A STUDY OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF SCHOOL-LINKED SERVICES IN
SELECTED PROJECT SUCCESS PILOT SITES IN ILLINOIS

by

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Educational Administration

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to provide an in-depth explanation of the development of coordinated services during the last four years at a selected number of Project Success pilot sites, and to identify critical factors that emerged which are associated in the literature with effective school-linked strategies. The research questions guiding this study were: (1) What common elements developed that crossed all selected sites, and what individual differences emerged among the sites? (2) What organizational structure emerged among the multi-agencies at the selected sites? (3) What collaborative processes emerged across selected sites that facilitated the project? (4) In what ways did parents become involved in the implementation of the project? (5) What barriers or support were encountered in establishing and operating the sites?

The data collection for this study occurred in three parts: individual interviews with the Project Coordinators, focus group interviews with appropriate representatives of the pilot site projects, and notes from meetings of the Local Governing Board. A questionnaire that consisted of seven questions was used to collect data for this study.

Materials gathered during in-depth interviews were transcribed and analyzed after the interviews were completed. First, the researcher read the transcribed interviews and hand coded the consistencies and emerging themes on a large chart. Second, a matrix was made of the hand coded data using a word processor. Third, the researcher used the Ethnograph Computer Software Program to organize and code the data. From this data, the researcher identified themes, common patterns, and important stories shared by the participants regarding their experiences with developing coordinated services to meet the needs of children and families during the last four years. A narrative summary was written for each selected pilot site. Recommendations for further research are provided at the conclusion of chapter five.
Dedication

For my husband, Lue A. Walters, who is a wonderful spouse and a constant inspiration to my life. I love you very much.

For my sons Donald & Ronald Walters, who are my pride and joy. I thank God for the two of you. You would be an inspiration to any mother.

For my grandparents, Clem (deceased) & JoAnna Hedrick, who raised me as well as five of my siblings. I thank God they were there for us.

For my sister, Shirley Ellis, who is always supportive and helping out when needed. In many ways, she was my mother as we were growing up.

For my in-laws, Frank & Annie Walters (deceased), who were great parents to me, even with eleven children of their own.

This dissertation serves as a special dedication to two individuals: Mrs. JoAnna Hedrick (Mama Jo), for her love and dedication to the six grandchildren she took the time to raise. Finally, to the memory of Mrs. Annie Guyton Walters (Mama), who was such a God sent to my existence. My heart will always be filled with beautiful memories of the way she guided my life. If we can truly be “Touched By Angels,” I know I’ve had that experience through knowing Mama Jo and Mama.
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As my life evolved, God granted me the precious gift of twin sons, Donald and Ronald. An additional father and mother, Mr. Frank Walters (deceased), and Mrs. Annie Walters (deceased). I am also blessed to have five additional sisters (Annie Dillard, Dora Vaughn, Bonnie Pritchett, Bobbie Brown, Dr. Bettye Walters) and five additional brothers (Jerry, James Roy, Perry, Earl, and Eddie Walters). I am grateful to God for my biological siblings and those acquired through marriage.

I would like to thank my committee, Dr. Joan Curcio, Chairperson; Dr. Diana McCauley, Dr. Steve Parson, Dr. Marilyn Lichtman, and Dr. Harold McGrady for their help in guiding me through this process.

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