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Communication and Collaboration Issues Between Educators and Parents

Blake Hurd, College of Technology

The project my peers and I worked on consisted of interviewing teachers at West Base Elementary School to obtain insight on how well their college education prepared them for their own classrooms after college. Many of the teachers expressed that their college education did not prepare them for the student demographic they encountered. A main issue was that the younger teachers were challenged by communicating with parents about their children when they did not have any children of their own.

After conducting the interviews with the teachers we came to the conclusion that an after-school event was needed to help the parental community connect with teachers at the school and build relationships. Once we decided to hold an event, we invited all West Base Elementary students

and encouraged them to bring their parents to participate in educational games and crafts. I personally engaged in interviewing parents as well as creating and executing a world geography game which consisted of throwing a ball at a map and, according to where the ball hit, asking the students geography-based questions.

The event we held succeeded in that many students and parents attended and participated in most of the events. The parents seemed to enjoy the games just as much as the children, which led to a positive community experience. Our project gave my peers and me an interesting perspective on how teacher education courses could be improved. For instance, West Base Elementary teachers stressed how important relationships with the parents are and that teacher education programs should provide pre-service teachers with techniques on how to communicate with parents. What I took away from this project is that communication between teachers and parents is complex and requires experience, in addition to reflection from classroom discussions.