

Building Capacity for School Success in Families of Young English Learner (EL) Students

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Goals for the webinar:

As a result of your participation today, you will:

- » Learn specific activities families can use at home to promote school readiness for young English Learner students in preschool and kindergarten, including promoting L1 (home language) and L2 (English) at home.
- » Learn ways for schools and families to overcome barriers to successful home-school partnerships.

Your presenters today...

- » Linda Espinosa – Professor of Early Childhood Education (Emeritus) at the University of Missouri, Columbia
- » Melanie Packham – Family Engagement Facilitator, Academic Parent-Teacher Teams, WestEd
- » Maria Paredes – Senior Program Associate, Comprehensive School Assistance Program, WestEd

Reminders:

- » Questions – please type in the chat area
- » Share ideas and resources – build on others' ideas in the chat area
- » Focus on English Learner/Dual Language Learner students
- » L1 = home language and L2 = English
- » Complete survey at the end

Webinar structure:

» School readiness for Dual Language Learners

- Understand it
- Tips
- Activities

» Overcoming barriers to effective home-school partnerships

- Understand it
- Tips
- Activities

Working with families has been a cornerstone of effective early childhood practices for decades

- » Effective family engagement is linked to improved child outcomes:
 - Literacy, cognitive, language, math, social-emotional skills
 - Long-term academic achievement
 - Families critical to cultural and language preservation
- » To promote school readiness in young dual language learners, we must establish strong, meaningful, and respectful partnerships with families.

Supporting school readiness for young Dual Language Learners – Understand it

- » All states have early learning standards that define school readiness for all learners

Additional considerations for Dual Language Learners...

- » Strong foundation in first or home language
- » Some English language skills—should be in addition to L1
- » Basic concepts: math, early literacy, science in any language
- » Strong positive relationships with peers and important adults

Supporting school readiness for young Dual Language Learners – Tips

- » Families need to feel respected and supported
- » Take time to learn about family languages, preferences, talents, values, etc.
- » Capitalize on families existing skills, knowledge, and activities



Activity: Building knowledge about home and community in L1 and L2

» All About Me Books

- Send blank books home for families to complete together: family structure, birthday, favorite food, favorite activity, etc. Be sensitive about discussing “home.” Could draw or use photos.
- Lessons at school on conversational skills in L1 and L2 to ask about family: What is your favorite food? Do you have a sister/brother?
- Send the same questions home along with other activities so families can practice together and extend the learning

» Why do it this way?

- Builds on L1 vocabulary and questioning strategies to develop L2
- Supports discourse skills needed for Common Core reading
- Engages families in meaningful ways in supporting school readiness

Activity: Leveraging everyday activities

- » This video of everyday activities that a family is doing with their young children is from Colorín Colorado and the American Federation of Teachers.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?list=PLoU659hwTdDYooVO6raTMb9zsmJWC6bDO&t=85&v=gZ1z1TzYHc>
- » As you watch this video, consider how we can reframe everyday activities that parents and children do together to maximize school readiness and L1 and L2 growth.
- » Type your responses in the chat.

Activity: Leveraging everyday activities

» Utilizing everyday activities

- Identify learning targets
- Select an everyday activity (grocery shopping, cooking, laundry)
- Develop instructions and materials for families aligned with the learning targets
- Provide training, home visits, or partner families to support successful implementation

» Why do it this way?

- Maximizes the value of an everyday interaction by aligning it with the classroom learning targets
- Helps parents be more aware of their contribution
- Caution: Be aware of assumptions we make about family routines and structures when designing activities

Resources

- » The Early Authors Program: self-authored books support academics and home-school partnerships <http://www.ryerson.ca/bernhard/research/early-authors-gallery/>
- » Head Start State-by-State Guidelines and Standards: <http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/cultural-linguistic/state-guidelines/references.html>
- » Head Start National Center on Cultural and Linguistic Responsiveness: Handouts providing basic information on topics related to Dual Language Learners <http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/cultural-linguistic/home-language.html>

Resources:

- » Parent Teacher Association: Parent Guides in English and Spanish
<http://www.pta.org/parents/content.cfm?ItemNumber=2910&navItemNumber=4064>
- » Parent Toolkit – Social Emotional Wellness
<http://www.parenttoolkit.com/index.cfm?objectid=8C7EDC50-7CB0-11E4-A6DD0050569A5318>
- » Parent Toolkit – Academics
<http://www.parenttoolkit.com/index.cfm?objectid=E0F96EB0-20A6-11E3-8EC10050569A5318>

Resources:

- » Harvard Center on the Developing Child: Information about early development and school readiness <http://developingchild.harvard.edu>
- » Colorín Colorado: Information in English & Spanish for educators and families, especially on reading <http://www.colorincolorado.org>
- » Florida Center for Reading Research: Teacher resources starting at Kindergarten that support language arts <http://www.fcrr.org>

Partners in Education: A Dual Capacity Building-Framework for Family-School Partnerships

1. Create a welcoming, inviting culture
2. The Partnerships are linked to learning
3. Honor the families' funds of knowledge; there are multiple support role opportunities for families

(US DOE 2013)



Overcoming barriers to effective home-school partnerships – Understand it

- » Language – Families are not fluent in English and schools often don't have capacity to provide info in multiple languages
- » Culture – Families may feel it is disrespectful or not their role to be involved in school or the education of their children
- » School staff awareness and capacity – Understanding what families can offer is key to success
- » Organization – schools have too many activities that are not linked to learning or are not developmentally appropriate

Overcoming barriers to effective home-school partnerships – Tips

- » Honoring the families' funds of knowledge is key to success
- » Establishing trust and personal rapport is essential for strong partnerships
- » Engage all stakeholders in the school building/system. There are opportunities for each stakeholder in the system to take an active role in family engagement
- » Create a plan at the beginning of the year outlining educational opportunities for the year

Activity: First connection of the year

- » Open house – First parent meeting
 - Provide families with a short list of grade level learning targets. Show how these can be supported in L1
 - Provide families with a calendar listing the dates and times for learning opportunities for teachers and families together
 - Communicate that parents and educators will work as a team to help every student be successful

- » Why do it this way – how does it address barriers?
 - Sets clear learning expectations and developmental milestones
 - Creates a team approach to learning with mutual support and respect
 - Creates a structure so both teachers and families can plan learning opportunities in advance

Family Engagement Calendar

Month	Learning Theme	Parent Meeting Dates
September	Open House – Working together for the children. Kindergarten skills & activities for the year!	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tuesday 22nd, 6:30pm
October	Letter names and letter sounds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tuesday 20th, 4:15pm • Thursday 22nd, 7:45am • Saturday 24th, 10:00am; Campus clean up 11:00am
November	Asking and answering questions about the stories we read together	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tuesday 15th, 4:15pm • Thursday 17nd, 7:45am • Saturday 19th, 10:00am; Gratitude lunch 11:30
December	Clearly expressing thoughts, feelings and ideas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tuesday 13th, 6:30pm; Children’s presentation 7:15pm • Thursday 15th, 9:30am; Children’s presentation 10:15am
February	Counting and comparing groups of objects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tuesday 23rd, 4:15pm • Thursday 25th, 7:45am • Saturday 27th, 10:00am
March	Adding and subtracting numbers 1-10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tuesday 15th, 4:15pm • Thursday 17nd, 7:45am • Saturday 19th, 10:00am; Campus clean up 11:00am
April	High frequency words for Kindergarten	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tuesday 19th, 4:15pm • Thursday 21st, 7:45am • Saturday 23rd, 10:00am
June	Summer learning & preparing for 1 st grade	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tuesday 7th, 4:15pm; Kinder graduation & potluck with 1st grade 5:30pm • Thursday 9th, 7:45am • Saturday 11th, 10:00am

Activity: Effective outreach

» Tips for making parents partners:

- Extend personal invitations explaining how important families are to learning
- Ensure translation is available
- Provide transportation and childcare options
- Be child-centered – include student performances or demonstrations of skills aligned with learning targets
- Schedule multiple sessions so parents have options



Activity: Building community

» M&M activity

- Each parent chooses a few different color M&M's
- Parents mingle until the music stops. Parents find someone with the same color M&M
- Each color M&M is associated with a prompt (Describe two ways you do counting at home. What is your child's favorite book and why?) Parents discuss the prompt. Repeat.

» Why do it this way?

- Sets a collaborative, safe climate for home-school meetings
- Helps build a support network for families
- Tip: Encourage parents to bring a family member or friend who can interpret – build a bigger network

Resources:

- » Academic Parent Teacher Teams (APTT): Engages families in supporting students' academic success
<http://www.wested.org/service/academic-parent-teacher-teams-aptt-family-engagement-in-education/>
- » Colorín Colorado: Resources in English and Spanish to support strong home-school partnerships
<http://www.colorincolorado.org/families/partnerships/>
- » Harvard Family Research Project: Case studies & other materials to build staff capacity
<http://www.hfrp.org/family-involvement>

Resources:

- » Abriendo Puertas/Opening Doors: Parent education approach for Latino families; good evaluation data <http://ap-od.org>
- » Home Instruction of Parents of Preschool Youngsters (HIPPY): Works with parents in the home to actively prepare children for school <http://www.hippyusa.org>
- » Families In Schools: Trainings, advocacy, and resources to support effective parent engagement <http://www.familiesinschools.org>

Resources:

- » AVANCE: Parent education program in 3 states
<http://www.avance.org>
- » Project Flame: Family literacy program; families and children aged 3-9
<http://www.uic.edu/educ/flame/flamethroughout.html>
- » Literacy for Life: Intergenerational literacy program for children and adults <http://literacyforlife.org>



Reminders:

- » To retrieve archived materials from the webinars, go to:

<https://relwest.wested.org/events/323>

- » Please fill out the survey!

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/FV8L7WB>

- » Follow us on Twitter: @REL_West

- » Reference Desk: Ask a REL Program

https://relwest.wested.org/documents/index_ref_desk



Thank you for participating!



Please fill out the survey:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/FV8L7WB>