

From Involvement to Engagement: Capitalizing on the Role of Latino Families

OLGA MARTINEZ HICKMAN, PHD

INSTITUTE FOR PUBLIC SCHOOL INITIATIVES

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN

Objectives

- Share our experience with Latino Parents, Families, & Communities
- Understand the differences between Parent Involvement and Parent Engagement
- Gain a common understanding of the key components of Parent Engagement
- Explore strategies, ideas, and activities to support the engagement of Latino Parents, Families, and Communities in schools

Reflection

On a blank sheet of paper, write, jot, or take notes on the following:

- What is your current reality of a Parent Involvement/Engagement?
- What are the key understandings of each?
- What needs to be clarified?



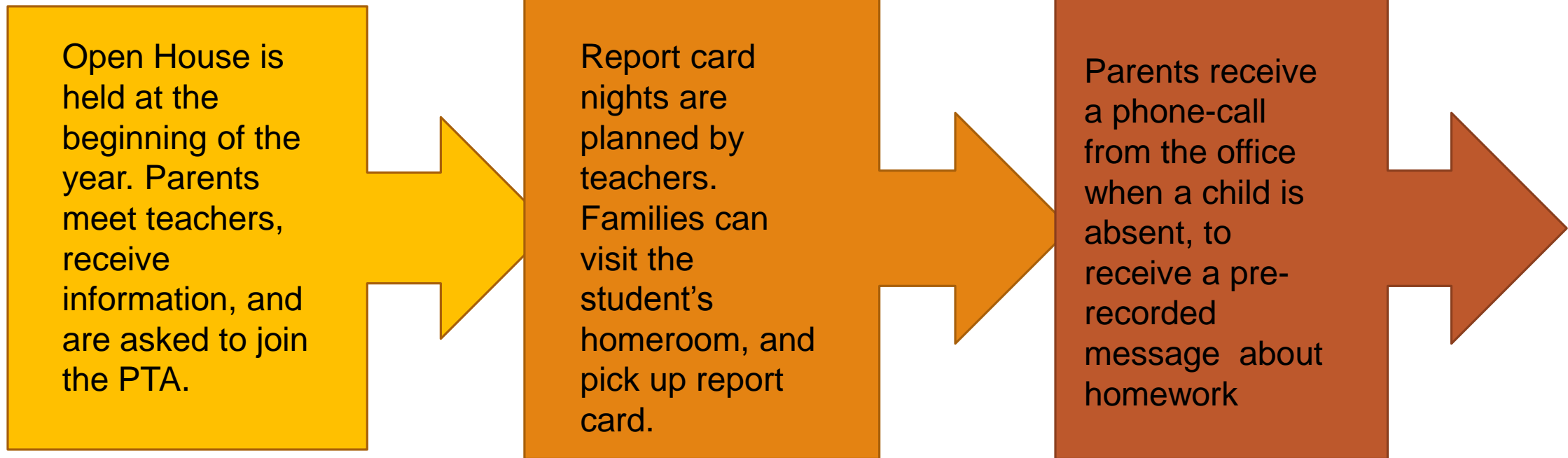
From Involvement to Engagement

Parent/Family Involvement

“Involvement is often thought of simplistically as helping with homework, attending parent-teacher conferences, or volunteering in the classroom,”

(Wooley, Glimpse, & Johnson, 2001, p. 34)

Examples of Traditional Involvement



From Involvement to Engagement

Parent/Family Engagement

Parent engagement is a shared responsibility, and includes more than a checklist of things that have been done. When parents and school staff working together to support and improve the learning, development, and health of children and adolescents, parent engagement occurs.

(Mapp, 2015)

Examples of Engagement



Your Current Situation

1. Using whatever available technology you have, scan the QR code, or



2. Access the link: pollEV.com/olgahickman026

Latinos in Education

- Latina/os are currently considered the largest minority group in the United States
- Texas is ranked second in the nation, in terms of their Latino population
- Federal, state, and local agencies have called for an increase in the involvement of Latina/o families
- The practices Latino families have historically been depicted as uninvolved through conventional models of involvement

Perspectives of Latinos in Education

- Uninterested
- Adversarial
- Unresponsive
- Uncaring
- Uninvolved
- Not Concerned
- Can't/won't communicate

Reflect

How have the demographics of the population you serve evolved in your school/district?

How have practices on your campus/district changed to meet the needs of changing demographics?

What, if any, assumptions or perspectives about Latinos have kept Latino parents from being more engaged?

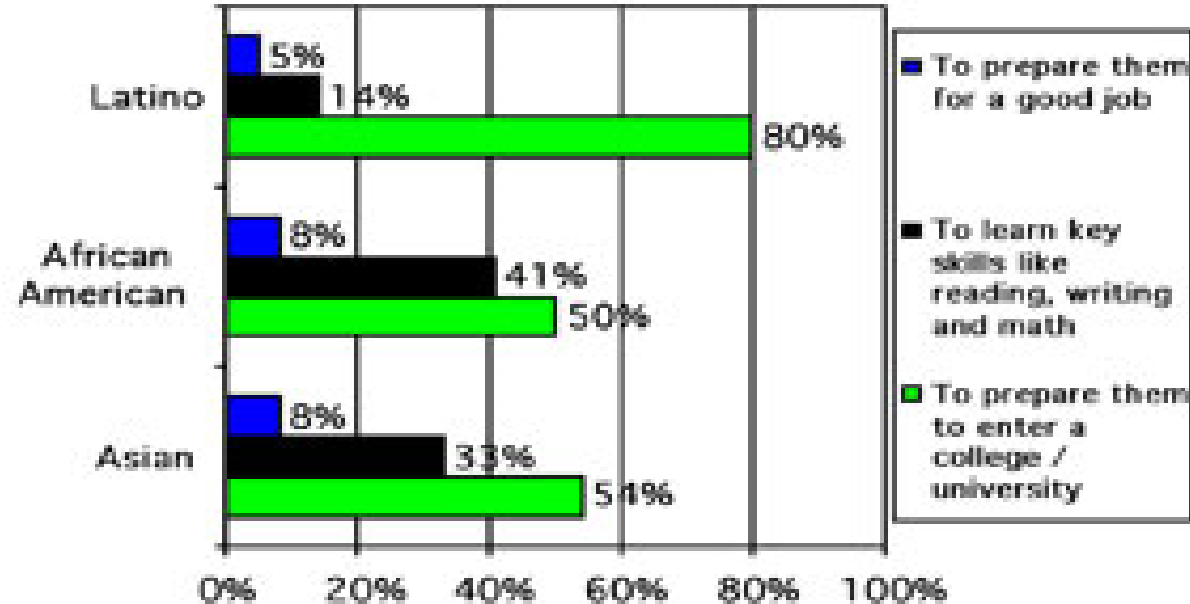
Why Latino Parents Matter in Education



It is not that our parents are not interested in education. Language and cultural barriers, and general unfamiliarity with the systems of US public school directly impact the interaction of Latina/o parents and families with schools.

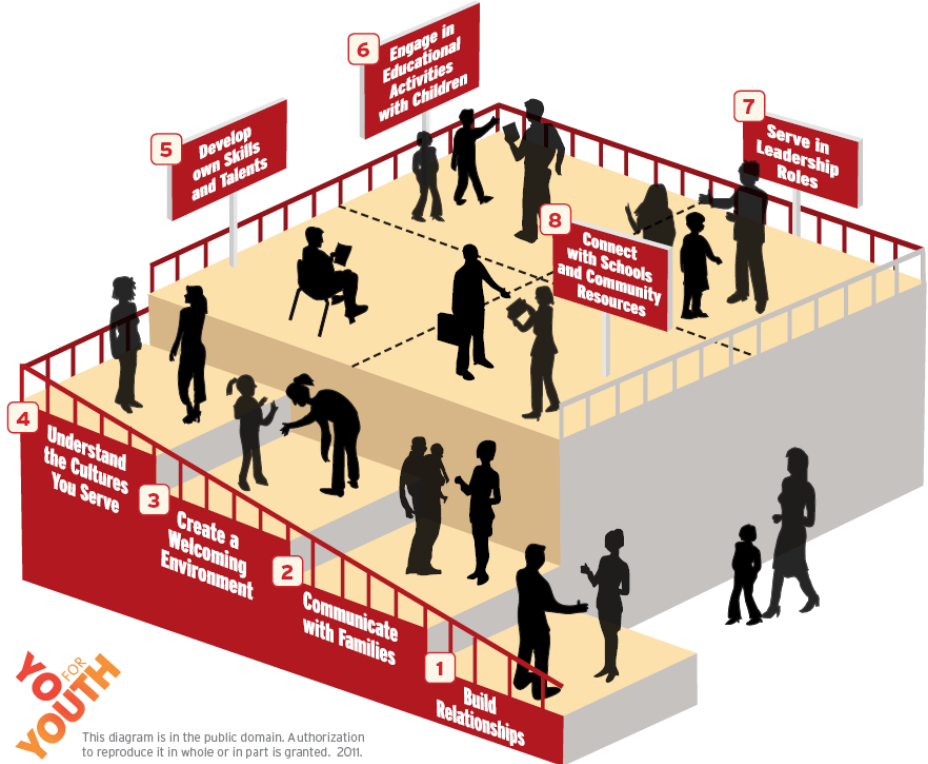
(Martinez Hickman, 2014)

What do you think is most important for children when it comes to their education in the public schools?



New America Media, 2006

Building Blocks of Family Relationships



Yo
FOR
YOUTH

This diagram is in the public domain. Authorization to reproduce it in whole or in part is granted. 2011.

This diagram was funded by the U.S. Department of Education under contract number ED-08-CO-0145. The views expressed here are not necessarily those of the Department or of the contractor, Synergy Enterprises, Inc.

Learn more about family involvement at <http://y4y.ed.gov>.

U.S. Department of Education
<https://y4y.ed.gov/>

Build Relationships

Initiate 2-way communication with Latino parents

- Use formal and informal communication to connect with the families you serve
- Make personal contacts with families, including phone calls or home visits
- Offer translators to welcome and assist families during school activities

Create a warm and welcoming environment

- Show parents/families they are welcome
- Hold an open house, prior to school opening, at which families can meet their children's teachers, tour the school building and meet other parents
- Offer events at various times to accommodate working schedules

Example



Understand the Cultures You Serve

- Value all types and levels of engagement
- Draw on existing knowledge and skills
- Provide materials in languages and formats that all families understand
- Incorporate families' cultures into their activities
- Honor *life participation and* non-academic support

Life Participation (Zarate, 2007)

Academic Involvement	Life Participation
Attend parent-teacher conferences.	Be aware of child's life.
Sign homework as required by the teacher.	Be aware of and monitor child.
Know when to expect report cards.	Be aware of child's peer group and interacting with peers' parents.
Ask about homework daily.	Teach good morals and respect of others.
Listen to the child read.	Communicate with child.
Visit classroom during open houses.	Be aware of and encourage child's abilities and career aspirations.
Ask questions about homework.	Provide general encouragement.
Ask friends, siblings, and other family members for homework help for child.	Discuss future planning.
Have high standards for academic performance.	Monitor school attendance.
Purchase materials required for class.	Exercise discipline and provide behavioral cuing.
Drive them to tutoring and school activities.	Establish trust with child.
Go to the library with them.	Provide advice on life issues.
Be present when required to pick up report cards at school.	Warn of dangers outside the home, such as illegal drugs.
	Get to know teachers to assess child's safety.
	Volunteer to observe school environment.
	Encourage siblings to look out for each other.

Engage Families in Leadership and Decision-Making

More than just the PTA

- Create opportunities for governance and leadership activities
- Provide opportunities for parents to serve as advocates for their children
- Build on parents' assets to lead activities for children or other adults
- Create networks to link parents with parent representatives/liaisons

Link to Learning

- Programs/activities that are specifically address student learning have a stronger link to improved student achievement
- Support parents in developing literacy skills, through parent education sessions, parent-child activities at school, and literacy-centered activities at home, to improve language development of young learners
- Work with school and community staff to provide training that is specifically tied to skills students need to gain knowledge in all content areas
- Provide workshops for teachers and staff that focus on creating/sharing best practices
- Show, don't just tell

Example



Example



English I: Reading: Module 1: Lesson 1: Section 4 Linguistic Roots and Affixes Graphic Organizer: Building Words with Affixes

Directions: In the activity below, you will find a list of word affixes with brief definitions. Build as many words as you can using these affixes. When you are finished, mouse over the checkboxes for some possible responses.

Affix:	Definition:	Examples:
-ist	a person, one who does something	artist, bassoonist, biologist, realist
Affix: sub- Examples: _____	Definition: under or beneath, nearly, secondary	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Affix: hyper- Examples: _____	Definition: over, above, in excess	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Affix: mono- Examples: _____	Definition: alone, single	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Affix: mal- Examples: _____	Definition: bad, ill	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Affix: super- Examples: _____	Definition: great, above	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Affix: equi- Examples: _____	Definition: equal	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

On-Track Online Lessons

Texas Gateway

<http://www.texasgateway.org/resource/linguistic-roots-and-affixes>

Family Engagement: Students with Engaged Families

- Acquire language and literacy at faster rates
- Adapt better to school and attend more regularly
- Students gain social and behavioral skills
- Graduate and go on to higher education

Family Engagement

Parents/Families who are Engaged

- **Welcomed:** Partnerships create a feeling of a learning community
- **Honored:** Partnerships create a sense of value
- **Connected:** Partnerships connects parents/families to what their students are them to their student's academics

Links

<http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED502065.pdf>

<http://ipsi.utexas.edu/>

<http://www.texasgateway.org/>