Navigating School:
An English as a Second Language Curriculum
for Multilingual Caregivers

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The Faculty of the School of Education
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In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts in Teaching English To Speakers of Other Languages

By
Kerry Stimpson
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MASTER OF ARTS

in

TEACHING ENGLISH TO SPEAKERS OF OTHER LANGUAGES

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Under the guidance and approval of the committee, and approval by all the members, this field project has been accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree.

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ABSTRACT

If multilingual families feel that they are not able to communicate with school staff, then these families may not become involved in their child’s school, and the child’s learning could be negatively impacted. The purpose of this project is to create a roadmap and lessons for English as a Second Language (ESL) instructors to implement in their classes with multilingual caregivers. This curriculum will address the lack of understanding that ESL teachers have in regard to the needs of multilingual caregivers to communicate with their child’s school staff and understand the school system in the United States. Given the content of this project, it has the potential to provide a resource that supports parents, youth, school staff, other researchers in the field as well as ESL teachers. In this field project, educators are provided with ten lessons to be implemented at specific times of the year with the caregivers of school-aged children. These lessons cover authentic school-related topics of interest to caregivers, such as parent-teacher/student-led conferences and reading progress reports. If more schools could educate and provide resources for adults alongside the children in their lives, this could have a positive impact on language acquisition and school navigation for parents, as well as an increase in multilingual parent involvement in school. Schools are in a unique position to reach an incredible amount of ESL adults and positively impact their lives, which therefore positively impacts the youth schools serve.
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

“What does IEP mean?” (personal communication, 2021). This is an example of one of the many school-related questions I am routinely asked at my job as a Case Manager working with many multilingual families. There are so many acronyms, words, and phrases used by school staff that are unfamiliar even to some native English speakers, but certainly for families that speak a different mother tongue. Families frequently express that they have issues when communicating with their child’s school and understanding the school system in general. There is often confusion over which teacher is the lead of the class, when school holidays are, how to support their child with homework, and more. These families are often seeking knowledge of the best way to navigate these uncertainties as well as language to support them in their communications. If families are unable to understand these key elements of the school system and to speak with the people educating their children, this is detrimental to the child’s education and therefore future. Schools are required to provide translators for spoken communications as well as translation of documents, however, the parents I work with have expressed that while these resources are necessary and helpful, parents would truly prefer to be able to communicate with school staff independently, without the use of an interpreter (personal communication, n.d.; Shiffman, 2019; U.S. Department of Justice & U.S. Department of Education, 2015).

Statement of the Problem

If multilingual families feel that they are not able to communicate with school staff, then these families may not become involved in their child’s school and the child’s learning could be negatively impacted. Although the benefits of family involvement have been demonstrated through research, there are challenges in including multilingual families in school.
Multilingual parents sometimes feel that their communication needs are not prioritized, that they cannot be independent in supporting their child’s education, and are unable to be actively involved in school activities (MacPhee, 2021). Parents report being unable to communicate their concerns and queries to the staff at their child’s school (Park & McHugh, 2014). Although there is great interest on behalf of families to be involved in their child’s school, communication with school staff and understanding the school system in general can be a barrier (Vera, et al., 2019). Parents feel it is their duty to be involved in their child’s school and want to be able to communicate without interpreters (Shiffman, 2019).

The need to include multilingual families in their child’s education is a prevalent concern given the number of immigrant families coming to the United States. According to the Migration Policy Institute (2020), every year since the 1970s the population of immigrants has increased in the United States. In addition to this, the institute claims that the total number of immigrants in the United States in 2019 was ~45 million, which amounts to 13.7% of the country’s population (Migration Policy Institute, 2020). In the same year in California, there were ~10.5 million immigrants, which amounts to 26.7% of the state’s population (Migration Policy Institute, 2020). The Migration Policy Institute also found that in 2013, 19% of California’s population had Limited English Proficiency (LEP) (LEP, n.d.; Zong & Batalova, 2020). A person who has LEP does not speak English natively and has a limited ability to read, write, speak or understand the language (LEP, n.d.). These numbers are significant because English Language Learners (ELLs) graduate at a rate far below their non-ELL peers, at 67% compared to 84% (U.S. Department of Education, n.d.). High school diploma attainment is vital because it directly connects to economic and career opportunities (U.S. Department of Education, n.d.). This achievement gap between ELL students and non-ELL students and the
ever-increasing amount of immigrants in the United States showcases how lack of multilingual family inclusion, and therefore involvement, is a prevalent issue.

**Purpose of the Project**

The purpose of this project is to create a roadmap and lessons for English as a Second Language (ESL) instructors to implement in their classes with multilingual caregivers. This guide will address the gap that ESL teachers have in understanding the needs of multilingual caregivers to communicate with their child’s school staff and navigate the school system in the United States (Sommer et. al, 2020). It will include a roadmap of important school-related topics that arise at specific points of the year as well as lessons that match the points indicated on the road map. The guide will instruct ESL teachers on important topics for parents and potential sources of conflict between multilingual caregivers and school staff and provide guidance on impactful instruction techniques. The guide that has been developed for this project is geared towards ESL instructors teaching school-based classes, however, it is useful for any class with parents of school-aged youth as students. By utilizing this guide, ESL instructors will be meeting an expressed need of multilingual caregivers to better communicate with school staff and enhance their ability to be advocates for their children in regard to their education (Shiffman, 2019).

This guide was created as a strategy to support multilingual parents in increasing their English language proficiency so they are better able to communicate with and understand school staff (Waterman, 2009; Sommer et al., 2020). Schools can support family involvement by providing educational opportunities for parents of their students (He et al., 2019). To further support parents, these educational opportunities can focus on parenting techniques as well as English acquisition (Waterman, 2009). Research has shown that when multilingual parents are
enrolled in English as a Second Language (ESL) class that weaves in parent-involvement and school information, both English acquisition and parent-involvement increase, however, ESL instructors do not always have the parenting or school knowledge to teach or create a curriculum on this topic (Sommer et al., 2020). Providing opportunities for the parents of children to increase their English language proficiency can ease communication barriers between family and school staff, thereby supporting family involvement and student success.

Theoretical Framework

This project is guided by theoretical frameworks that provide support on best practices for additional language acquisition, as well as theories around parental involvement in children’s education. This framework includes the Communicative Language Teaching approach, which focuses on the ability of English Language Learners (ELLs) to communicate for authentic purposes. It also includes Epstein’s Framework of Six Types of Involvement, which was created to support schools in creating relationships and partnerships with families.

Communicative Language Teaching

In the 1960s, Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) rose to popularity as teachers and linguists saw the value of focusing on actual communication rather than drilling and memorizing when it came to learning a new language (Ju, 2013). Several linguists created theories around this idea, but Canale and Swain’s (1980) theory denoted four specific categories that together would lead to communicative competence for the learner: (a) grammatical competence; (b) sociolingual competence; (c) discourse competence; (d) strategic competence. All four of these components support the idea that when learning a foreign language, it is most important that the learner has the ability to communicate using real, authentic scenarios.

The first of the four components of Canale and Swain’s (1980) theory is grammatical
competence, which describes the understanding and correct production of basic grammar tenets of a language such as syntax, semantics, and phonology. To learn sociolingual competence, a student would know what language is appropriate in a certain situation and know the conventional rules of conversation. Discourse competence focuses on learners knowing how to produce sentences that are understandable. Lastly, if a student has strategic competence, the student would understand how to correct communication problems as they arise. In a class that incorporates CLT, error correction is not a focal point, but rather, supporting students in practicing situations that may occur when they are outside of the classroom is emphasized. CLT lessons still incorporate grammar, however, there is more focus on actual communication rather than perfect grammar. Students getting practice using realistic scenarios will support their additional language acquisition and communicative competence (Canale & Swain, 1980). Canale and Swain’s theory has been expanded on by more recent linguists, but the main tenet, that learners complete meaningful tasks to ensure effective communication, remains the same. In the next section, Epstein et al.’s (2019) work also supports the benefits of communication, not in terms of ESL teaching, but through the lens of parent and school relationships.

Epstein’s Framework of Six Types of Involvement

Epstein et al.’s (2019) work creating the Framework of Six Types of Involvement started in the 1990s and has evolved over the past three decades as more research has been completed. Epstein theorizes that there are overlapping spheres of influence on children consisting of parents, youth, and schools. All three elements are interdependent, working in conjunction with each other. These Six Types of Involvement are believed to create ideal relationships and systems for parents, youth, and schools to work together.

The first type of involvement Epstein et al. (2019) describes is parenting, which is when
a youth’s environment at home helps them to be successful as students, as well as when schools are collaborative and understanding with families. Central to the framework is the idea that schools demonstrate how they feel about the children they serve by how they treat those children’s parents. Type 2 is communicating, when school staff and families have successful ways of communicating in both directions (school-to-home and home-to-school). Epstein et al. emphasizes communications between families and schools in regards to the need for regularly scheduled conferences, progress reports, newsletters, and other forms of communication, as well as translation support to ensure that all information regarding school policies and procedures is clear. Volunteering, Type 3, emphasizes bringing in caregiver support for youth. To enhance student success, schools must look at parents and caregivers as key collaborators in a child’s education. Next, Type 4 is learning at home, which involves providing education and information to caregivers on best practices for supporting their children with academics in their home. Type 5, decision making, showcases the importance of including parents as leaders and champions of their child’s education. Decision-making should not be solely left to school staff, but ought to include and value the opinions and thoughts of families. Lastly, collaborating with the community. Type 6, incorporates the community at large, stating that resources and services that support families, in general, should be part of the education system. Focusing on enhancing the family unit outside of just the student’s education, will ultimately support the child’s education, as the family will have more support and resources in general. In summary, Epstein et al.’s work provides educators and school administrators with a rationale for the value of parent involvement as well as a comprehensive guide on best practices to value and include families in their children’s education.

Canale and Swain’s (2018) and Epstein et. al’s (2019) frameworks emphasize the
importance of communication, which is highly valued in this project as well. Canale and Swain’s theory believes that focusing on actual, effective communication is most important for ESL learners, a concept that is demonstrated in this project. Epstein et al.’s theory discusses how family involvement can be supported by schools and highlights increasing parental voice and advocacy, another value that is shown in this project. These two theoretical frameworks together provide the rationale for this project: an ESL curriculum aiming to increase caregiver English language skills in general, as well as specifically around school topics.

**Significance of the Project**

There are multiple stakeholders that could potentially find value in this project. It may be of interest to immigrant parents who are hoping to increase their English proficiency, as they would be the students in any English as a Second Language (ESL) class that implemented this curriculum. These parents would benefit as they would enhance their English skills while also expanding their knowledge surrounding the school system in the U.S. In addition to parents, the children in these families would also benefit from the project. If caregivers increase their English proficiency and school navigation expertise, this will allow them to communicate with school staff independently and support their child in their education more, potentially lessening the achievement gap between English Language Learner (ELL) students and non-ELL students. A parental increase in English skills will potentially lessen the need for youth to act as translators and increase parents’ ability to support with school requirements (such as homework) at home.

In addition to having a significant impact on parents and students, this project could also be of interest to school administration and district leadership who are invested in parent engagement in their schools. When considering the concern for the inclusion of multilingual
families in school, in order to focus the responsibility on schools rather than families, it is noted that schools ought to accommodate the parents and ensure their understanding and involvement through culturally responsive practices, hiring of school staff that reflects the families’ cultures and languages and through the utilization of translators. However, this project would still potentially be of interest to school leaders because it would support schools in meeting the expressed needs of parents to be their own advocates and would support creating a welcoming, inclusive environment for immigrant families.

Lastly, educational researchers and ESL teachers may find the project useful for their own practices. Other researchers interested in family involvement, specifically for multilingual families, might find the literature and data discussed to be beneficial for their own work. ESL teachers who have parents as students in their classes could be interested in this project as there is no clear guidance, curriculum, or topic map on what topics are critical, which times of the year, and what best practices there are for instructing parents on the topic of understanding the school system adequately and being actively involved in their child’s education. This curriculum provides ESL teachers with a guide to enhance the school literacy of multilingual caregivers to increase ELL family involvement in school and therefore potentially lessen the achievement gap between ELL and non-ELL students. This project has the potential to provide a resource that supports parents, youth, school staff, other researchers in the field as well as ESL teachers.

**Limitations**

While there is ample evidence for why a curriculum of this kind is necessary, there are some limitations to this project. At this time, the curriculum has not been used with actual parents and is therefore untested in the field. Once it has been utilized in the
classroom, potential gaps will be recognized, then revisions and alterations will be made to the curriculum to increase its usefulness. In addition to this, the curriculum was also designed with a specific school in mind. When applying the curriculum in another school, alterations would need to be made to make it more applicable and useful to the students and families in that school. These tweaks can easily be made to the program, however, ESL instructors may not have the time to implement them.

Additionally, while results from research studies were used to create this curriculum, no original research was completed to confirm that teachers and parents are in agreement as to what topics should be covered in an ESL curriculum incorporating school navigation. Ideally, focus groups would be conducted at each school site that plans to implement this curriculum to be sure all topics that are a priority for the specific community are covered. These focus groups would ideally include parents, guardians, teachers, and other school staff. Lastly, I have a positive bias toward immigrant families that may influence the choice of data and interpretations of data in this paper.

**Definition of Terms**

- Achievement gap: when groups of students that differ from each other (for example, by race, ethnicity, etc.) do not perform the same (National Center for Education Statistics, n.d.)
- Caregiver: an adult caring for a child (interchangeable with “parent” in this paper) (Merriam Webster, n.d.)
- English Language Learner (ELL): a person learning English (Britannica, n.d.)
• English as a Second Language (ESL): when learning English in an English-speaking country (ex: England, New Zealand, Canada, or the United States), ESL is used to describe the class (Britannica, n.d.)

• Family engagement: any adult who cares for and tends to the academic, social, emotional, and overall wellbeing of a youth; the term “family” can include mother, father, adult-aged sibling, grandparent, foster parent, aunt/uncle, neighbor, etc. (interchangeable with “family involvement”, “parent engagement” and “parent involvement” in this paper) (NASA, n.d.)

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• Limited English Proficiency (LEP) individual: someone who does not speak English as their first language and may have a limited ability to read, speak, write or understand English (LEP, n.d.)

• Mother tongue: the language someone learns from birth (interchangeable with “native language” in this paper) (Merriam-Webster, n.d.)

• Multilingual: someone that speaks two or more languages. This term is used because ESL implies that people are always learning English as a second language, however, some people know 3+ languages (Cambridge, n.d.). The term ELL is not always ideal either as it sometimes has negative connotations (Linse, 2013). The term “multilingual” is used to
be more inclusive of the many languages that families may speak and to showcase this skill-set in a positive light.

- Native language: the language someone learns from birth (interchangeable with “mother tongue” in this paper) (Collins, n.d.)

- Parent engagement: any adult who cares for and tends to the academic, social, emotional, and overall wellbeing of a youth; the term “parent” can include mother, father, adult-aged sibling, grandparent, foster parent, aunt/uncle, neighbor, etc. (interchangeable with “family involvement”, “family engagement” and “parent involvement” in this paper) (NASA, n.d.)

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CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The first chapter illustrated that multilingual families have a deep interest in expanding their English language proficiency in order to be better able to advocate for themselves and their children in their schooling. While schools must provide interpreters and translated materials for non-English speaking families, many of these families would like to expand their own knowledge and skill-set so they are able to have these school-to-home communications without translator support (Shiffman, 2019; U.S. Department of Justice & U.S. Department of Education, 2015). The purpose of this literature review is to provide a rationale for an English as a Second Language (ESL) curriculum as a means to support family involvement of English Language Learner (ELL) families. First, studies that exemplify parent or family involvement and how it supports the academic achievement of students are discussed (Cheung & Pomerantz, 2012; Dotterer & Wehrspann, 2015; Santos Rego et al., 2018). Next, challenges for multilingual parents to be included in schools are articulated, based on studies that spoke with immigrant families (MacPhee, 2021; Park & McHugh, 2014; Shiffman, 2019; Vera et. al., 2019). Lastly, research that illuminates best practices for addressing the concerns and difficulties of including multilingual families is described (He et al., 2019; Sommer et al., 2020; Waterman, 2009). All of this literature supports the importance of creating an ESL curriculum that focuses on increasing multilingual families’ English proficiency by incorporating parenting and school system navigation topics into the lessons.

Benefits of Family Involvement

It has been shown over the course of many decades that parental and family involvement is a positive influence on children’s academic success (Cheung & Pomerantz, 2012; Dotterer &
Wehrspann, 2015; Santos Rego et al., 2018). This section will review some of the research that supports this claim, and includes work focusing on how children were motivated by their parents to be as successful as possible in school (Cheung & Pomerantz, 2012). Another study completed in the Midwest with middle schoolers also demonstrated that youth who rated their parents as involved in school had higher grades and engagement with their school (Dotterer & Wehrspann, 2015). It has been shown with older students as well, that when families are more involved, their children are more motivated (Santos Rego et al., 2018). All of these studies together show how beneficial it is when parents and caregivers can be actively involved with their child’s education, as it shows that it positively impacts the youth’s academics.

Cheung and Pomerantz (2012) examined how parent involvement in school influences a child’s motivation and success in school, focusing on parent-oriented motivation, as the research was lacking in this specific area. According to the authors, parent-oriented motivation is when a child is driven to be successful in school in order to get the approval of their parents. To investigate how this type of motivation may impact a child’s academic success, the researchers conducted quantitative research in the U.S. with 374 students, starting the study as the students were entering 7th grade. The study was completed at the end of the student’s 8th grade school year, amounting to two full academic years of research. The students completed questionnaires four times over the two-year period and each questionnaire was completed six months apart from the other. The questionnaires asked students to rate their agreement to statements about their parents’ involvement (for example: “My parents help me with my homework when I ask”) and parent-oriented motivation in school (for example: “I try to do well because I want my parents’ approval”) (p. 823). The schools provided the researchers with the student's grades as well.
Cheung & Pomerantz (2012) discovered that parent-oriented motivation had a positive effect on a child's school success over time, in terms of academic achievement as well as motivation to do well in school. There were a variety of reasons articulated for this in the data, as some children completed school requirements because they wanted to avoid punishment or gain rewards from parents, while some children noted that school success was important to them because it was important to their parents. This research demonstrates how parental involvement is crucial for a child’s success in school, which Dotterer and Wehrspann (2015) expanded on as well, specifically with families living in an urban environment.

Dotterer and Wehrspann (2015) hoped to understand how parent involvement does or does not impact the educational success of their children, specifically with families living in urban environments. They were driven to do this research with middle schoolers, as this is often a time that youth’s interest in schools starts to decrease, particularly for students living in urban environments. Dotterer and Wehrspann collected data from 108 middle school students at a public school in the Midwest. Participants filled out a survey twice a year, once in the fall and once in the spring. Students answered questions on a three-point scale to indicate their response to questions regarding their parent’s level of involvement with school activities, their own engagement in school, and how much they felt they were successful academically. The researchers also received the students’ grades from the school.

From the data, the researchers found that there was a positive link between parent involvement and students’ grades, as well as the students’ approximation of how successful they were academically and the students’ own engagement in school. Students who reported more parental involvement were linked to fewer disengagement behaviors (for example, issues with other students), suggesting that children whose parents demonstrate to them that school is
important are more likely to adhere to school rules and codes. Dotterer and Wehrspann’s (2015) work demonstrates that parent involvement has a direct link to their child’s success and engagement in school, something that researchers in Spain sought to reflect as well.

In Spain, researchers Santos Rego et al. (2018) were concerned about the lack of success and completion of school by secondary students and wanted to see if cooperative learning and parental involvement could support student success. The researchers created groups, with 146 students in one group (the experimental group), and 123 students in another group (the control group). Santos Rego et al. also got feedback from 8 teachers and 89 other adults, which consisted of a combination of parents, guardians, and other relations of the students. The students in the experimental group participated in a program that focused on engaging and educating families. Both the control and experimental group completed a pretest before the program began to gather quantitative data. Both groups also completed a post-test once the program was completed.

Santos Rego et al. (2018) found that students in the experimental group, whose parents participated in the family education program, felt more support from their parents. The findings showed this was particularly strong in regards to maternal rather than paternal support. Parents in this program reported to be more connected to the school and had more contact with the school, which appeared to lead to students feeling more motivated to continue their educational efforts. This demonstrates that when families are included in the school and are brought in as collaborators in a young person’s education, it positively impacts the student’s academics in terms of grades as well as motivation.

The aforementioned research shows that family involvement in school does have clear benefits for their children. Cheung and Pomerantz (2012) found evidence for this in their
research that examined how children can be motivated by their parents to do well academically. In the Midwest, Dotterer and Wehrspann (2015) discovered that there was indeed a positive correlation between parent involvement and students’ grades and interest in school. Lastly, the work done by Santos Rego et al. (2018) in Spain showed how with older students, all of this still rings true and parents’ involvement can help to motivate their kids in school. Given how it is clearly important for student success to have families involved in school, it is crucial that all parents are part of this, including multilingual families. There are, however, challenges in this regard, illuminated in the next section.

**Multilingual Family Inclusion Challenges**

As noted earlier, there are certain challenges that are unique to multilingual families when it comes to inclusion in the school system, a phenomenon that has been studied by researchers many times (MacPhee, 2021; Park & McHugh, 2014; Shiffman, 2019; Vera et. al., 2019). These researchers have sought to understand what these challenges are, primarily from the perspective of the parents themselves. In an example from Canada, MacPhee’s (2021) research was done within the context of French-speaking schools and how non-French-speaking parents felt about communication with school staff and other aspects of school. Related to the U.S. context, Park and McHugh's (2014) study illustrates the challenges for immigrant families with young children before they enter kindergarten. Vera et al. (2019) got feedback from many multilingual families to showcase what barriers they felt in terms of parental involvement. Shiffman’s (2019) point of focus was getting feedback from parents currently enrolled in ESL classes on what was challenging at the schools their children attended. All of these studies together point to several challenges for including multilingual families in school, with the communication (language) barrier being a primary one.
MacPhee (2021) wanted to learn how non-French-speaking parents felt about their ability to be involved in their child’s school and education when their child attended a French-speaking school in Canada. This work is important because there has been an increase in French-speaking schools in Canada since the 1980s, however, 64% of students in those schools have at least one parent that does not speak French. To do their work, MacPhee used an online survey (which had 86 participants), nine focus groups (which had 34 participants), and individual interviews (which had 4 participants). The research utilized a questionnaire, focus groups, and interviews to gather the data.

MacPhee (2021) found that parents were eager to support their children with homework, but were unable to due to language abilities. Lack of French language ability made it difficult for parents to be involved in school and parents felt a lack of both autonomy and competency in regard to their child’s education. The parents’ responses indicated a belief that the school did not make it a priority to rectify this issue. MacPhee’s work demonstrates that when parents are not able to communicate in the same language as school staff and the school does not prioritize parental support, it leads to challenges with parent involvement and satisfaction with their child’s school. These findings were echoed in the research done by Park and McHugh (2014) as they investigated what the needs of immigrant parents are, given that these parents have challenges that native parents may not have.

Park and McHugh (2014) conducted research across six states in the U.S., completing 19 site visits and 7 focus groups with 70 immigrant parents. All participants were parents of young children who were enrolled in early childhood education programs (in addition to this, some participants had older children as well). A repeated challenge reported by the immigrant parents was their own lack of English proficiency and literacy skills in English. Parents noted that they
were “unable to communicate their questions and needs” to the staff at their children’s schools (p. 21). Although some schools did offer adult ESL classes and there was a “nearly universal desire” from parents to enroll, the classes were often inaccessible for various reasons (for example, lack of childcare or available spaces in class) (p. 21).

The researchers also found that there was a lack of funding specifically for supporting parents with language access issues. Park and McHugh’s (2014) work found that parents, community leaders, and program directors of early childhood programs all agreed that English language proficiency was a barrier to meaningful communication. The researchers recommended that to effect change, the states ought to add parent education to more early childhood education programs, enhance the existing parent education programs at the sites that already have them, and ensure funding will continue for these existing programs as well. Park and McHugh’s findings certainly emphasize the need for parent education as well as enhanced communication between school staff and parents, as does the next study.

Vera et al. (2012) wanted to find out more about barriers to family involvement in school, specifically for ELL families, given the ever-increasing population of immigrants in the United States and how important parent involvement is for student success. The researchers asked 239 ELL parents questions regarding involvement in school and then cross-referenced these answers with demographic information of the participants in order to see how other factors (such as English ability, race, employment status, etc.) impacted involvement. Participating families were found across four school districts in the Midwest United States. Each participant answered a 31-question survey where they rated their answers based on how much they agreed with the statements.

Vera et. al’s (2012) findings showed that parents did their best to support their children at
home, but that language barriers and unfamiliarity with the school system in the U.S. were among the most commonly reported issues in terms of being involved in their child’s education. The results also demonstrated that reports of lower English proficiency for parents also correlated with lower reports of school involvement and other at-home educational supports for youth (for example, reading with their child or supporting with homework). The research done by Vera, et al. (2012) shows that knowledge of the school system and English language proficiency are huge factors in determining parental involvement for multilingual families, and Shiffman’s (2019) work underlines this challenge as well.

Shiffman (2019) sought to understand how parents in ESL classes viewed communications with their child’s school, what that communication was like, what the communication challenges were, and how home-school communication could be improved. Shiffman (2019) pursued this research because there are areas of the U.S. that are becoming homes to immigrants that have not historically had large immigrant populations, and therefore might not be prepared to support these families. The researcher also did this work with the belief that communication is key for school-to-home relationships. To investigate the topic, the researcher surveyed 85 parents enrolled in ESL classes across three school districts in Virginia. In addition to data gathered from interviews, the researcher also utilized publicly available documents, such as Census Bureau data. The survey was both qualitative and quantitative, and survey questions inquired about why the parents enrolled in an ESL class and their parent involvement beliefs.

The results showed a trend that parents believed it was their role and duty to communicate with their child’s teacher and to support their child’s education. Many parents noted that this belief was the very reason that they enrolled in ESL classes in the first place. Interview results
showed that during interactions with school staff, interpreters were helpful for parents with lower English proficiency, but most parents wanted to be able to communicate independently. Some schools sent translated documents home in the family’s native language, however, the quality of the translations varied. Many parents also found school websites to be difficult to understand and navigate. Shiffman’s (2019) work showcases that while immigrant families value school involvement, there are communication and language barriers that prevent this from occurring to the degree that parents would like.

A clear theme from these studies is that among other issues, communication (spoken and written) is a challenge for families that do not share a common language with their child’s teacher and school. As shown by Park and McHugh (2014), low English language proficiency was a challenge parents were frustrated by. Parents and caregivers were frustrated by their inability to support their child and communicate with school officials due to a lack of a common language (MacPhee, 2021; Shiffman, 2019; Vera et al., 2019). These issues create an environment that does not wholly support multilingual families in their involvement in their children’s schooling. Although this research shows that there are challenges to including multilingual families, there are still paths to success, which are discussed in the next section.

**Multilingual Family Inclusion Strategies**

Despite the issues that arise in including multilingual families in their child’s school, schools have options for how to prioritize and rectify this issue, particularly when it comes to addressing communication barriers. Given that basic communication was a repeated issue, increasing families' English language proficiency and therefore autonomy is a clear option to support family involvement. He et al. (2019) demonstrated how supporting the education of two generations (children and the adults that care for them) of English learners is beneficial for
communities. Previously, in a seminal work in 2009, Waterman investigated if and how ESL classes can be used to enhance communication between multilingual parents and school staff with a curriculum that centered on parent involvement. A decade later, Sommer et al., (2020) also strove to see how ESL classes that encompassed parenting information in the curriculum supported caregivers with children enrolled in a Head Start program. Both Waterman (2009) and Sommer et al.’s (2020) studies examined not only how ESL classes support parents in their English language proficiency, but also their parenting skills and involvement in school.

Given the increasing number of English language learners in the United States, He et al. (2019) sought to understand how a two-generation program serving parents and their children could support the education of both adults and the youth they care for. A two-generation program is one that serves the young generation of a family as well as an older generation (for example, children and their parents). In this study, the parents were enrolled in an ESL course, and their children (as young as babies and as old as high schoolers) were enrolled in an educational program. To conduct their research, He et al. (2019) used a narrative and ethnographic approach, interviewing and observing nine people in total: four adult ESL teachers, one volunteer, one school-parent liaison, two university faculty, and one teacher candidate enrolled at the university.

From the conversations and observations, He et al.’s (2019) results showed that supporting youth is important, but specifically targeting support towards their parents is crucial as well. The researcher’s data demonstrated that family literacy programs that meet the needs of the adults are an opportunity for K-12 schools to truly enhance the learning experience of multilingual families. For these programs to be successful and create engagement with parents, it is very important for the teachers to get input from the parents enrolled in the class and to
actually use that input when designing the course and curriculum. The ESL class from this study was extremely tailored to the parent’s expressed needs and designed to help them in navigating their daily lives, including supporting their children in school. Waterman’s (2009) work is similar but focuses more specifically on ESL classes predominantly focused on parenting.

In a seminal work, Waterman (2009) wanted to shed light on how ESL classes can promote collaboration and communication between parents and school staff. Waterman (2009) felt that although there was research and laws that demonstrate the importance of parental involvement, there was no study that showed specifically how an ESL class designed for parents could support this. Waterman (2009) spoke with 87 Mexican mothers who had previously been enrolled in an ESL class at a K-12 school at four different school sites. The researcher utilized qualitative, narrative research through interviews and quantitative research through an English proficiency test administered before and after the class, to measure progress.

To conduct the study, Waterman (2009) divided the mothers into two groups, with one being a control group. The control group class (with 39 participants) focused solely on English skills in their class, whereas the treatment group (with 48 participants) incorporated parental involvement into the English lessons. The instructors of the treatment group also received additional professional development in supporting students and creating lessons that use authentic materials. Using what they learned in the professional development courses in addition to feedback gathered from the students, the teachers created a curriculum covering topics such as parent-teacher conferences, preparing for conversations with school leadership, and other school-related topics. Waterman (2009) spoke to the ESL students at the end and beginning of the study, asking questions about what students learned in the ESL course and questions related to parent involvement. The researcher also analyzed the English proficiency
growth of participants by checking their pre and post-tests.

Waterman (2009) found that the treatment classes that incorporated parental involvement into the curriculum had higher increases in parent-involvement skills and ESL skills compared to the control group. Parents enrolled in the treatment group reported that the ESL course supported their ability to be involved in their child’s education and be understood during important conversations with school staff. Parents in the treatment group reported that their communications with teachers improved by 84%, compared to 29% in the control group. Waterman’s work demonstrates the strength of school-based ESL classes that intentionally focus on parent involvement, as does the research done more recently by Sommer et al. (2020).

Sommer et al. (2020) examined a two-generation program consisting of a group of parents enrolled in an ESL course focusing on early childhood development. All of the parents had children enrolled in a Head Start program. Head Start is an early childhood education program that provides childcare and educational opportunities to low-income children (Head Start, 2021). Sommer et al. (2020) wanted to do work with this population because ~50% of immigrant children live in low-income homes, but only 5% of parents with children in Head Start are enrolled in an ESL course. Many Head Start teachers do not speak the native language of the families, so communication between parents and teachers can be difficult. For the quantitative part of the study, the researchers asked demographic and background information of 35 parents. 28 of the 35 parents then participated in the qualitative portion of the research, which consisted of focus groups. The researchers also tracked parent attendance, and parent English progress and examined the course curriculum. The entire study was done over the course of 1.5 years.

Sommer et al. (2020) found that ESL teachers’ lack of understanding of early childhood
development was a barrier to success, but that despite this, parents reported improved
confidence in their English communication skills and more self-advocacy skills. Not only that
but attendance and progress for parents in this program were higher than that of comparable
ESL programs in the area. Parents also told researchers that they felt less ashamed and more
confident in their English language skills, resulting in more caregivers engaging in English
conversations outside of the classroom, for example, with their children’s teachers or doctors.
The data from this study echoed the results of Waterman’s (2009) work and demonstrates how
an ESL class can be more effective when focusing on child development and child school
success in conjunction with English language skills.

Although there are clear challenges in the inclusion of multilingual families, there is also
a plentitude of options for schools to take to support these families. Incorporation of ESL
classes that focus on parent-involvement is a way to not only include families and bring them to
the school campus but also a way to enhance the parent’s English language proficiency and
school-related skills (He et al., 2019; Sommer et al., 2020; Waterman, 2009). Sommer et al.
(2020) also showed that an average ESL teacher that does not have experience working in the
K-12 system or with caregivers in such a capacity may not have the knowledge to lead a class
like this, which is the gap this curriculum is attempting to fill. As it is clear that communication
is one of the main barriers for families, every school with multilingual families ought to include
ESL classes for adults. Not only will this support in easing the communication barrier, but it will
also bring families into the school environment and demonstrate that the school truly is
responsive to the needs and requests of multilingual families. The conclusions and evidence
from the literature led to the creation of this project, further described in the next section.
Summary

This literature review demonstrated how parental involvement is beneficial for students, as studies showed that across ages and countries, family involvement led to increased motivation for youth, increased academic achievement, and increased engagement in school (Cheung & Pomerantz, 2012; Dotterer & Wehrspann, 2015; Santos Rego et al., 2018). The review also examined the various issues of including multilingual families in schools, with language barriers and communication challenges being the primary issues (MacPhee, 2021; Park & McHugh, 2014; Shiffman, 2019; Vera et al., 2019). Finally, the review discussed opportunities for schools to include families, specifically by providing ESL classes that incorporate parenting and school information (He et al., 2019; Sommer et al., 2020; Waterman, 2009). The results from these various studies imply that parental involvement is crucial for student success and to mitigate the challenges of including multilingual families who have lower English language proficiency in their child’s education, schools can offer ESL classes that tie in parenting and school topics.
CHAPTER III
THE PROJECT AND ITS DEVELOPMENT

**Brief Description of the Project**

The problem addressed in this project is that if multilingual families feel that they are not able to communicate with school staff, then these families may not become involved in their child’s school and the child’s learning could be negatively impacted. This project consists of lessons for English as a Second Language (ESL) instructors teaching mixed-level beginner students to implement in their classes with multilingual caregivers. This resource attempts to address the gap that ESL teachers may have in understanding the needs of multilingual caregivers who wish to better communicate with the staff at their child’s school as well as navigate the general school system in the United States (Sommer et. al, 2020). The project begins with a cover page and letter to ESL teachers who will be utilizing the lessons in their classroom, which will support them in successfully implementing the lessons. There is a table of contents detailing where to find each lesson, and then the actual lessons begin.

The project consists of lesson plans regarding school-related topics organized by month according to what is happening during the school year during each specific month. The lessons are teacher-facing and include instructions for the teacher to share with the class as well as additional background information that might be useful to instruct the class. Each lesson has a cover page beginning with a paragraph that addresses why the topic makes sense in that specific month of the year as well as why the topic is important. Each cover page also has a “Did You Know?” section which contains either global information about the topic or information about what is happening during that month of the year for different cultures. Each cover page contains a list of materials needed for the lesson. The lessons can be implemented either in-person or
remotely, so there is a slight variation in supplies needed based on whether the lessons are implemented in-person or in a remote environment (presumably synchronously over Zoom).

After the cover page, the lessons begin. Each lesson consists of three pages of activities to be used in a 60-minute lesson. The first part of the lesson is an “Engage” section to start off the class to excite the students (caregivers of school-aged children) on the topic of the day and get their brains ready for the material. Next, is the “Study” section, which addresses the vocabulary or grammar topic visited in the lesson. Then, there are three activities (Activity 1, Activity 2, and Activity 3). Each activity addresses the content from the “Study” section, with the first activity having the most direction (i.e. for Activity 1 there is typically only one right answer or one way to do the activity) and the third activity being more open-ended (i.e. for Activity 3 there are multiple ways to do the activity and how the activity is completed depends on the student). Lastly, there is a “Homework” section which includes assignments for students to complete after class, in their own time. The homework is meant to expand and practice the information from each lesson.

The Oakland Unified School District Calendar is used as the framework for this project. The first month of the school year is August (Oakland Unified School District, 2021) and the topic for the month of August is Starting School Strong. This lesson is important to encourage parents to begin communication with their child’s teacher from the very start of the year to ensure they are able to communicate with each other regularly, right away. The “Did You Know?” section shares information on when the school year begins in different countries. For this month, the “Engage” section starts off the class by asking the students to reflect on their prior experiences with communicating with their child’s teachers. Next, in the “Study” section, students practice pronouns and conjugate the verb “to be.” In Activity 1, students complete a
fill-in-the-blank activity with the correct conjugation of the verb “to be.” Next, in Activity 2, as a class students will brainstorm information about their child’s experiences with school and how to best communicate with their child’s teacher (for example, via text or via email). In Activity 3, students will use a template to write a text to their child’s teacher. Lastly, for homework, students will ask their child if there is anything to add to the written text to their teacher and then caregivers should actually send the text to their child’s teacher.

The second month of the school year is September and the topic for the month is *Understanding the School Calendar*. This lesson is important to help parents understand when there are holidays, minimum days, and other scheduling items throughout the school year. It is best for parents to be aware of the academic calendar at the beginning of the year so they can prepare their schedules. The “Did You Know?” section discusses how calendars vary from culture to culture and country to country, so various aspects of the Western calendar may be new for parents. To start off the actual lesson, the “Engage” section asks students when their birthday is. The teacher will make note of when each student’s birthday is, to prepare their mind for discussing the academic calendar. Next, the “Study” section reviews the necessary vocabulary for the lesson and begins by looking at a real academic calendar. In Activity 1, students look at one month of the academic calendar and determine which days are holidays. After, in Activity 2” students look at another month to determine which days are holidays and to start thinking about how school closures impact their personal schedules. In Activity 3, students look at the entire academic calendar for the school year and register their own family’s schedule and how this impacts what their overall year will be like (for example, are there additional days of school their children will miss?). Lastly, for homework, students will put the calendar in an easily accessible place and continue using the calendar to plan for the year.
The third month of the school year is October and the topic for the month is *Interpreting Progress Reports*. This lesson is important so that parents can read and understand progress reports which indicate how their child is doing in school. It is important to address the topic in October, as there will definitely be progress reports sent to families soon if they have not already been sent. The “Did You Know?” section discusses how grading systems vary throughout the globe. To get students thinking, the “Engage” section begins by asking them how parents typically communicate with their children’s teachers in their home country. Next, the “Study” section reviews the vocabulary necessary for the lesson. In Activity 1 students will read a progress report as a class and answer basic questions about it. To further engage and understand the materials, in Activity 2 students re-read the same progress report and answer more in-depth questions about the report. In Activity 3, students reflect on what their thoughts would be if the progress report from the first two activities were for their own child. Lastly, for homework, students will reflect on a past progress report of their own child, as they practiced in class.

The fourth month of the school year is November and the topic for the month is *Parent-Teacher/Student-Led Conferences Pt. 1*. This lesson is important because schools often have conferences before the November break and sometimes parents do not prepare ahead of these conferences and therefore may not properly utilize the time with the teacher. The “Did You Know?” section discusses that the holiday Diwali falls around this time of year and if students are celebrating, this will impact their free time and possibly their focus in class around this time. For this month, the “Engage” section begins with students reflecting on parent-teacher conferences in their home country. Next, the “Study” section teaches the vocabulary necessary for the lesson. In Activity 1, students will watch a video of an example parent-teacher
conference while listening for basic information. Next, in Activity 2, students listen to the same conference again, listening for more complicated information. In Activity 3, students will prepare for their actual conferences with their child’s teacher. Lastly, for homework, the students will talk to their children to continue to prepare for the conference and bring their notes from class and homework to the actual conference.

The fifth month of the school year is December and the topic for the month is *Learning at Home Pt. 1*. This lesson is important because students’ children will soon be on a break from school and will therefore be completing their work from home. It is essential that the children’s home environment be as conducive to learning as possible. The “Did You Know?” section shares data on the amount of homework assigned in different countries. To start off the actual lesson, the “Engage” section begins with students sharing how much homework is typically assigned in their home country. Next, the “Study” section teaches vocabulary for the lesson. In Activity 1, the class brainstorms what the location of a study area for a child should be like and what materials a child may need. After, in Activity 2, students sort images according to whether the image represents a positive learning environment for a child or not. In Activity 3, students create a map of their own home to figure out the best location for their child to complete their at-home assignments. Lastly, for homework, students should actually implement the changes they planned during Activity 3 and see how the changes impact their child’s learning and ability to complete their work.

The sixth month of the school year is January and the topic for the month is *Attending School Events*. This lesson is important because it can be hard for caregivers to attend school events, but it is a great way for them to bond and build relationships with school staff. As families return from the winter break, it is a great time for them to take a look at their schedule
and plan for attending a school event before the end of the school year. The “Did You Know?” section shares that students in the ESL class may be celebrating Lunar New Year and be busy with family activities, especially at the end of the holiday. To get the students thinking, the “Engage” section asks students to reflect on a positive party experience and what they enjoyed about the party. Next, the “Study” section reviews question words (for example, who, what, and where) that are useful for the lesson. In Activity 1, as a class, students read a flyer for a school event and discuss the basic information contained in it. To further engage and understand the materials, in Activity 2 students re-read the flyer for more information and discuss what other information they would like to know before they might attend the event. In Activity 3, students create their own flyer for an event they are planning to host. Lastly, for homework, students will continue to work on their flyers and also reach out to staff at their child’s school to determine when the next school event is and make plans to attend it.

The seventh month of the school year is February and the topic for the month is Communicating Disagreement. This lesson is important because, at this point in the year, caregivers have likely disagreed with their child’s teacher and possibly been unsure how to communicate their disagreement in a way that feels comfortable to them. Even though it might feel uncomfortable for parents, it is still important for caregivers to share their thoughts with teachers and open up a dialogue with each other. The “Did You Know?” section discusses that what is considered appropriate for parent-teacher communication will vary from country to country. For this month, the “Engage” section begins with students hearing opinions about the length of recess and students then vote on whether or not they think it should be longer or shorter. Next, the “Study” section reviews useful sentence starters to communicate disagreement in a polite way. In Activity 1, students fill in the blank of a sentence with the appropriate
sentence starter. Next, in Activity 2, the class writes sentences explaining their opinion from the “Engage” section (that is, whether or not they think recess should be longer or shorter). In Activity 3, students practice saying the sentence they wrote out loud, repeating their practice with multiple partners. Lastly, for homework, students will go home and ask their children their own opinions on the length of recess and use the sentence starters they practiced in class.

The eighth month of the school year is March and the topic for the month is Connecting to School Resources. This lesson is important because parents are often unaware of what resources their child’s school has to offer and they could be missing out on resources that would positively impact their family’s wellbeing. Caregivers should be made aware of these resources before the end of the school year. The “Did You Know?” section shares that, depending on the location of the class, Daylight Savings Time is beginning this month and may allow children to participate in more after-school activities, due to the increase in daylight hours. To start off the actual lesson, the “Engage” section asks students to think about who they reach out to when they need help or more resources. Next, the “Study” section reviews the vocabulary needed for the lesson. In Activity 1, students must match vocabulary words from the “Study” section to the correct definition. After, in Activity 2, students brainstorm what staff and resources they would like their child’s school to have, besides the ones mentioned in the previous activities. In Activity 3, caregivers will practice how to ask about these resources to school staff. Lastly, for homework, students should actually speak with staff at their child’s school and ask about resources, using the sentences they practiced in class.

The ninth month of the school year is April and the topic for the month is Parent-Teacher/Student-Led Conferences Pt. 2. This lesson is important because the end of year conferences take place before the last month of school and are a useful time for caregivers to
check in with teachers on what their child might need to practice over the summer. The “Did You Know?” section shares that the exact date of Ramadan changes each year, but is usually around April. This time of year is very busy and exciting for Muslim students, and these students may need accommodations to complete their coursework during these weeks. To get the students thinking, the “Engage” section asks students to reflect on how the beginning of year conferences went. Next, the “Study” section teaches the vocabulary needed for the lesson. In Activity 1, the class reads a script of a conference and answers basic questions about the content of the script. To further engage and understand the materials, in Activity 2, students re-read the script and answer more complicated questions about the script. In Activity 3, students reflect on the script they read and what ideas it gave them in regards to what they want to discuss at their own child’s conference and write these ideas down. Lastly, for homework, students will talk with their child about what information the child wants to be shared at the conference, and caregivers will add this to their notes to bring to the actual conference.

The tenth and final month of the school year is May and the topic for the month is *Learning at Home Pt. 2*. This lesson is important because many students lose knowledge over the summer break and there are strategies for parents to think about before the school year ends. The “Did You Know?” section shares information on the length of summer holidays in different countries (as shown in Figure 1 on page 35). For this month, the “Engage” section begins with sharing data on the concept of “summer slide” and how it impacts children’s retention of the information they learned the previous school year (as shown in Figure 2 on page 36). Next, the “Study” section reviews vocabulary important for the lesson (depicted in Figure 2 on page 36). In Activity 1, students will sort images of activities and determine if the images represent activities that support learning and those that do not sort learning (as shown in Figure 3 on page
Next, in Activity 2, students brainstorm more activities that support their children’s learning while outside of school (as shown in Figure 4 on page 38). In Activity 3, parents will make a plan for encouraging their child’s learning in different categories (math, reading, and social) over the summer (depicted in Figure 4 on page 38). Lastly, for homework, caregivers will check in with their child’s teacher to see what other activities they should add to their plan and also inquire as to what incentive systems the teacher uses to motivate their child to learn in school (included in Figure 4 on page 38).

As previously mentioned, Figures 1-4 highlight some important components of lessons found in this field project.
A break from school ideally does not mean a break from learning, unfortunately, this is often the case. It has been shown that over the summer months, students lose 17-34% of their learning from the previous school year. This “summer slide” is important for families to be aware of before the holiday begins so they can make a plan to better engage their kids over the summer months.

**Did You Know?**
Length of summer holidays changes country to country (and there are variations even within each country). Summer break is typically 3 months in Argentina, 2 months in China and 6 weeks in Denmark. Families may have different experience with summer learning based on how long the break is in their home country.

**Materials Needed:**
- Chart paper with vocabulary words or share images on Zoom screen
- Copies of images from Activity 1 for each student

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*Summer Slide* stats from: https://www.nwea.org/blog/2021/summer-learning-loss-what-we-know.html.


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**Figure 1.** Page 37, cover page of the lesson for May, *Learning At Home Pt. 2.*
Figure 2. Page 38, “Engage” and “Study” of the lesson for May, Learning At Home Pt. 2.
Activity 1 (10 mins)

Next, students will be sorting activities into two categories:
Supports Learning and Doesn’t Support Learning. Remind students that there are lots of ways students can learn, not just traditional ways. The important thing is for children to keep their minds busy and having new experiences.

Before students begin, ask the following concept check questions:
If something Supports Learning, is that good or bad? [Good]
If something Doesn’t Support Learning, is that good or bad? [Bad]
Does Reading support learning? [Yes]

Then, go over answers as a class. Be sure to ask students why they put something in each category. There might be variation in what students decide goes in which column, so it’s important to hear their evidence and thoughts behind their choice. Remind students that it’s ok to have differences in opinion.

Figure 3. Page 39, “Activity 1” of the lesson for May, Learning At Home Pt. 2.
LESSON PLAN

Activity 2 (10 mins)
Ask students to brainstorm with a partner other ways (aside from the examples in Activity 1) to support learning over the summer. Students should think of activities such as reading, writing, science experiments, etc., as well as ideas like going to a museum, looking for leaves in the park, going to the zoo, etc.

Next, ask students to share their ideas to the whole class. Write down the ideas so they can be sent out to all the students after class.

Activity 3 (20 mins)
Ask students to think about one of their children. They will be making a plan for this child to promote their learning over the summer in three topics:

1) Reading    2) Math    3) Social

Students should write or draw three things they will do in each category to promote learning for their child.

Once they are done working individually, they can share with a partner.

After sharing with a partner, share with the whole class.

Before starting, ask students the following concept check questions:
Are these ideas for the teacher to do at school? [No]
Are these ideas for you to do with your child? [Yes]
How many ideas are you making for each category? [Three]

Homework
Students are assigned to reach out to their child's teacher to see what activities the teacher suggests for their child over the summer and see if the teacher knows of any resources that would support with it (ex: summer camp). Students should also ask the teacher if there are any rewards charts/systems they use in class that the parent can replicate in their own home to motivate their child to do activities that promote learning. This would be easier, as the child will already be familiar with the system.

Figure 4. Page 40, “Activity 2,” “Activity 3,” and “Homework” of the lesson for May, Learning At Home Pt. 2.
Development of the Project

This project was very much inspired by the families I serve at my work. In my current job, I am a Family Navigator working out of a Family Resource Center located within an affordable housing complex in Oakland, CA. As a Family Navigator, I connect families to resources and provide case management as well as educational opportunities for both caregivers and their children. In this work, I serve many families whose first language is not English. Through my professional experiences, I have seen how these parents are often left out of conversations with school staff, or they feel they do not understand why something is happening with their child at school. These caregivers say they are unaware of what activities are taking place at school and unsure of what resources the school offers. Due to these issues, families ask me to attend school meetings with them to have an advocate that is fluent in English that can support their interests, they send me copies of correspondence that they cannot read, and we review progress reports that they do not understand together and more. While schools should certainly provide translated material as well as translators at meetings, these caregivers have made it clear that they would prefer to be able to conduct conversations and respond to school staff independently, without extra support. These interactions at work demonstrated to me that there is clearly a missing resource for parents to learn to navigate the school system and develop their English proficiency at the same time.

Another source of inspiration for this project was my sister, who has been a teacher in a public school in Oakland, CA for 5+ years. Many of her students’ parents speak a language other than English as their first language, and productive communication with them is one of her top priorities. Hearing from her on what topics are a source of confusion or miscommunications for families or what opportunities she noticed they were consistently missing, added another
perspective to influence the lessons. The fact that she has worked with hundreds of parents also shows the universality of some issues and supports that the content would be useful to a large population of ESL caregivers. While the lessons are intended to directly positively influence parents specifically, it is also beneficial if the content meets the communication needs of teachers.

All of these experiences influenced my coursework throughout the completion of my Teaching English as a Second Language (TESOL) Master’s program. If I was assigned a project or to write a lesson, I always thought of the caregivers at my work and what kind of lesson they would enjoy and benefit from. I believe that the best way people learn is when they are learning tangible information that they can use in their own life, which led me to create activities on school-related topics. This project started off with one or two lessons completed in other TESOL courses, but as I entered the initial thesis course, I felt I could expand those two lessons into something more. My literature review confirmed that family involvement in school is beneficial for students and that there are challenges and strategies to including ESL families in this way (Cheung & Pomerantz, 2012; Dotterer & Wehrspann, 2015; Santos Rego et al., 2018). My main takeaway from the literature is that communication is the major barrier between families and school staff and that ESL courses conducted through a school-lens are a strategy to combat this issue (He et al., 2019; MacPhee, 2021; Park & McHugh, 2014; Shiffman, 2019; Sommer et al., 2020; Vera et al., 2019; Waterman, 2009).

Lastly, while creating the lessons I was also sure to remember Canale and Swain’s (1980) theory of Communicative Language Teaching, which emphasizes actual communication and does not focus on minor grammatical errors. Every lesson in this project is based on actual issues or conversations that arise in the school environment and the homework assigned to students is
usually to have a dialogue with school staff based on the content from the lesson. By using these lessons, it is hoped that students will be intelligible and able to have conversations with staff with a natural flow. To ensure that the lessons will lead to more parent involvement, I also referred to Epstein’s (2019) handbook on creating partnerships between families and schools. This handbook details six types of family involvement (parenting, communicating, volunteering, learning at home, decision-making, and collaborating with the community) that I referred to and included throughout the lessons.

The Project

The project can be found in its entirety in the Appendix.
CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions

From the literature as well as my personal experiences, it has been made clear that there are struggles to involve multilingual families in their children’s schools and their teachers (MacPhee, 2021; Park & McHugh, 2014; Shiffman, 2019; Vera et. al., 2019). This project began due to this very problem and that if multilingual families feel that they are not able to communicate with school staff, then these families may not become involved in their child’s school and the child’s learning could be negatively impacted. At the same time, these families have a strong desire to be connected to their child’s school and the staff there (MacPhee, 2021; Park & McHugh, 2014; Shiffman, 2019; Vera et. al., 2019). There are also benefits to children when their caregivers are able to be involved in school (Cheung & Pomerantz, 2012; Dotterer & Wehrspann, 2015; Santos Rego et al., 2018). The literature shows that families are positively impacted by increased communication with school staff and that ESL classes specifically on school-related topics support the greater acquisition of English and improved connections to their child’s school (He et al., 2019; Sommer et al., 2020; Waterman, 2009).

This project combats this issue by supplying a curriculum for English as a Second Language (ESL) instructors to utilize in their classes with multilingual caregivers. This guide will address the gap that ESL teachers have in understanding the needs and desires of multilingual caregivers to communicate with school stakeholders and navigate the school system in the United States (Sommer et. al, 2020). Given that the project consists of ten lessons that are all focused on school-related topics (such as reading progress reports, preparing for student-teacher/parent-led conferences, or accessing school resources), this project accomplishes
the purpose. The project makes it easy for ESL teachers to implement the lessons in class, as it indicates to teachers when they should implement each lesson and best practices on how to do so. This means that even if a teacher does not have experience in schools for children, they will be able to utilize the lessons effectively. Given these factors, the project has the potential to positively impact ESL caregivers and their children, ESL teachers as well as other school stakeholders.

It seems that to increase the English language and self-advocacy skills of parents, two-generation learning programs (educating the younger generation as well as the older generation) have been shown to be most effective (He et al., 2019; Sommer et al., 2020; Waterman, 2009). If more schools could educate children alongside the adults in their lives, this could have a positive impact on language acquisition and school navigation for parents, as well as involving multilingual parents in school. Schools are in a unique position to reach an incredible amount of ESL adults and positively impact their lives, which therefore positively impacts the youth they serve.

**Recommendations**

While this curriculum can be implemented in any English as a Second Language (ESL) class that has parents as the students (for example, classes hosted by community-based organizations or community colleges), school-based adult education courses are the simplest environment to use the lessons, as all the students are caregivers. Any family literacy course that is hosted by a school would have students that would certainly benefit from this course. Another recommendation to ESL instructors utilizing the curriculum is, if time allows, for them to talk to their local school district to utilize that calendar and other authentic materials from their local area (actual progress reports or flyers). This increases the usefulness of the lessons for families,
as they will be completed with materials they may actually encounter in their children’s schools. Any alterations to make the curriculum more tailored to the actual students are certainly recommended.

To further develop the project, many of the topics could have an entire week of instruction spent on them rather than just one lesson. Other ESL professionals could expand on the lessons to go deeper into each topic. It is advisable to see what questions parents still have after the initial lesson and respond to the expressed needs and desires of the students. These topics might be new for caregivers and this course might be the first time someone has asked the parents to think deeply on the topic, meaning they might want to re-visit the concepts several times. Even for families that have thought about and discussed the topic, it is advisable to give them more time to absorb and expand their understanding of the information.

A further recommendation would be to evaluate the effectiveness of the curriculum. It would be ideal to compare three groups of multilingual parents: the first group, parents who are not enrolled in any ESL course, the second group, parents in an ESL class, and the third group, parents in an ESL that is utilizing the lessons from this project. With these three groups, it would be useful to test and compare their English proficiency over the course of time and survey the parents on topics such as their knowledge of school-related topics and their confidence in speaking with staff at their child’s school. If parents in the third group (the ones enrolled in ESL courses utilizing the lessons) have greater English language proficiency growth and report more positively to the school-related survey questions compared to the other groups, this may demonstrate that the curriculum enhances caregiver’s learning and communication (and therefore family involvement) in their child’s school.

By implementing this curriculum, ESL instructors are providing an opportunity for their
students to gain English language skills that directly benefit their lives, as well as their children’s lives. As there are many non-native English speaking parents in the United States, there is a significant number of families that could potentially gain from this type of curriculum and it is important that ESL classes meet this growing need for multilingual families.
REFERENCES


APPENDIX

Acing School: An ESL Curriculum for Multilingual Caregivers
ACING SCHOOL: AN ESL CURRICULUM FOR MULTILINGUAL CAREGIVERS

BY KERRY STIMPSON, 2022
This curriculum is meant to be used in any ESL classroom with caregivers (parents/guardians/adults with children) as students. It has been shown that family involvement supports student learning, however, it can be hard for multilingual families to engage with school staff. This curriculum is designed to meet the need for ESL teachers to see what topics are important for caregivers and how to cover them. It also meets the need for parents to increase their English language proficiency, understanding of the U.S. school system, and their overall confidence in having conversations with school staff.

Each lesson is designated for a specific month of the school year, based on what is happening in the child’s school. Each lesson has an explanation on the front as to why the topic is important, a fact to do with the time of year/the topic as well as the materials needed for the lesson. Each lesson can be tailored to be used in a virtual classroom or for in-person instruction. The curriculum was designed using the Oakland Unified School District 21-22 calendar (Oakland, CA) and can be tailored to the school district the students live in.

Each lesson has the same basic components: 1) Engage, 2) Study, 3) Activity 1, 4) Activity 2, 5) Activity 3, and 6) Homework. The lessons are designed for a 60-minute class but could be stretched to a longer session if students need more time with the material. The curriculum is intended for a beginner class of a mixed level but could be tailored to a more advanced class as well.

The focus of this curriculum is not necessarily perfect grammar, but the ability to communicate and get thoughts across in a conversation. There is a focus on vocabulary, partner work, and for students to connect the topic to their own lives. The goal is that they will use what they learn in class in actual communications with their child’s school staff, outside of the ESL classroom. I am excited you will be utilizing this in your classroom to support parents in their English acquisition, as well as their connection with their child’s school.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Pages</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>August</td>
<td>1-4</td>
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<td>September</td>
<td>5-8</td>
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<td>October</td>
<td>9-12</td>
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<td>33-36</td>
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<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td>37-40</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
AUGUST: STARTING SCHOOL STRONG

This topic is for the first month of school because it's important for caregivers to open up communication with teachers right away. It's also good for parents to know that it's totally appropriate for parents to be the instigators of this communication, and they do not have to wait for the teacher to reach out to them.

Did You Know?

Schools in the U.S. typically start in August or September, which is similar to other countries such as Mexico and Iran. This varies around the world, as school starts in January in Nigeria, February in Costa Rica, and March in South Korea.

Materials Needed:

Chart paper + marker or Zoom whiteboard
Copies of sentences in Activity 1 for each student
Copies of sentences in Activity 3 for each student

Did You Know Information from: https://www.infoplease.com/world/social-statistics/school-years-around-world
LESSON PLAN

Engage (10 mins)

Ask students to raise their hand if this is their child’s first year in any school. Then ask students to raise their hand if their kids have been in school before. If their kids have been in school before, ask them to think about the last school year. Once again, ask them to raise their hand if they had all of their children’s teacher’s phone numbers. Ask them to share with a partner when they would normally talk with their child’s teacher: during pickup, during parent-teacher conferences, on the phone, some other time? Let the class know that this lesson today will be about communication with their child’s teacher starting at the very beginning of the year. Having easy communication is very important for their child’s success in school.

Study (10 mins)

When students are introducing themselves and talking about their child to the teacher, they will definitely need to use different pronouns and the verb “to be.” This content should be mostly review but is also an opportunity to fix common errors students may make with the grammar.

While teaching pronouns, point at students to give examples of the different pronouns (point to yourself and say “I”, point to one other student and say “you”, point to a female student or picture and say “she”, point to a male student or picture and say “he”, point to a group of students and say “they” and gesture to the whole group and say “we”).

Write example sentences with the pronouns and the correct conjugations of the verb “to be”. Be sure to keep these sentences visible for the rest of the lesson so students can refer to them.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pronouns</th>
<th>Verb “to be”</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>I am</td>
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<tr>
<td>You</td>
<td>You are</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He/She/It</td>
<td>He/She/It is</td>
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<tr>
<td>They</td>
<td>They are</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We</td>
<td>We are</td>
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</table>

I am from...
You are from...
She is from...
They are from...
We are from...
LESSON PLAN

Activity 1 (10 mins)

Write the following sentences on the board (without the answers):

a. I ____ from California. [am]
b. He ____ over there. [is]
c. We ____ in Oakland. [are]
d. She ____ very tall. [is]
e. You ____ from New York. [are]
f. It ____ a hot day. [is]

Ask students to fill in the blanks with either "am", "are" or "is", depending on the pronoun. Students can work with a partner. Once they are done, review the answers as a class. Spend more time reviewing errors that are repeated among the students.

Activity 2 (15 mins)

Tell the class that next, they all are going to write a text to send to their child’s teacher to introduce themselves and tell the teacher about their family. Make a chart to fill in together (see below).

Ask students: What are some ways you would like to talk to the teacher? Write the ideas on the chart in the #1 section. The answers should look like “on the phone, by email, by text” and whatever other ideas students have. Give an example if students seem confused. Next, parents should share with the teacher what their child needs help with in school. Maybe they have a hard time with reading or something else. What else could a child have trouble with? Write the ideas in the chart in the #2 section. Last, parents want to tell the teacher what their child really likes about school or learning. Ask the class: What does your child like? Some of the answers might be the same as the previous question. Write the ideas in the chart in the #3 section.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#1: How</th>
<th>#2: What they need help with at school</th>
<th>#3: What do they like at school</th>
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Activity 3 (15 mins)

Next, students can choose what fits from the chart for them to write in their text to the teacher. Give students the following information on a hand out or share a Google Doc where they can fill in their answers.

Before the students begin, ask them the following concept check questions:

Are we sharing how you feel about school, or how your child feels about school? [*Child*]

Who is this text being written to? [*Child’s teacher*]

Hi, I am ________, ________’s parent.

I want to share information about my family with you.

I am able to talk ________.

My child needs help with ________.

My child likes ________.

I hope we can talk soon, thank you.

Ask students to share their work with a partner and then ask for volunteers to share with the whole class. If there is time, ask students if they think there is more information that their child’s teacher should know.

Homework

When students go home, ask them to check with their child and ask them the same questions from class (What do they need help with in school? What do they like about school?). If it makes sense, add the child’s answers to the text. When the text is ready, send the text to their child’s teacher. Be sure to follow up next class and see which students actually sent the text and what the response was like from the teacher.
SEPTEMBER: UNDERSTANDING THE SCHOOL CALENDAR

This topic is important towards the beginning of the school year so that parents are immediately aware of the academic calendar for the whole year. Understanding the calendar will help parents to prepare for school breaks, minimum days, when reports cards are coming, and more.

Did You Know?
In Ethiopia, the yearly calendar involves 13 months, with the final month consisting of about six days. Though the Western calendar might say the year is 2022, the Ethiopian calendar would say it is the year 2000. Other countries and cultures have different calendars as well, so it is important to point out the distinctions of the U.S. academic calendar.

Materials Needed:
- Chart with months of the year/calendar + stickers (on Zoom, can use Annotation Stamps rather than stickers)
- Chart paper with vocabulary words + pictures or share images on Zoom screen
- Copies of December OUSD calendar for each student
- Copies of April OUSD calendar for each student
- Paper + writing device for each student
- Copies of November OUSD calendar for each student
- Copies of 21-22 OUSD calendar for each student
LESSON PLAN

Engage (10 mins)
Ask students when is their birthday according to the US calendar? What do they do to celebrate their birthday? Ask them to share with a partner. Next, go through each month of the year and ask students to raise their hand when their birthday month is said. Put stickers on a chart labeled with each month with how many students have their birthday that month. Let students know that today the class will be talking about reading the school calendar and how to plan for school breaks.

Study (20 mins)
Tell the class now that you will be using vocabulary from the school calendar to make sure everyone knows what is coming up next in the year. Go through each word, definition, and sentence. Have students repeat the vocabulary word after you (choral repetition). For this lesson, these words are for reading purposes, not necessarily for speaking.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Schools</th>
<th>Child Development Centers</th>
<th>District Offices</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>= where TK-12th grade students study and learn (ages 5-18)</td>
<td>= where preschool students study and learn (ages 3-4)</td>
<td>= where office workers for schools work</td>
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<tr>
<td>I took my first grader to school.</td>
<td>My three-year-old goes to the child development center for preschool.</td>
<td>The district office will decide the new school lunches.</td>
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Some days of the year schools are closed and child development centers are closed. Some days, just schools are closed. It’s important to know the schedule so parents can be prepared for these days. Ask the following concept check questions:
If your child is in 2nd grade, do they attend a school or a child development center? Are there any children at the district offices? How old are children at child development centers?
LESSON PLAN

Study continued (20 mins)
Show students the month of December. Indicate to them the three different color circles you are focusing on: Black, Red, and Orange. Review what each color means. Explain that it mostly won’t matter to them when a District Office is closed unless they want to call and submit a complaint or want to ask for a big change in the school. Also, let students know to ignore the purple circle for now. For reference: Only Schools Closed = Black Circle, Schools and Child Development Centers (CDCs) Closed = Red Circle, Schools, CDCs and District Offices Closed = Orange Circle.

Ask the following concept check questions:
What color shows that ONLY schools are closed?
What does the color Red mean?
What color means all three are closed?

Explain color coding more if needed and ask more concept check questions.

Activity 1 (10 mins)
Give each student a copy or image of the month of April. Ask them to make a chart and work with a partner to write down which days JUST schools are closed vs. when schools and child development centers are both closed. Ask students to share their answers with the class and ask for their evidence of how they knew their answers.

Activity 2 (10 mins)
Next, give students a copy of November. Ask them to do the same as the previous activity (creating a chart). Remind them to ignore the purple for now. Share answers with the class. Ask again how they knew which days were which. Then students should share with a partner: How do school closures impact your schedule (needing childcare, entertainment for kids, taking days off work, etc.)? Share responses to the class.

Oakland Unified School District (OUSD) academic calendar from: https://www.ousd.org/domain/3540
**Activity 3 (10 mins)**

Give students a copy of the entire academic school year calendar. Again, remind them to focus on the orange, black and red circles. Ask them to look through and make note of what will be going on in their life at different times of year (ex: birthdays, holidays, their work schedule, etc.). Think about how they will prepare for these school breaks and what steps they need to take to be ready. After thinking about this individually, ask them to share with a partner. If there is time, ask for volunteers to share with the whole class.

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**Homework**

Ask students to put a copy of the calendar somewhere easily accessible for them (for example, on the refrigerator). If they have another calendar or planner they use, ask them to mark that calendar with the school holidays. Students should also think about what additional days of school their children might miss for vacations or other holidays. It is good to be prepared for this so they can receive work from the teacher ahead of time, so their student does not fall behind. Students can also go to the OUSD website (linked here) to look at the digital copy of the calendar.
This topic is important in October because this is around the time of year when the first or second progress report for caregivers' children will be released. Information on progress reports can be a good indicator of how a child is performing in school, where their successes are, and where they have room for improvement. It’s essential that caregivers are able to understand these so they can follow up with teachers for more information and so they can implement additional learning at home.

**Did You Know?**
Grading systems are different throughout the U.S. as well as globally, so parents might be used to a different way of receiving feedback on how a student is performing in school. For example, in Albania, grades may be given in terms of a specific number or decimal point, rather than a letter (9.00-10.00 is the highest range, categorized as “Excellent” and 1.00-4.99 is the lowest range, categorized as “Insufficient”).

**Materials Needed:**
- Chart paper with vocabulary words + pictures or share images on Zoom screen
- Copies of Progress Report in Activity 1 for each student
- Paper + writing device for each student

Did You Know information from: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Grading_systems_by_country
**LESSON PLAN**

**Engage (10 mins)**

Ask students to share with a partner how teachers communicate with families about how their child is doing in school back in their home country. Then ask for volunteers to share out to the entire class. Let the class know that today you will be focusing on reading progress reports for a child.

**Study (15 mins)**

First, go through each vocabulary word, definition, and sentence. Have students repeat the vocabulary word after you (choral repetition). For this lesson, these words are for reading purposes, not necessarily for speaking.

- **to improve**
  - = get better at
  - I would like my son to improve at listening. He is not very good at it now.

- **to make progress**
  - = get better at
  - She is making progress with the alphabet. She knows a lot more letters now.

- **energetic**
  - = to have a lot of energy and like to move around
  - He is energetic, so he likes to jump a lot.

**Marking periods**

- = when teachers finish grades for a certain amount of time
  - The end of the marking period is in September.

**Report cards**

- = based on students work, teacher assign them grades to show how well they are doing
  - She got good grades on her report card.

**Progress reports**

- = might have grades like a report card, but will also have written explanation to say how the child is doing
  - My child’s progress report says she needs to practice math more.

Oakland Unified School District (OUSD) academic calendar from: https://www.ousd.org/domain/3540
Activity 1 (10 mins)
Write the letters A, B, C on the board. Let students know A is the best score on a report card, then B, and then C. Let them know + means extra good and - means low. They may know this already, but it’s a good reminder. Then, you as the teacher read a progress report out loud to the class.

After reading as a class, ask students to look at the progress report on their own and answer the following questions:

What class is Sara’s lowest score?
What class is Sara’s highest score?
What score did she get in Reading class?
What score did she get in Science class?

Before starting, ask the student’s the following concept check questions:
What is the name of the student on the report card? [Sara]
What classes are they getting grades in? [Math, Science, Reading]
What is the highest grade? [A]
Does - mean lower or higher? [Lower]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Student: Sara Gonzalez</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Math</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
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</table>

Sara is great to have in class. She is very nice and has lots of friends. She understands addition and subtraction. She likes to read too. She needs a lot more practice with science. She is too energetic in this class and does not like to sit and listen. Please let me know if you have any questions, thank you.
Activity 2 (10 mins)
Ask students to read the progress report again for more information and then answer the following questions:

What class do you think Sara needs the most help in? Why do you think that?
What class do you think Sara does not need help in? Why do you think that?

Before starting, ask the following concept check question:
If the class is the one they need the MOST help with, does that mean they need a lot or a little help with the class? [A lot]

Then students can review their answers with a partner.

Activity 3 (15 mins)
Ask the class: If Sara was your child, what questions or thoughts would you have for her teacher? Tell them they will be writing down three thoughts or questions for Sara's imaginary teacher.

To support students, you can write the starter of common questions on the board (words such as "Why" and "How"). Once they are done with their independent work, ask them to discuss their thoughts with a partner and then share with the class.

Before starting, ask the following concept check questions:
Does saying "If Sara was your child" mean Sara is ACTUALLY your child or you are pretending she is your child? [Pretending]
Are you writing questions or thoughts to ask Sara or Sara's teacher? [Sara's teacher]

Homework
Remind students of the school calendar from the last lesson. Tell them the purple circle on the calendar means the marking period is over and progress reports are coming soon. If your students can find one, ask them to look at an old progress report from their child. Ask them to think about these questions:
What class do you think your child needs the most help in?
What class do you think your child does not need help in?
What questions do you have for your child's teacher?

If they don't have an old progress report, remind them to be prepared to think about these questions with the upcoming progress report.
November: Parent-Teacher/Student-Led Conferences Pt. 1

Usually, schools will host conferences before the November break.

Conferences are a formal way for caregivers and teachers to discuss the progress the student is making. Although ideally, all parties are communicating regularly outside of these conferences, it is still an excellent time for parents to discuss their concerns, ask questions, and have dedicated 1-1 time with their child’s teacher. It is good for parents to be prepared with their own thoughts and be able to direct the conversation to their concerns.

Did You Know?
The exact date of Diwali changes year to year based on the Hindu lunar calendar, but it is celebrated in either October or November. It consists of five days of celebrating light over darkness. Your students celebrating Diwali might be busy with cooking and preparing for large gatherings during this time.

Materials Needed:
Chart paper with vocabulary words + pictures or share images on Zoom screen
Projector/other device to share video/audio or share screen on Zoom
Paper + writing device for each student
LESSON PLAN

Engage (15 mins)

Ask students to give a thumbs up if there are parent-teacher conferences (also known as student-led conferences) in their home country and thumbs down if there aren’t any.

Then, ask students to share with a partner: What are parent-teacher conferences like in your home country? What do you talk about during them? (If no conference in the country, students can share about general teacher/parent communication).

Ask for volunteers to share to the whole group how conferences are the different/same from the ones they’ve been to in the US.

Let students know that in the US, parent-teacher conferences are done differently depending on the teacher or school, so they might be different for each teacher of each of their children. No matter what, it will be a time for them to meet with the teacher and talk about how their child is doing in school, including grades, behavior, and how they are doing with making friends.

Study (5 mins)

Tell students that you will be listening to a pretend example of a parent-teacher conference. It’s a "pretend" conference because it is not a real conference, but it will still help as an example. There are a few words everyone will want to be sure to know before listening because they are in the video and are important. First, go through each vocabulary word, definition, and sentence. Have students repeat the vocabulary word after you (choral repetition). For this lesson, these words are for listening purposes. These words should be review, as they were used in the last lesson.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>to improve</th>
<th>to make progress</th>
<th>energetic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>= get better at</td>
<td>= get better at</td>
<td>= to have a lot of energy and like to move around</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I would like my son to improve at listening. He is not very good at it now.</td>
<td>She is making progress with the alphabet. She knows a lot more letters now.</td>
<td>He is energetic, so he likes to jump a lot.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
LESSON PLAN

Activity 1 (5 mins)
Now listen to the video as a class. Let students know that parent-teacher conferences should be much longer than this example. A normal conference is at least 10 minutes and could be thirty minutes long.

Parent Teacher Conference 3 (1 minute & 17 seconds)
As they listen for the first time, students should be working to figure out who is the teacher, who is the parent, and what is the name of the child.

After listening the first time, review answers as a class: Which person is the teacher? Who is the parent? What is the name of the child? Ask students what the evidence is for their different answers.

Activity 2 (5 mins)
Now listen to the video again as a class. During this second listen, students should be listening for the following information: What subject is the child good at? What subject does she need to practice more?

After listening the second time, review as a class the answers to the questions: What subject is the child good at? What subject does she need to practice more?

Ask students what words gave clues for the answers.

Youtube Video Link from: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jOQ58NZOIfQ
Activity 3 (25 mins)

Remind students that was a very short example of what a conference should be. There should be more conversation about their child and how they are doing at school in an actual conference.

Ask students to share with a partner: Was that like conferences you have had? How was it different/same? What did you like about it? What did you not like?

After ~5 minutes, ask students what other things could be talked about during a conference? What other questions could be asked? (Make sure making friends, being academically challenged, school policies/events, etc. are brought up). Write down their ideas for everyone to see.

Now, students will get a chance to prepare for a parent-teacher conference for their own child. Ask students to:

Write down 2 questions they want to ask their child's teacher at their conference.
Write down 2 things they want to tell the teacher about their child.

Before starting, give students an example of both a question/statement (for example: "What is my child behind in?" or "My child has trouble with writing."). Also, write sentence starters for questions for students to refer to (for example: "My child..." or "Why do you think...").

After ~10 minutes, ask students to share what they have written so far with a partner and explain why they chose these questions or statements.

Come back together as a class. Ask for volunteers to share their favorite question/statement their partner said (if there is time).

Homework

Students should talk to their child about the questions/things they wrote down as part of Activity 3.
Ask their child if there are any other questions/things they would like to be discussed at the conference.
If it makes sense, students should add these to the list they have.
Remind parents to keep their notes to bring to the actual parent-teacher conference.
Caregivers, regardless of language proficiency, are often unsure of how to best support their child’s learning outside of school. It is important for families to have strategies to set up a learning environment at home so that their children can be more successful academically. This is especially important before the upcoming break schools take at the end of December, as the students will be assigned work to complete during the holidays.

**Did You Know?**

The amount of homework children are assigned per week varies globally. Children typically receive about 3 hours of homework a week in Brazil, 4.5 hours a week in Israel, and almost 10 hours a week in Russia. The amount of homework given within the U.S. varies by age and school, increasing as children get older.

**Materials Needed:**

- Chart paper with vocabulary words + pictures or share images on Zoom screen
- Blank chart paper + pen or Zoom whiteboard
- Copies of images for Activity 2 for each student pair
- Blank paper + writing device for each student

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Did You Know information found from: https://teach.com/blog/homework-around-the-world/
LESSON PLAN

Engage (10 mins)
Ask students the following question: How much homework does your child get every week? Tally their responses on a chart with the following categories:
- Less than 1 hour
- 1-2 hours
- 3-4 hours
- 5+ hours
Next ask students to share with a partner their answer to this question: How does this compare to homework in your home country? If students need help with the verbiage, ask them if it is more than in their home country, less than in their home country, or the same.

While children spend a lot of time learning at school, caregivers are their child's teachers for life and it's great for them to have a good learning set-up at home.

Study (10 mins)
Go through each vocabulary word, definition, and sentence. Have students repeat the vocabulary word after you (choral repetition).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Environment</th>
<th>Distractions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>= place you are or spot</td>
<td>= where you are, the general surroundings.</td>
<td>= anything that keeps someone from finishing something or focusing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This is the location of the photograph.</td>
<td>This environment is great for sleeping, it's so quiet.</td>
<td>There are too many distractions in that room.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Materials</td>
<td>Supplies</td>
<td>Comfortable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>= supplies or things you need</td>
<td>= materials or things you need</td>
<td>= relaxed, at ease, nice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I need my school materials to finish the homework.</td>
<td>What supplies should we get for the science experiment?</td>
<td>My bed is so comfortable, I sleep so well.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
LESSON PLAN

Activity 1 (10 mins)
Ask students what they think is important to help their child learn in terms of location and materials. Make a chart together as a class and write down their ideas.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Materials</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Activity 2 (15 mins)
Students will be sorting images into what they think represents a positive learning environment and ones that do not.

It's important to remind students of the qualities or examples they listed in Activity 1 and that some of the ideas might be surprising and seem strange at first. But, if the quietest spot in the house is the closet, then that is a good place for a child to study. A bed might be comfortable, but too comfortable for a child to stay awake and focus while lying in it.

Ask them to work with a partner to sort the images. Once they are done, share answers as a class and discuss their reasoning for each decision. Before sharing, remind the class that it's ok to not all agree and that we can learn from the differences in opinions.

- Image of child working in the closet
- Image of workplace in corner of room
- Image of clear desk with monitor
**Activity 2 continued**

![Image of bed](image1)
![Image of desk with papers](image2)
![Image of two children on the phone on the couch](image3)
![Image of couch](image4)

**Activity 3 (15 mins)**

Ask the students to draw a rough map of their living environment so they can think of all the different spaces they have (including bathrooms, closets, empty corners, etc.). Students can use this time to map out where they can put each of their children so they can each have their own space to learn at home and try to avoid distractions. Because students are drawing their homes, this is personal and they may not want to share this with any classmates. If there is time, ask the class to share what changes they plan to make when they go home and why that change will help their child's learning.

**Homework**

Students should actually implement the changes they planned to make in Activity 3 and see if this helps their child to learn at home. If students feel comfortable, they can take a picture of the new learning environment to show to you (their teacher) or their child's teacher to get advice on other changes they could potentially make. Remind students to tell their child why they are making these changes because the child will be more accepting of the change if they are told the reason behind it, although it might take time for them to adjust.
JANUARY: ATTENDING SCHOOL EVENTS

If caregivers are able to make relationships with school staff, this is beneficial to their child’s education. An opportunity to spend more time with school staff and strengthen these relationships is to attend school events. January is a good time to check in on this to set new goals for attending events in the new year and to make plans for how to work the events into the caregiver’s schedule.

Did You Know?
Lunar New Year starts in January and ends in February. Some call the holiday “Chinese New Year”, however, Lunar New Year is a more inclusive name as countries outside of China also celebrate the holiday. For your students celebrating the holiday, the last few days of Lunar New Year might be busy and marked by family gatherings. Their child’s school may also mark the holiday with a cultural event, so they should be on the lookout for that.

Materials Needed:
Chart paper with question words + pictures or share images on Zoom screen
Chart paper + pen or Zoom whiteboard
Copies of Black History Event flyer for each student
Blank paper + writing device for each student
LESSON PLAN

Engage (10 mins)
Ask students to think of a party they have been to that they enjoyed and ask them to answer some or all of the following questions. If you want, make a chart and jot down notes:
What did the party have that made it fun?
Who was at the party?
What food did they have?
How did you feel at the party?

Let the parents know that schools have events and parties throughout the school year that caregivers can attend. It can be hard for parents to work these events into their schedule, but if they are able to, attending these events is a great way to build relationships with the school staff and have a fun experience with their child.

Study (10 mins)
Reviewing "question" words will be helpful for students so they can ask questions about events and interpret the question words that may be used on a flyer for school. Say each word and have each student repeat it. Spell each word as well. Go over each word and the example images that go along with it and provide other examples.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>When</th>
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<td>![Date Icon] 28</td>
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Activity 1 (10 mins)

Today students will be reading a flyer for a school event to understand what the event is for, who is invited, where and when it will be, and other details. First, they will read the flyer just to gather the basic information about who is invited and where and when the event will be. Students can circle this information on their own copy of the flyer. If it's helpful, you can read the flyer first to the class before they read it independently. After they are done, ask for volunteers to share who is invited and where and when the event will be. Fill in a chart under the appropriate labels as a class (see below).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Who</th>
<th>Where</th>
<th>When</th>
<th>What</th>
<th>Other Information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Black History Month Event

Please join us on February 4 from 5:00-6:30pm in the Cafeteria

Food, Music, Games!

Childcare not provided, but all children are welcome
Activity 2 (15 mins)

Students will read the flyer a second time. This time, they are focusing on what the event is for and other information that is helpful about the event.

Ask students to read the flyer, find the answer, and then share their answers with a partner.

Then, share the answers with the whole class and fill in the rest of the chart.

Then, ask students to share what other information they would like to have about this event before attending (for example, do they want to know what kind of food there will be or if this event is just for their child's class or the whole school, etc.).

Activity 3 (15 mins)

Ask students to think of the next party they will be having (child's birthday, holiday party, etc.). Have them think about when it might be, who might be coming, all the questions we answered about the previous flyer. Then, they can fill in a blank outline or blank piece of paper with the information about their party and design their own flyer.

Before they start, ask the following concept check questions:

Is this flyer for a party the school is having or you are having? [You are having]

Do we need to put the time of the party or not? Why or why not? [Yes, so people know when to come]

What other important information should we include on this flyer? [What will be at the party, things guests should bring, etc.]

Homework

Students can continue to work on their draft of the flyer for their party.

More importantly, students are assigned to reach out to their child's teacher (via email, text, phone call, or in-person) to ask when the next school event is. Students should mark this on their calendar and start to make a plan so that they can attend or another adult in their family can attend the event.
At this point of the school year, hopefully, the caregivers have been in communication with teachers throughout the year, not only during conferences. At this point, there have also probably been disagreements between the caregivers and the teachers. It can be difficult for caregivers to know how to navigate disagreements or how to communicate these feelings to the teacher, so it is good to give them the opportunity to practice this.

Did You Know?
In Japan, teachers are extremely respected, and both students and caregivers often feel that whatever the teacher says goes and it is rude to question or disagree with the teacher. While teachers in the U.S. ought to be respected as well, it is also important for parents and students to know that it is ok and expected to ask questions and voice their opinions as well.

Materials Needed:
- Copies of text in Engage section for each student
- Chart paper with sentence frames from Study section or share images on Zoom screen
- Copies of sentences from Activity 1 for each student
- Paper + writing device for each student
LESSON PLAN

Engage (10 mins)
Ask students to listen carefully to a text you will read out loud to them. You should also give them a copy of the text so they can follow along:

*Schools all over the United States are changing recess. Some schools are getting rid of recess to make more time for reading and math class. These schools say that the kids need more time to learn.*

*Some schools say that recess needs to be longer. These schools say that the kids need time to relax and move their bodies. These schools think kids learn better if they do not have to sit still all day.*

Ask students to close their eyes and raise their hand when you say the statement they agree with. The first statement is: Recess should be shorter. The second statement is: Recess should be longer.

Next, tell students that today you will be talking about disagreeing and how to disagree and share their opinions while still being polite and respectful.

Study (15 mins)
There are different ways to say things politely when it’s something a person disagrees with or wants to change or wants to improve something. Let parents know it’s also ok to not worry about being polite when there is an important issue for their child. It is their choice how they approach a conversation, so this lesson is about giving them tools to use if they choose.

When trying to disagree politely, a useful formula is [say something understanding] + but + [your opinion].

Review examples of [saying something understanding]:
- I hear what you are saying, but...
- I understand, but...

Some other useful phrases are:
- Actually, I think...
- OR I’m not sure about that because...

Give students examples of these four different sentence starters. Use the topic of recess (for example: "I hear what you are saying, but I think kids need more time in class." or "Actually, I think kids should spend more time running around."). Put emphasis on the transition part of the phrase (such as "but").
Activity 1 (15 mins)

Next, students will try to fill in the blank with the correct word from a phrase studied in the previous part of the lesson. Be sure the example sentences from the Study section are in students' view so they can confirm their answers. Read the statements before students work independently and have them follow along with the text in front of them.

I think reading is the most important skill for kids. ____________, I think math is more important. [Actually]

P.E. is the worst class.
I ____________ what you are saying, but to me, Drama is worse. [hear or understand]

I think online school is useful when kids are sick
I ____________, but it is hard for parents that work. [understand or hear you]

It's better for kids to go home after school and relax.
I'm not ____________ about that because the kids learn a lot when they stay in after-school program. [sure]

Before students begin, ask the following concept check questions:
Will your response be agreeing or disagreeing with the statement? [disagreeing]
Are you saying whatever you actually think or using the phrases we practiced? [phrases we practiced]
Where can you check your work? [on the board/with the example sentences]

Once students are done, ask them to check answers with a small group and to explain why they chose the word they chose. Make sure students check their answers verbally (by actually saying the disagreeing phrase they chose out loud).

Share answers as a class and ask students to choral read with you after the answers have been determined. The important part of this lesson is the beginning sentence frames that signify disagreement, not the topic or context of the sentence.
Activity 2 (10 mins)

Recall which students thought recess should be longer or shorter during the Engage section. They will be assigned to re-read different parts of the initial text depending on their opinions. They will reread the text they disagree with and write a sentence in response to the paragraph, using one of the sentence frames previously practiced.

If students think recess should be longer: Schools all over the United States are changing recess. Some schools are getting rid of recess to make more time for class time on subjects like reading and math. These schools say that the kids need more time to learn.

If students think recess should be shorter: Some schools say that recess needs to be longer. These schools say that the kids need time to relax and move their bodies. These schools think kids learn better if they do not have to sit still all day.

Ask students to pair up with a student and share the sentence they wrote in response to the paragraph they disagree with.

Activity 3 (10 mins)

Next, ask students to switch to multiple partners and read their politely disagreeing sentence.

After students have worked with at least three partners, ask for volunteers to read their sentence to the whole class.

Homework

Ask students to go home and ask their child about whether or not they think recess should be shorter, longer, or the same (they should ask these questions in English). Students should bring up opinions that are different than their child’s opinion (even if they actually agree with whatever their child is saying). This will help to continue the conversation.

Students should note how their children start their sentences when they are disagreeing and see what points their child makes for their argument.
Caregivers may be unaware of what resources they are able to access at their child's school, which may be different from resources available in their home country. Ideally, families are aware of these resources and feel they understand them well enough to be comfortable accessing them. It is also important for families to express needs to school staff so if the school does not provide a resource, they can refer the families somewhere or work to include this resource at the school.

**Did You Know?**
The Daylight Savings Time change does not happen everywhere, so be sure to tell students about this taking place this month if you are located in an area that observes it. The time change might impact their child’s after-school schedule, as students who normally walk home may be able to stay at school longer as the sun stays out later each afternoon.

**Materials Needed:**
Chart paper with vocabulary words or share images on Zoom screen
Copies of images and definitions from Activity 1 for each student
LESSON PLAN

Engage (10 mins)
Ask students to share with a partner their answer to the following question:
When you need help with something, who do you go to and why?
Then ask students to share to the group.

Let students know that there are different options for support at their child’s school that are important for them to be aware of. Remind students that EVERYONE, including yourself, needs help sometimes. It is part of being human.

Study (10 mins)
Go through each vocabulary word, definition, and sentence. Have students repeat the vocabulary word after you (choral repetition).

- **Librarian**
  - The person in charge of the library, the place with all the books
  - The librarian gave me a funny book to read.

- **Counselor**
  - A person trained to give guidance for someone’s problems
  - She’s talking to the counselor because she’s been stressed.

- **Safety Officer**
  - A person who is supposed to keep the students physically safe
  - The safety officer is standing at the front door.

- **Principal**
  - The person in charge of the whole school
  - The principal decided to close the school today.

- **Vice-Principal**
  - The person right below the person in charge of the school (2nd in charge)
  - The vice-principal took over because the principal was sick.
LESSON PLAN

Activity 1 (10 mins)

Students will practice the vocabulary by matching the images with the correct definitions. After working individually, they should check their work with a partner.

2. = the person in charge of the whole school
   = the person right below the person in charge of the school (2nd in charge)
   = a person trained to give guidance for someone’s problems
   = a person who is supposed to keep the students physically safe
   = the person in charge of the library, the place with all the books

Review afterward:
If your child needs help with finding a book, you should go to the _______. [Librarian]
If the principal is out and you want to talk to someone high up at school, you should go to the _______. [Vice-principal]
If your child is having a hard time with their emotions, you should go to the _______. [Counselor]
If you are worried about your child’s safety, you should go to the _______. [Safety officer]
If you want the school to make a change, you should go to the _______. [Principal]
LESSON PLAN

**Activity 2 (15 mins)**

Ask students to work in a small group to brainstorm what other jobs would be helpful for the school to have.

To prompt thinking, ask if they would like more people to help with translation, someone to help with paperwork, etc.

Ask the groups to share with the class.

Next, ask students to work in the same small group to brainstorm what other resources they wish their child's school had.

To prompt thinking, ask if they would like more clubs or sports teams, etc.

Ask the groups to share with the class.

**Activity 3 (15 mins)**

Next, ask students to think about the ideas they had from Activity 2. Students will be thinking about the resources they wish the school had and pretend to be asking a staff member from their child's school about these ideal resources.

Ask students to write down three questions they would ask the school in regards to these resources (for example, "Do you have information about summer camps?"). Ask students to share these three questions with a partner.

Before starting, ask students the following concept check questions:

Are you asking your child about resources? [No]

Who are you asking about resources? [School staff - principal, teacher, office staff, etc.]

**Homework**

For homework, students should actually talk to a school staff member and ask the questions they have about resources and where to find them.

If students do not feel comfortable asking the questions yet, encourage them to practice them more with a friend or a classmate.
End-of-year conferences are around the corner and can be very important for discussing where a student is currently at academically and how this impacts their next school year. This is a chance for parents to get information on what to work on over the summer, start conversations on whether or not their child should be retained, and any final thoughts they want to share with their child's teacher.

Did You Know?
The date of Ramadan changes every year based on the Islamic lunar calendar but often begins around this time of year. For your Muslim students, this is a very special and busy time of year. Be extra mindful of allowing them space to adhere to prayer times and be understanding of other obligations they may have.

Materials Needed:
Chart paper with vocabulary words or share images on Zoom screen
Copies of conversation from Activity 1 for each student
**LESSON PLAN**

**Engage (10 mins)**

Ask students to think about the following questions and share their answers with a partner: How were the conferences in November? What was good about them? What would you change?

Then, ask volunteers to share to the whole group.

Let students know that end of year conferences are coming up soon so it’s a good time to reflect on thoughts from the whole year, hear about their child’s successes, and get information on what their child might need to catch up on over the summer as well as the best ways to do that.

**Study (10 mins)**

This vocabulary should be mostly review for students, along with some new words. Go through each vocabulary word, definition, and sentence. Have students repeat the vocabulary word after you (choral repetition).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vocabulary</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Sentence</th>
<th>Activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>to improve</td>
<td>= get better at</td>
<td>I would like my son to improve at listening. He is not very good at it now.</td>
<td>To practice: She practices soccer every day after school.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to make progress</td>
<td>= get better at</td>
<td>She is making progress with the alphabet. She knows a lot more letters now.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>energetic</td>
<td>= to have a lot of energy and like to move around</td>
<td>He is energetic, so he likes to jump a lot.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Subtraction</td>
<td>= taking away</td>
<td>If I use subtraction to solve 3 - 2 that leaves me with 1.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Addition</td>
<td>= putting more</td>
<td>Addition tells me that 2 + 2 = 4.</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Activity 1 (15 mins)

Students will be reading a script (pretend conversation) of a parent-teacher/student-led conference.

Remind students that it is a very short conversation and the conference they have should be at least 10 minutes and can be much longer.

First, read as a class (you as a teacher reading to the class) twice and then ask students to look at the script individually.

While reading the script on their own, students should figure out the names of the teacher and the parent, as well as the child.

Before students read on their own, ask the following concept check questions:

Who is the parent talking to? [The teacher]
What are they talking about? Is it sports, animals, what is it about? [School, their child, how their child is doing in school]

**Parent:** Hi Ms. Sujo, how are you?
**Teacher:** I’m good Ruby, how are you?
**Parent:** Very good. I am excited to talk about Samayah's grades and progress.
**Teacher:** Yes, me too. Samayah improved a lot in reading. Is she practicing with you?
**Parent:** Yes, we read most nights before bed. We always read when I do not have to work late at night.
**Teacher:** That is really good. She also needs to practice math. Can she practice subtraction and addition with you?
**Parent:** Yes, we will practice it more. Do you have worksheets or a website to practice on?
**Teacher:** You can practice on a website called Khan Academy. They have a lot of problems for students to do and it is free.
**Parent:** Ok, we will use that website. Thank you.
**Teacher:** Of course, thank you for practicing.
**Parent:** Have a good day.
**Teacher:** You, too!
Activity 2 (15 mins)
Next, students will be reading the script again out loud with a partner. One student should be assigned as the teacher and another assigned as the parent. They should be focusing on speaking and reading with intonation and understandable pronunciation.
If it makes sense, read the script again as a class to model for students before they begin their partner work.
Before reading, review the basic information:
What's the teacher’s name? [Ms. Sujo]
What's the parent's name? [Ruby]
What is the child's name? [Samayah]
After students practice reading with each other, ask them what has the child (Samayah) improved in [reading] and what does she need more practice in [math].

Activity 3 (10 mins)
Ask students to think about the conversation they have practiced and heard a few times now and how it makes them think about the conversation they will soon have with their own child's teacher. Ask them the following questions:

What is your child doing well in school?
What do you think your child needs to practice more over the summer?

Students can write notes with their answers to these questions and then can share with a partner these answers. Next, ask for volunteers to share their thoughts with the whole class.

Homework
Like they did before the last conference, students should talk to their child about the answers they wrote down during class as part of Activity 3.
Ask their child if there are any other things they would like to be discussed at the conference.
If it makes sense, students should add these to the list they have.
Remind parents to keep their notes to bring with them to the parent-teacher conference.
A break from school ideally does not mean a break from learning, unfortunately, this is often the case. It has been shown that over the summer months, students lose 17-34% of their learning from the previous school year. This “summer slide” is important for families to be aware of before the holiday begins so they can make a plan to better engage their kids over the summer months.

Did You Know?
The length of summer holidays changes from country to country (and there are variations even within each country). Summer break is typically 3 months in Argentina, 2 months in China, and 6 weeks in Denmark. Families may have different experiences with summer learning based on how long the break is in their home country.

Materials Needed:
Chart paper with vocabulary words or share images on Zoom screen
Copies of images from Activity 1 for each student

"Summer Slide" stats from: https://www.nwea.org/blog/2021/summer-learning-loss-what-we-know-what-were-learning/#:~:text=This%20study%20found%20that%20the,lose%20ground%20in%20subsequent%20summers.

Did You Know information from: https://www.walesonline.co.uk/news/wales-news/how-long-countries-around-world-13293731
LESSON PLAN

Engage (10 mins)
Tell students you are going to share a stressful and sad fact.
Next, tell students: It has been shown that over the summer months, students lose 17-34% of their learning from the previous school year. This means whatever a child learns in kindergarten, they might lose 1/3 of it by the time they start 1st grade.
Ask students to share with each other why they think students lose learning over the summer. Then share out to the whole class.
Today students will be making a plan for their families to try to keep their children learning over the summer.

Study (10 mins)
Go through each vocabulary word, definition, and sentence. Have students repeat the vocabulary word after you (choral repetition). Provide more examples as necessary.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To promote</th>
<th>To support</th>
<th>Learning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>= to encourage or support</td>
<td>= to help or encourage</td>
<td>= studying, getting more information or knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This class promotes getting your hands dirty to learn.</td>
<td>She likes support when she's working on multiplication.</td>
<td>Learning through play is really fun.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Activities

- = things a person does
- We do science activities right after school.

Social

- = making friends, talking with other people, learning how to deal with others
- After being at home so long, she's still practicing being social with others.
Next, students will be sorting activities into two categories: Supports Learning and Doesn't Support Learning. Remind students that there are lots of ways students can learn, not just traditional ways. The important thing is for children to keep their minds busy and have new experiences.

Before students begin, ask the following concept check questions:
- If something Supports Learning, is that good or bad? [Good]
- If something Doesn't Support Learning, is that good or bad? [Bad]
- Does Reading support learning? [Yes]

Then, go over answers as a class. Be sure to ask students why they put something in each category. There might be variation in what students decide goes in which column, so it's important to hear their evidence and thoughts behind their choice. Remind students that it's ok to have differences in opinion.
Activity 2 (10 mins)

Ask students to brainstorm with a partner other ways (aside from the examples in Activity 1) to support learning over the summer. Students should think of activities such as reading, writing, science experiments, etc. as well as ideas like going to a museum, looking for leaves in the park, going to the zoo, etc.

Next, ask students to share their ideas to the whole class. Write down all of the ideas so they can be sent out to all the students after class or they can take a picture of the list.

Activity 3 (20 mins)

Ask students to think about one of their children. They will be making a plan for this child to promote their learning over the summer in three categories:

1) Reading  
2) Math  
3) Social

Students should write or draw three things they will do in each category to promote learning for their child.

Once they are done working individually, they can share with a partner.

After sharing with a partner, share with the whole class.

Before starting, ask students the following concept check questions:

Are these ideas for the teacher to do at school? [No]  
Are these ideas for you to do with your child? [Yes]  
How many ideas are you making for each category? [Three]

Homework

Students are assigned to reach out to their child’s teacher to see what activities the teacher suggests for their child over the summer and see if the teacher knows of any resources that would support their child’s learning (ex: summer camp). Students should also ask the teacher if there are any rewards charts/incentive systems they use in class that the parent can replicate in their own home to motivate their child to do activities that promote learning. This would be easier, as the child will already be familiar with the system.