

Introduction to Breaking Barriers Video Transcript

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Danielle Luer: Hi, my name is Danielle Luer. I'm a WIDA Fellow and a multilingual educational coordinator. I'm excited to introduce one of the ABCs of Family and Community Engagement, Breaking Barriers. Addressing barriers impacting multilingual families and communities, and developing and nurturing responsive systems and practices is the focus of this ABC. Breaking barriers is an important area because it addresses how individual efforts alone are not sufficient for creating responsive family and community engagement efforts. Without considering barriers, especially ones at the school or district level, multilingual learners and their families often get blamed for issues that are out of their control or are not culturally and linguistically responsive and sustaining. Addressing barriers for multilingual families and communities involves collaboratively building practices and policies that center multilingual family and community voices, knowledge, and priorities. For example, in my district, we recently started using an app that, uh, you can text using the language of your choice. This has really opened up doors for families and educators. This Breaking Barriers Snapshot features multilingual students, their families, and educators. It includes examples and practical ideas from the field, including a tool for mapping and addressing barriers, and resources for navigating change with students individually and in a school or district. I invite you to explore the Breaking Barriers Snapshot resources and adapt them to your context. Barriers can seem impossible to overcome, but I know from experience when we collaborate around solutions, we can chip away at the barriers and begin to create positive outcomes for everyone. We hope these resources offer practical ideas and examples for you. Thank you for everything you do for our multilingual learners and their families and our communities.