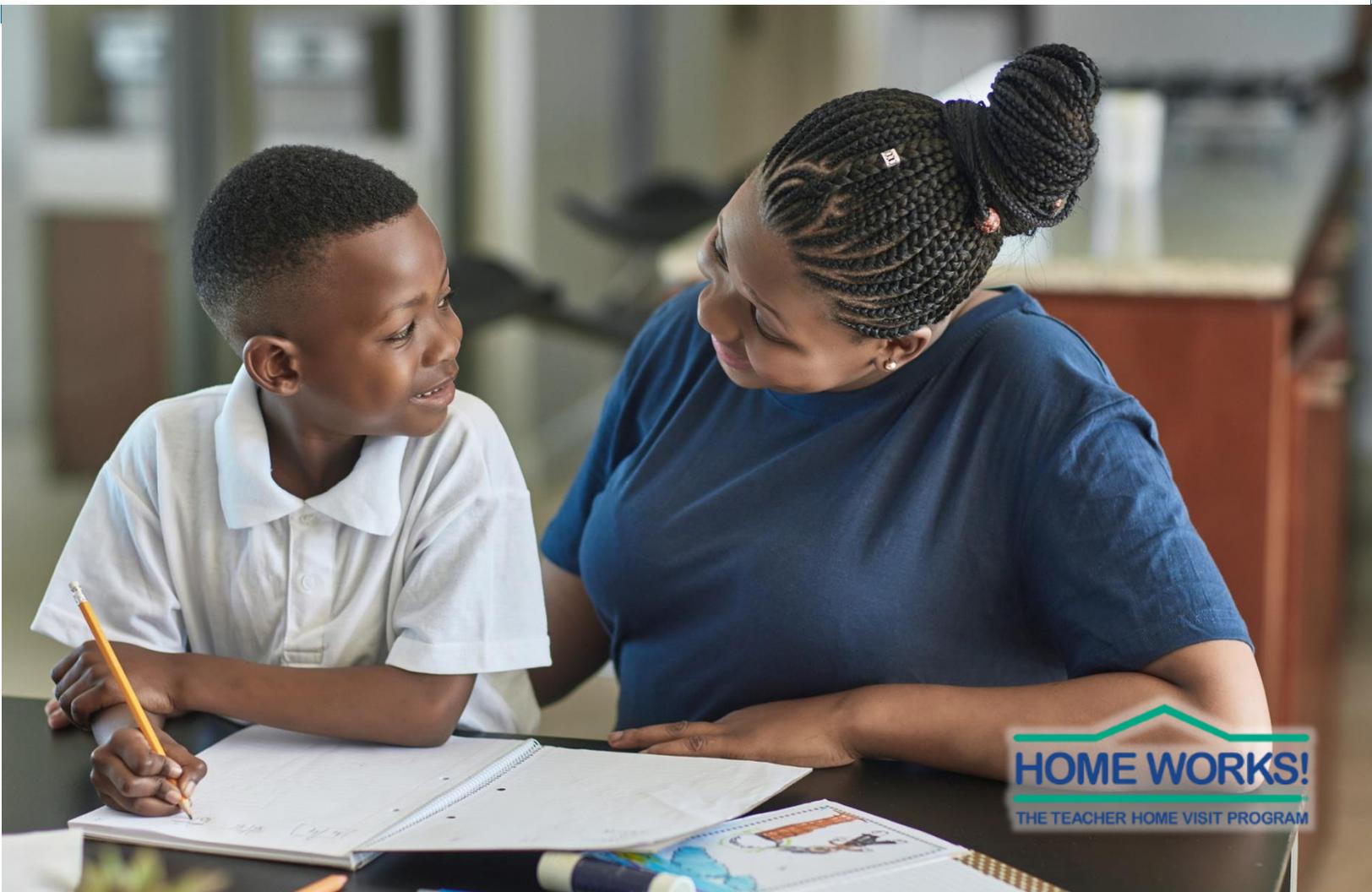


# HOME WORKS! The Teacher Home Visit Program

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## 2018-19 Annual Evaluation Report



**HOME WORKS!**  
THE TEACHER HOME VISIT PROGRAM

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# Table of Contents

<b>Table of Contents</b> .....	<b>1</b>
<b>Introduction</b> .....	<b>2</b>
Evaluation Approach .....	2
Data Collection Activities .....	2
Section Summary .....	3
<b>HOME WORKS! Program Overview</b> .....	<b>4</b>
HOME WORKS! Program Models .....	4
Program Objectives .....	5
<b>School, Staff, and Student and Family Participation</b> .....	<b>6</b>
School Participation .....	6
Staff Training Implementation .....	7
Staff Training Feedback .....	7
Teacher and Staff Participation .....	9
Students and Families Served .....	10
Prioritizing Students for Home Visits .....	11
<b>Implementation of Planned Program Components</b> .....	<b>14</b>
Location of Visits .....	14
Timing of Visits .....	14
Completing First and Second Visits .....	15
Child Present at the Visit .....	16
Home Visit Focus on Attendance .....	16
Family Dinner Attendance .....	17
Impacts on School Performance .....	18
<b>Parent Survey Responses</b> .....	<b>19</b>
<b>School Administrator Survey Responses</b> .....	<b>21</b>
<b>Site Coordinator Survey Responses</b> .....	<b>24</b>
Site Coordinator Training and Support .....	24
Identified Barriers and Challenges .....	25
Perceived Effectiveness .....	25
<b>Home Visitor Survey Responses</b> .....	<b>26</b>
Staff Participation .....	26
Program Visibility and Outreach to Parents .....	26
Supports for Implementation .....	27
Identifying and Removing Barriers .....	27
Teacher Perceptions of Program Impact .....	28
Continuing Involvement .....	28
<b>Findings and Recommendations</b> .....	<b>30</b>

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## Introduction

HOME WORKS! The Teacher Home Visit Program was established in St. Louis, Missouri in 2007 as a community-based, non-profit organization that partners with early childhood education (ECE) centers and K-12 schools to promote parents' engagement in their children's learning. The HOME WORKS! organization works with schools to train teachers and school staff to conduct home visits with families to build positive parent-teacher relationships and to introduce parents to educational practices that promote student learning and school success. HOME WORKS! also co-hosts family events in the school setting to help foster positive, productive home-school connections. The goals of the program are to increase student and parent engagement, prevent excessive absenteeism or problem behaviors, and improve students' academic achievement.

HOME WORKS! prioritizes research and evaluation to continuously strengthen its program operations and to build knowledge of what constitutes effective practice in achieving positive youth and school outcomes. For the 2018-19 school year, HOME WORKS! contracted with an external evaluation research firm, EMT Associates, Inc., to conduct an annual evaluation of its program operations. The evaluation timeframe overlapped with the final year of a large-scale randomized controlled trial (RCT) being conducted by Concentric Research, Inc. that provided more rigorous measurement of school and participant outcomes associated with home visit participation. For this reason, the annual evaluation focused largely on monitoring program performance based on indicators of implementation success, and gauging stakeholders' perceptions of program quality and benefits to participants.

## Evaluation Approach

The 2018-19 annual evaluation is one component of a more comprehensive data-driven strategy embraced by HOME WORKS! to monitor school implementation, identify best practices and lessons learned, and guide program improvements. To advance this strategy, the evaluation approach involved an array of data collection and analysis activities to monitor school performance and to gather feedback from stakeholders regarding program implementation quality and perceived outcomes.

The 2018-19 evaluation also included the design of a set of monitoring reports to track school and teacher participation and provide standard measurement of program objectives. This was designed to fill a gap in

data access for program staff and coordinators resulting from the limited reporting capacity of the existing data system. The evaluation team also pilot-tested the development of a Tableau data dashboard as a tool to support real-time analysis, monitoring, and reporting of program performance that could be accessed by program staff. The original dashboard design laid the foundation for continuing development and refinement of the tool by a professional Tableau developer who is currently contracting with HOME WORKS!.

The evaluation effort also included the provision of ongoing technical consulting to the HOME WORKS! administrative team to support efforts to strengthen internal management and operational structures. The purpose is to ensure that newly onboarded schools have sufficient levels of readiness to meet program expectations, that all schools are adequately supported by the HOME WORKS! organization, and that sound monitoring and accountability provisions are in place to maximize school effectiveness.

## Data Collection Activities

Evaluation findings were informed by multiple data collection components, including the following:

**School administrator surveys (n=11).** School principals at each participating ECE center, elementary school, middle school, and high school were asked to respond to an end-of-year survey to provide feedback on their school's experience with the program. Eleven principals (48%) responded to the survey request.

**Site Coordinator surveys (n=26).** Site coordinators from each school-building were asked to respond to a brief end-of-year survey to provide feedback on the site coordinator role. Twenty-six coordinators from 20 of 23 schools responded to the survey request.

**Online home visit logs (n=2,758).** Teachers and school staff who serve as lead visitors enter information about each home visit into an online visit log within 24 hours of completing a home visit. The log provides detailed information about each visit including date, time, location, presence of family members, characteristics of the child, and teacher perceptions of the visit. Each year the teacher home visit log is refined as needed as part of a continuous quality improvement effort. Information from online visit logs is used to measure program outputs for all active schools relative to established performance objectives.

**Parent family dinner feedback forms (n=516).** Parents and family members who attended family dinners were asked to respond to a brief survey at the conclusion of the event to provide feedback on the family dinner. Forms were collected at 20 of 28 family dinner events hosted during the 2018-19 school year.

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**Parent home visit feedback forms** (n=114). Parents and family members who participated in home visits were invited to complete an online survey to share information about the home visit experience. Paper copy versions of the survey form were also available to parents upon request.

**Home visitor surveys** (n=164). Teachers and other school staff who actively participated in home visits were asked to respond to a brief end-of-year survey to provide feedback on the home visit experience and to share perceptions of student outcomes resulting from home visit participation.

## **Section Summary**

The 2018-19 report summarizes data from multiple data sources to describe HOME WORKS! program implementation and to assess progress toward achieving program objectives. The report also summarizes school administrator, site coordinator, and teacher and parent perceptions of their experiences and identifies implementation strengths and challenges from the perspective of key stakeholders that may inform future replication and sustainability efforts.

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## HOME WORKS! Program Overview

The purpose and intent of HOME WORKS! is to build trust between parents and teachers and to encourage parents to adopt effective parenting practices that will help children succeed academically. The HOME WORKS! organization provides leadership, training, and stipends for school-level coordinators, sponsors family dinners and other school-based events for families, and shares the cost of teachers' extra service pay with schools to help compensate teachers for their participation.

HOME WORKS! is governed by a Board of Directors and is managed by a core administrative team that includes a Chief Executive Officer (CEO), a Chief Operating Officer (COO), a Director of Program Operations, and a team of Program Leaders assigned to each school who support implementation and who are strongly committed to the program's mission and vision. HOME WORKS! also benefits from collaboration and funding support from numerous community and corporate partners and donors.

During the 2018-19 school year, the program partnered with 23 public schools, charter schools, and ECE centers located across the greater St. Louis area and central Missouri. These schools collectively enrolled more than 9,000 students from pre-kindergarten to 12<sup>th</sup> grade. The program has maintained its size and scope of program operations since 2017-18 in terms of the number of active schools after undergoing a period of rapid expansion from 14 to 27 schools between 2016-17 and 2017-18.

### HOME WORKS! Program Models

The logic of the HOME WORKS! parent engagement strategy is that through the home visit process, teachers build positive relationships with families, and gain new insights into student strengths and needs that can shape instructional practices and enhance the quality of parent-teacher interactions. Parents, in turn, learn about their child's progress in school and their own role in the learning process, gain access to tools and resources they can use to support home-based learning, and adopt more positive orientations toward schools. The resulting changes in teaching and parenting practices lead to improvements in school attendance, homework completion, classroom behavior, and academic achievement.

The original HOME WORKS! program design was a 2 + 2 school-wide model involving two teacher home visits with families and two sponsored dinners on school campuses for students and their family members. The program was first implemented in elementary schools, middle schools, and high schools with minor adaptations to accommodate differences in school structures. It was later expanded to include ECE centers serving pre-kindergarten age children. The program also recently began to offer an alternative to the core program model, known as Parent Teacher Learning Teams (PTLT). PTLT is a variation of the standard model that combines one teacher home visit with school-based parent engagement activities, including parent-teacher conferences and classroom-based instructional sessions for parents and other family members.

Findings from early evaluations consistently showed that schools adopting the 2+2 model struggled to implement second visits and often failed to achieve fidelity to the program design, as measured by the number and percent of students who participated in all planned program components. In response to this challenge, HOME WORKS! began to offer schools greater discretion to customize model components to better fit the needs and preferences of unique school contexts and ensure that program components were feasible for schools to implement.

For 2018-19, the program established new parameters and guidelines for participation. Schools were only required to implement a minimum core model of one home visit and one family event and were offered a menu of additional components that could be selected to supplement the core model. For the 2018-19 school year, this customization resulted in the implementation of nine different variations of the HOME WORKS! program. Seven schools (30%) implemented the original 2 + 2 standard model, two schools implemented a combination of two home visits and one family dinner (9%), five schools implemented one home visit and one family dinner (22%), and one school implemented one home visit and one school-based event, such as an ice cream social or back-to-school night. The eight remaining schools combined home visits and family dinners or school events with PTLT components. Specifically, one school implemented two home visits, two family dinners, and one PTLT session (4%), three schools implemented two home visits, one family dinner, and one PTLT session (13%), two schools implemented one visit, one family dinner, and one or two PTLT sessions (8%), and two schools implemented one home visit, one school-based event, and one PTLT session (4%). This resulting array of program designs varied widely across schools, sharing a common thread of working to build positive parent-teacher learning partnerships.

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While the ability to customize the program has been welcomed by many schools, an unintended consequence of this greater flexibility has been an increase in program complexity. This has resulted in considerable variation in the intervention across schools and a greater challenge for the HOME WORKS! program to ultimately define itself. This complexity has also made performance monitoring and measurement of objectives and outcomes more challenging. The difficulty balancing greater autonomy for schools with the desire for more prescription in defining an ‘optimal’ program model presents an ongoing challenge for the HOME WORKS! organization and remains a focus of future research activities.

### Program Objectives

HOME WORKS! identifies a set of program objectives each year that measure completion of planned service components. The program objectives also include targeted benchmarks that align with desired outcomes and that can be used to monitor program performance. Benchmarks are refined on an annual basis to represent realistic growth targets that derive from the previous year’s performance. Data collection tools, including the home visit log and survey forms, capture data supporting measurement of objectives and benchmarks, which are used to communicate progress to program staff, funders and other stakeholders.

The next sections of the report present a summary of data collection activities and an analysis of findings from the HOME WORKS! evaluation that support measurement of these program objectives for 2018-19 school year.

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### Exhibit 1. HOME WORKS! 2018-19 Program Objectives

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**Objective 1** Actively recruit and engage at least 50% of lead teachers eligible to participate in the program.

**Objective 2** Sponsor at least one family dinner or one school-wide event at each school to communicate that parent engagement is welcomed, valued, and expected, to reinforce parenting practices that support student learning, and to persuade reluctant parents to accept home visits.

**Objective 3** Complete second home visits with at least 40% of students targeted to participate to build positive parent-teacher relationships and to introduce parents to educational practices that promote student learning and school success (e.g., daily reading, daily school attendance, homework monitoring, home-school communication, support and encouragement).

**Objective 4** Implement the HOME WORKS! program model with fidelity in each school to maximize the impact of the intervention on student’s academic progress and to reinforce parenting practices related to education; at least 40% of all students receiving home visits will participate in all planned service components based on each schools individual program design.

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## School, Staff, and Student and Family Participation

HOME WORKS! is implemented through formal partnership agreements with local districts and schools. This section profiles the schools that participated in the 2018-19 school year and describes their enrolled student populations, and staff, students and families who participated in teacher home visits.

### School Participation

School districts and individual schools request to participate in HOME WORKS! or are invited to participate through the HOME WORKS! organization. School districts that choose to partner with HOME WORKS! must sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and are expected to work with the HOME WORKS! organization to establish parameters for implementation (e.g., participation targets, timelines) and to outline expectations for school and staff involvement.)

Eight school districts and 23 schools, including a mix of public and charters schools, participated in HOME WORKS! in 2018-19. One additional elementary school initially committed to the program but was later discontinued. Eleven were elementary schools (50%), seven were middle schools or high schools (29%), and five were early childhood centers (ECCs) or early elementary schools serving preschool-age children or children in pre-kindergarten through grade 2. Schools collectively enrolled more than 9,000 students. Of the 23 schools that participated in 2018-19, slightly more than half (52%) were new to the program, while the other 48% were returning schools.

Exhibit 2 describes the characteristics of participating schools, including the number of students enrolled, the grade spans served, the urban or rural location, and each school's Title I designation. HOME WORKS! schools were located across St. Louis and central Missouri and were somewhat diverse with respect to school size and geographic location. Schools were located in either large cities or suburbs, or in rural towns or rural fringe areas. School enrollment ranged from 117 students in the smallest school to 774 students in the largest middle school. Twenty of 23 schools, or 87% of schools active in 2018-19, received federal Title I funds for serving high concentrations of families living at or below poverty. This proportion was substantially higher than in the previous school year when only half (52%) of participating schools were Title 1 designees.

**Exhibit 2.** HOME WORKS! School Characteristics (n=23)

	School ID	Grade	Urban/Rural	Total enrolled	Title I
Elementary	100	KG-6	Large suburb	663	✓
	101	PK-6	Large city	309	✓
	102	PK-5	Large city	230	✓
	103	PK-6	Large city	421	✓
	104	PK-5	Large city	551	✓
	105	KG-2	Rural town	222	✓
	106	KG-4	Rural town	226	✓
	107	KG-4	Rural town	238	✓
	108	KG-5	Large suburb	350	✓
	109	PK-5	Large city	407	✓
	110	KG-6	Large suburb	-	-
ECC	200	KG-2	Rural town	225	✓
	201	PK	--	--	--
	202	PK-2	Large city	463	✓
	203	KG-2	Large suburb	592	✓
	204	PK	Rural fringe	-	-
Middle	300	6-8	Large suburb	606	✓
	301	5-8	Large city	117	✓
	302	6-9	Large suburb	592	✓
	303	7-8	Rural fringe	774	✓
High	400	9-12	Large suburb	770	✓
	401	9-12	--	--	--
	402	9-12	Large city	422	✓

**Source:** National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) and Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE)

**Notes:** Student enrollment information from NCES was unavailable for the early education program. Data presented is from the 2017-18 academic year. Schools 107, 203, 301, and 401 had no enrollment data available and are absent from this Exhibit.

## Staff Training Implementation

Each new school year HOME WORKS! offers training to participating school staff to build capacity around parent engagement and prepare teachers to conduct home visits with families. All staff who plan to conduct home visits must complete required training before they can initiate visits. For the 2018-19 school year, the HOME WORKS! organization offered 80 in-person training sessions, including first visit, second visit, and PTLT trainings for first time home visitors, refresher trainings for returning home visitors, program administrator trainings for Principals and Site Coordinators, and make-up trainings for staff who were unable to attend scheduled training sessions at their respective schools. Staff trainings in 2018-19 were facilitated by Program Leaders employed by the HOME WORKS! organization or by members of the HOME WORKS! management team.

**Exhibit 3.** Training Sessions and Number of Staff Trained by Type

Indicators	Sessions	Staff Trained
First visit training	27	326
Second visit training	11	94
PTLT training	4	28
Refresher training	18	189
Principal/Site Coordinator training	20	55
<b>Total sessions</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>691</b>

Staff training dates are usually scheduled with schools before the start of each school year. For the 2018-19 program year, first visit trainings were held between July and late November 2018, second visit trainings were held from December 2018 to late February 2019, and PTLT trainings were held from January to February of 2019. Refresher trainings were held from August to mid-December 2018 for 189 returning teachers and school staff who had been active as home visitors in the previous year. A total duplicated count of 691 school staff were trained project-wide; of those, 349 staff went on to conduct at least one home visit as lead and/or co-visitor and 286 conducted multiple visits. In certain schools, administrators opted to train all staff as part of

in-service training sessions, which accounts for the high percentage of those trained (33%) who were not active in the program. All staff who went on to conduct home visits were confirmed to have received training through the HOME WORKS! organization.

Of the 80 in-person training sessions that were implemented by the HOME WORKS! project team, about half (56%) had fewer than 5 people in attendance and many occurred relatively late into the school year. Given the time and resource demands of implementing staff training, the logistical challenges of scheduling events, and the requirement that all staff be trained before initiating home visits, the program could consider alternative approaches, for example, transitioning to online training for returning staff in-lieu of in-person refresher training events. This would remove potential delays to program start-up for returning schools by offering immediate access to training resources. This could also free more time for Program Leaders and Site Coordinators to closely monitor and facilitate visit completion in the first few critical weeks and months of the school year.

## Staff Training Feedback

HOME WORKS! collects feedback on its staff training program at three different points in time: immediately following the training session, after new home visitors have successfully completed their first visits, and on end-of-year surveys after all home visits have concluded for the school year. This approach allows the program to assess differences in staff perceptions about the adequacy of training based on different levels of experience working with families. Of the school staff who were trained through HOME WORKS! in 2018-19, about 44% had no previous home visiting experience.

**Exhibit 4.** Percent of Respondents Who Rate Training Content as “Excellent”

Indicators	%
Clarity of objectives	81.4%
Appropriateness of content	87.4%
Meeting expectations	83.2%

## Objective 1b

All home visitors will complete mandatory training and more than 75% of those trained will rate the overall quality of training instruction and resources as “excellent” or “very good”.

At the conclusion of the training session, staff were asked to share perceptions about their training experience by completing a brief online survey questionnaire. Based on a summary of overall responses, the immediate feedback from school staff on both the quality of training content and the quality of the presentation was highly positive. As shown in exhibits 4 and 5:

- Eighty-seven percent (87.4%) rated the training as “excellent” on appropriateness of training content;
- Eighty-three percent (83.2%) of staff rated the training as “excellent” on meeting their expectations;
- Eighty-one percent (81.4%) of staff rated the training as “excellent” on clarity of training objectives;
- Eighty-eight percent (88.0%) rated their training presenters as ‘excellent’ on knowledge of the training topic;
- Eighty-seven percent (87.4%) rated their trainers as “excellent” on enthusiasm;
- Eighty-three percent (83.2%) rated trainers as “excellent” on responsiveness to questions, and,
- Eighty-one percent (81.4%) rated trainers as ‘excellent’ on ability to communicate clearly.

**Exhibit 5.** Percent of Training Participants Who Rated Presenter as “Excellent” (n=382)

%	Indicators
88.0%	Knowledge of the topics
81.4%	Ability to communicate clearly
87.4%	Enthusiasm
83.2%	Responsiveness to questions

According to survey findings, HOME WORKS! clearly exceeded its targeted benchmark for more than 75% of training attendees to rate the quality of training instruction as “excellent” or “very good”.

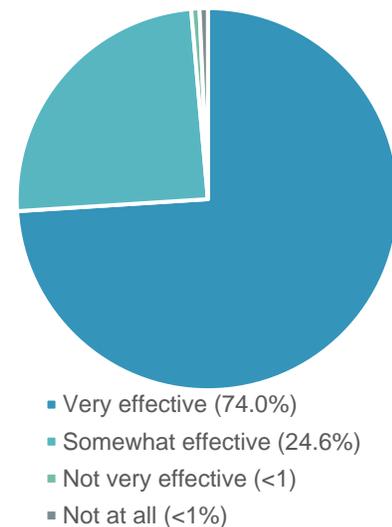
## Objective 1c

After completing home visits, 80% of teachers will rate the training as “very effective” in preparing staff to conduct home visits with families.

Once lead visitors had initiated home visits with families, they were asked to reassess how effective they felt the initial training had been in preparing them to conduct home visits with families. The HOME WORKS! program also established a new measurement benchmark that after completing home visits with families, at least 80% of teachers would rate the training as “very effective”. For the 2018-19 school year, this new question was integrated into the home visit online log.

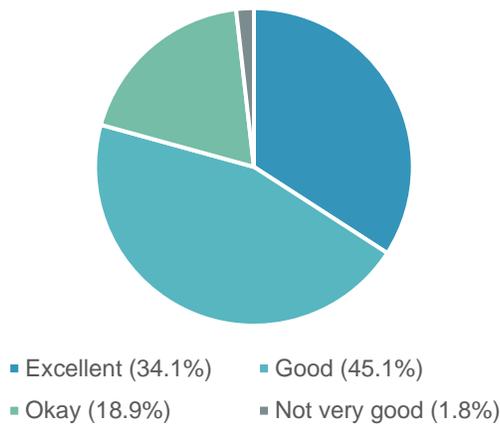
As shown in exhibit 6, about two-thirds of lead visitors (68.5%) reported that the training was “very effective” in preparing them to conduct home visits with families and one-third (30.2%) felt that training was at least ‘somewhat effective’. Fewer than two percent felt that the training had been either “not very effective” or “not effective at all”. These percentages fell slightly below the targeted 80% benchmark.

**Exhibit 6.** Teacher Rating of Training Effectiveness After First Home Visit Experience (n=862)



At the conclusion of the school year, lead and co-visitors were invited to respond to an online survey covering several aspects of the home visit experience including the perceived adequacy of training. When asked to reflect on the quality of the training program, about 79.2% of staff indicated that the training was either “excellent” or “good” in preparing them to conduct home visits with families. About 20% of respondents rated the training as either ‘okay’ or ‘not very good’ at the conclusion of program implementation.

**Exhibit 7.** Home Visitor Perceptions of the Overall Quality of Training (n=164)



As a follow-up to the rating question, home visitors were asked if they had any training needs that they felt were not met, or if they thought any areas of the training could have been improved. More than a quarter of survey respondents (26%) stated that they had no unmet training needs or simply offered positive feedback on the training program. The remaining respondents identified a mix of training topics that they felt were either omitted or not adequately covered or offered general critiques of the training session. Each specific topic or issue mentioned was only referenced by a small number of home visitors (<5).

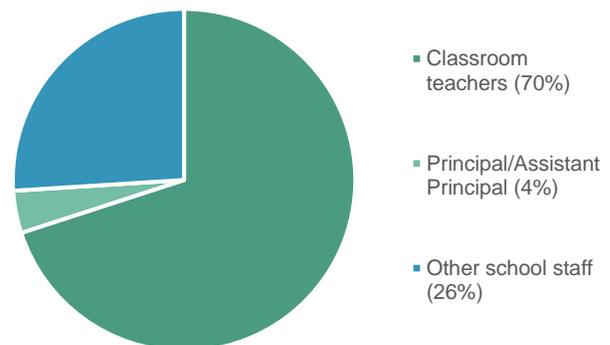
The content areas that staff felt were not adequately addressed included: managing difficult situations, such as risks for child abuse or neglect or negative behavior of students during the visit, addressing health and safety risks in the home, connecting families with resources in their communities, effectively engaging in parent outreach, clarifying the purpose of first and second visits, defining the co-visitor’s role, providing more modeling, role-play, or practice scenarios, and helping staff navigate data entry and record-keeping tasks (e.g., time sheets and logging visits). Staff also offered critiques of the training sessions, including that training was too fast-paced, was too long or had too much repetition, was not appropriately customized to each school setting, was scheduled too late in the school year or was limited with

respect to available dates and locations, was not well-facilitated, or was not well-suited to the experience level of teachers with regarding to their expertise engaging parents and families. Specific responses are listed in *Attachment D. Home Visitor Survey Responses*. Although staff perceptions of the training quality were highly favorable overall, these specific recommendations may be useful for informing minor adjustments to the training curricula for the upcoming school year and identify areas where staff might benefit from additional support.

## Teacher and Staff Participation

School staff within each school building participate in home visits on a voluntary basis. Staff conduct home visits in two-person teams comprised of a lead and co-visitor, with an interpreter as needed. The lead visitor is typically the child’s classroom teacher or another staff member who has knowledge of the student’s school performance. Co-visitors may be anyone in the school-building who is trained to conduct visits with families. Staff are encouraged to configure teams so that at least one team member shares the family’s culture, race or ethnic identity. For 2018-19 there were 349 unduplicated school staff who participated in home visits with families.

**Exhibit 8.** Lead and Co-Visitors by Position (n = 349)



About half of home visitors (55.6%), or 194 teachers and other trained school personnel, were active as both lead and co-visitors, 51 staff were lead visitors only (14.6%), and 104 staff were exclusively co-visitors (29.8%). As shown in exhibit 8 above, about 70% of all home visitors were classroom teachers, 26% were other instructional and non-instructional staff employed by the school, and 4% were school administrators—either Principals or Assistant Principals. This pattern reflects a recent push on the part of the HOME WORKS! organization to encourage more administrators to participate in home visits to learn more about the program operating in their school buildings.

HOME WORKS! set an objective for 2018-19 that schools should actively recruit and engage at least 50% of eligible lead visitors in each school building, with eligibility determined based on each schools' program design. For example, a school that chooses to implement home visits in kindergarten classrooms only would need to recruit 4 of its 8 kindergarten teachers in order to meet the established target. Although this benchmark was approved for 2018-19, the data infrastructure for compiling counts of teachers employed in each school was not yet in place to support measurement of this objective. These data will be integrated into the data system for the 2019-20 school year.

According to an analysis of teacher visit logs, the number of lead visitors who actively participated across schools varied widely, from as few as 2 lead visitors in 4 separate schools to as many as 23 lead visitors in one elementary school. The total lead visitors are listed by school in exhibit 9 below. The average number of staff serving as lead home visitors across schools was 15.

**Exhibit 9.** Lead Visitors and Average Visits per Staff by School (n=211)

	School ID	Total Staff	Min	Max	Mean First Visits per Staff
Elementary	100	12	1	27	14.2
	101	13	1	73	20.1
	102	6	1	16	9.33
	104	12	1	28	13.1
	105	3	1	41	27.3
	106	2	6	18	12.0
	107	2	10	11	10.5
	108	14	1	16	6.9
	109	15	1	18	7.73
	110	21	1	23	5.9
	111	7	1	11	4.71
ECC	200	2	25	26	25.5
	201	5	8	15	11.2
	202	17	1	46	15.5
	203	23	1	26	7.2
	204	7	1	1	4.0
Middle	300	11	1	54	7.7
	301	2	5	10	7.5
	302	5	2	4	3.0
	303	12	1	9	3.7
High	400	5	3	10	6.6
	401	6	1	6	2.2
	402	9	1	184	39.1*

Schools also varied with respect to the number of visits conducted by each lead staff member. As shown in exhibit 9, the average number of completed first and second visits conducted per lead visitor ranged from 5.9 visits in one elementary school to 27 visits on average in another. Most of this variation can be explained by differences in expectations for staff participation set by school administrators, as well as differences in individual levels of engagement and commitment among teachers who agree to participate. Historically, there has not been any minimum standard for the number of visits completed per visitor set by the HOME WORKS! organization in acknowledgement of the fact that participation is voluntary and demands a high level of commitment on the part of participants. It also helps to ensure that the program only engages those teachers and school staff who are fully committed to the HOME WORKS! mission and vision.

Differences in expectations were evident when staff participating in HOME WORKS! training were asked to anticipate the number of families they planned to visit. While many staff shared a goal of visiting all students in their classrooms, many said they planned to reach only one or two. This variation not only determines how successful schools are in reaching targeted number of students and families, but also affects the nature of the intervention from universal program benefit all students to an indicated program benefitting a few students selected for participation.

### Objective 1

Actively recruit and engage at least 50% of lead teachers eligible to participate based on the school's program design.

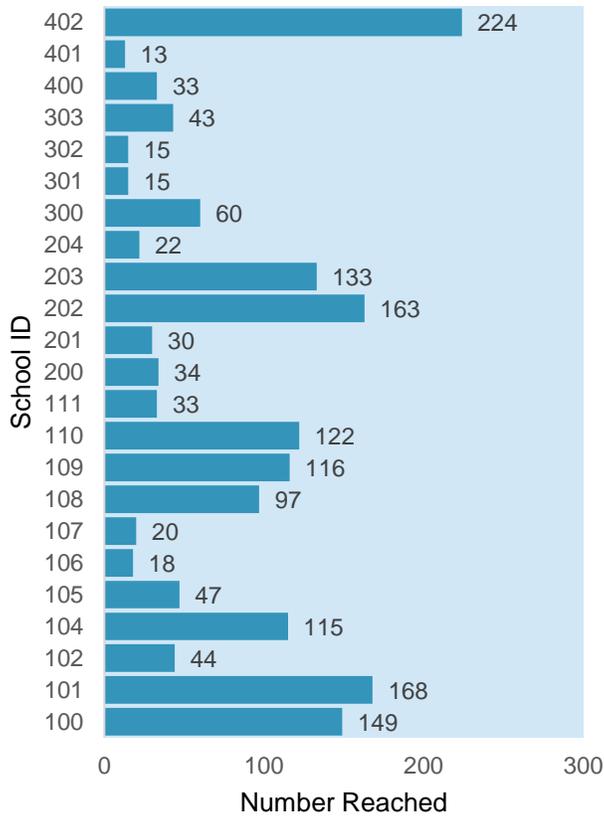
### Students and Families Served

School staff across 23 HOME WORKS! schools completed 1,735 first visits in 2018-19 with 1,714 students and their families or approximately 20 percent of the enrolled student population.<sup>1</sup> This figure represents the total number of students enrolled in the program in 2018-19 as all students must participate in at least one home visit to be defined as a program participant. Exhibit 9 below reports the unduplicated number of students visited by school of enrollment. The data shows wide variation in program reach across

<sup>1</sup> Students with parents in separate households may receive more than one first or second visit.

school settings, ranging from fewer than 15 students in one school to more than 200 in another. The median number of students reached across schools was 44 students.

**Exhibit 10.** Students and Families Reached (n=1,714)



There was also considerable variation in the proportion students served relative to the enrolled student population. Specifically, about one-third of schools visited less than 10% of the school population, while two schools visited more than half of students in their school buildings.

### Prioritizing Students for Home Visits

HOME WORKS! schools adopted different approaches to implementation of home visits with families. Some used a more *universal* strategy focusing on the entire school population or entire grade levels within schools, whereas others relied on a more *indicated* strategy primarily targeting students with demonstrated risks for academic or behavioral challenges. The HOME WORKS! organization has encouraged schools to prioritize the highest need students and families to ensure that program resources are directed to students and families who are presumed to benefit most from the intervention. This strategy also acknowledges that time constraints may limit the number of families that teachers can visit. However, the program also emphasizes the importance of making visits available to all families upon request and

reaching as many families as possible to destigmatize the outreach effort.

Staff were provided the following set of criteria to prioritize outreach to families:

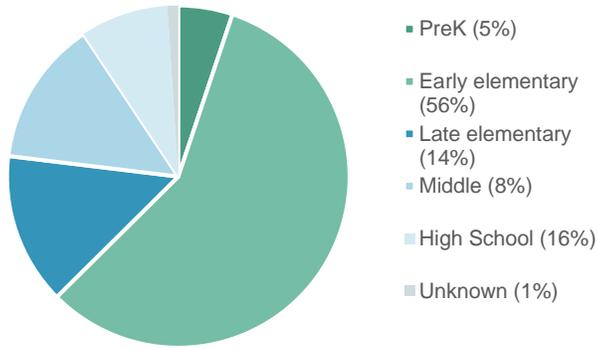
- Students performing below grade level
- Students with discipline problems
- Students who are chronically absent
- English Language Learners (ELL) or immigrant families.

Schools used different methods of identifying students for home visits, often based on differences in school setting. For example, lead visitors in most ECE centers and elementary schools selected families from within their own classrooms or caseloads based on knowledge of student needs. Middle schools and high schools were more likely to provide staff with lists of priority students based on an analysis of school performance data to direct outreach efforts.

In previous years, schools were required to identify a *priority student goal*, which represented the targeted number of students and families that schools anticipated their teachers would visit, based on levels of student and family need and levels of staff participation. In practice, goals set by schools varied widely and were often revisited mid-stream when schools realized that original goals were not likely to be met. Ultimately, school-wide goals were eliminated for the 2018-19 school year, and instead teachers were asked to identify a personal priority goal, with a target of at least 11 first visits.

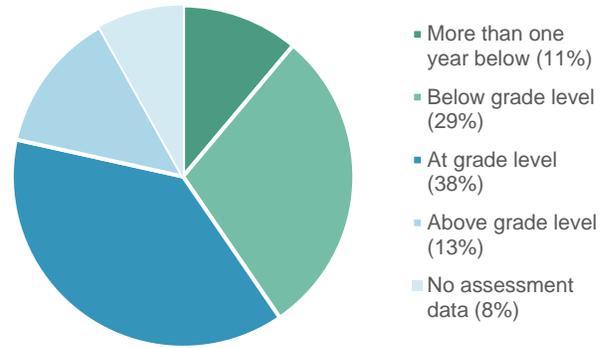
Information on the demographic and risk characteristics of students who were ultimately reached through the HOME WORKS! program was recorded by lead visitors in online visit logs completed after the conclusion of each visit. According to program records, there were proportionately more male students (53%) than female students (47.3%) represented in the home visit sample. Across grade levels, early elementary school students in grades K through 3 accounted for the largest share of participants, representing a little more than half of all students (56%) served by the program. This reflected the fact that the RCT study implemented in St. Louis Public Schools (SLPS) was limited to students in early elementary grade levels, and the fact that one large district limited its home visits to kindergarten classrooms.

**Exhibit 11. Student Grade Level (n=1,714)**



About half of all students in the program were Black or African American (51.6%) and about one-third were White (36.6%), reflecting the demographic composition of the school populations. Another five percent of students were Hispanic or Latino (5.2%), two percent were multi-racial (2.2%), and four percent (4.4%) were other races. As shown in exhibit 11, about 40% of students receiving teacher home visits were reading below grade level on standardized assessments. Online visit logs also indicate that 8.4% of all students receiving first visits were English Language Learners (ELL) and 8.5% were Special Education (SPED) students.

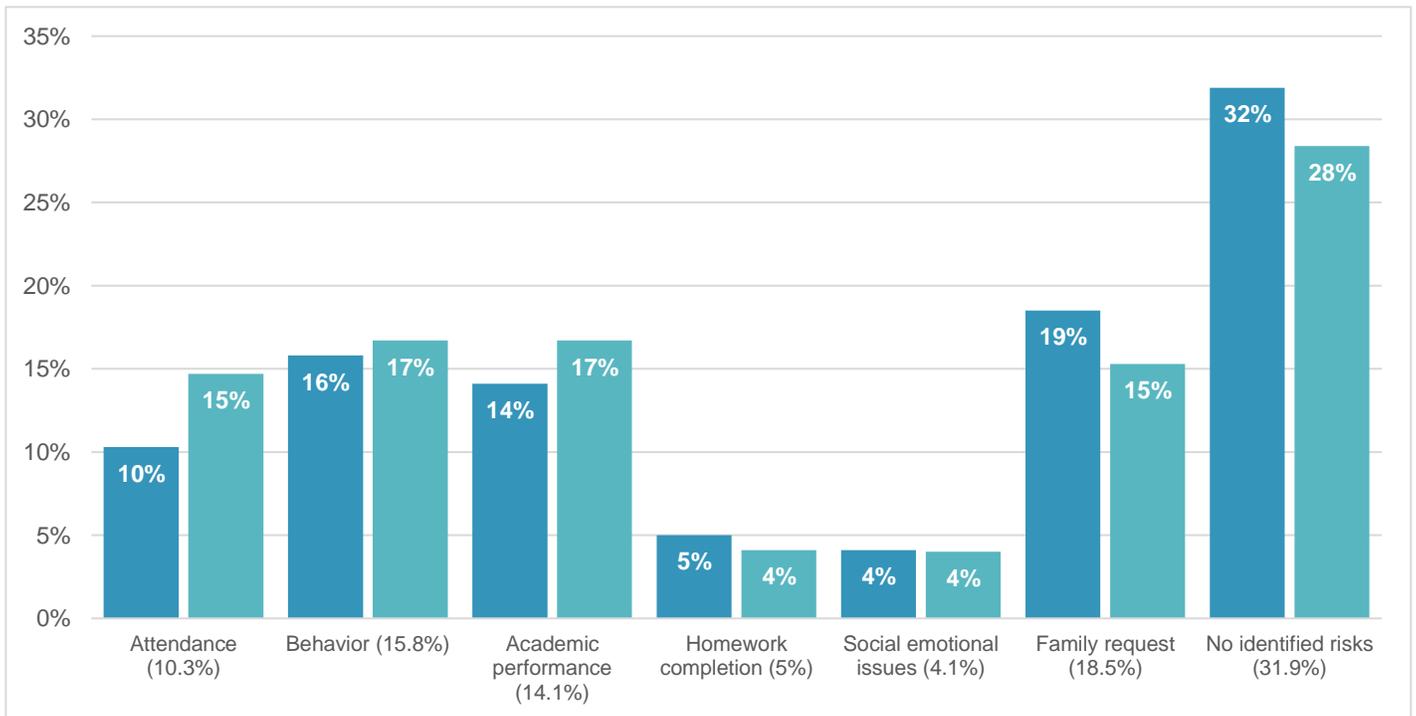
**Exhibit 12. Student Reading Level**



About 21% of all children and families visited in 2018-19 were new to their schools, indicating high rates of community mobility. About 6% of kindergarten age children reached by the program had never attended preschool.

As shown in Exhibits 9 and 10, among students whose families received visits from teachers, about 32% had academic needs, 25% had behavioral concerns, 21% had challenges completing homework, 18% had social or emotions concerns, 15% had poor school attendance.

**Exhibit 13. Comparison of Risk Characteristics between Students with First Visits Only and Students with Both Visits**



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In all, the profile of students served through HOME WORKS! indicates that teachers and other school staff were successful in reaching a high need student population that would benefit from intervention support. However, the data on teacher and student participation also uncovered significant variation in the overall number of active school staff, the number of students benefitting from the program, and the relative success of schools in meeting targets for participation.

This finding highlights potential differences in either school commitment or capacity to implement the program design as planned and underscores the need (1) to more closely monitor how home visits are being implemented within school-buildings, (2) to identify barriers and challenges, early on, that may be impeding schools' progress, and (3) intervening in a timely manner to take corrective action or provide schools with appropriate support. Although these strategies were initiated in the 2018-19 school year, implementation challenges have persisted. This area remains a critical focus for future implementation.

## Implementation of Planned Program Components

Historically, HOME WORKS! schools were expected to implement the standard 2 +2 model, involving two home visits with families and two family dinner events.

However, as noted in previous sections, beginning with the 2017-18 school year, HOME WORKS! started to offer schools greater flexibility to custom-design the program model and to select from the menu of components that would work best for their school settings. This increased flexibility resulted in considerable variation in program models and strategies implemented across schools, although programs maintained the shared goals of building positive parent-teacher relationships, improving communication, cultivating positive family orientations toward school, and motivating parents to engage in their children's learning.

Schools are now required to implement a minimum set of components and to conform to selected features of the original HOME WORKS! design including:

- Completing one or two home visits
- Locating visits in the home
- Timing visits appropriately
- Involving students in the visit
- Sharing attendance updates and goal-setting strategies
- Hosting family dinners or school-based events

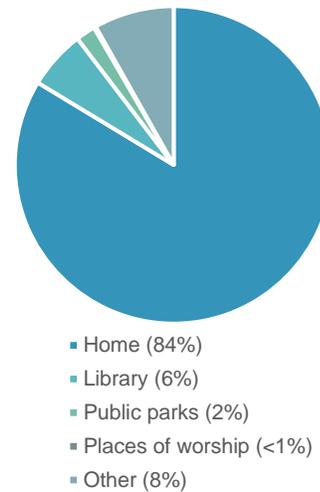
The next sections present data from teacher logs for all 23 active school sites to assess how closely schools conformed to these implementation expectations.

### Location of Visits

The HOME WORKS! model emphasizes the importance of conducting home visits in the child's home environment as a strategy to promote understanding of the family's culture and home life, and to help the teacher assess conditions in the home that may support or limit a child's opportunity for learning and school success. If families decline the home visit, teachers can suggest another location. This accommodation may have resulted in higher numbers of families agreeing to a visit than who might otherwise. As shown in exhibit 15, teacher logs indicate that in 2018-19 about 84% of all first visits were conducted in the child's home and 16% were conducted outside of the home, including public libraries (6%), public parks (2%), places of worship (<1%), and other locations (8%), such as restaurants,

schools, the home of a relative, hotels or shelters, at children's sporting events or other activities, or on benches or at bus stops. About 86% of all second visits were conducted in the home.

**Exhibit 14.** Location of First and Second Visits



### Timing of Visits

Although specific program timelines were negotiated on a school-by-school basis, program guidelines suggest that teachers should begin visiting families upon immediate completion of the first visit training. Schools should ideally conclude first visits within the first three months of the school year. Teachers were instructed to initiate second visits beginning in January and to conclude all second visits by March prior to standardized testing.

Exhibit 16 shows the distribution of first and second visits by month of the school year. For 2018-19, about three-quarters of all first visits (76%) were completed within the targeted timeline between August and October of 2018. This represented a key accomplishment for the organization, which was the result of a concerted effort to engage in outreach earlier in the school year and to initiate visits as soon as training had been completed. Although schools may still benefit from moving the first visit timeline earlier in the school year, this was an important area of improvement compared to the previous school year. By contrast, only slightly more than half of second visits in 2018-19 were completed within the targeted timeline (58%) with a substantial number of visits completed in April or May, which is considered too late in the school year to meaningfully impact parent engagement or students' school performance.

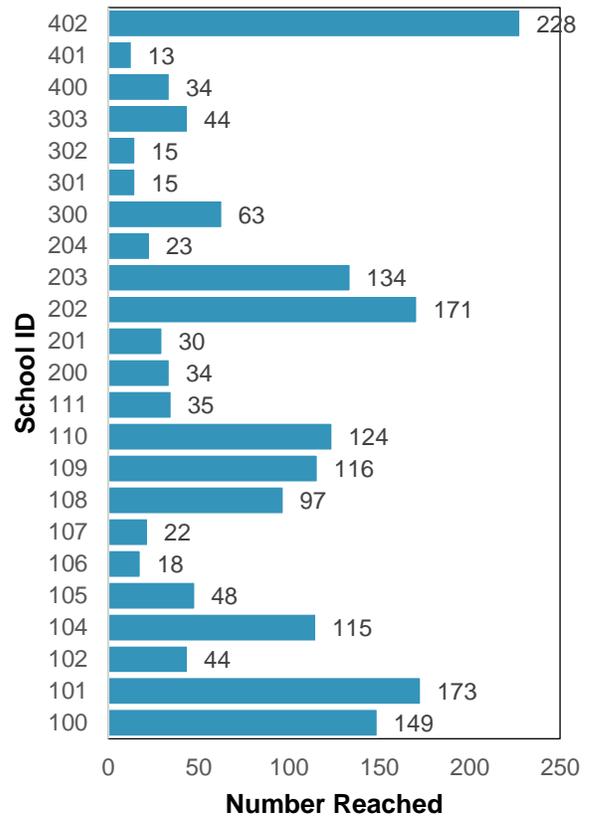
## Completing First and Second Visits

For 2018-19, there were 13 schools of the 23 that remained active in the school year that implemented second visits with families. In second visit models, the follow-up visit is intended to educate parents about school expectations, to discuss parental roles in supporting children’s academic success, and to review students’ academic progress. By design, families must participate in a first visit before receiving a second visit. For some schools, first visits were offered to all students, while second visits were reserved for students with higher level needs, such as those with identified academic or behavioral challenges. The HOME WORKS! organization established a program objective for schools implementing two visits to complete second visits with at least 50% of all families.

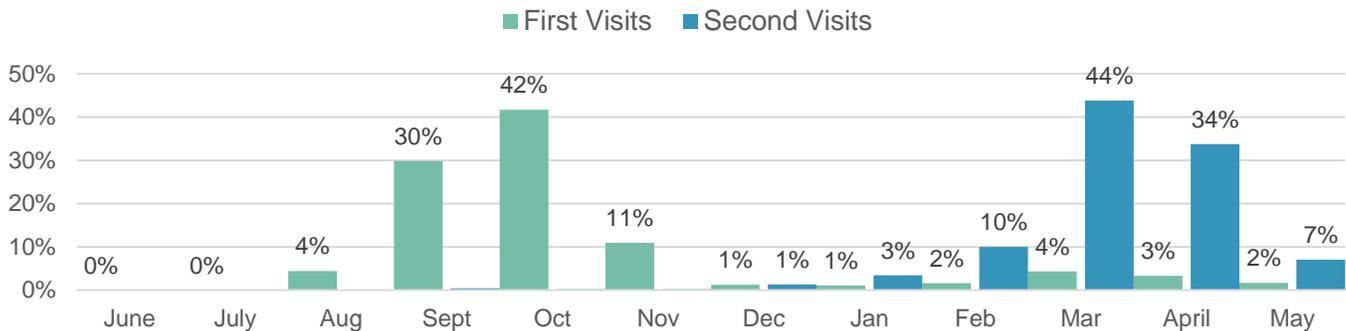
**Objective 3**  
 Complete second home visits with at least 50% of HOME WORKS! families to discuss students’ academic progress and to reinforce parenting practices related to education.

Exhibits 17 and 18 compare the first visits to the total number of second visits in 2018-19. Online teacher logs show that of the 1,252 first visits completed in schools with a two visits model, 528 second visits, or 42%, were completed within the same school year. Rates of second visit completion varied considerably across schools from 14% to 87%. The percent of second visits overall fell below the minimum 50% targeted by the program.

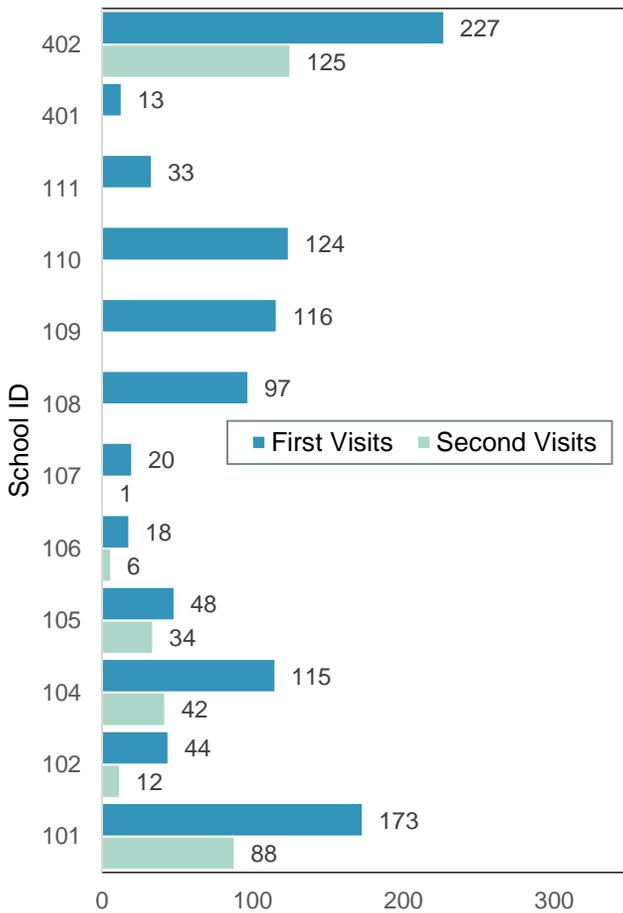
**Exhibit 16.** First Visits Completed by School in 2018-19 (n=1,745)



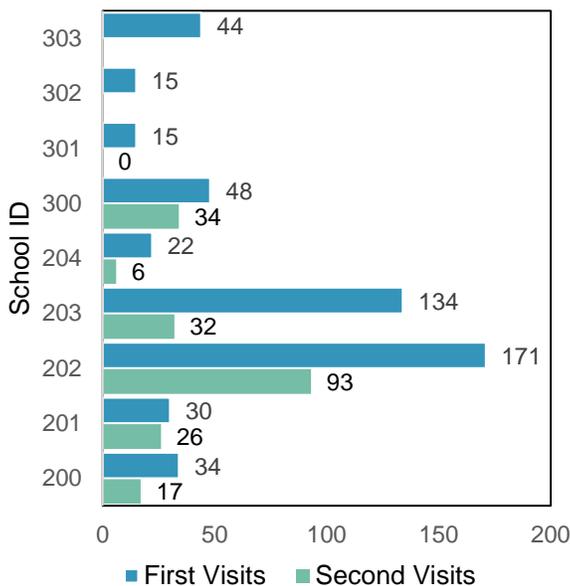
**Exhibit 15.** Timings of First and Second Visits by Month



**Exhibit 17.** First and Second Visits – ECE Centers and Elementary Schools



**Exhibit 18.** First and Second Visits – Secondary Schools



### Child Present at the Visit

The HOME WORKS! program model also encourages students to be present during the home visit and to be actively engaged in sharing and goal setting activities. In 2018-19, in about 92% of all first visits and 95% of all second visits, the child was present at the home visit. This indicates a high level of adherence to the program design.

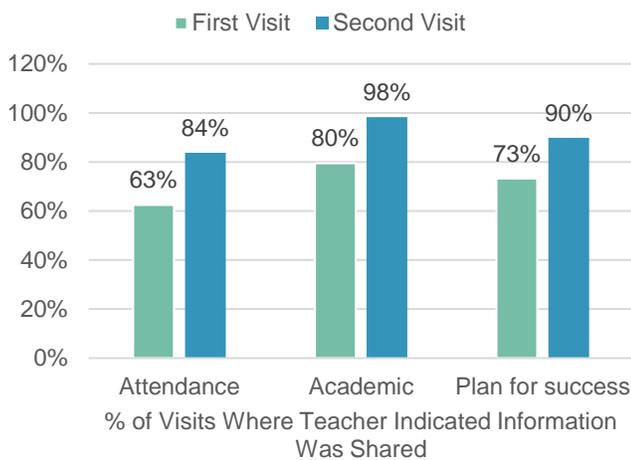
### Home Visit Focus on Attendance

To reinforce the importance of regular school attendance with families, HOME WORKS! introduced a new strategy for sharing de-identified classroom information about each child’s pattern of attendance and academic performance relative to the performance of their classmates. According to teachers ratings of student risk characteristics, about 10% of all students receiving first home visits and 15% of students receiving second home visits were identified as having attendance issues at the time of the visit.

Teachers were also asked to document in the online log whether they had shared this information with families and whether they had worked with families to develop a Plan for Student Success. The Plan for Student Success is a simple goal-setting activity that details action steps for how students, parents, and teachers can work together to promote student progress in need areas. Teachers were asked to share examples of proposed plans in online visit logs.

According to data from online logs, teachers shared attendance information with families in 63% of all first visits and 84% of all second visits, regardless of whether attendance was identified as an area of need. Teachers shared academic information in 80% of first visits and 98% of second visits and created or reviewed a Plan for Student Success at 73% of first visits and 90% of second visits. The targeted outcome was for teachers to engage in these activities in at least 90% of all second visits, thus the objective was met for only one of these three activities (e.g., sharing academic data).

**Exhibit 19.** Teacher Reports of Information-Sharing and Goal Setting at First and Second Visits



### Family Dinner Attendance

HOME WORKS! schools also implement family dinners or other school-based events one or more times throughout the school year to increase parent engagement and foster positive parent-teacher and parent-school relationships. Families who receive home visits are invited to participate as part of their involvement in the program. Families of students enrolled in active HOME WORKS! classrooms who have not yet agreed to a teacher home visit are also encouraged to attend.

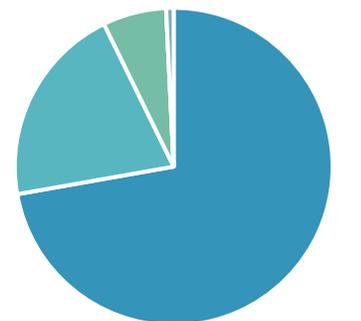
The HOME WORKS! organization established an objective for each school to sponsor at least one family dinner or one school-wide event to communicate that parent engagement is welcomed, valued and expected, to reinforce parenting practices that support student learning, and persuade reluctant parents to accept home visits. During the 2018-19 school year, 19 of 23 schools implemented at least one family dinner, and 8 schools hosted two dinners. Three schools hosted other school events and one school did not implement any event as planned. In all, schools reached as many as 3,343 people, including 776 families, 965 students, and 1,776 parents or family members through HOME WORKS! sponsored school events.

#### Objective 2a

Sponsor at least one family dinner or one school-wide event to communicate that parent engagement is welcomed, valued, and expected, to reinforce parenting practices that support student learning, and persuade reluctant parents to accept home visits.

Parents who attended family dinners were asked to complete a brief survey at the end of the event to provide feedback on their experience. For the first set of questions, parents were given a series of statements and asked the extent to which they “agreed” or “disagreed” with each one. There were 516 parents or other family members in attendance at a family dinner who completed the survey form. Parents, overall, felt very positively about their family dinner experience.

**Exhibit 20.** Parents’ Response to Feeling Welcomed and More Connected to School (n=516)



- Strongly agree (75.9%)
- Agree (21.6%)
- Neither agree nor disagree (1.8%)
- Disagree (0%)
- Strongly disagree (.8%)

When asked for feedback, 97% of survey respondents ‘agreed’ or ‘strongly agreed’ that their participation made them feel welcomed and more connected to their child’s school. Ninety-one percent of parents or family members surveyed believed that attending a family dinner had strengthened their relationships with their child’s teacher and had helped them realize the benefits of a home visit.

More detailed information from family dinner events provided by families, including recommendations for how events could be improved, was summarized in brief school level reports that were distributed to HOME WORKS! schools throughout the school year.

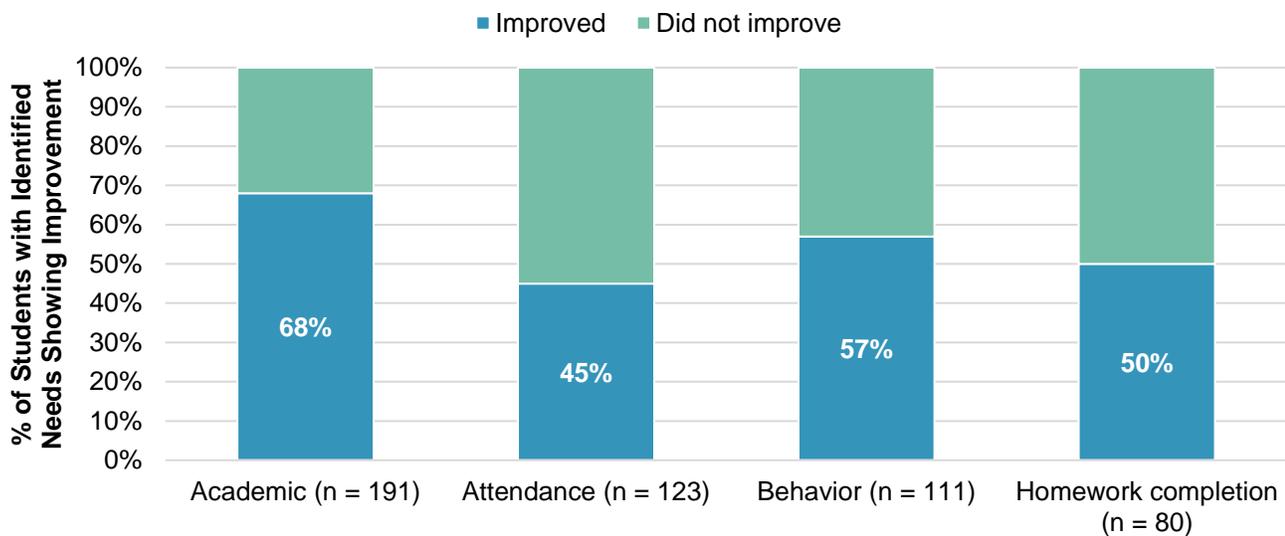
## Impacts on School Performance

The ultimate goal of HOME WORKS! is to increase parent and teacher engagement as a strategy to improve students' school performance. For students who participated in second visits, teachers were asked to assess student needs in areas targeted by the program, including academic achievement, attendance, homework completion, and classroom behavior.

For students who were performing below grade level academically, teachers indicated that 68% had shown some improvement over the course of the school year. Teachers also noted improvements among 57% of all students who had exhibited behavioral issues in the classroom, 50% of those who had trouble completing homework assignments, and 45% of those who had problems with school attendance.

These observations reinforce the perceptions shared by teachers and parents that home visits not only strengthen the quality of relationships forged between schools and homes, but that participation in home visits translates into better classroom performance and stronger school performance for the students who are visited.

**Exhibit 21.** Teacher Observations of the Percentage of Students who Demonstrated Improvements in School Performance



## Parent Survey Responses

For the 2018-2019 school year, HOME WORKS! introduced a brief survey for parents to share feedback about their experiences receiving visits from their children’s teachers. The survey was also designed to provide parents with a mechanism for communicating any concerns that might arise during the visit. After each visit had concluded, parents were given a flyer with a weblink to an online survey or were given the option of completing the survey on a paper form. Parents who responded to the survey were eligible to win a gift incentive to thank them for their participation. A total of 114 parents responded, representing about 7 percent of all families who received home visits in 2018-19. Due to this small sample size, responses may not be representative of all parents reached through the program.

### Objective 3c

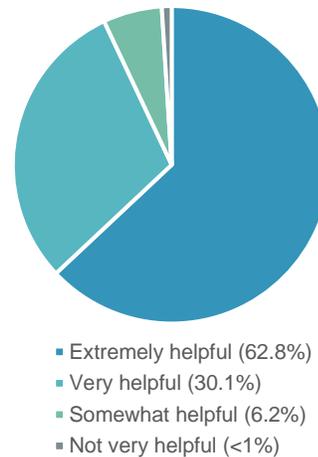
As a result of home visits participation, at least 80% of parents who received home visits will report that home visits were “extremely helpful” or “very helpful” in building a positive relationship with their child’s teachers and providing them with useful strategies or resources to support their children’s learning at home.

Parents were first asked to respond to a series of statements regarding the potential benefits of home visits for children and families. More specifically, parents were asked to indicate how helpful they felt home visits were in each of four areas that included building positive relationships, providing resources to support learning at home, updating parents on their children’s school progress, and making parents feel valued as partners in their children’s education.

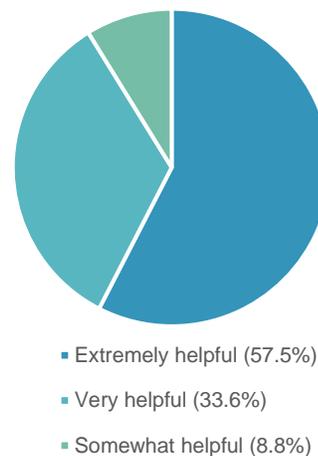
According to survey findings, parents who responded to the feedback survey felt very positively about the home visit experience overall and perceived benefits from their participation. As shown in the following exhibits, most parents felt that visits were “extremely helpful” in building positive relationships with their child’s teachers. Respondents also generally agreed that visits provided families with new ideas and resources that they could use to support their child’s learning at home (57.5%). Parents also felt that visits were “extremely helpful” in keeping families updated on their children’s progress in school (72.1%), and in making parents feel valued as partners in their children’s learning (67.4%).

Two of these survey items were used to provide measurement of the HOME WORKS! program objective that relates (*Objective 3c.*) to successfully completing home visits with families. On measures of building positive relationships with teachers (93%) and providing useful strategies and resources to support children’s learning at home (91%), HOME WORKS! teacher home visitors exceeded the targeted program objective with more than 80% of families perceiving that home visits were either “extremely helpful” or “very helpful” in promoting positive outcomes.

**Exhibit 22.** Perceived Benefit of Visits in Building Positive Relationships (n=113)

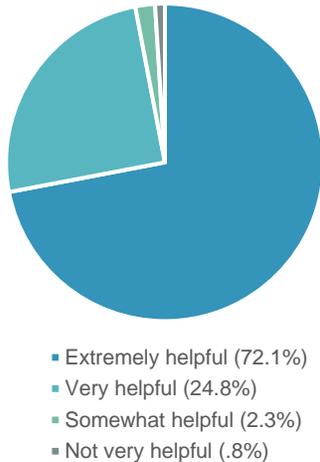


**Exhibit 23.** Perceived Benefit of Visits in Providing Ideas and Resources to Support Learning at Home (n=113)

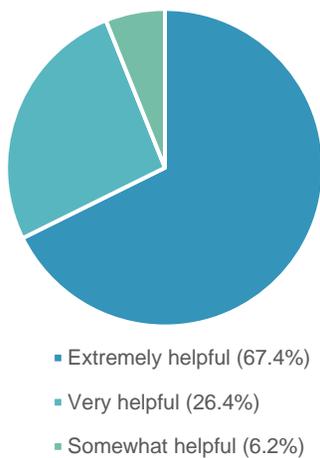


*'We loved that she took the time to go over not only our child's needs but also the areas where he was excelling. She also gave us some tips to help meet his goals.'*

**Exhibit 24.** Perceived Benefit of Visits in Updating Parents on Their Child's Progress (n=112)



**Exhibit 25.** Perceived Benefit of Visits in Making Parents Feel Valued as Educational Partners (n=112)



Parents who responded to the survey were also asked to identify what they liked best about the teacher home visit in an open-ended response. The aspect that parents most often noted as the 'best' visit component (31%) was learning how they could help advance their children's school achievement, for example, by understanding school expectations, knowing how students were progressing academically, and learning about strategies

they could use to help their children achieve school success.

The second most favorable aspect of the home visit experience for parents (26%) was the opportunity to observe the interactions between their children and their children's teachers. Parents appreciated the level of enjoyment that children experienced from having teachers visit them in their homes and from sharing aspects of their home lives. It was clear from the sentiments expressed by parents that an added benefit of the home visit was that the teacher's presence communicates to children that they are valued, and reinforces positive orientations toward teachers and school.

*"The best part of the home visit was getting us as parents involved in our child's education. The teacher really cares for the well-being of our child and gave very good tips to make learning fun and challenging."*

Other aspects that parents noted as the 'best' component of the home visit included relationship building between parents and teachers (18%), the ability to meet with teachers in a relaxed environment, unconstrained by time limitations (13%), the opportunity to share information with teachers about the child's home environment (6%), the sense of partnership between families and teachers in promoting children's learning and school success (5%), and the resources provided in learning bags (4%).

Parents were also asked what, if anything, about the home visit could have been improved. Ten parents (9%) offered specific recommendations, and all others shared positive comments about the program or had no suggestions for program improvements. The specific recommendations offered included increasing the amount of time spent on visits or the number of visits conducted each school year, giving parents more advance notice to plan the visit, and providing a clearer explanation of the visit purpose.

When asked to indicate any reasons that parents were dissatisfied with the visit or felt that they were not helpful, only one parent responded, indicating that families are busy and the content of the visit could have been discussed at a parent-teacher conference.

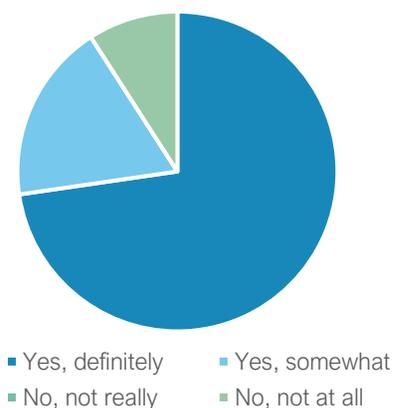
Overall, families offered highly positive reviews of their visits with teachers, and identified a number of benefits of participation for themselves and for their children.

## School Administrator Survey Responses

The HOME WORKS! evaluation included a brief feedback survey administered to principals of schools that were active in the program in the 2018-19 school year. The purpose was to compile feedback on implementation from the perspective of school administrators to identify supports and barriers to implementation and perceived benefits of school involvement. Eleven of 23 school principals responded to the survey request representing a 48 percent rate of response. The five schools with the fewest number of recorded visits (<25) did not respond to the survey request.

Each HOME WORKS! school is supported by a Site Coordinator who is hired from within the school building and receives a stipend to assist with program coordination. HOME WORKS! also assigns a paid Program Leader who is employed by the HOME WORKS! organization to assist schools with implementation. Principals were first asked to share information about their interactions with these designated program staff. When asked how frequently they met with Site Coordinators in their schools, Principals all reported holding regular meetings either bi-weekly (36.4%) or monthly (63.6%). Principals met slightly less frequently with their HOME WORKS! Program Leaders, meeting monthly (72.7%), quarterly (18.2%), or once or twice annually (9.1%). Principals universally agreed that the Program Leader assigned to their schools was ‘very helpful’ in answering questions, helping trouble-shoot problems, or supporting program implementation generally.

**Exhibit 26.** Principal Perceptions Regarding How Clearly Expectations Were Communicated (n=11)

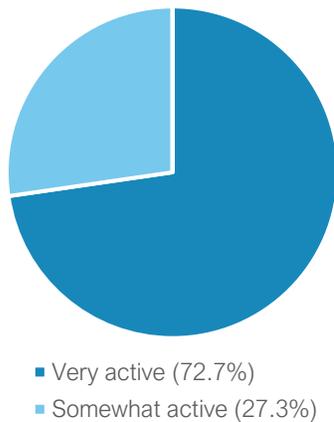


*“[The Program Leader] was extremely responsive and ensured that our staff felt truly heard. I felt that as a former educator, she had a realistic grasp on all of the competing priorities that teachers have and made decisions that supported our staff with that knowledge in mind.”*

As shown in exhibit 23, Principals were also asked about the expectations for school participation that were communicated to them by HOME WORKS!. Principals generally agreed that expectations for their schools’ involvement were clearly communicated (72.7%), although there were some exceptions. Among administrators who felt expectations were only ‘somewhat’ or ‘not at all’ clear, the concerns they raised included a lack of communication around data reporting expectations, the add-on of requirements for family dinners and visits that were communicated midstream, and changes to details and processes as the school moved through the school year. This suggests that a possible area of focus for improvement efforts would be on maintaining consistent expectations and delaying mid-course corrections until the end of a program year to minimize frustration among implementers.

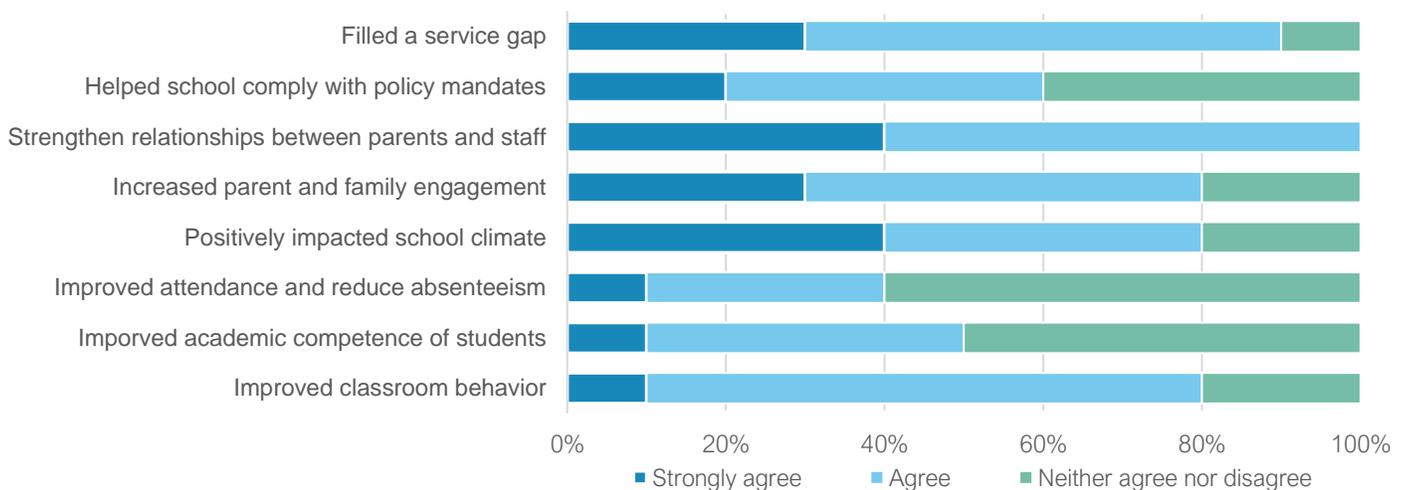
Principals were also asked to identify the most significant barriers or challenges that their schools encountered in implementing the HOME WORKS! program model. About half of respondents (55%) felt that the greatest barrier or challenge to implementation was finding time to make visits with families outside of the school day. This was a common theme in survey responses among most stakeholders (e.g., teachers, parents, etc.) Principals also noted challenges engaging parents through outreach (18%) and encouraging staff to participate in the program (18%). One administrator also identified aspects of the program structure as a barrier. This was based on informal feedback shared by parents indicating a preference for keeping classroom-based instructional sessions separate from family dinners, rather than combining them into a single event. Detailed survey responses are listed in *Attachment B. Principal Survey Responses*.

**Exhibit 27.** Principal Perceptions Regarding Their Own Level of Engagement in Encouraging Staff Participation (n=11)

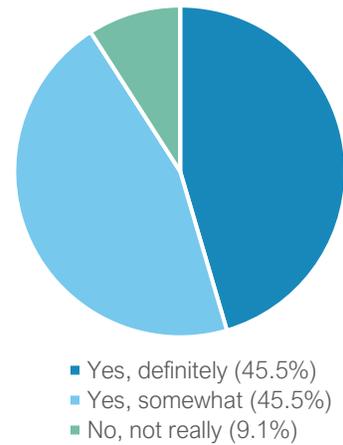


The success of HOME WORKS! implementation often rests on the leadership of administrators in actively promoting the program among their staff, as well as the motivation and commitment of teachers to follow-through with visits to families. Principals were first asked to rate their own level of engagement in encouraging participation among their school staff to conduct home visits. About three-quarters of administrators surveyed believed that they were ‘very active’ in promoting the program among staff and one-quarter felt they were at least ‘somewhat active’. Again, it should be noted that five schools with the lowest rates of completion of teacher home visits (<25) were not represented in the survey sample.

**Exhibit 28.** Principal Perceptions of the Impact of Home Visits (n=11)



**Exhibit 29.** Sufficiently Prioritized Home Visits with Families (n=11)



When asked if they believed their school staff had sufficiently prioritized home visits, responses were somewhat mixed. About 46% responded “yes, definitely”, 46% responded “yes, somewhat”, and 9% responded “no, not really.” Recruiting and maintaining motivation of staff to actively participate in home visits remains an ongoing challenge for schools, given the voluntary nature of the program and competing demands of work and homelife for participating teachers.

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Principals were asked to share their perceptions about the impacts of home visits on their school environments and their student populations. According to survey responses:

- All school administrators agreed that home visits strengthened relationships between parents and school staff, although 60 percent agreed only “somewhat”.
- Ninety percent ‘agreed’ or ‘strongly agreed’ (90%) that home visits filled a service or resource gap in how their schools address parent engagement.
- Principals were less likely to perceive that home visits helped their school meet state or federal mandates related to parent engagement (60% “agreed” or “strongly agreed”), such as Title I funding requirements.
- Eighty percent of administrators ‘agreed’ or ‘strongly agreed’ that home visits increased parent and family engagement in their children’s learning and positively impacted the climate in the school building.

- On measures of perceived impacts on students’ school performance, principals were most likely to ‘agree’ or ‘strongly agree’ that home visits positively influenced student behavior (80%) as compared to impacting either attendance (40%) or academic competency (50%).

Lastly, principals were asked to provide recommendations for how they would strengthen or improve the program. Respondents offered five specific recommendations. These recommendations included increasing the incentives for participation, increasing the flexibility for schools to customize their programs to their school resource environments, reducing excess meeting time, reducing training requirements, and moving training to earlier in the school year. These recommendations reflect strategies to maximize the benefits of participation while reducing level of burden to make programs more feasible for schools to implement.

## Site Coordinator Survey Responses

In addition to surveying school administrators regarding their roles supporting home visit implementation, the evaluation included a brief survey of Site Coordinators within each school-building. The purpose of the survey was to understand more about Site Coordinators' training needs and their perceptions of the implementation process. About 70 percent of Site Coordinators who responded to the survey were serving as Site Coordinators for the first time and 30 percent were returning. When asked what factors motivated them to take on the role, about half (50%) mentioned a history of involvement with the program or a desire to promote the program's success within their school building. About a quarter (27%) were motivated by working with students and their families. Fifteen percent were interested in assuming a leadership role in their schools and fifteen percent were motivated by the monetary incentives.

### Site Coordinator Training and Support

Site Coordinators were expected to attend training provided by the HOME WORKS! organization to prepare them for the Site Coordinator role. When asked to rate the overall quality of the training they received, 58 percent rated the training as "excellent". 39 percent rated the as "good", and 4 percent rated the training as "okay". Site Coordinators were asked if there were any training needs that had not been met or if there were any areas of training that they felt needed improvement. Of the six respondents who offered recommendations, three mentioned needs for additional training in key areas, including billing, completing timesheets, inputting student data into the portal, and connecting state-issued identification numbers to each student. One recommended that the timing of the Site Coordinators' training be moved forward to occur before the home visitor training, so that Site Coordinators could take a more proactive role in supporting implementation early on. One respondent felt that the training was redundant for those with previous Site Coordinator experience, and another noted that the training seemed self-explanatory and could be shortened or delivered as a webinar.

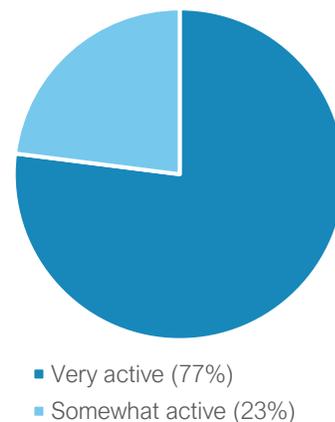
When asked whether the expectations for the Site Coordinator role had been clearly communicated to them, all respondents stated "yes, definitely" that the expectations for the role were clear. Site Coordinators were also asked if the expectations placed on them seemed reasonable relative to the amount of compensation provided. About 70 percent of

respondents said "yes, definitely", 19 percent responded "yes, sort of", and 11 percent responded "no, not really".

All HOME WORKS! schools are also assigned a Program Leader from the HOME WORKS! staff to provide guidance to school coordinators to help them fulfill their roles. Site Coordinators reported meeting with their Program Leaders weekly (19.2%), bi-weekly (15.4%), or in most cases, monthly (53.8%). One Site Coordinator reported meeting with the Program Leader daily, while two others reported meeting only once or twice throughout the school year. Site Coordinators almost universally agreed (96.2%) that the Program Leader was "very helpful" in providing them with assistance or support to facilitate program implementation, for example, by answering questions or helping to troubleshoot problems.

The survey also asked Site Coordinators to indicate how often they had accessed information in the HOME WORKS! home visit database to track completion of home visits by teachers in their school buildings. Nearly half of respondents reported monitoring staff completion of visits once monthly (46.2%), another 20% monitored visits bi-weekly (19.2%), and about 4% checked visits once or twice only. About one-third of Site Coordinators monitored visits on weekly basis—the optimal level of frequency that would allow them to proactively intervene to address low visit completion rates.

**Exhibit 30.** Site Coordinators' Rating of Their Own Level of Involvement in Follow-Up with Home Visitors (n=26)



Although three-quarters of coordinators (76.9%) felt they had been "very active" in following-up with staff to encourage home visits, the other quarter acknowledged that they were only "somewhat active" in this role. When asked why they had not been more involved, two new coordinators mentioned that they were still learning about the program, one feared push-back from colleagues, and one acknowledged that he or she could have pushed harder to meet home visit goals.

### Identified Barriers and Challenges

Site coordinators were also asked to identify any barriers that they encountered in implementing their role. The barrier that most Site Coordinators perceived to be 'very significant' was the inability to access timely information about home visit progress. This challenge has been identified through previous HOME WORKS! evaluations and was the impetus for the pilot development of the data dashboard. The second most significant barrier noted as 'very significant' by 77% of all Site Coordinators was too much data entry and record-keeping burden. This was followed by inconsistent or changing expectations or guidance from the HOME WORKS! organization, which was noted as a 'very significant' barrier by 65% of all site coordinators. Other issues viewed as 'very significant' barriers included the time commitment (50%), lack of participation or involvement from parents and families (50%), the difficulty convincing staff to become more actively involved (42%), too many competing time demands or priorities within the school building (42%), and inadequate support for the school administration (42%).

**Exhibit 31.** Percent of Site Coordinators Who Rated Barriers as "Very Significant"

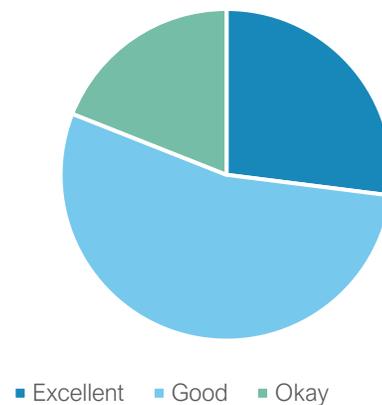
Barriers & Challenges	%
Difficulty convincing staff to become more actively involved	42%
Too much of a time commitment	50%
Too many competing demands or priorities in the school-building	42%
Too much data entry and record-keeping burden	77%
Inadequate support from the school administration	42%

Inconsistent or changing expectations or guidance from the HOMEWORKS! organization	65%
Inability to access timely information about home visit progress	100%
Lack of participation or involvement from parents and families	50%

### Perceived Effectiveness

Finally, Site Coordinators were asked to evaluate their own level of effectiveness in the Site Coordinator role. About 27% rated their performance as 'excellent' and 54% rated their performance as 'good'. The remaining 19% had more mixed self-assessments, rating their performance as only 'okay'. This suggests an area for further technical assistance and support from the HOME WORKS! organization to help Site Coordinators increase effectiveness in their roles.

**Exhibit 32.** Effectiveness as a HOME WORKS! Site Coordinator



Overall, the results of the Site Coordinator survey suggest that most staff who served in the coordination role were motivated to participate by intrinsic factors, such as a desire to work with students and their families and a belief in the program's mission and commitment to help the program succeed. Site Coordinators did identify barriers to successfully fulfilling roles, most importantly, the lack of access to real-time data to monitor staff participation within the school-building. This area has been a focus of HOME WORKS! program activities throughout the 2018-19 school year.

## Home Visitor Survey Responses

The next section of the report summarizes data from teacher and other school staff surveys that were conducted at the end of the program year to understand more about home visit implementation, including successes, challenges, and perceived outcomes for students and their families. The home visitor survey respondent sample included 164 teachers and other school staff, representing a 47% overall response rate. The information from teacher visit surveys is being used to help refine implementation of the home visit model and to support replication to other schools.

### Staff Participation

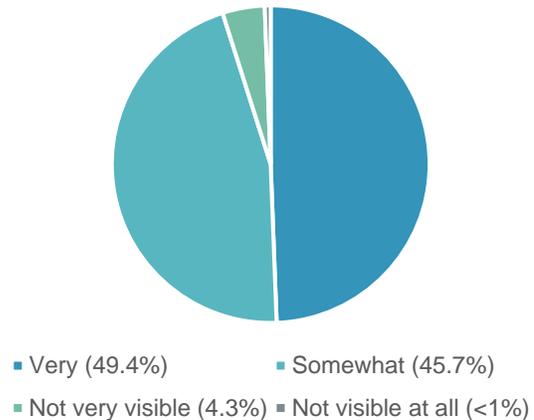
About 39.6% of all home visitors surveyed were participating in the program for the first time in the 2018-19 school year and 60.4% were new to the program. About half of survey respondents participated as both lead and co-visitors (56.1%), 10% were lead visitors only, and about one-third (33.5%) were co-visitors only. Sixty-one percent of school staff noted that they had never received formal training through their schools addressing parent engagement practices prior to their involvement with HOME WORKS!.

When asked about the factors that motivated their participation in the program, most respondents mentioned relationship building with students and their families, getting to know families outside of the school environment, learning more about their students' home lives, and partnering with parents to increase student's school success. Home visitors also indicated that pay was a motivating factor, as was the expectations placed on them by their district superintendents or school administrators.

### Program Visibility and Outreach to Parents

School staff were also asked to indicate how visible they felt the HOME WORKS! program was to members of the school community, including parents, family members, students, and school staff. This item was used to measure the impact of parent outreach efforts that were newly implemented in 2018-19 to promote the program within the school building. Examples included back-to-school night events at the beginning of the school year where home visits were marketed to families. About half of home visitors (49.4%) felt the program was 'very visible', whereas 45.7% felt the program was only 'somewhat visible', and about 5% felt the program in their school building was 'not very visible' or 'not visible at all'.

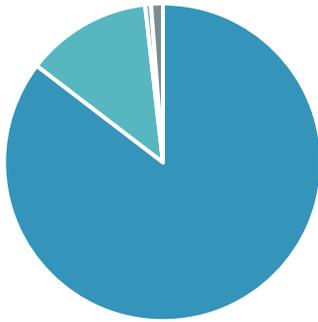
**Exhibit 33.** Perceived Visibility of HOME WORKS! in Schools (n=164)



Respondents were also asked to evaluate how active their school administration was in promoting the teacher home visit program in their schools, for example, by recruiting staff to participate, promoting the program to families, or discussing home visit progress at school faculty meetings. Leadership within the school building to promote the program and motivate staff and families to participate has been identified as an important factor in predicting implementation success. While two-thirds of staff surveyed rated administrators as 'very active', the other one-third felt that administrators were either 'somewhat active' (28.7%), 'not very active' (4.9%) or 'not active at all' (<1%). This may represent an area for more focus training or clearer expectations for administrator involvement.

Home visitors were also asked if they felt the expectations for participation in the HOME WORKS! program had been clearly communicated to them. Eighty-five percent responded 'yes, definitely' and 13% responded 'yes, somewhat'. Only 2% said 'no, not really' or "no, not at all" when asked if expectations were clear.

**Exhibit 34.** Staff Perceptions Regarding How Clearly Expectations Were Communicated (n=164)



- Yes, definitely (85.4%)
- Yes, somewhat (12.8%)
- No, not really (.6%)
- No, not at all (1.2%)

Home visitors were asked to identify any areas where they felt that expectations needed to be more clearly conveyed. Staff offered various comments, including a need to be clearer about expectations for staff involvement within the school building and the time commitment required to participated. Other areas where staff identified a need for greater clarity including the availability of incentives, the content and delivery of home visits, and shifting expectations more generally.

“Expectations were provided by peers and department heads, with very little reinforcement or mention from the administration.”

...

“I felt their expectations differed from what our school was trying to achieve. They were very focused on their own format and goals.”

...

“I feel that PTLTs were not explained well and we were not given enough time to get ready for them and then teachers were punished and not given all of their money.”

### Supports for Implementation

The survey also aimed to capture information from staff about the level of support they received from Site Coordinators in the school building. Three-quarters of all home visitors rated their school Site Coordinators as ‘very helpful’. About 9 percent stated that they did not require any assistance or support, and 2.4% said they did not have any interaction with the HOME WORKS! Site Coordinator in their school building.

### Identifying and Removing Barriers

To learn more about the reasons that schools may have encountered challenges to implementation, teachers and other school staff were asked about their experiences when attempting to complete home visits with families. Home visitors were presented with a list of potential barriers and were asked to indicate how significant each barrier was for them personally. Exhibit 35 below shows the percentage of home visitors who categorized each issue listed as either a ‘very significant’ or ‘somewhat significant’ barrier to implementation:

**Exhibit 35.** Home Visitor Ratings of “Very Significant” or “Somewhat Significant Barriers (n=164)

Barriers & Challenges	%
Difficulty convincing parents to participate.	62%
Too much of a time commitment.	40%
Difficulty scheduling a convenient time for a visit.	34%
Families’ distrust or reluctance to engage during a visit.	24%
Difficulty working with a co-visitor to schedule or coordinate visits.	20%
Concerns about personal safety	20%
Parents not showing up for a scheduled visit.	18%
Too much data entry and record-keeping burden.	17%
Not feeling like visits were making a difference.	16%
Too much distance to travel.	13%
Difficulty finding an alternative location when the home was not an option.	9%

Based on survey responses, the leading challenge noted was the difficulty convincing parents to participate with 62% of all respondents perceiving this to be a “very significant” or “somewhat significant” barrier. Home visitors also reported that the time demand required to participate in home visits (40%) was a factor impeding their involvement. Other highly significant barriers

included difficulty scheduling a convenient time for home visits (34%), distrust among families (24%), concerns about personal safety (20%), and difficulty working with a co-visitor to schedule or coordinate visits (20%). When asked if there were any additional barriers, not already noted, that had posed as a challenge to their participation, about 16% of home visitors offered open-ended responses. Barriers identified by survey respondents included issues involving targeted families, such as difficulty with parent outreach, lack of parent buy-in or parents not showing up for visits, health or safety concerns related to the home environment, and misbehavior among students during the visit. Respondents also noted issues related to management of the program within the school, such as late payments. Scheduling challenges were also noted, including problems with teachers not visiting their own students. Specific lists of barriers are noted in *Attachment D. Home Visitor Survey Responses*.

Finally, teachers and other staff who conducted home visits were asked if there was anything that could have been provided in terms of communication, assistance, or additional support that might have enhanced the home visit experience. Responses included assistance with scheduling and coordinating visits, logging visits, actively promoting visits to parents, conducting parent outreach, communicating more effectively with teachers, clarifying timelines, and improving reimbursement processes.

### Teacher Perceptions of Program Impact

The survey also asked home visitors about the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with a series of statements regarding the impact of home visits on families, schools, and students' school outcomes. More than 80% of all active home visitors surveyed at the conclusion of the school year, 'agreed' or 'strongly agreed' that home visits helped build positive relationships with parents, improved parents' attitudes toward school, increased parent-teacher communication, connected families with helping resources, provided new insights or cultural understandings that had informed their teaching practices, and provided families with useful strategies to support learning at home.

Teachers were also asked whether home visits improved students' academic performance, attendance, levels of classroom engagement, homework completion, and classroom behavior. Responses across all areas of performance indicate at least some perceived impact on student outcomes.

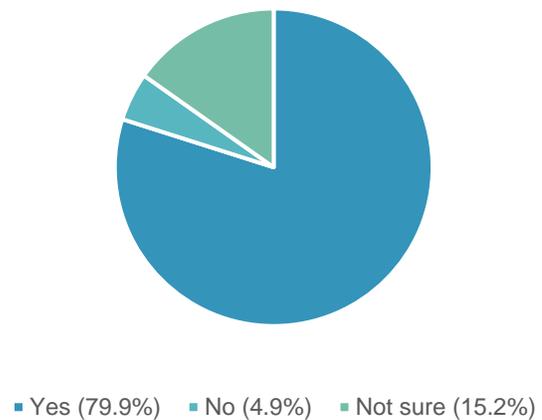
- About 70% of respondents either 'agreed' or 'strongly agreed' that home visits contributed to improvements in students' classroom behavior;

- More than half 'agreed' or 'strongly agreed' that home visits improved classroom attendance (59%), academic performance (57%), or home work completion of levels of classroom engagement (54%).

### Continuing Involvement

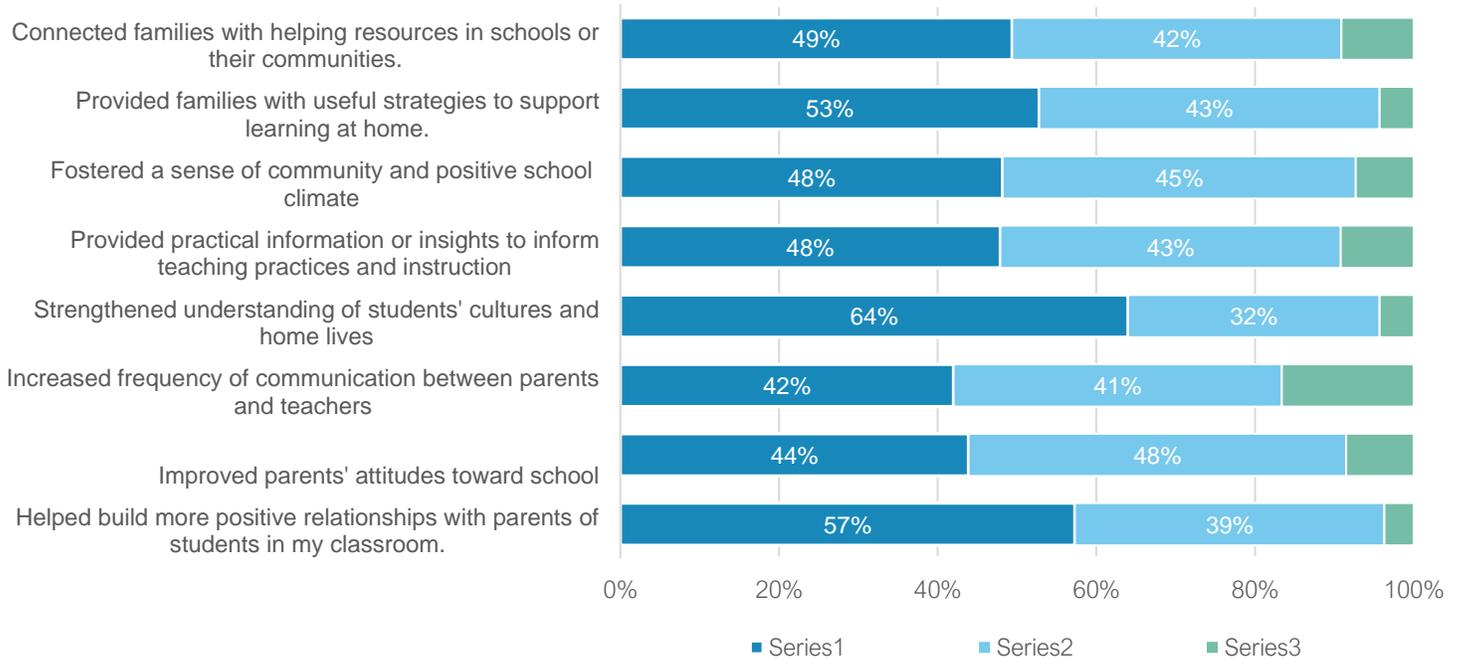
For the final item on the survey, respondents were asked if their school continued to support home visits in the 2019-20 school year, would they plan to participate. About 80% of school staff indicated that they would continue their involvement.

**Exhibit 36.** Teachers' Plans to Participate in the Next School Year (n=164)

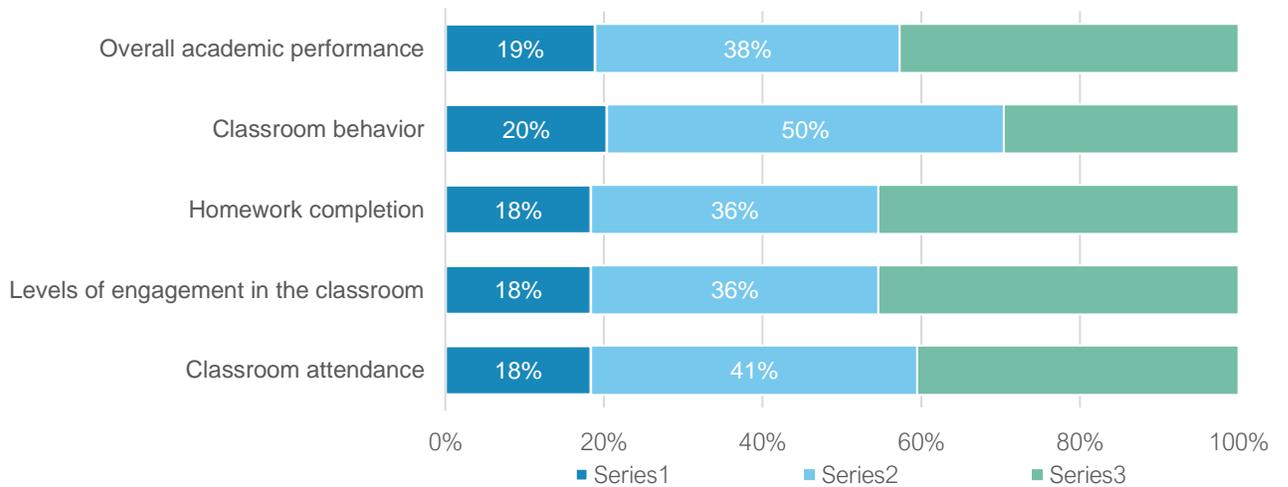


For those who indicated that they would not likely participate in the future, the leading reasons were that staff members were relocating to new schools, had competing family demands, or did not feel like the payment was adequate to compensate them for their time.

**Exhibit 37. Home Visitor Perceptions of the Value of Home Visits for Parents and Families**



**Exhibit 38. Home Visitor Perceptions of the Impact of Home Visits on Students' School Performance**



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## Findings and Recommendations

The intent of the HOME WORKS! annual evaluation for 2018-19 was to describe how the teacher home visit program model was being implemented across schools and to assess the extent to which schools were successfully implementing core components that are theoretically linked to program outcomes. The evaluation was also used to document school administrator, parent, and teacher perceptions about the impact of home visits on students, families, and schools, and the extent to which home visits helped schools better engage students and their families in the learning process. The evaluation team also helped support organizational development efforts by providing technical consulting and data system enhancements to facilitate program monitoring, to help identify and address programmatic challenges, and to increase the potential for successful program replication in newly onboarding schools.

### Key Accomplishments

This section highlights major accomplishments from the 2018-19 school year:

**The HOME WORKS! parent engagement program was implemented across 8 school districts and 23 participating schools, which collectively enrolled more than 9,000 students.** Schools included 4 ECE centers or early elementary schools (K-2), 12 standard elementary schools, 4 middle schools, and 3 high schools. About half of schools were new to the program (52%) and half were returning from the previous year.

**HOME WORKS! supported the delivery of 80 in-person staff trainings for 691 prospective lead and co-visitors in participating schools.** Of the individuals trained, 349 unduplicated school staff went on to actively engage in home visits with families as either lead or co-visitors. When asked at the end of the school year to reflect on the training they had received through HOME WORKS!, 79% of home visitors reported that the quality of training was either “excellent” or “good” in preparing them to conduct visits with families.

**School staff implemented a total of 2,263 home visits serving an unduplicated count of 1,714 students and their families.** This figure represents approximately 20 percent of the total student population enrolled in active schools. Staff successfully completed 1,735 first visits and 528 second visits over the course of the school year. Parents who responded to feedback surveys after visits concluded communicated that home visits were either ‘extremely helpful’ (62.8%) or ‘very helpful’ (30.1%) in building positive relationships with teachers, and were ‘extremely helpful’ (57.5%) or ‘very helpful’ (33.6%) in

providing ideas and resources to support their children’s learning at home.

**HOME WORKS! sponsored and co-coordinated 28 family dinners or school-based events to communicate that parent engagement was welcomed and to reinforce parenting practices that support student learning.** In all, schools reached as many as 3,343 people through family dinners and other school events, including 776 unique families, 965 students, and 1,776 parents, guardians, siblings, or other relatives. When asked to provide feedback on the family dinner, parents consistently reported that participation made them welcomed and more connected to their child’s school (97%) and had strengthened their relationships with their children’s teachers (91%).

**HOME WORKS! was successful in reaching students with demonstrated needs for support and intervention.** Almost all schools active in the program in 2018-19 were designated as Title 1, serving a high percentage of socio-economically disadvantaged students. This figure compares to only about half of schools in the prior school year. This suggests that HOME WORKS! was successful in redirecting its focus to higher need, harder-to-reach schools that were most likely to benefit from parent engagement strategies. About 40% of students participating in home visits were performing below grade level in reading at the time of the first visit. About 8% of students were English Language Learners (8%), and 9% were special education students.

**As in previous school years, the evaluation documented strong, positive perceptions of the program among school stakeholders.** Specifically, school administrators universally agreed that home visits strengthened relationships between parents and school staff (100%), increased parent and family engagement in schools (80%), and positively impacted school climate (80%). On measures of perceived impacts on school performance, a high percentage of administrators also ‘agreed’ or ‘strongly agreed’ that home visits positively influenced student behavior (80%), while slightly fewer agreed that home visits impacted academic competence (50%) or school attendance (40%). Teachers and other home visitors shared these perceptions. More than 80% of all active home visitors surveyed at the conclusion of the school year, ‘agreed’ or ‘strongly agreed’ that home visits helped build positive relationships with parents, improved parents’ attitudes toward school, increased parent-teacher communication, connected families with helping resources, provided new insights or cultural understandings that had informed their teaching

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practices, and provided families with useful strategies to support learning at home. Similar to the perceptions held by school administrators, teachers felt that home visits were most likely to impact student behavior (70% 'agreed' or 'strongly agreed' with statements on behavioral impacts), as compared to either school attendance (59%), or academic performance (57%).

### Areas for Continuing Improvement

The HOME WORKS! annual evaluation also highlighted ongoing challenges for the organization concerning implementation quality and consistency across schools. Notably, schools varied considerably in terms of the number of staff involved in home visits and the number of students and families reached across schools and classrooms. The following are recommendations related to implementation that represent potential areas of improvement.

**Narrowing the focus and refining incrementally.** Since the 2016-17 school year, the HOME WORKS! organization has undergone a rapid scale-up of operations, expanding from 14 to more than 20 schools. This time period also involved an expansion into more ECE centers and secondary schools, reaching students across a more diverse range of developmental stages relative to previous years. For 2018-19, HOME WORKS! partnered with 23 K-12 public and charter schools and ECE centers, of which half were new to the program and had no previous home visiting experience. This expansion of operations rapidly increased the workload for program staff and demanded a higher level of coordination across schools.

The organizational culture of HOME WORKS! also embodies a commitment to continuous quality improvement to address emerging needs and challenges; however, this often translated into substantial revisions to the program design, processes, or materials, or changes to expectations mid-stream. This was often done without sufficient time or levels of organizational readiness to absorb changes effectively. For example, for the 2018-19 school year, a key strategy was to grant schools greater discretion in shaping the program model to their unique school contexts. The goal was to make the program more feasible for schools to implement. This flexibility, though welcomed by many schools, resulted in nine distinct variations of the HOME WORKS! parent engagement program with different combinations of home visits, family dinners, school-based events, and PTLT sessions. This dismantling of the core program design, combined with the demands of coordinating

implementation across a larger number of new and more diverse schools, may have resulted in too much complexity, too fast, causing the organization to become stretched too thin. While a focus on program quality is essential to strengthening operations, it is important to balance the need for continuous refinement, with the need to ensure clarity and consistency of operations for program and school staff. Unclear or inconsistent expectations were, in fact, common themes identified by school stakeholders when asked about barriers to implementation. It is also critical that proposed changes be implemented incrementally with a manageable scale and pace to avoid overwhelming the capacity of staff and teachers and their ability to implement and monitor programs effectively. As such, HOME WORKS! could benefit from a future scaling down of its operations, with more limited recruitment of new schools. This would allow the program to focus on maximizing implementation within a smaller number of returning schools to build on lessons learned.

**Setting clear expectations and mandating or further incentivizing participation.** Issues related to the increased complexity and scale of operations were compounded by the fact that HOME WORKS! has often struggled to clearly delineate expectations for school and staff participation. For example, the HOME WORKS! model promotes strong teacher engagement and outreach to as many parents and families as possible while attempting to avoid any stigma associated with participation. This presents an organizational challenge because teacher participation in HOME WORKS! is largely voluntary, and demands a significant commitment of personal time outside of contracted work hours. Only a few schools mandate participation. Accordingly, it has been difficult for schools to engage a majority of their staff members, or to set minimum numbers of visits. This results in unclear or ill-defined expectations for participation and uneven implementation across schools. HOME WORKS! may need to identify new ways to incentivize staff participation and to limit implementation to schools where expectations are clearly defined, and where there is a demonstrated commitment on the part of the school administration and staff to carry-out home visits more fully.

**Defining an 'optimal' program concept and appropriate target population.** Similarly, ambiguity around what constitutes the 'optimal' intervention means that HOME WORKS! and participating schools often adopt a one-size-fits-all approach. For example, HOME WORKS! promotes *universal* implementation, when feasible, by encouraging as many teachers and families as possible to be involved. However, the program also

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aims to address students' specific academic and behavioral challenges consistent with a more *indicated* intervention approach. Home visit logs that capture data on student risk factors show that, within schools, teachers reached a diverse mix of students, including students with no identified risk factors (31.9%) as well as students with poor school attendance (10%), behavioral challenges (15.8%), or low academic performance (14%). The content of first and second visits, however, presume that students and families are somewhat uniform in terms of risks and resource needs. This may be an underlying factor explaining why teachers often struggle to articulate the purpose of visits to families or to distinguish between the purpose of first and second visits. Although all students and families are likely to benefit from increased parent engagement, the program could consider further differentiating based on the needs of participating students and families, and the developmental age of students. This strategy was pursued, to some extent, in schools with the two-visit model that completed first visits with all families, reserving second visits for those with higher levels of need.

**Removing barriers to implementation.** The HOME WORKS! program must also be proactive in trying to remove barriers to implementation that have been identified by school stakeholders. For example, HOME WORKS! requires that all staff receive training before they can initiate home visits. This includes a requirement for refresher training for returning staff. Of the 80 in-person training sessions that were implemented by the HOME WORKS! project team, about half (56%) had fewer than 5 people in attendance and many occurred relatively late into the school year. Given the level of program resources dedicated to staff training, the logistical challenges of scheduling events, and the consistent feedback from staff that training requirements were too demanding, the program should consider alternative approaches to training. For example, HOME WORKS! could transition to online training for returning staff in-lieu of in-person sessions. This would remove potential delays in program start-up in returning schools by providing staff with immediate access to training resources. This would also free more time for Program Leaders and Site Coordinators to more closely monitor and facilitate visit completion in the first few critical weeks and months of the school year.

Overall, the HOME WORKS! organization should continue to invest in efforts to strengthen internal management systems and organizational infrastructure to promote stronger school oversight, monitoring and accountability. This should include the development of a

multi-year strategic plan to outline parameters for program growth and continuing refinement. These efforts should also address procedures for recruiting and vetting new schools to ensure sufficient levels of commitment, facilitating school-based planning to maximize implementation success, designing tools to enable real-time monitoring of school implementation, and actively using those tools to review school performance and systematically intervene once problems or barriers are identified.

Despite the persistence of many implementation challenges, feedback from families, teachers, school administrators, and program staff overwhelmingly demonstrates the positive impacts of teacher home visits on all members of the school community. It also reveals the dedication and commitment to the program of most school leaders and their home visitors and highlights their belief in the power of parent engagement in promoting children's school success. The program should focus on continuing to build on these program successes.