Engaging Parents and Students from Diverse Populations in the Context of Distance Learning

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Today's Speaker – Part 1

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Today's Speakers – Part 2

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Washoe County School District

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Engagement Programs

Alameda Unified School District

Objectives for Today's Webinar

Participants will:

- Learn about what research tells us about family engagement with diverse populations

- Understand how engagement strategies need to shift in distance learning

- Hear what two districts have experienced – successes, challenges, and new learnings

Agenda

- Research Highlights
  - Margit Birge, WestEd
  - Barbara Jones, WestEd
- Research into Practice: The District Experience
  - D'Lisa Crain, Washoe County School District (Nevada)
  - Sara Stone, Alameda Unified School District (California)
  - Claudia Medina, Alameda Unified School District (California)
- Discussion
  - Adaptations to Shelter In Place and distance learning during COVID-19
  - Q and A
- Closing and Survey

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Research on Family and Caregiver Engagement: Key Components

Margit Birge
WestEd

Today's Roadmap

- What is family engagement?

- Why is family engagement an essential strategy for student success?

- What are key components of culturally responsive family engagement?

What Is Family Engagement?

"An intentional and systemic partnership of educators, families and community members … [who] share responsibility for a student's preparation for school, work and life, from the time the child is born to young adulthood."

– Weiss, Lopez, & Rosenberg, 2010

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Why is family engagement an essential strategy for student success?

Family Engagement

→
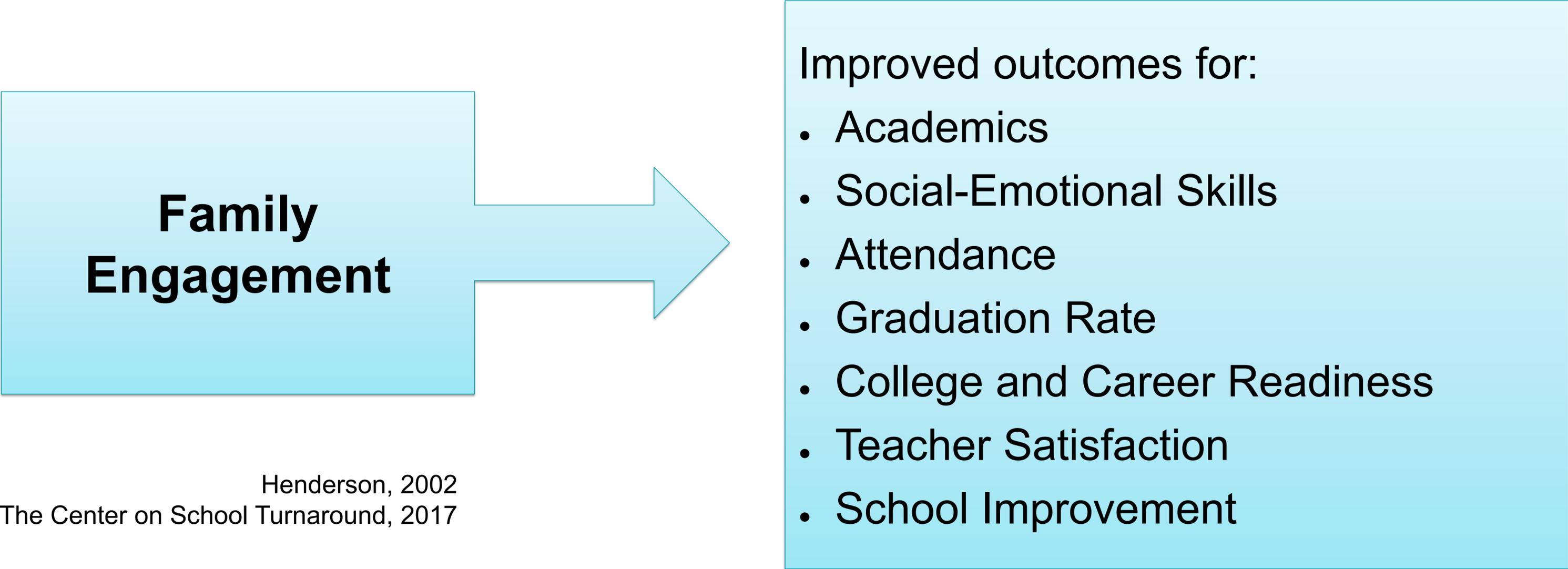
Improved outcomes for:

- Academics
- Social-Emotional Skills
- Attendance
- Graduation Rate
- College and Career Readiness
- Teacher Satisfaction
- School Improvement

Henderson, 2002
The Center on School Turnaround, 2017

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Why is family engagement an essential strategy for student success?

Research on successful schools in Chicago found that schools with stronger ties between educators, families, and the community had higher levels of student achievement than schools with weaker ties.

The stronger ties were characterized by **teacher actions**:
- understanding local issues and spending time in the community;
- inviting parents to observe in class;
- trying to understand parents' concerns; and
- embracing parents as partners.

– Bryk, Sebring, Allensworth, Luppescu, & Easton, 2010

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Key Components of Culturally Responsive Family Engagement

1) Partnership Orientation
2) Asset-based approach to students and families
3) Relationships of trust and respect
4) Two-way communication
5) Capacity building of educators and families

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Partnership Orientation

"Initiatives that take on a **partnership orientation** — in which student achievement and school improvement are seen as a shared responsibility, relationships of **trust and respect** are established between home and school, and families and school staff see each other as **equal partners** — create the conditions for family engagement to flourish."

– Patrikakou, Weissberg, Redding, & Walberg, 2005

Contrasting Approaches

Deficit Approach

- Myth-based: Families don't care
- Educators define students and their families by their weaknesses
- Educators blame families for students' failings

Asset Approach

- Research-based: All families want the best for their children
- Educators focus on strengths
- Educators seek to learn about family and community "funds of knowledge"

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Relationships of Trust and Respect

"No meaningful family engagement can be established until relationships of trust and respect are established between home and school."

– Partners in Education: A Dual-Capacity-Building Framework for Family-School Partnerships (SEDL, 2013)

Relationships of Trust and Respect

"Effective family, school, and community engagement in low-performing schools often must begin with **intensive efforts to rebuild trust** and promises of accountability given longstanding dynamics of miscommunication and distrust between these schools and their surrounding communities."

– Bryk & Schneider, 2002

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Two-Way Communication

"Regular and responsive communication is particularly important [for teachers] because it lays the foundation for strong partnerships and all forms of family engagement."

– Weiss, Lopez, Kreider, & Chatman-Nelson, 2014

"Programs that 'fostered increased communication between parents and teachers' were one of four types of parental involvement that had statistically significant, positive effects on student outcomes."

– Jeynes, 2013

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Maslow's hierarchy of needs

Capacity Building of Educators and Families

Capabilities

Skills & knowledge

Connections

Networks

Cognition

Beliefs & values

Confidence

Self-Efficacy

– Mapp & Bergman, 2019

Partnering with Students in Remote Learning
Teachers Talk about their Evolving Practice

Barbara Jones
WestEd

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"Culturally responsive-sustaining remote education grounds the use of education tools and arranges the educational experience in a **cultural view of learning** and human development in which **multiple expressions of diversity…are recognized and regarded as assets** for teaching and learning."

Guidance on Culturally Responsive-Sustaining Remote Education
By NYU Metro Center

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Listening to Educator Voices – Ongoing Study

- WestEd review of online journals of 70 educators enrolled in the online course *Student Agency in Learning*
- Teachers in the course are from Tucson, AZ, Sunnyside Unified School District
  - Primarily low SES, English learner students
- The course focuses on enhancing student agency through formative assessment
- In their online journals, teachers addressed the question:
  - *How did classroom culture and student identity show up in your digital learning spaces this week?*

Partnering with Students in Remote Learning – Themes

- Focus on developing an online learning culture
- Gather and respond to information about student learning and well-being
- Create transparency in learning
- Support student learner identity
- Engage peers in supporting one another in learning

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Focus on developing an online learning culture

- **Leveraging school/home connection**
  - Seeking and sharing information
- **Creating motivation without grades**
  - Focus on current learning vs. compliance and future outcomes
  - Supporting positive identities and student agency
- **Establishing culture of respect and trust**
  - Based on learning partnership

Developing an online culture

*Classroom culture is playing a big part in our google classrooms. I am not sure that teachers realize this, but **the trust that is being built** between the teacher, student and even the parents is incredible. Our focus may be a little off topic from what would normally happen in a classroom setting but we are all **appreciating individual differences**. We are inviting each other into our own personal spaces (homes). Everyone online can see and hear your surroundings and sometimes that can be a little intimidating, but we are all trusting and respecting one another.*

– Principal, Sunnyside School District

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Gather and respond to information about student learning and well-being

- Survey students and parents
- Start lessons with questions
- Gather evidence of learning through what students say, do, make, or write
- Use information to:
  - Structure timing, frequency, format, and content of lessons
  - Provide student choice in learning participation level, e.g., coping, maintaining, accelerating
  - Plan next steps based on current learning status

Create transparency in learning

- Teachers model sharing their own experiences, learning goals, challenges
  - Teachers and students all function as learners and leaders
- Share or co-create daily learning goals and success criteria
  - Support students in internalizing expectations and developing their own "why" for doing the work
  - Students can better gauge where they are in their own learning if they know where they're going

Support student learner identity

*In terms of student identity, many students have taken on a **<u>new role as a learner</u>**, some students are engaged and some are not. We really do not know the "why" for some of students that are not participating in remote learning. The students that are participating are now taking on new roles. **<u>The situation that we are in forces students to become independent and problem solvers</u>**. I think for the students that are participating, they are developing student agency without realizing it.*

– Teacher, Sunnyside School District

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Support student learner identity

I noticed that once the students began talking, the others who were either too shy or uncomfortable began to open up and participate more in the hangout. I feel that by **sharing with one another something about themselves** *they were more motivated to talk in this new format.*

Those who may be quiet in the actual brick and mortar space are thriving in their identity as learners in this new space*. Learners still enjoy routine and knowing what to expect. Systems and routines are important.*

– Teachers, Sunnyside School District

Engage peers in supporting one another in learning

- Extending thinking through discourse
- Peer feedback
- Collaborative learning projects

Engage peers in supporting one another in learning

I noticed that students are **developing a different sense of responsibility toward each other** *than they were at times in the classroom. For example, while on Google hangouts, if a student they were normally in a group with during in-class sessions was not in attendance during our live-stream video chat, they would remark on the student's absence and then send them a text message to encourage them to join the chat. They did this voluntarily.* **Reaching out to their fellow classmates so that a sense of inclusion** *was formed is something I did not expect to see during such an upheaval of our normal routine. They make me proud every single day.*

– Teacher, Sunnyside School District

Key Takeaways

Importance of:

- Having a learning culture that includes families
- Continually checking on the status of student learning and well-being
- Clearly sharing expectations for participation and learning
- Student learner identity and agency are key drivers of online learning
- Peers are critical in providing support for one another

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Research to Practice
Family Engagement in Washoe County School District
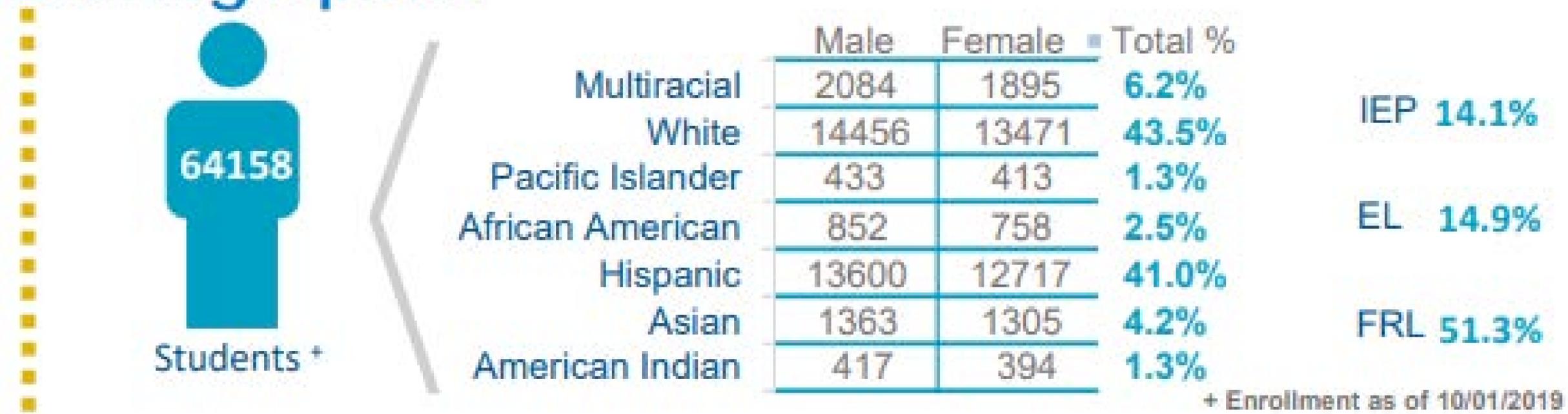
D'Lisa Crain

Administrator,

Department of Family-

School Partnerships

About Washoe County School District

- Washoe County School District serves 64,158 students in 107 schools
- Covering 6,342 square miles, there are urban (Reno & Sparks, Nevada) and rural areas
- Fun fact: School staff completed 1,322 positive relational home visits in 18–19 and families attended 4,426 sessions of learning through Parent University

Demographics

64158 Students +

	Male	Female	Total %
Multiracial	2084	1895	6.2%
White	14456	13471	43.5%
Pacific Islander	433	413	1.3%
African American	852	758	2.5%
Hispanic	13600	12717	41.0%
Asian	1363	1305	4.2%
American Indian	417	394	1.3%

IEP 14.1%

EL 14.9%

FRL 51.3%

+ Enrollment as of 10/01/2019

Our Journey

- Led with family wellness, social and emotional learning
  - Personal daily contact for every child and family
- Support for basic needs
  - Health and food
- Distance learning
  - Teacher professional learning
  - Reinforce prior learning (no new content)
  - Not a full day of instruction
  - District led creation of materials
  - Translated into Spanish
  - Modeling through video, key community partners, and paper access

DISTANCE LEARNING
AND FAMILY WELLNESS

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Challenges

Do you need information, resources, or help during this COVID-19 crisis?

Your School Counselors, Safe School Professionals and School Social Workers are still here for you and your family

¿Necesita información, recursos, o ayuda durante la crisis del coronavirus?

Sus consejeros escolares, profesionales de la escuela segura, y trabajadores sociales de la escuela todavía están aquí para usted y su familia

School Counseling
Consejero escolar

Barriers to Equitable Access

- Relationships
- Balancing too much contact with not enough
- Working through our implicit bias
- Geographic Distance
- Internet Access
- Devices

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Washoe County School District Distance Learning Successes

- Strong voices for equitable access
- Strong networks for family engagement with established, trusting relationships and critical community partners
- Collaboration in central office and with School Site Administrators
- Continuous feedback from families and staff to adjust supports and provide appropriate resources
- Systems and partners for diverse language supports
- Staff supports for secondary trauma

Research to Practice
Family Engagement in Alameda Unified School District

Sara Stone
Chief Academic
Officer

Claudia Medina
Coordinator of Family
and Community
Engagement Programs

About Alameda Unified School District

- Alameda Unified School District serves about 10,000 PreK to adult students
- Reflecting the diversity of our community and the San Francisco Bay Area region, our students are 36% Asian, 29% white, 16% Hispanic, 8% Black/African American, and 9% of two or more races. About 27% of our students are low income and 17% are English learners.
- Fun fact: Over 40 different languages are spoken by the families in our district.
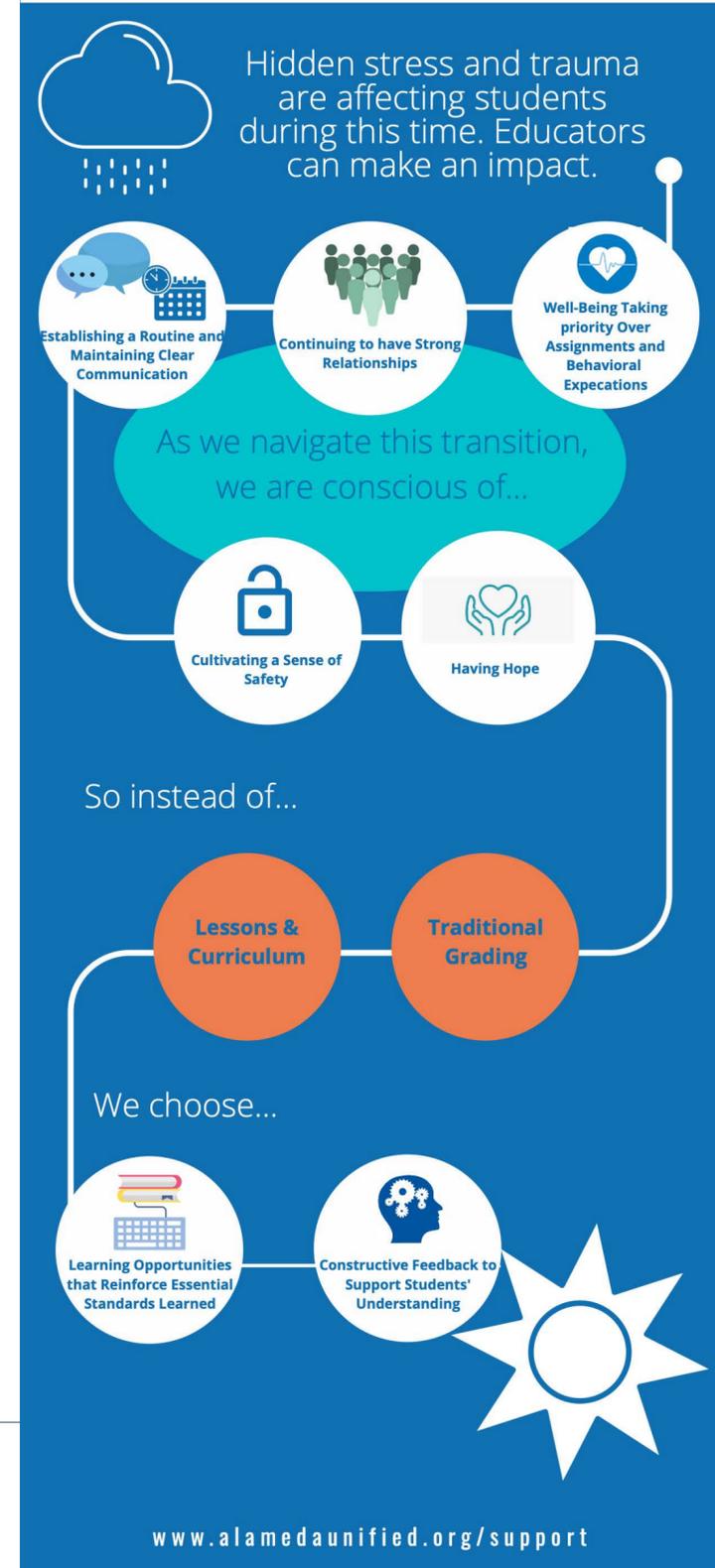
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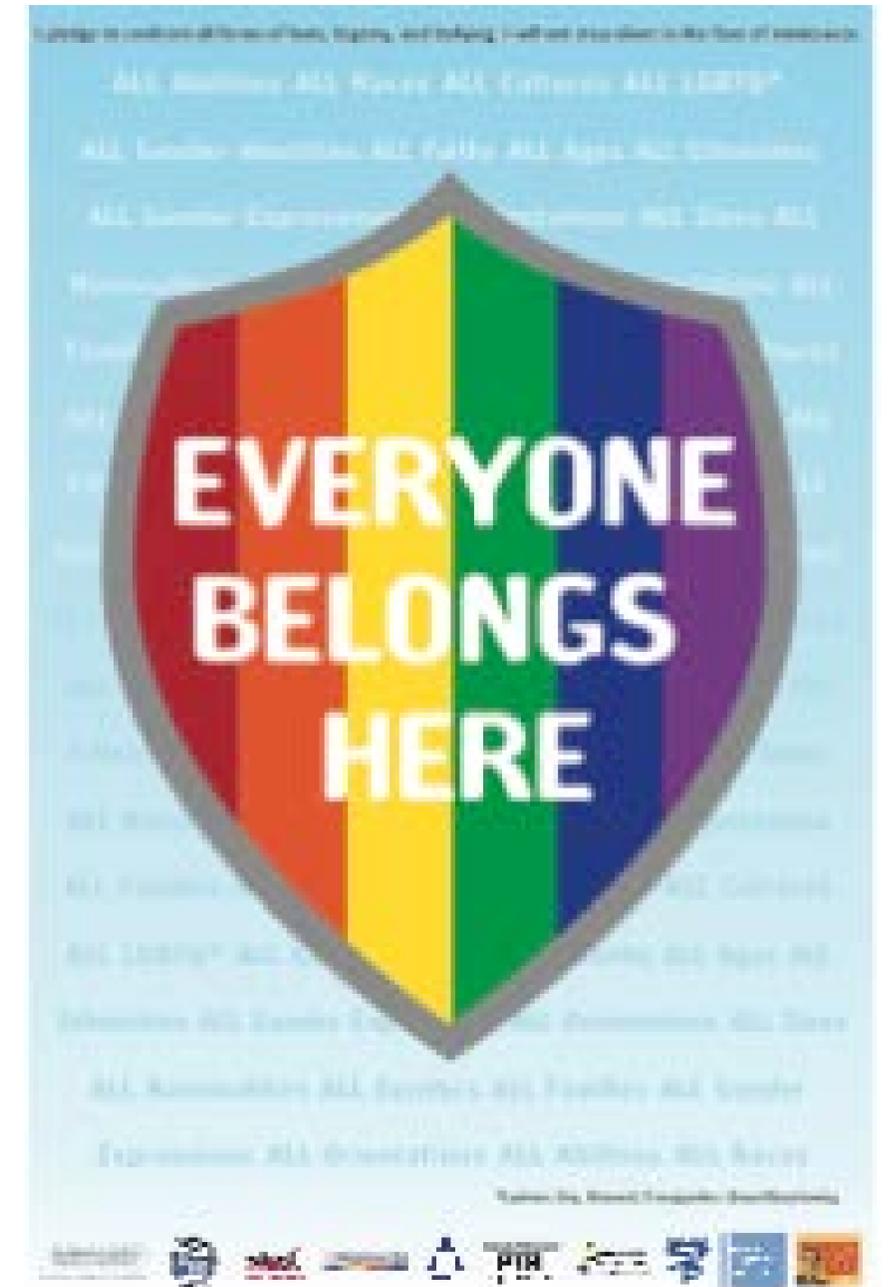
Our Journey

- We take a **trauma-informed approach** knowing that students and their families are affected by stress and the trauma of the current situation
- Prioritize:
  - Ensuring the well-being of students and their families
  - Establishing caring relationships
  - Cultivating a sense of safety
  - Having hope
- Learning focuses on:
  - Reinforcing essential standards
 - Constructive feedback to support understanding

AUSD Distance Learning
A Trauma-Informed Approach

Hidden stress and trauma are affecting students during this time. Educators can make an impact.

Establishing a Routine and Maintaining Clear Communication

Continuing to have Strong Relationships

Well-Being Taking priority Over Assignments and Behavioral Expecations

As we navigate this transition, we are conscious of...

Cultivating a Sense of Safety

Having Hope

So instead of...

Lessons & Curriculum

Traditional Grading

We choose...

Learning Opportunities that Reinforce Essential Standards Learned

Constructive Feedback to Support Students' Understanding

www.alamedaunified.org/support

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AUSD's Distance Learning Opportunities

More of:	Instead of...
– Providing Distance Learning Opportunities	– Direct Instruction and "Assignments"
– Providing feedback	– Grading and giving point values
– Posting/Review and feedback dates	– Due dates
– Having celebrations of completed work	– Consequences for not completing work
– Giving work that students can complete independently	– Work that requires teacher support and classroom discussions to complete
– A few hours of learning opportunities based on development level	– Full school schedule
– Review of standards taught prior to in-class instruction suspension and **focus on opportunities related to key grade-level standards**	– Sticking to a pacing guide and expecting mastery of all standards
– Distance Learning is an opportunity	– Referring to work as required

Mobilizing our community during COVID-19 to meet families' basic needs– leveraging trusting relationships.
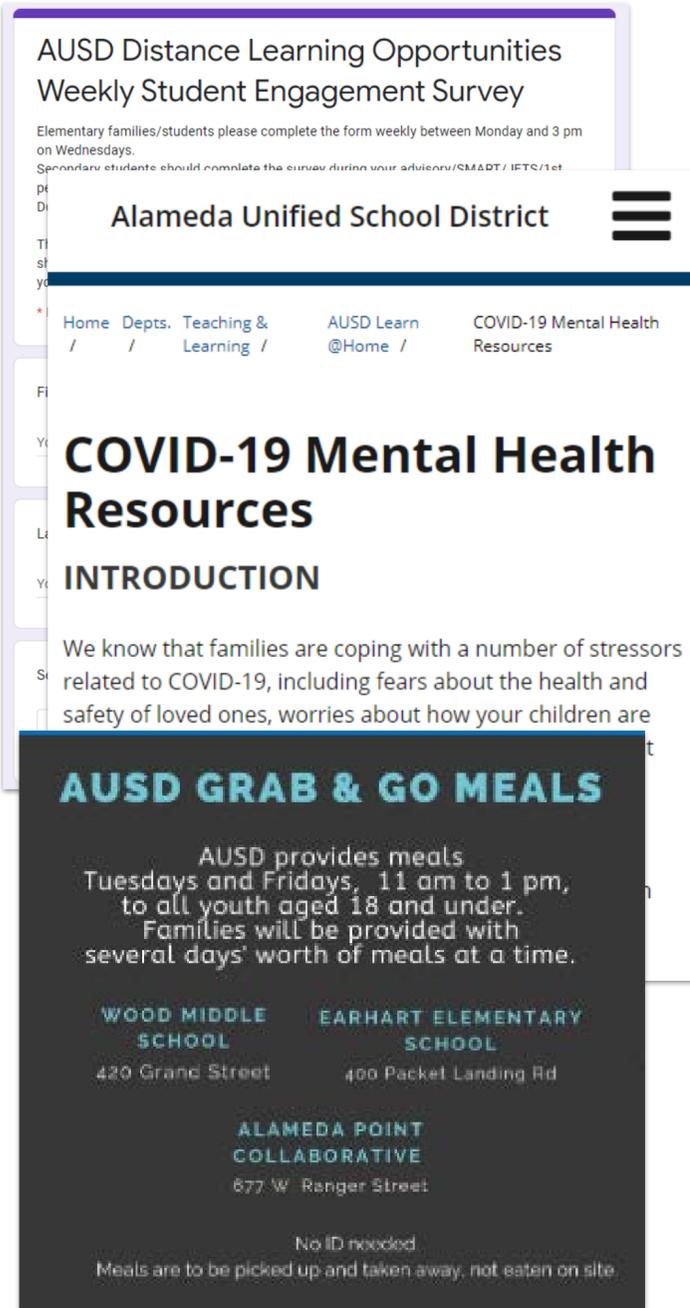
Love & Belonging Needs:
- Well-being checks on students, families, and amongst each other
- Weekly student engagement survey
- Coordinate efforts for support

Safety Needs:
- Kinship network (AUSD families, volunteers, community leaders)
- Social connection and support (AUSD PTA Leaders, After School Program partners)
- Social Services and Mental Health resources

Physiological Needs:
- Food and basic needs assistance (school) groceries (Food Bank)
- Internet access/hot spots and school supplies
- Housing and rent assistance

AUSD Distance Learning Opportunities
Weekly Student Engagement Survey

Elementary families/students please complete the form weekly between Monday and 3 pm on Wednesdays.
Secondary students should complete the survey during your advisory/SMART/IFTS/1st period

Alameda Unified School District

Home Depts. Teaching & AUSD Learn COVID-19 Mental Health
    /   /   Learning /   @Home /   Resources

COVID-19 Mental Health Resources

INTRODUCTION

We know that families are coping with a number of stressors related to COVID-19, including fears about the health and safety of loved ones, worries about how your children are

AUSD GRAB & GO MEALS

AUSD provides meals
Tuesdays and Fridays, 11 am to 1 pm,
to all youth aged 18 and under.
Families will be provided with
several days' worth of meals at a time.

WOOD MIDDLE   EARHART ELEMENTARY
SCHOOL   SCHOOL
420 Grand Street   400 Packet Landing Rd

ALAMEDA POINT
COLLABORATIVE
677 W. Ranger Street

No ID needed
Meals are to be picked up and taken away, not eaten on site.

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Building Capacity During COVID-19

Capabilities
Skills and Knowledge

- Tools to navigate online learning
- Grade-level resources

Connections
Networks

- Leverage existing social networks
- Connect families via social networking channels

Cognition
Beliefs and Values

- Surveys to get feedback from families
- Partnering with families to recalibrate what is needed

Confidence
Self-Efficacy

- Customized video tutorials to guide children's online experience
- Translation into top six languages

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Multilingual Resources

Accessing online resources translated into seven languages

Family Distance Learning Opportunity Feedback

English	Chinese 中文	Spanish Español	Arabic عربي	Vietnamese Tiếng Việt	Mongolian Монгол	Tagalog

Family FAQs about Distance Learning Opportunities (multilingual)

English	Chinese 中文	Spanish Español	Arabic عربي	Vietnamese Tiếng Việt	Mongolian Монгол	Tagalog

Family Technology Needs Survey (multilingual)

English	Chinese 中文	Spanish Español	Arabic عربي	Vietnamese Tiếng Việt	Mongolian Монгол	

Distance Learning Technical Support for Families (multilingual)

https://www.alameda.k12.ca.us/support | List of Internet Essentials

Aeries	Google	Zoom
Main Page	Main Page	Main Page

Discussion – Lessons Learned from Practice

Q&A

Lessons Learned From Practice

- Focus on student and family well-being first. Learning won't happen in the absence of safety and having basic needs met.
- Leverage critical community partners and staff including community-based organizations.
- Strong relationships and clear communication with families and students are key.
- Support families with appropriate resources at the appropriate times (e.g., food, devices, wifi).
- Build the capacity of all staff to engage with families.

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Thank you!

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