English Learner Family and School Engagement Strategies

Building Relationships

2019 KSU ESOL Conference

Breakout Session

February 5-7, 2019
Georgia’s Systems of Continuous Improvement

- Identify Needs
- Select Interventions
- Plan Implementation
- Implement Plan
- Coherent Instruction
- Supportive Learning Environment
- Family & Community Engagement
- Professional Capacity
- Leadership
- LIT

Who

What

How
Collaborating today…

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Today’s Interactive Session will

• address engagement strategies related to identifying and supporting the engagement of English Learners and their families.

• provide a deeper dive into exploring the issues related to English Learner engagement from both the English Learners’ and their families’ perspectives

• provide both the federal requirements for Title I and Title III and the key considerations for a sound family engagement program
Student Engagement
Think-Pair-Share

• How would you define student engagement?

• How do you know your students are engaged?

*Please, take 3 minutes to share your responses with someone near you.*
Student Engagement

Within the School
- Does the student exhibit behaviors to demonstrate that they are experiencing all that the school has to offer?
- Does the student show active participation not only in the classroom; but also in other school activities?

Within the Community
- Is the student able to navigate the cultural opportunities within their community?

At Home
- Is the student able to interact with his/her family to maintain familial relationships?
Introducing Elena

- Loss of First Language (L1)
- Second grader, came to U.S. when she was two years old
- Youngest of 4 siblings
- Parents speak English
Meet Van

- Multilingual – ELP3 proficient in English
- High school – 9th grader
- Oldest of 3 siblings
- Parents do not speak English and are not literate in their first language / L1
Small Groups

1. In small groups of 4 or 5 discuss the questions on the next slide (15 minutes).

2. With the whole group a volunteer from your small group will share one key strategy or tip.
Van and Elena

ELP3, 9th grader, Oldest sibling, L1 Parents

Loss of L1, 2nd grader, youngest, Parents speak English

1. How do you envision these students engaging in school, community, home?

2. How would you like for them to demonstrate their engagement?

3. How would you scaffold support to assist with their engagement?
Student Engagement Typically Includes Three Dimensions:

• **Behavioral Engagement** – focusing on participation in social, and co-curricular activities

• **Emotional Engagement** – focusing on the extent and nature of positive and negative reactions to teachers, classmates, and school

• **Cognitive Engagement** – focusing on student’s level of investment in learning

Source: Martin and Torres, *What is Student Engagement and Why is it Important?*
Student Engagement Addresses Problems Such as:

- low achievement;
- boredom;
- alienation; and
- high drop out rates.

By high school, 40 to 60 percent of youth are disengaged.

Source: Martin and Torres, *What is Student Engagement and Why is it Important?*
How Do You Know If A Student Is Engaged?

Teacher-Directed Learning

- Paying attention (alert, tracking with their eyes)
- Taking notes (particularly Cornell)
- Listening (as opposed to chatting, or sleeping)
- Asking questions
- Responding to questions
- Following requesting (participating, Total Physical Response, storytelling, Simon Says)
- Reacting (laughing, crying, shouting)

Student-Directed Learning

- Reading Critically (with pen in hand)
- Writing to learn, creating, planning, problem solving, discussing, debating, and asking questions
- Performing/presenting, inquiring, exploring, explaining, evaluating, and experimenting
- Interacting with other students, gesturing, moving

Family Engagement
What is Family Engagement?

There are many definitions of family engagement.

Family Engagement is an ongoing process that increases active participation, communication, and collaboration between parents, schools, and communities with the goal of educating the whole child to ensure student achievement and success.

Source: Georgia Department of Education's Family-School Partnership Program
Why Is It Important To Engage Families?

• Parents have a significant influence over their children's language development and later academic success.

• Families' insights... help teachers create a welcoming and supportive setting for children who are dual language learners.

Source: Michael-Luna. *What Parents Have to Teach Us About Their Dual Language Children.*
Mary Fortunato is one of your English Learners. At first glance, she “looks” Hispanic. However, as you’re getting to know Mary better, you realize that her parents and family members use multiple languages with her. Her father speaks Italian and some English while her mother speaks Portuguese, some Italian, and some English. Mary’s grandmother only speaks Spanish. So in a typical day, Mary speaks to her father in Italian, to her mother in Portuguese, and to her grandmother in Spanish, and to her teachers in English.
The Singh Family

You’re a 3rd grade teacher. Your upcoming units will be on fractions, measurements, and time. Jabier Singh’s parents own a small business.
1. How would knowing this information about Mary inform your classroom practices?

2. How would you inform Jabier's parents about the connection between the skills they use in running a small business with the skills in the upcoming math units?

3. How would you collect information from the parent about their child to enhance classroom practice?

4. Provide five tips you would use to build a relationship with this family?
Understanding Parent Knowledge

Collect information from the parent about their child to enhance classroom practice

• Family concerns, assumptions, questions about language learning
• Language and literacy practices in the home (e.g., does the parent read to their child?)
• What families hear and see at home
• Who speaks what language to whom and when (including the parent’s English language proficiency)

Source: Michael-Luna. *What Parents Have to Teach Us About Their Dual Language Children.*
What Else Can Teachers and Staff Do?

• Can help families understand the role of home language development and English language development for academic learning and school readiness, as well as support families as they navigate school language practices and goals.

• Can establish relationships where, over time, trust can develop

Source: WIDA Focus Bulletin: *Language-Focused Family Engagement*
ABCs of Family Engagement

- **Awareness** of beliefs about family engagement and how those beliefs drive approaches or expectations
- Supporting families' **advocacy** efforts
- Providing families' access to cultural and linguistic **brokers** can help families navigate school systems
- **Building trust**; trust is not freely given but earned
- **Communication** with families must be 2-way, meaningful, and free of education jargon
- **Connect to learning** by acknowledging multilingual learners' academic achievement as well as their language education

Source: WIDA Focus Bulletin: *Language-Focused Family Engagement*
The Four Pillars of Language-Focused Family Engagement: A Reflection Tool for Educators

The purpose of this tool is to deepen understanding of the four pillars of language-focused family engagement, as well as to encourage reflection and sustain conversation among educators and practitioners working with multilingual learners. Thinking through the questions on the next page can help ECE centers and schools plan language-focused family engagement strategies that will benefit multilingual learners and their families.

The Four Pillars of Language-Focused Family Engagement

- Awareness
  - Advocacy
  - Brokering
  - Building trust
  - Communication
  - Connect to Learning

Relatively private goals and decisions made by families about the language of their children

Key in home language maintenance and multilingual development

ABCs of Family Engagement

Family Language Practices and Goals

School Language Practices and Goals

Affirming Asset-Based Approach

Source: WIDA Focus Bulletin: Language-Focused Family Engagement
What Does Title I, Part A Say About Districts Engaging Families?

- Jointly develop with all parents a **school-parent compact** and a **parent and family engagement policy/plan**
- Implement an effective means of **outreach** to parents of English learners
- Hold **regular meetings** regarding recommendations from parents of students assisted under Title I or Title III
- **Notify parents** of participating ELs about supplemental English language support

-The Every Student Succeeds Act, Section 1116(d) and Section 1112(e)(3)
What Does Title III Statute Say About Engaging Families of ELs?

Districts receiving Title III, Part A funds must provide & implement effective parent, family, and community engagement activities and strategies that enhance or supplement language instruction educational programs for English Learners.

-The Every Student Succeeds Act, Section 3115(c)(3)(A) & (B)
Title III, Part A EL Family Activities May Include...

• Community participation programs
• Family literacy services
• Parent & family outreach & training activities that are focused on
• Improving English language skills of ELs
• Assisting parents/families to help their children improve their academic achievement
• Assisting parents/families to become active participants in the education of their children

ESSA, Section 3115(d)(6)(A) & (B)
What do Title VI and the EEOA say about engaging non-English families?

School districts must:

• Ensure *meaningful communication* with families in a language they can understand.

• Adequately notify parents of information about any program, service, or activity of an LEA that is called to the attention of non-English parents.

• Provide *language assistance* to EL parents effectively with appropriate, competent staff, or appropriate/competent outside resources.

• Develop a process for determining what parents' language needs are.

*Title III, Part A funds may not be used* to meet obligations under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Equal Employment Opportunity Act of 1972.
Resources

https://ncela.ed.gov/family-toolkit
Resources

WIDA ABC of Family Engagement: Key Considerations for Building Relationships with Families and Strengthening Family Engagement Practices

WIDA Focus Bulletin: Language-Focused Family Engagement
Resources

What Parents Have to Teach Us About Their Dual Language Children at https://www.naeyc.org/resources/pubs/yc/nov2015/what-parents-have-teach-us-about-their-dual-language-children

Technical College System of Georgia (TCSG)'s Certified Literate Community Program (CLCP) provides support for free ESOL/GED classes for adults at https://tcsg.edu/adult-education/
To identify the Georgia Department of Education staff in a specific program area, visit the District Support Directory at [http://gadoe.org/support](http://partnerships.gadoe.org)
# ESOL & Title III, Part A Language Programs Staff

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