

2024

IMAGINE IF ALL SCHOOLS HAD THIS! FOSTERING INCLUSIVE FAMILY ENGAGEMENT THROUGH HUMAN-CENTERED DESIGN THINKING

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Imagine If All Schools Had This!

Fostering Inclusive Family Engagement Through Human-Centered Design Thinking

By

Tamara York

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of

Doctor of Education

Seattle Pacific University

2024

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2024

Approved by



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Program Authorized to Offer Degree

School of Education

Date

19 January 2024



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Date 5-10-2024

Dedication

I dedicate this work, its findings, and its benefits to the educators steadfastly promoting family inclusion in marginalized communities. Your commitment resonates deeply, and this dedication is a testament to our collective pursuit of a more inclusive and empowering educational landscape.

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Abstract

This ethnographic study explores the crucial role of family engagement in educational systems and the impact a human-centered design team has on students' success at an elementary school. The research addresses the historical impact of racism and colonization on student outcomes alongside the ongoing challenge of narrowing the opportunity gap. Current interventions and support services, though significant, often adopt a remedial stance and are grounded in deficit thinking rather than embracing an asset-based approach.

The research proposes a shift from traditional school-initiated family engagement to a human-centered design (HCD) approach to address these challenges. The purpose of the study is to examine the impact of an HCD team on student success, explicitly investigating power-sharing or power-shifting dynamics between educational leaders and the design team. The three-phase HCD process—observation and empathy-building, brainstorming for community needs, and designing and testing solutions—aims to elevate family voices, build on community cultural wealth, strengthen relationships, and enhance family engagement practices.

By collecting data throughout each phase, the study seeks to gain insights into power structures within the group, assessing both collective and individual contributions. Ultimately, the research aims to contribute valuable knowledge to the field of family engagement, advocating for equitable partnerships that improve student outcomes.

Chapter 1: Introduction

“When schools build partnerships with families that respond to their concerns and honor their contributions, they are successful in sustaining connections that are aimed at improving student achievement.” (Henderson & Mapp, 2002, p.8)

In this chapter, I examine family engagement through the origins of power-holding structures and their influences on educational leaders, families, and students. I outline the study's problem, purpose, and significance and conclude the chapter by discussing the research design and examining my positionality and assumptions of the research.

Overview of the Issue

Family engagement is an essential part of school systems and is connected to the success of student outcomes (Casper & McWilliams, 2019; Henderson & Mapp, 2002). In addition to this, research-based practices for enhancing student learning opportunities and outcomes for students often involve family engagement as a critical component of achievement (Baker et al., 2016; Casper & McWilliams, 2019; Garcia et al., 2016; Jeynes, 2005; Smith, 2006; Song, 2015). The National Center for Family and Community Connections with Schools (Henderson, A., & Mapp, K., 2002) found that students with engaged parents and families are more likely to:

- Learn to read faster.
- Have higher grades and test scores.
- Take more challenging classes.
- Adapt better to school and have better attendance.

- Have better social skills.
- Graduate.

In response to this information, educators must recognize that not all families have the same resources to access and engage in the school community. Furthermore, marginalized students may experience an opportunity gap due to a colonized school system (Baquedano-López et al., 2013).

Family Engagement Development: Policy and Practice

The origins of 'family and school engagement,' specifically among marginalized groups, stem from the Civilization Fund Act of 1819, the first effort that explicitly considered children's need to be educated away from home. The idea behind the policy was to provide “improvements” for Native Americans through education and assimilation into society's mainstream (Baquedano-López et al., 2013). This policy was the beginning of what may be considered educational colonization. The policy empowered the governing race (which held and maintained more cultural capital) to have authority in choosing what was best for a marginalized group (Bourdieu, 1986; Poached, 2015). Through the early assimilation process of Native Americans, governing stakeholders created an educational institution that upheld racial supremacy ideals while oppressing the students' cultural ways.

Several decades later, America had become an increasingly diverse nation. Immigrants coming to America typically resided within their cultural communities, maintaining their sociocultural norms. The education system was an avenue that integrated immigrant children and their cultural values into the American nation. Realizing that some families did not have what Baquedano-López (2013) describes as

“proper access or adequate resources,” the government enacted the The Home Teacher Act of 1915. This policy allowed teachers into the students' homes to support families with American governance and citizenship (Ziegler-McPherson, 2009). One might argue that these policies were implemented to benefit the students and their families; however, it is important to note two things. First, the marginalized groups had little access to education (immigrants, formerly enslaved people, and refugees) and were rarely part of the decision-making policies; therefore, they had no voice in the education process (Baquedano-López, 2013). Second, broad assumptions were made about what support was needed. Colonization and assimilation became the prerequisites and products of American education.

In the 1950s, educators noticed lower academic growth rates among marginalized students, specifically students of color, low-income students, and students with disabilities (Baquedano-López et al., 2013). Several policies were enacted over the next several decades that were both student and family-focused to narrow educational inequality gaps. Some more notable policies include the Head Start Whole Family and Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, enacted in the 1960s. Title 1 programs and funding were implemented so all preschool, elementary, and secondary school children received high-quality, well-rounded education (Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction [OSPI], 2022). Title 1 programs were renewed in the No Child Left Behind Act of 2002 and have significantly supported early learning in preschool kindergarten to grade 12. For example, one-third of the public schools in Washington State currently operate Title 1, part A programs that provide academic services to over 350,000 students annually (OSPI, 2022).

The lasting imprint of these significant policies evolved into one of the more current Acts, the Every Student Succeed Act (ESSA), which provides all children significant opportunity to receive a fair, equitable, and high-quality education, and to close the educational achievement gaps (Rees, 2021). This Act is currently the nation's primary education law for public schools, which holds schools accountable for the student's learning process while providing quality and equitable education for all kids (*Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA)*, 2024).

Recognizing that family engagement is critical to student success, many states have created family engagement frameworks and policies (Henderson & Mapp, 2002). These frameworks provide school districts with information and resources to help guide school leaders in building a bridge between families and the school community. A key family engagement component is acknowledging marginalized families' barriers to accessing the school system.

As an educational leader, I must seek innovative and equitable family engagement strategies to support student's social, emotional, and academic outcomes. This research study focused on interrupting the traditional system of school-family engagement, one in which educational leaders identify problems and present solutions to parents, to collaborative partnerships created by human-centered design teams.

Problem Statement

The historical roots of racism, white supremacy, and colonization of marginalized people groups in America have directly impacted students' academic, social, and emotional success (Hawley & Nieto, 2010; Lee & Bowen, 2006). In addition, the disparities in access, resources, and funding between the socioeconomic advantaged and

disadvantaged can be linked to the ongoing problem of narrowing the opportunity gap (Henderson & Mapp, 2002). Work towards narrowing the opportunity gap has focused on specific student interventions and the vital role parents or guardians play in their child's education. However, despite policy changes, mandatory testing, and teacher training, there remains an opportunity gap (Álvarez, 2016; Song, 2015).

In response to the opportunity gap, school districts create strategies and programs to bolster student achievement and attendance through interventions and counseling services (Folres & Callahan, 2017; Jeynes, 2005;). While these supports are meaningful, they are remedial to the barriers within the opportunity gap and remain rooted in a colonized educational school system (Hawley & Nieto, 2010; Ishimaru, 2018). Research shows that effective collaboration between schools and families strongly correlates with higher student achievement (Baker et al., 2016; Caspe & McWilliams, 2019; Henderson & Mapp, 2002; Jeynes, 2005; Smith, 2006).

The connection between family involvement at school has traditionally been school-initiated; for example, schools provide platforms or programs for parents, such as Parent Teacher Associations (PTA), classroom volunteers, field trips, and family engagement nights (Baker et al., 2016; Jeynes, 2005). Participation and engagement are school-based, and parents voluntarily participate as they can. However, participation is often limited to those who meet the requirements and have the resources to be involved, such as time, education, or financial resources. Common barriers that prevent family engagement are language barriers, socioeconomic factors, schedule, transportation, and their own beliefs about education and the education system (Baker et al., 2016; Garcia et al., 2016; Jeynes, 2005; Smith, 2006; Song, 2015). A barrier that has become more

apparent over the last several decades is how schools view parent engagement and how parents preserve their child's education role (Baquedano-López et al., 2013; Caspe & McWilliams, 2019; Ishimaru, 2018).

Educators must implement family engagement practices that create equitable partnerships with all families, paving the way for increased student outcomes.

Purpose of the Study

This ethnographic study aimed to understand the impact a human-centered design (HCD) team had on students' success at an elementary school by identifying the degree to which power-sharing or power-shifting occurred between educational leaders and the human-centered design team. The Global Family Research Project, in collaboration with The Early Learning Lab and National Center for Families, explains that using a human-centered design (HCD) creates: (a) a platform for raising families' voices and perspectives, (b) strengthens relationships and understanding among families, educational leaders, communities, and (c) can lead to more effective family engagement practices and programs (Caspe, & McWilliams, 2019). There are three phases a human-centered design team goes through:

1. Observe and talk with others to create empathy and understanding.
2. Brainstorm new ideas to meet community needs.
3. Design and test new solutions.

Throughout each phase, data was collected to understand and gain insight into power structures within the group, evaluating the group collectively and individually.

Research Questions

The goal of this study was to explore the impacts of using a human-centered design team to answer the following questions:

1. What impact does the family engagement human-centered design team have on power-shifting and sharing between leadership and the human-centered design team?
2. How did power-sharing and power-shifting occur between leadership and the family engagement human-centered design team?
3. In what ways did the family engagement human-centered design team impact the opportunity gap among marginalized students?
4. How do human-centered design teams value community cultural wealth?

Personal Significance of the Study

Cross-Cultural Family Engagement

The selection of my research developed over time through a process of lived experiences and observation. My first encounters with school and family engagement as an educator were experienced in a rural city in Western China. I was one of the first English language teachers and foreign affairs liaison at an English training center for K-12th grade children. In addition to this, I taught English twice a week at a local middle school. I quickly learned that the role of families was to provide their children with as many academic opportunities as possible. For example, sending them to the English training center on the weekends, getting them private English lessons, and ensuring they were getting high marks in school, which demanded hours of homework and after-school classes.

In addition, I observed that children's academic success and failures impacted a parent's social importance and value in the school community. A common phrase I heard from parents was that they did not want to “lose face” on behalf of their child's academic outcomes. In 2013, I was asked to design, implement, and lead a bilingual international Kindergarten that served children between 3 and 6 years old. One of the core values I had in the school's design was family engagement. My goal was to include families in their children's learning process. This cooperative approach to family engagement was very foreign in the traditional Chinese kindergarten setting, so I used a blend of Chinese and Western methods of instruction, training, and language acquisition.

A unique feature of the school is that we were inclusive to all families. In this part of Western China, racial, linguistic, and cultural divides among Han Chinese and minority Tibetans, Mongolians, Hui, and Uyghur people groups. Many kindergartens are segregated by ethnicity because of specific cultural practices and beliefs. Minority families also have the option of sending their kids to non-segregated kindergartens. However, cultural, religious, and linguistic practices are put aside, and minority children assimilate into mainstream Chinese (Han) cultural and educational practices.

My goal with the kindergarten was to create a platform of inclusion and understanding for all families. Each month, I invited parents to participate in a “cultural talk.” These family meetings were usually centered around a student-centered topic like nutrition, social and emotional health, or extra-curricular play. I made sure to include meeting norms, such as listening to each other's ideas, respecting each other's cultural differences, celebrating our collective cultural community wealth, and centered the topic on how to support student outcomes.

These meetings led to a more vibrant school community, where trust, despite ethnic backgrounds, was developed over time, and appreciation for cultural differences was celebrated. My experiences with the family engagement meetings were critical to how I viewed the role of families in the school. When I returned to the United States in 2016, I was interested to see how educators viewed family engagement and what role families played in the school system.

Local Family Engagement

The district I work in has a rich history of community and parent support in our schools; they are committed to partnering with families to increase student opportunities and know it is vital to student success. Each school has numerous opportunities, from supporting students in the classroom and preparing materials for teachers to serving on the site team. Goals for our volunteers working with students include:

- Enriching student learning opportunities
- Providing help for individual students
- Establishing a school and community partnership for quality education
- Enhancing all aspects of the educational process

Additional service opportunities include working with the parent-teacher organization, booster clubs, and advisory committees.

These are all meaningful ways to include families in the school setting; however, access is still limited for all who want to participate and is often restricted to parents with access and the means of participation. In the 2017–2018 school year, our district recognized the need for more equitable practices and opportunities for students, families,

and community members and began revisioning equity in our schools. The following events took place between the 2017–2018 school years:

August 2017: Cultural Competence professional development offered at K-12 district professional development

September 2017–June 2018: Partnership with the community-based program, Together, and area professionals to host parent nights focused on immigration concerns and related information.

November 2017: The confederate flag incident prompted an increased focus on equity and cultural competence.

December 2017: Focus group discussion with county Black Alliance and U.S. history teachers took place to review Civil War materials, approaches, and perspectives.

January–June 2018: Dr. Karen Johnson was hired to consult with the district on the Needs Assessment with the District Administrative Council to review what was currently in place and what was missing. Additionally, a workshop for school board members was held that focused on cultural competence and policy planning occurred.

February 2018: The high school Multicultural Awareness Club (now the Social Equity Club) was formed to support student voice and involvement.

March 2018: The Board began to develop an Equity Policy and discuss Strategic Planning Alignment.

May 2018: Stakeholder input staff meetings, community forums, and equity surveys conducted regarding the development of the Educational Equity Policy.

In the 2018–2019 school year, equity work expanded into each school through a training series presented by Dr. Caprice Hollins, co-founder of Cultures Connecting. Her

experience opening and directing the Equity & Race Relations department for Seattle Public Schools supported the groundwork for our district. Each school (six elementary, two middle, and two high schools) received cultural competence training using the Trainer of Trainer model during district professional development time, with the site team leadership communities from each building leading the training. By December 2018, the school board had adopted Policy 3212 – ensuring educational equity. The policy stated, “To address opportunity and achievement gaps, the school district commits to eliminate systemic disparities and ensure systemic equity.” A part of this commitment includes family, student, and community engagement. Section II. A. 2 and 3 stated, *(2) engaging family and community members in developing and implementing culturally appropriate and effective partnerships between home and school and (3) inviting and including community members to bring multiple perspectives to examine and solve issues that arise.*

Policy 3212 helped shape the school district's goals and focus, specifically around equitable student outcomes and family engagement practices. The 2019–2020 school year plan addressed how to create a welcoming environment, inclusion, micro-aggressions, and support for students who experienced harassment/discrimination. However, the Covid-19 pandemic prevented much of the training planned for the latter half of the school year. Despite the hold on training, the district leaders sought volunteers (teachers and administrators) to create the Equity Advisory Committee.

In the 2020–2021 school year, they brought on a more refined vision for equity work in our district centered around student opportunities, outcomes, and family engagement. The Equity Advisory Committee was established, and the work in the

district was led by it. The Equity Advisory Committee aims to build collaborative relationships to create safe schools where all students, staff, families, and community members thrive and feel valued and respected. Their goal is to honor the unique strengths and voices of all students and community members to create equitable and inclusive educational opportunities and outcomes for all students.

August through October 2020, I participated in a six-session Coaching & Leading for Racial Equity series led by Puget Sound Educational Service District (PSESD). PSESD's commitment is to provide every student with equitable educational opportunities by enhancing and supporting racially equitable and culturally responsive approaches among staff, students, parents, and communities (2022). In addition, the school board received training on the Equity Policy, and the school board and city council met to learn about leading racial equity work. January – June 2021, each school identified building teams to lead building-level equity work, which is the work that I undertook at my school.

In the 2021–2022 school year, all district staff began training in Cultural Competence, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, developed by ESD 113 and Potential Unlimited, with training led by Jahmad Canley, Potential Unlimited CEO. Each training was designed to support learning around invitation, inclusion, and belonging for students and families, uncover bias, and identify barriers to equitable student outcomes. Toward the end of the 2022 school year, the Equity Advisory Committee identified the need for more family voices in each equity meeting. Some schools had already included families in their equity meetings and spoke highly of its impact on action steps for equitable opportunities for students.

As an assistant principal in two elementary buildings, leading equity work in both schools and on the district Equity Advisory Board, I continued to look for equitable ways to engage families, especially students and families within our marginalized communities. The benefits of utilizing a human-centered design team to address the opportunity gaps for family engagement within my elementary school included the following:

1. Public acknowledgment of existing barriers to engagement among marginalized families.
2. Co-ownership in creating solutions for increased engagement.
3. A collaborative approach to student education and achievement that narrows the opportunity gap.

Overview of Research Design

Research Design

This study employed a qualitative ethnographic approach to delve into the details of the research subject. Ethnography, a research design focused on discovering and describing shared patterns of values, behaviors, beliefs, and language within a culture-sharing group, served as the methodological foundation (Creswell, 2007). Additionally, this approach integrated systematic interviews and observations, characterizing the participants' way of life or culture (Bloomberg, 2022). A specific focus was given to critical ethnography, as Creswell (2007) outlined, emphasizing a value-laden orientation, empowerment of individuals through increased authority, challenging the status quo, and addressing concerns related to power and control.

Role of the Researcher

I chose critical ethnography because the research was based on fieldwork and required me to participate actively. Furthermore, critical ethnography is a qualitative approach that explicitly critiques supremacy, oppression, and unbalanced power relations to develop social change (Palmer & Caldas, 2017). The location in which participants were being observed was within my school community. As an assistant principal, I had prior knowledge and understanding of the institutional power structures within the school community. I was also in a leadership position to continue developing equitable family engagement strategies that benefit all families. Additionally, I had established trusting relationships with families built on valuing their cultural community wealth and their role as parents in their children's lives.

As a critical ethnographer, I had to acknowledge and recognize the current power imbalance between educational leaders and families at my school to address how to effectively disrupt and shift power dynamics. In order to do this, I had to recognize my role as the assistant principal and lead research designer and the impact it may have on the research process, how parents may perceive me, and my position. I had to constantly reflect on how my presence and interactions with participants impacted power dynamics within the human-centered design team.

Participants

Using purposive sampling, I assembled a team of 10–15 parents for the human-centered design team. I chose this type of sampling because it is a non-probability sampling technique in which candidates are selected because of the characteristics needed in the research (Mack et al., 2005). To gather individuals interested in the project, I sent

out an open invitation to parents, including information about the study and a survey. The purpose of sending out this initial survey was to identify families interested in participating. I anticipated many families would not respond to the survey. So, I also relied on the school's documentation of beginning-of-the-year family intake paperwork to identify marginalized families, specifically multi-language learners, low-income students, and students on individualized learning plans. I also talked with teachers about their classroom student population and used their feedback to identify families that may meet the marginalized criteria.

The human-centered design team met every two weeks to maintain consistency, build relationships, and progress toward solution-based conversation.

Method of Data Collection and Analysis

Fieldwork is a cornerstone of ethnography, and therefore, it involved my full participation and “immersion” in the human-centered design team over an extended time (Bloomberg, 2022). Data was collected in various ways, including informal interviews, observations, document/artifact analyses, and examination of life histories.

Data analysis occurred in three ways. First, data was prepared and organized throughout the research timeline. Each meeting was video and audio recorded. Additionally, I took notes and transcribed conversations during each human-centered design team meeting. Second, notes were described, classified, and interpreted by the note-taking team in a post-meeting. During the data analysis process, the goal was to bring order to the data, organize the information into categories and descriptive units, and look for relationships between them. Third, I moved toward interpretation, attaching meaning and significance to the analysis and explaining the patterns, categories, and

relationships (Brewer, 2000). Chapter 3 details the steps taken throughout the data collection, analysis, and interpretation process.

Rationale and Significance of the Study

This study was significant because it took an asset-based approach to understand the different forms of community cultural wealth within an elementary school. Additionally, it created a platform for collaboration and power-sharing between educators, students, and families (Pearson et al., 2014; Yosso, 2005). For example, by using human-centered design, educators could more appropriately address barriers families encountered when supporting their children in the school system. This understanding created acknowledgment and empathy and worked toward teaming with families in supporting all students (Ishimaru & Bang, 2016; Ishimaru, 2018; Renth et al., 2015; Williams, 2011). Lastly, there is a gap in the literature concerning the impact a human-centered design team has on power-shifting and power-sharing between school leadership and families. Therefore, this study was significant to the ongoing research of human design circles in elementary schools, specifically mid-size urban communities, and its impact on family engagement.

Researcher Assumptions

As an active participant in the research, I had to reflect and recognize my personal and professional assumptions and biases. I used the four values and principles for family engagement outlined by the Washington State Family Engaged Framework workgroup (2022) to help guide where my assumptions and biases lay.

The first assumption was that family engagement should be done through shared power and responsibility between educators and families; this included building the

capacity of educators and families to co-design instructions and support each student. The need for communication between families and teachers was essential to the outcome of student success.

The second assumption was that relationships were the cornerstone of family engagement. Relationships between educators and families were built on trust, communication, and valuing families and students' cultural assets.

The third assumption was that all families had strengths and were the first and best advocates and teachers for their children. This assumption was directly tied to Vygotsky's sociocultural theory (1978) and the importance of creating common ground for student development. Acknowledging families' foundational role in their children's lives deepened educators' commitment to valuing the family's role in the school community.

The fourth assumption was that family engagement promoted equity and success for all families. The role of the educator was to recognize the diversity of family types and promote cultural and linguistic competency and responsiveness.

Definition of Key Terms

The following significant terms were defined to maintain consistency and ensure a common understanding.

Achievement Gap: Traditionally, the term “achievement gap” referred to the disparity in academic outcomes between lower-income students, often people of color, non-native English speakers, rural communities, and affluent peers.

Opportunity Gap: A systemic inequity in education that structurally disadvantages specific demographics of students, for example, students with low income and economical status, students of color, and students with disabilities (Rees, 2021).

Marginalized Families and Students: Anyone who feels or is “undeserved, ostracized, disregarded, harassed, persecuted, or excluded in the community.” Marginalized students often include students with disabilities, immigrants, refugees, people of color, females, and those who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, asexual, and more (LGBTQIA+) (Rees, 2021).

Family Engagement: Family engagement is a process used by educators to build genuine relationships between schools and families. It involves the systematic inclusion of families in activities and programs that promote children's development, learning, and wellness, including in the planning, development, and evaluation of activities, programs, and systems (Folres & Callahan, 2017; Rees, 2021).

Student Achievement: The measurement of academic content a student learns in a given time. Each instructional level has a specific standard or goal that should be met by the end of each grade level. Achievement is assessed through progress and comprehension checks and examinations. Achievement can be measured by student growth percentiles and can be compared to other students with similar prior test scores (Folres & Callahan, 2017).

Human-Centered Design: The interactive system development approach to making the systems usable by focusing on the users, their demands, wants, and needs, and applying human factors and usability knowledge (ISO 9241-210:2019(E), 2022). It is an empathy-driven method of problem-solving that forces one to step back and identify

the underlying problems within a group or organization so that solutions can be developed specifically for them. The three spaces to keep in mind for human-centered design teams are inspiration, ideation, and implantation (Casper, 2010; Ishimaru et al., 2018; Rees, 2021).

Organization of the Dissertation

Chapter 1 examines family engagement through the origins of power-holding structures and their influences on educational leaders, families, and students. The study's problem, purpose, and significance are outlined throughout the chapter, which concludes by discussing the research design and examining my positionality and assumptions about the research.

Chapter 2 reviews relevant theoretical and conceptual literature regarding family engagement practices, student outcomes, and human-centered design circles. The chapter then analyzes asset-based family engagement in terms of power-sharing and power-shifting, noting themes and gaps in the literature.

Chapter 3 will explain the rationale for the research design and describe the method used to organize and analyze the data throughout the research study. Furthermore, it will outline the sample and population and provide a descriptive summary of the demographic information. This chapter will also include limitations, delimitations, credibility, and trustworthiness.

Chapter 4 will describe the results of the data analysis. It will explain the data collection process and how the data was tracked throughout the research project. Finally, qualitative findings will be presented, noting specific patterns and themes from the research analysis.

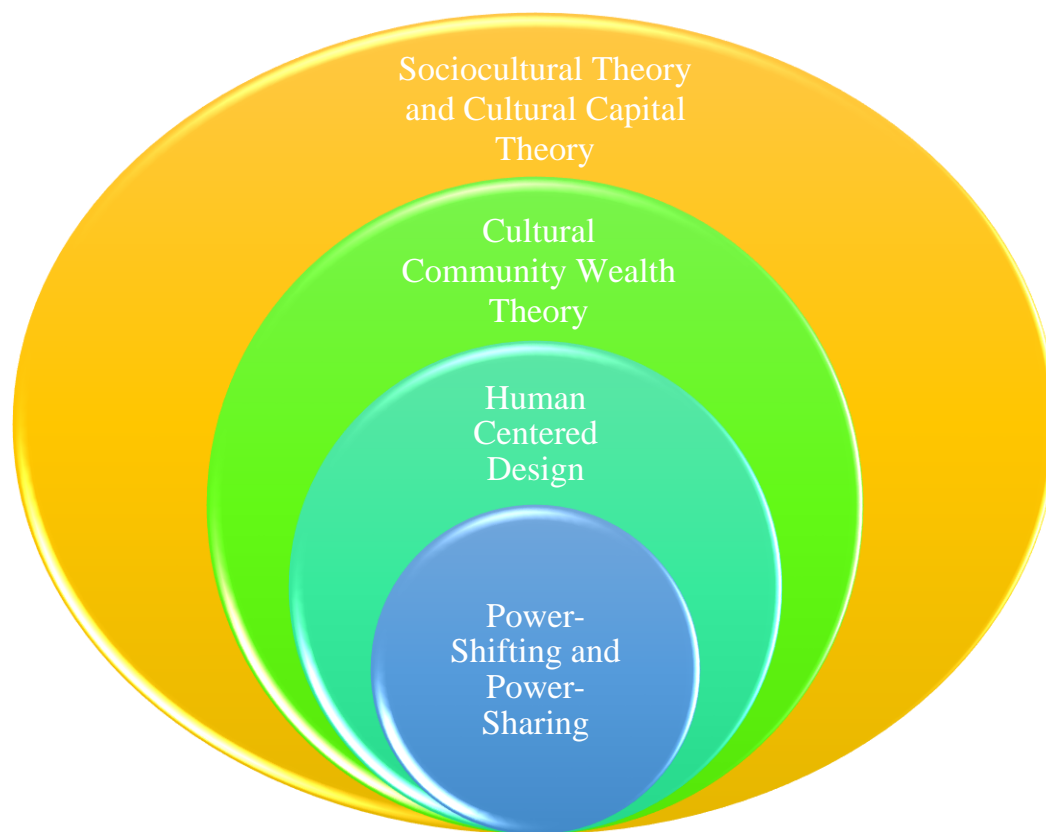
Chapter 5 will discuss the findings and conclusions related to the human-centered design team's impact on students' success and to what degree power sharing or power shifting occurred between educational leaders and the human-centered design team. Furthermore, it will discuss the implications for practice and its importance for the population of my community. The final chapter will conclude with recommendations for further study and research and my final thoughts regarding the research project.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

This [family engagement] demands a major shift in mindset, from one of devaluing and doing to and for families to one of valuing and co-creating with them: asking questions, listening, empowering, sharing perspectives and information, partnering, co-designing, implementing, and assessing new approaches and solution, and supporting parent leadership and advocacy for education equity and change.

Global Family Research Project, 2018

This chapter reviews relevant theoretical and empirical literature regarding family engagement practices in schools to provide a foundation and purpose for the study. First, Vygotsky's sociocultural theory and Pierre Bourdieu's cultural capital theory are introduced to explain the development, understanding, and challenges regarding family engagement and its impact on student outcomes. Second, the literature presents Yosso's (2005) cultural community wealth theory as a conceptual framework to examine family engagement strategies that support asset-based collaboration between families and educational leaders. Third, the research explores human-centered design circles as a strategic method of family engagement. The chapter then analyzes asset-based family engagement in terms of power-sharing and power-shifting, noting themes and gaps in the literature.

Figure 2.1*Literature Review Diagram*

Theoretical Framework

Vygotsky's sociocultural theory and Pierre Bourdieu's cultural capital theory are foundational in understanding the role of family engagement in the American school system (Lee & Bowen, 2006). These theories shed light on the interactions and impacts of educational leaders, families, and students, and how they all contribute to developing an opportunity gap.

Sociocultural Theory

Vygotsky's sociocultural theory (1978) views human development as a socially facilitated process in which a person acquires cultural values, beliefs, and problem-solving strategies through cooperative dialogues with more knowledgeable members of

society. He explained social development within his well-known, *general genetic law of cultural development*, that any function in human development appears first on the social plane, between two or more individuals, and then later on the individual plane, which is inside the individual. Active participation of individuals is mediated by two essential processes: social interaction and cultural tools (Al-Mahdi, 2019).

Vygotsky (1978) believed the role of education was to serve as the driving force of individual development and that with appropriate support from adults, children have infinite potential to learn almost anything (Eun, 2010). Before any school experience, a child typically experiences their first social interactions with their immediate and extended family. Their cultural values and beliefs are shaped within this family nucleus. As the child ages, school becomes a gateway to social interaction with those outside the family unit. Growing children are introduced to new values and beliefs, thus expanding, changing, and developing their values and beliefs beyond their first social structure. The role of family engagement between school and home becomes increasingly valuable because one begins to see parent contribution as a significant role in developing their children's learning abilities (Tekin, 2011).

Furthermore, interactions through cultural tools are also practiced through shared language skills, using signs, body language, and symbols to engage in enriching and meaningful activities. A child learns from adults (parents, teachers, friends) how to use different tools to organize and control their behaviors. These tools are created and developed in specific social, cultural, and economic contexts (Al-Mahi, 2019). With support from teachers, parents, and peers, school becomes a shared space for a child to

interact and process cultural values, beliefs, and problem-solving strategies with more knowledgeable members of society.

Cultural Capital

Pierre Bourdieu (1986) developed the idea of cultural capital to explain how power was transferred and social classes were maintained. Bourdieu defined *cultural capital* as “familiarity with the legitimate culture within a society” (Bourdieu, 1986). The idea behind this theory explains that families pass on, preserve, and maintain cultural class and capital through the class they are born into and socially connected. For example, suppose a parent is part of the upper-middle class. In that case, they may pass on social and cultural norms to their children by taking them to the theatre, galleries, and historical sites or talking about literature or art over dinner. These actions maintain the upper-middle-class cultural norms and perpetuate the child's cultural capital.

Bourdieu identified three sources of cultural capital. *Embodied* cultural capital is the knowledge consciously acquired and passively inherited by the socialization of culture and tradition through language, mannerisms, and preferences (Bourdieu, 1986). Like Vygotsky's sociocultural theory, embodied cultural capital is acquired over time as it is impressed upon the person's character and way of thinking, becoming more responsive to similar cultural influences. *Objectified* cultural capital is one's personal property, for example, books, instruments, machines, and works of art, that can be transmitted for economic profit (Bourdieu, 1986). Objectified cultural capital also conveys the class associated with owning such things. *Institutionalized* cultural capitals are one's qualifications and educational credentials. Status and value are often associated with institutionalized cultural capital and symbolize social class (Bourdieu, 1986).

The impact cultural capital has within the school structure has a lasting imprint on “who” has access to involvement and “how” they actively can participate in family engagement programs in the school community. Henderson and Mapp's (2002) research suggests that family engagement at home positively affects children as they progress through the education system. The more families support their children's learning and education progress, the more their children tend to do well in school and continue their education.

Involvement vs. Engagement

Researchers have defined and measured *parent involvement* and engagement in several ways, each with specific parent behaviors associated with the concept. The term *parent involvement* has been perceived as being present in the school building or involved with school activities (Baker et al., 2016). It has been characterized as including “demonstrable actions,” like helping a child with homework, participation in Parent Teacher Organizations (PTO), volunteering in the classroom, and participating in school-initiated activities (Jeynes, 2005). The traditional narrative of parent involvement in schools includes schools taking the lead in eliciting parent involvement and engagement (Baker et al., 2016 Smith, 2006; Song, 2015). While this works to a certain degree, other researchers have looked for ways to bring more balance, as Jeynes (2005) describes *cooperation* between schools and families.

Cooperation between schools and families moves beyond demonstrable actions; it calls for shared responsibility among families, schools, and communities. Cooperation is crucial to family engagement because it builds on families' strengths and culture and recognizes that families play multiple roles in students' development and learning (Global

Family Research, 2018) Washington State Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) describes *family engagement* as a process used by educators to build authentic relationships between school and families. Additionally, it is the systematic inclusion of families in activities and programs that promote children's learning, wellness, and development (Rees, 2021)

In 2020, the Washington State Legislature directed the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) and the Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) to create a workgroup to identify a family engagement framework for early learning through high school. The workgroup reviewed family engagement policies and practices in Washington and other states, identifying best practices that could be adopted through Washington State. They identified eight elements of family engagement, including (Rees, 2021):

1. Assessing strengths and barriers.
2. Confronting injustice and acknowledging intersectionality to address inequities.
3. Allocating resources to build and sustain capacity for family engagement.
4. Systematically building positive/trusting relationships.
5. Establishing equitable leaders and shared responsibility.
6. Creating an inclusive culture and welcoming families.
7. Fostering communication between schools, families, and communities.
8. Sustaining family engagement across developmental stages.

Each of these elements builds on the family's strengths and culture and is essential for creating effective family engagement practices and programs in a school. Moreover, they

are necessary to ensure marginalized students' success and family engagement (Baker et al., 2014; Global Family Research Project, 2018; Rees, 2021).

Parent Engagement and Student Outcomes

Parents and family influence student achievement across grades (Epstein & Sheldon, 2006; Galindo & Sheldon, 2012; Henderson & Mapp, 2002; Jeynes, 2005). Family engagement programs are designed to support student learning at school and home (Henderson & Mapp, 2002). Several studies have examined the impact these programs have had on student outcomes.

Jeynes's (2005) meta-analysis analyzed parental involvement programs' effect on student achievement. The meta-analysis included 51 studies of school-based parental involvement programs serving students from pre-kindergarten through 12th grade, comprising about 15,000 students. Jeynes (2005) categorized these school-initiated programs in the following way:

Shared Reading Programs: Encourage parents and their children to read together.

Partnership Programs: Efforts are designed to help parents and teachers collaborate in equal partnership to improve children's academic and behavioral outcomes.

Checking homework program: School-based parental involvement initiatives encourage parents to check daily whether their children have completed their homework.

Communication between parents and teachers' program: Programs incorporating efforts by schools to foster increased communication between parents and teachers.

Head Start program: Head Start programs place a particular emphasis on parental involvement.

English Second Language (ESL) programs: School-based efforts raise parental involvement levels by teaching parents English through ESL programs.

Four of the six school-based parental involvement programs had statistically significant positive effects on student outcomes. Specifically, those emphasizing parental involvement actions such as shared reading (.51), teacher-parent partnership (.35), checking homework (.27), and teacher-parent communication (.28). A variable that stood out in the research was the emphasis on partnership between parents and teachers. While both voluntary expressions of parental involvement and school-based family involvement programs may have some degree of efficacy and independence, cooperation and coordination between the home and the school enhance the impact of both (Jeynes, 2005).

Consistent with these findings, Galindo and Sheldon (2012) reported that when schools use planned activities and programs that increase school and teacher communication with students' families, more significant overlap between home and school environments can be facilitated. In response to this, higher levels of family engagement and increased student success are observed. Their research concluded that family involvement at school and parents' educational expectations were associated with students' math and reading gains; however, involvement at home was not related to achievement (Galindo & Sheldon, 2012).

The data suggest that a positive school climate was also a strong indicator of student math and reading gains. Noting that a positive school climate created a space for welcoming parents into the learning environment, and students were more holistically

immersed in a supportive learning environment between school and families (Henderson & Mapp, 2002; Galindo & Sheldon, 2012; Global Family Research Project, 2018).

Furthermore, there is evidence of longitudinal benefits for young children, specifically low-income children, when their parents are involved in school (Dearing et al., 2004; Galindo & Sheldon, 2012). Dearing et al. (2004) found that when families are more involved in their children's school from kindergarten to fifth grade, their children experience higher literacy performance in fifth grade. Data also suggested that the mother's education did not impact the outcome of student success. For example, children whose mothers were more educated and highly involved in their child's literacy development reported the most positive feelings about literacy. In contrast, children whose mothers were less educated and highly involved reported less positive feelings about literacy. Nevertheless, these children still reported the most dramatic increase in positive feelings about literacy between kindergarten and fifth grade (Dearing et al., 2004).

Despite a school's best effort to provide meaningful family engagement programs and activities, students not living in poverty, European American students, and students with more educated parents (Lee & Bowen, 2006) continue to perform higher over marginalized students (Ishimaru et al., 2018; Jeynes, 2005; Lopez, 2016; Mooney, 2018; Smith, 2006; Song, 2015). Thus, the opportunity gap for students and families continues to perpetuate.

Family Engagement and Social Capital

Parent involvement and student achievement vary according to the population (Global Family Research Project, 2018; Henderson & Mapp, 2002; Lee & Bowen, 2006).

The Global Family Research Project alarmingly points out the learning gap between middle-class children and children born into poverty by estimating that by the time students reach 6th grade, middle-class children have likely spent 6,000 more hours learning than children born into poverty (see Appendix A).

This disproportionality may occur because parental involvement rates are lower in low-income communities than in higher-income schools (Smith, 2006). Furthermore, low-income children with less involved parents often experience fewer educational benefits than those from higher-income homes (Henderson & Mapp, 2002). These inequalities reinforce the idea that cultural capital passes on through families; parents who have the means can provide various educational opportunities, extra-curricular activities, and instructions, while low-income families struggle to provide equal opportunities for their children (Bourdieu, 2011).

Lee and Bowen (2006) explain cultural capital as it relates to family engagement as “the advantage gained by middle-class, educated European American parents from knowing, preferring, and experiencing a lifestyle aligned with the culture that is dominant in most American schools” (p. 198). Parents' ability to access different types of involvement in school is defined by their family work situations that permit involvement and the ways they value school. Parents whose culture or lifestyle differs from the dominant culture may encounter barriers that inhibit or even prevent them from participating in school functions. Therefore, students whose families have the means to provide more opportunities for their children in school can maintain their current level of embodied, objectified, and institutionalized culture and leverage and obtain a higher degree of cultural Capital (Henderson & Mapp, 2022).

Barriers to Family Engagement

In order to move parents from low involvement to high levels of family engagement, barriers must be addressed and removed (Baker et al., 2016; Folres & Callahan, 2017; Smith, 2006). Many studies have specifically addressed common barriers marginalized parents encounter (Baker et al., 2016; Global Family Research Project, 2018); Ishimaru et al., 2018; Lopez, 2016; Smith, 2006). The following section elaborates on the common barriers found in many communities and how I sought ways to reduce them in my research project.

Time - School activities are often available during working hours, making it extremely difficult for low-income families to take time off work. Moreover, childcare can become an issue if it is not offered during school events and activities (Baker et al., 2016; Smith, 2006; Yosso, 2005). I asked participants about their three most available days and times to overcome this challenge. After collecting this information, I determined common days and times that worked with most participants and then called each participant to see which of the top three days and times worked for their schedule. Finally, I narrowed the day and time to the most available for all participants. I only used this process to schedule the first meeting. After the first meeting, participants determined the day and time for the following meetings, allowing participants ownership of the meeting process and taking my role as the leader and researcher out of the power structure. Furthermore, I provided childcare during the meetings so that parents did not have the burden of finding childcare or spending money on childcare. Childcare providers were introduced to participants before the first meeting and had experience working with children.

Transportation - Transportation for houseless and low-income families is a barrier because the parents may need a safe or reliable way to attend events. To overcome this challenge, I provided transportation for participants and their children. Participants were given the opportunity to use Uber or Lyft transportation, paid for through the research project funding, or were given the choice to use a prepaid intercity bus card.

Language - Language has been identified as a significant barrier because of the availability of translators and the sociocultural tools for navigating access to multi-language resources (Baker et al., 2016; Smith, 2006). To reduce this barrier, I relied on two resources. First, the plan was to defer to the participants themselves; I was interested to see if any participants, willingly and voluntarily (un-prompted), would become translators within their linguistic circle of participants. If this organically occurred, I would note the participants, the role they played within their linguistic group, and the impact it had on the broader team. The second resource I had available was voice translator devices. This year, our district introduced this technology to staff working with multi-language learners. The translation device can pick up one-on-one and group conversations and translate according to the language programmed. If the need arose, I planned to provide up to four translator devices so they were readily available to any of the participants. If these devices were used, I would document who used the device, the frequency of use, and feedback regarding the efficiency of translation.

Background Check and Cost - *background checks* have prevented some levels of parent engagement to volunteer and, finally, the *cost* of involvement for some activities (Baker et al., 2016; Folres & Callahan, 2017; Smith, 2006). While background checks

and costs did not apply to this research, I noted if this barrier was mentioned during any session.

Parents' Previous School Experience - Educators have also voiced their opinions regarding barriers to parent involvement. In Smith's (2006) research, she noted that some staff felt that parents' negative school experience impacted their level of involvement with their child's school experience. Additionally, parents' school experience can also negatively impact the way they interact with the school community.

In my experience working with marginalized communities, many parents felt they needed to be educated or linguistically equipped to volunteer. Furthermore, some parents expressed distrust of the school system when trying to navigate educational support for their children.

Whether perceived or identified by marginalized communities, educators must address barriers to engage families more appropriately (Folres & Callahan, 2017; Ishimaru et al., 2018; Rees, 2021; Yosso, 2005). Additionally, collaborate with families to understand how to remove barriers and provide meaningful programs and activities (Global Family Research Project, 2018) so that all students have growth opportunities.

My study supported a cooperative engagement strategy between families and educators that enhances power-shifting and power-sharing by implementing a human-centered design team (Caspé & McWilliams, 2019; Global Research Center, 2018; Ishimaru et al., 2018). This model addressed common barriers to engagement and sought to disrupt the power dynamics that keep barriers in place between educators, students, and families. Chapter 3, methodology, will explore the definition, history, and purpose of human-centered design teams.

Conceptual Framework

Community Cultural Wealth

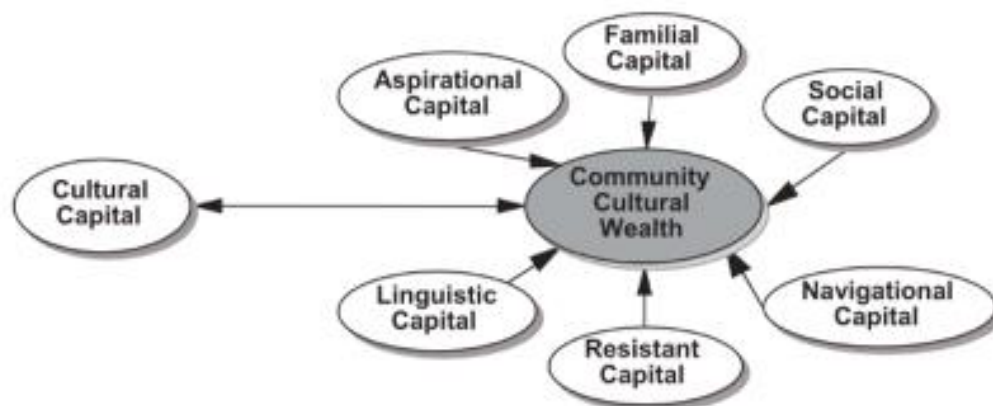
One way to understand the barriers marginalized families face in accessing the school system's resources and how educators might see these barriers as assets is through the lens of *community cultural wealth*. Researcher and author Tara J. Yosso (2005) expanded upon the traditional interpretations of Bourdieuan cultural capital and introduced an alternative concept called community cultural wealth. She explains that schools often work from a Bourdieuan class assumption in structuring ways to help disadvantaged students whose race and class background have left them lacking the necessary knowledge, social skills, abilities, and cultural capital. Yosso (2005) expounds on this theory by explaining that learning to understand and engage with specific assets within a cultural community can create more constructive pathways to student, family, and community partnerships.

A Bourdieuan class assumption is prevalent in the U.S. school system and is considered deficit thinking. *Deficit thinking* takes the position that minority students and families are at fault for poor academic performance because (a) students enter school without the normative cultural knowledge and skill, and (b) parents neither value nor support their child's education (Yosso, 2005, p. 8). As a result, schooling efforts, policies, procedures, and programs continually aim to fill supposedly passive students with forms of cultural knowledge deemed valuable by the dominant society, and students, parents, and the community must change to conform to an effective and equitable system (Yosso, 2005).

In contrast to this thinking, Yosso (2005) proposes an asset-based approach highlighting a community's cultural wealth. Community cultural wealth is an array of knowledge, skills, abilities, and contacts possessed and utilized by marginalized communities, for example, communities of color, to survive and resist macro and micro forms of oppression. The six forms of capital are not to be interpreted as mutually exclusive or stative but as a process that builds on one another as part of community cultural wealth (see Figure 2).

Figure 2.2

Community Cultural Wealth



Note. Adopted from Yosso, 2005, p. 78

1. *Aspirational Capital* refers to the ability to maintain hopes and dreams for the future, even in the face of real and perceived barriers.
2. *Linguistic Capital* includes the intellectual and social skills attained through communication experiences in more than one language and style. In addition, students who have participated in the storytelling tradition.
3. *Familial Capital* refers to families' cultural knowledge that carries a sense of community, history, memory, and artistic intuition.

4. *Social Capital* can be understood as networks of people and community resources.
5. *Navigational Capital* refers to maneuvering skills through social institutions.
6. *Resistant Capital* refers to knowledge and skills fostered through oppositional behavior that challenges inequity.

An Asset-Based Approach to Family Engagement

Community cultural wealth is asset-based thinking that assumes all students have potential and seeks to understand their strengths. When examining these capital categories, one may understand that leveraging resources and supports outside the dominant cultural group is challenging. Yosso (2005) moves beyond the original Bourdieuan theory and digs deeper into the idea that each culture and community leverages and engages the community wealth it already has. Educational settings that value students' and families' community cultural wealth can increase the number of students who successfully move through the education system (Yosso, 2005).

Many of the barriers mentioned in the previous section, such as language, transportation, and time, could be addressed through an asset-based approach by educators to help bring problem-solving collaboration into the school setting. An asset-based approach transforms parent involvement into engagement within the school. It may require a profound educational shift focusing on the strengths and resources families can bring to their child's education (Baker et al., 2016). This shift in thinking requires educators to go from a deficit to an asset approach when considering family engagement in schools (Baker et al., 2016). It recognizes the disparities and barriers underrepresented families face in the traditional school system and works to reimagine a new way of

addressing these issues through asset-based approaches (Global Family Research Project, 2018).

Yosso's community cultural wealth theory bridges the gap between home and school by accessing marginalized families' cultural wealth. Understanding family life circumstances and accessing community cultural wealth reduces educators' tendencies to blame families for students' academic challenges (Smith, 2004). Rather than blame families for the lack of family engagement, educators can assist families.

Accessing Community Cultural Wealth

Acknowledging cultural community wealth capital and how it supports an asset-based approach to family engagement is essential to removing barriers to engagement. The benefits of parental involvement are closely linked to aspirational capital (the ability to maintain hopes and dreams for the future, even in the face of real and perceived barriers). For example, parents reported in Smith's (2006) study that before attending school functions, their motivation to support their child in school was lower than when they started attending school engagement activities. One parent expressed that she hoped her increased involvement at the school would impact her son's achievement in school. The Family Service Coordinator in Smith's (2006) research believed that family involvement and relationships built with the school increased student success and helped parents gain a sense of community. Teachers also saw the benefits of parental involvement and reported that their students were more motivated, had improved self-confidence, and had higher fulfillment in goal achievement (Smith, 2006).

Accessing marginalized communities' social, navigational, and linguistic capital is also essential in creating an inclusive culture. Effective ways to do this are by (a)

integrating culturally responsive and age-appropriate content on diverse ethnicities and cultures via classroom instruction, (b) providing language access services to all families, and (c) hiring school district and state-level staff that reflects the population and understands their needs (Rees, 2021).

Having welcoming committees and offering introductory resource “toolkits” to introduce families to the school are also meaningful ways to engage families and invest in their community's cultural wealth. Ensuring resources are accessible through different formats and translated into the languages representing the community is a way to remove linguistic barriers and value linguistic differences. Lastly, for educators to provide levels of support that meet families' needs with an asset-based approach, they must engage the familial capital (families' cultural knowledge that carries a sense of community, history, memory, and artistic intuition) of each of these communities.

Districts and school buildings should prioritize an inclusive school culture that embraces diversity and empathetically listens, learns, and honors each family's rich cultural heritage. Likewise, educators should give marginalized families space for everyone's voices and invest in time, resources, and growth to strengthen the family, school, and student partnership (Ishimaru et al., 2018; Rees, 2021; Yosso, 2005).

Human-Centered Design Circles

Origin

Human-centered design (also called design thinking or design circles) is an approach that can help schools and organizations move beyond typical problem-solving methods and come closer to new ideas, thinking, and cooperative problem-solving between participants. IDEO, an innovation design firm formed in 1991, developed the

design thinking framework. By 2001, IDEO was increasingly asked to solve unique problems outside the traditional design scope. From helping pharmaceutical companies, manufacturing companies, and universities, IDEO went from designing consumer products to designing consumer experiences (Brown & Wyatt, 2010).

Design thinking focuses on creating human-centered products and services, which relies on our ability to be intuitive, recognize patterns, construct ideas with emotional meaning, and be functional. The design thinking process is described as an iterative system rather than a sequence of orderly steps (Brown & Wyatt, 2010). The three spaces to keep in mind for human-centered design teams are inspiration, ideation, and implementation. *Inspiration* refers to the space necessary for those who bring about understanding to the problem and opportunities that exist. *Ideation* is the process of brainstorming, developing, and testing ideas to solve an identified problem. *Implementation* refers to the actionable steps in problem-solving – sharing resources and opportunities to create a new system or program (Casper, 2010).

Human-Centered Design Circles in Education

When applied to education, a human-centered design opens new possibilities for reinventing how schools partner with and engage families. This approach focuses on developing empathy and putting oneself in another's place. Many marginalized communities feel left out of the education system; cultivating empathy can motivate educators to respond with more inclusive and equitable practices to engage families (Lopez, 2016).

Building empathy among educators requires them to think through questions such as (a) How do parents see teachers?, (b) What do parents hear from and feel about

teachers?, and (c) What do families feel when they enter school? This first step toward using a human-centered approach replaces programs with people. A collaborative family engagement model supports educational leaders in observing and listening to families, understanding where they are ready to invest their time, and allowing them to lead and problem-solve (Harvard Family Research Center, 2016).

Harvard Family Research Project (1982–2016) led the way in researching human design circles' impact on family engagement. Their decades of research helped create design thinking frameworks, especially among marginalized families. Their study examined how human design circles interrupted the traditional family engagement protocols in schools and impacted student outcomes and family/student self-efficacy.

In 2017, the Global Family Research Project separated from Harvard Graduate School and is no longer affiliated with Harvard University. Global Family Research (formerly Harvard Family Research Project) is known for advancing the fields of family, school, and community engagement. Their work extends to policymakers, foundations, educators, and nonprofit organizations who seek help developing and improving their strategies for engaging all families to have a voice in their children's learning (Global Family Research Project, 2021).

In 2018, researchers set out to understand educators' perspectives on the benefits of human-centered design in a workshop co-facilitated by the Global Family Research Project, the Early Learning Lab, and the National Center for Families for Learning. The participants were parents, librarians, early childhood providers, and family literacy specialists. The participants shared five ways that human-centered design circles benefit family engagement practice (Casper & McWilliams, 2019):

1. It empowers families and creates equity. Many participants felt that human-centered design circles put families at the center of organizational practice and were a powerful way to unlock the potential within the community and transform them into change agents.
2. It challenges assumptions and biases which requires participant to empathize and see others' perspectives through reflection.
3. It helps educators to consider families' wishes and desires rather than jump to solutions.
4. It promotes collaborative decision-making.
5. It pushes educators out of their comfort zone.

Key characteristics within a human-centered design circle are mutual respect, trust, and shared goal-setting between participants. Collaboration and communication should be intentional, relevant, culturally responsive, and two-way. The goal is to create a team that shares power dynamics despite educational leaders' and families' positions, responsibilities, and roles (Global Family Research Project, 2018; Ishimaru et al., 2018).

Researchers Ann M. Ishimaru, Aditi Rajendran, Charlene Montano Nola, and Negan Bang explored human design circles' impact on schools through community design circles. Ishimaru et al. (2018) identified “human” as a community, thus coining the *community design circle*. In the study, “Community Design Circles: Co-designing Justice and Wellbeing in Family-Community-Research Partnerships” (2018), the researchers bridged the two fields of family engagement and design research to theorize and explain a solidarity-driven process of partnership between families and communities of color, educators, and other researchers toward educational justice. The research aimed

to offer community design circles as a methodological evolution to reclaim the central “agentic” role of families and communities of color in transforming education research and practice (Ishimaru et al., 2018).

The research team identified three co-design dimensions foundational to the solidarity-driven process: a) building from family definitions of well-being and justice, b) disrupting formative, asymmetrical power dynamics, and c) building capacity for dreaming and change-making. Examples from Ishimaru et al. (2018) are highlighted in the following section.

Power-Sharing and Power-Shifting

A Human-Centered Design model supports a cooperative engagement strategy that enhances power-shifting and power-sharing between educators (Casper & McWilliams, 2019; Global Research Center, 2018; Ishimaru et al., 2018). Furthermore, it:

Demands a major shift in mindset, from one of devaluing and doing to and for families to one of valuing and co-creating with them, asking questions, listening, empowering, sharing perspectives and information, partnering, co-designing, implementing and assessing new approaches and solutions and supporting parent leadership and advocacy for educational equality and change. (Global Family Research Project, 2018, p.14)

The following section has been thematically organized by the five benefits mentioned in the previous section that a human-centered design team has on family engagement practices. I will address methodological approaches that support power-

shifting and power-sharing dynamics. Lastly, I will analyze and discuss its implications for my research.

Power-Shifting and Power-Sharing Empowers Families

Human-centered design puts families at the center of organizational practice. It is a powerful way to unlock the potential within the community and transform them into change agents (Casper & McWilliams, 2019; Global Research Center, 2018; Ishimaru et al., 2018). Equally important, human-centered design empowers participants to have co-ownership in creating change within a system.

Five steps lead toward empowering families through human-centered design teams. First, those designing a human-centered design team (educational leaders and researchers) need to ensure their primary focus is student success. They must acknowledge families' fundamental role in their children's learning and identify barriers participants may have. Asset-based understanding will emerge by accessing participants' community cultural wealth and lending toward trust-based partnership (Ishimaru et al., 2018; Yosso, 2005).

The second step to empowering participants through a human-centered design team is creating a design challenge. A design challenge keeps participants focused throughout the study or workshop. Some practical ways to empower multiple family perspectives are breaking groups into small groups and giving them space to brainstorm ways to design a better way for families, educators, and communities to encourage students to learn together (Casper & McWilliams, 2019).

The third step is to create empathy within the team. Empathy was previously mentioned in section two of this chapter as a critical component of human-centered

design teams and is a key to power-sharing and power-shifting equitable roles within the team. Empathy requires the dominant power structure within the team to listen attentively without talking (Casper & McWilliams, 2019; Ishimaru et al., 2018; Lopez, 2016).

The fourth step involves participants co-designing a prototype representing their ideas. At this point in the process, the goal is that power-shifting and power-sharing between participants have occurred; this will be evident through sharing ideas, solutions, and critiques (Casper & McWilliams, 2019; Ishimaru et al., 2018; Weiss et al., 2010).

Finally, teams of participants will collaborate on a solution. Each team presents its prototype as a solution, with pros and cons, and then participants can collaborate on which model may have the highest success. Again, the goal of human design teams is to disrupt the normative power structures and create collaboration through power-sharing and shifting.

When families feel their opinions and involvement matter, they are empowered to engage with the school community more deeply. An example of how human-centered design teams impact empowering families is a longitudinal study conducted by researcher Ishimaru (2018). In 2009, due to low attendance and low graduation rates, Rainier Beach High School – ranked as one of the lowest-performing schools in its district, threatened to merge with another school or close. Alumni, community members, and neighborhood families banded together to form what Ishimaru called a “small but mighty” group to ensure the school remained open and worked toward an academic turnaround. Over the next seven years, this group successfully worked to push back on the school's negative reputation and reform the school's systems.

Ishimaru's (2018) findings indicated that minoritized families, community leaders, and formal leaders leveraged conventional schooling structures within a “colonized” education system, such as turnaround reforms, the International Baccalaureate program, and the PTA, to disrupt schools' default institutional scripts. Driving equity-focused change for all students, particularly African Americans from the neighborhood (p. 7). At the end of the seven years, the work of the community team resulted in increased enrollment, graduation rates that exceeded the district's average, a trusting relationship between community members and school leaders, and a growing collection of state and national awards (Ishimaru, 2018).

Challenges, Assumptions, and Biases

The research underscores the resilience of most parents in urban communities, who instill a profound value for education in their children despite the hurdles they face in the pursuit of education (Baker et al., 2016; Ishimaru et al., 2018; Smith, 2006). The ability to maintain hope while navigating these challenges is not just a form of resistance but also an expression of aspirational capital, as described by Yosso (Pearson et al., 2014). When educators and families confront their personal and collective assumptions and biases, it fosters a community of trust and cooperation through power-shared structures (Ishimaru, 2018; Ishimaru et al., 2018).

The Family Engagement Framework 2021 Report to the Legislature (2021) recommendations in addressing bias, injustice, and the role of intersectionality are through (a) providing training to staff in anti-racist education, implementing culturally responsive practices, recognizing bias, and understanding transformative justice, (b) identifying levels of access families have and removing barriers that may be present by

using families' ideas to create programming; elevating the different cultural perspectives by valuing the student family cultural assets, (c) creating and implementing school district and building Racial Equity Teams that are led by people of color and listened to by leadership, and (d) collecting and analyzing disaggregated data to monitor disproportionality, explicitly looking at systems that have oppressed the lived experiences of Black, Indigenous, and People of Color community. These recommendations are actionable steps involving participation and teamwork between educators, families, and students. More specifically, these recommendations lend toward supporting marginalized families in navigating and accessing the educational system (Yosso, 2005).

Over 40 years of cumulative evidence from The National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance (2016) has consistently shown that family engagement is one of the most powerful predictors of children's academic success. In response, they have developed a comprehensive toolkit of resources for educators. This toolkit offers an integrated family and community engagement approach that could support power shifting and sharing throughout human-centered design team workshops.

The first part of their toolkit requires participants to access *linguistic and familial capital* by building an understanding of family through multiple linguistic avenues. Linguistic barriers must be removed to ensure all families can participate (Garcia et al., 2016; Yosso, 2005). The second part of the toolkit calls for educators and families to build a cultural bridge. As previously pointed out, a way to address this is through empowering families through their *aspirational capital*, listening, valuing, and respecting their cultural heritage (Garcia et al., 2016; Lopez, 2016; Yosso, 2005). Part three of the toolkit, building trusting relationships with families and the community, develops

throughout each human-centered design meeting. The core power-shifting and sharing structures may occur during small group discussions and collaboration. Finally, part four of the tool kit, engaging all (families and educators) in data conversations, is essential to creating solution-based thinking.

With the exception of report cards, data sharing and collaboration between schools and families are rare. Often, families are separated from data-based decision-making regarding instruction, discipline, and curriculum. Traditionally, this has been left to qualified educators (Garcia et al., 2016; Rees, 2021). However, inviting parents to examine data may enhance innovative ways of creating solution-based activities and programs (Garcia et al., 2016).

A human design team in Chicago, IL, offers an example of how to work toward power-sharing between groups. They aimed to build global indigeneity. Participants included the Aloha Center (Native Hawaiian), the American Indian Center, and the Native America Support Program at the University of Illinois, Chicago. Throughout four community design circles, parents, community leaders, and researchers focused on how to *build solidarity across our different Indigenous communities*. (Ishimaru et al., 2018).

They identified barriers to well-being, educational justice, and dreaming of new ideas. Throughout each meeting, solidarity across their communities began to develop by sharing core values and histories that connect Indigenous communities. The design circle used a “river of life“ activity to visually capture the narrative and ideas throughout the meetings. The visual was brought back at each meeting to orient new members and re-orient returning co-designers to educational justice and well-being conversations. Through meaningful conversation and collaboration, they sought to support each other in

their individual and collective struggles to raise strong leaders and sustain healing relationships for future generations (Ishimaru et al., 2018).

Elevating Marginalized Family Voice

Meaningful family engagement includes empowering families, addressing barriers, and elevating the marginalized voice. When these components are included in a human circle design, power shifting and sharing between educators and families will likely occur (Caspé & McWilliams, 2019). Furthermore, human-centered design circles help educators to consider families' wishes and desires rather than jump to solutions.

One of the best ways to elevate marginalized family voices is to ensure language resources are available. As mentioned previously, language is among the most common barriers to family engagement (Baker et al., 2016; Yosso, 2005). For example, families participating in a design team in San Diego felt empowered when they spoke in their language of choice. School personnel had to listen to translations of the family's discussion, a reversal of what is more commonly practiced. In addition, families shared their stories, and educators were not allowed to speak but listen. The outcome of this practice led educators to better understand their students and families. It also established trust between groups (Ishimaru et al., 2018).

Another way to elevate marginalized family voices is to enhance power-sharing and shifting by offering multiple ways to communicate ideas (Garcia et al., 2016; Lopez, 2016). When co-designers engage in their own “how can” questions across diverse contexts, their ideas are elevated, and they work from a more equitable platform. Human design team facilitators and participants can support this work by offering different

options of activities during a meeting, allowing for more outcomes from co-designs that impact well-being, power-sharing, and educational justice (Ishimaru et al., 2018).

Global Family Research Project (2018) identified five shared themes that have traditionally not included the voice of marginalized families in the school system. Some themes overlap with research that has been explored, enhancing the need for collaboration between family and school:

Attendance – Families play a crucial role in preventing absences. Co-collaboration and communication between school and families could help support and monitor school expectations to ensure attendance expectations are met.

Data sharing – Through human-centered design teams, data can solve problems and support students' academic, social, and emotional progress.

Academic and social development – Family engagement strategies should focus on literacy and STEM in and outside the school setting.

Digital media – Access to media should not be a barrier to families and students. These tools should be available in and outside the school to help promote learning anytime, anywhere.

Transitions – Strategies focused on reaching underserved students and families can be essential in re-engaging families at critical moments in their children's education.

Global Family Research Project (2018) argues that these areas could be examined and approached independently, but they are far more effective when used together. Based on the research outcomes, the high-leverage areas are likely to be: “More effective when families believe that they have a role to play in their children's education, trust that they can be effective advocates for their children, and are invited by the educators to be

partners in their children's social, emotional, and academic learning” (p. 25). Elevating family voices within these areas are foundation strategies that support the work accomplished by human design circles in schools and foster the school's and families' collaborative relationship.

Collaborative Decision-Making

Collaborative decision-making is the cornerstone of human-centered design teams and is a vital characteristic that unlocks effective family engagement (Baker et al., 2016; Folres, M., & Callahan, K., 2017; Smith, 2006). Furthermore, it is an actionable step that can be taken between educators and families to power shift and share solution-based practices (Casper & McWilliams, 2019; Ishimaru, 2018; Ishimaru et al., 2018).

Enhancing collaborative decision-making means *establishing equitable leadership and shared responsibility*, which considers co-leadership through policies and procedures by establishing explicit norms and objectives (Rees, 2021). Schools must engage with existing family groups, such as Parent Teacher Associations (PTA), and partner with community-based organizations to develop families' leadership and advocacy. These partnerships can catalyze social capital by bringing together families and educators and facilitating dialogue and family engagement goal-setting (Baker et al., 2016; Folres, M., & Callahan, K., 2017; Rees, 2021). Leveraging each group's social capital creates new and existing opportunities for families and students (Bourdieu, 2018; Lee & Bowen, 2006; Rees, 2021).

An example of collaboration through a human-centered design team is outlined in Ishimaru et al.'s research (2018). A human-centered design team in Los Angeles, CA, held space for design circle participants to imagine and practice humanized and healthy

relationships with schools. The community advocacy organization CADRE in South Los Angeles, California, brought together African American and Latinx families. Co-designers asked, “How can we redefine parent relationships with teachers toward well-being and justice for South L.A. students of color?” The community design circle had 10–15 participants, including directors of the organization, CADRE, parent leaders, a Latinx faculty researcher from the University of California, LA, and a core member from Ishimaru's research team. The stories families shared in this context were meant to build solidarity between African American and Latinx families who experienced similar prejudice and discrimination within the school system. Their aim, to *disrupt normative power dynamics*, employed a variety of practices that encouraged participants to reflect on their own bias, observe each other's perspective, challenge transactional roles, and cultivate vulnerability. Co-designers used role-playing and collective reflection to reimagine parent-teacher conversation and interaction through scenarios drawn from lived experiences.

The second example of effective collaboration through human-centered design teams occurred in Salt Lake City, UT. The team asked, “How can we re-design School Community Council to equitably and authentically engage families, mainly Spanish-speaking Latinx families, in site-based decision-making?” Co-designers included families, educators, administrators, and community members. Facilitation was done in English and Spanish, with opportunities for same-language discussion (Ishimaru et al., 2018).

Design circles were primarily facilitated by Latino faculty research in English and Spanish at the University of Utah. What evolved through these design circles was the

power dynamics between the co-design leadership team and other co-design participants. Salt Lake City design circles sought ways to co-design equitable school-family partnerships through a reflection model. They did this by reading the transcript from the first session. The lead facilitator would note who led the conversation and whose voice needed to be heard. He would then change the next session to invite others to reflect on their participation.

Design circles are transformative learning and growth processes for both researchers and participants in community design circles. They can lead to the development of a set of partnering commitments and the evolution of a solidarity-driven decision-making process that shapes how educators and families can more effectively work together (Ishimaru et al., 2018). Finally, human-centered design circles can create pathways to shared leadership through collaborative power shifting and sharing ideas and solutions (Casper & McWilliams, 2019; Ishimaru, 2018; Ishimaru et al., 2018).

Power-Shifting and Power-Sharing Pushes Educators Out of Their Comfort Zone

Power-shifting and sharing between families and educators through human-centered design teams can be vulnerable. Sometimes, it may be awkward and uncomfortable, but it is necessary for the process. These steps create trust, empathy, and a deeper understanding (Casper & McWilliams, 2019).

Educators must also accept that some parents will remain disconnected from the school for reasons beyond their control. An extreme case of low parental involvement may include chronic absenteeism due to illness, homelessness, or trauma. In a situation like this, other measures must be taken to support families (Smith, 2006). These cases of low parent involvement can guide reflection and conversation among the human-centered

design teams and provide information that requires specific intervention for these identified families.

Attention must be given to the ongoing development of understanding the life circumstances of school families and strategic ways to reduce the barriers (Baker et al., 2016; Smith, 2006; Yosso, 2005). Understanding family life circumstances reduces teachers' tendencies to blame families for students' academic challenges (Smith, 2006). Rather than blaming families for the lack of family engagement, teachers need to assist families by recognizing their community's cultural wealth (Yosso, 2005).

Educators should also be aware of their assumptions and biases regarding family engagement. For example, the participants in Smith's (2006) research went from a limited understanding of family involvement, such as a parent volunteering in the classroom, participating in PTO, and going on field trips, to a broad acceptance of cooperative family engagement. In addition, educators working in low-income communities are willing to learn about their student population and have a high degree of commitment to school families.

Discussion

This section will outline the literature's strengths and weaknesses and how it applies to my research. Lastly, it will identify gaps in the research and the need for more investigation.

Literature Collection

The literature examined in this chapter encompasses a wide range of relevant studies that have been done concerning family engagement, opportunity gaps, human-centered design circles, and power-shifting and sharing between educators and families to

impact student outcomes. There are several ways in which I selected the literature about my study:

1. I used keywords (family engagement, opportunity gap, and design circle) and phrases (school and family engagement, marginalized families and school engagement, family engagement practices in elementary schools) to look up peer-reviewed articles on ERIC, Google Scholar, and Seattle Pacific Universities' online library.
2. I read through 41 articles that were correlated to the studies key words and phrases, noted common themes between studies, and the gap in the literature that was missing.
3. I cross-referenced citations and sources in the literature, which prompted other scholarly articles that applied to my research.

My research collection intended to go from a broad general topic, “family engagement,” to a narrow search that fit my research scope, limited to “human-centered design circles” and whether or not power-sharing and power-shifting between educators and families occurred.

Strengths and Limitations of the Research

To thoroughly examine the topics, I made sure to include studies that researched the same subject but used different methodologies. The purpose of doing this was to understand better why researchers chose their method, how they collected data, and how they analyzed their information. This process gave me valuable information to help guide my research and identify gaps. The following studies highlight some of the more unique methods used in the literature and their implications for my research.

Through a case study, Smith (2004) utilized interviews, observation, and document reviews to collect data. Those who participated in the study were administrators, a family liaison who provided a bridge between the school and student's families, and Family Services Coordinators who acted as family counselors. Snowball sampling was applied to several parent participants. Interviews ranged from 15–50 minutes, and various events and after-school programs were observed.

An important finding in Smith's (2006) research that should have been mentioned in other literature is the need for a Family Resource Center and community liaison. The community liaison played a vital role in helping families reduce barriers, helping them navigate the logistical side of education (paperwork, volunteer forms, and applications), and accessing community resources. The community liaison in Smith's (2006) research had characteristics similar to those of the community liaison participating in my study: they were trusted in the community, already had connections to resources, and had training working with families. I wondered if my research would yield similar results.

The school where my research took place has a small Family Resource Center; however, it is used differently than in Smith's study. It often remains empty or contains boxes of clothes, school supplies, and backpacks. The only people who access the space are our counselor, who takes supplies to give to families, and occasionally members of the parent-teacher association who need supplies. The space has the potential to become a shared space between families and educators, adding value to co-ownership within the school community. Research suggests that having a shared space for families and students promotes more partnerships and activities (Casper & McWilliams, 2019; Smith, 2006).

Baker et al. (2016) study was a much larger body of research that invited families and staff in six schools in a Midwestern state to participate in focus groups. Schools were selected based on their use of Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) and their ongoing implementation of PBIS. Similar to my research sampling method, the research team asked principals to take the lead in recruiting teachers and families from diverse backgrounds. Principals were encouraged to recruit families from varying races/ethnicities, socioeconomic status (SES), and students on individualized educational programs (IEP).

The goal was 10–12 participants in each focus group, with the focus group meeting before or during an on-site school activity. Each data collection team included one research associate, one project associate, and one or two graduate research assistants, all female, who racially identified as black or white. These teams facilitated the parent and staff focus groups. Fifty parents and 76 staff across the six schools (three elementary schools, two middle schools, and one high school) were engaged in the facilitated discussions about their school. Researchers requested two separate focus groups: two for families and two for staff. Each meeting lasted about 45 minutes.

An applied thematic analysis (ATA) was used to organize codes, identify themes, and structure a team approach to focus group analysis. The benefit of using ATA is that it provides a framework to organize and explicitly account for the variance in issues related to qualitative analysis (Baker et al., 2016). Baker et al.'s data analysis was done through coding by a coding team. The codes and transcript excerpts were then organized based on the focus group protocol questions.

Ishimaru et al. (2018) research yielded the most in-depth review of design circles, power-shifting, and power-sharing between human-centered design teams. Her team used participatory design research (PDR). The interactive methodology seeks to advance human learning theories alongside new ideas, practices, and tools to support social injustice and change-making (Bang & Vossoughi, 2016). It is informed by cultural-historical activity theory. The critical difference with PDR is that it deliberately poses “how can” questions to generate knowledge and solutions toward new possibilities. “How can” questions, compared to “how to do” (understandings of the ways things currently are), aim researchers toward the future and the possibilities of the ways things could be. It views systems that need repair via asset-based approaches (Casper, 2010; Casper & McWilliams, 2019; Pearson et al., 2021; Yosso, 2015).

Through the co-design model and drawing from the decolonizing scholarship of PDR, they used a solidarity-driven partnership process to cultivate social dreaming. Within this research, there are four stages of the solidarity-driven co-design process used in my research:

1. Relationship building, brainstorming, and problem-solving.
2. Designing and developing tools to support new relationships and ideas of change.
3. Implementing ideas and new practices organically developed by the design team.
4. Analyzing and reflecting on the process for continued learning and innovation.

These four stages encompass the foundational human design model “spaces” in that it supports inspiration, ideation, and implantation (Casper, 2010; Ishimaru & Bang, 2016).

To illustrate solidarity-driven co-design models, the research team used examples from a participatory design research project: The Family Leadership Design Collaborative (FDLC). The FDLC was launched in 2015 by Dr. Ann Ishimaru and Magan Bang out of the University of Washington College of Education. Several examples of human-centered design in the literature were drawn from this research. The initial project involved two phases of meetings and research spanning over three years. They partnered with groups in 10 cities across the U.S. and supported each city in co-designing and piloting local solutions through the lens of solidarities and knowledge sharing across each site. The project has grown into a national network with a majority of members from communities of color, spanning 16 states as well as the District of Columbia and bringing a “broad range of individual and collective community, profession, and research expertise” (Ishimaru & Bang, 2016, p. 44).

Participants and context differed by each site. However, the design circle process was a common approach across each location. Each site engaged in three to four initial community design circles lasting one to three hours with a range of co-design participants. Like Smith (2006) and Baker et al. (2016), participants included researchers, educators, school administrators, community organizations, and families. They were led by members of the collaborative who had relationships with the communities in which they were designed; for example, a director, superintendent, or university researcher. A vital feature of the community design circle was bringing together families and members of different racial and linguistic communities.

The data collection methods Ishimaru's team used for the design circles included methods I used throughout my research and are described in Chapter 3 in the data collection methods section. First, the research team and co-design leaders (facilitator) began by mapping out the trajectory of the circles, recruitment, and potential agenda strategies. Second, co-design leaders facilitated their design circles, including activities and discussions lasting 1.5–3 hours. These circles were audio/video recorded and transcribed by the research team. Between design circles, site-based co-design leadership and core investigators reviewed transcripts and identified conceptual themes and how participants and co-design leaders interacted. The goal was to identify “what” was emerging and “how.” Third, the team conducted qualitative and quantitative analyses of the design circles; in contrast, my research will only include qualitative data. Finally, the research team synthesized data with the co-design leaders and produced summaries of the critical concepts to sustain and propel the future work of the communities (Ishimaru et al., 2018).

Literature Weakness

A unique aspect of Ishimaru's research that is not found in other pieces of literature is the need for more focus on methods that explicitly work to disrupt normative power relations and decision-making within the research process itself. They seek to “position research not simply as an outcome to leverage in an existing power paradigm, but a process of change-making that opens new transformative solutions and actions” (p. 4). The roles of the researcher and those researched remain within a methodological scope. For example, the researcher's expertise lies with just the researcher. The lived experiences and expertise on inequities reside with only the research participants.

Ishimaru et al.'s (2018) research acknowledges the inequitable partnership dynamic within the education system. Noting that it is not “exclusive to school-community partnership; rather, they reflect a broader racialized narrative and historical dynamic that inevitably extend to and shape our research practices and process” (p. 3).

The concern with using traditional family engagement methods, such as a focus group or case study, is that they may reinforce unbalanced power structures within the research group, re-enforcing whiteness as a dominant paradigm, or leave families out of the decision-making process (Ishimaru et al., 2018). While these methods may be convenient, it is only sometimes clear how families and communities are positioned as change-makers because power-shifting and power-sharing need to be better defined.

While ethnography was not explicitly mentioned or used in Ishimaru's research, there are overlapping elements to our research method that elicit power balance, justice, and positionality for marginalized families. The type of ethnography I used, *critical ethnography*, includes a value-laden orientation, empowering people by giving them more authority, challenging the status quo, and addressing concerns about power and control (Creswell, 2007).

Gaps in Research

While some of the literature addressed power-shifting dynamics within the human-centered design team, there needed to be more evidence of when and how power-sharing or shifting occurred. While power-sharing results were evident in the research, such as trust, co-creation, and problem-solving, the interaction and *how* that occurred need to be clarified. Gaps in the research show the need for more evidence toward power

sharing and shifting between family and educators; for example, when, how, and to what degree it occurred in the research.

Furthermore, the literature I reviewed had a different sample population and demographics used in my research. For example, there is little evidence to suggest that similar studies have been done in mid-sized urban school districts. Most human-centered design circle research has focused on large urban school populations with a high concentration of marginalized communities.

Despite the gaps in research pertaining to family engagement in suburban schools, the opportunity for growth in this area and the implementation of human-centered design teams is profound. Educators must be aware of the benefits of utilizing a human-centered design team and its outcome on student achievement.

Summary

Implementing a human-centered design model, versus using a family engagement model in which school staff takes the initiative and directive in creating opportunities for parents (Baker et al., 2016; Jeynes, 2005; Smith, 2006, may have a greater degree of impact because it intentionally shifts power dynamics from school leaders to parents (Casper, 2019; Global Research Center, 2018; Ishimaru et al., 2018). The research details that there is a need for collaboration, cooperation, and teamwork between schools and families for the success of student outcomes within marginalized communities (Baker et al., 2016; Epstein & Sheldon, 2006; Galindo & Sheldon, 2012; Henderson & Mapp, 2002; Jeynes, 2005; Rees, 2021; Smith, 2006).

Furthermore, when an asset-based approach to family engagement is used, one that seeks to include community cultural wealth components, parent voice is elevated,

and empathy between family and school is created. This model sets the stage for an inclusive, diverse team environment where parents can share their thoughts, reflections, and goals with the family engagement team.

Chapter 3: Method

The research methodology used in this study is reported in this chapter. This information is organized into the following sections: 1) rationale for the research design, 2) research setting and context, 3) data collection method, 4) issues of trustworthiness, 5) limitation and delimitations, and 6) summary.

The Rationale for Research Design

Research Questions

While considering the focus of my research on family engagement, my specific area of interest concentrated on the impact a human-centered design team had on students' success at an elementary school. Additionally, I wanted to identify *to what degree power sharing or power shifting occurred* between educational leaders and the human-centered design team. As stated in Chapter 1, this study sought to answer these primary questions:

1. What impact does a human-centered design team have on power-shifting and sharing between leadership and the human-centered design team?
2. How did power-sharing and power-shifting occur between leadership and the human-centered design team?
3. In what ways did the human-centered design team work towards reducing the opportunity gap among marginalized students?
4. How do human-centered design teams value community cultural wealth?

Approach

There are several reasons why I chose qualitative methods for my research. First, qualitative methods answer questions about experiences, meaning, and perspective, most

often from the participant's standpoint. This allowed me to ask questions that cannot be easily put into numbers to understand human experiences. Qualitative research techniques include "small-group discussion, semi-structured interviews, in-depth interviews, and analysis" (Creswell, 2007). These techniques allowed me to seek in-depth, firsthand accounts through group discussions and questions that would be difficult to extract from survey results.

The second reason I used qualitative methods was to observe social phenomena among the human-centered design team, which revealed to what extent, when, and how power-sharing and shifting occurred. Through observation, recording, and interpretation of nonverbal communication during meetings, I was then able to analyze themes that emerged from the discussion (Hammarberg et al., 2016).

Lastly, the use of qualitative methods necessitates a more interactive approach to research. As an active participant in the research, I had to establish trust with my participants. This engagement led to the participant providing a more candid assessment of the organization-public relationship (Grunig, 2002).

Method

When deciding what method to use for ethnographic research, I considered ethnography, phenomenology, and case studies. Ethnography is preferred when researchers seek a comprehensive understanding of a particular social group or culture, emphasizing immersion in the community's daily life to capture the richness of cultural context and social practices. This approach facilitates naturalistic observation and provides a holistic perspective on various aspects of social life, making it well-suited for applied research in disciplines like anthropology and sociology (Reeves et al., 2013).

Phenomenology, in contrast, centers on exploring the essence of individual experiences, delving into the meaning individuals assign to their lived realities, and is often chosen for more theoretical inquiries in philosophy or psychology. As a distinct method, a case study involves an in-depth investigation of a particular case or instance, providing detailed insights into a specific phenomenon within its real-life context. It is particularly valuable when the researcher seeks to understand complex phenomena in their natural setting, often involving multiple data sources. The choice between ethnography, phenomenology, and case study in qualitative research hinges on the specific goals and focus of the study.

I used ethnography as my primary method because it explores the nature of a specific social phenomenon and tends to use unstructured data (Reeves et al., 2013; Suryani, 2013). Ethnographies usually focus on a specific culture, its characteristics, and all information embedded within the social structure (Creswell, 2007; Gay et al., 2011). Several characteristics of ethnography make it applicable to my work. First, *the researcher creates social relationships with the participants*. This characteristic of ethnography was applied through the relationship-building process between each member of the human-centered design team and me.

The second characteristic, *firsthand and participant observation*, assumes that the researcher will be part of the study. Researchers have argued whether long-term involvement and observation should be considered necessary to understand the complexity of people's beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors (Creswell, 2007; Gay et al., 2011). Traditional approaches argue that a year is considered a minimum because it allows people to go through their routines, patterns of work and play, and special

activities (Hammersley, 2006). In contrast, more recent research feels that it is not the length of time but the ethnographer's presence in the research field to build valid claims and collect sufficient data. Hammersley (2006) points out that current fieldwork carried out by ethnographers is likely to last months rather than years because of:

1. The intensification of work in universities
2. The increasing pressure on academics for productivity
3. The shortening of contracts for researchers employed in particular projects

In addition, updated forms of technology, such as audio apps and video recording devices, can quickly produce large amounts of data and analyze qualitative data. The length of my research took place over six months through informal and formal meetings. I met with parents during human-centered design circle meetings (formal); however, I also interacted with parents in informal settings such as school functions, before and after school student pick up and drop off, or community events. The time frame for my research was primarily based on the structure of the 2022–2023 school year calendar and the proposed timeline for my dissertation.

The third characteristic of ethnography is that the *ethnographer plays a vital role as a research instrument*. The depth of information depends on the researcher's sense of what is relevant and irrelevant to the topic (Creswell, 2007; Suryani, 2013). In light of this fundamental characteristic, I followed procedural data collection and analysis methods. The following section in this chapter will give a detailed description of the process.

The fourth feature is that ethnography is a *research technique primarily consisting of triangulation*, meaning the researcher uses various data collection

procedures to cross-check data accuracy. Cross-checking for accuracy is recommended to get a clear construct of what is being observed and to avoid bias, furthermore, to obtain a complete picture of the topic in focus (Gay et al., 2011; Reeves et al., 2013).

The fifth characteristic of ethnography is that the researcher can modify the research questions, design, and technique from the beginning until the completion of the study. Reeves et al. (2013) explain that “because ethnography is exploratory, the approach facilitates an inductive and iterative approach whereby thick description leads to the development of research questions as the social phenomenon being studied.” My research included four questions that guided my research inquiry. The method by which I collected, analyzed, and summarized information is explained in the following section.

Research Setting and Context

In June 2022, I accepted a new position as the assistant principal in two different elementary schools within my district. For the confidentiality of the schools, I will refer to the two schools, Hawk Elementary School and Engineer Elementary School. I chose Hawk Elementary School over Engineer Elementary School for this study for several reasons. First, each school had equity committees. However, only Hawk Elementary School included families, teachers, and educational leaders. Second, I had established relationships with the teachers and many families at Hawk Elementary School. I attended the school as a fourth grader when it opened in 1990 and completed my fifth and sixth-grade years there. Furthermore, in 2020–2021, I did my administrative internship at the elementary school, and in 2021–2022, I substituted for the principal during his absences and off-site district meetings. Since trust and relationships are critical components to a human-centered design team, choosing a school where I was already established made

sense. Lastly, the demographics of the school population represent the cultural, linguistic, and racial diversity within the larger community.

Hawk Elementary School houses preschool through fifth grade with a capacity of 400 students. Hawk Elementary School's core values include characteristics that lend toward a cooperative power-sharing and power-shifting engagement model. The core values are:

We All Belong – We value who we are. We value each other, and we celebrate our differences. To say “we all belong” does not mean changing to be a certain way. It means respecting each other. It means showing acceptance and kindness. It means all of us are special students, families, staff, and our community.

We All Learn – We learn in different ways and at different paces. We take responsibility for learning and know that mistakes are part of a successful journey. If we are not learning, we ask ourselves, “What do we need to change?” We keep our school safe so we can learn. We support each other as we learn. We encourage each other with high expectations. We are passionate about being positive.

Service Makes Us Stronger – When we help each other and our community, we get more experience and skills for future jobs. We grow. We connect. We make more friends. We have more empathy. We become more confident in what we can do. We become better leaders. We create a stronger school.

Even though the school had family engagement practices, such as back-to-school nights, fall festivals, movie nights, and a Parent-Teacher Association, many programs and activities do not consider barriers families may encounter when participating in these events. Moreover, the school was still caught in the school-determined forms of family

engagement. The elementary school's principal and community could benefit from a human-centered design team that sought out problems and solutions through power-sharing between educators and families.

Study Parameters

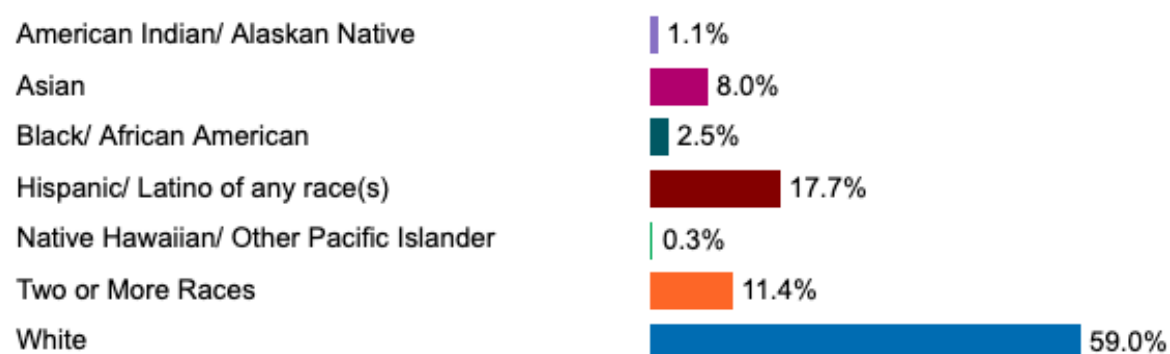
Research Population

Data was collected from Hawk Elementary School, a mid-size school in Western Washington that serves about 335 students. The study participants reflected a “marginalized” student population: students who have been traditionally underserved, ostracized, disregarded, harassed, persecuted, or excluded from the school community.

For the study, the following characteristics were indicators of students marginalized within the school community based on race, demography, income, language, and students receiving special education services. The following bar chart refers to the student population by race:

Figure 3.1

Student Population Bar Chart



Note. Elementary School Report Card (2022).

Marginalized students based on race included American Indian/Alaskan Native, Asian, Black/African American, Hispanic/Latino of any race(s), Native Hawaiian/Other

Pacific Islander, and two or more races. In addition to racial diversity, several marginalized student communities needed to be considered—for example, 1.7% of students identified as homeless and 30.2% as low-income. Multi-language learners include 3.6% of the population and 4.4% qualified for 504 services, and 15.8% are students with disabilities.

Sample

Using purposive sampling, I assembled a team of 10–15 parents for the human-centered design team. I chose this type of sampling because it is a non-probability sampling technique in which candidates are selected because of the characteristics I needed in my sample. Furthermore, the sample size could be fixed after data collection and depended on the resources and time available and my study's objectives (Mack et al., 2005). I developed recruitment guidelines to gather individuals interested in the project to avoid saying anything that could be interpreted as coercive. My invitation to parents was sensitive to my students and families' social and cultural contexts. It included a clear outline of the study, what was expected of them if they participated, and how their privacy was respected (Mack, 2005).

Data Sources

I sent an open invitation email to parents and created a link on our school webpage, including information about the study and a survey. The email survey asked four questions. The first question, “Do you believe family engagement is a key component for student achievement?” was closed-ended (yes, no, maybe). I intentionally chose a close-ended question to get a general overview of parents' beliefs on family engagement and student academic outcomes.

The second question, “Do you believe family engagement is a key component for student social and emotional development?” was closed-ended (yes, no, maybe). I intentionally chose a close-ended question to get a general overview of parents' beliefs on family engagement and student social and emotional outcomes.

The third question, “How interested would you be in a family engagement team?” was intended to rate parents' overall interest in the research and identify parents who would like to participate. Parents responded using a five-point Likert scale rating, indicating uninterested to highly interested.

The fourth question, “Are there barriers that prevent you from participating in a family engagement team? If so, please list what they are.” left room for comments. This question aimed to understand what barriers prevented engagement and how I could eliminate barriers to encourage more partnerships. Responses may have included common barriers families in marginalized communities face accessing family engagement activities at schools, such as language barriers, socioeconomic factors, schedule, transportation, and their own beliefs about education and the education system (Baker et al., 2016; Garcia et al., 2016; Jeynes, 2005; Smith, 2006; Song, 2015). The end of the survey left room for their contact information and other details they wanted to provide, such as their children's names and grade levels.

The purpose of sending out this initial email survey was to identify families who responded to the survey and how they responded to it and to flag families who still need to answer it. I anticipated many families would not respond to the survey because they needed more time to fill it out, care to fill it out, or read the email. Therefore, I also relied on the school's documentation of beginning-of-the-year family intake paperwork to

identify potentially marginalized families, specifically multi-language learner students, low-income, and students on individualized learning plans. Additionally, I talked with teachers about their classroom student population and used their feedback to identify families that may meet the marginalized criteria. Phone calls to specific families were intentional and encouraged parents of our students with perceived barriers to engagement. I wanted to ensure that the team reflected the school's diverse student body and considered all families' equity, inclusion, and belonging.

Ethical Guidelines

I followed ethical research guidelines to protect my participants' rights. Four core principles, the first three initially articulated in The Belmont Report, form the universally accepted basis for research ethics:

Respect for persons - requires a commitment to ensuring the autonomy of research participants, and where autonomy may be diminished, to protect people from researchers abusing their vulnerability. The dignity of all research participants must be respected. Adherence to this principle ensures that people will not be exploited to achieve the research objective (Mack et al., 2005). To ensure that I adhered to *respect for persons*, I allowed participants to keep their names anonymous, made sure my research (transcripts, data, and analysis) was available to participants throughout the project, and that the research outcomes were transparent to all participants.

Beneficence - requires a commitment to minimizing the risks associated with research, including psychological and social risks, and maximizing the benefits that accrue to research participants (Mack et al., 2005). To ensure *beneficence* throughout the project, participants could drop out of the study at any point.

Benefits participants may have gained throughout the research project were: (a) developing relationships with other families at Hawk Elementary, (b) gaining a sense of gratification from their contributions to the school community, and (c) providing other Hawk Elementary families with marginalized communities connections to family engagement at the school.

Justice - requires a commitment to ensuring a fair distribution of risks and benefits resulting from research. Those who take on the burdens of research participation should share the benefits of the knowledge gained (Mack et al., 2005). I made sure to clearly communicate the intended purpose of the research to the participants and the integral role they played in the research. In addition to this, I outlined the potential benefits of the knowledge gained from the research.

Respect for communities - calls for the researcher's obligation to respect the community's values and interests and, wherever possible, protect the community from harm. Mack et al. (2005) explain that this is fundamental for research when community-wide knowledge, values, and relationships are critical to research success and may, in turn, be affected by the research process or its outcomes. Respect for communities was vital to my research because community-based participation is built on trust and relationships. I hoped the team would set norms that provided a foundation for respect for each individual and their community.

In order to move forward with the research, I ensured the following pieces of information were communicated to participants:

- The purpose of the research
- The expectation of a research participant

- Expected risks and benefits, including psychological and social
- That the research is voluntary, and they can withdraw at any point
- How confidentiality will be protected
- Data interpretation and analysis through member-checking
- The name and contact information of an appropriate person to contact with questions about one's rights as a research participant

This information was provided in the first language identified by the participants and at an educational level that the participants understood. Individual informed consent was documented by the participant's signature and kept in a secure location throughout the research.

I protected participants' confidentiality by storing all information on encrypted computer-based files and storing documents in a locked file cabinet, such as signed consent forms, interview transcripts, and field notes. Furthermore, I remove personal identifiers from the study documents as soon as possible.

In preparation for my research, I also completed the Institutional Review Board (IRB) Human Subject Assurance online training, Protecting Human Research Participant. Each of these modules outlined the protection and rights of research participants. This training was completed on May 23, 2022.

Data Collection Method

Data Collection

Several possible data sources were collected during fieldwork to explore and identify *to what degree power-sharing or power-shifting occurs* in the human-centered

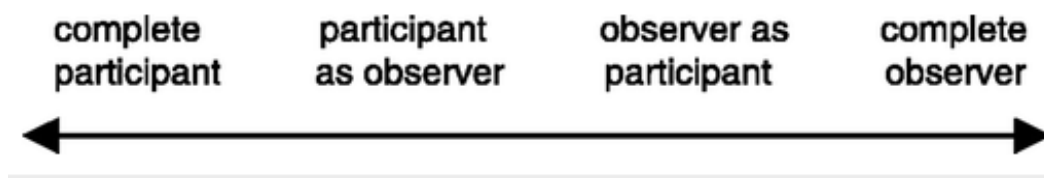
design team and answer the questions posed in my research. Outlined below are the effective methods I used to collect data.

Participant Observation

Participant observation is a fundamental method of ethnographic fieldwork and combines several different data collection strategies such as document analysis, interviewing, direct participation, and observation (Creswell, 2007). My participation in the research can be identified using Gold's (1958) typology of research, which identifies the level of participation between two poles:

Figure 3.2

Gold's Typology of Research



According to Gold (2005), the level of participation depends on the research site and includes both formal and informal interaction with the study participant. When the researcher - takes on an insider role and is entirely part of the setting, which allows for covert observation is the *complete participant*. When the researcher takes on the role of *participant as an observer*, they gain access to a setting by having a genuine and non-research reason for being part of the setting. The *observer as a participant*, has only minimal involvement in the social setting being studied, and the complete observer, does not take part in the social setting at all. According to these observer roles, I was a participant observer by having a genuine and non-research reason for being part of the setting as the assistant principal.

Life Histories

Examining participant's life histories allowed me to extend my understanding of each participant beyond the HCD team, helping me gain a more holistic picture of the participant's cultural community wealth and perceived barriers to school engagement.

In-Depth Discussion

This method does not use fixed questions but aims to engage the participants in conversation to elicit their understandings and interpretations. The discussions are characterized by active involvement in conversing on a particular topic relevant to the research questions or topic being explored (Reeves et al., 2013).

Through the application of this technique, I was able to foster discussions and pose questions that yielded valuable information, enabling me to assess the occurrence of power sharing and shifting. At each session, I carefully observed, recorded audio, and noted key phrases that directly related to the four research questions, as well as other terms or expressions associated with power-sharing and power-shifting. Additionally, I kept a record of the frequency and duration of individual contributions. The following table (Appendix B) provides an example of potential indicators – keywords or phrases – that guided the identification of themes relevant to my research questions:

Table 3.1

Indicators

| Research Questions: | Observational Indicators | Key Words or Phrases |
|--|---|---|
| What impact does a human-centered design | Indicators: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Which participants facilitate, lead the discussion, and lead | Key Words: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Community |

| | | |
|---|--|--|
| <p>team have on power shifting and sharing between leadership and the HCD team?</p> | <p>problem-solving solutions during each meeting?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Duration of time participants are speaking • Collective conversation and problem-solving led by the HCD team. • Positive or negative interaction between family and educators. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students • Culture • Power • Share • Ideas • Create • Reflect • Opportunity • Barrier • Deficit • Racial • Gender • Teacher • Problem • Idea • Solution |
| <p>How did power-sharing and power-shifting occur between leadership and the HCD team?</p> | <p>Indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In Each meeting, there is a progression of family-led discussion and problem-solving that ultimately leads to family participants generating action steps to a solution. | <p>Key Phrases:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I like that idea... • What if we... • How about we try... • I am wondering if... • We could try... • I like that idea and.. • I do not think that will work... • Will it help if we... • Who should solve this... |
| <p>In what ways did the HCD team work towards reducing the opportunity gap among marginalized students?</p> | <p>Indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Solution-based action steps led by family participants at each meeting. • Student-focused conversation • Participants are identifying barriers toward student achievement. | <p>Key Phrases:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I like that idea... • What if we... • How about we try... • I am wondering if... • We could try... • I like that idea and.. • I do not think that will work... • Will it help if we... • Who should solve this... |
| <p>How do HCD teams value community cultural wealth?</p> | <p>Indicators:</p> | <p>Key Phrases:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I like that idea... • What if we... • How about we try... • I am wondering if... • We could try... • I like that idea and.. • I do not think that will work... • Will it help if we... • Who should solve this... |

| | | |
|--|---|--|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acknowledgment of each participant's cultural heritage, language, and socio-economics. • Shared experiences of common barriers to school engagement. • Collaboration between families that supports all students. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whose problem is this... |
|--|---|--|

Triangulation

As mentioned in the previous section, I used triangulation as an analytical technique that incorporates and compares multiple methods to provide a more in-depth and holistic understanding of power-shifting and power-sharing within the human circle design team. There are four types of triangulations: methodological, data, investigator, and theoretical. I used data triangulation, which involved the use of different sources of data to examine phenomena across settings and at different points in time (Reeves et al., 2013). I triangulated data using a combination of observational notes, session transcripts, and Otter.ai codes. Following this, I further triangulated my analysis. This involved engaging human-centered design participants in the process. They reviewed the transcripts and recorded their written feedback. Once they were finished, I reviewed the content and made necessary edits to the results based on their input.

I employed data triangulation as a methodological approach to enhance the trustworthiness of the research findings and reduce bias, error, and subjectivity (Creswell, 2007). Additionally, it offered a more complete and objective view to navigate the complexities of the family engagement team. Utilizing the family engagement team

participants to analyze and interpret the data supported the following outcomes of my research:

Enhanced Credibility and Trustworthiness - Participants validated the findings by demonstrating that the same information or patterns were independently observed through various lenses. This led to more significant trustworthiness in the research outcomes.

Minimization of Bias - When the participants independently supported the same observation or patterns, it became less likely that my perspectives distorted the findings.

Comprehensive Understanding - I gathered feedback from a teacher, parent, and community member. Each participant provided complementary insights, leading to a more comprehensive understanding of the research project.

Validation of Themes and Patterns - Participants confirmed the validity of the themes by demonstrating that they were not isolated or coincidental but consistent across multiple data sources.

Correction of Errors - I was able to make corrections to some errors in my research. Most notably, I had two participants named Jessica S and Jessica B (who was identified as Katie in the research) read through the transcripts and found I had mixed up their names in some of the transcripts. I was able to fix the mistakes and move forward with accurate accounts.

Deepening Analysis - The participant's analysis helped me gain a deeper understanding of the layers of meaning of each session. Using multiple perspectives helped me gain a more profound understanding of the answer in my research.

Increased Confidence in Conclusions - Using multiple data sources supported my findings and interpretation, giving me greater confidence in the conclusions.

Reflexivity

Lastly, I used reflexivity, which involves the consideration of oneself while planning and conducting ethnographic research. It required that I self-reflect on my background, values, and history, impacting how I view and report on the social phenomenon. Acknowledging my role as a leader in the school community and my educational background as a white, educated female would impact how I designed questions, analyzed information, and interpreted outcomes.

Procedures

In order to gain thorough data, the human-centered design team needed to meet 8–10 times throughout a 6-month period. I arranged the first meeting (day and time); however, the following meetings were decided on by team members if they chose to take on that responsibility. Initially, the first meeting followed a schedule. However, the schedule changed depending on the power-sharing dynamics that occurred over time. The first meeting schedule outline included the following features:

Introduction: Each team member introduced themselves and shared why they were interested in being part of the human-centered design team. We had Spanish, Chinese, and Vietnamese translators to reduce linguistic barriers. The purpose of the introduction to the meeting was to maintain norms, build relationships with participants, and set the agenda. This part of the meeting took 20–30 minutes but was subject to change based on participation, collaboration, and power-sharing structures between school leadership and family participants.

Discussion: During this time, parents discussed problems and barriers at the school from their perspective.

Reflection and Conclusion: I observed and took notes during these meetings to identify themes and occurrences of power shifting or sharing. For example, I considered who facilitated the conversation: an educational leader or a human-centered design member.

I took several steps to ensure the data was organized efficiently throughout the data collection process. First, I ensured that data was backed up in a secondary form. I audio-recorded conversations, interviews, and discussions. In order to comply with the Washington State “two-party consent” law, I needed to get the consent of all parties before recording any conversation that might be considered private. In Washington, I could satisfy the consent requirement by announcing to all parties engaged in the communication or conversation that their conversation was about to be recorded, so long as the announcement was recorded (Digital Media Law Project, 2023). If someone did not want to be recorded, I allowed them to leave or voluntarily take them out of the recording transcript. I stored recordings as a Screencastify file until they were transcribed and translated if needed. Third, I protected anonymity by using pseudonyms, if preferred by participants, and fourth, I developed a data collection matrix to organize information (Creswell, 2007).

Instruments/Measures Used

Google Survey - Google Survey was used to gather information from participants. It was first used to intake potential participants and then to organize the date and time for the first meeting.

Discussion Observational Notes - Observational notes were taken and transcribed throughout each meeting.

Observation - Observational overviews of each meeting were noted, including the mood of the meeting, speakers (who was speaking/who was not speaking), and occurrences of team brainstorming and problem-solving.

Screencastify - A screen recording and video editing tool commonly used for creating tutorial videos, educational content, software demonstrations, and presentations, Screencastify is a Chrome browser extension that allows me to capture, edit, and share recordings of my computer screen accompanied by audio narration.

Otter.ai - Otter.ai is an artificial intelligence-powered transcription service that uses advanced speech recognition technology to convert spoken words into written text. Users can record interviews, meetings, or any spoken content, and Otter.ai will transcribe it in real time. It is known for its accuracy and the ability to identify different speakers. Additionally, Otter.ai offers features such as summarizing key points, searching within transcriptions, and organizing information (Otter.ai – AI Meeting Note Taker & Real-time AI Transcription, n.d.).

Data Analysis

Data analysis has three aspects: description, analysis, and interpretation. The description refers to recounting and describing of data. Analysis refers to examining relationships, facts, and linkages across the data points, and the interpretation of data builds an understanding or explanation of data (Reeves, 2013). Data analysis and representation often involve the following steps outlined by Creswell (2007):

1. Create and organize files for data.

2. Read through text, make margin notes, and form initial codes.
3. Describe the social setting, actors, and events; draw a picture of the setting.
4. Analyze data for themes and patterned regularities.
5. Interpret and make sense of the findings.

Create and Organize Files for Data

After each session, the initial raw data was systematically collected and compiled, comprising video recordings, Otter transcriptions, and observational notes. Otter transcripts were securely downloaded and stored in a password-locked Google Doc, ensuring a secure platform for collaborative sharing.

Form Initial Codes

Subsequently, each transcript underwent a careful review involving listening to the video recording while simultaneously reading the transcript. This dual approach guaranteed the accurate reflection of session discussions, including speaker identification and alignment of participants' names with their voices and contributions. Any discrepancies were corrected for accuracy. This step involved reading through text, making margin notes, and forming initial codes.

Setting

This step involved describing the social setting, actors, and events and drawing a picture of the setting. After transcript verification, the content was cross-referenced with observational notes to identify key moments, shared themes, participant contributions, and noteworthy observations not apparent from the text alone. A second reading focused on coherency and understanding the conversation's context, identifying overarching

themes, recurring topics, and the session's flow. Notes highlighted areas necessitating further exploration or comparison.

To quantitatively understand participant involvement dynamics, a copy of the transcript was coded into an Excel document to track the frequency of each participant's speaking turns in each session. This approach ensured that the research remained data-driven.

Analyze Data

Step 4 involved analyzing data for themes and patterned regularities through open coding. This process included labeling concepts, defining categories, and identifying relationships based on themes, characteristics, and elements. Open coding enabled the emergence of concepts from raw data, which were later grouped into conceptual categories, ensuring validity.

Upon completion of open coding for each session, previous session notes were revisited to initiate the axial coding process. This phase involved identifying connections and relationships between initial codes and grouping related codes into broader categories or themes. A thorough examination and comparison of new data with existing codes throughout the coding process ensured that the evolving coding scheme accurately represented the ethnographic data's complexity.

Otter.ai identified frequent words and themes, automatically identifying the 20 most frequently used keywords in the transcript. The top 20 keywords were downloaded, categorized, and noted for usage in subsequent sessions. The purpose of finding keywords was to identify common topics and ideas, with a contextual review of the

words' usage and importance to discussions. This step involved using automated tools for analysis.

The benefits of open coding were that the concepts emerged from the raw data and were later grouped into conceptual categories, ensuring the work's validity (Khandkar, 2009). Using open coding, I identified themes highlighting power-sharing and power-shifting within the human design team. Once I had established themes and categories, I began step 4 to interpret and make sense of the findings through the theoretical framework. The goal was to build a descriptive, multi-dimensional preliminary framework for later analysis.

Interpretation of Findings

Step 5 involved interpreting and making sense of the findings, moving beyond themes and patterns toward a descriptive storyline. Ethnographic research conducts interpretation by making sense of findings through narrative and visual representation. Reflections and open coding insights provide the information needed to move beyond themes and patterns toward a descriptive storyline, while member-checking with participants ensures the validity of interpretations. Interpreting the findings required stepping back to assign deeper meaning based on personal views and comparisons with relevant literature and previous research, aiming for a new understanding and meaning of the research phenomenon. Bloomberg (2022) emphasized the importance of this step in the process, detailing how it should be included in the IRB description of participation.

Issues of Trustworthiness

Ethnography is a form of qualitative inquiry that seeks to explore, describe, and interpret information using thick description and detail. The advantage of such an

approach is that it brings the human voice and experience to the research. It is for these reasons that qualitative research has been viewed more critically. Therefore, qualitative research achieves its credibility through trustworthiness. Trustworthiness allows for quality checking and vetting the accuracy of the information collected from the human circle design team. Evaluative criteria for qualitative studies are needed to judge the vitality and truthfulness of the study findings (Muzari et al., 2022). In order to do this, I will check for the credibility of the study findings.

Credibility is the *truth value* of the finding (Muzari et al., 2022). Credibility issues can be ensured by having appropriate research methods to collect firsthand information for the study. I collected information during the research project primarily through observation, interviews, detailed descriptions, and transcribing conversations throughout HCD meetings. The study's trustworthiness and accuracy of the information were based on the credibility that I, as the researcher, had taken all necessary steps that conformed to and applied to the principles of obtaining qualitative data. Steps that I took to ensure trustworthiness were:

1. Prolonged engagement (Creswell, 2007) with participants in the human-centered design team at each meeting over several months.
2. Maintaining data collection consistency through an organized system to collect and analyze my data.
3. Clarify my research bias by acknowledging preconceptions and biases.
4. Ensure that ethical steps are in place to protect all participants' rights.

Trustworthiness can also be provided through triangulation (Creswell, 2007). According to Reeves et al. (2013), triangulation reduces the risk of chance association

and systematic bias due to collecting information from a diverse range of individuals, teams, and settings using various sources. I used data triangulation to cross-examine the results obtained from multiple sources of information (interviews, field notes, observation, and reflective exit ticket response). To further verify that my data aligned with my research outcomes, I member-checked with the participants in my study and used peer examination, which allowed the opinion of my colleagues for a sound review of the study (Creswell, 2007; Muzari et al., 2022).

Limitation and Delimitations

Several limitations (external conditions) and delimitations (intentionally imposed conditions) may have affected my study. First, ethnography is a time-consuming research method. It required me to immerse myself in the project and have a clear plan, established timeline, and organized system for long-term data collection. The project was time-bound due to the school calendar, so it was vital to maximize my time with participants (Creswell, 2007; Muzari et al., 2022).

Second, ethnography is unique because it requires the researcher to be both a participant and a researcher. This may have led to subjectivity and bias. Moreover, it can be challenging to maintain the necessary distance to analyze the data (Creswell, 2007; Reeves et al., 2013).

Third, the study investigated only one case. The sample for this study, derived from a mid-size public elementary school, is specific to the marginalized population of students and families. Therefore, this study's results should not be generalized to other schools and student populations, such as trade schools, Montessori schools, private

schools, or urban public schools. In each of these settings and contexts, the phenomenon that occurred in my study may not be observed similarly.

Finally, the success of my study depended on the participant's willingness to participate and open up. If a trusting relationship had not been established between the participants, gaining accurate observation and honest discussion may not have been easy. Furthermore, there was also the risk that participants represented themselves differently because of the setting or context. For example, some parents may have over-compensated their previous lack of school involvement by over-talking others during group discussions and dominating the conversation. Others may have deferred to more “educated” parents or teachers in the meetings by not voicing their opinions or remaining quiet through discussion because they do not think their opinions matter. This mindset may also relate to cultural and linguistic hierarchies within one's cultural belief system.

Summary

In summary, this chapter presented the details of the method and procedures for this dissertation research study. The data collection, derived from participant observation, in-depth discussions and interviews, profiles of life histories, and documentary data in sequence within a qualitative ethnographic research design, addressed the purpose of research: to understand the impact a human-centered design team has on students' success at an elementary school by identifying to what degree power-sharing or power-shifting occurred between educational leaders and the human-centered design team.

As stated in Chapter 1 and outlined in Chapter 2, family engagement is an essential part of school systems and is connected to the success of student outcomes. However, some barriers prevent parents within marginalized communities from

participating in school activities (Casper & McWilliams, 2019; Henderson & Mapp, 2002). There is a clear need for research into the role human-centered design circles have on family engagement within an elementary school building in terms of power-sharing and power-shifting. This study helps satisfy that need.

Chapter 4: Findings and Analysis

This chapter explores the heart of the ethnographic research study, focusing on the impact of a human-centered design team on students' success at Hawk Elementary School (HES). As previously described in Chapter 1, the primary questions guiding this study revolve around understanding the relationship between the human-centered design team and the school's leadership, examining how power is shared or shifted, and assessing the team's efforts to reduce the opportunity gap among marginalized students while valuing community cultural wealth. The four primary questions are:

1. What impact does a human-centered design team have on power-shifting and sharing between leadership and the human-centered design team?
2. How did power-sharing and power-shifting occur between leadership and the human-centered design team?
3. In what ways did the human-centered design team work toward reducing the opportunity gap among marginalized students?
4. How do human-centered design teams value community cultural wealth?

Chapter Outline

Chapter 4 begins by briefly outlining the findings of the sample collection processes. It then examines fieldwork data from each family engagement meeting, including transcripts and observations. Findings are presented for each research question, emphasizing the sequential development of power dynamics between the human-centered design team and educational leadership. The data analysis highlights the qualitative findings, revealing specific patterns and themes from the research investigation.

Findings from the Sample Collection Process

Purposeful sampling was used to assemble a group of 10–15 parents to participate in the human-centered design team. The initial phase involved gathering general information through a survey (Appendix C) distributed to all Hawk Elementary families to gauge their perspectives on family engagement. This survey also aimed to distinguish between families that responded and those that did not. On March 31, 2023, the survey was emailed to all Hawk Elementary parents, resulting in 58 responses out of the 371 surveyed families. Despite the low number of responses, I was still able to gain the following information:

Question #1: Do you believe family engagement is a key component for student achievement?

This closed-ended question, offering only “yes” and “no” responses, was asked to get a general overview of parents' beliefs on family engagement and student academic outcomes. One-hundred percent of the responses believed family engagement is essential to student academic achievement.

Question #2: Do you believe family engagement is a key component for student social and emotional development?

This was also a closed-ended question, offering only “yes” or “no” responses, asked to gain a general overview of parents' beliefs on family engagement and student social and emotional outcomes. One-hundred percent of the respondents believed family engagement is crucial to students' social and emotional development.

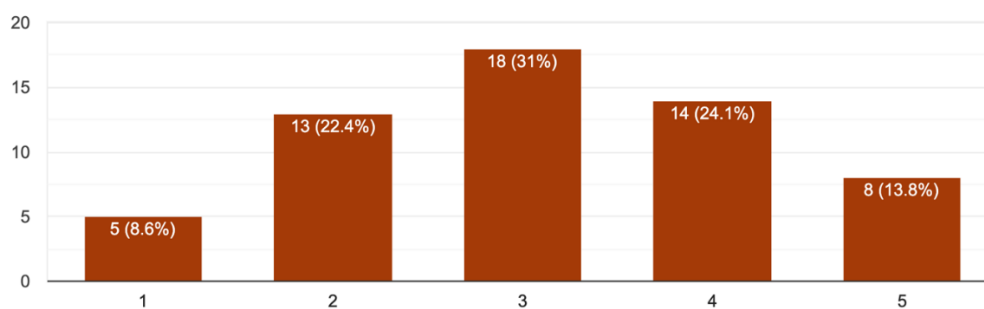
Question #3: How interested would you be in a family engagement team?

This question was intended to rate the overall interest in family engagement among parents and identify parents who would like to participate in the research. Parents responded using a five-point Likert scale rating indicating *uninterested* to *highly interested*. The following column graph represent their response:

Figure 4.1

Question #3 - Colum Graph

How interested would you be in participating on a family engagement team at THE?
58 responses



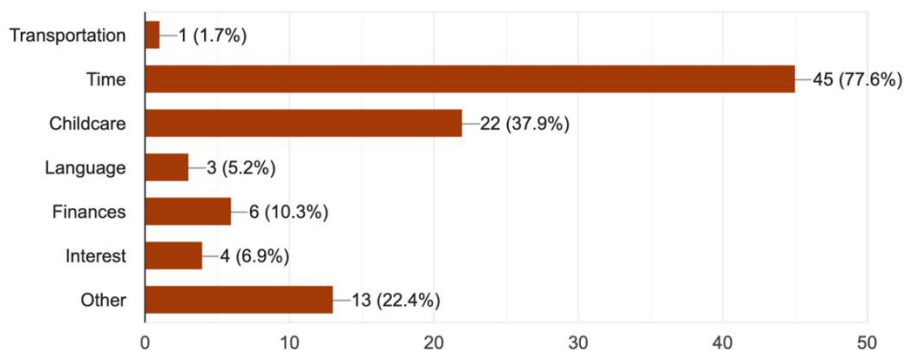
Question #4: Are there barriers that prevent you from participating in a family engagement team? If so, please list what they are.

This question was designed to identify what barriers prevented engagement and, more importantly, how I could eliminate the barriers to encourage more partnerships. The following bar chart represents their responses:

Figure 4.2*Question #4 - Bar Chart*

Please mark the boxes that could be a barrier to participation.

58 responses



The overall answers to the survey helped capture essential information. From the 58 responses, all respondents agreed that family engagement is crucial to students' academic, social, and emotional outcomes. Additionally, more than half (68.9%) of the respondents indicated they would be interested in being part of a family engagement team. The top three barriers preventing possible participation were time (77.6%), childcare (37.9%), and other (22.4%). The “other” category lacked a response line, leaving room for various unidentified barriers within this category. While these responses were helpful, I also relied on the school's documentation of beginning-of-the-year family intake paperwork to identify potentially marginalized families, specifically multi-language learners, students from low-income households, and students on individualized learning plans for purposive recruitment for the study.

Teachers played an essential role during the second step of the data collection process. I met with teachers during a staff meeting on March 16, 2023. I asked them if they would voluntarily identify at least 3–5 families in their classroom that met the

marginalized criteria and pass on an informational flyer (Appendix D) about the family engagement team during spring conferences (March 28th–31st). If a guardian did take a flyer, I asked the teachers to write down the name and then email me the information after the conference. I clarified with staff that while it was essential to be intentional with parent selection, the informational flyers could be given to anyone. I sent a follow-up email on March 27 that reviewed the information and reminded them that flyers would be available. Thirteen out of sixteen teachers voluntarily identified candidates and passed along information regarding the family engagement team, activating the final step of the sampling process.

Once teachers emailed me the names of families, I called each of the 32 families, inviting them to participate in the first family engagement meeting on April 19.

Eliminating previously identified barriers, I made sure to include in the conversation that free childcare, transportation, and food would all be available. If I could not get ahold of the individual, I left a message and then sent a follow-up text message. The following table shows how many teachers made referrals, the number of candidates, and responses from the initial invitation phone call.

Table 4.1

Teacher Referrals & Responses

| | Teacher | Number of Students | Parent Responses |
|--------------|---------|------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Kindergarten | Mrs. T | 5 students | Yes: 2 No:2 No Response: 1 |
| | Miss. C | 3 Students | Yes: 3 No:0 No Response: 0 |
| | Mrs. W | 3 Students | Yes: 0 No:0 No Response: 3 |
| First Grade | Mrs. W | 2 Students | Yes: 1 No:0 No Response: 1 |
| | Mrs. M | 2 Students | Yes: 2 No:0 No Response: 0 |
| | Mrs. F | No Student Identified | Yes: 0 No:0 No Response: 0 |
| Second Grade | Mrs. W | 4 Students | Yes: 3 No: 0 No Response: 1 |
| | Mrs. B | 2 Students | Yes: 1 No: 0 No Response: 1 |
| | Mrs. O | 2 Students | Yes: 1 No:0 No Response: 1 |
| Third Grade | Mrs. R | 2 Students | Yes: 1 No:1 No Response: 0 |
| | Mrs. D | 1 Student | Yes: 0 No:0 No Response: 1 |
| | Mrs. E | No Student Identified | Yes: 0 No:0 No Response: 0 |
| Fourth Grade | Mr. R | 1 Student | Yes: 1 No:0 No Response: 0 |
| | Mrs. L | 5 Students | Yes: 1 No:1 No Response: 3 |
| Fifth Grade | Mrs. B | No Students Identified | Yes: 0 No:0 No Response: 0 |
| | Mr. N | No Students Identified | Yes: 0 No:0 No Response: 0 |

In addition to families and staff, three community liaisons were invited to participate. Both school district family liaisons, Beau and Dom, were interested in participating in the research project to support family engagement work and learn new pathways to elevating family voices within the school district. Additionally, their participation in the family engagement team gave them first-hand experience on whether or not similar projects could be reproduced at other schools in the Hawk Elementary School district.

Courtney, a TOGETHER Community Schools Program Team Member, was also invited to join the project. TOGETHER is a nonprofit organization founded in 1989 that serves families in the South Sound. The mission of TOGETHER is to advance the health and well-being of young people in the community. They offer direct youth programs, mobilize communities through coalitions, and advocate for healthier systems that promote health through community and individual education. Each school in the Hawk Elementary School District has a TOGETHER team member who supports the individual needs of families within each school.

By April 2023, the Hawk Elementary Human-Centered Design team comprised parents, educational leaders, and community liaisons. The Human-Centered Design (HCD) team gathered for nine semi-structured meetings over six months. The team referred to themselves interchangeably as the HCD team or, more simply, the family engagement team. I coordinated the initiation of the first meeting, including its date and time; however, the subsequent meetings were determined by team members who chose to assume that responsibility. Initially, the first meeting adhered to a predefined schedule, but over time, it evolved in response to shifting power dynamics, topics of discussion, and conversation.

The following chart shows participants' first names, team roles, and meeting attendance (Appendix B). Two individuals came to the second meeting but did not want to be part of the project. Their names have been left out of the data:

Table 4.2

Attendance

| | #1 | #2 | #3 | #4 | #5 | #6 | #7 | #8 | #9 | Event |
|---|-------------|-------------|-------------|------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|--------------|
| Name | 4/19/ 23 | 5/10/ 23 | 5/24/ 23 | 6/7/ 23 | 6/21 /23 | 7/26/ 23 | 8/17/ 23 | 8/31/ 23 | 9/14/ 23 | 10/11/ 23 |
| Beth Teacher | X | X | X | | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| Beau District Community Liaison | X | X | | X | X | X | | X | X | X |
| Dominique District Community Liaison | X | X | | X | X | X | | | X | X |
| Courtney Together Coordinator | X | | X | X | | | | X | X | X |
| Joye Parent | X | X | X | | X | X | | X | X | X |
| Sam Parent | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | | | |
| Des | X | | X | X | X | | | X | X | X |

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|---------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Parent | | | | | | | | | | |
| Chris | | | | | | | | | | |
| Parent | | | X | X | | | | X | | X |
| Jessica | | | | | | | | | | |
| Parent | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | | |
| Katie | | | | | | | | | | |
| Parent | X | X | X | | | X | X | X | X | X |
| Nadine | | | | | | | | | | |
| Parent | X | X | X | X | X | | X | X | X | X |
| Jon | | | | | | | | | | |
| Principal | X | | | | X | | X | X | | X |
| Tamara | | | | | | | | | | |
| Assistant | | | | | | | | | | |
| Principal | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| Researcher | | | | | | | | | | |
| Robert | | | | | | | | | | |
| Parent | | X | | | | | | | | |
| Sarah | | | | | | | | | | |
| Parent | | X | | | | | | | | |
| Jen | | | | | | | | | | |
| Paraeducator | | | X | | | | | | | X |
| Heather | | | | | | | | | | |
| Music Teacher | | | X | | | | | | | |
| Anna | | | | | | | | | | |
| PTA President | | | | | X | X | | X | X | X |
| Christine | | | | | | | | | | |
| PTA Secretary | | | | | X | | | | | |

Qualitative Findings

The qualitative findings highlight the impact of the human-centered design team on power dynamics, the strategies employed to foster collaboration, and the tangible initiatives undertaken to bridge the opportunity gap among marginalized students. This section presents the data that answers each of the four research questions. To guide the analysis of the qualitative findings for each question, I paid attention to the possible indicators (Appendix B), which helped me identify themes related to my research questions.

Questions #1

What impact does a human-centered design team have on power-shifting and sharing between leadership and the human-centered design team?

The impact of a human-centered design team on power-shifting and sharing between leadership and the human-centered design team was observed through the overall participation, dialogue between participants, and result of the team's ideas. The key indicators that I was observing and became apparent throughout each session were:

- Which participants facilitated and led discussions and problem-solving solutions during each meeting
- Duration of time participants are speaking
- Collective conversation and problem-solving led by the HCD team
- Positive or negative interaction between family and educators

The following sections provide an overview of the human design team's impact on power-shifting and sharing between leadership and the HCD team.

Participation

Each session comprised a diverse group of community leaders, parents, and educational leaders, fostering an inclusive and comprehensive representation. Parents emerged as the most dedicated attendees, surpassing community leaders and educational leaders, with consistently higher average attendance. The community members also had high attendance. Notably, there were four meetings where all three community members were present, four sessions attended by two members, a single instance of solo attendance (Courtney), and one meeting where none of the community leaders could participate.

In contrast, educational leaders, encompassing teachers, administrators, and para-professionals, exhibited the lowest level of attendance. My presence was observed across all meetings, while Beth demonstrated exceptional commitment, attending eight sessions, and Principal Jon attending half of the sessions.

Table 4.3*Participant of Attendance*

| District Liaisons | |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| Participant | Sessions (including event) Attended Out Of |
| | 10 |
| Beau | 8 |
| Dominique | 7 |
| Courtney | 6 |
| Parent Participation | |
| Nadine | 9 |
| Joye | 8 |
| Jessica | 8 |
| Katie | 8 |
| Des | 7 |
| Sam | 7 |
| Anna | 5 |
| Chris | 4 |
| Christine | 1 |
| Robert | 1 |
| Sarah | 1 |
| Educational Leadership Participation | |
| Jon | 5 |
| Tamara | 10 |
| Beth | 8 |
| Heather | 1 |
| Jen | 2 |

Parents' consistent and active participation in the sessions demonstrates a significant level of empowerment, leading to increased influence in decision-making. The comparatively low involvement of educational leaders could be seen as a power

differential and preserved as having less impact on the discussions and decisions made during the sessions.

Furthermore, there was consistent member engagement, with Nadine participating 90% of the time, Beau, Joy, Jessica, Katie, and Beth 80% of the time, and Dom, Sam, and Des attending 70% of the time. This shared commitment is power-sharing between and with select individuals having more of an influence on the outcomes of these sessions. In addition, Principal Jon and the P.T.A. president attending sessions half of the time implies that they may have a moderate impact on decision-making, with their influence being more evenly distributed.

The findings to the question, “What impact does a human-centered design team have on power-shifting and sharing between leadership and the human-centered design team?” hold potential implications for fostering more inclusive, adaptive, and collaborative approaches to decision-making between leadership and parents at Hawk Elementary.

Dialogue

Reviewing the transcripts and noting who facilitated meetings and how many people spoke in each session was a valuable way to examine *the impact a human-centered design team had on power-shifting and sharing between leadership and the human-centered design team*. The dialogue will be presented chronologically from the first to last sessions. Each session will include chunks of dialogue, the percentage of “talk time” each participant had, and an analysis of how it addresses the answer to the question. Also, names will be included to indicate their role in the HCD team. If a parent is speaking, their name will be followed by “P.” Community liaison's (district and

TOGETHER participants) names will be followed by “C.L.,” teachers' names will be followed by “T,” para-professionals names will be followed by “P.P” and Principal Jon's name followed by “E.L” indicating educational leader.

Session 1

The first session was not recorded because I wanted to give the participants a chance to understand the team's intent and an opportunity for them to decide about joining the HCD team. More importantly, consent forms were not signed; this came at the end of the session. Instead, I took observation notes and collected feedback from participants.

Initially, I was worried that the participants would have nothing to discuss during the first meeting, and I was concerned that they would lack direction and connection if the group did not have a purpose. However, through facilitated question prompts, team members quickly fell into conversation and openly shared ideas. Throughout the session, I shared with participants the purpose of a Human-Centered Design team and the steps of creating a team that could take on design challenges. The hope was to create a power balance between educational leaders, community members, and parents that could use empathy-building strategies and a team working together to brainstorm, collaborate, and implement an activity or event to support students at Hawk Elementary.

This session set the foundation for the HCD team. All participants who came to the first meeting signed the consent form and, more noteworthy, remained active participants throughout each session and were vital to the planning and implementation of an event. Their active involvement proved essential in shaping the team's purpose. The commitment of all attendees, coupled with the ethical practice of obtaining consent,

reflected a collaborative and transparent approach within the team. The participatory dynamic positioned the newly formed Hawk Elementary team with hopeful success for future endeavors.

Session 2

In session 2, I encouraged the group to reflect on their personal school experiences. Allowing them time to engage in small group conversations, I brought the entire group back together after eleven minutes and prompted a discussion on their shared memories. The bolded sentences indicate how I used prompts to generate questions:

Tamara 11:01 - ***So I'm just wondering, I mean, does anyone want to share out anything?*** *I might actually just share out a few things (I overheard). Some memories that I was overhearing were like hands-on project-based stuff, and somebody over here said, "it's not like you remember the worksheets!*

>Everyone laughs

I did have to laugh and at the same time, those are convenient and great to assess, but you don't remember those. So, something that was fun is that there's a connection here. They both were in California, Southern, Central or...

Nadine (P) - *Southern.*

Tamara - *And they happen to also grow up in the same area. And there's a project that they did called like, "mission", and they would go it sounded like...*

Katie (P) 11:54 - *It's like a bunch of churches out in California and they are like called missions. So, you just had to pick one of them and do a report on it.*

Nadine (P)12:03 - *And like it has for a report.*

Participants: *Cool/Yeah/Oh, interesting*

Tamara 12:12 - *So yeah. And then you (point to Dom) were talking about like paper mâché, anything cool?*

Dom (C.L) - *Yeah, like, yeah, get your hands into...*

Tamara - *And then also like a cultural night. Is that what I was hearing over here?*

Sam (P) 12:29 - *Yeah, more of like learning about cultures like a lot of like from where I'm from Florida. Or, like, I came from when I first got here, like to call my area. As they have, like, I don't know, there's more like a heritage thing. You got to learn about different cultures and stuff like that. So, you get like a perspective into someone else's, like, you know, type of life, so I thought that would be really cool. We used to have that one (heritage/cultural activity).*

Tamara 12:57 - *And then we're talking about food and French food and different things like that. So, I couldn't quite hear over here. Do you want to share out any of the cool, cool memories? Or I also heard talking about like science project-based science stuff, which is always fun. Does anyone else want to share over here?*

Beau (C.L) 13:18 - *Yeah, we also talked a little bit about different cultures, and I mean, my kiddos in middle school, so they're at a different level, but they're, they're doing something where every time they're learning about a different part of the world, they get to choose, you know, do you want to do your project on like cultural, traditional clothing? Do you want to bring in a food dish? And so, it's been really fun. I mean, we're making you know, curry dishes, and we're making sushi, and you know, and it's been, it's been really fun. And it's been a way that*

she is, you know, a way that she's felt like a sense of belonging, you know, because she doesn't identify as white, and so it's been nice for her to learn about other people's cultures. And she also feels like it's kind of shifted the culture a little bit in her school because they're learning more about one another. Gosh, what else? So, we talked about, we talked about like hands-on and kind of finding things that teachers teaching the way that students like to learn as opposed to you know, the way that they traditionally teach. We talked about extroverted children.

>Participants - Oh, that's a challenge. Yeah. Oh, yeah.

*Tamara 14:31 - Well, awesome. Well, I hope this kind of got you guys thinking about some things. The second part that we can kind of move into is the design challenge. And this is kind of where I hope that we can keep building on - is what as a as a group, we have the ability to really think through like, **what is something that we could possibly create?** As a group and implement whether it's doing a culture night or something that you feel like we could bring to, you know, teachers and say, "**Could we try this?**" or is it something like, as parents, we could, you know, work together to, you know, do something for our students. So, use all of your creative minds to think about something that we could try and problem solve and then implement. And so, with that, I don't think, I mean, maybe you have a brilliant idea right now, which is awesome. But if you guys want, there are some snacks here, and you guys can have some think time. I have sticky notes on the tables for you. I want - I am - I, I know what I would like you guys to do, but I don't want to tell you what to do. But I hope that you guys can use the next 15 minutes to get creative. Does that sound good? To just kind of get together get*

your thoughts out on post-it notes, or if you need more paper, generate some thinking and some ideas.

Sam (P) 16:08: *Yeah, so just like structural-wise, ideas for like this building, or is that like saying if you're gonna be doing this in the whole district in other schools?*

>Group - *Yeah*

Beau (C.L) 16:26 - *Department of Education. (ha ha ha - everyone is laughing)*

Tamara 16:28 - *Hey, there is a new superintendent! (Everyone laughs) This is where we could get really creative, right? Like even if we think of an idea and it meets a brick wall, and we're like, well, at least we tried, right? **Like how far can we - you know, push on something, or what is in the way of that happening? Could be information for parents too, right?** Like, oh, that's a policy, you know, or we didn't know we could do that. So, I think the more ideas that we come up with and explore, the better, and we're not going to solve anything tonight like all I want. It would be great if we just generated a few ideas. And so again, tapping into there was stuff on IEPs that we talked about last week or a couple of weeks ago. I think was it ACT time being on a different time or maybe like school hours, like*

>Yeah, late start. *(everyone chimes in)*

*So even stuff like that, like, just start getting some ideas down that we can then meet next, the next time we meet, we can just come back to that and then kind of dig a little bit more. **So how does that sound?***

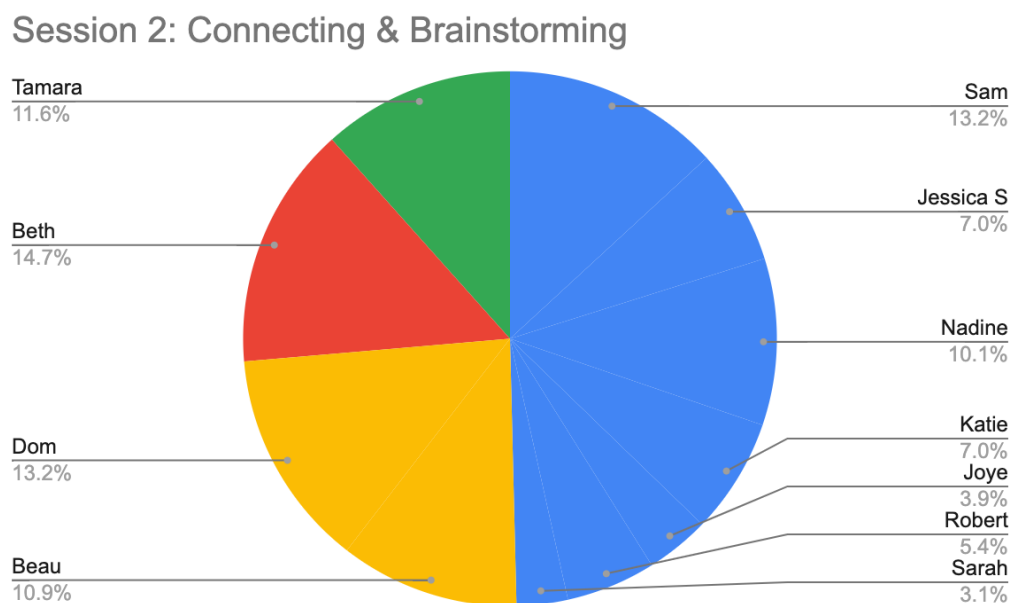
>Participants: *Sounds good/Yup/Ok*

This dialogue revealed the potential to rebalance power dynamics between leaders and parents. Through the question prompts, I fostered collaboration and inclusivity so that members felt safe sharing. The facilitation was not directive but intended to actively engage parents in sharing their ideas, valuing their insights, and beginning to collaborate.

The provided pie chart visually represents the percentage of speaking time for each participant during the session:

Figure 4.3

Session 2 - Connecting and Brainstorming



The provided information presents a breakdown of speaking time during the session, revealing distinct participation patterns. Parents collectively accounted for the majority, speaking 50.3% of the time, indicating their significant engagement in the discussion. Community liaisons followed with a share of 24.1%, suggesting their noteworthy contribution to the conversation. Teacher Beth spoke for 14.7%, reflecting a

more limited but notable involvement. As the facilitator, I spoke 11.6% of the session; this time was spent primarily on introductory remarks, posing questions, and addressing participant questions.

Session 3

In session 3, I still facilitated the conversation. Instead of leading the meeting right away, as I had in sessions one and two, I waited almost 13 minutes to see if anyone would take the initiative before starting the meeting. In those 13 minutes, the participants were casually talking and connecting. Contrary to the previous week, I did not give a prompt; instead, I recalled information (in bold) about the previous meeting, hoping that others would jump in, which is what happened:

*Tamara 12:43 - Um, well, I don't want to drive how the evening goes. I did put up ideas (pointing to the whiteboard) and each time we meet I'm just gonna go ahead and kind of start putting up our ideas and if I forgot any, add them up. So, for those of you who missed the second meeting, we kind of brainstormed. We're starting to get like more like where do we want our vision to go or what could we kind of do like and so the conversations were around **family culture, Project science, Family Project Day, country project/passport, drama club, flag project, lots of cool ideas**. So, to kind of throw some big ideas out there. We have what like four weeks left of school. So, if there's something that you guys are really motivated, like, I wonder if we could do this right like we could you guys' brainstorm that and then work on a timeline, get some ideas going. Or if there's a project where you're like, let's keep working on this through the summer, and then see if we can implement it in the fall. That would be an again, we don't, this is you*

guys drive this and kind of see where it goes. So, I do have paper out and sticky notes.

It's up to you guys. Like if this all is like nope, let's just try something totally different and out of the box. But I thought that this might narrow your scope of ideas. So yes,

Jen (P.P) - *What is skills day?*

Sam (P) 14:29 - *What did I mean by that? - We were just brainstorming*

Katie (P) - *Probably our version of when you grew up kind of like the field day, I guess.*

Beth (T) - *Similar to like career day?*

Nadine (P)14:36 - *You know, it's like not an athletic thing or whatever was like a competition.*

Jen (P.P) 14:45 - *For the kids, you know, like that show back in their 70s Sports Show. You did the opposite.*

Nadine (P) 14:51 - *Yeah, you do the crab walk, you know, you do the pull-up bar, you know,*

Jen (P.P) 14:55 - *Okay, I understand that. Okay. Yeah,*

Nadine (P) 14:57 - *It was really fun.*

Jen (P) 14:58 - *Just for me, skills day is like career day.*

Tamara - *Oh, good clarification,*

Jen (P) - *So maybe a different name for that. obstacle course or day or something, maybe some other word.*

Nadine (P) 15:14 - *Field Day, maybe we had to go back to the field.*

Tamara 15:18 - *And we do have Field Day.*

Chris (P) - *Tumwater Ninja Warrior.*

Participants laugh

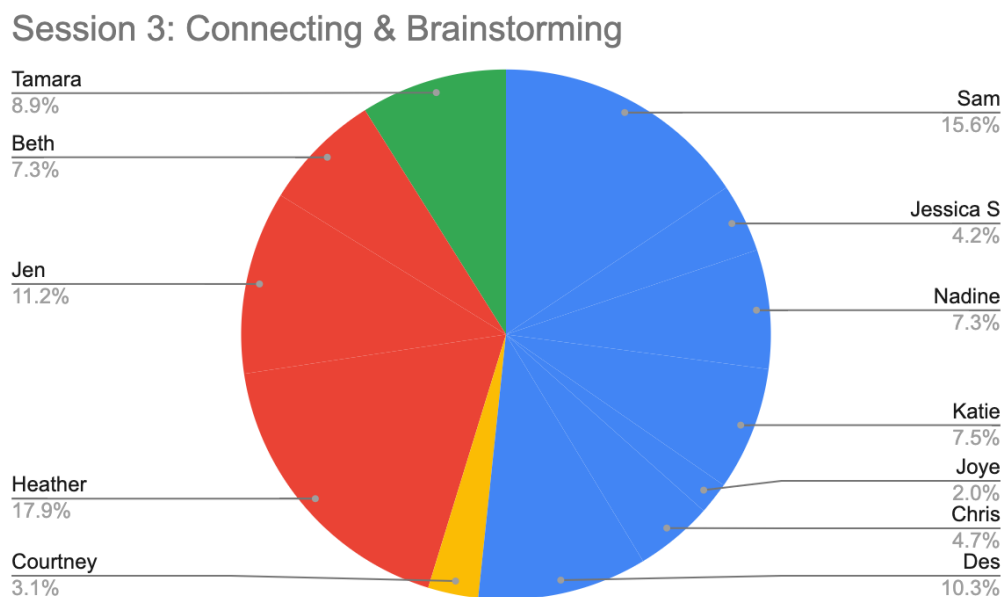
Jen (P.P) - *Ninja Warrior.*

>Participants - *Okay. Yeah.*

Tamara - *And yeah, for you guys that like brainstorm these. If you want to share out what was already talked about, go for it. And then if you guys want to spread out, get together, do timelines, get creative and new vision. **We can start when you guys narrow it down to like how do we make this happen?***

The Human-Centered Design (HCD) model was effectively applied in this dialogue, as demonstrated by fostering a user-centric and collaborative approach. I encouraged participants, including parents and a teacher, to actively contribute ideas and drive the initiative. The discussions were productive, with ideas evolving and being clarified throughout the meeting, aligning with HCD's emphasis on continuous refinement. In my facilitative role, I ensured a clear understanding among participants and empowered them to take ownership of the project's vision.

The provided pie chart visually represents the percentage of speaking time for each participant during the session:

Figure 4.4*Session 3 - Connecting and Brainstorming*

The breakdown of speaking time during the session indicates a pattern of participation. Parents collectively accounted for the majority, speaking 51.6% of the time, a slight increase from the previous session, which suggests an ongoing commitment to engagement and active involvement. Teachers followed with a share of 36.4%. An increase from the second session, which is most likely due to the addition of teacher Heather and paraprofessional Jen. As the facilitator, the decrease in speaking time to 8.9% suggests a deliberate effort to step back and allow for more participant-driven discussions, aligning with the HCD principle of empowering users to shape the direction

of the conversation. Courtney had the least amount of input (3.1%) and was the only representative for the community liaison in the session.

Session 4

In session 4, I waited a few minutes longer to see if power-shifting would occur with the facilitator role in the team. Sixteen minutes into the session, Sam got everyone's attention and stated, "But onto the school discussion. Like, let's be honest, like I think certain times, like, even if you start young and they have like, extracurricular activities within like, like you said last time, like, oh, getting their toes like even if they get their toes a little wet like that kind of like idea because imagine, like what they can do now." At this point participants began recalling information without any prompting from me:

Beau (C.L) 19:09 - ...*Okay, so we must have talked about more ideas than just life skills. I like that we are brainstorming more ideas because I love it.*

Des (P) 19:28 - *I think we were I took a picture of the board from last time.*

"The Big Ideas" - family culture project. I think we wanted to combine that with the flag project. Buddy System. We're gonna touch base on that one too. We were talking about choirs, but there is choir. We talked about drama club a lot.

>It was like a drama club?

Yes. Science Project Day, pumpkin patch, which they do do that here. Yeah, so I think we were really touching a lot of bases about like country project. Family.

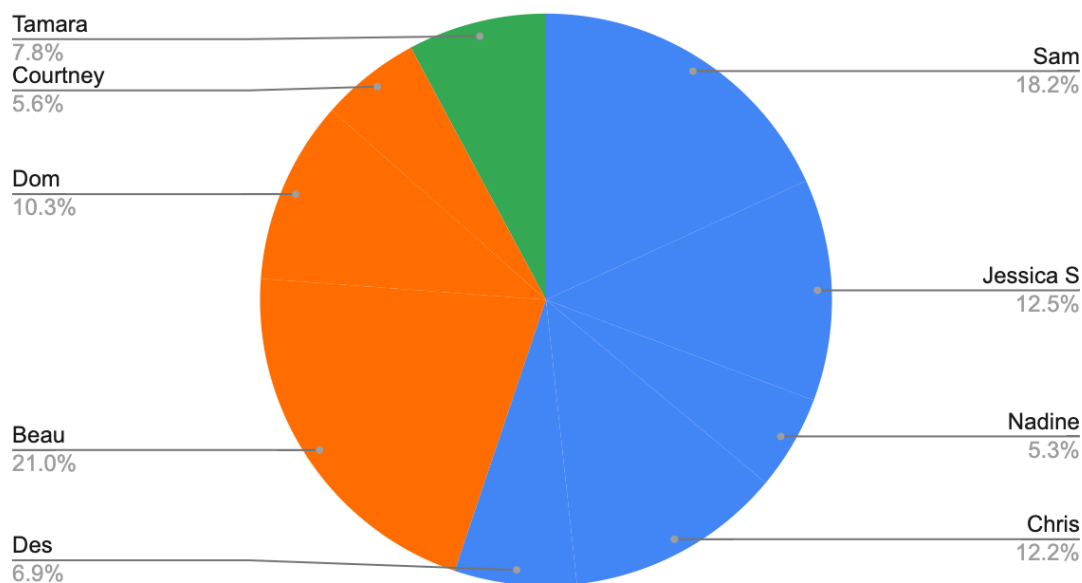
Culture flag like kind of doing like a...

>Participants 20:08 - Yeah, yeah, (group chatting)

Des (P) 20:11 - *Yeah, like the history of where they came from, you know, in the classroom. I think this is what you were saying (pointing to Sam) it was mostly a lot of your (Sam) ideas.*

The HCD team model has facilitated a noticeable power shift, allowing participants to take more active roles in driving the discussion. Recognizing the importance of empowering team members, I deliberately waited for an extended period at the beginning of the session, allowing others to step into the facilitator role. Parent Sam took the opportunity to redirect the discussion towards a school-related topic and initiate a conversation about potential ideas. This shift in leadership demonstrated the HCD model's commitment to inclusivity and the distribution of decision-making power among team members. The subsequent participant discussions, led by individuals such as Beau and Des, further highlighted a decentralized approach, with team members recalling and expanding upon previous ideas without prompting from a facilitator.

In addition to this example, the provided pie chart visually represents the percentage of speaking time for each participant during the session:

Figure 4.5*Session 4 - Brain Storming***Session 4: Brain Storming**

The analysis of speaking time distribution in this session indicates a significant increase in the active involvement of parents, who collectively shared 55.1% of the discussion, suggesting a more active role in the “brainstorming” phase. Community liaisons accounted for 36.9% of the talk time, with the influence of participants Beau and Dom impacting the overall increase in their participation. My speaking time decreased, accounting for 7.8% of shared conversation, compared to previous sessions. This reduction in talk time supports a power shift within the team, reinforcing the HCD model's commitment to empowering participants and fostering a more balanced and participatory dialogue.

Session 5

Session 5 of the human-centered design team's meeting demonstrates a noteworthy shift in power dynamic due to the presence of the Parent Teacher Association (PTA) president, PTA secretary, and Principal Jon. Nevertheless, Sam took the facilitator lead again and not only got the meeting going within the first 7 minutes but also was able to summarize the purpose of the team:

Sam (P) 6:47 - ***Yeah. We got a full house tonight!***

Tamara 7:01 - (to self) *And Jon is with us - we shall see how this changes things.*

Sam (P) 7:08 - ***So, hi everybody!***

Jessica S (P) 7:09 - (turns back to me and whispers) *Psychological experiment.*

All right. Is there another group within the group? (Those of us who are regular attenders laugh) We are the placebo group - the Control Group. (Participants in earshot – “Oh, yeah”).

Sam (P) 7:23 - ***So um, last week, we were touching - one we weren't here last week - but you know, something like that. We were touching base on like, some ideas that we can like implement for like the school for kids to like, be able to like do, or like I don't know how to explain it. I'm really bad at explaining things but um, it's just different ideas to get the school more engaged, more family-like, engaged in the idea more like a certain ideas, inclusiveness and stuff like that. Um, I had the board of ideas on my phone? But it was like one of the like, the main things were like a skill day that we were talking about. And then another one was like a family-like, cultural project. So that was our main ideas. Last week. I know we were touching base with Tamara and she was***

telling us that you liked some of the ideas that we had. Did you have like any particular ones that stuck out?

Jon (E.L) 8:49 - My favorite ideas are from my families. And so, when you talk about things you're interested in, I am interested in them too. And the only thoughts I had were okay, right? I want to learn more. And I want to I'm always keeping in mind the whole school and everything and I'm thinking about, wow, we actually have two family entities now in our school, which is great, kind of comparing it to other schools like, ha ha wouldn't you feel pretty proud! I'm also aware of how do they connect or how do we communicate? I would I think - It would be challenge to have One group entity like this group, having ideas and going into schools (pointing with the right hand) and then our PTA also have ideas and going here (pointing with the opposite hand). So, I was just thinking in my mind, how does that connect and overlap? How do we make it stronger, and honor the great ideas that are coming? So those are just the thoughts that I've been having about it.

The principal's acknowledgment of the valuable ideas from both the collaborative group and the PTA suggests a recognition of the power dynamics within the family engagement team. The power dynamics involve the principal and the family entities contributing ideas. The shift in power dynamics is significant when Jon stated, "How do we make it stronger and honor the great ideas that are coming?" expressing a willingness to learn from the ideas generated by the families, indicating a shared decision-making process. The principal's consideration of connecting and communicating between these two-family entities demonstrates an openness to power-sharing, where collaborative

efforts are recognized and honored. However, community liaisons reacted adversely to PTA; Beau stated, “I don't know about PTA,” and Dom agreed, “Me either.” Meanwhile, parent Des responded with a more open and inclusive attitude, stating, “Well, it sounds like we need to join our two big brains. Together.” Des's comment aligns with a cooperative approach to problem-solving or decision-making, emphasizing the importance of combining individual strengths to achieve a common goal. It reflects a positive attitude toward teamwork and the belief that combining different perspectives can lead to more comprehensive and effective outcomes.

Right after Des's comment, Sam pointed out to the group, “Wait - aren't you the PTA person (points to Anna)?” At this point, everyone began laughing, and Beau and Dom were visibly surprised. Parent Jessica then motioned to PTA president Anna and took the lead saying, “Well you have the floor!” Anna shared with the group, “So, when Mr. Halverson told me about you all, well, he didn't tell me a lot, but he was like, new ideas and I was like, I want to be there if you guys, **I don't know what you think, but I'd love to join forces and make something happen because we're all a brand-new board and we are it sounds like our values and goals align really well.** And we see oh my gosh, you guys today I'm getting goosebumps but our families really showed up at field day and I am so proud of that. And I think if we continue to get that gives me support. There's like nothing we can't do. Oh, I'm Anna.”

Throughout the session, Anna expressed her enthusiasm for collaborating with the HCD team and emphasized the shared values and goals. The willingness to join forces implied a potential shift in power-sharing, as it indicates that leadership and the team are open to working together on shared initiatives for Hawk Elementary. The PTA president's

and the principal's active engagement and interest indicated a willingness to collaborate and share power with the team. This change in dynamics suggests that the team's efforts in generating ideas and fostering collaboration had a tangible impact on power-sharing and shifting between leaders and the team.

Toward the end of the conversation, participants reflected on their involvement with the HCD team. Jessica (P) expressed her gratitude, stating, "I am really glad you (Tamara) did this because never in a thousand years would I actively pursue to join in. I am very much in my own shell and so I love this." Sam (P) echoed Jessica's sentiments, recalling her initial hesitation, "Like we said last time, at first, we were like, ah no we don't want to come, but you sounded so sweet on the phone. I just could not say no!" Participants in the group laughed while Sam elaborated on her decision to participate despite her initial reservation, "In my head I was like I don't want to do this, but oh, I can't say no! Because I never get out. When she called, I was like who is this and she had such an upbeat attitude. I was like oh my gosh she is so sweet I am going to just show up!" Jessica S. agreed with Sam, emphasizing, "It worked for me too! This is my first things that I have done in a long time!" Beau pointed out to both Sam and Jessica, "*Now you are more likely to get involved.*" Sam shared, "I feel like I have met a really great group of people and like I said now we chat. When I see people, I invite them to join. I am glad did this. I made friends and know more about my kids' education." Teacher Beth validated Jessica, Sam and Beau's comments stating, "I love when I see you guys now. Out front (during student drop off) I'm like - oh hi!"

The impact extends to the broader social dynamics, as evidenced by Teacher Beth's comment, "I love when I see you guys now. Out front (during student drop off), I

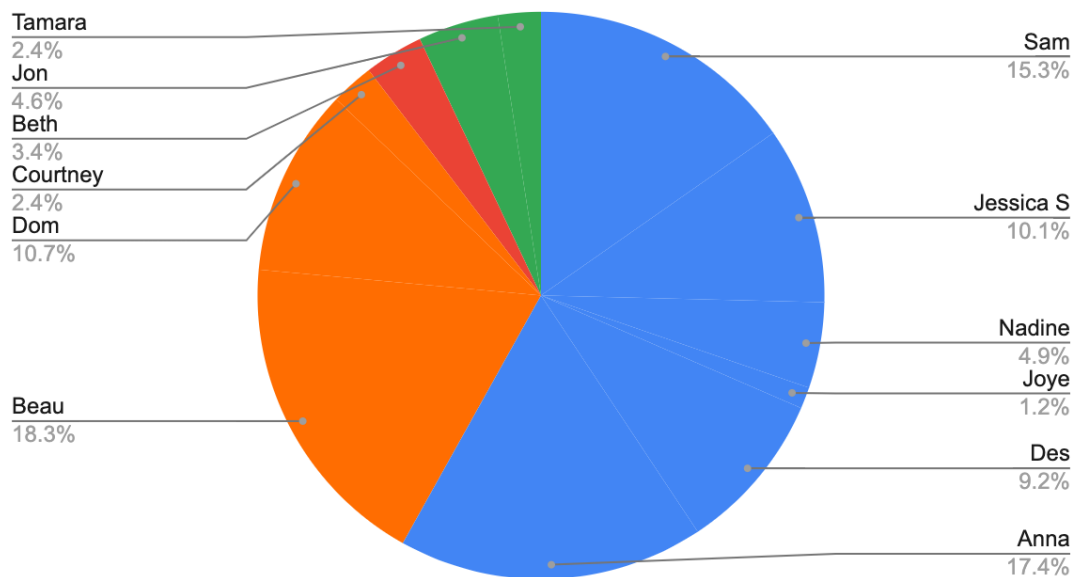
am like - oh hi!” The comments indicate a shift in the participants' interactions, creating a more welcoming and connected community. Beau's observation, “Now you are more likely to get involved,” reinforces the idea that the HCD team has not only influenced individual engagement but has also fostered a sense of community and openness among the participants. The adaptive and inclusive nature of the HCD model further reinforced a dynamic, user-centric process, fostering increased trust and shared ownership between leaders, community liaisons, and parents.

The provided pie chart is a visual representation of the percentage of speaking time for each participant during the session:

Figure 4.6

Session 5 – Brainstorming

Session 5: Brainstorming



The analysis of speaking time distribution in this session indicates a continued increase in active participation from parents, who shared 58.1% of the discussion, signifying their role as primary contributors to the brainstorming process. The notable

presence of PTA president Anna influenced the discussion, with a significant portion revolving around PTA-related topics, leading to an increase in Anna's talk time.

Community liaisons shared 31.4% of the time, with Beau taking a more prominent role than to Dom and Courtney. Educational leaders contributed 8% of the discussion. There is a marked decrease in my speaking time to 2.4%, reflecting a deliberate shift in power dynamics and a transition to a more observational and research-oriented role. This adjustment aligns with the Human-Centered Design (HCD) model's principles, emphasizing participant-driven discussions and inclusive collaboration, allowing for a more balanced and dynamic exchange of ideas within the team.

Session 6

Between sessions 1 and 5, the team met every other week. However, session 6 was held four weeks after session 5 due to summer vacation and schedules. Even though many participants were vacationing, four parents, two community liaisons, teacher Beth, and I attended (See Table 3). Anna's attendance is noteworthy, indicating her desire to be part of the HCD team and her belief that she is an accepted member.

Table 4.4

Sessions 1 Through 5 Total Attendance

| Participant | Number Sessions Attended |
|--------------------|---------------------------------|
| Sam | 6 |
| Joye | 5 |
| Katie | 4 |
| Anna | 2 |

| | |
|--------|---|
| Beth | 5 |
| Beau | 5 |
| Dom | 5 |
| Tamara | 6 |

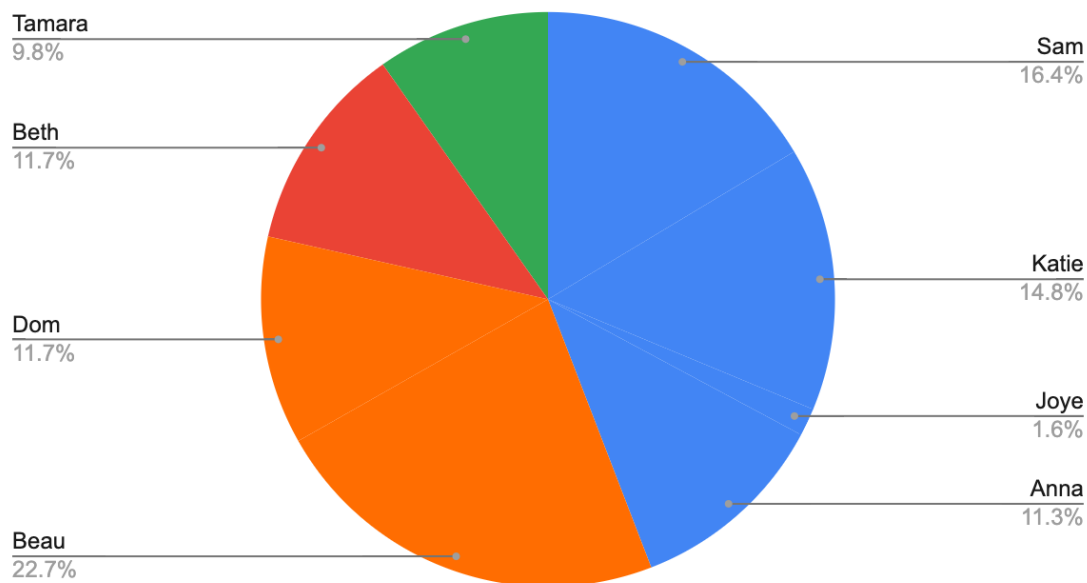
In the first 43 minutes of the conversation, participants took turns sharing information about their summer break. Forty-three minutes into the conversation, Beau interjected and said, “**And still on to an IEP like parents training is my favorite**, it is just a pivotal moment for me to hear like, so many parents in the room be like, oh my gosh, I felt the same way about an IEP like I had no idea like and the stigma that's attached to it and then not being able to really understand it right off the bat. So, I love that one.” The discussion continued to develop the idea of an IEP workshop. However, the focus shifted to personal experiences with COVID-19 homeschooling, parenting, and self-help therapy. Dom stated at an hour and 7 minutes, “**I don't feel like we've talked at all about what we should have.**” All participants laughed, acknowledging that the time had gone by without “team talk.” Beau then replied, “Sorry, I don't know how I took us in that direction!” Sam pointed out, “**Well, it started with the IEP thing**, and then we just got here!” Katie then asked the team, “Do you need an official diagnosis and stuff?”

This question then prompted a 20-minute discussion, until the end of the meeting, about IEP referrals, diagnoses, and the need for more guided information about IEPs. Teacher Beth was asked many questions regarding classroom support and provided information from her perspective. For example, Anna asked Beth, “Is there ever a case where you're like, this kid can really benefit from an IEP?” Beth replied, “Yeah, if I were,

um, I haven't really had that. I haven't really had that situation. Because first, we are, I mean, I don't really think about an IEP. I'm just thinking, like, talking with the parent and finding out, like, what they're seeing and what I'm seeing and where I think a kid might need some help like because we always want school to be a nice place and something they enjoy. **So, you know, like that parent input to me as a teacher is so important.**”

Session 6 aligns with the HCD model's emphasis on understanding and addressing users' authentic needs and experiences; in this case, the team discusses topics of immediate relevance and importance. Beau's interjection and subsequent discussion on IEPs reveal a pivotal moment where participants connected over shared experiences and challenges, aligning with HCD's user empathy principles. Despite a delayed acknowledgment of the need for more focused “team talk,” the conversational detour allowed for a genuine exploration of concerns, questions, and experiences related to IEPs, demonstrating the HCD model's adaptability to emergent and user-driven discussion topics. The involvement of Teacher Beth further enriches the conversation, providing valuable insights and fostering collaborative understanding between educators and parents, reinforcing the HCD principle of inclusive and collaborative problem-solving.

The provided pie chart visually represents the percentage of speaking time for each participant during the session:

Figure 4.7*Session 6 – Envisioning***Session 6: Envisioning**

Parents, with a significant share of 44.1%, demonstrated continued active engagement, contributing to the collaborative HCD process. Community liaisons shared 34.4% of the time, reflecting their ongoing involvement and contribution to the discussion. Teacher Beth experienced an increase in shared talk time to 11.7%, possibly due to being asked numerous questions about IEPs and sharing about her summer. This engagement of the teacher signifies a collaborative exchange of insights between educators and parents, fostering a shared understanding. My speaking time increased to 9.8% because participants wanted to know what I had done over the summer. Joye's decision to only share a bit provides information about her preference to be an observer, supporter, and listener. This decision aligns with the HCD model's flexibility,

recognizing and respecting individual preferences for involvement within the collaborative process.

Session 7

During session 7, team members continued to express strong solidarity and fulfillment with their teamwork, creating a positive and collaborative atmosphere. Parents and leaders both emphasized their role in advocating for children (see bold comments), indicating that the team collectively empowers parents to engage in the decision-making process actively. Teacher Beth started off the meeting stating, “I’m here for like, the whole time. And I see you guys like at the end of the day now because it’s like, oh hi! I have fun—**just a really lovely group of people to work with**” (referring to the parent engagement team). Parent Sam shared Beth’s point of view, replying to the team, “Yeah, so I was like, I’m going to miss this the most! I will miss the school too. I was like, **oh, is this a little bit more than a random getting together.**” Beth validated her statement: “Yeah, **we have really enjoyed coming together.**”

Sam (P) 1 0:28 - *It was just like just coming together. It's just like I was having like, similarities and really good ideas with all of us. That's like, you know, make this like a whole like....*

Nadine (P) 0:39 - *We just feel like we're really pushing for our kids, you know?*

>Participants: Yeah, yes.

Nadine (P) - *Well, I don't know. My son - I feel like he needs certain things. So, I'm just, like, trying to be in it.*

Beth (T) 0:52 - *So awesome. It's like one of the best things we can do for our kids. Yeah*

Nadine (P) 0:55 - *it was so random on the teacher just like oh, you know, if you want to do this little focus group thing, and I was just like, Oh, okay. And then I got the message, and I was like, okay, he's really happy.*

Jessica (P) 1:08 - *You (Tamara) were so nice on the phone as well.*

Sam (P) 1:10 - *Yeah. All this like, school stuff like that. Like she was very positive (about the family engagement group). She was so excited.*

Katie (P) 1:21- *I'm gonna be mad if I miss stuff, right?*

Sam (P) 1:26 - *Super excited and enthusiastic on the phone. I was like, okay, yeah, give this a shot see how it goes.*

Tamara 1:33 - *I will make sure to note that in the research.*

>Everyone laughs

Sam (P) 1:37 - *Just imagined like this (referring to the family engagement team) at other schools and then imagine it in the district and how much can be accomplished.*

Beth (T) 1:44 - *So many ideas. And just even just problem solving, talking about like things going on with kids and like I hear so many things that like oh, I sons this. Oh, Yeah, mine too. Oh, yeah, we you know, just I don't know I just like so many connections that it just I don't know connections. I just always seem to make us feel better.*

Katie (P) 2:08 - *I also like that, like, you guys (Jon and Tamara) are here just because, like, I know you're here all the time, but I'm just saying, like, **I feel like I am now more comfortable just going in the office and being like, hey.***"

Tamara - *And that is what we (admin) would like"*

Jon (EL) - *Yeah, absolutely.*”

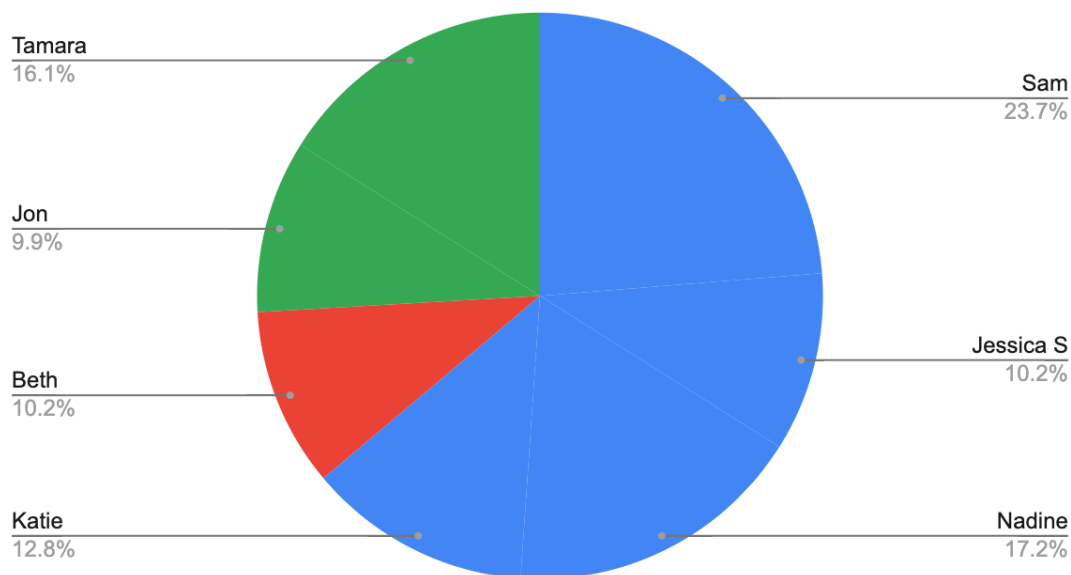
Beth (T) - *Yeah. And I feel that way as a teacher like just like when I'm like, Oh, hi. Hey!*

Nadine (P) - *I gotta be honest. I didn't know you were the principal for like a while. I thought you were the crossing guard. Everybody say you the principal and I was like, “Oh!”*

This excerpt notes the positive and affirming interactions between parents, community liaisons, and leadership, highlighting the increased comfort of approaching school leaders and demonstrating improved communication and collaboration.

Furthermore, the dialogue illustrates how parents are becoming more familiar with and open to engaging with school leadership, suggesting a more balanced power-sharing dynamic. The team's role in encouraging idea generation and facilitating discussions about important issues for parents further emphasizes its impact on empowering and engaging families. The HCD team has played a crucial role in fostering a collaborative and inclusive partnership between parents and school leadership, leading to a more balanced power-sharing relationship.

The provided pie chart visually represents the percentage of speaking time for each participant during the session:

Figure 4.8*Session 7 – Envisioning***Session 7: Envisioning**

Parents, with a substantial increase, shared 63.9% of the time, indicating a more active and engaged participation in the discussion. The educational leaders, including yourself, accounted for 36.2% of the discussion, reflecting a collaborative exchange between facilitators and participants. I took on a more active role by asking questions about PTA and ideas for an IEP workshop. This session helped me gain valuable insights into how the parents would move forward with the merger of PTA. This demonstrates an effort to gather insights directly from the users, aligning with HCD's emphasis on empathetic understanding and co-creation of solutions. While the absence of community liaisons in this session might impact the diversity of perspectives, an essential aspect of HCD, the increased involvement of parents and educational leaders still contributes to a

collaborative and inclusive approach. Furthermore, parents' perspectives were critical to the future of the team and its impact on Hawk Elementary.

Session 8

Throughout session 8, collective power-sharing occurred in how they divided up planning for the IEP workshop. Des took the lead in keeping everyone on task and organized, stating, “Before we leave today, we should probably - there's gonna be stuff that needs to be done and where we're going and knows they're gonna go should sign up for a job. Like someone is gonna make a flyer, someone's gonna make sure it ends up on the school website. I don't know who's in charge of that. You know.” Over the next 5 minutes, participants seamlessly volunteered in ways that contributed to the planning.

The following table provides a breakdown of tasks:

Table 4.5

Tasks

| Participant | Task |
|--------------------|--|
| Katie (P) | <i>I am decent at illustrator, but I don't know. How about the printing.</i> |
| Anna (P) | <i>I can do the flyer.</i> |
| Tamara | <i>I'm gonna take the notes (from today), then I'll give you the</i> |
| Researcher/Admin | <i>info. And if you want to mock something up, we can look at it on the 14th.</i> |
| Courtney (C.L) | <i>Yes, are there going to be refreshments because if so, I can help with that.</i> |
| Tamara | <i>I can get babysitters.</i> |
| Researcher/Admin | |

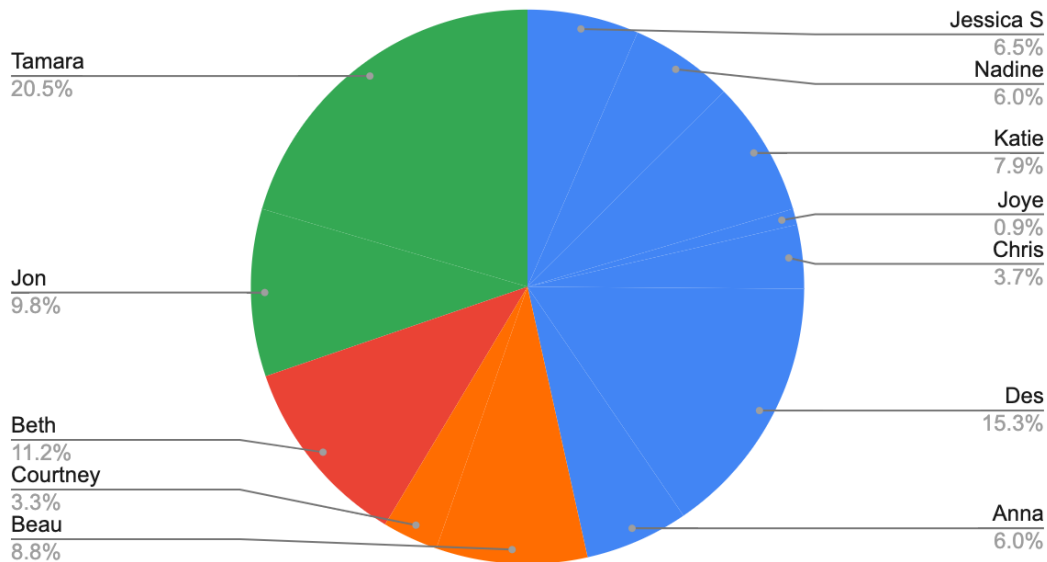
- Jon (E.L) *Awesome. Yeah. I'll be connecting with staff to come in and be a part of that.*
- Anna (P) *So, our first PTA meeting of the school year is on September 15. That very next day, okay, so if you guys would like to come and talk about*
-

The provided pie chart visually represents the percentage of speaking time for each participant during the session:

Figure 4.9

Session 8 – Planning

Session 8: Planning



The analysis of speaking time in this session reflects a subtle dynamic within the Human-Centered Design (HCD) team, highlighting power-shifting among parents,

community liaisons, and educational leaders. While parents shared a slightly lower percentage (46.3%) compared to the previous session, the diverse distribution of speaking time among community liaisons (12.1%), Teacher Beth, and Principal Jon (21%) indicates a collective approach consistent with HCD principles. My increased role, driven by questions about the details of the events and my active participation in answering team questions, aligns with the HCD model's emphasis on facilitators engaging with users and adapting based on their feedback. Additionally, Principal Jon's role in the upcoming event emphasizes the shared nature of the team, where leadership roles are shared based on expertise and context.

Session 9

During the last session, the team further discussed individual responsibilities and tasks assigned to each participant for the upcoming IEP workshop. Decision-making and planning roles were distributed among all participants, with educational leadership taking on a more prominent planning role due to their connections with other educators involved in the workshop. I took the lead in facilitating conversation, stating, "Right, okay, moving forward. Jon is not going to be here. But he sent me an email, which will be very helpful in moving forward." Katie made a joke referencing Principal Jon's monthly video updates to families, saying, "Is it a video?" I respond:

That would be awesome! He said he's been doing his homework as assigned. And he kind of put a schedule out to help guide conversation and if we want to follow that structure, or like brainstorm differently, how that might look, but he said 6:30 to 6:45 have like a meet and greet sign in kind of more casual. Courtney, you said you could bring some refreshments for that. So, then 6:45 to 7:15 ish, so about a

half hour, the school psychologist E.A has agreed to do the presentation, she is fantastic and then she'll leave time in that chunk for questions. And answers if needed. Then 7:15 - 8:00pm have individual breakout so families can get some small group time with specific professionals, which is what we had discussed in last session. He also talked to L.J, who's our speech, and then E.A would-be available just for general questions about IEPs or evaluations or referrals or next steps or things like that, and then working on possibly the OT, so he just hasn't had confirmation on it.

My reply is characterized by a responsive and collaborative approach that seeks to actively involve the team in decisions about structuring the event. The team then collectively decided on the event's duration, despite what Jon's notes outlined, demonstrating shared decision-making power:

Anna (P) 2:40 - *Okay, good question. Yeah. Sorry to like already have a question. I just wanted to check what I had down. **We were gonna do 7:00 - 8:30pm is that wrong?***

Des (P) - ***That's what I have.***

Anna (P) - ***That's what I have. He just did what he wanted to do?***

Tamara 2:57 - *Possible. **But if that time works better for the group and everyone decided it should be 7:00 to 8:30.***

Participants - *Uh huh.*

Tamara - *Okay, so we'll do 7:00 to 830. **Do you think that that is too long? Do you guys feel like that....***

Beau (C.L) 3:15 - *We don't have a date yet. Oh, great. No date.*

Tamara 3:18 - *He did propose a couple of different dates.*

Beau (C.L) 3:21 - *Okay*

Tamara - *So, we can look at our calendar.*

Beau (C.L) - *So, no final date.*

Tamara 3:23 - *No final data. **We can pick the final date right now if we want to.***

Attention is then turned to who will be facilitating the workshop. A brief conversation between Beau and me indicates individual empowerment within the team. Furthermore, Beau's initiative highlights a shared responsibility for extending the HCD team's impact beyond its immediate scope of Hawk Elementary to the school district.

Beau (C.L) 3:28 - *I have also been in talks with C.B (district special education director), who kind of like supervises all all of the people as a potential like q & a or small groups.*

Tamara - *That would be good*

Beau (C.L) - *And hopefully some kind of pamphlets or you know,*

Tamara: *That's good. You've talked to her?*

Beau (C.L) - ***Yeah, she emailed me back. And so, then I'm just waiting for her response, but she seemed really eager because I reached out to S.B. (assistant superintendent) first.***

Tamara - *Okay, good.*

Beau (C.L) - *And then SB, put me in contact with C.B.*

Tamara 4:00 - *Okay, so he's like, "What's that York doing?"*

Participants all laugh

Beau (C.L) 4:04 - *Well, and he, I have to say, like the Assistant Superintendent thought it was wonderful. Yeah. I mean, I know he said this early on. But I do I believe that this is something so much bigger, and that really, and our school district really needs to rebuild relationships with families, our schools need to rebuild relationships with families. So, I mean, you guys have done something super special here.*

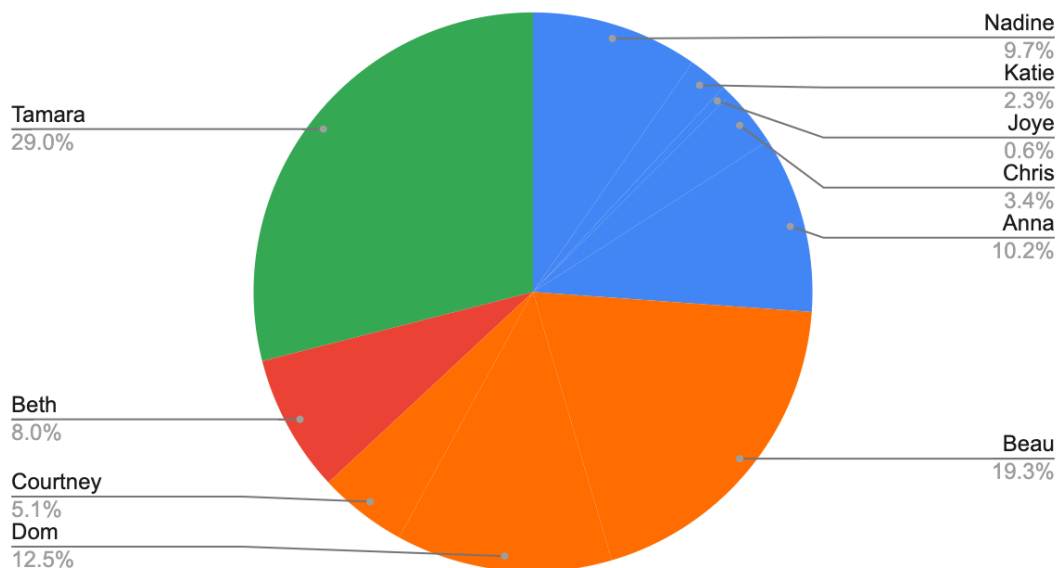
In this brief dialogue, Beau's position and her ability to be a bridge between families and the school district leadership are evident, and more importantly, she has the power to support and implement parent-led initiatives. Beau's acknowledgment of the significance of the HCD team's work in rebuilding relationships between the school district and families emphasizes the broader impact of the team's efforts. Her recognition of the team's achievements to the Superintendent and District Special Education director reflects an understanding of the collective power to influence positive change within the educational community.

The provided pie chart visually represents the percentage of speaking time for each participant during the session:

Figure 4.10

Session 9 – Planning and Reflecting

Session 9: Planning & Reflecting



While parents shared 17.2% of the time, less than in previous sessions, community members took a more active role, speaking 36.9% collectively. As the most outspoken community member, Beau contributed significantly, dedicating 19.3% of the discussion to sharing her vision for expanding the team to other schools and emphasizing the impact of the HCD team on justice and equity for families and students. Teacher Beth shared 8.0% of the time, contributing insights from the educational perspective. My increased sharing (29.0%) was notable in this session due to the need to close remarks, answer questions, and wrap up the research portion. The session highlights a collaborative environment where various stakeholders appropriately contribute based on their expertise, fostering inclusivity and shared ownership within the team, which is in line with the HCD model's principles. Particularly suitable for a reflection meeting, it enables those with institutional knowledge and power to provide valuable feedback to the group.

The HCD team's impact on power shifting and the power-sharing between the leadership and the human design team was a deeper understanding of themselves, parents, leaders, community members, and each other. The team worked in flow with each other, sharing the responsibility of student engagement at Hawk Elementary. The team recognized the collective work throughout the sessions and ultimately created an IEP Workshop event to benefit Hawk Elementary families.

Triangulated Feedback

Three participants volunteered to conduct data analysis. To capture their initial thoughts and reflections, I had them respond to pre-questions before reading the transcript. After reviewing the transcript, they addressed post-questions, mirroring the pre-question set (Appendix F). This approach was implemented to observe if their responses changed after reading and reflecting on the transcripts, enabling a comprehensive analysis of their insights. The following table represents the questions that apply to Q1 and the participants' responses to the pre and post-reading:

Table 4.6

Triangulated Feedback

| Do you think having different people attend impacted conversation? | |
|---|--|
| Pre-Read | |
| Katie (P) | <i>I think it is a necessity to have different people. We need different perspectives</i> |
| Beth (T) | <i>Absolutely!</i> |
| Dom (C.L) | <i>Yes, every person had a different perspective and take on a situation. Different family background.</i> |

The responses to the question "Do you think having different people attend impacted the conversation?" reflect a unanimous agreement among the participants on the importance of diversity in perspectives within the conversation. Each response emphasizes the importance of different perspectives. The participants collectively acknowledge and appreciate the impact of having different people attend, recognizing the inherent value of diverse perspectives in shaping a more inclusive and comprehensive conversation.

Table 4.7

Triangulated Feedback

| What do you think the impact was of having educational leaders, community members and families attend to enhance diverse perspectives to that all voices were respected and valued? | |
|--|---|
| Pre-Read | |
| Katie (P) | <i>Not only a moderator, but as someone to keep on schedule and on topic.</i> |
| Beth (T) | <i>A richer conversation and wider range of ideas/input.</i> |
| Dom (C.L) | <i>Absolutely, we all brought something different to the table and everyone was kind, encouraging and vulnerable.</i> |
| Post-Read | |
| Katie (P) | <i>I think hearing multiple types of people are an asset and needed in this type of setting.</i> |
| Beth (T) | <i>It created a broader base and gave the families a team to help them become involved. We supported them. For example, "I'm worried but don't really know who to contact or how to get help. I don't fully understand how the system works. Is my child getting the help they need?"</i> |

Dom (C.L) *It was humbling. You don't know what you don't know. Everyone had unique perspectives. Questions were shared and answered. Ideas/experiences validated.*

The second question, “What do you think the impact was of having educational leaders, community members, and families attend to enhance diverse perspectives so that all voices were respected and valued?” was asked pre-reading and post-reading. In both the pre- and post-readings, there is a consistent acknowledgment of the positive impact of diverse perspectives. Participants recognize the value of diverse voices, emphasizing the richness and support they bring to the group. Post-read responses provide specific examples of how diverse perspectives address practical concerns and support families. For example, Beth states, “It created a broader base and gave the families a team to help them become involved. We (educational leaders) supported them. For example, “I am worried but do not know who to contact or how to get help. I do not fully understand how the system works. Is my child getting the help they need?” Beth is quoting a comment made by one of the participants during one of the family engagement sessions. Beth's response indicates that the teaming between families and parents supported students in getting the help they needed. The participants acknowledge a deeper understanding of the positive impact of diverse perspectives on the conversation, with post-read responses offering more nuanced insights into the practical benefits for families.

Question #2

How did power-sharing and power-shifting occur between leadership and the human-centered design team?

Throughout the series of family engagement meetings, the group demonstrated a balanced power structure characterized by a sense of relationship building, collective

decision-making, collaboration, inclusivity, and a shared commitment to addressing the needs of parents. To appropriately analyze “how” this occurred, I observed and noted the progression of family-led discussions and the problem-solving during each session, which ultimately led to family participants generating action steps for a school-wide event. Each meeting shed light on “how” power sharing and shifting occurred organically throughout the process.

Sessions 1

As mentioned previously, I facilitated the first meeting because I wanted participants to understand the purpose of the team and the steps of a co-design, explain their role as participants, and give them a chance to share why they were interested in being involved with a family engagement team. Since I did not have consent to video or record, I only took observational notes (Appendix B) throughout the meeting. During the evening, participants shared their hobbies, which helped them connect. Common interests included cooking, gardening, gaming, and parenting. Participants also shared why they were interested in coming.

A parent, Jessica S., shared, “This was a big step attending an in-person group.” Since COVID-19, she has dealt with fatigue from an accident and ongoing health issues. She was interested in joining the group because she felt that, *this would be a good step to take personally and a great way to support her son*. Sam (P) said, “Joining the team was a way to connect with other parents and get involved with the school community.” Beth (T) shared that she joined because “it was a way to hear parent ideas and concerns.” Des’ (P) reason for coming was to, “advocate for her daughter.”

The diverse motivations demonstrate that participants came to the meeting with individual purpose. To further develop connections between participants, I asked them to think about and jot down what they enjoyed about Hawk Elementary on sticky notes. The following comments were written down, shared and then collected at the end of the session:

- “My children and I are most excited about them meeting new people, making friends. Before school, we (the parents) were their best friends. That has changed.”
- “What we have enjoyed is how Hawk Elementary understands and takes the time to help students that are having struggles with academics and social skills.”
- “I am enjoying just being asked to be a part of something like this and to my knowledge others schools have not taken these steps, which I feel is such a positive step in the right direction.”
- “The staff and all-around excitement to be at school!”
- “I love the service aspect and would love to see more families involves with these activities.”
- “I have enjoyed seeing how everyone interact with my son, and knew his name right away. I have also enjoyed seeing my son’s social skills blossom as well as picking up being able to read this year. I love how accommodating the school has been with my son, and I know my son is in good hands.”
- “Hearing students talking about our school’s core values when they think no adults are listening.”

- “I enjoyed how hands on the teachers and the staff are. Also, how teacher/staff interact with my child by helping build confidants.”
- “I have enjoyed my girls making new friends here. I love that the school kinda has an open-door policy for the volunteers to come when they can. My daughter has been super into writing and spelling, and her older sister loves reading and the field trips.”

The positive interactions between staff, teachers, and students are highlighted, contributing to the overall positive experience for parents and students. The emphasis on values, hands-on teaching, and the open-door policy for volunteers further reinforces the idea that the school is creating a welcoming and engaging atmosphere for students and their families.

Next, I asked participants what they were curious about regarding Hawk Elementary. This question was intended to generate ideas and discover whether participants shared similar curiosities. After five minutes, I had them turn and talk in small groups and then share with the group. Some ideas generated in the discussion revolved around individualized education plans (IEPs), service projects, school hours, science projects, and cultural awareness.

At the end of the meeting, I invited parents to post their notes on the whiteboard for me to collect. I also reviewed the consent form and allowed them to read it and decide if they would like to sign it. All of the participants that were present signed the form. Before the end of the session, I facilitated a conversation about what time we would meet, and the participants agreed to meet again in two weeks. While they were offered,

this group did not require transportation or translation devices; however, childcare was needed, so I made sure childcare was set up for the subsequent sessions.

Power sharing and shifting occurred through several critical elements of the facilitation process:

1. I explained the team's purpose and the co-design process and clarified the participants' roles.
2. I empowered participants with information, making them aware of the purpose and process of the family engagement team.
3. All participants, regardless of their roles (parent, community liaison, or teacher), had the opportunity to voice their motivations, fostering equality in expression, and acknowledging the diverse perspectives within the group.
4. Participants were able to establish connections between each other. This shared experience created a more collaborative and friendly atmosphere, breaking down potential barriers.
5. I validated their feelings by encouraging participants to share positive experiences and creating a supportive environment.

Session 2

The second meeting had some added group dynamics, with two new couples and the absence of Courtney, the TOGETHER coordinator, Principal Jon, and Desiree. Once the team assembled, participants introduced themselves, and I explained the team's purpose to them again. To help foster relationship building, I asked, "What was your or your child's school experience like?" The group was broken into two groups: group 1 consisted of a district liaison, a teacher, and parents, while group 2 consisted of parents

and a district liaison. I gave them about five minutes to chat. Some of the participants shared the following remarks:

Group 1

Beau (C.L) shared about her daughter's experience and connected it to her own experience in education, stating, "So I just I have just been like absorbing all and loving it all and watching her and her, you know, *because I volunteer and I also like work in the school district. I facilitate a bipoc group at lunch for, you know, students of color and allies. And then, at one middle school, I do like an LGBTQIA and Ally space for kids at lunch. And so, it has just been really fun to watch how schooling is shifting a little bit and allowing kids to really explore their curiosities, and then having teachers really embrace that and kind of say, Okay, well, let's switch things up a little bit. Let's get creative.*"

Beau's joy in witnessing the evolving educational landscape emphasizes the importance of teachers embracing creativity and allowing students to explore their curiosities.

Parent Sarah explained, "My daughter is a social butterfly, *which is hard for me because I am an introvert.*" Jessica, also a parent, shared that her first grader, who is autistic, loves science and that his social development this year has been incredible, stating, "He's really making friends and like really engaging in normal kids' things actually interacting with other kids, and it is just really neat to see him picking up the reading or writing this year." Robert (P) reflected on his own experience, explaining, "I mean, my experience with school is I had quite a few friends who, like now, looking back on it like, oh, you know, I saw them struggling in school, but they are just labeled as not smart. I worked in a prison for a little bit, and some of them came into the prison. I think, gosh, if someone really just grabbed onto them when they were kids and taught them how

to accommodate, some of them - maybe some of it, could have turned out differently.”

Beth (T) responded to Robert, saying, “That is one reason, as a teacher, I like school because teachers want students to participate. If they are participating, if they are having fun, and they are learning with me, we are not even going to be thinking about the learning; they are just having fun and having fun with their friends!”

These personal reflections laid the groundwork for understanding the importance of accommodating diverse learning styles. The power dynamics were subtle, with each participant contributing a unique perspective. The exchange demonstrated the emergence of a collaborative culture, setting the stage for ongoing dialogue, shared decision-making, and a collective commitment to the Hawk Elementary family engagement initiative.

Group 2

Katie (P) explained to her group, “I went to a private school, and clearly (points to her pride mask), I am a working rainbow, so that was hard.” Sam (P) acknowledged Katie’s (P) response and shared with the group that cultural representation was highlighted in the schools she went to as a child. Dom (C.L) asked her if the school was more diverse than Hawk Elementary, and in turn, Sam (P) said, “Yes!” Moreover, Katie replied, raising her hand, “Private school – we did not have that at all.” As the conversation continued, parents Katie and Nadine made a random connection, discovering they grew up in the same town in CA when discussing certain school activities specific to CA.

Power dynamics and the sharing of experiences are evident, starting with Katie openly sharing her personal experience of attending a private school and her reference to being a *working rainbow* identifying being a part of the LGBTQ+ community. By expressing the challenges she faced in a private school, Katie subtly shifted the power

dynamic, prompting a recognition of different life experiences. In addition to this, Sam's contribution broadened the conversation, emphasizing the significance of diversity and cultural representation in educational settings. The conversations move beyond individual experiences to a collective understanding of diversity and shared connections, fostering a sense of inclusivity within the group.

The second part of the meeting focused on group collaboration and brainstorming. Group 1 had a far more structured conversation centered around IEPs and science fair ideas. Group 2's conversation identified cultural needs in an elementary school. The following dialogue captures group 2's experiences and feelings toward cultural awareness in schools:

Sam (P) - *When I first got to this school, I stuck out like a sore thumb (referring to being black). I mean you know? I guess it would be good to, like, you know, meet other parents and talk about cultural things and history.*

Dom (C.L) - *Kind of like country reports, like walk-throughs. I think we could do a country report.*

Joye (P) - *Honestly, elementary school should do that. They want to include everything, and it is easiest (idea) to be the most inclusive.*

Sam (P) - *Yeah, in Tacoma, it was easier to talk about those things and dive into cultures.*

Joye (P) - *People each have their differences.*

Dom (C.L) - *Encouraging people to understand others' cultures and not stereotyping.*

Sam (P) - *I get what you are saying.*

Dom (C.L) - *I guess that is my struggle. You need to talk about all these things.*

Nadine (P) - *It can be offensive and wrong.*

Katie (P) - *It can be very uncomfortable.*

Dom (C.L) - *These things have to be learned.*

Katie (P) - *My kids had some friends, and I was not sure about their cultural heritage, so I asked their parents what culture they were from, and then I got library books based on what they said, and then I could talk to my kids about it. Yeah, and I like to ask questions.*

Dom (C.L) - *Yeah*

Katie (P) - *Right, and then you are going straight to the source.*

Dom (C.L) - *Yeah, I like that my culture is different than yours, which is okay.*

Katie (P) - *I was raised white and Christian, which was way different than some of my friends. Like a vegetarian. Different for different groups. It is just different even within religions.*

Sam (P) - *My upbringing was different than my husband's upbringing. My version vs. their version (in reference to the husband's family).*

This short dialogue between participants is an example of the discussions that highlighted personal histories and connections between each other. There was a sense of understanding and belonging between the participants as they each identified within unique minority aspects of their cultural identity: Sam's identity within her black heritage, Nadine's Latino background, Dom's identifying with her black heritage, while married to a white male and having bi-racial children, and Katie's support and identity within the LGBTQ+ community. These open conversations and acceptance of each other's

backgrounds paved the way for trust and collaboration, setting the foundation for envisioning collective ideas for students and families.

The group's power-sharing dynamics were notably collective, with participants actively engaged in discussions while facilitators such as Beau and Dom adeptly guided the conversations. Beth's dual role as a teacher and a parent brought a distinctive perspective to the dialogues, further enriching the exchange of ideas. For example, when the participants in her groups were discussing IEPs and 504, she talked about how she used them in a classroom and her son being on an IEP when going through school. Additionally, the absence of Principal Jon eliminated any potential power structures typically associated with a school principal.

The second meeting was a significant step towards developing a more robust and inclusive educational community, marked by the participants' commitment to addressing pressing issues and fostering a diverse, supportive environment for students and their families. The session provided educational leaders with new learning about the impactful role of visual cultural identity in a school community. This insight highlighted the importance of recognizing and embracing diverse cultural representations in education. Additionally, the involvement of community liaisons added a broader perspective, enriching the conversation with a larger scope of resources. This collective learning experience emphasized the collaborative ethos of the HCD team, stressing the significance of diverse viewpoints and cultural awareness in advancing the team's mission of inclusivity and comprehensive educational support.

Session 3

During the third meeting, participants brainstormed the big ideas from the previous sessions into a list of potential projects to implement in the school. To help generate thinking, I wrote up the previous ideas on the whiteboard, which included the following:

- Family Cultural Project
- Science (family) Project
- Skills Day
- Pumpkin patches/Hay Maze
- Drama Club
- Choir
- Country Project/Passport
- Flag Project
- Buddy System
- Garden Club Project

Since there were a couple of new participants, parent Desiree's husband, Chris, Jen, a para-educator, and Heather, a music teacher, the team decided to reintroduce themselves and then lead into the discussion. The team's decision to introduce themselves indicated a desire to allow participants to share updates, experiences, or any relevant changes since the last meeting, contributing to a deeper understanding of each other. Additionally, it created space for new members to feel comfortable expressing their thoughts, concerns, or contributions during the session.

The first big idea that the team brought up was a concept called "skills day," a term not entirely clear to some of the participants but then clarified by Sam, Nadine, and

Beth as an event similar to a field day or career day where community members, including parents and local businesses, could share their expertise and hobbies with students, providing a hands-on learning experience. The group discussed the potential educational value of such an event, suggesting it could be an opportunity for community collaboration to celebrate different cultures and showcase individual skills. This idea led to a second big idea, “the flag project,” encompassing a family cultural project and a country project. The conversation around these ideas is further developed and captured later in the chapter in response to question #4.

The group also discussed the idea of a drama club and a choir, revealing an interest in extracurricular activities promoting creativity and self-expression. An idea that captured much of the participants’ interest was implementing a tech club or a robotics program. The idea gained momentum as participants agreed that it had the potential to engage younger students and provide them with foundational skills in coding and computer science. Heather, the music teacher, shared with the group, “When we had technology with Mr. C, he did code stuff with the kids. But it made me think when you said computers like we haven't had anyone to continue the robotics club. Yeah, and that has been missed. Not saying you should (referring to Chris with a tech background), but I mean, there might be chocolate involved.” Joye (P) agreed, stating, “that was a skill that was so wonderful.” Jen (P.P) reflected on the computer science idea and shared with the group, “I think that would be awesome to do in elementary because when they get to middle school, they do have a robotics class. Computer science class. Yeah. And we all know that the kids are learning earlier and earlier about electronics. Yeah, to have some of that and elementary. I think maybe set up to be very successful, I think.” Nadine (P)

supported her comment by replying, “Yeah, just even getting their (the students) feet wet.” Jen (P.P) suggested funding, stating, “You know, we look for some grant money, some kind of funding to start that club.” But Heather (T) quickly pointed out to the team that, “We (Hawk Elementary) have that for robotics. We have the kits already. There needs to be someone to teach it.” At this point, Jen (P.P) sighed and responded, “Yeah, it was because we needed the funding.”

While the dialogue primarily reflects a positive and collaborative atmosphere, a few aspects could be seen as barriers or challenges. The mention of limited resources and scheduling constraints reminded participants that these barriers could hinder the implementation of specific programs, highlighting a practical challenge educators face. In addition, financial concerns indicate potential challenges in securing the necessary support for specific initiatives. Organizing events that align with the schedules of both volunteers and students also could be a problem.

Despite these challenges, the team explored creative solutions and brainstormed additional support, such as grants or community involvement. The team eventually came back to the idea of career day and addressed how to enlist extracurricular activities for students. Katie (P) explained, “That'd be so cool. Like, have everyone write down (what they are skilled in) and then find parents and community members to match the kids with adults and then like, go out and everything with the opposite backgrounds.” Sam (P) piggybacked off the comment, suggesting, “Oh, for family members or whatever, are more like, like flyers. I mean, it's gonna require school print and paper but a flyer and kids can like take it home and show it to the parents and then that's what connections are like.” Heather, the music teacher, built off the idea, stating, “Yeah, the only benefit I

think to having that, like on a weekend, would be maybe more availability with those volunteers. Yeah. I think during the weekday like I think that's why they struggle to get the career day people is it's during a school day. Like I was just thinking, oh, maybe my son could like to do some like Scratch programming or something. If it were on a Saturday like he could be there helping the kids, and like a high school student, you know, they would love to help.” At this point in the discussion, all the participants nodded in agreement.

Power shifting is evident through collaborative problem-solving, shared input, and collective effort to explore and expand on ideas related to introducing extracurricular activities. Participants actively contribute to the conversation, and their collaborative dynamics indicate a shared responsibility for the success of these initiatives. However, with the information provided by Heather and the natural facilitation skills of Sam (P), who frequently connected ideas to personal experiences and expressed hopes for school activities, the team successfully progressed, narrowing down ideas to include skills day, a cultural project like a flag initiative, and a garden project.

A mutual and open approach to idea generation for school projects marked the overall power-sharing dynamics in this session. Teacher Heather was a primary speaker and focal point throughout each topic. Not only did she speak about her own experience, but she also spoke about the history of programs at the school. Furthermore, Heather gave honest feedback about the feasibility of projects, time commitment, funding, and implementation. With the information she provided, the team could move forward with ideas, narrowing ideas down to skills day, a cultural project like a flag project, and a garden project. Sam (P) also emerged as a natural facilitator throughout the meeting. She

often interjected during conversations, connecting ideas to personal experiences and hopes for activities within the school. The absence of community liaisons could potentially have impacted the breadth of perspectives, resources, and cultural insights available for consideration during the meeting; despite this, the team still generated ideas and collectively continued to move forward.

These early interactions led to the discovery of common hobbies and personal experiences among participants, fostering connections. The discussions throughout each meeting encouraged participants to reflect on their experiences with Hawk Elementary. They prompted discussion on brainstorming ideas to support student learning and family engagement, resulting in proposals like “skills day,” a “flag project” celebrating cultural diversity, and a garden project. An idea that many of the participants continued coming back to in each meeting was individualized education plans (IEPs) and advocacy for students with a disability.

Session 4

The conversation in the fourth meeting felt far more casual than in previous meetings. What led to this observation was the casual conversation before the meeting, personal inquiry into how individuals were doing, and an openness to generate ideas. Additionally, it was the fourth meeting that all participants had been together and the first meeting; the participants remained the same throughout the next five meetings. The participants spent the first 16 minutes of the meeting chatting about random topics and things about their kid's hobbies. It was not until Sam (P) took the lead and said, “But onto the school discussion!” that they began to discuss ideas. This session was the first time a parent took the initiative to get the meeting going. Jessica(P) tagged on to Sam's

comment by offering, "Well, the more opportunities that they (students) have, the more they can figure out what they like and what they can excel at or do later on." Over the next hour, topics ranged from the significance of cultural immersion, extracurricular activities, such as robotics clubs, and mentorship programs involving older high school students to mentor younger students in different areas of interest, to educational reform.

The conversation reflected a desire to provide students with more practical and interactive learning experiences. Ideas began to narrow down to a career/skills day, a robotics club, or a cultural activity. The group started to think beyond an idea and expanded on who might be involved in the planning, the teacher's role, and community involvement. At one point, Beau (C.L) even proposed making the decided event cross-grade level K-12th grade. While this idea was exciting, the team agreed it would take more planning and that the event should be offered only to Hawk Elementary families.

The team's power structure dynamic was different from previous meetings. Parents like Sam and Jessica were more outspoken about ideas, and Beau (C.L) brought in the community engagement perspective.

Before the fifth meeting, I had a chance to meet with Jon and discuss his involvement with the team. Since he had not attended the previous three sessions, I was curious about his interest in the research project and wondered about the role he saw himself having within the group. Throughout the conversation, it became apparent that he was nervous about the group's longevity and wondered about merging the PTA and the family engagement team. His reasons for a potential merge were three-fold:

1. He wanted to focus his attention on the school's equity team. A team he had started a year before that consisted of a small team of parents. His concern

was that he may need help to support the needs of both teams equitably, giving them the attention required.

2. He wanted the family engagement team to merge with the PTA because he felt like the president of the PTA supported parent-led groups' initiatives and was looking to create a more inclusive PTA.
3. Jon felt that the PTA could implement the HCD team's ideas.

I challenged him on these points and asked him to consider merging the engagement and equity teams as they both embodied similar values: inclusion and cultural diversity. In addition to this, the team had already expressed reservations about coming to events at the school. My hesitation in merging the HCD team with the PTA stemmed from my own experiences as well as the research that indicates there is a power imbalance and barriers that hinder the relationship and connection between marginalized communities and the PTA (Bourdieu, 2011; Henderson & Mapp, 2002; Lee & Bowen, 2006; Smith, 2004).

I was cautious about merging the group with the PTA and wondered what the power dynamics would be within the group; however, knowing that I would not be working at Hawk Elementary the following year, I felt Jon could take the lead. His final decision was to invite the PTA president and secretary to the next meeting and let the family engagement team decide whether they would welcome the merger. This pivotal moment marked a possible shift for the HCD, one that considered individual interests and the future continuity of the project.

Session 5

During the fifth meeting, the whole team was present, with the addition of Anna, the PTA president, and Christine, the PTA secretary.

Since there were new members, the group shared a bit about who they were.

When it came time for Sam (P) to share, she shared that her family would be moving at the end of July. Then, she shared something very profound. She said, "I have faith in this (the group)! It is like a good stepping stone for something that will be good for our kids. I feel like from when we all talked about all our ideas, now everything is coming into play. I feel like it (the event) will really really work. And I don't know; it'll be like a new era for many things coming in for new kids. So, I have, like, strong faith, and I will keep track on the page or the school website page and bring this to (my son's) new school."

Sam's use of the phrase "I have faith in this (the group)!" indicates a belief in the collective efforts and initiatives of the human-centered design team. This sentiment reflected shared ownership of the group's activities and suggested that decision-making and actions are not solely driven by educational leadership but involve active participation and support from the broader community. Additionally, the mention of "when we all talked about all **our** ideas" reinforces the idea that multiple voices, including those of the participants, contribute to the group's discussions and planning. This collaborative decision-making process signifies a shift from a traditional top-down leadership model.

The conversation also revealed assumptions that parents had about PTA. Dom (C.L) admitted, "I was always so scared to come to it (PTA) because I am like, is it like a form of a clique and then look at me, like, no. Beau (C.L) promptly replied, "It's okay. I'm gonna be really honest. I just dropped them really quick. I've had nothing but really

terrible experiences trying to get involved in PTA. Yeah, I mean, it was pretty terrible to the point where, like, I was like, okay, you know, I tried it at two separate elementary schools. I tried into middle school; I will never do it again. And now I do why No, which I mean, you both are. You both have been lovely, but I've never it was never like this for me.” Anna graciously responded to both comments, “We're in the process of planning our entire next year. **And something that's really important to us is inclusivity.** And so, our little hashtag whenever we share things on socials is ‘you can sit with us.’”

Anna shared more about why she took on the position and what the group does, and after hearing this, Sam (C.L) responded, “I like that. You know, because I always like said the stigma was like mean girls, like, the PTA does certain things. **So, it's good to hear from, like, president's mouth that no, like, you know, we can implement that stuff and make everybody feel like included, and I'm open to ideas. That's a good thing.**” Anna replied, “Yeah, very much. So yeah, **whatever you guys are passionate about and people are excited about, let's do it!**” Over the next 30 minutes of the meeting, Anna answered questions about PTA and what involvement looked like and shared her vision for creating a more inclusive group.

After listening to Anna share, Jon chimed in, stating:

I want to give an observation about our PTA this is the way I've looked at them this year with their new group is that they don't equate PTA with volunteering. I think they equate PTA with the connection. And I think that's why it's this group double down The PTA makes so much sense. And I think that's one of the things that has put off some people in school because, like, well, I don't know if I can volunteer, and then that's the stopping point. PTA is about being connected and

just hearing, listening, and serving. And I've seen your group really do that really well. And so, I want to make sure that that's mentioned because, yes, our school operates on volunteers, and we're building our system, and it is really important to us and our staff members. And PTA has been super great about supporting that and getting right behind that and I'm hoping that will continue. And PTA is also just about listening and connection. And so it's it's really neat. It's it feels unique to me and special. And I'm I'm excited to see it grow.

Beau (C.L.) exclaimed, "And I just want to commend you guys because you instantly said it **inclusive**, and I mean, when I think PTA, I don't think equitable. I don't think inclusive, so I love that you lead with that. And even the approach that you're talking about, that is a wonderful way to get families involved. And it's really, I mean, it's so far gone. And you know, media and personal experiences with PTA. You're right. There is kind of, I mean, like mostly in our country, there is a power dynamic that people, you know, really get hopped up on, and **so I love that you said inclusion because that's exactly what schools need**. And, especially after COVID, that is the approach you have to take to bring people back in. And I love the fact that your kind of just redefining what the PTO is. That's what it feels like to me."

The dialogue illustrates power-sharing dynamics by showcasing a collective effort to redefine the PTA's role, moving beyond traditional volunteerism to prioritize connection, inclusivity, and a fresh perspective that aligns with the changing dynamics of the school community.

Principal Jon's comment has both positive and potential negative impacts. On the positive side, it validates the team's focus on connection, aligning with the school

leadership's vision. However, there is a risk of a negative power imbalance due to Jon's elevated position, potentially limiting diverse viewpoints. The absence of Jon in previous meetings provided the team with an opportunity for collaborative decision-making, actively seeking diverse perspectives, and maintaining an environment where all voices are valued. I was interested in how the team would move forward without compromising its commitment to inclusivity and collaboration.

Towards the end of the meeting, there has been a notable shift in feelings toward the PTA. Beau (C.L) has completely changed her perspective on PTA by stating, "I like everything you're saying. So, including that on there (social media outlets) and let them know like it's not your traditional PTA. We want you to show up when you want. We are the cool PTA, not like other PTA's." Sam (P) chimed in, "Hash tag on there too!" At this point Dom (C.L) proposed, "What if we like merged them?" and Des (P) agreed, "Ya, like a full merge? I guess it makes sense that you're on PTA." Anna responded to this new idea, "I just didn't think about." The idea slowly evolved with Beau asking a clarifying question to the group, "No, but what we're saying like the PTA would like host family engagement team? It would kind of be similar to this like, like Mrs. York has." Dom (C.L) commented, "Family engagement night" and Beth (T) answered, "A chance to get together. Yeah, find out but not feel like they're committing right. Yeah. Be really nice."

In this session, I observed distinct power dynamics with specific members. For example, Anna and Jon took on more dominant and facilitative roles in the conversation, mainly because the group was interested in understanding Anna's role and reason for being the president of the PTA. Additionally, Jon was the one suggesting a merge of the

two groups. In contrast, some participants, such as Sam (P) and Beau (C.L), initially displayed more reserved participation. However, as they became more comfortable with the conversation, they began actively contributing their thoughts and ideas. These varying dynamics illustrate how the group's structure allowed for different degrees of assertiveness among its members, fostering a balanced and inclusive atmosphere.

Session 6

Session 6 held space for continued relationship building and explored ideas of change.

While most of the conversation focused on summer activities, the team eventually discussed ideas for an event in the fall. Teacher Beth emphasized the collaborative potential between the school leadership and parents, stating, “We can do so much more with the kids. When working with you guys (referring to the parents).” Sam (P) acknowledged this perspective and expressed to the group, “Like I always tell the teacher like I feel like it's like a team effort. Oh my gosh, that makes sense. I feel like sometimes it does take a village to like, really. Sometimes, like time, and I feel like they succeed better when they have that support system and that group.” Beth (T) then followed up saying, “They feel, I think, a lot of times kids feel more secure to because it's their schooling, at school at when they're at school and when they're at home. Those two groups are on the same page. So yeah, I think they seem like they feel more secure. And too sometimes, like after I've talked to parents and stuff, I will be like, oh, I know. Okay, now I know your dad said that he was willing to help you with this.”

The dialogue reflects a shared understanding that a collaborative approach involving parents and educators creates a more secure and supportive environment for

children. Beth further illustrates this point by suggesting that children feel more secure when both the school and parents are on the same page. She stated, "... And I mean like all of you are like, my heroes. You really are trying to get the most out of their school experience and have them be happy children and not be you know, put into a box okay, you have this and this because none of us want that for the kids. But it's that's probably the main reason I like to come here is because I love to have a hearing all these parents are trying to do the best for their kids and listening to their kids. It's wonderful. Just put you guys in the copy machine and make more of you!"

Session 7

Session 7 was an unexpected, more intimate meeting involving Hawk Elementary parents Sam, Nadine, Katie, Jessica, Principal Jon, teacher Beth, and myself. All three community liaisons and the PTA president had prior commitments. It was also Sam's last meeting before moving to South Carolina. In this conversation, participants reflected on their involvement in the parent engagement group, shared their thoughts on rebranding and expanding the group's activities, and, most importantly, agreed to move forward on an event to host in the fall, the IEP Workshop.

The meeting started with a discussion of the PTA and family engagement merger. The team spoke openly about their pre-conceived ideas and experience with the PTA and their initial hesitation in joining the PTA:

Sam (P) 10:41 - For me speaking personally, is that I have an image of like, maybe if they're just not huddled only talking to each other. More of like that preppy-like attitude so my welcome. Hey, like, you know, in maybe like that building that connection of getting to know somebody while you're talking.

Because when you're like huddled up in the corner with your friends and talking, you're less likely to walk up to one than like engage because like they already get the little click going on.

Katie (P) 11:08 - *Yeah, like when you're trying to, like could be a new person, just walking in feels disconnected. Yeah, that's how I feel like sometimes to just like, oh, they've been here for like two years trying to do this and training treating you just like, oh, you're just gonna walkthrough*

Sam (P) 11:29 - *It feels like the mean girls like clique like it's like, okay, I'm the new mom and you know, they just have like- PTA just has this stigma, but she (Anna) kind of like, pushed that stigma away from me then I'm like, Okay, I'd probably be like, Okay, I want to be a part of the PTA **but before I was like, like, it just seemed like to just clicky and you have to have a certain like, I always thought you had to have like a certain like standard to be a part of the PTA like make a certain amount of money or like preppy Moms.***

Jessica (P) 12:04 - *It's not gonna be welcoming*

Sam (P) 12:09 - *(You have to be like) my husband's by like the chief of police, you know, type of thing.*

Jessica's comment, "It's not gonna be welcoming," indicates a preconceived notion or concern about the PTA's current atmosphere, suggesting that she perceives existing barriers or challenges that make the PTA seem unwelcoming. Sam's response, "You have to be like my husband's by like the chief of police, you know, type of thing," adds to this perspective, implying a perception of an exclusive or hierarchical nature within the PTA.

The dialogue reflects a call for a power shift in the PTA's social dynamics. The team members acknowledge that the current state may not be as welcoming as desired and share the sentiment that change is needed. The team recognizes the importance of creating a more open and inclusive environment within the PTA, challenging stereotypes, and fostering a sense of belonging for all members.

The team's subsequent discussion on making the PTA more inclusive and appealing to parents suggests a proactive approach to address Jessica's initial concern. It demonstrates an understanding that fostering a welcoming environment requires intentional efforts to challenge preconceived notions and create a space where everyone feels valued and included.

This dialogue reflects a call for a power shift in the PTA's social dynamics, suggesting a need for a more open and inclusive approach that challenges stereotypes and fosters a sense of belonging for all members, irrespective of their backgrounds or perceived social standing. The team goes on to suggest ways to make the PTA more inclusive and appealing to parents.

Sam (P) 13:24 - *I think that she would be like a really good fit to really stop that stigma factor into bringing people in and just think if they do have something set up, it's more of like, okay, we're talking to each other in the corner.*

Nadine (P) 13:43 - *Now that I know her you know, I feel comfortable like I'd be comfortable like walking up to their little table.*

Sam (P) 13:48 - *Yeah, you know it was like the last day of school, and they were like, over there chit chat and I would have never done it before, and I walked up and said, hey! She's, like, really good.*

Nadine (P) 13:59 - *I did not know that she was like the head of the PTA like I see her all the time.*

The team continued to discuss the importance of creating an accessible and diverse range of volunteer opportunities, breaking away from the notion that the PTA primarily involves tasks like baking cupcakes or setting up tents. Sam (P) offered her thoughts on the current PTA, which showed how her perspective had changed over the past few sessions, “Because this is a really good community, like one of the best communities I've lived in. So, I'm pretty sure if everybody just had that open-minded idea of what it's really like, then they'll be more, you know, not opposed to PTA.”

This section reveals a candid and transformative dialogue within the team regarding their perspectives on the Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) and the implications of its absence in the discussion. The absence of the PTA members during session 7 highlights the team's autonomy in reflecting on their involvement in the parent engagement group. This intimate setting allowed for a more open and honest conversation between Hawk Elementary parents and school leaders.

The dialogue highlights the transformative process within the team as they openly address their initial reservations about the Parent-Teacher Association (PTA). The candid expressions from parents Sam, Katie, and Jessica shed light on the perceived exclusivity and stereotypes associated with the PTA, emphasizing the need for a shift in its image. Notably, the parents felt safe to speak transparently about their thoughts on the PTA in front of Principal Jon, emphasizing an atmosphere of openness and empowerment, one in which they knew they would be heard.

The discussions point toward a collective desire for inclusivity, challenging traditional cliques and fostering a more welcoming atmosphere. Anna's role in dispelling the stigma and making the PTA approachable emerged as a pivotal factor, signaling a power shift in shaping the team's perception. The evolving dialogue highlights the team's commitment to redefining the PTA, making it more accessible, diverse, and reflective of the broader community.

Session 8

During session 8, the team outlined action steps for planning an IEP workshop, emphasizing the importance of accessibility and inclusivity, particularly for parents of students with IEPs. This approach reflected a commitment to evolving and adapting to meet the needs of a diverse parent community.

Session 8 occurred right before school started. The team discussed preparations for the IEP workshop, establishing a clear timeline, identifying the target audience, and planning for advertising and accessibility (See Appendix G Meeting Notes).

The sense of camaraderie and shared purpose among the team members was evident as they recalled the initial discussions about the IEP workshop and its continued importance:

Beth (T) - Don't you just keep thinking about how we started talking about this that (first) night? We talked about it the whole night (the group agreed with encouraging yeses). And then, you know, we have talked about it almost every time. So it is, I mean, it seems like it's in high demand a little bit.

Katie (P) - So many people feel like it is only their kid who has an IEP and so, like this group, we found out several of us, you know, have children on an IEP (Group

agrees – yeah). Thus, I think that would appeal to, you know, the whole school, you know.

Desiree (P) - I think it is worth having a workshop alone. Seeing parents say, “Hey, our kids are in the same boat.” You know, you can connect with a parent on that level, whereas a kid who may not struggle or, you know, the parent cannot connect with you the same way. They don't have the same struggles. They are different struggles, but it's not the same. So, I think I'm gonna workshop and see parents get together learning by IEP, and yeah, it changes many people's perspective.”

Overall, this session exemplified the team's dedication to addressing the needs of parents with students on IEPs, their collaborative spirit, and their enthusiasm for making a meaningful impact on the school community. Their continued efforts reflect a shared commitment to creating a more inclusive and supportive educational environment.

Session 9

Session 9 took place a week and a half into the school year. Each participant was eager to take on a role in making sure the IEP workshop was a success. The members acknowledged that the idea for the IEP workshop had persisted and grown in importance. It was evident that they had evolved from their first meeting. This reflection highlighted their learning process, emphasizing their increased awareness of the demand for such a workshop and its potential to connect and support parents. At one point, when discussing how information about the IEP workshop should be sent out, Anna (P) said, “or even people who don't have current IEP's? Because I don't have - my little guy doesn't have an IEP yet, but I still want to know about it. And I know some of my friends are in similar

situations. So, I think if everyone gets it, that's going to be helpful.” Beth also agreed stating, “I do like the idea of sending inviting everybody. Yeah, so that there's not somebody that's like, well, I would have gone to that. So, I do think it's a bad idea. Originally, I was really thinking that we were just gonna invite the ones that (we thought needed it), but I think that's the right good decision to invite.” Their recognition of the varied struggles among parents and their appreciation for the power of collaboration showcased their ability to learn and adapt.

The session ended with Anna's invitation to the next PTA meeting, stating, “We would love to have you guys at our PTA meeting tomorrow night. Everyone is invited. No pressure. We won't put you to work or anything. Just if you would like to come.” Katie then asked, “Can we bring our kids?” to which Anna replied, “Yes! It'll be right here. The Librarian will have the kids over there, and we've got snacks to go!” At this point, Chris and Des were active participants in PTA, and Katie and Jessica had volunteered for one of the events hosted by PTA in the spring.

The assurance that there will be a designated space for the kids with snacks demonstrates thoughtful consideration of participants' potential, barriers, concerns or logistical challenges, making the event more accessible to parents with children. The fact that Chris and Des were already active participants in the PTA, and Katie and Jessica had volunteered for a PTA-hosted event in the spring indicates a positive transition from initial reservations to active involvement within the PTA. This participation hints at an integration of the team into the PTA community, demonstrating the impact of the co-design process in fostering engagement and breaking down perceived barriers.

In summary, within the framework of the solidarity-driven co-design process, the team's strong sense of collaboration and shared purpose emphasized their commitment to creating a more inclusive and supportive educational environment.

Triangulated Feedback

The following table represents the questions that apply to Q2 and participants' answers pre- and post the reading:

Table 4.8

Triangulated Feedback

| Were there any conflicts that arose due to power differentials and how were they resolved? | |
|---|---|
| Pre-Read | |
| Katie (P) | <i>To me, it did not seem that way. I felt like we all kind of understood what was happening, and “there were no stupid questions or topics.</i> |
| Beth (T) | <i>I don't remember any. It was a very positive environment among participants.</i> |
| Dom (C.L) | <i>Not at all. Everyone was so kind and respectful.</i> |
| Post- Read | |
| Katie (P) | <i>I did not see any. We were very open to each other and the process.</i> |
| Beth (T) | <i>I don't know of any.</i> |
| Dom (C.L) | <i>I really don't think so. At least conflict wise. I do feel like when Jon was there it did change the dynamic. People liked to him for answers.</i> |

The reflections from Katie, Beth, and Dom provide insights into power sharing and shifting dynamics within the HCD team. The initial statements suggest a collective and inclusive environment where participants feel empowered and respected. Katie's

comment *that everyone understood what was happening* and emphasized the absence of "stupid questions or topics" indicates a shared sense of equality and openness within the group. Beth's remark about *a very positive environment among participants* aligns with the idea that power is distributed more evenly, fostering a culture of collaboration and shared decision-making.

In the post-read, Katie's continued emphasis on not seeing any power-related issues and being open to each other and the process suggests that power-sharing remained consistent throughout. Beth's post-read statement, "I don't know of any," might indicate that she perceives power dynamics as relatively neutral or balanced.

Dom's reflection introduced an important observation about a potential change in dynamic when Principal Jon was present. The statement that people tended to look to Jon for answers suggests a shift in power dynamics with a centralizing influence, highlighting the sensitivity of power dynamics to external factors and the potential impact of leadership figures on the collaborative process.

While the reflections are a positive picture of a collaborative and respectful environment, the post-read hints at the possible influence of external factors, such as the presence of a leader, on the dynamics and power-sharing within the team.

Table 4.9*Triangulated Feedback*

| Do you think there were shared power structures within the group? | |
|--|--|
| Pre-Read | |
| Katie (P) | <p><i>Yes, like for me there were 3:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The school (principal and vice principal)</i> • <i>Parents</i> • <i>Outside (liaisons) help</i> <p><i>But I never felt like these groups had a power struggle.</i></p> |
| Beth (T) | <i>I believe the families started out skeptical but became empowered and gained strength as a team. Everyone is interested in students/learning but with a slightly different lens.</i> |
| Dom (C.L) | <i>I do. I feel the parents may have felt “inferior” to teacher or admin. but it was a shared space where after time no one felt or showed signs of inferiority or superiority.</i> |
| Post-Read | |
| Katie (P) | <i>I think I was right with my previous answer (pre read).</i> |
| Beth (T) | <i>The parents/families were volunteering to help where they could and all were working as a team.</i> |
| Dom (C.L) | <i>Again, I think Jon added a power dynamic unintentionally but it did alter things. There was less free thinking/brainstorming.</i> |

The district community liaison might express concerns about the unintentional power dynamic introduced by Principal Jon, as her role often involves maintaining a balance between families and school leadership. Her unique position as a liaison between

the district, schools, and families may make her more attuned to the potential impacts of authority figures on collaborative processes.

While teachers and parents may have their perspectives, the district community liaison could be particularly sensitive to power dynamics and their potential effects on the collaborative and inclusive nature of the discussions. This heightened awareness may stem from her role in bridging the gap between different stakeholders, advocating for equal participation, and ensuring that the collaborative process aligns with the principles of the Human-Centered Design (HCD) model.

Teachers and parents may not have explicitly mentioned this concern because their roles and perspectives might focus more on immediate educational and family-related aspects. At the same time, the district community liaison takes a broader view that encompasses the overall collaborative dynamics.

In summary, the district community liaison's comment might reflect her unique position, emphasizing the importance of maintaining an inclusive and collaborative environment in connecting families and school leaders.

Table 4.10*Triangulated Feedback*

| What do you notice when the PTA president and secretary sat in? Did anything shift? | |
|--|---|
| Post-Read | |
| Katie (P) | <i>I liked that it felt like the think tank was getting together with PTA which the muscle or “doer” side of this.</i> |
| Beth (T) | <i>There seemed to be many perceived ideas regarding PTA</i> |
| Dom (C.L) | <i>Yes! Anna shifted all our minds and hearts. It felt motivating and exciting for families to engage and have a say in what they loved about PTA events as well as ideas about new ones.</i> |

The decision to ask this question in a post-read interview rather than a pre-read interview stemmed from the fact that the transcripts were given while research was still being conducted. During the sessions, the team may have yet to develop their opinion or be aware of the potential impact of the PTA president and secretary's presence. It may become more apparent upon reflection or analysis after the sessions concluded. Asking the question post-read allowed participants to gather retrospective insights and share their observations and perceptions with the benefit of hindsight.

Katie's comment about the think tank merging with the PTA, describing it as the “muscle” or “doer” side, implies a sense of teamwork and synergy between the HCD team's strategic thinking and the PTA's action-oriented approach. This integration of perspectives could enhance the team's ability to turn ideas into actionable plans, suggesting a power shift toward a more action-oriented and practical implementation phase. Beth's mention of perceived ideas regarding the PTA indicates that there might

have been preconceived views or assumptions about the PTA's role or impact. The introduction of the PTA president and secretary could have shifted these perceptions, brought a better understanding of the PTA's potential contributions, and fostered collaboration between the two groups. Dom's reflections significantly impact the team's mindset and motivation. The statement that Anna (PTA president) "shifted all our minds and hearts" suggests a transformative influence on the team's collective thinking and emotional engagement.

Question #3

In what ways did the human-centered design team work toward reducing the opportunity gap among marginalized students?

The team worked to assess what needed to be added for their students to engage with and participate in at school. Brainstorming ideas was a central topic of conversation from the first meeting to the main event. All participants suggested ways to provide students with meaningful school opportunities. Three indicators I was looking for to help me answer the question were:

- Solution-based action steps led by participants at each meeting.
- Student-focused conversation
- Participants identifying barriers toward student achievement.

As mentioned in the response to question #2, the focal point of discussion throughout each meeting centered on ways to support students and families at Hawk Elementary (Appendix C). Throughout the brainstorming sessions, ideas were narrowed down from a list of ideas to three main ideas and then one idea. The following figure is a visual presentation of ideas:

Figure 4.11*HCD Team Ideas*

The idea behind the IEP workshop came from the recurring discussion about students on IEPs, participants' kids who had IEPs, and the need for more parental understanding regarding IEPs. The idea was birthed in session 1 out of a collective hope that the workshop would provide a pathway for parents to understand and better advocate for students being served with an IEP. Additionally, parents who attended the meeting would feel more equipped to support their child's social, emotional, and learning needs. The workshop would provide a way for Hawk Elementary school leaders and families to work together to help children on IEPs.

While these sentiments were woven through each meeting, IEP was also one of the most frequently used words identified by Otter in sessions 2,6,7,8, and 9. In addition, Otter also identified IEPs as a “summary of topics” in sessions 2,6,7, 8, and 9:

Table 4.11*Summary of Topics*

| | |
|-----------|--|
| Session 2 | IEP event for families |
| Session 6 | Normalizing IEPs in school |
| Session 7 | Importance of knowing about information on an IEP |
| Session 8 | Building a sense of community for families with students on an IEP |
| Session 9 | Logistics of the IEP workshop |

The following sections specifically examines the brainstorming, discussion, and planning that occurred in session 2, 6, 7 and 8 and how the HCD team worked toward reducing the opportunity gap among marginalized students through an IEP workshop.

Session 2

During the second session, Beth (T), Jessica (P), and Beau (C.L) had a discussion around the needs for students on IEP's:

*Beth (T) 20:17 - Well, I feel like it's a big switch when he (her son) went to junior high, you know because he went from elementary to all these teachers supporting him. So, it was just overwhelming for him in middle school. So, he had an IEP, and I thought it meant that he would not be able to do as well. I wasn't interested in software, and I didn't know anything about it. I, you know, my son just needed some extra help, but sometimes in school, when he didn't get it what he just needed was a little extra time. I mean, you know he grew up - **but it's like an IEP is to help kids.***

Jessica (P) 21:30 - *Oh yeah. When kids are accommodated properly, it really felt like that's what helps them thrive in school. **My son was doing developmental preschool. They didn't really follow his IEP, not really any of it. I just don't think that they really knew how to, you know, but my son was very, very active.** He would run around and go under the tables, and he would not do that at home, but like in the preschool room, he was really, really overactive. And so I'm like, "Hey", I have his IEP like, that's why he is in here (preschool), and he just wasn't thriving, **but when finally we got here and kindergarten, they really followed his IEP,** and I'm like, I started seeing a big shift in my son's attitude towards going to join a, and he was being successful he was thriving. That was critical. Because when those IEPs are not followed or examined, like I said earlier, then like sometimes they're just labeled as problems, you know, when really, they're trying to say, "Hey, I just need a different style."*

>Participants - Yeah

Beth (T) 22:46 - *But one of the things one of the accommodations that my son needed when he was in school was his writing. You couldn't even read it. It was so messy. And you know, I would try to help him to learn how to write. And his stories! Every writing assignment just seemed like a disaster, and then in his IEP, they realized he needed the type his stories. It was like you couldn't even tell it was a story from the same. He was writing and writing he couldn't even write a sentence, but I could write complete sentences (for him). Yeah, so that was one of his accommodations. And so all of a sudden, he went from, like, failing everything that had to do with writing to he was getting B's. But it was like he was typing*

everything. Anyway, it was like, that's why I couldn't even believe that it could make that big of a difference. **But that's the kind of thing they can put into an IEP.** Those are just, I mean, it depends on the child. Every IEP is different.

Beau 23:47 - Oh, yeah, they all look different. I mean, sometimes it's as simple as instead of sitting in a chair, it's sitting on a medicine ball. It's as simple as if they need a cooldown—period, allowing them that opportunity to cool down. Yeah, and it changes. **I mean, my son didn't get an IEP until this year in seventh grade, and it was, and it was, and it was pretty vital for him, but my niece had an IEP in kindergarten, and it worked well. It worked well for her, and now she no longer has the IEP.** So I mean, it really does vary from Kid to Kid, and it is it changes I mean, each kid looks differently. Sometimes it looks like, you know, gosh, there's a high schooler now who's really struggling with everything being on the computer on the Chromebook. And for that, he was really struggling because he needed paper. Well, how easy is it for us to just print out those assignments? Not every assignment can be printed out, but for that student, it made all the difference. He went from failing to passing with flying colors simply just because he could not focus on a computer screen. You know, it's so true.

>Participants agree

Beth (T) 24:53 - There are so many little things to be restricted that we can do with the kids that see such a big difference.

Robert (P) 25:10 - But when you really think about it, it is their children. So, when they're overwhelmed, oh no, they're not, you know, as an adult, we can kind of

think about it, and we can think of some different options, maybe talk to another person. You know, a lot of teachers just react to being overwhelmed.

Jessica S (P) 25:31 - *Yeah, absolutely. And **there's a stigma with IEP.** I think. I think that's kind of what we discovered. **The last time y'all met was there's kind of a negative stigma that follows IEPs and FBAs that, you know, think that yeah, like I mean, people see something wrong (with them).***

Beth (T) 25:49 - *When my son first got one, I was like, Yeah, I can be able to figure out how he is showing growth, you know, at that point, it was like the opposite. I thought you guys, instead of being unable to go to college. So that he could go to college and, you know, it's just like, not letting them continue to struggle, struggle, struggle. And, like, you know, not go anywhere. Start to dislike school.*

Jessica S (P) 26:21 - *Yeah, it's like it's hard to get them to like school.*

>Participants - Oh, yeah. Yes, I agree.

Beau (C.L) 26:24 - *It just takes a couple of bad experiences to change as we talked about earlier. You know, all it takes is one moment for a kid to stop asking questions or stop engaging, but I don't know. **I would love to see an IEP class. We do parent courses through the district. I would love to see some kind of like IEP training courses, just so families understand. You know, they understand the process of an IEP, they have an opportunity to meet other parents if they want, you know, yes, and learn about like it's, it's much more common than you realize.***

Jessica (P) 27:02 - *Oh, you know, what, **I mean, sort of bought into this stigma before.** You know, I started noticing my son was, you know, when he was like doing stuff, and so I went to the pediatrician, and I'm like, "Hey, here is what's going on", you know. He was just sort of, oh, he's a kid, and I'm like, (implying that his behavior was neurodiverse) So, I'm constantly online like I have a lot of anxiety, so I'm like, by the time he was two and a half, **I met with the Birth to Three programs and they helped me with talking me through the IEP and like, Hey, this is a really good thing, and I'm in love with it.***

>Participants – *Yeah (all agreeing)*

I just think that if a kid needs them, they're incredible and really help children to thrive.

The fact that the idea was initiated by a community liaison, taken up by a parent (Jessica), and agreed upon by others highlights the collaborative and inclusive nature of the decision-making process within the group. It suggests that the team values input from diverse perspectives, with the community liaison playing a crucial role in catalyzing ideas that directly benefit the community. This collaborative approach aligns with the principles of Human-Centered Design, where the voices of various stakeholders contribute to informed and inclusive decision-making. The team continued to share their personal experiences:

Beth (T) 27:47 - *Every year. I have, you know, as a teacher, every year I'll have, like, a handful of children that either have an IEP IEP or a 504. So, it's not like something that everybody in the class needs. But you know, certain kids do need*

them there. It's yeah when you grow up, I mean, that's such a simple thing we can provide to help kids.

>Participants - *Yeah*

I have a girl like we have those little stools in our classrooms. And she, for her, she can maintain if she has one of those to sit on, otherwise, she just can't. Yeah, she's a wiggly one, but the whole problem goes away.

>Participants - *Yeah*

So that's what anything we can do to help them be successful. And a lot of times my parents are really the ones you know; I spend way more time with them than the students. You know, because at the beginning of the year, we don't know right away. And so exams, like if there are little things that you know work really well, maybe, you know, so like, I know, as soon as with my son, even though he hadn't signed up, but that taught me as a parent that every year I was letting the teachers know you know.

Beau (C.L) 29:16 - *But you know, right, just not understanding and, ya know, **it's just, it's helping us help your kids with differences in non-negative ways.***

Jessica (P) 29:27 - *My son actually ended up having to get a one-on-one helper because even though he actually cried when it was like during COVID and it was just him and I doing it but as soon as he went to a classroom full of 20 kids, that's when like, things went off the rails on you know, so that's why he needs lots of breaks. Unfortunately, he will not stay on task worth anything unless someone's like right there with him. Like constantly like hey, you have come on, you know, like he - I'm hoping that will improve, you know, over time. Right now, the one on*

one to helpers are great with, you know, being there with him just helping them stay on mass. You know, I'm just he's never alone. But I never risk, and you know, it affects a lot of autistic kids, and so you know, it's really helpful to safety as far as that, and then it allows me to like to trust any number of things I anything so like my helicopter mom. And so, it's like, it took me a lot from sending my son to school, taking care of see your kids, I felt comfortable sending them here.

*Beth 30:46 So it's a good thing here, you know, we want the kids to be safe. And, like, I worry about the kids. All the time, as if they're my kids. Some kids need different things. If someone needs a brain break, I'm gonna ask them, you know, but we want them to be happy here. Like she was talking about some different things or words. Maybe some things that you guys would like to see at the school. **Or, you know, we were talking about IEP Project. Maybe we could do it for the kids at the school or something.***

The conversation touches on the stigma associated with IEPs, acknowledging the need to challenge and overcome negative perceptions. The team members express a collective desire for increased awareness and understanding of IEPs, suggesting the potential benefit of offering training courses for parents. This indicates a shared commitment to bridge the information gap and ensure that families are well-informed about the resources available to support their children's diverse learning needs.

The team's discussion not only recognized the crucial role of IEPs in addressing the opportunity gap for students, but also advocated for increased understanding, acceptance, and proactive support within the school community. The focus on individualized, student-centric approaches demonstrates the team's commitment to

creating an inclusive and supportive educational environment for all students and families at Hawk Elementary.

Session 6

IEPs were a recurring topic across several sessions, but only in the sixth meeting was a concrete decision reached to organize an event centered around an IEP workshop. The meeting featured the regular attendees – Parents, Sam, Joye, and Katie, with the addition of Anna, community liaisons Beau and Dom, and teacher Beth. This gathering extended far beyond the usual duration, lasting almost two hours, making it one of the lengthiest recorded sessions, mainly because participants had not seen each other in four weeks. Participants spent the first 43 minutes catching up. It was not until the midpoint of this extended meeting that the focus transitioned back to generating ideas for an event.

Beau (C.L) 43:09 - *And still on IEP like parents training are still at my altar is just a pivotal moment for me to hear like, so many parents in the room be like, Oh my gosh, I felt the same way about an IEP like I had no idea like and the stigma that's attached to it and then not being able to really understand it right off the bat. So I love that one.*

Beth (T) 43:39 - *I really liked that one too. I mean, because first I experienced it as a parent and I wasn't in education at all. And then now being a teacher. I can see it from the teacher side. And I mean, I definitely think that's an area that it could be helpful for the parents and even the kids. Yeah, know a little bit more about it.*

Beau (C.L) 43:59 - *Yeah. And I'd love to see it like normalized amongst the kids too. For them to be like able and comfortable to talk about it.*

The team recognized the significance of IEPs and the challenges parents and students faced in understanding and navigating this process. Beau (C.L) played a pivotal role by highlighting the importance of parents' training on IEPs, acknowledging the stigma attached to it, and expressing the need for a supportive environment where parents could share their experiences. The emphasis on understanding and normalizing IEPs aligned with the HCD team's goal of creating an inclusive and informed community at Hawk Elementary.

The team's idea of implementing an IEP workshop suggested a commitment to addressing educational disparities and ensuring families, particularly those with marginalized students, had the necessary resources and information. The decision to organize an IEP workshop reflected a proactive step in providing support and information to families at Hawk Elementary. By creating a platform for discussion, understanding, and normalizing IEPs, the team reduced the opportunity gap among marginalized students and fostered a more inclusive and supportive educational environment.

Session 7

In the seventh session, the groundwork for the IEP workshop began to take shape, with support from all the team members, particularly parents, Nadine, Sam, and Jessica, whose children are recipients of Individualized Education Programs (IEPs), community Liaison Beau whose child is also being served on an IEP, and teacher Beth who supports students on IEPs in her classroom. I prompted the discussion by stating, “We have great ideas. What is doable in the foreseeable future? I put three things in the email (referring to a previous email) that we have kind of are common themes that we keep coming up with skills day, then we've talked about the flags, and then the one that seems like

probably the quickest one we could implement would be like the IEP workshop or meet and greet with other parents or something like that—so, thinking of how, then, as a group, partner with PTA possibly that, what would our next steps be?” The following discussion ensued:

Jon (E.L.) - *What I'm jazzed about is our IEP night. It could be really good to have in the fall.*

Nadine (P) - *I really want to see that go somewhere.*

Jon (E.L.) - *And you are the one who originally brought it up*

Nadine (P) - *Yeah, my son has it, and I didn't know, like other people had them. I thought he was like the only one. I like had to ask him all the time if he was like he's the only one that has this.*

Jessica (P) - *You feel like your kids are the only ones.*

Nadine (P) - *Yeah.*

Sam (P)- *And like you say, we just can't walk up to other parents and say, do your kids have an IEP? They will be like - how dare you?*

Beth (T) - *When my son got his (IEP) I remember thinking, well, I think this is really good for him. But I wonder if he understands what this means in middle school or how it works.*

Nadine (P) - *You know, I want to know how they're teaching them how to do it, you know? Yeah, and I've seen that part, and I'm just getting confused, like, how am I? How am I helping him if I suppose how much was to build off of it and not just start a new chapter? Because there are so little steps there.*

Tamara - *So, if there was an evening-like setup. What would you want to get from it? What would be helpful?*

Jessica (P) - *I think one thing would be just the foundation of just knowing how to even fill out an IEP, maybe like a little section for that because a lot of people are; it's intimidating when you're first starting it. I mean, I was lucky, and I had the Birth to Three program helped me with it, but most people don't.*

The dialogue demonstrates a shift toward recognizing and valuing the experiences and perspectives of parents, particularly those with children in Individualized Education Programs (IEPs). Additionally, it signals a move towards a more inclusive, collaborative, and empathetic educational environment. Furthermore, the dialogue reflects a collective commitment to building a supportive and inclusive community at Hawk Elementary.

Recognizing parents' challenges in discussing Individualized Education Programs (IEPs), the team envisioned the IEP workshop to address feelings of isolation, empower parents through education, and provide holistic support through educational transitions. Nadine's personal experience of initially feeling isolated resonates with others, emphasizing a shared acknowledgment of the barriers parents may face in openly discussing IEPs. This acknowledgment formed the basis for the team's commitment to breaking down barriers and creating an open, understanding community. The HCD team's goal for the event was to create a platform that educates and builds a sense of belonging and shared understanding among parents, ultimately contributing to closing the opportunity gap for all students.

Session 8

During the eighth session, team members collaborated to plan the IEP workshop. The team generated specific ideas, outlined a flexible timeline, and identified relevant topics to address during the workshop, all aimed at effectively meeting the needs of the anticipated participants. The team identified barriers to student achievement, including a lack of understanding, stigma, and uncertainty among parents about IEPs. These discussions culminated in organizing an IEP workshop to educate parents and families on better advocating for their children's social, emotional, and learning needs. This initiative aimed to reduce the opportunity gap by providing parents and caregivers with the knowledge and resources to support students on IEPs, fostering a more inclusive and supportive educational environment. The team members shared their experiences as parents and educators, normalizing the discussion around IEPs and creating an environment where families can openly address their concerns and seek solutions to support their children's success in school. Des took on the facilitator's role during the meeting, taking notes and keeping the conversation moving. Towards the end of the meeting, she summarizes for the group:

See where we're at. It's chicken scratch (pointing to her notes). Okay, so I have IEP workshop, first week of October evening, weekdays one and a half hours. Beau was going to get a hold of Case Manager Find out what day works best first week of October. Getting the counselor involved for the workshop. We're going to start with IEPs and build into interventions like math and reading later on. Home sign-up sheet for many sessions, maybe one on one sessions. Audience - we want students with IEPs parents with concerns and their child's learning. A (time) for q & a so we can get to know the families maybe see what they're

interested in so that we can reach out like hey, this is where you should be kind of thing. Check in at the end make sure see if people are interested in doing another workshop. Translators' accessibility equitable, kid friendly and ride sharing, doing YouTube clips. Advertise - advertising so flyer to go out with the kids. Put on the website and the PTA newsletter.

Des's role as a parent leader in the HCD model is characterized by active facilitation, strategic planning, and a commitment to inclusivity and communication. Her contributions demonstrate how a parent leader can play a central role in driving HCD initiatives forward and ensuring that they are implemented effectively for the community's benefit. The final event resulted from the human-centered design team's efforts to reduce the opportunity gap among marginalized students.

Question #4

How do human-centered design teams value community cultural wealth?

As explained and highlighted in the previous answers to questions 1 through 3, participants brought their experience, cultural identity, and values into the meeting. The following dialogues provide further evidence of the inclusive environment that the human-centered design team fostered. Indicators I was looking for throughout each meeting to help answer question 4 were:

- Acknowledgment of each participant's cultural heritage, language, and socio-economics.
- Shared experiences of common barriers to school engagement.
- Collaboration between families that supports all students.

Topics discussed throughout each session included:

- Valuing cultural celebrations and connections.
- Encouraging personal passion and talents among K-12 students.
- Providing inclusive resources and support.
- Building a supportive community by fostering networks among families.
- Removing barriers and creating a strong sense of community and support.

Session 3

Cultural Awareness and Understanding

Session 3 highlighted how team members, even early on in the project, valued community cultural wealth. The dialogue emphasized the participants' enthusiasm for promoting cultural awareness and understanding within the school community. Sam (P) introduced the idea of a project where students could share interesting aspects about themselves, creating flags to represent their cultural backgrounds. She stated, "Yeah, they had ideas of the people or anything like a project only to like you learn different things about them and then you can like display it (with a flag). Our idea was like maybe display it in like the gym somewhere. Or within the hallways so each class can like have a spot. For example, like one class gets Germany one class gets India or classes could work together." Participants expressed agreement with Sam's proposal, suggesting a positive reception to the idea of class-specific displays representing different countries or cultures.

Sam continued to share the idea with the team, "Different stuff that interesting about themselves they can like display it and like make a flag but then like, you know, display for like only the second-grade class or like the third-grade class I think so making sense." Jen (P.P) drew parallels between Sam's idea and Mrs. M's first grade class at Hawk Elementary, where cultural studies are conducted on a monthly basis, showcasing a

pre-existing positive model within the school. She explained, “I understand what you're saying, sounds a lot like Mrs. M's class in first grade. I don't know if other grades or other classes of first grade do this, but she does do one country a month or one culture. She takes one culture a month, and she studies that with her children. Or their students.” The positive reference to Mrs. M's class suggests that similar initiatives have been successful and well-received. She continues explaining, “What Miss M was doing in her class would be a great intro to what you're discussing and your ideas would be an excellent influence to get ideas off of.” Sam (P) offered insights into her initial thoughts on cultural awareness at Hawk Elementary stating, “Yeah, cuz I felt like I was like when I first got here, I was like, oh, no, like, a diversity is kind of like a big thing. So, it's like, I don't know. I won't dive into the school—that much. So I don't know like what activities that they really like, have as far as like stuff like that, but when we came from Tacoma like they had something like that, and it was more than just like in the office or with just you know the sign with the different ways to say hello like you know, like, I was like, when whenever you call me if your kids like, for example, my husband Haitian so I was like I can't imagine walking into the school and you see like, your flag, right like, you know, you'll feel like you belong to like, you know, so.” She explained further a personal anecdote about her husband's positive experience with cultural activities, emphasizing the impact it had on making him feel comfortable and included:

My husband's Haitian. So, like when he moved here to the States, like his teacher noticed that he couldn't like to speak English and stuff and she wants to make him feel more comfortable. So when, you know, in Florida, he went to school and she had to like every like, I would say like every month or like every other month.

She would like you know there was a student and she was like from Africa also she brought in like a dish but I know some people don't feel comfortable enough other people's house is like that, but right. You know, it was like just an idea like, you know, but she talked about her culture like, oh, this is what they do here. And then everybody like studied about and stuff and then they had like a little potluck like the piano or like when I took French class had like the party and or whatever, and had to bring in like a friend to this type of thing. Like so like stuff like I know you don't do it really to high school. So, you'll have to like bring it down to like, elementary standards. So that's what we thought of like flagging, like, decorating a flag.

Des supported the idea of cultural learning by recalling instances of cultural potlucks, underlining the potential for building connections and understanding among students, “You get to learn about that culture where they came from kind of what they do at home when they eat, what they like to read or listen to the time of using. Because then people maybe they will not be so intimidated to make friends with that person. Just because they look different or have an accent or yeah, they brought something different for lunch.”

The conversation reflects a collective commitment to celebrating cultural diversity, promoting understanding, and creating an inclusive environment within the school. The proposed project aligns with the principles of community cultural wealth by valuing and incorporating the diverse cultural assets present among students.

Community Cultural Assets

Conversations also highlighted personal experiences with ideas about student learning that build off student assets. The following discussion revolved around Jen's

(P.P) experience of being hard of hearing and the potential for an ASL (American Sign Language) club, “So, I was born hard of hearing and had only 20% of my hearing. After I got hearing aids My siblings would turn up the TV as loud as Oh, oh my God. That's so loud.” I mention, “We could have an ASL club, essentially.” Sam (P) explained, “Imagine if we were like, teaching ASL.” The following conversation continues:

Tamara York 1:02:33 - *We have a couple of teachers (at the other school) who integrate it into their classrooms and it's really cool.*

Nadine (P) 1:02:38 - *Use the alphabet you know, yeah. Hello, thank you. You know.*

Joye (P)1:02:42 - *Yeah, at my kids is old school, that they went to they had what they called hands. So like a sign language thing.*

Jen (P.P) 1:02:54 - *Very cool. You know, and being hard of hearing was in my face. Oh, my mom wants to raise me normally understand, okay? And so I never learned sign language. But I know the alphabet. I know a few words. You know, so I'm happy to you know, bring one library. I don't bring a lot but*

Nadine (P) 1:03:24 - *the kid in the alphabet, you know, the basic, you know, I keep saying you know, but that'd be I would want to learn that with my kid. You know, I would be totally into that.*

Jen (P.P) 1:03:36 - *See, and I look back now I look back now because I wish my mom will let me have that experience.*

Yeah.

Des (P) - *Elementary school. When I was in elementary school, we our teachers taught us the alphabet and basic words, sign language, and I loved*

The suggestion of an ASL club and teaching ASL in schools aligns with the idea of valuing community cultural assets by actively incorporating sign language, celebrating diversity, and fostering a sense of community involvement and inclusivity within the educational setting.

Cultural Identity and Language

Shortly after this, Courtney addressed cultural identity and language by bringing up an event at a different elementary school in the district called, Fiesta. She explained, “So what I just loved about the fiesta was how proud the kids were of their culture, like their culture was obviously very celebrated that night, and it just you could see it in their eyes just like the pride. And for families. Yes. I just loved it. I was like tearing up. It was so beautiful, you know?” Having attended the fiesta, I agreed and explained to the team what Courtney was referring to, “Yeah. Yeah, at Engineer Elementary we do a big thing called the Fiesta. And like 1000 families attend. Yeah, it was a huge turnout.” Courtney agreed, “It was amazing.” I further explained, “Yeah, and we have a Spanish program, and so we tie it into everything basically and then do a really big Fiesta.” At this point Nadine (P) questioned, “Do you have a Spanish teacher?” Courtney was quick to answer, “Yes! Because of this amazing teacher. I wish she was at every school now. E.N Yeah. Oh my god, if we could just have E.N at every school.”

While this conversation highlights community cultural wealth by showcasing the active celebration of cultural identity, the integration of cultural events into schools and community engagement at Engineer Elementary, it also exposes the inequity of the absence of a Spanish program on other campuses throughout the district.

Linguistic differences were also addressed in the meeting alongside the importance of learning a second language. Sam (P) begins the conversation by explaining, “Yeah, I'm so scared to like to talk back to my husband's mom in Creole, because I'm like, I talk really weird when I'm trying to say in Creole like I'm like, was it like, you know, so I'm just like, she'll be like, it's okay. Yeah, like if I say the wrong thing, I'm like, oh, my God, I don't want to offend you.” I agreed with Sam, stating, “I learned like; you have to put yourself out there. I didn't speak Chinese when I went to China. And so, I would just get out there and practice with like the little ladies that sat outside. And I mean, one time, instead of asking a grandma, how old's your granddaughter? I was like, how much is your granddaughter? And she was staring at me all weird. And I realized what I said I'm like, no, and I got like all red, and she just started laughing. She was so patient. Yeah, but it's like you're just gonna make mistakes, and that's okay.” Sam made an insightful and inclusive remark stating, “Yeah, it's good to like to learn, you know, whatever country you go to their language because I've read that they respect you more if you at least attempt to try for them.” Jessica concurred with Sam and shared a personal example, “I hate admitting this but I watch 90 Day fiancé and it drives me nuts when they go to another country and don't try to fit in with the culture, and they don't try to pick up the language.” Chris (P) then stereotypes Americans, stating, “I mean, I'm just like one of those Americans that takes advantage of what other countries that have learned English.” This part of the conversation emphasizes the value of linguistic diversity, linguistic barriers and cultural integration. Furthermore, the need for equitable practices within each school in language programs.

Inclusion

At this point conversation circled back to what type of event the team should plan. Sam shared, “Make it like a family thing, like family science project. So, it's like a family thing.” Participants agreed. The mention of cultural days and family science projects indicates a desire to create inclusive events that engage not only students but also their families. Beau (C.L) stated, “I like that idea too. I would love to see more opportunities for families to get more involved. Like I like the cultural day but like giving those options for families to come in as a whole because I do I think, I mean, times were changing anyways, but then COVID.” Beau further emphasized the changing times and challenges faced by families, especially post-COVID, highlighting the need for intentional efforts to bring families together, “Yeah, I feel like it's been really hard for people to get back in the habit of and I think just as an adult and being busy with kids like it's hard to make friends it's hard to put yourself out there people don't have playdates like they used to for lots of different reasons, some understandable, you know, and then like, some people are just too tired. Like, I'm tired with my own kids, you know, but just creating those opportunities for families to kind of have a chance to talk to other families that they might click with. Yeah, and then spreads, you know, you build your social circle, or even you just find somebody that your kiddo clicks with that they're not in a class with, so they don't really have an opportunity. Just those opportunities for people to get to know one another.”

Session 5

Session 5 also revealed how participants valued individual community cultural wealth and how it can support Hawk Elementary. Anna explained to the team that even with an excess of volunteers at events like field day, they never turn away a volunteer,

fostering a welcoming atmosphere, “Even our current volunteers tried to get involved, they tried to help and no one ever got back to them. And so, I think some of it was just people doing our best to respond to people as best as possible. But I think there was some like control and so people you know, sometimes don't quite have control of things. And so that's really hard. I personally just like weaseled my way in somehow, I just started showing up, but I was like, let me because I'll be at the school for like seven years between my two kids. So, I'm not mean girls at all. I think we're we try to best.” Sam inquired about the process of getting involved in the PTA, “So how does one usually get involved with becoming, you know, getting into the PTA? Like it's only like, select, like, select seats, or like.” Anna responded, emphasizing openness and inclusivity:

Okay, so the thing this year that I really want to focus on is okay, so this morning at field day, we had way too many volunteers, but I'm never gonna turn away a volunteer. If you want to help, we will find a spot for you. Even if there are four people doing one job like you get to hang out with other parents and talk there there have that have you not feel welcome. So okay, what was the question?

ADHD. Yes, so one of the things that is important to make Yes, you need to show up to meetings, you can just email us and say, hey, here's what I'm interested in. Here's my skill set, and we will find a place for you. I'm really passionate about and how, Christine mentioned this, is to whatever you love, I want to see you do that. I don't want to just assign you to like, if you're like a field day person, I don't want to ask you to make cupcakes you want to be Yeah, I want you to enjoy what you're doing and not just selflessly do it. You should enjoy it. I was listening to podcasts. I feel like you're on something stuck with me. It was like parents, not

just for the kids like you should enjoy it also. And I was like, whoa, I'm allowed to do that. I want us all to enjoy what we're doing. So yes, anything that you love like you said you're a gamer. Like there are kids at school who are gamers if you want to have a game or night or sorry I dont speak gamer...

She encouraged individuals to show up to meetings or simply email the PTA expressing their interests and skills, assuring that there is a place for everyone. Sam shared her perspective on the perceived stigma around PTA involvement, "I like that, you know, because I always like said the stigma was like girls, like no, the PTA does certain things they don't like good. So it's good to hear from, like, president's mouth that no, like, you know, we can implement that stuff and make everybody feel like included, and I'm open to ideas. That's a good thing." Anna reinforced that the PTA is open to ideas and wants everyone to feel included, "Yeah, very much. So yeah, whatever you guys are passionate about, and people are excited about, let's do it."

In conclusion, the human-centered design team demonstrated a deep commitment to valuing cultural community wealth through their inclusive and collaborative efforts. The team's dedication fostered an environment where diverse cultural identities were accepted, acknowledged, and appreciated. Genuine discussions revolving around community involvement, celebrating cultural diversity, and identifying common barriers showcased the team's holistic approach to problem-solving.

The proposed initiatives, displaying cultural flags and monthly explorations of different cultures, emphasized the team's commitment to cultural awareness within the school community. Moreover, the team's recognition of the importance of community building and inclusivity within the Parent-Teacher Association further exemplifies their

dedication to involving volunteers with diverse skills. The team's rich dialogue and collaborative initiatives show their understanding and appreciation of cultural community wealth, affirming its integral role in the collective efforts to strengthen the school community and enhance the overall learning experience for students.

Conclusion

Chapter 4 was a comprehensive analysis centered on the influence of a human-centered design team on student success at Hawk Elementary School (HES). Guided by the research questions, I explored the power dynamics between the human-centered design team and school leadership. The investigation revealed how power was shared and shifted, providing insights into collaboration and innovation.

Furthermore, I analyzed the impact power-sharing and shifting had on decreasing the opportunity gap among marginalized students, emphasizing how the human-centered design team actively worked towards fostering inclusivity and equity within the school environment. Finally, I showed evidence of how these teams valued and leveraged the cultural assets within the school community and shed light on the importance of recognizing diverse cultural backgrounds.

The analysis contributes a deeper understanding of the interplay between human-centered design, power dynamics, opportunity gap reduction, and promoting community cultural wealth at Hawk Elementary School. I will synthesize these insights in Chapter 5, reflect on their broader implications, and outline potential recommendations for educators, administrators, and researchers.

Chapter 5: Discussion

This ethnographic study sought to investigate the influence of a human-centered design team on the academic success of elementary school students. The primary focus was assessing the extent of power-sharing or power-shifting dynamics between educational leaders and the human-centered design team. Data was collected during nine family engagement meetings over 6 months. The data collection process followed an ethnographic research design specifically tailored to address the research questions:

1. What impact does the family engagement human-centered design team have on power-shifting and sharing between leadership and the human-centered design team?
2. How did power-sharing and power-shifting occur between leadership and the family engagement human-centered design team?
3. How did the family engagement human-centered design team impact the opportunity gap among marginalized students?
4. How do human-centered design teams value community cultural wealth?

Chapter 5 explains the findings and conclusions concerning the influence of the human-centered design team on student success. This chapter will examine the extent of power-sharing and power-shifting between educational leaders and the human-centered design team. It will expound upon the implications for practical application and the significance of these findings for the community. Additionally, it integrates these findings with existing literature, creating a cohesive narrative. Chapter 5 will conclude by offering recommendations for future research endeavors, providing insights into further study, and reflecting on the personal implications of the research project.

Summary of Data Analysis

The Hawk Elementary Human-Centered Design (HCD) Team demonstrated collaborative innovation and power-sharing dynamics that fostered a shared commitment among parents, educational leaders, and the broader community. Intentional efforts to cultivate mutual respect, trust, and shared goal-setting within the team had a transformative impact on power sharing and shifting.

Hawk Elementary, embodying the principles of the HCD team, established an environment where diverse voices were heard and actively valued in decision-making processes. These principles, evident in initiatives like the IEP workshop and inclusive learning environments, enhanced the educational experience for students and families and catalyzed positive change in the district.

Incorporating feedback from parent Katie, teacher Beth, and community liaison, Dom provided invaluable insights into my research. Hearing Katie's perspective as a parent allowed me to understand better the experiences and concerns of families within the school community, offering a unique viewpoint on the impact of my research initiatives. Similarly, teacher Beth's input provided practical implications of the findings within the classroom, highlighting potential opportunities for implementation and areas for further exploration from a firsthand perspective. Dom's perspective as a community liaison also offered insights into the broader community context and potential avenues for collaboration with external stakeholders. Incorporating feedback from these diverse sources enriched my understanding of the research findings. I developed more comprehensive and impactful strategies to support Hawk Elementary students with diverse learning needs.

Iterative triangulation played a pivotal role for several reasons. It enabled me to gather comprehensive and nuanced insights from multiple perspectives, ensuring a holistic understanding of the research topic. Furthermore, it facilitated the validation and cross-verification of findings, allowing for the identification of common themes and concerns. This empowered me to refine and adapt strategies and interventions in real time, ensuring responsiveness to the evolving needs and preferences of the school community. Through the systematic application of iterative triangulation, I developed more informed, inclusive, and practical approaches, enriching the research findings and fostering collaboration and ownership within the school community.

For example, when asked, “What insights or conclusions can be drawn from analyzing this conversation?” teacher Beth stated, “Parent engagement takes time and energy, but many people are interested because their children are important to them.” Adding to this statement, parent Katie explained, “Schools and families can come together to make important decisions about events and classes.” Dom also pointed out, “Families need support around IEPs not just from the school professions but from **each other!**” The insights from the conversation point to the complex and dynamic nature of parent engagement, emphasizing the need for time, energy, and collaboration between schools and families, support for specific educational programs like IEPs, and the involvement of the broader community in the educational process.

Themes

A comprehensive analysis of the collected data, highlighted in Chapter 4, unveiled five overarching themes that capture the core elements of collaborative dynamics and shared values within the human-centered design (HCD) team. Furthermore,

the corroborating responses from teacher Beth, parent Katie, and community liaison Dom not only align but also strengthen these identified themes.

1. Connection and trust through shared common interests.
2. Power-sharing and power-shifting dynamics within the human design team.
3. Parent Teacher Association (PTA) involvement with the HCD team.
4. The crucial role of inclusion in effectively engaging students and families.
5. The importance of mutual respect is cultivated through appreciating each other's community cultural assets.

These identified themes offer actionable insights to promote meaningful connections, equitable power dynamics, and a culture of respect and inclusion between families and educational leaders within educational settings.

Interpretation of Findings

Connection and Trust

Over 6 months, a deep sense of connection and trust evolved among the participants as each individual invested in the collaborative efforts to enhance the educational experience for Hawk Elementary students. The commonality of purpose was evident by the recurring presence of the word “kids” in the discussions, reflecting a shared commitment to the well-being and success of the students. In parent Katie's pre-reading analysis of the transcripts, when asked, “What do you think are the main topics or themes that emerged during the conversations?” She shared, “Parents want what is best for our kids and community and how to do things respectfully with love.” Katie's response echoes the broader community sentiment and introduces an implicit theme of trust. Her emphasis on conducting discussions with respect and love implies a foundation

of trust, indicating that the collaborative dynamics within the community are rooted in mutual trust and understanding. This insight adds to the community's ethos, illustrating a commitment to the students' academic, social, and emotional well-being and fostering a trusting and supportive environment in their collaborative endeavors.

Additionally, the team's discussions extended beyond the confines of conventional meetings as they explored innovative ideas, such as creating avenues for families to connect and developing informative resources to boost community involvement. These forward-thinking concepts highlighted the team's dedication to fostering a supportive community within Hawk Elementary.

The team actively engaged in dialogue about enhancing community involvement by tapping into common passions, such as organizing skill days and family cultural projects. This intentional effort to intertwine shared interests with community engagement was evident in the nine sessions. Sharing personal narratives, cultural identities, and values created a positive and inclusive environment, allowing genuine connections to flourish. In community liaison Dom's pre-reading analysis of the transcripts, when asked, "What do you think are the main topics or themes that emerged during the conversations?" she recalled, "I think people just liked the engagement. Friends hanging out and talking," going on to note, "Also, IEP came up almost every session." Dom emphasizes that people enjoyed the engagement, suggesting a comfortable and informal atmosphere where participants felt at ease sharing their thoughts and perspectives. Using the term "friends" implies a sense of camaraderie and mutual understanding, contributing to creating a community where individuals feel valued and supported. Additionally, Dom notes that the topic of Individualized Education Programs

(IEP) consistently arose during the sessions. The recurring discussion of IEP, a sensitive and personal aspect of education, indicates openness and trust among the participants to delve into important and potentially challenging topics.

As the team worked together on exploring different proposals, the underlying theme of shared interests driving meaningful connections became a cornerstone of their approach to community building. One project suggestion emerged during the collaborative sessions—an initiative where each class delves into studying and presenting a different part of the world. This idea, which had already started to take shape, promoted shared interests and offered a tangible way for students to connect with each other's cultures. The prospect of students exploring diverse facets of the world together showcased a commitment to fostering understanding and appreciation among Hawk Elementary's student body, and it's a testament to the success of our collaborative efforts.

The team's bonds and mutual trust deepened significantly from sessions 1 through 9. An example summarizing this occurred during the fifth session when parent Sam openly shared:

I have faith in this (the group)! It is like a good stepping stone for something that will be good for our kids. I feel like from when we all talked about all our ideas, everything is coming into play now. I feel like it (the event) will really really work. And I don't know; it'll be like a new era for many things coming in for new kids. So, I have, like, strong faith, and I will keep track on the page or the school website page and bring this to (my son's) new school.

Sam's statement and the many examples provided in Chapter 4 from different HCD team members embody the theme of connections and trust developed through

shared common interests within the group. Her expression of faith in the group and the emphasis on collective discussions and shared ideas highlight the development of connection and trust within the human-centered design team. The collaborative decision-making process and shared common interests signify a departure from traditional top-down leadership, fostering a more inclusive and interconnected team dynamic.

Navigating Power-Sharing and Power-Shifting

In sessions 1 through 4, three distinct groups within the human design team, parents, educational leaders, and community liaisons worked seamlessly and in balance. In session 5, power dynamics shifted, and space was created to include Anna, the president of the Parent Teacher Association (PTA). The role she assumed in the following sessions was as a parent and as a bridge between the HCD team and PTA. Throughout sessions 6 through 9, these groups collectively and creatively worked toward enhancing student and family connection. As noted in chapter 4, navigating power-sharing and shifting between these groups occurred through the frequency of participation, conversation, and decision-making.

Attendance

The consistent participation of parents, surpassing community and educational leaders, suggests a shift in power dynamics. Parents' active involvement indicates increased empowerment, giving them more influence in decision-making processes.

However, the comparatively lower engagement of educational leaders suggests a potential power differential that can influence discussions and decision-making within the collaborative framework. None of the participants explicitly mentioned the lower attendance by Principal Jon, as this concern did not arise in any of the conversations. It is

noteworthy that the community liaisons privately shared their surprise regarding his limited attendance. This observation adds an additional layer to the exploration of power dynamics, providing insight into the perceptions and expectations surrounding the involvement of educational leaders in the collaborative process. The varying patterns of community member attendance further highlight the complexities of power-sharing within the team. Overall, the data collected emphasizes an interplay of power dynamics, where the active involvement of specific individuals, especially parents, shaped the collaborative process and influenced outcomes within the human-centered design team.

Conversation

Throughout each of the sessions, I observed distinct patterns of power-sharing. As we progressed through sessions 1 to 9, there was a deliberate effort to empower participants further, particularly parents. Their increased share of speaking time reflected a commitment to the Human-Centered Design (HCD) principle of empowering users to shape discussions. Educational leaders, teachers, and community liaisons consistently maintained a substantial presence. To foster participant-driven conversations, I intentionally reduced my speaking time.

A noteworthy power shift unfolded in sessions 4 and 5, where parents assumed an even more active role, surpassing 60% of the discussion, noting heightened engagement, particularly during the brainstorming phase, was significant. The community liaisons adapted to this shift, maintaining a significant share, with notable contributions from individuals like Beau and Dom. My reduced speaking time during the brainstorming sessions demonstrated a commitment to participant empowerment and a more balanced and participatory dialogue within the team.

In subsequent “envisioning” sessions (6 and 7), the distribution of speaking time continued to reflect power-shifting dynamics. Parents sustained active engagement while community liaisons remained involved. The increased talk time from Teacher Beth aligns with the emphasis on partnership between parents and teachers highlighted in the research studies, particularly those analyzed by Jeynes (2005).

In Jeynes's meta-analysis, programs emphasizing teacher-parent partnership demonstrated statistically significant positive effects on student outcomes. The positive impact of shared reading (.51), teacher-parent partnership (.35), checking homework (.27), and teacher-parent communication (.28) resonates with the collaborative environment fostered by Teacher Beth's increased talk time. This alignment suggests that the collaborative HCD model, where educators actively participate in discussions and collaborate with parents and community liaisons, shares common ground with effective school-based parental involvement programs.

The active engagement of Teacher Beth in the collaborative exchanges contributes to creating an environment where shared understanding and collaboration between educators and parents can positively impact student outcomes. My heightened sharing during session 8 planning and a decreased share from parents demonstrated adaptability and a more observational role, aligning with HCD principles.

By session 9, parents demonstrated consistent engagement, accounting for a substantial share, while community liaisons and educational leaders, including myself, engaged in more collaborative exchanges with participants. My active role in asking questions and seeking insights demonstrated a commitment to gathering user perspectives

directly, aligning with HCD's emphasis on empathetic understanding and co-creation of solutions.

The overall “talk time” average from session 2 through 9, the average “talk time” revealed that parents spoke 51.1% of the time, educational leaders, teachers, para-educators, and leaders (including myself) 27.1%, and community members 21.2% of the time. While noteworthy, it is crucial to consider each person's attendance, role, and influence in decision-making.

The profound impact of power shifting and power-sharing became evident as the team worked cohesively, sharing responsibilities for student engagement at Hawk Elementary. Recognizing collective efforts throughout the sessions, the team successfully created an IEP Workshop event that would benefit Hawk Elementary families, showcasing the practical outcomes of a collaborative and inclusive approach guided by HCD principles.

Dialogue

The dialogue also emphasized power-shifting and sharing dynamics. Conversations revealed participants valuing others' community assets, cultural heritage, language, and socio-economic background. This commitment paved the way for an equitable power-sharing environment characterized by collaboration rather than hierarchy.

The team's commitment to inclusive decision-making and flexible adaptation to changing circumstances created a collaborative environment. This environment allowed for leadership emergence from unexpected participants, reinforcing that true collaboration thrived in an equitable and inclusive setting. Additionally, the triangulated

responses (Table 4.16) from parent Katie, teacher Beth, and community liaison Dom to the question “Do you think having different people attend impacted the conversation?” reflected a unanimous agreement among the participants on the importance of diversity in perspectives within the conversation.

Each response emphasized the importance of different perspectives, signifying a departure from a hierarchical or dominant narrative, with power distributed among the participants to contribute their unique insights. The participants collectively acknowledged and appreciated the impact of having different people attend, recognizing the inherent value of diverse perspectives in shaping a more inclusive and comprehensive conversation. The influence of power shifting was evident in recognizing that diverse perspectives contributed to a more informed and well-rounded discussion, emphasizing the shared responsibility for shaping the conversation.

Impact of PTA Involvement

Session 5 uncovered critical insights into the challenges faced by families and students. The discussion resonated deeply with the PTA's role in dispelling stereotypes and fostering a positive experience for parents. The PTA president, Anna, emerged as a vocal advocate for inclusivity, urging volunteers to contribute based on their unique interests and skills rather than conforming to assigned tasks. Anna's commitment to inclusion resonated deeply with the HCD team as it aligned with the goals and development of the team project.

Anna actively participated in sessions 5, 6, 8, and 9 of the HCD team and attended the IEP workshop. During session 6, she clarified that her attendance was not to influence a potential merger but to support family engagement as a parent advocate despite her role

as the PTA president. This was evident in her contributions, which aligned with the general discussions of the participants and had minimal focus on the PTA. Anna could not attend the seventh meeting due to a prior commitment. However, this did not impact the HCD team talking about the merge. Instead, participants who had participated in sessions from session 1 up to this point had a chance to share and reflect on the potential merge openly. In sessions 8 and 9, Anna played a supportive role, aiding the team's decision-making process for the IEP workshop event. Despite her position as the PTA president, her inclusive and supportive role within the HCD team helped mitigate potential power imbalances and fostered a collaborative environment. She also offered valuable support and resources from the PTA, including facilitating family communication.

In the broader context, session 5's dialogue delved into the impact of parents' involvement, particularly in advocating for their children, with a spotlight on Individualized Education Programs (IEPs). The collaborative dynamics between the PTA and the HCD Team resulted in an understanding that joint efforts could create awareness and understanding among parents about the educational system and their children's specific needs. This dynamic was exhibited by participants sharing past negative experiences with PTA involvement, emphasizing the need for a thoughtful merger of the family engagement team with the PTA.

Principal Jon's consideration of merging the PTA and the family engagement team raised concerns about potential power dynamics. The structural differences between PTAs and family engagement teams within the Human-Centered Design (HCD) framework might have led to conflicts arising from disparate organizational philosophies

and methodologies. Typically, PTAs operate independently, focusing on fundraising and supporting school activities, while family engagement teams, guided by HCD principles, emphasize collaboration, co-design, and inclusive decision-making. Merging these distinct structures could have presented challenges with varied goals and approaches.

The potential merger also introduced the risk of unintended power imbalances, as one group's pre-existing structures and processes may have overshadowed the other. This imbalance could have jeopardized the autonomy and influence of one entity, undermining the principles of co-design and collaborative decision-making within the HCD approach. Maintaining a careful balance was crucial to the success of any merger, ensuring that the principles of co-leadership, shared responsibility, and equitable leadership, as highlighted in research (Rees, 2021), were woven into the new framework.

Moreover, concerns about inclusivity arose as the HCD approach prioritized diverse voices. Merging the PTA into a different structure could have inadvertently excluded specific perspectives. It was essential for the team to navigate these challenges carefully to prevent unintended consequences and uphold the principles of inclusivity, shared ownership, and collaborative decision-making within the HCD framework.

HCD participants expressed reservations in sessions 5 and 7, demonstrating the delicate balance needed for successful integration. However, amidst these considerations, the PTA president's active participation and the HCD team's inclusive nature positively impacted the team's dynamics. Their enthusiasm for collaboration revealed a potential for joint initiatives between the human design team and the PTA, signaling the transformative impact of teamwork.

Inclusion through Engagement

The role of inclusion in effectively engaging students and families emerged as a significant theme. Parent Katie indicated this as a recurring theme throughout the sessions. In her response to the post-reading question, "What do you think are the main topics or themes that emerged during the conversations?" she explained, "The need to progress our kids' minds through play, academy, and to cater to our kid's needs."

The response aligns with the crucial role of inclusion in effectively engaging students and families. Inclusion in education involves creating an environment accommodating all students' unique needs and preferences, ensuring that each child can thrive. The mention of catering to the kids' needs also suggests an awareness of individual differences and a commitment to addressing them. The reference to play and academics indicates a recognition of the multifaceted nature of learning. Inclusive education recognizes that students have varied strengths and ways of engaging with information, and it seeks to provide a diverse range of learning experiences to accommodate these differences.

Acknowledging the importance of progressing children's minds through different avenues and catering to their individual needs, the response aligned with the idea that inclusion was fundamental to effective engagement in education. It reflected an understanding that an inclusive approach benefited students with diverse needs and contributed to a more enriching and supportive educational environment for everyone involved, including families.

Teacher Beth's response to the same post-reading question also referred to the theme. She stated, "Parents are concerned about their children but do not always feel

comfortable sharing in a school setting.” The statement highlighted the importance of creating an inclusive and welcoming environment within the school setting to facilitate open communication and engagement with parents.

As explained in chapter 2, inclusion in education extends beyond the students to encompass families and the broader school community. Engaging with established family groups and fostering partnerships with community-based organizations supports family leadership and advocacy. This approach aims to catalyze social capital, unlocking family and student opportunities. By leveraging the unique social capital of each group, a synergy of resources and perspectives can be cultivated, aligning seamlessly with the collaborative and co-design ethos integral to the HCD framework (Baker et al., 2016; Bourdieu, 2011; Lee & Bowen, 2006; OSPI, 2022; Rees, 2021; Rees, 2021).

Teacher Beth's insight highlights a potential barrier to effective engagement—parents feeling uncomfortable sharing their concerns in a traditional school setting. This response emphasized the need for schools to adopt inclusive practices that encouraged parents to actively participate in their children's education and well-being (Ishimaru et al., 2018; Rees, 2021; Yosso, 2005). Her observation also highlighted the importance of sensitivity and cultural competence in fostering inclusion. Families might have varying comfort levels with sharing concerns in a school environment, influenced by cultural norms, past experiences, or individual preferences. Recognizing and addressing these differences was crucial for creating an asset-based and inclusive atmosphere where all parents felt empowered to engage in their children's education (Yosso, 2005).

Session 4 captures what Katie and Beth observed and highlights the importance of inclusion within the HCD team. The team collectively brainstormed ways to enhance

community involvement, from celebrating cultural festivities to encouraging the exploration of personal passions and talents among K-12 students. Central to this discussion was the emphasis on providing inclusive resources and support, ensuring that diverse needs were not just acknowledged but actively addressed.

Additionally, the team's appreciation of the importance of understanding and respecting diverse learning styles and cultural backgrounds stressed a commitment to creating inclusive learning environments. Ideas surrounding different cultural projects and the acknowledgment of the unique needs of neurodiverse learners became integral components of the conversation. As the team navigated these discussions, a strategic focus on addressing barriers to inclusion in education emerged, highlighting a proactive approach to ensuring that engagement strategies were universally accessible.

Finally, personal stories became powerful conduits for promoting team members' sense of belonging, trust, and understanding. Sharing these narratives emphasized the human aspect of inclusion, fostering connections, and breaking down barriers. Cultural days and projects emerged as tangible examples within this dialogue, highlighting the team's commitment to recognizing and celebrating diversity. These projects extended beyond mere acknowledgment as the team delved into practical considerations, particularly in accommodating and supporting students with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs). The HCD team sought to embrace inclusive practices to help individual families and contribute to a more collaborative and supportive school community where everyone felt valued and included in the educational journey.

Mutual Respect

The sessions emphasize the importance of mutual respect by appreciating each other's community cultural assets. This theme emerged as a poignant exploration of shared values. Throughout the dialogue, a consistent thread of mutual respect and appreciation for the diverse cultural assets within the community was evident.

Sharing personal histories and traditions fostered mutual understanding, with participants openly sharing their cultural backgrounds. This willingness to authentically share exemplified a collective commitment to learning from each other and appreciating the rich diversity within the community. The dialogue challenged stereotypes and encouraged positive experiences for parents, a testament to the team's recognition of the importance of mutual respect in community engagement.

This theme emerged from the team's discussions and emphasis on valuing cultural celebrations and connections. The proposal of students sharing aspects about themselves through flag displays representing their cultural backgrounds exemplifies the team's commitment to promoting cultural awareness and understanding within the school community. The team recognizes the inherent value of cultural diversity in shaping a more inclusive educational environment by providing a platform for diverse identities to be acknowledged and appreciated.

Furthermore, the team acknowledges the importance of encouraging personal passion and talent among K-12 students. Considering family science projects to engage students and their families underscores a desire to create events that foster connections. This initiative aligns with the team's goal of actively providing opportunities for families

to participate, recognizing the changing times and challenges families face, particularly in a post-COVID era.

The team's commitment to providing inclusive resources and support is evident in its discussions about cultural days and family science projects. These proposed events showcase a genuine desire to celebrate diversity and engage families in the educational journey. By creating inclusive opportunities for families to connect, the team recognizes the importance of building a supportive community that actively involves families in the school's activities.

Removing barriers and creating a strong sense of community and support are central themes in the team's conversations. For example, the team's discussion regarding linguistic diversity and cultural integration highlights the need for equitable language programs within each school, emphasizing the value of creating an inclusive environment that respects and celebrates different languages and cultures.

Appreciating individual community cultural wealth is crucial to the team's approach. The team encouraged volunteers with diverse skills and interests to participate actively in the Parent-Teacher Association (PTA), challenging stereotypes associated with PTA involvement. The PTA president's emphasis on openness to ideas and a desire for everyone to feel included speaks to the team's dedication to fostering a welcoming atmosphere and actively involving families in the school community.

Principal Jon's suggestion to merge the Human-Centered Design (HCD) team with the PTA rather than the equity team suggests an emphasis on fostering a welcoming atmosphere and actively involving families in the school community. While the equity team focuses on addressing disparities and ensuring fairness, the HCD team often centers

around broader community engagement, design thinking, and collaborative problem-solving.

However, the potential benefits of Jon merging the HCD team with the equity team are worth considering. First, a holistic approach to inclusivity could be achieved by combining insights from the HCD team's focus on student, family, and community engagement with the equity team's lens on fairness and justice. Second, this approach would allow Jon to understand and address the intersectionality of equity issues within the school with various aspects of school life, including design, engagement, and community relationships. Third, Jon's involvement in the HCD team and equity teams could enable him to tailor strategies that address these intersections, ultimately contributing to a more integrated approach to equity within the school.

Furthermore, collaboration across different teams provides an opportunity for a more comprehensive understanding of the challenges and opportunities within the school community. Merging the HCD and equity teams would allow him to gain insights from diverse perspectives, fostering a unified vision that integrates human-centered design principles with a solid commitment to equity.

While joining both teams could enhance communication channels between different stakeholders and ensure the integration of equity and human-centered design principles into the school's overall mission, it is crucial to acknowledge that the decision to participate in specific teams depends on various factors. These include the school's goals, the teams' structure, and the educational institution's specific challenges. Balancing participation in multiple teams requires careful consideration to ensure effectiveness and to avoid potential conflicts. Jon felt the HCD team would best merge with the PTA.

Community liaison Dom's response in the post-response to the question, "What do you think were the main topics or themes that emerged during the conversation?" also aligns with the theme of emphasizing the importance of mutual respect through the appreciation of each other's community cultural assets. She explained, "Everyone just really loves their child and wants to share. No one has all the answers. It truly does take a village. Support. Support. Support!"

At its core, the statement highlights a universal truth and the core of the HCD team—that parents share a common love and concern for their children, transcending cultural, linguistic, or socio-economic boundaries. The acknowledgment that "no one has all the answers" reflects humility and recognition of the community's diversity of experiences and perspectives, fostering an environment of openness where individuals are receptive to learning from one another.

Furthermore, the mention of "it truly does take a village" echoes the sentiment that collaborative efforts and community involvement are essential components of a child's holistic development. This concept aligns with community cultural wealth, emphasizing that diverse contributions from various community members enrich the educational experience. It recognizes that each community member brings unique insights, experiences, and strengths that contribute to the collective well-being of the village—whether that village is a classroom, a school, or a broader community.

Her repeated emphasis on "Support. Support!" emphasizes the importance of creating a supportive environment where individuals feel valued and empowered. In the context of mutual respect for community cultural assets, this support extends beyond individual needs to encompass a broader understanding and appreciation of the cultural

wealth each member brings. It reinforces that respecting and supporting diverse cultural backgrounds is integral to fostering a positive and inclusive community.

In conclusion, the HCD team at Hawk Elementary exemplifies a comprehensive and human-centered approach to education. By valuing cultural diversity, fostering community connections, and actively involving families, the team contributes to creating a positive and supportive educational environment. The team's collective efforts showcase the transformative power of human-centered design in shaping the future of education, where diversity is celebrated, barriers are removed, and communities actively contribute to the learning experience. Each theme encapsulates the spirit of collaboration, recognizing that together, community members can create an environment that supports children's academic success and nurtures their cultural identities and overall well-being.

Research Alignment to the Theoretical Framework

Collaboration within the human-centered design team is a compelling ethnographic study that aims to understand the power dynamics of shared interests and experiences in fostering participant connection and trust. This section explores how the research aligns with the theoretical framework outlined in chapter 2, seen through the lens of Vygotsky's sociocultural theory and Bourdieu's cultural capital theory. This integration of research and theory provides a comprehensive framework to analyze and appreciate the multifaceted aspects of the collaborative journey within the family engagement team.

Sociocultural Theory

The family engagement team's collaboration stressed the transformative impact of shared interests and experiences in building connections and trust among participants.

Vygotsky (1978) believed that education played a crucial role as the driving force behind individual development. He asserted that, with proper support from adults, children possessed infinite potential to acquire a broad range of knowledge and skills (Eun, 2010).

The team's deliberate integration of common passions into community engagement reflected Vygotsky's belief in cultural development through cooperative dialogues (Al-Mahdi, 2019). Through collaborative discussions and shared values, the team engaged in dialogues that promoted cultural understanding and development. This alignment with Vygotsky's principles emphasizes the team's commitment to facilitating a supportive atmosphere where diverse perspectives and shared activities contribute to the growth and development of individuals within the community.

Exploring power-sharing and power-shifting dynamics within the HCD team provided not only theoretical insights into sociocultural theory but also practical ones. The team's commitment to inclusivity and adaptive leadership roles mirrored the dynamic interplay of power dynamics, in line with Vygotsky's perspective on social interaction driving individual development. This practical application of Vygotsky's theory underscores its relevance and applicability in real-world settings.

Furthermore, the examination of inclusion in student and family engagement resonated with Vygotsky's sociocultural theory, highlighting the importance of addressing diverse needs. Vygotsky's notion of cultural tools integral to individual development was not just a theoretical concept for the team but a guiding principle. The team's dedication to providing inclusive resources was a tangible manifestation of this commitment. The explicit acknowledgment and promotion of inclusion within the HCD

team focused on a commitment to community engagement, reinforcing the theoretical framework.

Cultural Capital

The collaborative decision-making processes also aligned with Bourdieu's cultural capital theory, which emphasized the role of social classes in maintaining power structures (Bourdieu, 1986). The assessment of PTA involvement on the HCD team reveals the interconnection of cultural capital and family engagement. The challenges identified, as well as advocacy for inclusivity and collaboration, align with Bourdieu's concept of cultural capital passing through families.

Furthermore, the consideration of merging the PTA and the family engagement team reflects the potential impact on power dynamics, reinforcing that social class plays a role in collaborative efforts within the educational system.

The emphasis on mutual respect through appreciating community cultural assets aligns with Vygotsky's and Bourdieu's theories. Vygotsky's focus on open communication shared understanding, and the importance of cultural competence in educational settings is evident in the team's dialogue. Furthermore, recognizing the transformative power of mutual respect and appreciation for different perspectives aligns with Bourdieu's cultural capital theory, emphasizing the role of cultural assets in shaping power dynamics and community engagement.

Family Engagement and Social Capital

Hawk Elementary Human-Centered Design (HCD) team aligned with concepts of social capital as it emphasized the importance of fostering networks, communication, relationships, and shared values within a community for mutual benefit.

Fostering Networks

The IEP workshop at Hawk Elementary stood as a testament to a collaborative endeavor to address the unique needs of students with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs). The workshop was a social capital-building initiative that actively fostered collaboration and communication among educators, parents, and the broader school community. It emphasized the importance of building social networks, enhancing communication, addressing stigmas, and adopting an individualized approach to cater to the diverse needs of students on IEPs.

The collaborative team's commitment to community engagement, aligned with research findings on family involvement, reinforced the strategic nature of this initiative. The workshop went beyond mere involvement, exemplifying genuine engagement by intertwining shared interests, promoting inclusivity, and creating a positive environment. As the team attempted to bridge the opportunity gap and contribute to increased student success, the workshop emerged as a proactive response to the imperative for effective communication, understanding, and collaboration within the school community. These findings aligned with the Global Family Research project, acknowledging that cooperation was crucial to family engagement because it built on families' strengths and culture and recognized that families played multiple roles in students' development and learning (Global Family Research, 2018).

The collaborative team of educators and parents participating in the IEP workshop was instrumental in building social networks. By bringing together individuals with diverse perspectives and expertise, the workshop created a platform for exchanging ideas, experiences, and support.

Enhancing Communication

Effective communication between school leaders and families was vital. As the HCD team unearthed, effective communication about IEPs between families and schools often faces various barriers, including the complexity of the IEP process, limited time and resources, power dynamics, inconsistent communication channels, and stigma or misconceptions. Moreover, these obstacles can hinder the collaborative understanding between parents and educators, impacting the success of the IEP process. The HCD team determined that these challenges require proactive efforts to provide clear, accessible information, and foster an open, collaborative environment that encourages meaningful dialogue between schools and families. By addressing these barriers and promoting open dialogue, the workshop contributed to developing strong social ties within the school community.

Relationship

The recognition of the individualized nature of IEPs and the importance of accommodating students' diverse needs spoke to a personalized approach. This approach addressed students' unique requirements and promoted a sense of belonging and support, enhancing the social capital within the school community.

The discussions within the workshop aimed at dispelling stigmas associated with IEPs contributed to creating a more inclusive and supportive social environment. As participants shared personal experiences and overcame preconceived notions, understanding and empathy were fostered, strengthening social bonds.

Shared Values and Goal

Throughout the sessions, the team engaged in discussions focused on solution-based action steps and student-centric conversations. The IEP workshop at Hawk Elementary demonstrated shared values and goals through the proactive initiative of a collaborative team of educators and parents committed to addressing the needs of students with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs).

The emphasis on effective communication between school leaders and families created a common goal of ensuring a support system for children served on an IEP. The team addressed existing stigmas around IEPs and the need to foster understanding among students and families about the benefits of an IEP. Personal experiences, such as Beth, Beau, and Jessica's accounts, provided real-life examples that resonated with the team, further reinforcing a shared understanding of the challenges faced by students and the crucial role of IEPs in addressing their unique needs. Furthermore, discussions focused on the need for parents to understand and advocate for their child's social, emotional, and learning needs.

The decision to organize the IEP workshop emerged due to these shared discussions, showcasing the team's collective commitment to comprehensively addressing challenges associated with IEPs.

Furthermore, the team's alignment with research findings by Galindo and Sheldon (2012) reflected shared values in emphasizing the positive impact of planned activities and programs that enhance school and teacher communication with families. The commitment to empathy, understanding, and collaboration reflected a holistic approach that resonated with shared values in reducing the opportunity gap. Recognizing the

persistent opportunity gap, especially for marginalized students, indicated the team's shared commitment to addressing disparities in family engagement.

Connections to the Conceptual Framework

Community Cultural Wealth

Yosso (2005) expanded on traditional interpretations of Bourdieu's Cultural Capital Theory, emphasizing that learning to understand and engage with specific assets within a cultural community can create more constructive pathways to student, family, and community partnerships. This theory emphasizes that learning to understand and engage with specific assets within a cultural community can pave the way for more constructive pathways to student, family, and community partnerships (See Figure 2.2).

Yosso's (2005) Community Cultural Wealth Theory was effectively explored and applied by the Human-Centered Design (HCD) team at Hawk Elementary. The team actively contributed diverse cultural experiences in each session, emphasizing the value of diversity and inclusion within the school community. The proactive organization of an Individualized Education Program (IEP) workshop demonstrated their commitment to *aspiration capital*, highlighting a forward-looking dedication to improving outcomes for students with IEPs. *Linguistic capital* was evident in discussions about learning languages and recognizing language's importance in fostering cultural understanding. Family engagement remained a central theme, emphasizing the team's commitment to creating opportunities for connection and supporting initiatives that valued personal passions, showcasing the importance of *familial capital*.

The team effectively maneuvered (*navigational capital*) through social institutions, challenging established practices and fostering a collaborative environment

to reshape narratives and enhance community accessibility. Initiatives like cultural displays and monthly explorations of different cultures contributed to building *social capital* within the school. Moreover, the team exhibited *resistant capital* by challenging stereotypes associated with parent-teacher associations, actively working to create a positive and personalized experience within the PTA.

In conclusion, the family engagement team's dialogue demonstrated a comprehensive understanding and application of Yosso's theory. Their actions and discussions showcased a commitment to leveraging diverse forms of capital, resulting in an inclusive, culturally rich, and empowering educational environment.

The section ‘Significance of the Findings Concerning the Research Questions’ will explore more thoroughly how the Human-Centered Design team valued community cultural wealth, particularly in answering research question #4. This examination reveals a holistic approach that promotes positive and meaningful outcomes for students and their families, showcasing the team's dedication to creating an inclusive, culturally rich, and empowering educational environment.

Collaboration within Human-Centered Design Circles

The goal of using a Human-Centered Design model was to bring together a team that shared power dynamics despite educational leaders' and families' positions, responsibilities, and roles (Global Family Research Project, 2018; Ishimaru et al., 2018). Within the spaces of the Human-Centered design framework – inspiration, ideation, and implantation – Hawk Elementary aligned with key characteristics within a human-centered design circle, emphasizing mutual respect, trust, and shared goal-setting among participants (Casper, 2010). The collaborative efforts at Hawk Elementary reflected a

commitment to intentional, relevant, and culturally responsive collaboration and communication. The school community, comprising educational leaders and families, actively engaged in two-way communication, fostering a dynamic exchange of ideas and experiences.

The intentional and relevant collaboration was evident in the planning and implementing initiatives like the IEP workshop, where the HCD team at Hawk Elementary demonstrated a proactive commitment to addressing the unique needs of students with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs). The team engaged in solution-based action steps, student-centric conversations, and identifying barriers to student achievement and family engagement. This collaborative approach was rooted in mutual respect and trust, with participants valuing each other's unique cultural experiences and contributions.

The shared goal-setting within the team was demonstrated by the team's dedication to creating a more inclusive and supportive learning environment. The team's focus on building social networks, enhancing communication, addressing stigmas, and adopting an individualized approach to cater to the diverse needs of students on IEPs reflected a collective commitment to positive student outcomes. The alignment with research findings on family engagement further reinforced their dedication to evidence-based practices.

Moreover, the emphasis on creating a positive school climate, exploring different cultures each month, and actively involving parents in the educational process illustrated a commitment to shared power dynamics. Despite differing positions, responsibilities,

and roles, the Hawk Elementary community worked towards creating an environment where power was shared and decision-making involved input from all stakeholders.

In summary, Hawk Elementary embraced the critical characteristics of a human-centered design circle, fostering mutual respect, trust, and shared goal-setting among participants. The intentional, relevant, and culturally responsive collaboration and communication created a dynamic and inclusive educational community where power dynamics were shared, aligning with the principles advocated by the Global Family Research Project and Ishimaru et al. (2018).

Solidarity Driven Model

Hawk Elementary's Human-Centered Design team aligns closely with the research conducted by Ann M. Ishimaru, Aditi Rajendran, Charlene Montano Nola, and Negan Bang on human design circles. The researchers, in their study, “Community Design Circles: Co-designing Justice and Wellbeing in Family-Community-Research Partnerships” (2018), discuss the role of the “human” as a community within the design circle. Hawk Elementary's team echoes this approach by actively engaging families, educators, and community members in a collaborative effort to address the unique needs of students, particularly those with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs).

The Human-Centered Design team at Hawk Elementary exemplifies a solidarity-driven process similar to the one theorized by Ishimaru et al. (2018). Their proactive initiative of organizing an IEP workshop reflects a commitment to partnership between families, educators, and researchers. The team's focus on building social networks, enhancing communication, addressing stigmas, and adopting an individualized approach

aligns with the foundational co-design dimensions identified by the research team – building from family definitions of well-being and justice, disrupting formative, asymmetrical power dynamics, and building capacity for facial dreaming and change-making. For instance, the emphasis on building from family definitions of well-being and justice is evident in Hawk Elementary's efforts to understand and address the specific needs of students on IEPs through collaborative discussions and initiatives. The team's commitment to disrupting formative, asymmetrical power dynamics is reflected in their intentional and inclusive approach to decision-making, involving input from various stakeholders regardless of their positions or roles.

Cooperative Engagement Strategies

The Hawk Elementary Human-Centered Design Team aligned with collective research on human-centered design models supporting cooperative engagement strategies, particularly in enhancing power-shifting and power-sharing between educators and families (Casper, 2019; Global Research Center, 2018; Ishimaru et al., 2018).

The team's approach was rooted in the principles of the human-centered design model, fostering a collaborative environment that placed families at the center of organizational practices and transformed them into change agents. The alignment was evident in their commitment to student success, acknowledgment of families' fundamental roles, and identification of barriers to facilitate trust-based partnerships (Weiss et al., 2010).

Discussion of Findings

This section examines the family engagement literature explored in chapter 2, comparing common themes, methods, and approaches. Embracing human-centered

design principles, the study positions families as critical influencers in education. It aligns with broader research, emphasizing the vital role of families in fostering student success.

Empowering Families through Human-Centered Design Teams

Human-centered design emerged as a powerful strategy, aligned with the collective research of Caspe (2019), the Global Research Center (2018), and Ishimaru et al. (2018). This approach places families at the forefront of organizational practice, moving beyond participation to full engagement. This approach transformed the Hawk Elementary Human-Centered Design team into change agents, emphasizing their potential impact on school community dynamics.

The first step in the five-step process advocated by the human-centered design team aligns with Weiss et al. (2010) research that explains educational leaders and families, as co-designers, prioritize student success and recognize the fundamental role of families in children's learning. The design challenge, as the second step, echoed Caspe and McWilliams (2019) by focusing on keeping participants engaged and empowering multiple family perspectives. In addition, practical measures, such as breaking into small groups for brainstorming, aligned with the collaborative ethos of human-centered design teams.

Empathy, the third step, was identified as a critical component by Caspe and McWilliams (2019) and Ishimaru et al. (2018), emphasizing its role in power-sharing and power-shifting within the team. Listening attentively without dominating the conversation became pivotal in establishing equitable roles.

The fourth step involved co-designing a prototype, aligning with Caspe and McWilliams (2019), Ishimaru et al. (2019), and Weiss et al. (2010), marking a phase

where power-shifting and power-sharing between participants manifested through idea-sharing, solutions, and critiques.

The collaborative solution development in the final step resonated with the broader research on disrupting normative power structures (Caspé & McWilliams, 2019) and fostering collaboration through power-sharing and shifting.

Illustrating the impact, the longitudinal study by Ishimaru (2018) provided a real-world example of how human-centered design teams empowered families. Similarly, the dialogue among the Human-Centered Design (HCD) team members in session 5, particularly the reflections from parents Jessica and Sam, community member Beau, and teacher Beth, provides insights into the impact of the HCD team on power-shifting and sharing.

Jessica (P) - *I am really glad you did this because never in a thousand years would I actively pursue to join in. I am very much in my own shell, and so I love this.*

Sam (P) - *Like we said last time, at first, we were like, ah no, we don't want to come, but you sounded so sweet on the phone. I just could not say no! -Everyone laughs- In my head I was like I don't want to do this, but oh, I can't say no! Because I never get out. When she called, I was like who is this and she had such an upbeat attitude. I was like oh my gosh she is so sweet I am going to just show up!*

Jessica (P) - *It worked for me too! This is my first things that I have done in a long time.*

Beau (C.L) - *Now you are more likely to get involved.*

Sam (P) - *I feel like I have met a really great group of people, and like I said, now we chat. When I see people, I invite them to join. I am glad did this. I made friends and learned more about my kids' education.*

Beth (T) - *I love when I see you guys now. Out front I'm like - oh hi!*

The dialogue highlighted the transformative effect of the HCD team on power-shifting and sharing, with members expressing newfound involvement, friendships, and knowledge about their children's education.

In summary, the principles of human-centered design consistently aligned with existing research, providing a structured approach to empower families, disrupt normative power structures, and foster collaboration through power-sharing and shifting. The qualitative reflections from the HCD team focus on the tangible impact on individuals, emphasizing the potential for deeper family engagement and collaboration within the school community.

Elevating Marginalized Family Voices

The principles outlined in the research findings of Caspe & McWilliams (2019) regarding meaningful family engagement found significance in Hawk Elementary HCD Team practices. Both emphasized empowering families, addressing barriers, and elevating marginalized voices. Hawk Elementary's approach aligned with the idea that power-shifting and sharing between educators and families could be facilitated through human-centered design circles, as advocated by Caspe and McWilliams (2019).

In San Diego, a design team experience reflected in Ishimaru et al.'s (2018) research demonstrated the empowerment of marginalized family voices. The research also aligned with the Hawk Elementary Human Design Team, where language resources

were ensured to be available, allowing families to express themselves in their language of choice. The practice of educators listening without speaking further echoed the emphasis on elevating marginalized voices and fostering trust.

The Hawk Elementary team's focus on offering multiple ways to communicate ideas, as suggested by Lopez (2016) and Garcia et al. (2016), paralleled the emphasis on diverse communication platforms within human-centered design teams, ensuring a more equitable platform for co-designers. Both stressed the importance of considering the unique contexts and “how can” questions of participants to elevate ideas and promote well-being, power-sharing, and educational justice.

Addressing Challenges, Assumptions, and Biases

Hawk Elementary's research on family engagement aligned with broader findings in the field, stressing the significance of parental values in fostering their children's commitment to education despite facing various barriers (Baker et al., 2016; Ishimaru et al., 2018; Smith, 2006). Acknowledging families' resilience and aspirational capital in navigating educational challenges resonated with Yosso's perspective (Pearson et al., 2014). Like the cited research, Hawk Elementary recognized that addressing assumptions and biases was pivotal in building trust and cooperation and facilitating power-sharing structures (Ishimaru, 2018; Ishimaru et al., 2018).

In alignment with The Washington State Family Engagement Report's (2021) recommendations, Hawk Elementary emphasized the importance of anti-racist education, culturally responsive practices, and recognizing and removing biases to ensure equitable access for all families. The collaborative approach advocated by the report, involving educators, families, and students, coincides with Hawk Elementary's commitment to

teamwork and active participation, aimed explicitly at supporting marginalized families in navigating the educational system (Yosso, 2005).

Additionally, Hawk Elementary's importance on family engagement echoed the conclusions of The National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance (2016), which identified family engagement as a robust predictor of children's academic success. The toolkit created by the center, emphasizing linguistic and familial capital, building cultural bridges, developing trusting relationships, and engaging in data conversations, provided a framework aligned with Hawk Elementary's human-centered design approach. Both highlighted removing linguistic barriers, valuing cultural heritage, and fostering collaborative decision-making and data sharing between schools and families.

The example of a human design team in Chicago, IL (Ishimaru et al., 2018) also mirrored Hawk Elementary's commitment to power-sharing between groups. The focus on building global indigeneity and solidarity across diverse Indigenous communities reflected Hawk Elementary's dedication to creating an inclusive and collaborative environment. Visual activities, such as the “river of life” exercise, aligned with Hawk Elementary's emphasis on meaningful conversations and collaborative strategies within their human-centered design process.

Collaborative and Inclusive Approach

Collaborative decision-making emerged as a cornerstone in various research studies, including Baker et al. (2016), Smith (2006), and OSPI (2022), highlighting its fundamental role in effective family engagement. This approach advocated in literature (Casper & McWilliams, 2019; Ishimaru, 2018; Ishimaru et al., 2018) provided the Hawk

Elementary research team with a practical avenue to power-shifting and share solution-oriented practices.

In alignment with research recommendations, the Hawk Elementary HCD team focused on enhancing collaborative decision-making by establishing equitable leadership and shared responsibility, incorporating co-leadership through explicit norms and objectives (Rees, 2021). This commitment to a balanced power dynamic between educators and families reflected the broader strategies outlined in the literature.

Actively engaging with existing family groups, such as Parent Teacher Associations (PTA), and forming partnerships with community-based organizations were an unexpected component of Hawk Elementary's approach. This emphasis on fostering family leadership and advocacy aligned with recommendations from Baker et al. (2016), Folres & Callahan (2017), and Rees (2021).

Examining the Hawk Elementary research team's real-world examples further stressed collaborative decision-making's adaptability and applications. They shared similarities with the Los Angeles CADRE team, which created a space for design circle participants to redefine parent relationships with teachers for the well-being and justice of South L.A. students of color. Through storytelling, the community design circle fostered solidarity between African American and Latinx families facing similar prejudice, disrupting normative power dynamics, involving reflection on biases, observing perspectives, challenging roles, and cultivating vulnerability through role-playing and collective reflection (Ishimaru et al., 2018).

Similarly, the Hawk Elementary team mirrored the collaborative decision-making strategies observed in Salt Lake City, where a human-centered design team focused on

redesigning the School Community Council to authentically engage Spanish-speaking Latinx families in decision-making. The co-designers, including families, educators, administrators, and community members, facilitated discussions in both English and Spanish. A Latino faculty researcher led design circles to address power dynamics, using a reflection model based on session transcripts to ensure equitable participation and diverse voices in subsequent sessions (Ishimaru et al., 2018).

These examples highlighted the consistency of collaborative decision-making as a core principle across diverse studies and its practical implementation within the Hawk Elementary research team. The alignment between the research findings and the practices of Hawk Elementary underscores the universal importance of collaborative decision-making in fostering empowered family engagement and shared leadership within educational settings.

Power-Shifting and Power-Sharing Pushes Educators out of their Comfort Zone

The Hawk Elementary HCD team, guided by the insights from Caspe and McWilliams (2019), acknowledged the transformative potential of power-shifting and sharing within human-centered design teams. It recognized the discomfort associated with these processes as essential for establishing trust and understanding between families and educators.

The team emphasized the need for targeted interventions to address the challenges faced by some parents, such as chronic illness or homelessness. Here, the community liaisons played a crucial role in supporting educators, helping them navigate the potential discomfort associated with these circumstances. The liaisons served as bridges between educators and families, contributing to a more empathetic and inclusive approach.

Teacher Beth, a key participant in the HCD team, played a pivotal role in embodying these principles. Her involvement in collaborative discussions and commitment to understanding the life circumstances of school families showcased a dedication to reducing barriers to engagement. Teacher Beth's active participation within the HCD team, supported by the community liaisons, contributed to a more empathetic and inclusive educational environment at Hawk Elementary.

Influenced by the perspectives of Baker et al. (2014), Smith (2006), and Yosso (2005), the HCD team at Hawk Elementary emphasized the importance of comprehensively understanding the life circumstances of school families and strategically reducing barriers to engagement. The team recognized the significance of educators refraining from blaming families for academic challenges and, instead, assisting them by recognizing the cultural wealth within their communities. The HCD team's commitment to these principles pushed educators out of their comfort zones, encouraging a more inclusive and empathetic approach to family and community engagement.

Exploration of Theoretical Insights

Aligned with broader studies (Baker et al., 2016; Jeynes, 2005; Smith, 2005), Hawk Elementary's research emphasized the potentially more significant impact of implementing a human-centered design model over a traditional family engagement model. Unlike models where school staff initiates and directs parental involvement, the human-centered design approach intentionally shifts power dynamics from school leaders to parents, as highlighted by Caspe (2019), the Global Research Center (2018), and Ishimaru et al. (2018).

The collective research emphasized the crucial need for collaboration, cooperation, and teamwork between schools and families, especially in marginalized communities, for the success of student outcomes (Baker et al., 2016; Epstein & Sheldon, 2006; Galindo & Sheldon, 2012; Henderson & Mapp, 2002; Jeynes, 2005; Rees, 2021; Smith, 2006). The HCD team approach acknowledged the importance of a shared responsibility in fostering positive educational outcomes. Moreover, parent voices are elevated when adopting an asset-based approach to family engagement that incorporates components of community cultural wealth. This inclusive model fostered empathy between families and schools, creating a conducive environment for diverse teams.

Hawk Elementary's research aligned with these findings, emphasizing the significance of an inclusive, diverse team environment where parents can actively contribute their thoughts, reflections, and goals to the family engagement team. The asset-based approach set the stage for meaningful collaboration and shared decision-making, ultimately contributing to a more empowering and practical educational experience.

Significance of the Findings Concerning the Research Questions

This section delves into the impact of the Hawk Elementary family engagement Human-Centered Design team, offering insights into the four research questions surrounding power dynamics within educational settings. The findings emphasize how the human-centered design approach disrupted normative power structures, fostering trust-based partnerships and asset-based understanding between leadership and the design team. The section also highlights the collaborative norms characterizing how human-centered design teams value and leverage community cultural wealth, emphasizing the

significance of diverse cultural assets in creating inclusive, equitable, and supportive educational environments.

Question #1: Findings

What impact does a human-centered design team have on power-shifting and sharing between leadership and the human-centered design team?

The impact of a human-centered design (HCD) team on power-shifting and sharing between leadership and the team was observed through various key indicators, including overall participation, dialogue dynamics, and the outcomes of the team's collaborative efforts. The synthesis of findings revealed a notable shift in power dynamics, emphasizing inclusivity, collaboration, and shared ownership within the team.

The sessions featured diverse community leaders, parents, and educational leaders contributing to inclusive representation. Parents consistently exhibited higher attendance, demonstrating active engagement and empowerment. In contrast, educational leaders showed lower attendance rates, suggesting potential power differentials and varied levels of influence.

In the first two sessions, my role as the facilitator was crucial in initiating topics, posing questions, and guiding discussions. However, a deliberate effort was made to step back and allow participant-driven conversations, showcasing a commitment to inclusivity and shared decision-making. As sessions progressed, a shift in speaking time distribution was evident, with parents consistently occupying a significant portion. The decrease in facilitator speaking time and increased participation from parents and community liaisons reflected a change in power dynamics, aligning with HCD principles. Instances of unplanned conversations, such as the detour into IEP discussions in session 6,

demonstrated the adaptability of the HCD model. These conversations allowed for genuine exploration of concerns and experiences, aligning with the user empathy principles of HCD.

Task assignments and planning responsibilities for events like the IEP workshop showcased a collective approach, with participants seamlessly volunteering for various roles, emphasizing shared responsibility and power-sharing among parents, community liaisons, and educational leaders. The principal's involvement in session 5 and consideration of connecting with the PTA indicated a willingness to collaborate and share power with the HCD team. This demonstrated recognition of the team's impact and a commitment to fostering a connected community.

Triangulated participant feedback consistently articulated the positive impact of diverse perspectives and the importance of having educational leaders, community members, and families in the conversation. The feedback underscored the value of inclusivity and collaboration in shaping more comprehensive and supportive discussions.

In conclusion, the HCD team's impact on power-shifting and sharing between leadership and the team was evident throughout the sessions. The HCD model's principles, including inclusivity, collaboration, and participant-driven discussions, facilitated a balanced and dynamic exchange of ideas. The findings suggest a potential transformation in decision-making approaches within educational settings, emphasizing the influence of family engagement on reshaping power dynamics. The HCD team's collective efforts contributed to a more inclusive and collaborative partnership, ultimately influencing positive change within the educational community at Hawk Elementary.

Question #2: Findings

How did power-sharing and power-shifting occur between leadership and the human-centered design team?

A balanced power structure characterized by relationship building, collective decision-making, collaboration, inclusivity, and a shared commitment to addressing parents' needs was evident throughout the series of family engagement meetings. To analyze “how” this occurred, I observed the progression of family-led discussions and problem-solving during each session, ultimately leading to the generation of action steps for a school-wide event. The power-sharing and shifting dynamics unfolded organically, and each meeting shed light on the mechanisms driving this process.

In session 1, the facilitation process laid the groundwork for power-sharing. Introducing participants, sharing personal motivations, and reflecting on positive aspects of Hawk Elementary fostered connections. Participants' diverse motivations, from personal growth to advocacy, highlighted individual purposes. Power-sharing occurred as participants voiced motivations, established connections, and collectively agreed on future meetings.

Session 2 introduced new participants, influencing group dynamics. Individual experiences and reflections were shared, emphasizing the importance of accommodating diverse learning styles. Power dynamics subtly shifted as participants contributed unique perspectives, fostering a collaborative culture. The absence of the school principal eliminated potential hierarchical power structures. The focus on collaboration and brainstorming signaled a collective commitment to addressing issues and creating an inclusive environment.

Session 3 solidified power-sharing through a brainstorming session. Participants collectively narrowed big ideas into potential projects, guided by the facilitator. Emphasis on “skills day” and a “flag project” indicated shared responsibility for envisioning initiatives. Open conversations about cultural identity created trust and set the foundation for collaboration.

Session 4 revealed a more casual and open atmosphere. Parent Sam took the initiative to steer the discussion, indicating a shift in power dynamics. Participants desired practical and interactive learning experiences, narrowing down ideas to a career/skills day, a robotics club, or a cultural activity. Parents became more outspoken about ideas, and community engagement perspectives were introduced.

Before session 5, discussions with the school principal revealed potential shifts in power dynamics. His interest in merging the family engagement team with the PTA demonstrated a willingness to consider alternative structures. The decision to invite PTA representatives marked a pivotal moment, indicating a possible shift in leadership and future continuity.

Session 5 introduced new members, Anna (PTA president) and Christine (PTA secretary), potentially shifting power dynamics with their leadership roles. Anna's external leadership introduced a new human-centered design (HCD) team dynamic. Sam's statement, "I have faith in this (the group)!" reflected a shared belief and ownership in the collective efforts of the HCD team, emphasizing a shift from a traditional top-down leadership model to a more collaborative decision-making process. The discussion on PTA stigma revealed pre-existing assumptions and power dynamics. Anna's response emphasized inclusivity, challenging traditional perceptions of the PTA

and setting the stage for a positive shift in perception, with some expressing a change in their views of the PTA. The idea of merging the HCD team and PTA was proposed, showcasing a collaborative effort to redefine and expand the group's activities.

Session 6 focused on summer activities and fall event planning. Beth emphasized collaborative potential between school leadership and parents, indicating a shared approach. Sam highlighted the importance of a team effort, emphasizing collaboration between teachers and parents. The dialogue reflected a shared understanding that collaboration creates a more secure and supportive environment for children. Beth's appreciation for parents' efforts underscored a shift toward recognizing the importance of shared perspectives.

Session 7 continued the discussion on PTA stigma, with participants expressing reservations about its perceived exclusivity. Parents Sam, Katie, and Jessica suggested a need for a more open and inclusive approach, challenging stereotypes and fostering a sense of belonging. The team discussed Anna's role in dispelling the PTA stigma, highlighting a power shift in shaping perceptions. Emphasis was placed on creating diverse volunteer opportunities, signaling a shift from traditional PTA roles. The dialogue highlighted a transformative process within the team, showing a commitment to redefining the PTA and making it more accessible.

Session 8 outlined action steps for planning an IEP workshop, emphasizing accessibility and inclusivity. The commitment to evolving and adapting to meet the needs of a diverse parent community reflected a shared power structure. Beth's reflection on the initial discussions about the IEP workshop emphasized its continued importance and high

demand. Team members' camaraderie and shared purpose indicated a collaborative and inclusive power structure.

Session 9 revealed participants' eagerness to take on roles for the IEP workshop, reflecting a shared commitment and sense of responsibility. Recognition of the team's learning process and increased awareness of the workshop's importance highlighted a shared power structure. Anna and Beth emphasized the importance of inviting everyone, showcasing an inclusive approach. The team's acknowledgment of varied struggles among parents reflected a commitment to diversity and inclusivity.

Power-sharing and power-shifting between leadership and the human-centered design team occurred through dynamic processes. Initially, the team operated with a collaborative power structure, recognizing distinct roles for the school, parents, and external support. The participants acknowledged a potential sense of “inferiority” among parents in the early stages, but this evolved into a shared space where no signs of inferiority or superiority were displayed. The distribution of “talk time” from sessions two through nine, where parents spoke 51.1% of the time, educational leaders, teachers, para-educators, and leaders (including myself) contributed 27.1%, and community members accounted for 21.2%, reflects a shared balance within the human-centered design team. This distribution demonstrates a departure from the traditional hierarchy of educational leadership-led initiatives, disrupting the conventional power dynamics. The higher engagement from parents indicates an intentional effort to create a collaborative space where diverse voices play a substantial role in decision-making processes, fostering shared leadership and inclusivity within the team.

Overall, power-sharing within the HCD team was characterized by a collaborative spirit, shared goals, and a commitment to inclusivity. The evolving dynamics showcased the team's adaptability and commitment to creating a more inclusive and supportive educational environment through shared decision-making and collaboration.

In conclusion, the findings highlight the transformative impact of human-centered design on organizational dynamics, emphasizing the significance of reshaping power dynamics and enhancing collaboration within educational settings. The five-step process: prioritizing student success, creating a design challenge, empathy, co-designing and collaborating on a solution, facilitated trust-based partnerships, tapping into participants' community cultural wealth and fostering asset-based understanding. The design challenge, empathy-building, co-designing a prototype, and collaborative solution development marked the phases of power-shifting and power-sharing between leadership and the human-centered design team.

The dialogue from sessions 1 to 9 among HCD team members showcased the effect, expressing newfound involvement, friendships, and knowledge about their children's education. Qualitative reflections from the HCD team focus on the tangible impact on individuals, emphasizing the potential for deeper, more meaningful family engagement and collaboration within the school community.

Question #3: Findings

In what ways did the human-centered design team work toward reducing the opportunity gap among marginalized students?

The IEP workshop at Hawk Elementary played a crucial role in reducing the opportunity gap among marginalized students by positively influencing family

engagement and knowledge. This targeted intervention addressed the needs of students on Individualized Education Programs (IEPs), a demographic often associated with marginalized groups. The workshop empowered parents with comprehensive information and support, enabling them to advocate effectively for their children's education. The indirect impact on students was substantial, as informed and engaged parents collaborated with educators, leading to more tailored and effective educational plans. Thirty Hawk Elementary parents attended the IEP workshop, expressing interest in a second session in Spring 2024.

Aligning with research emphasizing family engagement's crucial role in student success, particularly in learning to read faster, achieving higher grades and test scores, taking challenging classes, adapting better to school with improved attendance, developing better social skills, and graduating (Caspé & McWilliams, 2019; Baker et al., 2016; Garcia et al., 2016; Henderson & Mapp, 2002; Jeynes, 2005; Smith, 2006; Song, 2015), the Human-Centered Design (HCD) team at Hawk Elementary embraced an inclusive approach. The team acknowledged families' agency and contribution, especially those from marginalized backgrounds, in addressing the opportunity gap within the school community.

The HCD team's initiative stemmed from recognizing challenges faced by students on IEPs and the need for increased parental understanding. The idea of an IEP workshop emerged during sessions, with the team engaging in open dialogue, sharing personal experiences, and emphasizing diverse student needs. Dedicated sessions focused on planning, organizing the workshop, and discussing logistics, promoting inclusivity, collaboration, and continuous improvement with community engagement considerations.

The active participation of several HCD families, including those with students served by an IEP or expressing concerns, significantly influenced the team's initiatives. Their firsthand experiences enriched discussions, ensuring the IEP workshop's planning and implementation addressed specific needs. Direct involvement of individuals with IEP-related experiences contributed to a more targeted approach, empowering families to shape solutions, advocate for their children, and foster a sense of agency within the community.

Question #4: Findings

How do human-centered design teams value community cultural wealth?

The Hawk Elementary Human-Centered Design (HCD) team was dedicated to embracing and enhancing community cultural wealth, drawing inspiration from Yosso's (2005) framework. This approach is particularly evident in their meticulous engagement with diverse forms of capital within the marginalized community they served. The team, committed to valuing and leveraging cultural wealth, actively incorporated Yosso's six forms of capital – aspirational, linguistic, familial, social, navigational, and resistant– into their initiatives.

Aspirational Capital

In the initial session, the Hawk Elementary Human-Centered Design (HCD) team laid the foundation for their commitment to community cultural wealth by actively seeking and incorporating aspirational capital. During session 1, parents were invited to share their perspectives on what they enjoyed about Hawk Elementary and what they were curious about regarding Hawk Elementary. This participatory approach allowed the

team to gain valuable insights into the community's aspirations and dreams, forming the basis for their subsequent engagement with aspirational capital.

As the research progressed, the team demonstrated a seamless integration of the aspirations voiced by parents into their initiatives, exemplified by the planning of Individualized Education Program (IEP) workshops. In this instance, the team ensured that the aspirations expressed by parents for their children's education took a central role in the discussions. By actively incorporating these aspirations, the HCD team not only validated the parents' curiosities and hopes but also fostered a collaborative atmosphere that contributed to developing a shared vision for the students.

Linguistic Capital

During their ethnographic study, the Hawk Elementary Human-Centered Design team recognized the significance of linguistic capital within the community. While not facing a language barrier within the group, the team still considered linguistic diversity a valuable asset, acknowledging and respecting various communication styles. Even without a language barrier, the team actively integrated linguistic capital into event planning and communication strategies, understanding that communication richness extends beyond language proficiency to include diverse cultural expressions.

By leveraging their traditions during the study, the team demonstrated a commitment to understanding and valuing linguistic capital, contributing to a more inclusive and culturally sensitive educational environment. This proactive and inclusive approach ensured that linguistic diversity was not merely a factor addressed in overcoming obstacles. However, a fundamental element seamlessly integrated into the

planning of events, fostering an environment where all forms of communication were respected and celebrated.

Familial Capital

The HCD team consistently valued familial capital throughout their research. Throughout each session, the team actively engaged with families to explore and appreciate their cultural knowledge, including community history and memory. In these collaborative discussions, parents were encouraged to share insights, emphasizing the significance of familial narratives as a form of cultural knowledge and as a foundation for decision-making within the educational context.

The “talk time” data, reflective of the collaborative power-sharing dynamics within the HCD team, showcased a sustained commitment to familial capital. Parents' cultural insights and memories from session 2 continued to play a pivotal role in influencing decision-making processes. This was evident when addressing potential changes or improvements within the educational system, as the team actively sought and incorporated the familial capital present within the community.

By consistently acknowledging and integrating familial capital across multiple sessions, the HCD team demonstrated a holistic approach to decision-making. This ongoing commitment not only valued the cultural knowledge embedded in community history and memory but also highlighted the integration of these insights into their educational initiatives. Ultimately, this approach contributed to a more culturally informed and inclusive educational environment at Hawk Elementary.

Social Capital

Throughout sessions 1 through 9, the HCD team strategically leveraged social capital by engaging with parents, community liaisons, and teachers. Their collaborative efforts were integral to creating a supportive and inclusive educational environment. The team recognized the importance of diverse voices and resources within the community.

Participants brainstormed many ways of enhancing the Hawk Elementary community, for example, bringing in high school students to assist younger students or organizing a community skills day event; the HCD team demonstrated a commitment to expanding social capital. By involving parents, community liaisons, and teachers in these initiatives, they strengthened existing networks and cultivated new avenues of connections within the community. This collaborative approach enhanced the school's social capital by tapping into the expertise and support of various stakeholders.

Navigational Capital

Hawk Elementary's Human-Centered Design team also made navigational capital a key focus by actively working to understand and address barriers within the educational system. An example of this commitment was the team's recognition of the challenges faced by students being served on IEPs.

Acknowledging the unique needs of students on IEPs, the team strategically leveraged navigational capital to develop a targeted solution—the IEP workshop. This initiative addressed specific challenges by providing valuable information and support to students and their families. The workshop became a testament to the team's commitment to navigating the educational system, demonstrating their ability to identify and overcome institutional barriers.

Beau's (C.L) connection to district resources was a crucial aspect of this navigational process, facilitating a more efficient and informed approach to developing solutions. By recognizing and actively addressing challenges faced by students on IEPs, the HCD team showcased a commitment to navigating the educational system with a focus on meeting the unique needs of marginalized students.

Resistant Capital

The Hawk Elementary Human-Centered Design actively recognized and supported resistant capital by valuing knowledge and skills fostered through oppositional behavior challenging inequity. This involved seeking and acknowledging perspectives that diverged from traditional norms and understanding their potential for transformative change in resisting systemic injustices. The team embraced these alternative forms of capital, actively involving families, especially those with experiences related to IEPs, in shaping solutions and advocating for their children. This approach ensured that resistant capital within the community was recognized and actively harnessed to challenge systemic inequities within the educational system.

In conclusion, the team manifested a holistic and culturally sensitive educational environment by recognizing and respecting the aspirations, linguistic capabilities, cultural knowledge, social networks, and navigation through institutional challenges within the community. Their dedication to acknowledging and supporting resistant capital further highlighted a commitment to challenging systemic inequities and empowering families to advocate for their children. The Hawk Elementary HCD team's approach effectively woven these various forms of capital, fostering an inclusive, equitable, and supportive educational atmosphere.

Consideration of Limitations

Understanding and applying the research necessitates acknowledging its limitations, significantly influencing the findings. Reflexivity, in particular, played a crucial role in maintaining the research's integrity and effectiveness. As the researcher, I actively embraced reflexivity, consistently reflecting on my biases, assumptions, and values throughout the research. This ongoing introspection allowed me to critically assess how my background, experiences, and perspectives influenced various aspects of the research, including its design, interactions with participants, and interpretation of findings. This self-awareness empowered me to approach the study with enhanced transparency, rigor, and sensitivity toward the diverse needs and viewpoints within the school community.

Moreover, reflexivity was a valuable tool in navigating the intricate ethical considerations and power dynamics inherent in the research process, fostering a more inclusive and equitable approach to Human-Centered Design. By fully embracing reflexivity, I aimed to bolster the research's validity, reliability, and ethical integrity, ultimately striving towards more impactful outcomes for the Hawk Elementary students, families, and educators.

While reflexivity offers significant benefits, it also carries the potential to inadvertently limit my ability to fully capture and represent the multiplicity of perspectives within the school community. Therefore, it was crucial to strike a delicate balance between leveraging reflexivity to promote transparency and rigor in the research and ensuring inclusivity and representation of all stakeholders' voices. Recognizing the

potential limitations of reflexivity is essential to the ongoing efforts to promote a more inclusive and representative approach to Human-Centered Design at Hawk Elementary.

Second, it is important to note that the research findings are specific to Hawk Elementary and its human-centered design team practices. The school's context, including its demographics, structures, and cultural contexts, may significantly influence the applicability of these findings to other educational settings. Therefore, caution should be exercised when attempting to generalize these results, as they may not hold in other contexts. This understanding is crucial in our collective efforts to promote a more inclusive and representative approach to Human-Centered Design.

Third, these qualitative reflections and perceptions of participants are crucial components of the study. However, it is vital to acknowledge the potential for bias and subjectivity in these reflections. Participants may share experiences based on their perspectives, which may not fully represent the objective reality.

Fourth, there is a potential limitation in the generalizability of findings to Hawk Elementary' urban settings. The school is classified as within a mid-size city or small territory inside an urbanized area and inside a principal city with a population of less than 100,000 people. Differences in school demographics and community dynamics may influence the effectiveness of the human-centered design approach.

Fifth, it is essential to acknowledge that some voices were inadvertently missed despite efforts to ensure inclusivity. One significant barrier was linguistic diversity, which posed challenges in effectively engaging with all school community members. While attempts were made to accommodate diverse language needs, there were instances where linguistic barriers unintentionally limited the participation of specific stakeholders,

particularly non-English-speaking families. Additionally, time constraints presented another limitation, as the demands of the school schedule and project timelines sometimes restricted the extent to which all voices could be heard and considered. Despite proactive efforts to engage with stakeholders, time constraints and language barriers may have inadvertently excluded some perspectives from the research process. Addressing these limitations will ensure a more inclusive and representative approach to Human-Centered Design at Hawk Elementary.

Finally, the study's limitation lay in its emphasis on the impact confined to the Human Design Team at Hawk Elementary. While recognizing the positive changes achieved within the team, the study highlighted a potential limitation by calling for an explicit consideration of the broader systemic impact on the educational institution or district. The need to understand the scalability and sustainability of the approach was acknowledged, and a commitment to ongoing research and monitoring within the district was emphasized. However, the research might have only provided a partial understanding of how the approach could be applied and sustained at a larger scale or over an extended period, indicating the potential need for future research or evaluation efforts.

Contribution to Existing Literature

The research contributed significantly to the literature by addressing crucial gaps and extending the understanding of power dynamics within human-centered design teams, particularly in the context of suburban elementary schools. While existing literature touched on power-shifting dynamics, this work delved deeper, providing valuable evidence on when and how power-sharing or shifting occurred. The emphasis on

clarifying the interactions leading to power-sharing outcomes, such as trust, co-creation, and problem-solving, filled a critical void in the then-current knowledge landscape.

Moreover, the research focused on a different sample population and demographics than existing studies. Many human design circle research projects had concentrated on urban schools with high concentrations of marginalized communities, leaving a notable gap in understanding power dynamics in suburban elementary schools. By exploring this distinct setting, the research not only broadened the scope of existing literature but also added a unique perspective to the discourse on family engagement and power dynamics within the educational system.

This research was among the few to investigate a mid-size city or small territory inside an urbanized area and inside a principal city with a population of less than 100,000 people, which was noteworthy. By shedding light on the dynamics of human-centered design teams in suburban schools, the research provided valuable insights that educators could leverage to benefit student achievement. This recognition of the profound opportunity for growth in implementing human-centered design teams in suburban settings underscored the practical implications of the findings for educators and educational policymakers.

Hawk Elementary's research contributed to the literature by addressing gaps in understanding power-sharing dynamics and exploring a different context, specifically among mid-size urban elementary schools. This expansion of the research landscape was crucial for informing educators about the potential benefits of human-centered design teams and their impact on student achievement, thereby bridging a critical knowledge gap in the field.

Implications

Broader Implications

The Human-Centered Design (HCD) team's findings have broader implications for the research community, particularly in educational settings and community engagement. The identified themes—fostering connection and engagement, navigating power dynamics, assessing the impact of parent-teacher association (PTA) involvement, recognizing the role of inclusion, and emphasizing mutual respect through the appreciation of community cultural assets—provide valuable insights that can shape future research and practices in several ways.

The emphasis on fostering connection and trust through shared common interests stresses the importance of building meaningful relationships within educational communities. This theme suggests that future research should explore the impact of shared goals and interests in fostering collaboration among diverse stakeholders. Understanding how connection and trust contribute to a supportive community can inform the development of strategies to enhance engagement in educational contexts.

Exploring power-sharing and power-shifting dynamics within the HCD team highlights the need for research that delves into equitable decision-making processes within educational teams. The observed shift in leadership dynamics and the commitment to inclusivity suggest that future studies could investigate the impact of such dynamics on team effectiveness and overall community engagement. This theme prompts a deeper examination of how power dynamics influence collaborative efforts in educational settings.

The insights into the impact of PTA involvement on the Family Design Team raise questions about the potential benefits and challenges of integrating different parent-led initiatives. Research in this area could explore the dynamics of collaboration between parent groups and educational teams, focusing on understanding how such collaborations can positively influence school culture and family engagement. Additionally, merging the family engagement team and the PTA opens avenues for research on effective strategies for integrating diverse parent-led efforts.

The theme of inclusion as a significant factor in student and family engagement emphasizes the importance of creating inclusive learning environments. Future research could further investigate the effectiveness of inclusive practices in education, particularly in addressing diverse needs and fostering a sense of belonging among students and families. The team's commitment to practical considerations for accommodating neurodiverse learners suggests research exploring inclusive strategies tailored to different learning styles and needs.

Finally, the theme of mutual respect through valuing community cultural assets highlights the transformative power of cultural competence in educational settings. This theme suggests that future research should explore the impact of cultural awareness and appreciation on community engagement and overall school climate. Understanding how mutual respect and appreciation contribute to positive educational environments can inform strategies for promoting cultural competence in schools.

In conclusion, the themes identified by the HCD team's collaborative efforts offer valuable insights that can shape the direction of future research in educational settings. These themes touch upon critical aspects of community engagement, collaboration, and

inclusion, providing a foundation for further exploration and developing evidence-based practices to enhance educational experiences for students and families.

Practical Implications

The practical implications of the findings from the Human-Centered Design (HCD) team's collaborative efforts can significantly impact a school district, influencing policies, practices, and overall educational experiences and include:

1. Building meaningful relationships
2. Equitable decision-making process
3. Collaboration with parent groups
4. Inclusive learning environments
5. Promoting cultural competence
6. Research-informed policy

Building Meaningful Relationships

Emphasizing the importance of fostering connection and trust through shared common interests suggests that school districts should prioritize initiatives that unite diverse stakeholders. Strategies that promote shared goals and interests among students, parents, teachers, and administrators can contribute to a more supportive and collaborative educational community.

Equitable Decision-Making Processes

The exploration of power-sharing and power-shifting dynamics highlights the need for school districts to assess and enhance the equity of decision-making processes within educational teams. Doing this may involve training programs, workshops, or

guidelines that promote inclusivity and ensure that all voices, including parents and educators, are considered in decision-making.

Collaboration with Parent Groups

The insights into the impact of PTA involvement on the Family Design Team suggest that school districts should actively seek collaborations between different parent-led initiatives and educational teams. Understanding the dynamics of such collaborations can inform policies that encourage positive interactions, ultimately influencing school culture and enhancing family engagement.

Inclusive Learning Environments

The theme of inclusion highlights the significance of creating inclusive learning environments. School districts should focus on implementing and refining inclusive practices that address diverse needs, ensuring that students and families feel a sense of belonging. In order to support these practices, professional development for educators and the development of resources tailored to different learning styles and needs.

Promoting Cultural Competence

The theme of mutual respect through valuing community cultural assets highlights the transformative power of cultural competence. School districts should invest in initiatives that promote cultural awareness and appreciation, creating a positive school climate by integrating cultural diversity into curricula, organizing cultural events, and providing cultural competence training for educators.

Research-Informed Policies

Overall, the identified themes provide a foundation for research-informed policies and practices. School districts can benefit from staying current with research findings in

these areas and adapting their approaches accordingly, establishing channels for ongoing dialogue between researchers and practitioners to ensure that the latest insights are integrated into district policies.

By incorporating these practical implications into their strategies, school districts can create more inclusive, collaborative, and supportive educational environments that cater to the diverse needs and backgrounds of students, families, and educators.

Recommendations for Future Research

Building upon the collective efforts of the Human-Centered Design (HCD) team, this research yields several recommendations—primarily, cultivating connections and trust among diverse stakeholders within the school community. Strategies encompass organizing events, workshops, or collaborative projects aligned with shared interests and goals to facilitate community solidarity and student outcomes.

Moreover, the research reveals the significance of proactively fostering collaborations between distinct parent-led initiatives and educational teams. Such collaborations, observed to positively influence school culture and family engagement, are facilitated by establishing platforms for dialogue and joint initiatives, fostering an inclusive approach that appreciates the contributions of all parent-led endeavors.

Additionally, a critical component involves focusing on implementing and refining inclusive practices within schools that cater to diverse needs and cultivate a sense of belonging. Essential measures include providing educators with professional development opportunities, crafting resources tailored to varied learning styles and needs, and ensuring that policies prioritize inclusivity.

Furthermore, the research advocates for strategic investments in initiatives that promote cultural awareness and appreciation and contribute to a positive school climate. These initiatives include integrating cultural diversity into curricula, orchestrating cultural events, and providing educators with training on cultural competence. Collectively, these efforts contribute to an educational environment that values and celebrates diverse backgrounds for tangible impact.

Finally, integral to the practical implications of the Human-Centered Design Team model, the research also emphasizes the importance of power sharing and shifting in the educational context. Recognizing and redistributing power within decision-making processes and collaborative initiatives is integral to dismantling traditional hierarchies and fostering a more equitable and dynamic educational landscape. Implementing these researched recommendations, inclusive of power dynamics, has contributed to the evolution of a more inclusive, collaborative, and supportive educational environment within the outlined framework of the Human-Centered Design Team model.

Conclusion

The comprehensive analysis and findings of the power-sharing dynamics within the team uncovered five overarching themes:

1. Connection and trust through shared common interests.
2. Power-sharing and power-shifting dynamics within the human design team.
3. Parent Teacher Association (PTA) involvement with the HCD team.
4. The crucial role of inclusion in effectively engaging students and families.
5. The importance of mutual respect is cultivated through appreciating each other's community cultural assets.

These themes provide actionable insights for fostering meaningful connections, equitable power dynamics, and a culture of respect and inclusion between families and educational leaders.

Interpreting findings through the narrative emerged over 6 months, revealing a sense of connection and trust among the participants, driven by a shared commitment to enhancing the educational experience for Hawk Elementary students. The power dynamics within the human-centered design team underwent a discernible shift, with active involvement from parents influencing decision-making processes and fostering a more balanced power-sharing dynamic.

Inclusion emerged as a significant factor in effective engagement strategies for students and families. The team's commitment to understanding and respecting diverse learning styles and cultural backgrounds highlighted a proactive approach to creating universally accessible engagement strategies. Personal stories became powerful conduits for promoting a sense of belonging and understanding, exemplifying the human aspect of inclusion.

Furthermore, the team emphasized the importance of mutual respect by valuing each other's cultural assets in the community. This commitment challenged stereotypes, encouraged positive experiences for parents, and exemplified the transformative power of mutual respect and appreciation for different perspectives.

Drawing from Vygotsky's sociocultural theory and Bourdieu's cultural capital theory, the theoretical framework provided a lens through which we analyzed the collaborative journey within the family engagement team. The alignment with these theories emphasized the significance of shared experiences, cultural development through

cooperative dialogues, and the role of social classes in collaborative efforts within the educational system. Exploring the concept of social capital within the Hawk Elementary community, the team's initiatives, such as the Individualized Education Program (IEP) workshop, also revealed the importance of fostering networks, enhancing communication, building relationships, and sharing values. The workshop exemplified genuine engagement, addressing diverse needs and dispelling stigmas associated with IEPs.

Finally, the conceptual framework based on Yosso's Community Cultural Wealth Theory provided a comprehensive understanding of the diverse forms of capital the human-centered design team leveraged. The team's actions and discussions reflected a commitment to creating an inclusive, culturally rich, empowering educational environment.

Chapter 5 contributes valuable insights into the collaborative dynamics of human-centered design teams and offers practical implications for educators, leaders, and researchers. The recommendations for future research, insights for further study, and reflections on personal implications underscore the significance of this research project in advancing our understanding of family engagement and student success within an educational setting.

Research Reflection

The Hawk Elementary Human-Centered Design (HCD) team's cooperative efforts contribute to ethnographic research within educational settings and family and community engagement. The emphasis on power-sharing, fostering connection, and engagement exemplifies the importance of interpersonal relationships in ethnographic

studies and challenges researchers to explore the impact of shared goals and interests on collaboration among diverse stakeholders.

Hawk Elementary HCD team's demonstration of power-sharing presents a valuable opportunity for further ethnographic studies. The team's approach to power dynamics within the educational setting offers a unique lens for researchers to delve into the intricate interplay between decision-making processes, collaboration, and community engagement. By closely examining how power is distributed and shared among the team members, researchers can gain insights into the effectiveness of such an approach in fostering a more inclusive and participatory educational environment. It opens avenues for future research to explore equitable decision-making practices within educational teams, acknowledging the evolving nature of power structures and their influence on overall community engagement.

The theme of inclusion and its significance in student and family engagement also introduces a critical dimension to ethnographic exploration. The Hawk Elementary HCD team's demonstration of power-sharing creates an avenue for researchers to examine the outcomes of such practices on student and family engagement. Ethnographic studies can focus on *how* power-sharing initiatives contribute to a sense of belonging, inclusivity, and mutual respect within the school community. This exploration can shed light on the broader impact of power dynamics on the educational experience and well-being of students and their families.

Moreover, the Hawk Elementary HCD team's demonstration of power-sharing offers a rich context for ethnographic studies exploring decision-making, collaboration, and community engagement within educational settings. It emphasizes mutual respect by

valuing community cultural assets. This dual focus highlights the potential of cultural competence in educational environments, prompting future ethnographers to delve into the intricate connections between cultural awareness and appreciation, their influence on community engagement and school climate, and their impact on student outcomes. Researchers can utilize the Hawk Elementary case as a starting point to investigate the broader implications of power-sharing practices, examining their impact on equity, inclusivity, and the overall quality of the educational experience.

As Hawk Elementary's pioneering efforts resonate district-wide with the implementation of HCD teams, each forging a unique path in inspiration, ideation, and implementation, the lasting impact becomes evident. This legacy is a model for empowering communities, creating a ripple effect that transcends individual schools and propels the district towards a future characterized by inclusivity, collaboration, and a student-centric educational approach.

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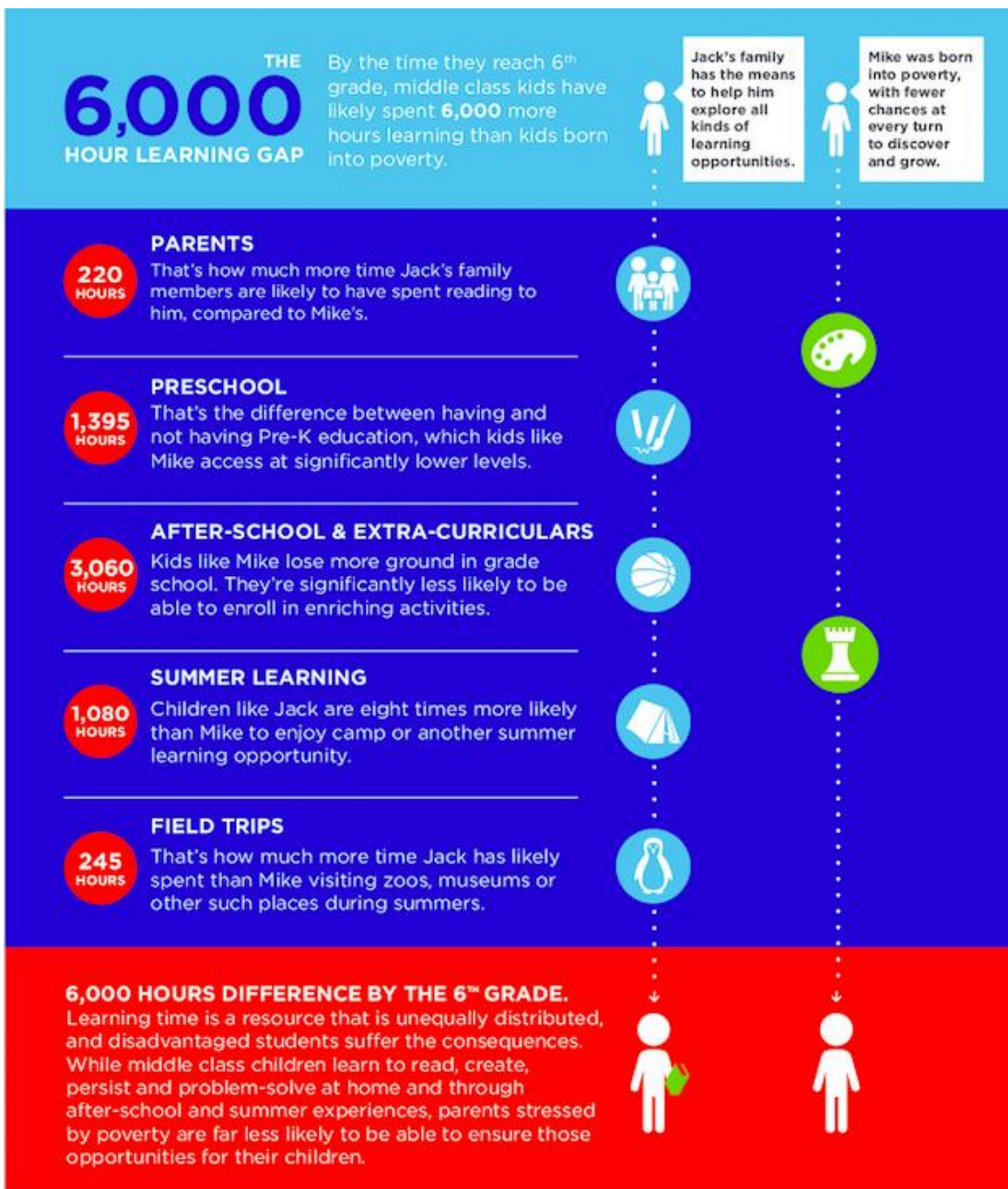
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Appendix A

The 6,000 Hour Learning Gap



SOURCES: Hofferth and Sandberg (2000) / Bureau of Labor Statistics (2012) / Barnett and Nores (2012) / Barnett, et al. (2012) / Wimer, et al. (2002); Afterschool Alliance (2013) / Gutierrez, K. D., et al. (2010) / Wimer, et al. (2006) / McLaughlin & Pitcock (2009) / Meyer, D., et al. (2004) / Institute of Museum and Library Services (2008) / Baifanz, R. (2009) / PBS Frontline, (2012)



Appendix B

Research Observation Indicators

| Research Questions: | Observational Indicators | Key Words or Phrases |
|--|--|--|
| <p>What impact does a human-centered design team have on power shifting and sharing between leadership and the HCD team?</p> | <p>Indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Which participants facilitate, lead the discussion, and lead problem-solving solutions during each meeting? • Duration of time participants are speaking • Collective conversation and problem-solving led by the HCD team. • Positive or negative interaction between family and educators. | <p>Key Words:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Community • Students • Culture • Power • Share • Ideas • Create • Reflect • Opportunity • Barrier • Deficit • Racial |
| <p>How did power-sharing and power-shifting occur between leadership and the HCD team?</p> | <p>Indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In Each meeting, there is a progression of family-led discussion and problem-solving that ultimately leads to family participants generating action steps to a solution. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender • Teacher • Problem • Idea • Solution <p>Key Phrases:</p> |

| | | |
|---|--|--|
| <p>In what ways did the HCD team work towards reducing the opportunity gap among marginalized students?</p> | <p>Indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Solution-based action steps led by family participants at each meeting. • Student-focused conversation • Participants are identifying barriers toward student achievement. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I like that idea... • What if we... • How about we try... • I am wondering if... • We could try... • I like that idea and.. • I do not think that will work... |
| <p>How do HCD teams value community cultural wealth?</p> | <p>Indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acknowledgment of each participant's cultural heritage, language, and socio-economics. • Shared experiences of common barriers to school engagement. • Collaboration between families that supports all students. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will it help if we... • Who should solve this... • Whose problem is this... |

Appendix C

Family Engagement Survey

Human-Centered Design: The Vital Role of Family Engagement

Tamara York, Assistant Principal

Tumwater Hill Elementary & East Olympia Elementary

360-709-7200

Tamara.york@tumwater.k12.wa.us

Google Survey: Sent via email and newsletter. Also posted on the website.

Each respondent will be required to identify who they are and contact information. They will have the option of stating who their child is and what grade the student is in.

1. Do you believe family engagement is a key component for student achievement?

Closed-ended question (yes, no, maybe).

2. Do you believe family engagement is a key component for student social and emotional development?

Closed-ended question (yes, no, maybe).

3. How interested would you be in participating on a family engagement team?

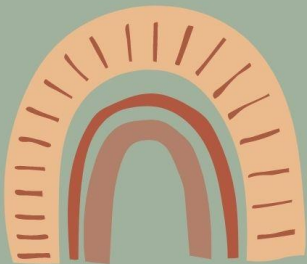

Parents will respond using a five- point Likert scale rating indicating uninterested to highly interested.

4. Please mark the boxes that could be a barrier to participation:

- Transportation
- Time
- Childcare
- Language
- Finances
- Interest
- Other

Appendix D

Family Engagement Flyer

Family Engagement Research

You are invited to take part in this study because we value your involvement and ideas in your child's education

RESEARCH PROJECT

The study aims to understand the human-centered design team's impact on students' success at Tumwater Hill Elementary by identifying to what degree power-sharing occurred between educational leaders, parents, and community members that participate in the family engagement human-centered design team.

GOAL

- ✓ Foster a team that values parent voice and partnership with educators.

BENEFITS

- ✓ Develop relationships to other families at THE.
- ✓ Be part of a solution based team.
- ✓ Connection to family engagement

YOUR ROLE

DURING EACH MEETING WE WILL...

- ✓ Discuss students daily activities, learning and social emotional needs.
- ✓ Brainstorm new ideas to meet the needs of THE students and community.
- ✓ Design and apply new solutions.

In order for us to accommodate the needs of all families, please fill out the four-question **survey**. The survey responses will help us identify how we might remove any barriers such as language, transportation, and childcare issues.

Thank you!

<https://forms.gle/MQZ1iMrMSJWgrHYo9>

For more information, please contact:
tamara.york@tumwater.k12.wa.us
360-709-7300

Appendix E

Participant Attendance

| Name | #1 | #2 | #3 | #4 | #5 | #6 | #7 | #8 | #9 | Event |
|---|-------------|-------------|-------------|--------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-----------------|--------------|
| | 4/19/2 3 | 5/10/2 3 | 5/24/2 3 | 6/7/20 23 | 6/21/2 3 | 7/26/ 23 | 8/17/ 23 | 8/31 /23 | 9/1 4/2 3 | 10/11/ 23 |
| Beth Teacher | X | X | X | | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| Beau District Community Liaison | X | X | | X | X | X | | X | X | X |
| Dominique District Community Liaison | X | X | | X | X | X | | | X | X |
| Courtney Together Coordinator | X | | X | X | | | | X | X | X |
| Joye Parent | X | X | X | | X | X | | X | X | X |
| Sam Parent | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | | | |
| Des Parent | X | | X | X | X | | | X | X | X |
| Chris Parent | | | X | X | | | | X | | X |

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Jessica Parent | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | | |
| Katie Parent | X | X | X | | | X | X | X | X | X |
| Nadine Parent | X | X | X | X | X | | X | X | X | X |
| Jon Principal | X | | | | X | | X | X | | X |
| Tamara Assistant Principal Researcher | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| Robert Parent | | X | | | | | | | | |
| Sarah Parent | | X | | | | | | | | |
| Jen Paraeducator | | | X | | | | | | | X |
| Heather Music Teacher | | | X | | | | | | | |
| Anna PTA School President | | | | | X | X | | X | X | X |
| Christine PTA School Secretary | | | | | X | | | | | |

Appendix F

Triangulated Feedback Questions

Questions

Please answer the pre-questions before you read the transcripts. Then, as you read through the transcripts, note what you notice. During or at the end of reading the transcripts, answer the post-questions.

Pre-Questions:

What do you think will stand out as you read the transcripts?

Do you think having different people attend impacted conversation?

What do you think the impact was of having educational leaders, community members and families attend to enhance diverse perspectives so that all voices were respected and valued?

What do you think are the main topics or themes that emerged during the conversations?

What insights or conclusions can be drawn from analyzing these conversations?

Were there any conflicts that arose due to power differentials, and how were they resolved?

Do you think there were shared power structures within the group? Provide examples

Post Question:

What stood out to you after reading the transcripts, and did it differ from your original assumption?

What do you think the impact was of having educational leaders, community members, and families attend to enhance diverse perspectives so that all voices were respected and valued?

What do you think were the main topics or themes that emerged during the conversations?

What insights or conclusions can be drawn from analyzing these conversations?

Were there any conflicts that arose due to power differentials and how were they resolved?

Do you think there were shared power structures within the group? Provide examples

What did you notice when the PTA president and secretary sat in? Did anything shift?

Is there anything that differs from what you experienced?

Appendix G

IEP Workshop Notes

IEP Workshop Notes

8/31

Family Engagement Team

Flyer with a way to sign up for the workshop - advertised on THE website and in the PTA newsletter.

If we have a second IEP workshop, get the word out during spring conferences.

Host the workshop the first week of October on an evening - 1 to 1.5 hours.

A speaker the first 30 min. Who can share an overview of what to expect on an IEP/how to read and IEP and then smaller sessions (PT/OT, and speech)

Hold off on reading and math - perhaps dive deeper in the spring

Resources to take home - YouTube resources

Audience - parents of students with an IEP, parents with concerns in their child's learning

Questions and Answer forum or place to write questions (get the ball rolling for the APP

IEP group on Remind APP or Band APP - sign-up sheet with contact information or QR code for sign-up

Check-in at the end to see if people are interested in another workshop.

Language access - pocket translators and Spanish translator

Virtual accessibility - equitable and kid-friendly

Bus route or rideshare options - more information through phone inquiry

Advertising:

Transportation is available

Family Friendly - kid's activities while parents are in the workshop

Video demo on a YouTube channel, short clips to reference any time.

Jobs

Tech - Chris

Flyer - Anna and Desire

Q & A - Beau

Refreshments - Courtney

Volunteers - our group

Babysitters - Tamara

Case manager - Beau

Speakers - Jon

Appendix H

IRB Application

SEATTLE PACIFIC UNIVERSITY IRB APPLICATION FOR HUMAN SUBJECTS REVIEW

Title of project: Human-Centered Design: The Vital Role of Family Engagement

Expected Start Date for Data Collection: 3/18/2023

Expected End Date for Data Collection: 3/18/2024

Name of Principal Investigator¹: Tamara York

Phone #: 253-289-9168

E-mail: yorkt1@spu.edu

Name of Co-Investigator(s)²: _____

Phone #: _____

E-mail: _____

Name of Co-Investigator(s): _____

Phone #: _____

E-mail: _____

Faculty Sponsor Name: Dr. Julie Antilla

Faculty Sponsor signature: 

Date: 3/11/23

=====
Directions: Please follow the guidelines available on the IRB website. Research that has more than minimal risk or includes vulnerable participants will be reviewed by the entire Institutional Review Board (IRB) or a subset of members. If your study requires further review, you will be notified. Please expect full IRB review to take at least a month. Check the website for IRB meeting dates.

Appendix I

Informed Consent



INFORMED CONSENT

Human-Centered Design: The Vital Role of Family Engagement

Investigators:

Tamara York, Assistant Principal
Tumwater Hill Elementary & East Olympia Elementary
360-709-7200
Tamara.york@tumwater.k12.wa.us

Jon Halvorson, Principal
Tumwater Hill Elementary
360-709-7300
Jon.halvorson@tumwater.k12.wa.us

Dr. Julie Antilla
Associate Professor, Educational Leadership
Seattle Pacific University
206-281-2216
antillaj@spu.edu

PURPOSE

You are invited to take part in a research study. This study aims to understand the impact a human-centered design family engagement team has on students' success at an elementary school by identifying to what degree power-sharing or power-shifting occurred between educational leaders and the family engagement human-centered design team. You have been invited to participate in this study because we value your involvement and ideas in your child's education. The number of people participating in this research is 12 – 15 adults.

PROCEDURES

The goal of the human-centered design team is to meet for an hour to an hour and a half 6-10 times over six months (March–August). During each meeting, we will:

- Discuss daily student activities, learning, and social-emotional needs
- Brainstorm new ideas to meet the needs of THE students and community
- Design and apply new solutions

The goal is to foster a team that values parent voice and educator partnership. Each participant will also be interviewed to understand their goals and values about school better. Each meeting will be observed, notes taken, and video and audio recorded. Complete confidentiality will be provided for each participant. Names will be given pseudo names, and all recordings will comply with the Washington State "two-party consent law. Each participant will also have full disclosure of the research, data, and transcripts.

RISKS and DISCOMFORTS

There are no physical or legal risks that would impact participants.

BENEFITS

Benefits participants may gain throughout the research project are: (a) develop relationships with other families at Tumwater Hill Elementary, (b) gain a sense of gratification from their contributions to the school community, and (c) provide other Hawk Elementary families of marginalized communities connections to family engagement at the school.

PARTICIPATION AND ALTERNATIVES TO PARTICIPATION

Participation in this study is voluntary; you may decline to participate without penalty. If you decide to participate, you may withdraw from the study at any time without penalty and without loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. If you withdraw from the study before data collection is completed, your data will be returned to you or destroyed. Likewise, the Researcher may terminate your participation in the study at any time.

CONFIDENTIALITY

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Your de-identified data may be used by the Principal Investigator listed above in future research, presentations, or for teaching purposes.

COMPENSATION

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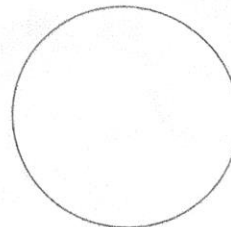
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I have read the above information and agree to participate in this study. I have received a copy of this form.

| | |
|--|---|
| Participant's name (print) <u>Jon Halverson</u> | Researcher's name (print) <u>Tamara York</u> |
| Participant's signature <u>[Signature]</u> | Researcher's signature <u>[Signature]</u> |
| Date <u>4-29-23</u> | Date <u>4/29/2023</u> |

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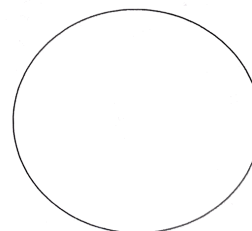
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| | |
|--|---|
| Participant's name (print) <i>Beth Leitch</i> | Researcher's name (print) <i>Tamara York</i> |
| Participant's signature <i>Beth Leitch</i> | Researcher's signature <i>Tamara York</i> |
| Date <i>4-19-23</i> | Date <i>4-19-2023</i> |

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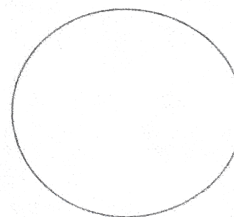
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| | |
|---|---|
| Participant's name (print) <u>Heather Stoker</u> | Researcher's name (print) <u>Tamara York</u> |
| Participant's signature <u>Heather Stoker</u> | Researcher's signature <u>Tamara York</u> |
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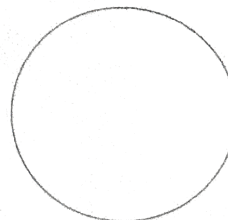
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| | |
|---|---|
| Participant's name (print) <i>Jennifer Slump</i> | Researcher's name (print) <i>Tamara York</i> |
| Participant's signature <i>[Signature]</i> | Researcher's signature <i>[Signature]</i> |
| Date <i>4-29-23</i> | Date <i>4-29-2023</i> |

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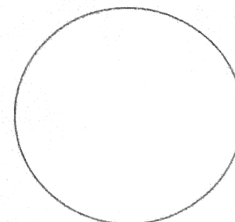
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| | |
|---|---|
| Participant's name (print) <u>Kristine Helstad</u> | Researcher's name (print) <u>Tamara York</u> |
| Participant's signature <u>[Signature]</u> | Researcher's signature <u>[Signature]</u> |
| Date <u>4/29/23</u> | Date <u>4/29/2023</u> |

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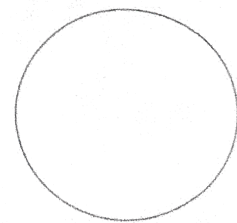
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| | |
|---|---|
| Participant's name (print) <i>Anna Soneson</i> | Researcher's name (print) <i>Tamara York</i> |
| Participant's signature <i>[Signature]</i> | Researcher's signature <i>[Signature]</i> |
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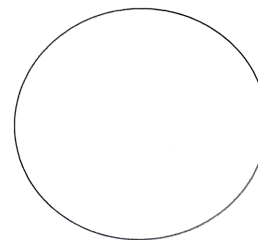
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|---|---|
| Participant's name (print) <i>Joye Gardner</i> | Researcher's name (print) <i>Tamara York</i> |
| Participant's signature <i>[Signature]</i> | Researcher's signature <i>[Signature]</i> |
| Date <i>4/19/23</i> | Date <i>4-19-2023</i> |

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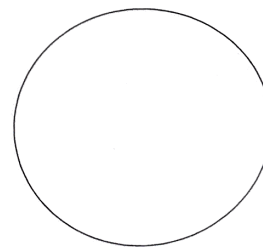
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| | |
|--|---|
| Participant's name (print) <i>Chris Serra</i> | Researcher's name (print) <i>Tamara York</i> |
| Participant's signature <i>[Signature]</i> | Researcher's signature <i>[Signature]</i> |
| Date <i>04/19/23</i> | Date <i>4/19/2023</i> |

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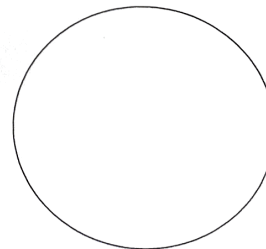
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| | |
|--|---|
| Participant's name (print) <i>Desiree Serra</i> | Researcher's name (print) <i>Tamara York</i> |
| Participant's signature <i>Desi Serra</i> | Researcher's signature <i>Tamara York</i> |
| Date <i>4/19/2023</i> | Date <i>4-19-2023</i> |

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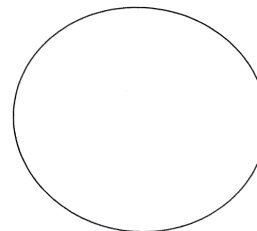
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| | |
|--|---|
| Participant's name (print) <i>Courtney Prothero</i> | Researcher's name (print) <i>Tamara York</i> |
| Participant's signature <i>Courtney Prothero</i> | Researcher's signature <i>Tamara York</i> |
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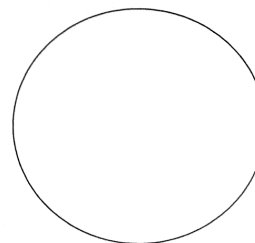
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| | |
|---|---|
| Participant's name (print) <i>Dominique Wilson</i> | Researcher's name (print) <i>Tamara York</i> |
| Participant's signature <i>Dominique Wilson</i> | Researcher's signature <i>Tamara York</i> |
| Date <i>4/19/23</i> | Date <i>4/19/23</i> |

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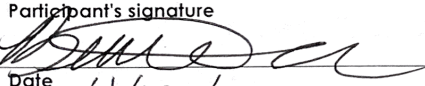
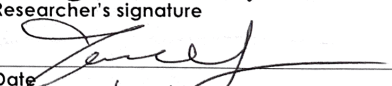
SUBJECT RIGHTS

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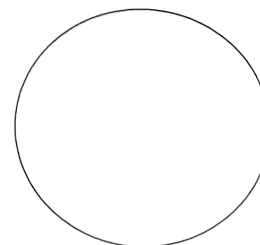
CONSENT

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I have read the above information and agree to participate in this study. I have received a copy of this form.

| | |
|--|--|
| Participant's name (print) Beau Wilson | Researcher's name (print) Tamara York |
| Participant's signature  | Researcher's signature  |
| Date 4/19/2023 | Date 4/19/2023 |

Copies to: Participant Principal Investigator



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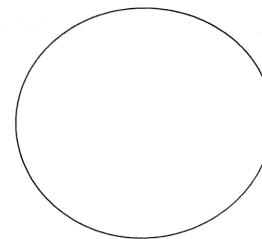
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| | |
|---|---|
| Participant's name (print) <i>Samirra Lafrenesse</i> | Researcher's name (print) <i>Tamara York</i> |
| Participant's signature <i>[Signature]</i> | Researcher's signature <i>[Signature]</i> |
| Date <i>4/19/2023</i> | Date <i>4/19/2023</i> |

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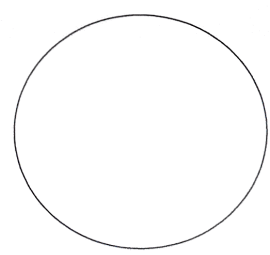
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| | |
|---|---|
| Participant's name (print) <i>Jessica Shea</i> | Researcher's name (print) <i>Tamara York</i> |
| Participant's signature <i>[Signature]</i> | Researcher's signature <i>[Signature]</i> |
| Date <i>4/19/2023</i> | Date <i>4/19/2023</i> |

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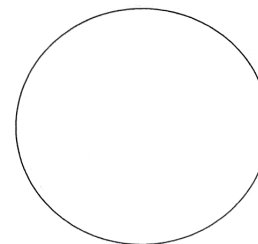
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| | |
|---|---|
| Participant's name (print) <i>Jessica Bowers</i> | Researcher's name (print) <i>Tamara York</i> |
| Participant's signature <i>Jessica Bowers</i> | Researcher's signature <i>Tamara York</i> |
| Date <i>04-19-2023</i> | Date <i>4-19-2023</i> |

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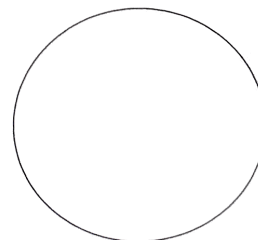
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| | |
|---|---|
| Participant's name (print) <i>Robert Preston</i> | Researcher's name (print) <i>Tamara York</i> |
| Participant's signature <i>[Signature]</i> | Researcher's signature <i>[Signature]</i> |
| Date <i>05/10/2023</i> | Date <i>5/10/2023</i> |

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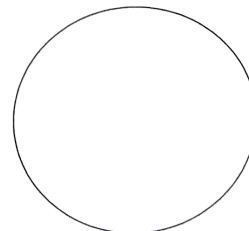
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| | |
|---|--|
| Participant's name (print) Sarah Preston | Researcher's name (print) Tamara York |
| Participant's signature <i>Sarah Preston</i> | Researcher's signature <i>Tamara York</i> |
| Date 5/10/2023 | Date 4-19-2023 |

Copies to: Participant Principal Investigator



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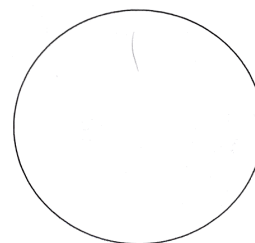
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| | |
|--|---|
| Participant's name (print) <i>Nadine Rivera</i> | Researcher's name (print) <i>Tamara York</i> |
| Participant's signature <i>Nadine Rivera</i> | Researcher's signature <i>Tamara York</i> |
| Date <i>4/19/23</i> | Date <i>4-19-2023</i> |

Copies to: Participant Principal Investigator



Appendix J

Identity Disclosure



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Identity Disclosure Consent for Research

Human-Centered Design: The Vital Role of Family Engagement

Investigators:
 Tamara York, Assistant Principal
 Tumwater Hill Elementary & East Olympia Elementary
 360-709-7200
Tamara.york@tumwater.k12.wa.us

Jon Halvorson, Principal
 Tumwater Hill Elementary
 360-709-7300
Jon.halvorson@tumwater.k12.wa.us

Dr. Julie Antilla
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 Seattle Pacific University
 206-281-2216
antillaj@spu.edu

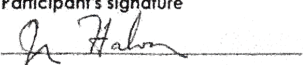

RESEARCH IDENTITY

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| | |
|--|--|
| Participant's name (print) <u>Jon Halvorson</u> | Researcher's name (print) <u>Tamara York</u> |
| Participant's signature  | Researcher's signature  |
| Date <u>9-14-23</u> | Date <u>9-14-23</u> |

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Identity Disclosure Consent for Research

Human-Centered Design: The Vital Role of Family Engagement

Investigators:

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360-709-7200
Tamara.york@tumwater.k12.wa.us

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| | |
|--|---|
| Participant's name (print) <u>Beth Leitch</u> | Researcher's name (print) <u>Tamara York</u> |
| Participant's signature <u>Beth Leitch</u> | Researcher's signature <u>Julie</u> |
| Date <u>9/14/23</u> | Date <u>9/14/23</u> |

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| | |
|---|---|
| Participant's name (print) <u>Heather Stoker</u> | Researcher's name (print) <u>Tamara York</u> |
| Participant's signature <u>Heather Stoker</u> | Researcher's signature <u>[Signature]</u> |
| Date <u>9/14/23</u> | Date <u>9/14/23</u> |



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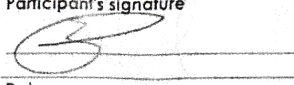

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| | |
|--|--|
| Participant's name (print) <u>Jen Slomp</u> | Researcher's name (print) <u>Tamara York</u> |
| Participant's signature  | Researcher's signature  |
| Date <u>9/14/23</u> | Date <u>9/14/23</u> |



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| | |
|---|---|
| Participant's name (print) <u>Kristine Hofstad</u> | Researcher's name (print) <u>Tamara York</u> |
| Participant's signature <u>[Signature]</u> | Researcher's signature <u>[Signature]</u> |
| Date <u>9.14.23</u> | Date <u>9-14-23</u> |



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|--|---|
| Participant's name (print) <u>Anna D. Soneson</u> | Researcher's name (print) <u>Tamara York</u> |
| Participant's signature | Researcher's signature |
| Date <u>9.14.23</u> | Date <u>9/14/23</u> |

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| | |
|---|---|
| Participant's name (print) <u>Joye Gardner</u> | Researcher's name (print) <u>Tamara York</u> |
| Participant's signature <u>[Signature]</u> | Researcher's signature <u>[Signature]</u> |
| Date <u>9/14/23</u> | Date <u>9/14/2023</u> |



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| | |
|--|---|
| Participant's name (print) <u>Christopher Serra</u> | Researcher's name (print) <u>Tamara York</u> |
| Participant's signature | Researcher's signature |
| Date <input type="text" value="09/14/2023"/> | Date <u>9/14/2023</u> |



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| | |
|--|---|
| Participant's name (print) <u>Desirei Serra</u> | Researcher's name (print) <u>Tamara York</u> |
| Participant's signature <u>Desirei Serra</u> | Researcher's signature <u>[Signature]</u> |
| Date <u>09/14/2023</u> | Date <u>9/14/2023</u> |



Identity Disclosure Consent for Research

Human-Centered Design: The Vital Role of Family Engagement

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RESEARCH IDENTITY

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CONSENT

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| | |
|---|--|
| Participant's name (print) Courtney Prothero | Researcher's name (print) Tamara York |
| Participant's signature | Researcher's signature |
| Date 2/1/24 | Date 9/14/2023 |



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| | |
|---|---|
| Participant's name (print) <u>Dominique Wilson</u> | Researcher's name (print) <u>Tamara York</u> |
| Participant's signature <u>Dominique Wilson</u> | Researcher's signature <u>[Signature]</u> |
| Date <u>9/14/23</u> | Date <u>9/14/23</u> |



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| Participant's name (print) <u>Beau Wilson</u> | Researcher's name (print) <u>Tamara York</u> |
| Participant's signature  | Researcher's signature  |
| Date <u>9/14/2023</u> | Date <u>9/14/2023</u> |



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|--|---|
| Participant's name (print) <i>Samirria Lajeunesse</i> | Researcher's name (print) <i>Tamara York</i> |
| Participant's signature <i>[Signature]</i> | Researcher's signature <i>[Signature]</i> |
| <i>02/12/2024</i> | <i>2/12/2024</i> |



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| | |
|--|--|
| Participant's name (print) <u>Sarah Preston</u> | Researcher's name (print) <u>Robert Preston Tamara York</u> |
| Participant's signature <u>[Signature]</u> | Researcher's signature <u>[Signature]</u> |
| Date <u>4/11/24</u> | Date <u>04/11/2024</u> <u>4/11/24</u> |



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|--|--|
| Participant's name (print) <u>Jessica Shea</u> | Researcher's name (print) <u>Tamara York</u> |
| Participant's signature  | Researcher's signature  |
| Date <u>9/14/2023</u> | Date <u>9/14/2023</u> |



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| | |
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| Participant's name (print) <u>Robert Preston</u> | Researcher's name (print) <u>Tamara York</u> |
| Participant's signature <u>[Signature]</u> | Researcher's signature <u>[Signature]</u> |
| Date <u>4/11/24</u> | Date <u>4/11/24</u> |