

ABSTRACT

DISSERTATION: WHY GET INVOLVED? PARENT ENGAGEMENT AND THE INSTITUTIONALIZATION OF PARENT INVOLVEMENT IN SCHOOL

STUDENT: Aletta M. Sanders

DEGREE: Doctor of Philosophy

COLLEGE: Teachers College, Ball State University

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The purpose of this phenomenological qualitative study is to understand individual parental experiences related to parental engagement in and out of school. This study seeks to understand how parents in one district in Indiana define parent involvement and engagement, the meaning they make of these activities, the school-imposed barriers to engagement they encounter, and the actions they take to remain engaged in their children's education.

To date, few studies experience parent perceptions of parent involvement and family engagement. This qualitative study used in-depth semi-structured interview to explore these ideas. Participants included 3 parents, over the age of 18, each with at least one child aged 5-18. Participants' children were all enrolled in what became to be termed a beyond school environment, in this case Future Problem Solvers International (FPSI), a problem-solving club that proved to meet their needs for authentic engagement not available within the school environment.