

Latinx Parents for Change

Parent School Ambassador Project



Facilitator Guide

A Message from Working Women

Working Women Community Centre (WWCC) is a charitable organization that provides a variety of programs and services which help immigrant women adjust to living in Toronto.

Our wide range of successful programs is making a significant impact on engaging parents and fostering their child's school performance. Some programs include On Your Mark, a tutoring/mentoring program identified as the largest ethno-specific tutoring program in Canada working with over 300 students in 9 schools in Toronto, and 175 volunteers; and HIPPY, a free home-based program that recognizes parents as children's first and best teachers.

The Latinx Parents for Change project uses theoretical and practical tools for parents to reflect on their current realities, gain transferable skills, exchange knowledge and share practices as a community to take collective action towards a more inclusive and accessible school system.

Acknowledgments

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Project Overview

Meaningful parental involvement is a powerful predictor of children's educational success and well-being. Studies have shown that there is a positive correlation between family engagement and improved academic achievement, and yet, there is a growing number of parents who remain disengaged and disenfranchised by the education system, particularly parents from the Latin American community (Ornstein, 2000).

Based on a series of participatory community needs assessments, Latinx¹ parents identified some of the barriers to their involvement in schools and expressed interest in learning more about how to become advocates for their children in the education system, and to develop leadership skills, and to understanding school governance, and how to actively participate in their school/community life.

In an effort to reduce drop-out rates and systemic barriers, Working Women Community Centre (WWCC) and the Mennonite New Life Centre (MNLCC) collaborated to implement Latinx Parents for Change - Parent Ambassador Project (PAP). The main objective of the project is to provide parents with the knowledge, tools and resources to become Ambassadors in their communities, promote participation in parental involvement committees and increase Latinx representation in school councils in Toronto.

PAP offers 27 hours of training on topics of Canadian political system, school governance, leadership, parental involvement, special education, equity and social justice. Once training is completed, parents are encouraged to implement their learning back in their communities. Successful learnings have been demonstrated by parents joining school councils, delivering trainings in their communities and/or actively engaging more parents in their children's education.

This project is supported by the Toronto District School Board (TDSB) and the Toronto Catholic District School Board (TCDSB) and is funded by the City of Toronto and Access and Equity Human Rights Investment Funding Program (AEHR).

¹ Latinx is the gender inclusive term for Latin American peoples.



Goals

- To provide Latinx parents with tools and resources to better support and advocate for their children's educational success
- To promote Latinx parents participation in the school councils and/or parent involvement committees
- To encourage parents to increase and enhance their participation in their children's education plans and goals
- To foster the development of local and informal parent based networks in each participating school (peer to peer support, informal interpretation from parents to parents etc.)
- To provide Latinx parents with an in-depth understanding of the Education System in Ontario and its impact on their children's education.

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Beyond Understanding the Education System

Facilitator guide

Based on a series of participatory community needs assessments through focus group and dialogues, Latinx parents identified some of the barriers that hinder their involvement in schools and expressed interest in learning more about the Canadian political and education system and what are the expectations, rights and responsibilities as parents. In response to these observations, Working Women Community Centre (WWCM) and Mennonite New Life Centre (MNLC) developed the Latinx Parents for Change project to empower Latinx parents to become ambassadors for change in their communities.

This facilitator guide is equipped with tools and resources to help Latinx parents navigate the Canadian school system and increase Latinx representation in the school life. Parents are encouraged to play an active role at home and in school to enhance their children's learning experience and educational success.

The Latinx Parents for Change project uses theoretical and practical tools for parents to reflect on their current realities, gain transferable skills, exchange knowledge and share practices as a community to take collective action towards a more inclusive and accessible school system.

Who can benefit from this training guide?

This tool may be used by parents looking to gain a better understanding of the public education system in Toronto and how to identify and navigate the school system based on their individual experiences.

This training manual may also be of benefit to diverse community organizations, agencies and workers who support Latinx parents in Toronto. The flexibility of this methodology will allow for this tool to be utilized alongside various community programs that support parents. It can also be adapted to meet the experiences of other ethno-cultural communities.

The key role of the trainer is to facilitate effective learning through role modelling, provide accurate information, embrace the needs of the learner, facilitate open and respectful dialogue and encourage reflective learning.

What is the parent participant role?

The main role of the parent participant is to acquire effective learning through identifying their own learning needs, recognizing their own learning style and applying their new learning into practice in their children's school and their community.

How can the training can be implemented?

There will be a total of 8 sessions. Each 3-hour weekly session will cover one of the topics below:

- Session 1: Meet & greet
- Session 2: Unpacking Canadian Political System
- Session 3: Understanding the Education system in Ontario
- Session 4: Breaking down the structure of parental involvement in schools in Ontario
- Session 5: Unveiling systematic barriers in education system using an anti-oppressive framework
- Session 6: Navigating systemic barriers in the education system using an anti-oppressive framework
- Session 7: Identifying and overcoming challenges faced by Latinx students
- Session 8: Promoting Active Parental Participation in Schools: a road map to student success
- Session 9: Discovering your inner leader a call to action

Depending on the particular group's needs and experiences, two of the topics may be combined into one weekly session. This will allow you to still cover 9 topics in the 8 weeks.

How will the sessions be structured?

Each session will begin setting learning objectives, revisiting community agreements and presenting the session's outline. During each session, the facilitator will cover 5 sections per topic: Check in, reflection moment, content, action moment and evaluation & check out. The following graphic explains the methodology developed as a tool using a popular education approach.

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<h1>LATINX PARENTS FOR CHANGE</h1> <h2>Session outline</h2> <p>(*) Check the session this outline is for</p>		Session 1: Meet and Greet	Session 5: Anti-oppression: Systemic barriers in the education
		Session 2: Unpacking Canadian Political System	Session 6: Identifying and overcoming challenges faced by Latinx children
		Session 3: Understanding the Education System in Ontario	Session 7: Unpacking tools and resources to overcome the challenges
		Session 4: Parenting in Ontario	Session 8: Discovering your inner leader a call to action
Title:			
Learning Objectives: Strategic objectives of the session		Expected Outcomes: (We know we achieve the objective because...)	
Session Structure			
Check-in	An opportunity for all participants to be present, grounded and open-minded before each session begins. It helps create an inclusive and welcoming environment where all voices are heard and valued.		
Reflection Moment	Present questions that prompt critical thinking for parents to reflect on their current realities, challenges and assess the level of knowledge on each topic presented.		
Content	(Content will be delivered by ... based on...) Deliver information, data, tools and resources for parents to gain knowledge on the weekly topics.		
Action Moment	From the reflection to the action (What? So What? Now What?) Moment of the learning process to connect the content with a concrete "to do"/action, which effectively reflect the change in parents' reality.		
Evaluation & check out:	Monitoring results (Method, tool, etc.) Revise topic outcomes, reinforce new learnings, and takeaways.		
<p>(*) What: This is the description and self-awareness level and all questions start with the word what: what have I learnt? / What did I hope to learn? / what surprised me? ... So what: This is the level of analysis and evaluation when we look deeper at what was behind the experience: so what is the importance of this learning? / So what more do I need to know about this? / So what have I learnt about this? / So what was different to what I knew previously? -- Now what: This is the level of synthesis. Here we build on the previous levels these questions to enable us to consider alternative courses of action and choose what we are going to do next: now what can I do? / now what might I do to improve or enhance my doing? / now what might be the consequences of this action.</p>			

Session 1: Meet & Greet

Latinx Parents for Change Parent Ambassador Project

Learning Objectives:

1. Parents to get to know each other, find common interests and start building a strong sense of community
2. Parents develop ownership and commitment to the project's learnings and agreement
3. Parents will have a clear understanding of opportunities for involvement in schools
4. Parents commit to and willingly attend sessions (repeated in #2)

Expected Outcomes:

1. Each parent will be able to name and introduce three other parents
2. Parents will be able to develop a project agreements and learning goals
3. Parents will be able to present how the project will connect them to the life of the school and the impact on their child's school performance
4. 95% of the parents will agree and commit to attending all session

Check- in

Materials needed: A ball or a soft toy

Welcome parents and introduction of facilitators

- Housekeeping Items re: washroom facilities, telephone, child minding, community agreements, etc.
- Land Acknowledgment *Appendix 1*
- Establish session times/break times during training
- Forms to be filled out: Photo release *Appendix 2*

Confidentiality: Define and explore the importance of sharing in a safe space, participants are invite to build a shared definition of how this will be implemented during the sessions.

Getting to know each other: Introductions of participants

Parents will sit/stand in a circle. The facilitator will pass around a ball, each time someone catches the ball they will share their name, children's age, grade and school.

Once each participant has had their turn to share with the group, the facilitator will invite them to respond one of the following questions:

Possible guiding questions include, but are not limited to... be creative!

What word describes best the way you are feeling today?

What inspired you to come today?

What is the last thing that your child(ren) taught you?

What did your child (ren) tell you that resonated with you?

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What is your proudest achievement this week?
 What kind of animal do you identify with and why?
 If you were a tree, what kind of tree would you be and why?
 How was your commute here today?

Reflection Moment

Materials needed: Pens & post-it notes

Instructions to build community agreements, creating a safe space: Invite participants to write down on a post-it note their thoughts on the following questions (one by one), emphasizing on using I/We pronoun.

1. What do we need from ourselves and from each other to fully participate in this learning process?
2. What do we need from ourselves and from each other to feel safe in this space?
3. How are we going to work together during this training process?

Community Agreement sample*

- Each of us will be responsible for his/her learning while at the same time working to develop a learning community.
- We will work with each other in the spirit of mutual learning/teaching, giving and receiving feedback, and creating a safe, respectful, and open environment.
- We will engage each other to develop and share analysis of our social realities.
- We will also engage each other in possible “difficult conversation,” knowing that it is important to struggle to develop meaningful consensus.

Please note that the community agreements print out should remain visible in each session, so participants will be able to add or review them at any time.

* Community agreement sample from the first parent’s cohort of LatinX Parents for Change2016.

Content

Project overview- Interactive presentation (PowerPoint)

The presentation gives participants an overview of the project, including the history and genesis of the program; what the short term and long-term goals are; and the overview of the topics covered during the 8 weeks. Examples of previous cohorts and their action projects are shared to give participants a more concrete idea of the program and its outcomes.

Action Moment

Materials needed: Appendix 3

Having reflecting on the program goals, implementation strategies, goals and expected impacts, parents will commit to be part of the learning process through reading the participant agreement form. Facilitators should read through the agreement with them and clarify any questions.

Evaluation & Check-Out

Materials needed: Appendix 4

Evaluation: facilitators will share the participatory evaluation model that will be applied through the program introducing the “Registration and assessment tool” to be filled out by parent participants.

Facilitators should also share purpose of the anonymous demographic questionnaire.

Check out- Parent participants are invited to stand up and with a movement to answers the following question.

In one word, how are you leaving from today’s session? (Emotions)

Facilitator Checklist

Materials

Appendix 1: Land Acknowledgment
Appendix 2: Photo Release
Appendix 3: Participant Agreement
Appendix 4: Registration and
Assessment form & Demographic
Questionnaire

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Session 2: Unpacking the Canadian Political System

Learning Objectives:

1. Be able to identify the areas of responsibility for the three orders of government,
2. Understand the process by which governments make decisions.
3. Be able to identify the opportunities to influence decision-making by government.
4. Understand their role in voting for their elected representatives and through the public policy process.

Expected Outcomes:

1. Parents will name three responsibilities of each level of government.
2. Parents will describe how a bill become a law and how bylaws at municipal level are done.
3. Parents will identify in each level of government the best “public input-moment” to impact a policy change.
4. Parents will be able to access their representatives according to the issue they want to address.

Check-In

Parents are asked to share in one word the following statement:

I started my day...

Facilitator will present the community agreement built collectively in the previous session.

Reflection Moment

Current Events: A picture from current events is used to evoke what parents know about this situation. This could be municipal, provincial or federal elections, political party leadership elections etc.

The idea is for participants to connect to a current event happening in their locality or in the country at this moment and identify their knowledge around this area. Particularly, how much they know about the Canadian government structure, and how they can participate in it.

Content

Materials needed: Flip chart paper, markers, loteria cards

Main themes this week will include:

1. Democracy: Government structures: federal, provincial and municipal level

Canadian government structures- Interactive Mini-lecture – Power point presentation

“Loteria” A game of chance: Participants number themselves from 1 through 3 forming 3 teams. Each team will be assigned a board to be filled with images that represent the government responsibilities at each level.

The winner team will be the one that fill the board correctly and shouts: “Loteria”

Facilitator to guide the discussion to the question: What cultural dimensions drive these differences?

Action Moment

Participants form 4 groups, each group will identify an issue that they would like to see change. Participants will identify the level of government is responsible for the issue and list the steps to make this change

Check out

Materials needed: flipchart paper and crayons

Parents are asked to collectively draw on the flip chart paper their feeling about the following question:

What are you taking with you today?

Facilitator Checklist:

- Materials
- Community Agreement
- Loteria Boards and Tiles

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Understanding the Education System in Ontario

Learning Objectives:

1. Grow parents understanding of the different components of the education system in Ontario
2. Gain a better understanding of the Ontario's Wellbeing Strategy for Education.
3. Be able to identify the opportunities to influence and provide parental input in the decision-making process
4. Identify roles and responsibilities of agents of action that implement Ontario Education Act.
5. Make their voices heard by their elected representatives and through the public policy process

Expected Outcomes

1. Parents will identify and explain the role of three key components in the education system
2. Parents will connect the Strategy with four school related activities and explain how they contribute to their children well-being.
3. Parents will present a "hypothetical pathway" within the Education system on how an issue/concern may be address, identifying key decision- makers, and concrete moments to provide input.
4. Parents will be able to recognise three agents of action and explain what they do in the Education system.
5. Parents will name their trustee and identify the members of the school council at their children's school.

Check- in

Using storytelling, parents are invited to create a collective story starting with the following sentence:

Once upon of time, when I went to school....

Each parent will add just one sentence until the last person close the story.

Facilitator will wrap up the activity inviting parents to connect their own experiences with the topic of the day.

Reflection Moment

Materials needed: markers, flip chart paper

Brainstorm Activity on a Chart Paper:

*What catches your attention the most about the Canadian Education System?
Is it different from the one that you attended?*

Content

Materials needed: markers, flip chart paper

Topic presentation starts with a video summary of the education system: School boards structure

Overview of the education system:

What is the ministry responsible for?

Ontario School boards:

What do they do?

What is their structure

Who are the decision makers?

Ontario's well-being strategy for Education:

Parents are divided in four groups and each group will be responsible for presenting a component of the strategy. Positive mental health, safe and accepting schools, healthy schools, equity and inclusive education Presentations **MUST** be creative and include a scenario that showcase each component. These will then be taken up to the whole group and presented by using performance, acting, role playing etc.

Action Moment

Motions as Mechanisms for change

Parents will be presented with examples of real Motions presented at the school boards. Parents are asked to number themselves from 1 to 3 to form 3 groups. Each group will be asked to create a Motion draft for an issue that they identified in the school system.

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Motions Samples:

Tamil heritage Month Motion:

[Whereas, a public interest has been expressed and communicated by the Tamil Community of Toronto, along with parents and students of the Toronto District School Board to establish the calendar month of January as Tamil Heritage Month at the TDSB; and Whereas, Canadians of Tamil heritage and descent have made, and continue to make significant contributions to the growth and prosperity of Toronto and the province, as well as important contributions to Canada's history; Whereas, in 2014, the Province of Ontario declared January as Tamil Heritage Month through the Provincial Legislature, and the Cities of Toronto, Markham, Pickering and the Town of Ajax have also declared January as Tamil Heritage Month; and Whereas, the month of January will provide an opportunity for Tamil heritage communities to share their vibrant culture and traditions with the Toronto District School Board; Therefore, be it resolved that the month of January be designated as Tamil Heritage Month in the Toronto District School Board]

Latin American Heritage Month

[Whereas compared to the general Board student population, Latin American students were more likely to agree that learning more about their own culture would make their learning more interesting (73%), help them enjoy school more (63%), and help them do better in school (51%); and whereas a significant number of self-identified students from the Latin-American diaspora are generally under-performing academically compared to the overall Board student population and whereas in April 2010, the Board decided that April be designated as Hispanic Heritage Month in the TDSB; and whereas the term Hispanic is not entirely reflective of the diversities that exist within our communities and whereas the histories, experiences, various languages, and traditional practices of our communities from Latin-America must be more appropriately represented and reflected; therefore be it resolved that April be recognized as Latin-America History Month.]

Each group will present their motion to the audience.

Check- out

Mix and Match game: “Who does what in Education?”

Participants are invited to play a game of Mix and Match and the roles play by different agents in the Education System.

Facilitator Checklist

- Materials
- Community Agreement
- Matching game

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Breaking down the structure of Parental Engagement in schools in Ontario

Learning Objectives:

1. To identify resources available for effective parental involvement
2. Comprehend the provincial parent engagement policy
3. To be able to identify opportunities to influence decision making as parents in the education system
4. To understand what school based-involvement means and its implementation

Expected Outcomes:

1. Parents understand the link between school councils, the parent involvement committee (PIC) and the Board of education
2. Parents know and identify how to navigate the education system and become advocate for their children
3. Parents distinguish who does what in education
4. Beyond schools councils: Engaging parents to help their children succeed at school.

Check- in

Materials needed: Chart paper and markers, crayons

Parents are welcome and invited to draw in a collective chart anything that comes to mind about how they are feeling that day.

After the collective drawing is done parents are invited to observe the image and welcome to add anything that they feel the drawing is missing.

Reflection

Parents are asked to group by countries of origin/or the country they identify with to discuss and share their knowledge on the education system in their home country and the parent engagement initiatives.

Each group will share with the audience. Each group have 2 minutes to present.

Content

Materials needed: PowerPoint and Projector

Overview of the Ontario's Parent Engagement Policy (mini-lecture)

- Parental Involvement Policy
- School councils
- Learning about PIP and PICs

Suggestion:

Bring in parent guest speakers to share their experiences with being involved in School Councils or School Board Committees. Participant parents can ask questions about the process, how to navigate it, and what being in these spaces is actually like. Parents who have themselves gone through the Latinx program are a great resource for this.

Action

Materials needed: Post-it notes, pens

Building together the “how to be part of the School Council”

Parents are asked to write down in a post-it note, an action, task, or strategy that they would carry out in order to become a member of the school council. Each parent will share their post and the facilitator will be organizing the posts in a process flowchart keeping a chronological or logical criteria.

Parents, guest speaker and facilitators will clarify how the process actually works and how to get actively involved in their child (ren) schools.

Check-out

Check-Out: Parents are asked to share with a movement or a gesture their level motivation to actively take action in join a school council.

Facilitator Checklist

- Materials
- Community Agreement

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Unveiling systematic barriers in the Education System using an Anti-oppressive Framework

Learning Objectives:

1. Understand and define anti-oppression and systematic barriers.
2. Understand and define discrimination.
3. Understand how systemic barriers affect access to resources.
4. Understand how systemic barriers affect the experience of students in school.
5. Knowledge exchange between parents and facilitators

Expected Outcomes:

1. Parents will understand anti-oppression theory in relation to: race, class, gender, religion, immigration status etc.
2. Parents will know how to identify when they are experiencing discrimination.
3. Project team will have a better, more meaningful understanding of the diverse experiences of Latinx parents and the TDSB

Check- in

Parents are welcome and invited to finish the sentence:

The best news I've had in the past week is...

Reflection Moment

Materials needed: Pieces of paper, pens

Privilege Activity

Participants receive a piece of paper, and are asked to reflect on a problem/challenge that is pertinent to their child's school. Parents will reflect in how frustrate this issue is and are invited to symbolically crumple their problem into a ball. Facilitator then moves the recycling bin to the middle of the circle and invites participants to attempt to throw the ball into the trash at different locations around the room. The facilitator will commence by throwing his/her paper as close as possible, making a way to converse about privileges.

The facilitator will then ask participants to reflect based on their location in the classroom "how far do they feel from addressing that challenge at their child's school?" Next, the facilitator will open up the space for parents to reflect about their experience. (3 volunteer participants suggested)

Content

Materials needed: Anti-oppression learning tool worksheet

Main themes this week will include:

Access, power and privilege, discrimination, and gendered perspective

Group activity:

Parents participant are asked to form 4 working groups, each working groups will be given a set of two images to discuss their content with the following questions:

1. What does this image evoke to you?
2. What do you see?
3. How does it make you feel?
4. If you could change something about this image what will that be? And why?

A delegate from each group will present their answer to the audience.

Facilitator should guide the group discussion to concepts of colonization, sexism, racism and homophobia in order to begin a conversation about our understandings of oppression and introduce the idea of anti-oppression theory.

Materials needed: Powerpoint presentation, projector

Overview of an anti-oppression frame work: Navigating the School system through an equity and social justice lens- Interactive Mini-lecture – Power point presentation

Different content will be weaved through the workshop including slides, pictures and group discussion.

Action

Using the group discussion as jumping off point, parents will discuss in pairs some of their personal experiences with oppression and name the 'isms' they may have experienced in their lives. They will then be invited to share with the larger group, and the facilitator should guide the discussion to include an intersectional analysis of anti-oppression.

Check-out

Parents are asked to share with one word what are they taken with them.

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Facilitator checklist

- Materials
- Community Agreement
- Anti-oppression learning tool
- Power Point

Navigating systematic barriers in the Education System using an Anti-oppressive Framework

Learning Objectives:

1. Build confidence among parents to deal with systematic barriers
2. Integrate knowledge from previous session to analyse and identify courses of action in instances of discrimination.
3. Knowledge exchange between parents and facilitators

Expected Outcomes:

1. Parents will deepen understanding anti-oppression theory
2. Parents will improve on their capacity to address incidents of discrimination.
3. Project team will have a better, more meaningful understanding of the diverse experiences of Latinx parents and the TDSB and how they can best navigate the system.

Check-in

Parents are welcome and invited to finish the sentence:

The best news I've had in the past week is...

Reflection Moment

Materials needed: Flowe Power sheet, pens, markers and crayons

Flower Power activity

The “Power Flower” is a tool developed by Canadian social change educators when working with groups to “identify who we are (and who we aren’t) as individuals and as a group in relation to those who wield power in our society.”

Facilitator to introduce the purpose and rationale of the power flower, referring to the flower on newsprint.

Working as a group, fill in the outer petals together. For instance, when completing the social dominance category, it would not be too difficult to agree that “white” should go in the outer petal. The same might go for “English” in the language category language, and “heterosexual” in the sexual orientation category. Distribute one blank individual diagram and have everyone transfer these outer petal descriptions onto their individual sheets.

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Working individually or in pairs, have participants locate themselves in each inner petal on their own sheet.

Count up the number of matching petals, noticing which match. Let each pair compare their results with that of their neighbours, making observations as they go along.

In the large group, ask people to come forward and transfer their inner petal locations onto the inner petals of the large flower. This makes up the composite, communal social identity of your group.

Content

Main themes this week will include:

Access, power and privilege, discrimination, and gendered perspective

Using the flower power that has just been completed, facilitator should guide a discussion to touch on the following ideas.

Personal social identity: Count how many of your petals are different from the dominant outer petals, which means you do not share those areas of power conferred by society. What light does this throw on the way you have been treated as a person of privilege or as a marginalized person? Which of these cannot be changed (for example, where you were born, your sex), and which ones could be changed (e.g. level of education)?

Group social identity: What does the composite picture tell you about who you are as a group? Are you fairly privileged? In what ways are you not privileged? How might this affect, for example, the way you might go about anti-oppression work? If your school is located in a neighbourhood that has changed quite substantially in recent years, what kind of power flower pattern might your “neighbours” present, and how much would it differ from your group flower? What implications would this pose to your participation in school spaces?

Interpersonal relations within your group: Notice who has fewer matching petals and thus less social power, and who has more. How can you turn this knowledge to advantage as the group works together? As you make decisions? For instance, you might as a group decide to take measures to make sure members with less power do get a chance to be heard. How do you as leader/facilitator compare with your group members? What does this reveal about possible tensions?

Reflect on the unequal weight given some of the categories, for example, race or social-economic class, and thus the need to adjust the “power quotient” wielded by some petals over others.

Guest speaker: how to navigate systems of oppression/ how to navigate the system and make social justice change. Bring in a guest speaker who has experience working with school board/ school governance structures and also has an understanding of anti-oppression theory to begin a conversation about working within the system with this kind of lens.

Some possible topics to cover:

- How do you use your privileges to access spaces?
- How do you change spaces once you have access?
- Understanding the implicit bias, and how to counter it.
- Learning the language of these spaces.
- Resistance and Resilience

Action

Materials needed: Board policies printed out

Looking at Board Equity Policies

In pairs or small groups, participants will take a look at the equity and inclusion policies of the TDSB and TCDSB. After reading them, they will answer some of the following questions:

- What surprised you in the policy?
- What is missing?
- Do you think the policy is adequately applied in your school?

One delegate of each group to report back to larger group on their discussion. .

Check-out

Parents are asked to share with one word what are they taken with them.

Facilitator Checklist

- Community Agreements
- Materials
- Flower Power Activity Tool
- Board Policies

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Identifying and Overcoming Challenges for Latinx Students

Learning Objectives:

1. Comprehend the purpose of special education
2. To grow understanding an IEP and the process of its implementation
3. Learn about streaming, its effects on educational pathways and the over-representation of Latinx students in the applied streams.
4. Learn about bullying, its effects on mental health and how schools should respond; as well as parents' rights if their children experience bullying.

Expected Outcomes:

1. Parents will have a better understanding of what to do if their child(ren) needs special support education
2. Parents will understand IEP more in depth.
3. Parents will have a better understanding of course options and pathways.
4. Parents will understand some of the psychological basis of bullying and what they can look out for and expect from the school in case their children experience it.

Check-in

Materials needed: Blank cards or post it notes and pens

Parents will be given blank cards- Pair activity: create a card for your pair stating their Name; their children name age and grade; and a Superhero Quality and why, then introduce them to the group.

**Parents are invited to share their super-hero qualities as everyday they are their children best super-hero.*

Reflection Moment

Invite parents to brainstorm on the following question: What do you know about Special Education?

After a discussion with the group invited parents to watch a video about special education from People from Education to reflect on what that actually means and the tools to better support their child (ren).

Content

This session should be tailored to the specific needs of your group. Ahead of time, the facilitator should find out from the group what aspect they are most interested in, and spend most of the time for this session on that topic. Depending on the topic, some suggested methodologies are:

Special Education

A panel discussion with TDSB and TCDSB representatives or guest speaker from the Learning Disability Association of Toronto

Main themes this week will include: The basic understating of what is Special Education, IEP is its benefits and challenges. How students qualify for this program and the rights that parents have to like or dislike their children to be a part of IEP.

*Please note that this questions are guidelines to answers some of the questions that parents might have.

What are Special Education Services?
 Special Education Roles and Responsibilities
 What is the purpose of Special Education?
 When should a teacher refer a student?
 How does a teacher refer a student?
 What happens after a referral?
 What is The Individual Education Plan (IEP)?
 Why does a student have an IEP?
 Who must have an IEP?
 What is the expectation for IEP development and collaboration?
 How are IEP's created?

What is the responsibility of a classroom teacher?
 What is the responsibility of the SERT?
 What is the responsibility of the Principal?
 What is the responsibility of the Coordinator?
 New Students and New Diagnoses
 What happens when a new student registers?
 What happens when a student is newly diagnosed?
 Can my child (ren) have an IEP because he is a newcomer?

Bullying & Mental Health

Invite a guest speaker with background in mental health and bullying (or facilitator if they are comfortable) to address questions such as:

What is bullying?
 Why does bullying occur?
 What are some of the physical and psychological effect of bullying? (For victim, agressor and their families)
 What are some signs that my child is being bullied?
 What can I do if I suspect my child is being bullied?
 What is the school's responsibility if there is bullying happening?

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Streaming

Invite a guest speaker with background in education (or facilitator if they are comfortable) to address questions such as:

What is streaming?

When does it happen?

What are the effects of streaming?

What does it mean when we say Latinx students are overrepresented in applied courses?

Why might this be?

How can we advocate for our children in the course selection process?

What does the provincial policy say about streaming?

Note:

These are only suggestions, and the main content of the session should be dictated by the needs of your specific group. Guest speakers can be good resources for these conversations but they can also happen with the facilitator. The questions listed are only some of the questions parents may have, and those provided could help start the conversation. However, be prepared for groups to have many other questions!

Action

Materials needed: Video, Learning tool 3x3 cards

Parents are presented a video to practice self – advocacy skills with their children. After video parents are presented with a 3 by 3 card to practice in class.

Check-out

Parents are asked to share with one word what are they taken with them.

Reminder to parents to begin thinking about their action projects!

Facilitator Checklist

Materials needed:

- Community Agreements
- Learning tool: 3x3 Card
- Videos: Special Education and Developing Self advocacy Skills for students

Promoting Active Parental Participation in Schools a Road Map to Student success

Learning Objectives:

1. To have a better understanding of volunteer with a purpose and advocacy
2. To identify resources available for effective parental involvement
3. Learn about PRO grant and resources for effective parental involvement
4. Parents identify the tools for effective parental involvement in the everyday practice

Expected Outcomes:

1. Parents identify the importance of volunteering
2. Parents have access to resources such as tutoring, after school programs and scholarships
3. Parents recognize available funding from the ministry of education and how to apply for it.

Check- in

Parents are asked to describe in one word their feelings about parental involvement.

Reflection Moment

Materials needed: Parent Engagement Video

Invite parents to brainstorm on the following question:

What motivates you to advocate for your child (ren).

After a discussion with the group invited parents to watch a video about parental involvement from People from Education to reflect on what does actually mean and tips to better support their child (ren).

Content

Materials needed: Handouts, chart paper, markers

Group activity:

Parent participants are invite to form 4 working groups and read a document with “Tips for Parents” in the following topics: Homework, solving problems in school, high school courses and choices and parent teacher interviews. There should be a leader assigned to each group to make it work smoothly.

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After reading and discussing as a group, each group will present with the following instructions:

Group 1: Homework	Parents will be asked to play role a situation presenting the tips to support children at home with their homework.
Group 2: Solving problems at school	Parents will be asked the following question: What barriers do you have to face when engaging in them? Parents are asked to draw the process to solve problems at school.
Group 3: High school courses and choices	Parents will be invited to discuss the process and present a summary through a drawing of the process .
Group 4: Parent-teacher interviews	Parents will be asked to mock a parent- teacher interview. Each group will present their topic to the audience.

Main themes related on how to promote effective parental involvement this week will include:

- A general overview of volunteering in Canada
- Spectrum of volunteer engagement: a continuum that includes informing oneself about an issue, supporting a cause, actively participating, and adopting leadership roles. These range from the most passive to the most active levels of engagement.
- The value of volunteering:
- Volunteer is fundamental to a healthy and democratic society in Canada
- Volunteer is vital for strong, inclusive, and resilient communities
- Volunteer builds the capacity of organizations
- Volunteer is personal
- Volunteering is about building relationships
- Guiding principles for volunteering
- Volunteer opportunities at schools
- Volunteering TDSB
- Volunteering with TCDSB

Speaker presentation:

A representative of People for Education to speak about Parental Involvement.

Action

Materials needed: Paper, pens

Parents are asked to write down in a piece of paper what strategies they use to get their kids to talk after school, what actions they carry out to talk with their kids about school related topics. Invite them to be as specific as possible:

How do they introduce the conversation? What questions they ask to the children? When do they think is the best time to talk?

Invite parents to compare notes in pairs and ask them to focus in sharing strategies they have successfully used to get their kids talking about school.

Allow 3-4 minutes for discussion, then call on parents around the room to share their strategies.

Check-out

Parents are asked to share with one word what are they taken with them.

Facilitator Checklist

- Materials
- Community Agreement
- Videos
- People for Education Handouts

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Discovering your Inner Leader

Learning Objectives:

1. To reflect on the personal qualities of a leader and to enhance participant's leadership skills
2. To practice hands on techniques to promote effective public speaking.
3. Learn the protocol and process of making a deputation.
4. Learn the basics of assertive communication.
5. To reflect on their journey as parent ambassadors

Expected Outcomes:

1. Parents identify themselves as leaders in their communities and are ready to take action
2. Parents feel confident delivering presentation
3. Parents understand the process to make a deputation at a municipal or provincial committee.
4. Parents are able to identify specific actions to deliver back in their communities

Check- in

Parent participants are asked the following question:

If you were a bird, what kind of bird would you be and why?

Reflection Moment

Materials needed: Learning tool: Discovering your inner leader

Invite parent participants to reflect on the journey that they embarked over the last 8 weeks.

What Motivates You? : Please identify your top four motivators for being a Parent ambassador by circling them.

- Making a difference in my child's education
- Better understand the education system
- Being part of a community
- Support other parents
- Raise awareness
- Desire to join a school council
- Having responsibility
- Being recognized for my work
- Being appreciated and thanked
- Doing interesting and challenging work
- Opportunity for personal growth
- Opportunity to gain job skills
- Use of my knowledge and skills
- Being part of a team

Note: the goal is to find out the main motivator to be in the process... as a parent, as a group... and as a Latinx community... At the end, closing underlining next steps in concrete actions.

What action are you going to carry out in the next months?

Content

Materials needed: Deputation process information sheet

Introduction to public Speaking Guidelines, the content should explore the following:

- Why Public Speaking? Before you speak, while you speak and after you speak- tips.
- Principles of Assertive and Effective Communication
- Process for preparing and making a deputation at a Board committee.

Hands on practice: Part 1

Participants will work in small groups or pairs to choose a topic they would do a deputation on. They will identify the steps they would need to take in order to make a deputation about this topic to the appropriate audience. As a group they will present the steps they would take and a short outline of what they would say.

Action

Materials needed: Work Plan Template for Community Projects, post it notes and pens

Group work activities

Participants are given post it notes to brain storm and reflect on the topics presented during the Latinx parents for change project.

Each participants is ask to write down the topic that they would like to learn more about and or are passionate about.

What are you passionate about? Which session/ topic do you identified the most with?

Participants will begin planning for their action projects by deciding on whether they would prefer individual or group projects. They will then work in groups on filling out the workplan template to help them organize and clarify their action projects.

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Check-out & Evaluation

Check-Out: Using storytelling, parents are invited to create a collective story starting with the following sentence:

Once upon of time, when I went took the Parent Ambassador training....

Each parent will add just one sentence until the last person close the story.

Facilitator will wrap up the activity thanking parent participants for their commitment with their child (ren) Education and for attending the 8 weeks.

Evaluation: Parent participants are asked to fill the post-test evaluation form.

Facilitator Checklist

- Materials
- Learning tool: Discovering your inner leader
- Deputation information sheet
- Work Plan Template for Community Projects
- Post-test Evaluation Form