference to learning about cultural norms and values as a direct implication for home-school relationships. After the intervention, written reflections and focus group discussion included specific language about each family's cultural values and norms as critical to building a relationship. How this intervention impacted families' motivation for engagement is discussed in research question four.

### **Culturally Responsive Teaching Self Efficacy**

Research Question 2: Do Dynamic Home Visits affect teachers' sense of efficacy for teaching culturally diverse students? What do teachers report is different about their teaching after a home visit?

**Quantitative results.** The two variables examined in the present study self-assessment ratings of culturally responsive self-efficacy and the conditions of the motivational framework (relationships, relevance, rigor and results) were analyzed using a paired *t*-test with pre-and posttest scores. See Table 1 for descriptive statistics including means, standard deviations, and ranges for each variable composite for the sample population.

Results indicated that teacher participants had significantly more confidence in their culturally responsive teaching self-efficacy as measured by change scores from pre-to post intervention ( $M = 69.00$ ,  $SD = 18.97$ ),  $t(3) = 7.27$ ,  $p = .005$ . There also were significant differences within the group on each of the posttest outcomes. On all four posttest motivational conditions participants rated themselves as more confident from pre- to post-intervention in Relevancy ( $M = 24.25$ ,  $SD = 8.10$ ),  $t(3) = 5.99$ ,  $p = .009$ ; Relationships ( $M = 23.25$ ,  $SD = 8.54$ ),  $t(3) = 5.45$ ,  $p = .012$ ; Rigor ( $M = 12.50$ ,  $SD = 4.65$ ),  $t(3) = 5.37$ ,  $p = .013$ ; and Results ( $M = 7.25$ ,  $SD = 3.20$ ),  $t(3) = 4.53$ ,  $p = .020$ . Due to a small sample size, there were issues with regard to

statistical power which could make it more challenging to detect change from pre-to post.

This is discussed further in Chapter V.

**Qualitative results.** Culturally Responsive Teaching Self-Efficacy is a sensitive topic that can be difficult to measure through self-reports or analyzing survey questions primarily through quantitative statistics. Therefore, to better understand *how* Dynamic Home Visits impacted teachers' beliefs about their own capabilities and confidence to promote learning and engagement for culturally diverse students, survey questions, reflection worksheets, and transcripts were analyzed qualitatively.

***Motivational conditions for culturally responsive teaching.*** Of the survey questions, eight had the greatest mean score increase from pretest to posttest assessment, and were further analyzed using the Motivational Conditions for Culturally Responsive Teaching. These factors were: (1) "I am able to obtain information about my students' strengths (or funds of knowledge);" (2) "I am able to identify ways that the school culture (e.g., values, norms, practices) is different from my students' home culture;" (3) "I am able to implement strategies to minimize the effects of the mismatch between my students' home culture and the school culture;" (4) "I am able to obtain information about my students' home life;" (5) "I am able to establish positive home-school relations;" (6) "I am able to obtain information about my students' cultural background;" (7) "I am able to obtain information regarding my students' interests;" and (8) "I am able to use the interests of my students to make learning meaningful for them." Themes from these survey questions were investigated further through analysis of reflection worksheets and transcripts of focus groups.

***Relevant, challenging and engaging instruction.*** Teacher participants reported a statistically significant increase ( $p = .009$ ) in their ability to make instruction more relevant and

engaging through obtaining information from students and families about their funds of knowledge, identifying ways that the school culture (e.g., values, norms, practices) is different from their students' home cultures, and implementing strategies to minimize the effects of the mismatch between students' home culture and the school culture. One teacher participant declared, "Now thinking about the different cultures and views on education we have in our community, we can't accept middle class White American norms because for our student population that is so far from the norm, it's ridiculous." An analysis of both reflection worksheets and transcripts indicated that teachers felt more confident about how to incorporate their students' strengths into lesson planning after completing the reflection protocol with their home visit partner. The reflection process was reported to be an important part of synthesizing and integrating their experiences into lesson planning and instructional practice. Themes identified included: the difference in educational practices between school and students' country of origin; cultural norms and values regarding education; student responsibilities at home; and individual student strengths. During the second focus group, one teacher participant explained, "Now I realize how awkward some of our classroom practices were for him knowing more about his culture." While data indicated that involvement in this intervention led to a shift in perception of participants, it did not identify which teaching practices changed.

Teacher participants reported an increase in their confidence to make their instruction more rigorous, and learning more meaningful for their students after learning about students' cultural funds of knowledge and using student interests to make learning meaningful for them. Themes included increased awareness about cultural norms to incorporate into the classroom, and having higher expectations of students. One teacher participant said, "Now I hold her to

higher expectations especially since she was one of my lower students in math and one of my low readers.”

*Building respectful and connected relationships.* Teacher participants also reported an increase in establishing a connected and respectful relationship with students and families. An increase occurred in teachers’ confidence about relationships with both students and families after the intervention, specifically through increasing their knowledge about their students’ home life and through establishing positive home-school relationships. Themes included *cultural sensitivity* and *family roles*. Each teacher participant described an increase in awareness of culturally sensitive practices with regard to their relationship with students. One participant said, “I found out that one of my student’s mom was flying back and forth to Nigeria when I met with his aunt. Now I try to avoid saying “mom and dad [to my students]” which I didn’t even think of as being part of culturally sensitive before.” Teacher participants also used language referring to family roles and relationships between students and their families. One teacher participant explained, “Now I have a relationship with him and his mom. On top of that, from that visit it seemed like his mom is the head of the household in his life. To see that in action and how important that relationship is to him will help me.” Another said, “I was expecting the same kind of thing that I see in class-for him to be quiet and withdrawn- but the house was so alive and fun. It was exciting to see that aspect of his life.”

*Home-school relationships.* Teacher participants also reported an increase in feelings of competence to engage with families. This increase was evident in a shift in their language about their comfort with families rather than families comfort with the school. One participant explained, “I realized it was me who was intimidated by parents. That’s how my perspective has shifted the most. Family engagement isn’t just families coming into the school and engaging

them once they're here, but getting families engaged in whatever way they are able.”

### **Fidelity**

Research Question 3: Do teachers implement the strengths based home visit as recommended in the Dynamic Home Visits training?

**Survey results.** Results of the fidelity measure indicated that all teacher participants implemented the Dynamic Home Visit as intended. The family survey results indicated that teachers followed the protocol, but did not always ask specific questions included on the protocol. Given that teachers were not required to ask all questions on the protocol this did not mean poor fidelity, but did provide valuable data to inform the next iteration of intervention implementation and evaluation. Furthermore, since fidelity was predominately measured by self-report measures, there was likely bias.

### **Family Motivation for Engagement**

Research Question 4: How do Dynamic Home Visits influence the motivational conditions of families for engaging with their child's teacher?

**Quantitative results.** Results from the family survey indicated that 83% “agreed” or “strongly agreed” that the Dynamic Home Visits impacted at least one of the motivational conditions for engagement, and the participating families would recommend the intervention to other families. The highest possible score was 60 on motivation for family engagement, and the total score average of responses was  $M = 51.17$   $SD = 9.77$ . Means from the three survey questions for each of the four motivational conditions were analyzed with the highest possible score of 15 within each domain. Results indicated that families reported the most impact within the relationships domain ( $M = 10.27$ ) followed by results and relevance ( $M = 9.78$ ), and then rigor ( $M = 9.66$ ). These results are summarized in Table 4. Analysis of individual survey scores

with a total score range of 21 points (Min = 39; Max = 60) suggested that there was a high level of variability among the experiences of each family.

**Qualitative results.** Focus group transcripts were analyzed to understand *how* Dynamic Home Visits influenced motivation for family engagement. Specifically, survey questions that had highest responses of strongly agree and neutral were further investigated. Table 5 shows the questions investigated and corresponding themes noted in focus group transcript analysis. Survey questions with the greatest response rate of “strongly agree” were “I feel comfortable calling my child’s teacher if my child is having a problem;” “During the home visit my child's teacher asked about and listened to ideas I have about my child's strengths and abilities;” and “Our family has a good relationship with our child's teacher.” Qualitative themes derived from further clarifying *how* this intervention impacted family experience included *teachers’ showing interest* in learning more about the *family’s culture*, about their *child’s strengths*, and an *increase in comfort* between the teacher and family. Two survey questions that half of the participants felt neutral about were further investigated. These were, “I felt that the home visit can build a connection between home and school” and “I am encouraged by my child’s teacher to communicate with him/her.” Although half of the family participants reported that the intervention did not increase home-school connection, every participant reported a potential benefit for their children. Further analyses of answers to this question revealed that if families already communicated or felt they had a relationship with the teacher, this intervention did not further strengthen home-school connections. Furthermore, families reported that if they had an established relationship with the teacher, then the teacher did not need to encourage them to communicate. Conversely, half of the families agreed with these questions and reported this intervention influenced their experiences

by *establishing a personal connection, understanding cultural differences, and communicating with native language* (via a family liaison).

In order to understand and compare the differences between family and teacher definitions of family engagement, family participants also were asked to explain what family engagement meant to them. *Supporting their child* with both academic and non-academic tasks was prevalent across all responses. Several family members identified communicating with the school and teacher as a part of providing support though responses were in the context of information gathering rather than in the form of collaboration. Families described their role as multi-faceted including supporting formal education and working with the teacher among the ways they influenced their child's education.

## Chapter V: Discussion

### Summary and Implications of Findings

This study utilized an integrated mixed-methods design to conduct an initial evaluation of the logic model, fidelity, and generation of possible indicators for positive outcomes for the Dynamic Home Visits intervention. Dynamic Home Visits is designed to increase teachers' self-efficacy for teaching culturally diverse students and their awareness of culturally responsive family engagement. Research indicates that is not only the relationship between the student and teacher, but also the teachers' own belief that they possess the ability to teach all students that determine the level of success (Lee & Smith, 2001). Furthermore, when educators and families partner to support the emotional well-being of youth, their coordinated efforts are likely to have a greater impact on outcomes than efforts of either school or home implemented in isolation (Weiss et al., 2009). Data were collected at baseline and after the intervention to examine the effects on self-efficacy, perception of family engagement, families' motivation for engagement, and fidelity of implementation.

**Culturally responsive teaching self-efficacy.** One of the main goals of this study was to examine evidence in support of the logic model which posited that by increasing awareness of the motivational conditions for culturally responsive teaching, teachers' confidence about it would increase. Overall, quantitative and qualitative evidence indicates that teachers' awareness of each of the conditions of the Motivational Framework for Culturally Responsive Teaching: establishing inclusion, developing attitude, enhancing meaning, and engendering competence did increase. Furthermore, triangulation of the data from the survey results, focus groups, and reflection worksheets confirmed these results.

Teachers reported increased confidence in their ability to make instruction more *relevant, engaging, and rigorous* for their students through learning about students' cultural funds of knowledge using the interests of students to make learning meaningful. These findings are consistent with prior research that teachers who recognize and cultivate student strengths are more likely to increase engagement among them (Peterson & Seligman, 2004; Lopez & Snyder, 2003) and that when teachers' practice cultural responsiveness, it influences students' motivation to learn increases (Ginsberg, 2015; Ladson-Billings, 1994). Qualitative themes indicated that learning about students interests and funds of knowledge outside of the school environment contributed to teachers adjusting instruction to ensure students can relate to the course material and higher expectations for student learning. The finding that Dynamic Home Visits affected teacher beliefs and perceptions towards non-dominant students also draws attention to a potential unconscious bias of teachers towards students of color. Consistent with prior research, this study found that perceptions and beliefs act as a filter for accumulation of knowledge and have a direct influence interactions with culturally diverse students (Pohan & Aguilar, 2001). While teacher participants reported an increase in their expectations for the learning of students, which has been found to correlate with greater student achievement (Eccles & Roeser, 2011; Ferguson, 2003; Good, 1981), results also indicated that teachers possessed lower expectations for students of color before the intervention. Although teachers reported changes in their perception, they did not clarify what specific practices they changed or intended to change. It was outside the scope of this study to determine what practices teachers changed and to measure whether actual changes occurred within the classroom. These limitations and opportunities for future research are discussed further in the following sections.

In addition to an increase in self-efficacy regarding instructional practice, teachers also reported more confidence in developing relationships with students. Qualitative themes included changes in emotional language used to describe relationships with students, teacher perceptions of behavior, and the development of more nuanced definitions of trust and comfort.

The emotional vocabulary of teachers increased after the visits in that teachers used more explicit and descriptive terms to explain student experiences in their classroom as well as an increase in emotional vocabulary regarding their relationships with students. Analysis of focus group data indicated that teachers were thinking intentionally after the visits about how the culture of the school and their classrooms were incongruent with students' lives outside of school, and how that may influence the students' emotional experience in the classroom. Although this study did not measure student perceptions about relationships, it suggests that teachers increased their perceptions of students as individuals and emotional connection or attachment to students. If these results are consistent across future studies, this intervention could be viewed as a vehicle for increasing what the Social Development Strategy refers to as attachment and commitment. These two variables have been shown to be critical elements to school bonding, a protective mental health factor for youth (Hawkins, 1999; Hawkins et al., 1992; Kim et al. 2014). Furthermore, these initial results indicate that the Dynamic Home Visits intervention may be one method of supporting teachers to make intentional efforts to connect to their students, which has been shown to effect student achievement particularly when they do not share the same cultural backgrounds (Ginsberg, 2015; Boykin & Noguera, 2011).

A second theme that emerged from the data was a shift in teachers' perceptions of student behavior. While teachers reported an increase in student work production and improvement in classroom behavior after the visits, they attributed the change to how they modified their own

approaches to the classroom environment instead of student's changing their behavior. Before the intervention, teachers used terms such as "increased compliance" and "respect from students" to describe their expectations. After the intervention teachers used the following language to describe how the intervention influenced their desire to change their own behavior such as *increasing safety, creating a positive classroom environment, and encouraging students to take risks*. These preliminary results indicate Dynamic Home Visits impacts teachers' awareness of how their behavior and the classroom environment influence student behavior. This intervention may encourage teachers to foster positivity in their classrooms and provide engaging and meaningful learning opportunities which research has shown promote student acquisition of knowledge (Seligman et al., 2009; Cohen, 2006). Furthermore, this preliminary evidence may predict long term outcomes similar to studies of the Social Development Model which shows that when school environments embody certain conditions such as a positive climate and teacher-student relationships, students are more likely to bond to the school and experience prosocial outcomes later in life (Abbott et al., 2008).

A third theme within the motivational condition of relationships was trust as it relates to the bond between teacher and student. Before the intervention, this theme was not reported by teacher participants, however, after the intervention, this became a centralized theme for teachers. They felt that students were more comfortable sharing problems and concerns with teachers, and made their classrooms safer for students.

**Teacher perceptions of home-school relationships.** The initial evaluation of Dynamic Home Visits indicated that the training, experience of visiting a family in their home, and reflective practice with a teaching partner influenced teachers' perceptions of family engagement and of their relationship with families. Three qualitative themes emerged from the data

regarding teacher perceptions of how the relationship changed: increase in trust between teacher and family, change in communication between home and school, and change in the definition of family engagement. First, teachers described specific ways they felt trust had increased between themselves and families. Before the intervention teachers talked about “building trust,” but when probed to explain what trust meant to them, teachers described only vague actions taken by the families (e.g., communicating with the teacher more) rather than any meaningful change in their relationship or teacher responsibility for developing trust. After the intervention, teacher participants reported more detailed descriptions of the initial steps taken towards building trust including having more *honest conversations* with families and *sharing about real issues*. These findings indicate that this intervention may be a means for implementing strategies called for by the family engagement literature including taking intentional steps towards confronting and addressing power imbalance, increasing culturally responsive practices, and developing relationships grounded in trust and respect (Clarke et al., 2010; Hill, 2010).

Teachers thought that the content of what they talked about with families was more important than just an increase in the number of contacts. Before the intervention, teachers hoped that this would encourage families to reach out more often, but after the intervention they believed families would feel comfortable communicating with them. Lastly, teachers’ definitions of family engagement changed significantly from pre-to post intervention. Subthemes absent in the pre-intervention focus group that appeared with great strength after were *varied definitions of family engagement* (e.g., it must be defined differently for each family); *invitation* (e.g., the school needs to invite families to be part of the community); and *partnership is rooted in culture* (e.g., awareness of cultural values and norms are different between home and school). In fact,

data from the post intervention focus group shows that teachers' definitions of family engagement were much more aligned with families' definitions than before the intervention, which were more akin to what Auerbach (2007) described as the *invisible strategies* that many families of color and low-income use to support their children, and less on their role in the formal education of their children.

**Motivational conditions for family engagement.** Even though the data consistently indicated a change in teacher perception, results regarding how the intervention impacted families' motivation for engagement were not as robust. While teachers reported a significant increase in their relationship with families and described how this experience changed their understanding of family engagement, analysis of data from family participants produced mixed results as to whether it impacted their motivation for engagement. In part, this may have been related to the intervention design of teachers inviting family members to participate rather than soliciting family input. As it currently exists, DHV only provides families with the opportunities to say "yes" or "no" to receiving a visit, effectively denying families the power of shared decision making. While survey results revealed a high mean total score suggesting that family participants agreed that Dynamic Home Visits impacted their motivation for engagement, item analysis and qualitative data provided additional layers of complexity. For instance, item analysis showed that family participants would recommend this experience, felt closer to the teacher after the visit, and were more comfortable with the teacher and communicating with the school, but fewer family participants felt that Dynamic Home Visits can help build the connection between home and school. An analysis of the large range between individual survey scores suggests a high level of variability among the experiences of each family. Qualitative data indicated that families felt that teachers' learning more about their culture and showing an interest in their child

was important for their children in the classroom and at school. These results are consistent with the literature indicating that while strengths-based home visits have been identified as a best practice, they are not sufficient in isolation to produce equitable home-school partnerships (Mapp & Kuttner, 2013; Ishimaru & Lott, 2014).

According to survey data, the relationship domain was the motivational condition most affected for families and qualitative data supported this indicator. Data from the family focus group indicated that families chose an increase in trust and comfort as the primary factor that influenced the relationship between teacher and student, which was a major contributing factor to increase their engagement with the teacher and school. Data also showed that families reported communication between home and school changed after the intervention. Teachers' *interest in understanding different cultures* and *efforts made to reduce language barriers* were the two most influential factors. The overwhelming majority of families agreed that they felt more comfortable communicating with the school and the teacher after the home visit and that they felt more comfortable calling the teacher if their children were having a problem. These findings suggest the presence of possible positive outcomes of the intervention including increasing trust and comfort between home and school, which have been identified as protective factors for mental health outcomes by other researchers (Albright & Weissberg, 2010; Resnick et al., 1997).

**Fidelity of intervention.** An essential component of the initial evaluation of Dynamic Home Visits was to measure the implementation fidelity. Results were obtained through both results of the teacher fidelity survey as well as through analyzing several questions that families completed. Teachers reported high fidelity indicating that they followed the intervention protocol and completed required procedures before and after the visit. These data are summarized in Table 6. Family survey results indicated that teachers followed the protocol, but did not always

ask families about their cultural backgrounds or opinions of the child's strengths. While teachers were encouraged to ask many different questions, they were not mandated to ask specific questions of families, but rather required to select questions from the intervention protocol. These results may be indicative of an issue with consistency of implementation, however, given that DHV intentionally includes flexibility of implementation with the aim of encouraging culturally responsive practices, it does not necessarily suggest a lack of fidelity. It should be noted that while families' responses were considered an indication of fidelity with regard to following protocol, this design provided limited opportunities for families to offer critical feedback as to whether the intervention was implemented with fidelity in other ways such as being culturally sensitive.

### **Limitations**

There are many limitations to this study that require the quantitative interpretation of the findings to be taken with caution. One limitation was the timeline between when participants completed the pretest and posttest surveys, which was over the course of two months. It would be preferable to control the timeline between when the teachers take the pretest assessment, go on the visit, and take the posttest assessment. Given this length of time between survey measures, it is difficult to say with certainty that it was only the strengths-based home visit that impacted teachers' culturally responsive self-efficacy for teaching. Since teachers were asked to communicate with families to set up the visits as part of the intervention, it was not possible to control for when they would complete the visits. Moreover, this study occurred within the constraints of when the school could provide professional time for teachers to engage in trainings. In future interventions, it would be advisable to develop a shorter and more controlled timeline.

Other limitations of this study included a small sample size, use of convenience sampling and lack of randomization. Although this investigation was designed as a case study to examine whether the Dynamic Home Visits intervention warrants further research, a larger sample would be preferable to determine whether there are true effects of the intervention. In addition to increasing the sample size, it would be preferable to randomly assign a sample of teachers with similar characteristics to two groups (Dynamic Home Visits and standard visits) to determine whether there are true effects of the intervention.

A larger limitation of the present study was validity in detecting a change in responses to the intervention. Considering that groups were not randomly assigned and that teacher participants were obtained through convenience sampling, there was some internal validity threat of selection. These teachers worked together daily and a substantial amount of time passed between pretest and posttest, therefore, it is possible that teachers discussed their experiences before taking the posttest survey measure which may have affected the results.

Given that this was intended to be a case study evaluating possible positive indicators for the theory of change model of this intervention, both qualitative and quantitative results are critical to the evaluation of Dynamic Home Visits. However, qualitative data are also not without limitations. One such limitation is the results cannot be generalized to other populations, or replicated as the data reflect the individual experiences of the specific participants. As Merriam (2009) explained, “reliability is problematic in the social sciences simply because human behavior is never static, nor is what many experience necessarily more reliable than what one person experiences” (p.221). This observation underscores the importance of the results of this study, while also advising caution in forming any sort of generalization about the findings. The

results were consistent and dependable, which means they can be considered reliable, but not generalizable.

A final limitation of the study may have been the role of the researcher in the outcome of results. The researcher played a dual role of assisting with training implementation and leading the focus groups for teachers and families. While this dual insider-outsider role provided significant benefits in terms of access and trust building, there may have been a social desirability effect present in teacher responses even though intentional steps were taken to reduce this potential. Throughout the investigation, the researcher analyzed her role, position, and possible impact on the data and outcomes. As recommended by Merriam (2009), the researcher engaged in critical self-reflection regarding worldviews, assumptions, and how her relationship to the study may have affected the investigation. Although the dual role of the researcher may be considered a limitation by some, it may also be viewed as a strength of the design by others.

In addition, while Dynamic Home Visits incorporates aspects of culturally responsive teaching, the positive indicators studied for this investigation were more directed towards understanding teacher motivation, beliefs, and perceptions. Therefore, the aims of this study were limited to understanding the effects within the context of a participant group rather than the experiences of individual teacher participants.

### **Future Directions**

There are several recommendations for future research using Dynamic Home Visits or other strengths-based home visit interventions designed for teachers. First, it is recommended that researchers control more aspects of the design including using a control group to compare with those experiencing the intervention as well as randomly assigning participants to the control and intervention groups. This study included one measure of fidelity, but it was not sufficient to

adequately measure whether the teacher participants truly implemented the intervention with consistency and accuracy. Given that an essential component of the DHV design is that it provides autonomy to the teachers and families by not requiring a rigid rubric for each visit, future studies should consider defining fidelity of implementation to be more contextually appropriate. This could include an independent observation of the home visits and administration of different, more relevant questions in a family survey. This study provided preliminary evidence to suggest the Dynamic Home Visits does produce positive indicators as intended in the theory of change model. The next phase of research would be to conduct a randomized control trial to determine any true effects of the intervention. Along with a control group, it is recommended that future researchers obtain a larger sample size of participants which would allow for sufficient power to detect an effect of the intervention that was not possible for this study.

Given that there is a dearth of research on family motivation for engagement, future longitudinal studies should measure whether this intervention has clear effects on the motivational conditions for engagement. This study measured family-participants' perception only after the intervention, future research could investigate whether there is any true change in family behavior or perceptions of home-school relationships over time. Future studies may also include a component whereby all families within the school are informed about the intervention well before it begins and are invited share their input about the approach. This would provide informative feedback for those implementing the intervention and potentially allow for more robust findings with regard to family motivation for engagement.

In addition to controlling more aspects of the design and given the complexity of measuring culturally responsive teaching practices, it is recommended that researchers consider

conducting individual interviews as well as classroom observations to understand the actual practices that teacher implement after intervention. Specifically, it would be worthwhile to study the implications of teachers who reported a shift in their own behavior including whether they truly create more positive and culturally responsive classroom climates. Since the scope of this study was limited to experiences of families and teachers, future research should also evaluate responses of students. Considering the views of students, teachers and families would allow for more comprehensive investigations of the long term expected outcomes of the logic model to determine the true effectiveness of the intervention. The next iteration of evaluating this intervention should also include research questions regarding whether the increased home-school relationships and implementation of the motivational conditions for culturally responsive teaching result in actual school bonding for students.

### **Conclusion**

One of the core concepts of Dynamic Home Visits is to integrate the Motivational Conditions for Culturally Responsive Teaching into the fabric of all aspects of teaching practice. In this way, teachers were asked to use this framework to evaluate how this experience can support them in creating meaningful learning experiences for a diverse range of students. The preliminary results of this investigation indicate that the most salient outcome was the shift in teachers' beliefs regarding their perceptions of instructional practice and their relationships with students and families. Given that the long-term outcome intended for this intervention is to build protective factors around youth, including increasing home-school relationships and motivational conditions within classroom environments, there is evidence to suggest these are viable positive outcomes. This study supports the existing literature which indicates that one of the most critical

variables contributing to school bonding is teachers creating positive, safe and welcoming classrooms for all students, as well as demonstrating interest in students as individuals.

The results from this initial investigation of the logic model of the strengths-based home visiting program Dynamic Home Visits suggest that the intervention has positive indicators for outcomes and warrants further study to determine its effectiveness on enhancing culturally responsive self-efficacy for teaching and home-school relationships. This study demonstrated the importance of considering adult motivation as a key variable in changing teacher perceptions, beliefs and behaviors. When schools provide meaningful opportunities for teachers to learn about the strength of diversity and tools to enhance their awareness of motivation for teaching and learning, they are ultimately investing in building a community of learners. These initial actions lay the foundation for a safe, protective environment that enables equitable home-school relationships, positive teacher-student relationships, and the supportive structures that empower youth to flourish.

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Table 1

*Descriptive Statistics*

Outcome Variables	Pre				Post			
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Min	Max	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Min	Max
Self-Efficacy	125.25	20.14	107.00	154.00	194.25	5.19	188.00	199.00
Relevancy	42.50	7.42	33.00	51.00	66.75	2.63	64.00	69.00
Relationships	46.00	9.42	37.00	59.00	69.25	1.50	67.00	70.00
Rigor	26.75	4.43	22.00	31.00	39.25	0.96	38.00	40.00
Results	11.75	2.88	8.00	15.00	19.00	1.15	18.00	20.00

Table 2

*Inferential Statistics*

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Outcome Variables	<i>df</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Self-Efficacy	3	7.27	.005*
Relevancy	3	5.99	.009*
Relationships	3	5.45	.012*
Rigor	3	5.37	.013*
Results	3	4.53	.020*

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\* $p < .05$  is significant

Table 3

*Socio-Demographic Information*

Variable	Teacher Participants (N=4)	Family Participants (N=7)
Female	75%	86%
Male	25%	14%
<i>Race</i>		
Caucasian	50%	0%
African American	0%	14%
African	0%	28%
Asian	50%	0%
Hispanic	0%	44%
Native American	0%	14%
<i>Years Teaching</i>		
2	100%	

Table 4

*Family-Community Survey Responses*

Question	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I would recommend a home visit to other families <i>Results</i>	50%	33%	17%	0%	0%
I feel closer to my child's teacher after the home visit <i>Relationships</i>	50%	33%	17%	0%	0%
I am encouraged by my child's teacher to communicate with him/her <i>Rigor</i>	33%	17%	50%	0%	0%
I believe my child's teacher is interested in my ideas of how to help my child in school <i>Relevance</i>	50%	17%	33%	0%	0%
I feel comfortable calling my child's teacher if my child was having a problem <i>Relationships</i>	67%	17%	16%	0%	0%
I am encouraged by my child's teacher to be involved in my child's education, school or classroom <i>Rigor</i>	67%	0%	33%	0%	0%
I feel that home visits can help build the connection between home and school <i>Results</i>	50%	0%	50%	0%	0%
Our family has a good relationship with our child's teacher <i>Relationships</i>	67%	0%	33%	0%	0%
During the home visit my child's teacher asked my family about our culture & values <i>Relevance</i>	50%	17%	33%	0%	0%
During the home visit my child's teacher asked about and listened to ideas I have about my child's strengths and abilities <i>Rigor</i>	67%	17%	16%	0%	0%
My child's teacher asked about ways I would like to or can be engaged in my child's education <i>Relevance</i>	50%	33%	17%	0%	0%
After experiencing a home visit, I am more comfortable communicating with the school or my child's teacher. <i>Results</i>	50%	33%	17%	0%	0%

Table 5

*Qualitative Data Theme Analysis*

Family Survey Question	Focus Group Transcript Corresponding Data
I feel comfortable calling my child's teacher if my child was having a problem [Strongly Agree- 83%]	<p>“My trust with the school and the teacher really changed- it’s a lot better, increased a lot because I feel that the teacher knows my child now and better.”</p> <p>“The teacher I can call and we can get to know each other now, she got to know a little bit about my culture and she is interested so now I know I can call and just ask simple things like, ‘How is she doing? Is she doing okay?’”</p> <p>“Before this visit, I had to make several trips to the office to figure out what was going on and what was wrong, but now she and the teacher know each other and trust each other”</p>
During the home visit my child's teacher asked about and listened to ideas I have about my child's strengths and abilities [Strongly Agree- 83%]	<p>“They asked questions about my son’s future, his dreams and she asked about the parent’s education, my family’s life and the difference between my life and my child’s life.”</p> <p>“They asked about dreams, aspirations, his goals and our goals for him. What was my and his dad’s experience with education, what was different between them. It didn’t feel like it was a uniform visit, it felt very personal.”</p> <p>“They asked me what his strengths were and ideas for working with him in school.”</p>
Our family has a good relationship with our child's teacher [Strongly Agree- 83%]	<p>“I would recommend it to anyone who had reservations or questions about it because the child growing up- they don’t necessarily know what the sense of community should be outside of school and the stronger it is within the school, the more adults they feel comfortable speaking with and they know their parents are involved with- the better because then they have a bigger support system and they feel more widely cared for.”</p> <p>“I think it changed the relationship between me and the teacher- because now she knows me and we feel more comfortable with each other.”</p>
I feel that home visit	“I don’t think that the relationship has changed that much, but yeah- I

can help build the connection between home and school  
[ Neutral- 50%]

think it was beneficial for my son-it was having them come and letting them see part of his life.”

“I want him to be okay with me talking to his teachers and these visits set up a relationship between home and school so engagement like that can be normal for our children as they age.”

I am encouraged by my child's teacher to communicate with him/her  
[ Neutral- 50%]

“I guess I’m kind of neutral- I can see how it can help some people, but I think I communicate with the teacher pretty well.”

“I communicate with the teachers very well, but at the same time the teacher did not understand our culture so it does make a difference for them to understand my children to understand our culture now.”

“One thing I learned through the visit was other methods to communicate with the teacher...I wouldn’t have known about that without it.”

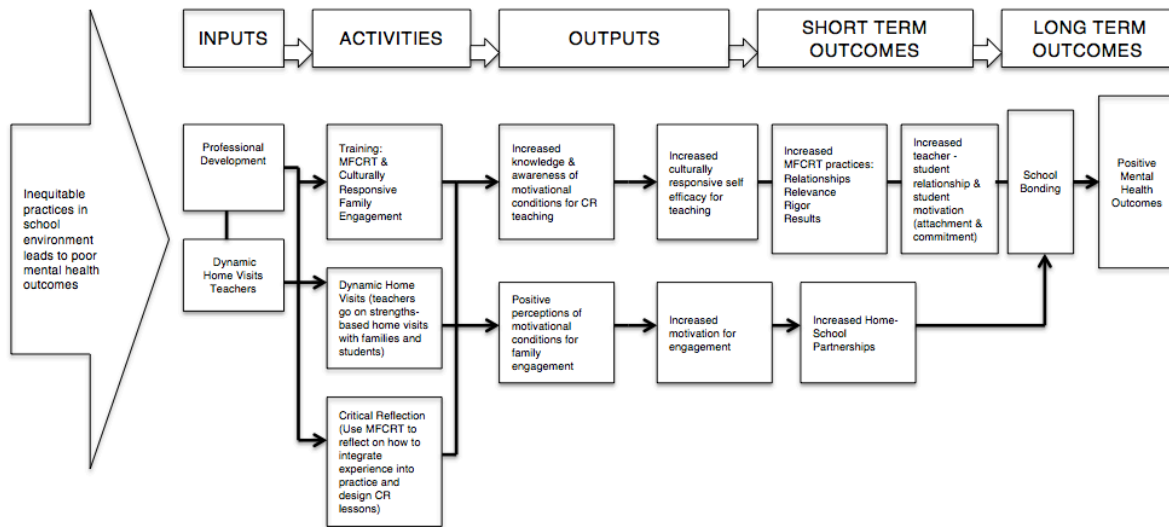


Figure 1. Logic Model. This figure illustrates how Dynamic Home Visits brings about change in mental health outcomes for youth.

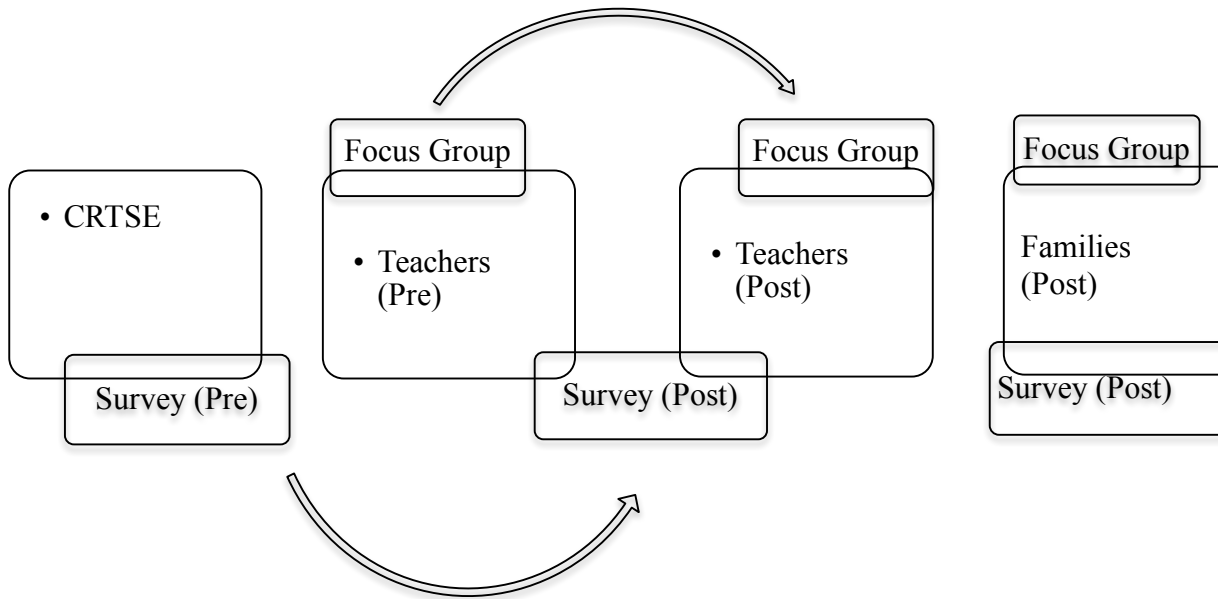
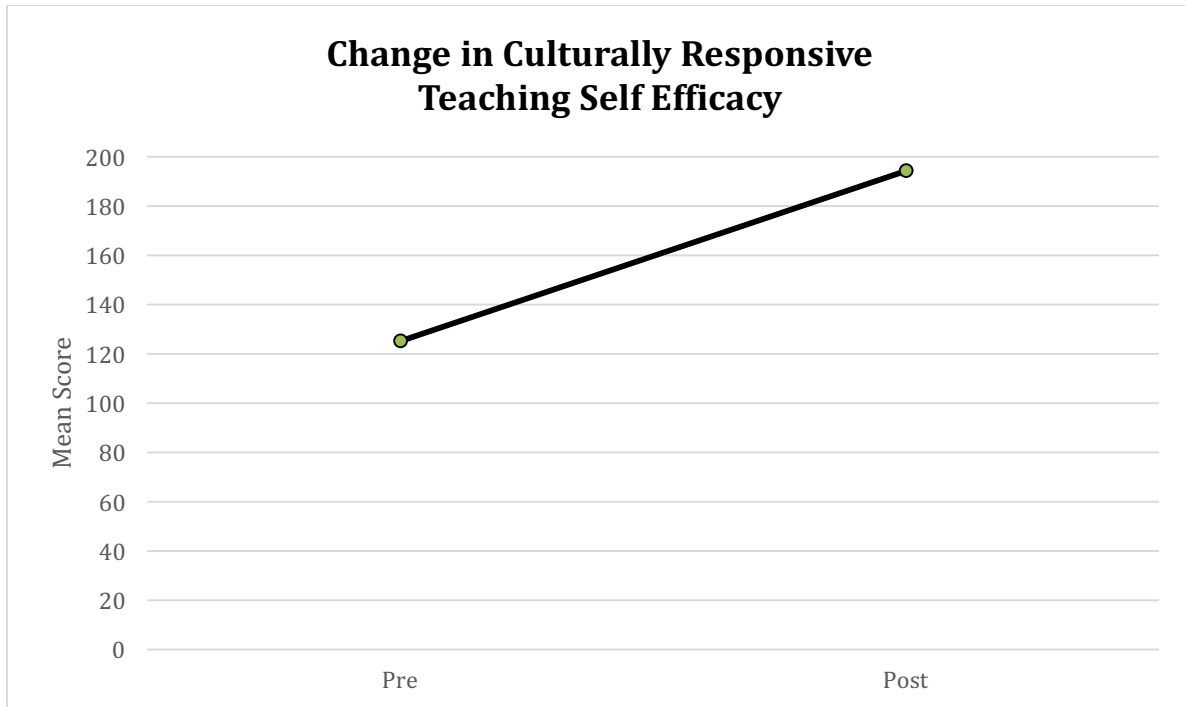


Figure 2. Graphic of data collection



Significant increase in confidence of Culturally Responsive Teaching Self Efficacy,  $p = .005$ .

*Figure 3.* Pre-Post Scores: Culturally Responsive Teaching Self Efficacy

## Appendix A: Measures

## A-1 Culturally Responsive Teaching Self Efficacy Scale – Teacher Survey (Siwatu, 2007)

I am able to...	Please rate the following questions from <b>0</b> (not confident at all) to <b>100</b> (completely confident)
1. Adapt instruction to meet the needs of my students	
2. Obtain information about my students' strengths [funds of knowledge] RELEVANCE (1)	
3. Determine whether my students like to work alone or in a group	
4. Determine whether my students feel comfortable competing with other students	
5. Identify ways that the school culture (e.g., values, norms, practices) is different from my students' home culture RELEVANCE (2)	
6. Implement strategies to minimize the effects of the mismatch between my students' home culture and the school culture. RELEVANCE (3)	
7. Assess student learning using various types of assessment	
8. Obtain information about my students' home life RELATIONSHIPS (1)	
9. Build a sense of trust in my students RELATIONSHIPS (2)	
10. Establish positive home-school relations* RELATIONSHIPS (3)	
11. Use a variety of teaching methods	
12. Develop a community of learners when my class consists of students from diverse backgrounds	
13. Use my students' cultural background to help make learning meaningful* RIGOR (1)	
14. Use my students prior knowledge to help them make sense of new information	
15. Identify ways how students communicate at home may differ from the school norms RELEVANCE (4)	
16. Obtain information about my students' cultural background RIGOR (2)	

17. Teach students about their culture's contributions to science	
18. Greet English Language Learners with a phrase in their native language	
19. Design a classroom environment using displays that reflects a variety of cultures RESULTS (3)	
20. Develop a personal relationship with my students RELATIONSHIPS (4)	
21. Obtain information about my students academic weaknesses	
22. Praise English Language Learners for their accomplishments using a phrase in their native language	
23. Identify ways that standardized tests may be biased towards linguistically diverse students	
24. Communicate with parents regarding their child's educational progress RESULTS (1)	
25. Structure parent-teacher conferences so that the meeting is not intimidating for parents RESULTS (2)	
26. Help students to develop positive relationships with their classmates	
27. Revise instructional material to include a better representation of cultural groups RELEVANCE (5)	
28. Critically examine the curriculum to determine whether it reinforces negative cultural stereotypes RIGOR (3)	
29. Design a lesson that shows how other cultural groups have made use of mathematics	
30. Model classroom tasks to enhance English Language Learners understanding	
31. Communicate with the parents of English Language Learners regarding their child's achievement RESULTS (4)	
32. Help students feel like important members of the classroom	
33. Identify ways that standardized tests may be biased towards students from diverse cultural backgrounds	
34. Use a learning preference inventory to gather data about how my students like to learn	
35. Use examples that are familiar to students from diverse cultural backgrounds RESULTS (5)	
36. Explain new concepts using examples that are taken from my students' everyday lives RIGOR (4)	
37. Obtain information regarding my students' interests RELATIONSHIPS (5)	

38. Use the interests of my students to make learning meaningful for them RIGOR (5)	
39. Implement cooperative learning activities for those students who like to work in groups	
40. Design instruction that matches my students' developmental needs.	

## A.2- Fidelity of Implementation Scale

## Home Visits Quality Scale

Please answer the following questions about your home visit experience.

	Yes	No
1. I talked about the families hopes and dreams for their child	Y	N
2. I talked about students' backgrounds	Y	N
3. I asked families what they expected of me and the school this year	Y	N
4. I talked about the families' backgrounds	Y	N
5. I discussed how I can communicate during the school year	Y	N
6. I completed the reflection sheet with my home visit partner	Y	N

## A.5- Family and Community Survey

<b>Family Survey</b>					
<i>Please answer the questions below based on your recent home visit experience</i>	<i>Please check the box that most fits your present belief</i>				
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. I would recommend a home visit to other families RESULTS (1)					
2. I feel closer to my child's teacher after the home visit RELATIONSHIPS (1)					
3. I am encouraged by my child's teacher to communicate with him/her RIGOR (1)					
4. I believe my child's teacher is interested in my ideas of how to help my child in school RELEVANCE (1)					
5. I feel comfortable calling my child's teacher if my child was having a problem RELATIONSHIPS (2)					
6. I am encouraged by my child's teacher to be involved in my child's education, school or classroom RIGOR (2)					
7. I feel that home visits can help build the connection between home and school RESULTS (2)					
8. Our family has a good relationship with our child's teacher RELATIONSHIPS (3)					
9. During the home visit my child's teacher asked my family about our culture & values RELEVANCE (2)					

10. During the home visit my child's teacher asked about and listened to ideas I have about my child's strengths and abilities RIGOR (3)					
11. My child's teacher asked about ways I would like to or can be engaged in my child's education RELEVANCE (3)					
12. After experiencing a home visit, I am more comfortable communicating with the school or my child's teacher. RESULTS (3)					

## Appendix B: Focus Group Protocols

### B-1. Protocol for First Round Focus Group with Teachers

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this focus group. I am going to ask you a few questions to get your perspective on your perspective about the role of families and community in schools and home visits. First we will introduce ourselves and then I will ask that you speak one at a time after I ask a question so that I can be sure to hear everyone.

1. What motivates you to participate in Dynamic Home Visits? *Probe: Was there a particular teacher, family, student or story that encouraged you to participate? Why is this work relevant to what you do? [RELEVANCE]*
2. Tell me about your understanding and experience with home visits prior to Dynamic Home Visits. *Probe: Have you heard anything about Dynamic Home Visits? If so, what do you know that is different about these visits? [RELEVANCE]*
3. Describe what you hope to get out of participating in Dynamic Home Visits. *Probe: Are you fulfilling requirements for your credential/ using this as part of your TPEP evaluation criteria/hoping to connect more with families/students? [RESULTS]*
4. How, if at all, do you think going on home visits will change your relationship with your students? *Probe: Describe the ways in which you think it might be different. If I walked into your classroom, what would be different after going on a home visit? [RELATIONSHIPS]*
5. How, if at all, do you think going on home visits will change your relationship with THE families of your students? *Probe: Describe the ways in which you think it might be different. If I walked into your classroom, what would be different after going on a home visit? [RELATIONSHIPS]*
6. Define cultural responsiveness as it relates to teaching. How, if at all, do you think going on home visits will impact your cultural responsiveness? *Probe: How do you think it will be different? What will be different? [RIGOR]*
7. What is the role of family in the education process? *Probe: Should families be involved at school, at home, or both? [RIGOR]*
8. What does ‘family engagement’ mean to you? *Probe: Does family engagement look different for different families? Describe how it might be different. [RIGOR]*
9. What have been your biggest challenges engaging with families? *Probe: Do you think going on home visits will change that? If so, how will it change? What will you [families] be doing differently? [RESULTS]*

*Teacher Focus Group Protocol #1 (Teachers first round) Version 1 (11-22-15)*

## B-2. Protocol for Second Round Focus Group with Teachers

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this focus group again. I am going to ask you a few questions to get your perspective on your perspective your experience of Dynamic Home Visits and your relationships with students and families. First we will introduce ourselves again and then I will ask that you speak one at a time after I ask a question so that I can be sure to hear everyone.

1. Describe what you hoped to get out of participating in Dynamic Home Visits.  
*Probe: Was this hope realized? If not, what was missing from your experience?*
2. Why would or wouldn't you recommend Dynamic Home Visits to other educators?  
*Probe: What specifically about this experience would you use as a reason to participate?*
3. Tell me in two minutes or less what surprised you most about the home visit.  
*Probe: Describe the feeling, what you saw, your experience, etc. that you did not expect.*
4. Describe your relationship with [student] after visiting them in their home.  
*Probe: If I walked in to your classroom, what would I notice is different about this student, about you, about the classroom?*
5. How, if at all, has Dynamic Home Visits influenced your cultural responsiveness/awareness of other cultures?  
*Probe: Describe a learning experience that challenged a view or bias you had before going on home visits.*
6. Is there anything you notice the student does more or less of in class after the visit?  
*Probe: Do you notice any differences in their engagement/behavior at school?*
7. How, if at all, has going on home visits changed your relationship with the families of your students?  
*Probe: If so, describe the ways in which it is different. What do you do differently? What does the family do differently?*
8. What does family engagement mean to you?  
*Probe: Does family engagement look different for different families? Describe how it might be different.*

*Teacher Focus Group Protocol #2 (Teachers second round) Version 1 (11-22-15)*

## B-3. Protocol for Focus Group with Families

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this focus group. I am going to ask you a few questions to get your perspective on your perspective your experience of Dynamic Home Visits and your relationships your child's school and their teacher. First we will introduce ourselves and then I will ask that you speak one at a time after I ask a question so that I can be sure to hear everyone.

1. Why would or wouldn't you recommend Dynamic Home Visits to other families? *Probe: What specifically about this experience would you use as a reason to participate?*
2. Tell me in two minutes or less what surprised you most about the home visit. *Probe: Describe the feeling, your experience, etc. that you did not expect.*
3. How, if at all, has experiencing a home visit changed your relationship with your child's teacher? *Probe: If so, describe the ways in which it is different. What do you do differently? What does the teacher do differently?*
4. What does family engagement mean to you? *Probe: Does family engagement look different for different families? Describe how it might be different.*
5. How, if at all, has experiencing a home visit changed your relationship with your child's school? *Probe: If so, describe the ways in which it is different. Do you feel more comfortable going to school or calling the teacher?*
6. Tell me about the conversation you had with your child's teacher during the home visit. *Probe: Did the teacher ask you about your child's strengths? About your family? About your experiences with school?*
7. How, if at all, does receiving a home visit differ from your experience with school up until now? *Probe: Does it feel any different to see a teacher in your home than at school? What about that experience is different?*



## C-2. Reflection Worksheet After Visits

Dynamic Home Visits  
Reflection B (After Visit)

Name of School:	Date:
Family members concerns/ suggestions	Family's funds of knowledge:
Describe your observations or objective experiences (E.g., We visited our student, her four siblings, mother and three cousins.)	
Describe your subjective experiences (E.g., My student has many responsibilities at home and family is very important to her).	
Review Reflection Form A: What did you see or experience that challenged the expectations you had? How might this relate to your classroom practice?	
<p>What did you learn about yourself?</p> <p>As a teacher/educator...</p> <p>As a person...</p>	

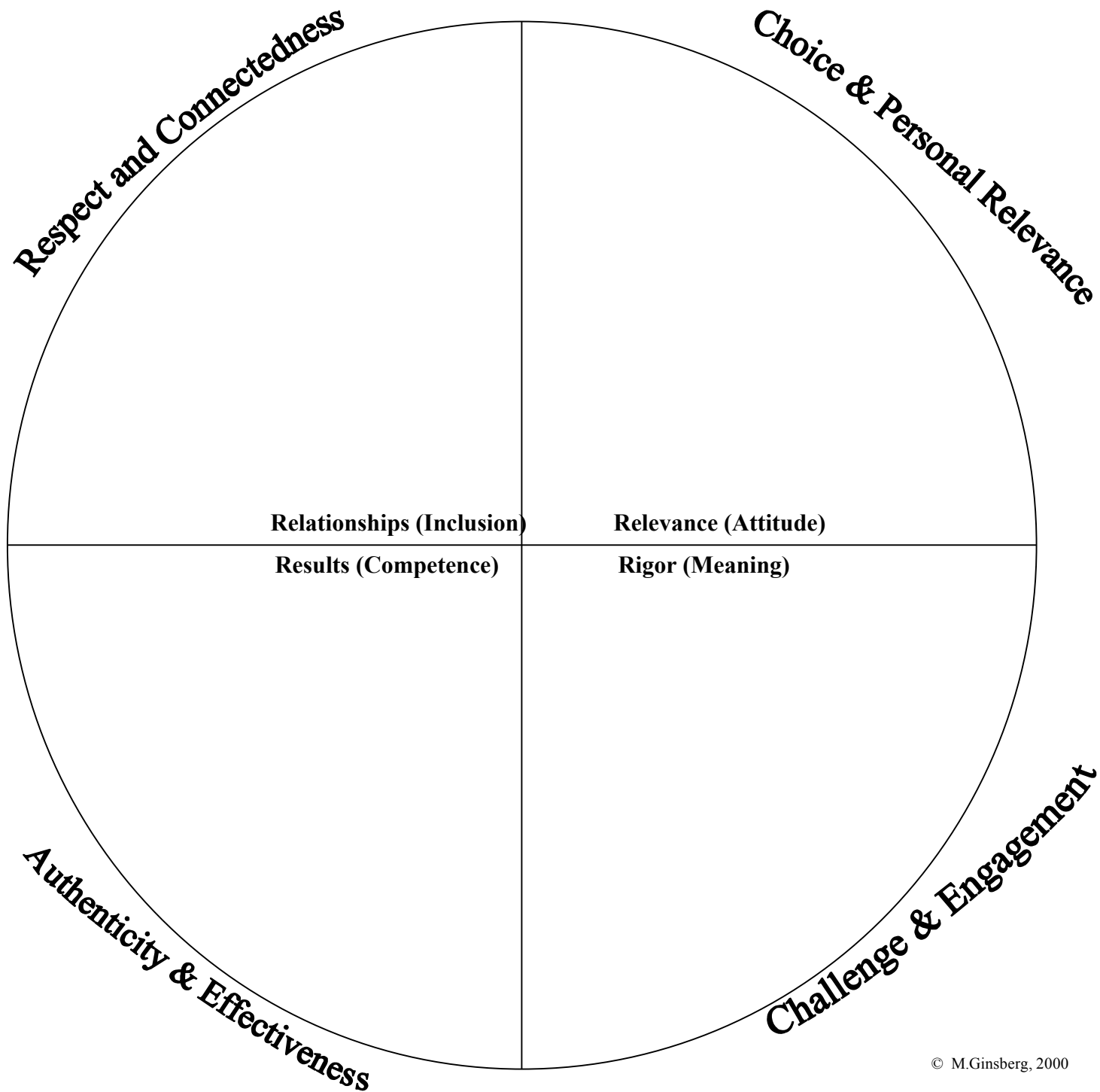
## Appendix D. Sample Dynamic Home Visits Materials

## D.1 T-Chart for Note Taking During Visit

Questions to Consider	Your Notes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What gives your family strength?</li> <li>• What are you most proud of about _____ (your son, daughter, granddaughter, etc.)?</li> <li>• Will you share your thoughts with me about the hopes/goals/dreams you have for your child?</li> <li>• What are some of the things about schools in the United States that seem to differ from opportunities to learn when you were a child? Probe: What is important in your culture or family that you would like educators to know?</li> <li>• How did your life in other communities differ from your life here?</li> <li>• How does the experience that you had (in school or just growing up) differ from your child's current school/growing-up experiences?</li> <li>• What are some of the things that you like about this community?</li> <li>• What are some things you would like to me to know about your student or family norms or traditions as they pertain to helping me support his/her success in my classroom?</li> <li>• Are you currently able to use the skills or talents that you developed in your home country (or in another valued community)? Probe: Can you tell me a little about some of the skills or talents that you value?</li> <li>• What is something you have learned since coming to the United States or moving to this community that you might not have imagined?</li> </ul>	

- What are some of the memories from your earlier community (communities) that you enjoy sharing?
- In what ways might your child say she or he is similar to you?
- Can you talk a little bit about the experience your child is having in school?  
Probe: What does your child talk about when he or she mentions school?
- Has your child talked about any particular experiences at school that were challenging or fun?
- Are there any ways you would like to participate at school that you may not have had the opportunity to contribute?
- What are some ideas you have about ways we can partner to support your student's success in my class?
- If your child showed up in a classroom where you were the teacher, what would you do to help him/her learn? What would you tell him/her?
- We are developing a unit/learning experience about \_\_\_\_\_. What do you think might be particularly important or interesting for your child to learn?
- If you could relive a single day, what day would that be?
- What contributions to the family does your child enjoy making?  
Probe: What are the special gatherings your family enjoys?
- What stories does your child enjoy?
- Probe: What is a favorite story that you share with your children?

D.2 Motivational Framework Tool Used to Plan Visit and Instructional Strategies  
**Motivational Framework for Culturally Responsive Teaching**



## D.3 Where I'm From Poem Activity

## Where I'm From

*(poem by George Ella Lyon, teaching strategy by Linda Christensen)*

I am from clothespins, from Clorox and carbon-tetrachloride.

I am from dirt under the back porch.

(Black, glistening  
it tasted like beets.)

I am from the forsythia bush,  
the Dutch elm

whose long gone limbs I remember  
as if they were my own.

I am from fudge and eyeglasses,

From Imogene and Alafair.

I'm from the know-it-alls

And the pass-it-ons,  
from perk up and pipe down.

I'm from He restoreth my soul

With a cottonball lamb

And ten verses I can say myself.

I'm from Aretemus and Billies' Branch,  
fried corn and strong coffee.

From the finger my grandfather lost  
to the auger

the eye my father shut to keep his sight.

Under my bed was a dress box

spilling old pictures,

a sift of lost faces

to drift beneath my dreams.

I am from those moments -

snapped before I budded -

leaf-fall from the family tree.

1. *Read the poem out loud together.* (Note that some poems use a hook to “link the poem forward” like a repeating line so the poem can build momentum.)

2. *Using the line “I am from” (or creating another phrase), think about your past.* Write lists to match the details that Lyons remembers about her past. Share your memories as you think, if you wish.

- **items found inside** whatever you called “home” when you were a child (e.g. bobby pins, stacks of newspapers, discount coupons for a Mercedes...

- **items found in your yard** if you had one (e.g. hoses coiled like green snakes, dog bones, broken rakes)
- **items found in your neighborhood** (e.g. the corner grocery store, the “home-base” tree)
- **names of relatives**, especially ones that link you to your past (e.g. Uncle Charlie and Aunt Selma)
- **sayings** (e.g. “If I told you once...”)
- **names of foods and dishes** that recall family gatherings (e.g. matzoh ball soup, black eyed peas, tamales)
- **names of places you kept your memories** (e.g. diaries, boxes, inside the family *Bible*)
- **names of relatives**, especially ones that link you to your past (e.g. Uncle Charlie and Aunt Selma)
- **sayings** (e.g. “If I told you once...”)
- **names of foods and dishes** that recall family gatherings (e.g. matzoh ball soup, black eyed peas, tamales)
- **names of places you kept your memories** (e.g. diaries, boxes, inside the family *Bible*)

3. *Share your lists out loud as everyone brainstorms.* (Try to make your lists “sound like home” using the names and languages of your home, your family, your neighborhood - let sounds, smells and languages emerge - e.g. bubbles of chicken fat on hot soup, pink tights crusted with rosin).

4. *Once everyone has specific lists of words, phrases, and names, begin writing,* using some kind of phrase like “I am from...” to weave the poem together. End the poem with a line or two that ties your past to your present, that ties you to your family history. For example, in Lyon’s poem, she ends with “Under my dress box/spilling old pictures...I am from those moments...”

5. *After you have written your first draft, join in a “read around” to share poems.* As you listen, write comments about each reader’s piece. (Pull out a piece of paper, write the name of the reader, then as each person reads, write what you liked about their piece. Please be specific. Write down what words or phrases made their poem work. Did they use a list? A metaphor? Humor?)

6. *Seated in a circle, each person reads their poem.* After a person reads, people raise their hands to comment on what they liked about the piece. The writer calls on people to speak.

The following excerpts are from student poems that Lyon’s piece provoked:

I am from bobby pins, doo rags, and  
wide tooth combs.  
I am from prayer plants that lift their  
stems  
and rejoice every night.

I am from chocolate cakes and deviled

eggs  
from older cousins and hand-me-downs  
to “shut-ups” and “sit-downs.”  
I am from Genesis to Exodus,  
Leviticus, too.  
church to church, pew to pew  
I am from a huge family tree that begins with dust  
and ends with mw

**Creating your I AM Poem**  
(Review directions on previous pages)

- **items found inside** whatever you called “home” when you were a child (e.g. bobby pins, stacks of newspapers, discount coupons for a Mercedes).
  
- **items found in your yard** if you had one (e.g. hoses coiled like green snakes, dog bones, broken rakes)
  
- **items found in your neighborhood** (e.g. the corner grocery store, the “home-base” tree)
  
- **names of relatives**, especially ones that link you to your past (e.g. Uncle Charlie and Aunt Selma)
  
- **sayings** (e.g. “If I told you once...”)
  
- **names of foods and dishes** that recall family gatherings (e.g. matzoh ball soup, black eyed peas, tamales)
  
- **names of places you kept your memories** (e.g. diaries, boxes, inside the family *Bible*)

# Theory of Change Model

