

# Building Trust: Coffee Chats

## Video Transcript

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Hello, my name is Pushpanjali Sengupta, and I'm one of the MLL facilitators at an elementary Title I school in the state of Washington. I'll take a couple of minutes to address some questions about community and family engagement and empowerment. One of the questions is establishing the trust at the beginning of developing relationships with multilingual families through the coffee chats that we have at our building. So, at the start of the building with multilingual families, you know, creating the trust is really essential.

[T]hrough our MLL coffee chats, I've been connecting with families regularly, whether it is face-to-face, through emails, phone calls, or Talking Points. [W]hen I make the phone calls, I just make sure that it's on a regular basis, and it is not to bring forward any challenges or struggles that the student has, but more as a positive for the family. [T]his really helps to foster open supportive communication. [T]hen, I make it a priority also to, instead of just giving information, I ask families what they would like to talk about or what they would like to discuss and share with me, . . . making sure that I am centering their voices and their needs in the conversations, . . . by highlighting also their strengths and skills and recognizing that each of them bring[s] in a lot into our school and community. We build a partnership, which really helps in building that trust and keeping that communication open amongst . . . all parties.

The other thing I [want to] talk about is also about connecting through the coffees, connecting with administrators and other leaders in the district, and also our staff. So, as I continue working with the MLL families through our coffee chats, I also make it a point to connect with our staff, . . . not just our principal [or] assistant principal at our building, but also with the director of our department. I share with families what my purpose is. I'm really clear that I want to bring your voice to the table and I share [those] topics that they care about, whatever they are giving us, their questions, their feedbacks, you know, their hopes through different activities, and feedback documents. And then, I not only share those with the staff and leadership but check in with particular teachers.



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If I know that a particular family is having some challenges or is struggling with maybe communication or has particular questions specific [to] their child, I make sure that I talk to the teachers, to bring it to the teacher and work with the teacher to make sure that communication is open, and I'm supporting and bringing forward what the families want to talk about.