

Building Collective Ownership in the School Community Through Authentic
Engagement of Latino Families and Students: A Professional Development for School
Staff

By

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This project was developed to share information found surrounding the guiding question, *What are the most effective methods to authentically engage Latino families to build collective ownership in their school communities and their students' education?*

This project consists of three one-hour long professional development (PD) sessions for classroom teachers, support and office staff aimed to increase awareness with how Latinos families in the district are supported by staff, and ways to improve or add to what is being done currently. The slides for the sessions can be found at this link:

<https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1stcvAzVEBN6fMo1OhLZuo200-8Y7kSm11HPy5SLu3c/edit?usp=sharing>

The school district in which this project takes place is in a first ring suburb to a major metropolitan city in the Midwest. There are three English, International Baccalaureate elementary schools, and one Spanish Immersion elementary school, one middle school (6-8 grades) and one high school (9-12 grades) for a total of about 4,590 students. The current ELL population of the district is about 410 students, or 9% of the total population. The goal of this PD is to provide participants with an interactive, adaptive PD series that introduces best ELL practices with working with our immigrant population (students and their families), by providing a more substantive understanding of who our ELL Latino families are and what they need in order to address inequities and ensure successful integration of our current and future ELL families.

To start this PD session, participants are asked to think about how they welcome Latino families in their space (classroom, school, etc). The first session is named, "Look inward, what are we doing in our district?" It looks at what are current challenges in effectively engaging Latino families in our district, what staff members' roles are in

helping Latino families feel welcome at their sites and what more we need to learn about the Latino families in our district. This PD will also look at what we as a district are currently doing to reach our Latino families and share those successes. Currently that would include a monthly ELL parent meeting called *Bring it Home*, that is conducted in one of the elementary schools at this time. This PD session includes a sample meeting format, monthly topics and implementation suggestions to help the three remaining elementary schools adapt this monthly meeting into their agendas. The goal of the first session is to have staff leave with a better understanding of the Latino population they serve, as well as how to implement or continue to support the *Bring it Home* model in their elementary school. The first session ends with the participants answering an exit ticket question on what one new thing they can do to help Latino families feel welcome in their classroom or school.

Session two is called “Look around: What are ELL successes in other districts and programs?” It discusses what local and national districts are doing to engage their Latino families in their students' education. It also introduces a new program called Parent Mentors that has had success in other districts across the country. The hope is that after the implementation of this PD, the Parent Mentors program can be presented to administration to adopt it into the current school programs.

Session three is named “Looking outward: When you know better you do better” (Maya Angelou, n.d.) This PD highlights the immigrant family member experience in our school district, and what it looks and feels like to be an immigrant in the school system. It includes the importance of immediate, positive relationships that start with the first contact. There is some time spent on what currently is done at the district level to identify

our ELL families, and how that can be improved and streamlined so all schools are adapting the same protocols. We focus on having an assets-based conversation from a funds of knowledge perspective (Reyes et al., 2016) with parents about the topic of language goals and everyday routines. This should be done during the first meeting with either the classroom teacher or district screener. It will include ways to best communicate with Latino families, with real life examples of how to streamline communication using different methods such as translation apps such as Talking Points. Also included is examples of what to do and not to do when sending announcements to Latino families. It includes time to rewrite an email using the strategies presented in order to better communicate with Latino families.

At the end of the three sessions, participants take a post survey to measure their growth and understanding of the importance of Latino family participation and their role in successfully implementing a positive culture for this to happen. Participants have an opportunity to share what they want to see in future PD offerings surrounding family engagement and successful communication with Latino families.

The goal of this PD series is to provide an important conversation space surrounding how to encourage staff to work on building positive relationships with our Latino families. This will ultimately result in higher trust and more involvement with our ELL families in the school community. This is meant to be an introduction to providing more equitable learning opportunities for staff and families to authentically work together, with the ultimate goal of providing a safe and caring learning environment for our ELL students. This in turn will add to the confidence our Latino community has in our school district delivering a high level education to their children.

References for Slide Deck

Slide 2:

All Are Welcome Here sign: Retrieved on April 20, 2021 from

<https://allarewelcomehere.us/>

Slide 4:

Courageous conversations about race compass artwork: Retrieved on March 30, 2021

from

Singleton, G. (2015) Courageous Conversations about Race: A Field Guide for

Achieving Equity in Schools, 2nd Edition

<https://images.app.goo.gl/BDSnxzRLB8pjkzP3A>

Slide 5 :

Clip art image from Google Images: Retrieved on March 30, 2021 from

<http://clipart-library.com/puzzle-pieces.html>

Slide 11:

Kahoot quiz and link

Slide 15:

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Slide 17:

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Slide 18

WIDA website: Retrieved on March 15th, 2021 from

<https://wida.wisc.edu/about>

Slide 21

Parent Institute for Quality Education website: Retrieved on February 25, 2021 from

<https://www.piqe.org/>

Slide 26

Courageous conversations about race compass artwork: Retrieved on March 30, 2021 from

Singleton, G. (2015) Courageous Conversations about Race: A Field Guide for Achieving Equity in Schools, 2nd Edition

<https://images.app.goo.gl/BDSnxzRLB8pjkzP3A>

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Google document for day 2 of PD (participants will have an actual copy of the letter)

St. Louis Park Public Schools
Attending students, one student at a time!

ETHNICITY, HOME LANGUAGE, AND PRIOR SCHOOL ATTENDANCE FORM

The State of Minnesota requires public schools to report the information on this form. There are three questions on ethnicity: questions 2 and 3 are required by the State of Minnesota, and question 4 is required by the federal government. All three questions on ethnicity must be answered.

1. Student Name _____
Last First Middle

Birth Date: _____
Month Day Year

2. Is your student Hispanic or Latino? Yes No

3. Is your student North American Indian or Alaskan Native? Yes No

4. FEDERAL Ethnicity - you must select at least one, but can select as many that apply:
 American Indian/Alaskan Native Asian Black/African American
 Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander White

The information you provide below will determine if your student should take an English proficiency test. Based upon the results of the test, your student may be entitled to English language development instruction. Access to instruction is required by federal and state law. As a parent or guardian you have the right to decline English Learner Instruction at any time.

5. My student first learned:	<input type="checkbox"/> Language(s) other than English <input type="checkbox"/> English and languages other than English <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Only English	Indicate language(s) other than English below:
6. My student speaks:	<input type="checkbox"/> Language(s) other than English <input type="checkbox"/> English and languages other than English <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Only English	Indicate language(s) other than English below:
7. My student understands:	<input type="checkbox"/> Language(s) other than English <input type="checkbox"/> English and languages other than English <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Only English	Indicate language(s) other than English below:
8. My student has consistent interaction in:	<input type="checkbox"/> Language(s) other than English <input type="checkbox"/> English and languages other than English <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Only English	Indicate language(s) other than English below:

9. Do you prefer an interpreter for oral communication with the school? Yes No

10. Have you moved to St. Louis Park within the last 36 months for temporary or occasional agricultural or fishing work?
 Yes No

11. Was your child born in the United States? Yes No
If no, which country? _____ What year did your child enter the U.S.? _____

Answer questions 12 and 13 only if your student attended school outside the USA.

12. How many years did your student attend school OUTSIDE of the United States? _____

13. Which grade(s) has your student already completed IN the United States? (please check ALL THAT APPLY)
 Kindergarten 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

14. Has your student previously attend St. Louis Park Public Schools? Yes No

15. What school has your student most recently attended?

School _____ Street Address _____ City/State/Zip Code _____ Grades _____ Dates _____

If student is receiving Special Education, please list services: _____

Please list other special programs in which the student has participated: _____
(i.e. Language services, gifted & talented, math/reading intervention)

February 27, 2020 1:04 PM

Slide 30

You tube video: Retrieved on March 10, 2021 from

<https://www.youtube.com/>

Slide 31

Google form for parent survey: Retrieved on April 1, 2021 from

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1iVZpq521ZAPhazYP3mDiJkHL-mdRhck5g9AXJrEnc5g/edit>

Slide 33

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<https://intercom.help/talkingpoints/en/articles/3936873-talkingpoints-tips-for-writing-for-translation>

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<https://intercom.help/talkingpoints/en/articles/3936873-talkingpoints-tips-for-writing-for-translation>

Slide 39

WIDA website: Retrieved on April 1, 2021

<https://wida.wisc.edu/sites/default/files/resource/ABCs-Family-Engagement.pdf>

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Post survey at the end of day 3 of the PD series

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1hyDRRAedBu3606EIYVENm0wlyto0CejvOxBNtGrp6Zg/edit>

References for Project Summary and Supplemental Material

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