

Juntos Es ... Educators Video Transcript

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Danielle Luer: We meet monthly with our Spanish-speaking families, and the meetings are held entirely in Spanish. So everyone feels welcome, feels like they belong, and they're able to really speak freely about their concerns about the school, concerns about their children. It's become quite an opportunity to build some social capital amongst our families and create a situation where they're allowed to bond with each other over their shared concerns. But it's also allowed us to bridge out into the schools and the principals, and it's fun to see our administrators come into those meetings and be among the linguistic minority, and having to listen to interpreters through headphones or having to struggle with language because they're no longer the dominant language in the room. And that has been a real eye-opener for our administrators, just creating an opportunity where they can feel what that's like. So we are proud of that group. We're really very proud of that group because they are able to bring a voice to that community particularly, and to share their concerns with the school in a way that's received and also just very culturally responsive to their needs.

Lizzy Castro: These families need it. The families have expressed the need for belonging, the need for engagement, the need for people to reach out to them and getting them to know the systems, and a concern and an investment in their students. Within the Juntos community, in our groups, we've developed our own unit and very community-focused, where they watch out for each other, and they feel like there's a sense of belonging. And then us going to the school has made it so that they feel attached to the school in one way or another.

Esmeralda Lopez (speaking in Spanish): Juntos es una comunidad. Vienen y se reúnen con otras familias que tienen las mismas preguntas, mismas preocupaciones por sus hijos, hasta cosas que igual yo he pasado, cosas en donde yo he visto hubiera sido importante haber sabido eso o cómo me hubiera gustado que mi papá o mi mamá estuvieran presentes y hubieran aprendido de estas cosas que se pueden hacer, en cosas en las que ellos pueden ayudarnos. Simplemente veo esa comunidad. Es un lugar en donde uno puede juntarse y vivir experiencias similares, cosas que todos pasamos. Siento que esto igual les ha dado esa oportunidad de ser quienes son y les ha dejado

que ellos se sientan en confianza y que no tengan miedo de expresarse en el modo en el que ellos crean más conveniente.

[Juntos is a community. It is a ... they come and they get together with other families that have the same questions, same concerns about their children, same ... even things that I also have experienced, things that I have seen that would have been important to know or how I would have liked for my father or my mother to have been there to learn about things that can be done, things that they can help us with. I see that community. It is a space where people can get together and live similar experiences, things that we all go through. I feel that this is, this has allowed them, this has given them that opportunity to be who they are and it has allowed them to feel comfortable and not be afraid to express themselves in the way that is most convenient for them.]

Voiceover: We would like to thank Danielle Luer, Lizzy Castro, and Esmeralda Lopez for graciously sharing their Juntos experiences and taking time to collaborate with us. We appreciate you.