

Title: *Family-School Communication: Critically Revisiting Parent-Teacher Briefings*

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Abstract:

FAMILY-SCHOOL COMMUNICATION: CRITICALLY REVISITING PARENT-TEACHER BRIEFINGS

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In this paper, I present part of the findings of a research which investigated family-school communication. More particularly, I explore the information schools and families exchange during teacher-parent briefings and I critically discuss how parents make use of this communication. The research was a multi-case study conducted in six state primary schools in Cyprus, with the participation of seven teachers, their pupils and the latter's parents. A number of briefings between parents and these teachers were observed and audio recorded. After such meetings, teachers, parents and pupils were interviewed individually or in focus-groups. The data was analysed with the use of the ATLAS.ti software package and involved both qualitative and quantitative content analysis. The analysis indicated that the content of parents and teachers briefings focused on specific aspects of the children's school-life during their meetings. Differences as far as the use of the information received were distinguished amongst different types of parents. Particular groups of parents seemed unable to interpret or effectively make use of the information they received in order to support their children's schooling. Finally, I suggest that, despite the pedagogical value placed on parent-teacher briefings, these might not succeed in fulfilling their purpose of enhancing children's school performance for *all* pupils and that they might even consolidate or widen existing stratification among pupils of certain family environments.