

Multilingual Learner: Family and Caregiver Engagement and Partnership

Competency

The educator plans and implements a workshop or other activity to increase engagement of families and/or caregivers of multilingual learners.

Key Method

The educator will understand important elements of engagement, such as cultural competence, having an asset-focused mindset, and how to communicate with families and caregivers to increase academic success for multilingual learners.

Method Components

Family, caregiver, and community engagement involves creating an inclusive and supportive environment where families, educators, and community members collaborate to promote the success of students. This collaboration includes traditional parent-teacher conferences, but extends into various facets of education, encompassing academic, social, emotional, and cultural aspects.

Incorporating family and community engagement into the education experience entails activities such as workshops, events, volunteer opportunities, and collaborative projects. The goal is to create a sense of shared responsibility, where families and community members are actively involved in supporting students' academic, social, and emotional growth and



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achievement. Building relationships through an asset-focused mindset creates an inclusive space that sets the stage for shared goals, trust, and respect.

Benefits of Family and Community Engagement

There are many advantages to student achievement that correspond to family or caregiver engagement. Strong engagement has been shown to contribute to overall student well-being and success. These are other benefits:

- Improved academic achievement
- Increased attendance
- Positive school climate
- Cultural awareness and diversity
- Increased resources
- Collaborative problem-solving

Asset-Based Mindset

Approaching the education of multilingual learners with an asset-focused view recognizes the diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds that students bring to the environment. This perspective emphasizes the strengths of multilingualism and the advantages that it brings.

Cultural Competence and Sensitivity

Cultural competence is a set of skills and knowledge that allows individuals to effectively interact and engage with people from diverse cultural backgrounds.

Engaging Families with Cultural Competence

Approaching families with cultural competence means you are extending an invitation to have meaningful connections. Educators can build trust and rapport which can enhance collaboration and result in improved student outcomes. Cultural competence allows educators to bridge gaps, celebrate diversity, and create a space where all students feel valued.

Strategies for Fostering Cultural Sensitivity and Awareness

Below is a list of strategies that can foster cultural sensitivity. Explore these to prepare for your activity or plan.

- Continuous learning
- Self-reflection
- Reflection of personal biases and the impact on instruction
- Cultural exchange
- Active listening
- Collaborative curriculum
- Open communication
- Cultural liaisons
- Personal connections



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Strategies for working with diverse cultures

It is important to use approaches which recognize cultural norms, values, and communication styles. This may include:

- Observation and Listening
- Asking respectful questions
- Noticing nonverbal signals and gestures
- Use cultural resources
- Build relationships
- Have an open attitude
- Adapt your approach to align with others
- Reflect and learn from mistakes

Communication with Families, Caregivers and Community Members

Importance of Communication

Communication between schools, families, and the community leads to a cohesive partnership where everyone is invested in the educational journey. Educators gain valuable insights and families feel empowered and informed. This leads to more supportive school environments where students can thrive. Effective strategies that support accessing a new language fosters an inclusive environment. Below are some practical strategies to learn about.

- Visual aids to transcend language barriers
- Comprehensible language by avoiding jargon and idioms
- Bilingual educators or interpreters to facilitate direct communication
- Conferences and other scheduled family events
- Translating materials to ensure information reaches all parties
- Digital communication can effectively bridge language gaps

Leveraging Technology for Communication

Technology offers a powerful arsenal of tools to enhance communication. Apps and websites can translate messages, announcements, and newsletters to ensure that all families can access the information necessary. Many districts subscribe to services to help communicate. Make yourself aware of the tools available and how to leverage them for your role with multilingual families and other stakeholders.

Community Engagement

Community engagement cultivates a sense of pride and ownership in the educational institution. When families and community members feel invested in school and student success, they contribute to creating and maintaining supportive environments for students.

Some strategies to consider in your work are:



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- **Open Dialogue and Communication Channels**—These are regular meetings and other platforms (e.g., newsletters and messages)
- **Partnerships and Collaborations**—These are opportunities for community members and families to have input feel a sense of community pride
- **Volunteer Opportunities**—These are roles that tap into contributors' skill sets and leverage them to enhance community involvement
- **Family Workshops and Events**-Connect with families with relevant topics to provide opportunities for families to actively engage in their child's education.
- **Student-Led Initiatives and Student Achievements**—These activities help to empower your students to organize or participate in events to develop their connection to community and build leadership skills
- **Cultural Celebrations**—These activities and events recognize and celebrate cultural diversity
- **Advisory Councils**—Establish these bodies and include parents, community leaders and members, and educators to provide insights and feedback
- **Digital Platforms**—Use technology to stay connected to the community using social media, websites, and other digital and online resources.

Supporting Rationale and Research

Armas, Ed.D., Elvira G.; Lavadenz, Ph.D., Magaly; Rozsa, M.A., Natividad; and O'Brien, Ph.D., Gisela, English Learner Master Plan Playbook: Developing Equitable Local Policies for Multilingual and English Learners Students (2021). [doi: 10.15365/ceel.el.master.plan.2021](https://doi.org/10.15365/ceel.el.master.plan.2021)

Cummins, J. (2005). A Proposal for Action: Strategies for Recognizing Heritage Language Competence as a Learning Resource Within the Mainstream Classroom. *Modern Language Journal*, 89(4), 585-592. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/3588628>

Larrotta, C., & Yamamura, E. K. (2011). A Community Cultural Wealth Approach to Latina/ Latino Parent Involvement: The Promise of Family Literacy. *Adult Basic Education & Literacy Journal*, 5(2), 74-83. <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ936695>

Russell, F. A., & Richey, A. (2020). Community Asset Inquiry: A Model for ESOL Teacher Praxis in Family and Community Engagement. *Excelsior: Leadership in Teaching and Learning*, 12(2), 115. <https://doi.org/10.14305/jn.19440413.2020.12.2.02> CCBY.

Song, Sun Yeo. "Digital Service-Learning: Creating Translanguaging Spaces for Emergent Bilinguals' Literacy Learning and Culturally Responsive Family Engagement in Mainstream Preservice Teacher Education." [Teaching English as a Second or Foreign Language Journal--TESL-EJ \(2022\): n. Pag.](#)



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U.S. Department of Education (2023). Family Engagement to Support Immigrant and Multilingual Families, Digital Service-Learning: Creating Translanguaging Spaces for Emergent Bilinguals' Literacy Learning and Culturally Responsive Family Engagement in Mainstream Preservice Teacher Education
<https://www2.ed.gov/documents/family-community/support-immigrant-multilingual-families.pdf>

Resources

[Benefits of Family and Community Engagement](#)

[Impact of Family Engagement](#)

[What the research says about the best way to engage parents](#)

[Family Involvement: What Does Research Say?](#)

[National Association for Family, School, and Community Engagement](#)

[Top Benefits of Family and Community Engagement](#)

[Connecting with ELL Families: Strategies for Success](#)

[Getting to Know ELLs' Families](#)

[How to Build Partnerships with Immigrant Families](#)

[Strengthening Partnerships with ELL Families: 15 Strategies for Success](#)

[CHAPTER 5: Establishing Partnerships With Families](#)

[Ten Strategies for Supporting Immigrant Students and Families](#)

[How to Support Immigrant Students and Families: Strategies for Schools and Early Childhood Programs](#)

[Strategies to Empower Parents/Caregivers of Multilingual Learners - Peers and Pedagogy](#)

[A Guide for Engaging ELL Families: Twenty Strategies for School Leaders](#)

Cultural Competence and Sensitivity

[How Immigration Issues Can Impact Students](#)



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[Addressing Student Trauma, Anxiety, and Depression](#)

[Teachers As Allies: Transformative Practices for Teaching DREAMers & Undocumented Students \(Chapter 2\)](#)

[Promoting Equity for Young Multilingual Children and Their Families \(WIDA\)](#)

[Children of Immigrants and Their Mental Health Needs](#)

[Understanding Undocumented Students' Mental Health Challenges](#)

Communication with Families

[For Families](#)

[How to Use Technology to Engage Multilingual Families](#)

[Communicating with ELL Families: 10 Strategies for Schools](#)

[The Case for Community Engagement | Great Schools Partnership](#)

[News and Stories—Communities In Schools](#)

[Promising Partnership Practices](#)

[Community Engagement 101: A Comprehensive Guide for Education Leaders](#)

Videos

[The changing ELL field: Seeing language and culture as assets](#)

[Building a Belonging Classroom](#)

Submission Guidelines and Evaluation Criteria

To earn this micro-credential, you must receive a passing score in Parts 1 and 3 and receive a proficient score for all components in Part 2.



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Part 1. Overview Questions (Provides Context)

200-400 words

Answer the following questions and use this word count as a guide:

- Explain your current role in working with families and caregivers. Describe the demographics of the families for whom you are focusing your event.
- How does your school or district view home language and cultures as an asset? If they currently have a deficit-based perspective, how will you work to share your understanding of an asset-based perspective to support the families and caregivers in your setting?
- Describe a cultural dilemma that has occurred in your school or classroom and explain how you could or did use cultural competence to support and bridge communication with families or caregivers.

Passing: Completely answers each of these questions using personal examples. Writing is organized and easy to understand.

Part 2. Work Examples/Artifacts/Evidence

Artifact 1: Purpose of Event—Describe the event purpose and its target audience. Include the language groups with whom you are working and how the multilingual learner experience of your families is supported in this event. Explain the process you used to decide on the purpose of your family event. If you used a survey to decide on a topic, include the results in the explanation.

Artifact 2: Communication Plan—This is a plan to share information about and communicate details of your event to a targeted audience. Explain the steps you took to notify and engage relevant staff, student families, community members, and other stakeholders. Include flyers, emails, or website invitations. The event participants should represent **multiple groups** such as:

- Families and caregivers
- Students
- Administration
- Support or other staff
- Community members

Artifact 3: Presentation Materials—Share the materials presented and determine if they were effective in supporting your event goal. Include links to any slides or pamphlets/flyers used or shared at the event.

*You may also include a summary or bulleted list of outcomes of the events as well as a brief video to ensure the evaluator has enough information to understand the outcomes.



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Artifact 4: Feedback from the Event—Collect feedback from **at least two groups** of participants represented at the event. Share those results as well as your reflection on how you connected to your beginning goal.

Part 2. Rubric

	Proficient	Basic	Developing
Artifact 1: Purpose of Event	<p>Includes the purpose of the family event and for whom it is planned.</p> <p>The plan thoroughly explains how this topic was selected based on a demonstrated building or district need as well as why it is relevant to your setting.</p>	<p>Includes the purpose of the family event and for whom it is planned.</p> <p>The plan does not clearly demonstrate the need or relevancy of the topic for your setting.</p>	<p>The plan does not include the purpose of the family event or why it was selected.</p>
Artifact 2: Communication Plan	<p>A comprehensive communication plan was in place ahead of the event.</p> <p>Includes purpose of event.</p> <p>Communication is catered to groups of stakeholders including translation needs. Include how you leveraged technology to reach families.</p> <p>*You do not need to include translations of materials but be sure to include a list of languages you will or did use.</p>	<p>A communication plan was developed, but it did not include the event’s purpose or timeline</p> <p>The relevant stakeholders list is incomplete or communication is not specific to different groups.</p> <p>Translation list is missing.</p> <p>Timeline is missing</p>	<p>The communication plan developed is incomplete and missing these required elements about the event:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -purpose of event -specific groups participating -translation list -not all groups included -timeline



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	<p>Relevant stakeholders are included such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -families -students (if appropriate) -administration -educators or other support staff -district or community participants <p>Timeline of communications</p>		
Artifact 3: Presentation Materials	<p>Includes slides and materials shared with families as well as an explanation of how the event is intended to meet the intended goals.</p> <p>Demonstrates inclusion of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -purpose of event -intended objectives 	<p>Includes slides and materials shared with families. Includes a brief or implied explanation of how the event meets the intended goals.</p> <p>The materials do not fully connect to the intended goal of the event</p>	<p>Includes slides or materials shared with families and other event participants</p>
Artifact 4: Feedback from the Event	<p>A summary of feedback is included. This may be survey or observational data.</p> <p>Includes data from at least two groups that participated in the event, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -families -students -administrators -support or other education staff -community members -partners and others <p>There is a reflection on how your event met</p>	<p>There is no reflection on how the intended goals were met</p>	<p>No reflection is included to demonstrate how the event met the intended goals</p>



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	the intended goals.		
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Part 3. Reflection

300-500 words

Use the word count as a guide to write a personal reflection about your work on this micro-credential. For guidance on writing a good reflection, review this resource:

[How Do I Write a Good Personal Reflection?](#)

Completely answer the following questions about your experience in completing this micro-credential. Your answers must not include identifiable information about your students or yourself.

1. What did you learn about the importance of creating a safe, connected setting for the families and caregivers of your multilingual students?
2. What are your plans for creating connections with families and caregivers? What are other areas that exist in your role to create connections? Include specific ideas.

Passing: The educator reflects on how forming relationships with families and caregivers is beneficial to students' academic, social and emotional well-being. The educator's reflection demonstrates an awareness of the importance of this collaboration for multilingual learners.



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