



English Learner Parent Advisory Council (ELPAC): Getting Started

MATSOL Presentation

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English Learner Parent Advisory Council: Getting Started

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Guidance for English Learner Parent Advisory Councils

August 2018

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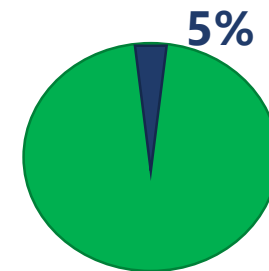
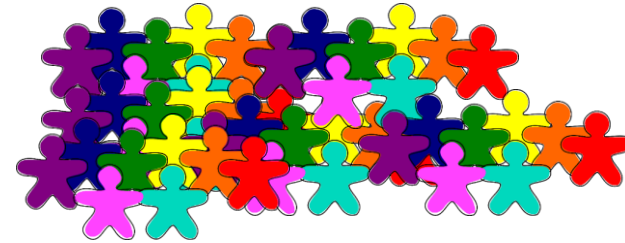
Building Collaborative Partnerships

- Collaborating with Other Councils
- Collaborating with Community Partners



1- English Learner Parent Advisory Councils (ELPAC) (603 CMR 14.09)

- Districts that require an EL Parent Advisory Council are those with 100 or more English learners or where English learners comprise 5% of the student body
- Schools that require an EL Parent Advisory Council are those that have ELE programs and are underperforming or chronically underperforming.
- The council shall receive assistance from the ELE Director or other appropriate school personnel as designated by the Superintendent.

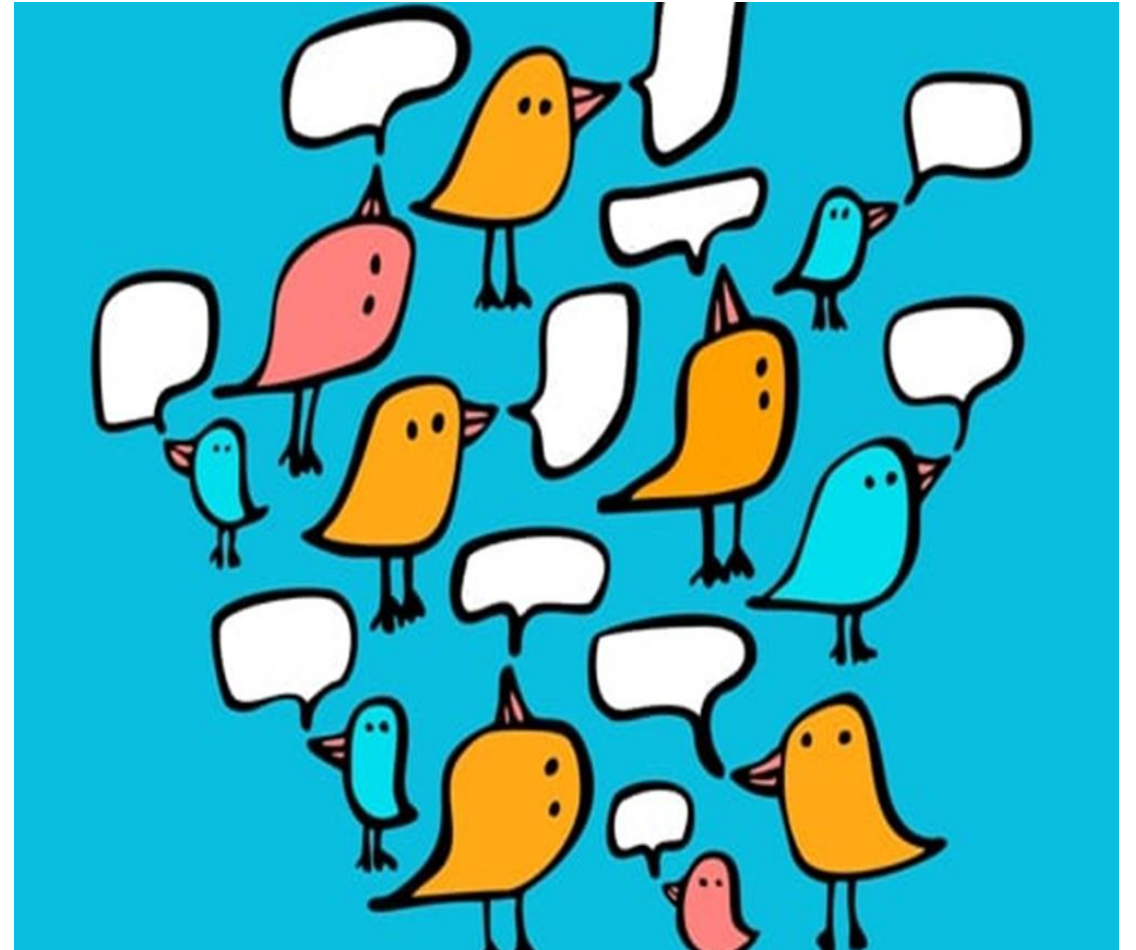


Think, Pair, Share

What is the purpose of an ELPAC?

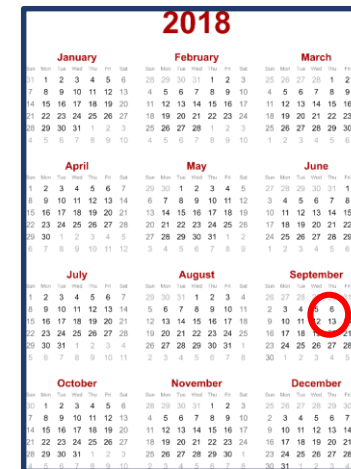
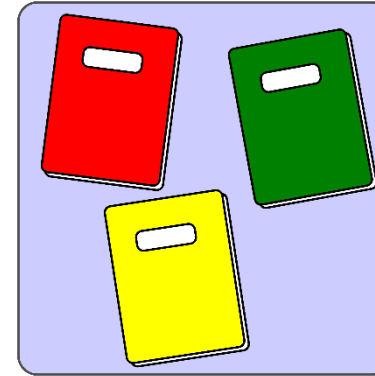
Does your school or district have an ELPAC?

- How did you engage parents to join?
- If not, what steps are being taken to start an ELPAC?



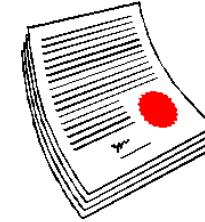
1- Some ELPAC Duties

- Advise the district on any new ELE programs before they are submitted for approval
- Participate in the review of district and school improvement plans as they relate to English learners
- Meet at least annually with the school committee or school council



1-Some ELPAC Duties

- Advise the school district, school committee, and board of trustees on matters related to English learners
- Meet regularly with school or district leaders to participate in the planning and development of programs to improve educational opportunities for English learners
- Create by-laws (rules) regarding officers and operational procedures



1- Establishing Bylaws

- When first established, the ELPAC must create bylaws regarding officers and operational procedures.
- The bylaws can define:
 - the leadership roles and responsibilities,
 - the process for selection of officers,
 - the frequency of meetings, and
 - the process for amending the bylaws.
- The ELPAC may also establish guidelines for attendance and participation of non-members.
- The Department recommends that ELPACs operate in a manner consistent with the Open Meeting Law.



1- Questions to consider when establishing bylaws, p.4

- What is the purpose of the ELPAC?
- What is the process to elect officers?
- What are the responsibilities of an ELPAC officer?
- When, where, and how often will the ELPAC meet?
- How can non-ELPAC members participate in ELPAC meetings?
- What are some outreach plans to maximize the representation of ELs from different schools, grade levels, language, and cultural backgrounds?



Think, Pair, Share

How does your district or school conduct meaningful outreach to parents of English learners?

How are parents currently engaged in their school community?



2- Strengthening School-Family Partnerships

- Partnerships built on **mutual respect and trust** and based on a foundational belief that **student success and district improvement** are a joint responsibility.
- Districts and schools can assist educators and families in creating and sustaining school-family partnerships by **providing support and activities** that help **develop the skills, knowledge, confidence, and attitudes for successful and productive partnerships.**

2-Strengthening School-Family Partnerships, pp.13-15

Family Engagement Principles

Family Engagement Principles

① Engage Every Family

Schools foster a welcoming culture for all parents and invest in professional development to increase cultural and linguistic competencies among district leaders, school principals, teachers, and staff.

② Build Effective Communication

Schools develop communication systems that consistently account for cultural and language differences, diminish barriers, and provide access to information to parents.

③ Empower Families as Partners

Schools help families gain knowledge about the school system, affirming the role of families as genuine partners in support of student learning and achievement.

④ Involve Families in Decision-Making

Schools develop structures for parent forums and focus groups, anchored by cultural and language supports, which provide parents with the opportunity to have a voice and participate in decision-making.

⑤ Leverage Community Partnerships

Schools involve community partners that can serve as important bridges to develop strong, trust-based relationships with parents.



2-Questions to Build Parent and Family Partnerships, p.11

- What are the opportunities for parents and family members to support and be involved in their children's education in this district and school?
- How do other individuals and groups within the school support the success of ELs?
- What programs and services are available in the district or school for ELs?
- What knowledge and skills can parents and families share with the school community?
- What additional support do families need to enable their participation in the ELPAC?
- How can the ELPAC provide regular input to the school district, the school committee or board of trustees?

2/3- Best Practices: Developing and Supporting Effective ELPACs

- Effective ELPACs build on school-family partnerships that regard student learning and school improvement as a shared responsibility between schools and families.

American Institutes for Research (SEDL) and the U.S. Department of Education (2013). *Partners in Education: A Dual Capacity-Building Framework for Family-School Partnerships*.

- These partnerships, established through relationships based on mutual respect and trust, can build bridges and enable parents to engage in the education of their children.



3- Best Practices: Developing and Supporting Effective ELPACs

Building Collaborative Partnerships

- ELPAC members should:
 - Establish reliable and effective communication systems at the beginning of ELPAC implementation.
 - Regularly publicize information about ELPAC activities to families within the school district or school, and to other stakeholders.



3- Best Practices: Developing and Supporting Effective ELPACs

Building Collaborative Partnerships:

- Include ELPAC updates in **school notices** or **district calendars**.
- **Schedule meetings**, secure **meeting space**, and **language assistance**
- Set up **regular meetings and communication with ELPAC** leaders to ensure that district leaders promptly address parents' needs.
- **Train teachers and staff on the role of ELPACs** so that they can inform parents and support their participation.
- **Implement culturally proficient practices** to enhance the partnership between schools and families from diverse cultural backgrounds.
- **Recruit parents from different language backgrounds** to become Parent Liaisons to conduct parent outreach.
- Request assistance from different **local community and civic organizations** to inform parents of the opportunities to participate in the ELPAC or contribute in other ways.



Think, Pair, Share

What are the roles and purposes of other councils in advising the school district or school?

How do they support English learner success?



3-Questions to Build Partnerships with other Councils, p.11

- What are the roles and purposes of other councils in advising the school district or school?
- How is our work similar? How is it different? How can we align our efforts?
- What are some recent achievements of the council? What can we learn from these successes?
- What issues or concerns can we address together?

3- Best Practices: Developing and Supporting Effective ELPACs

Collaborating with Other Councils

- ELPACs partner with School Councils and Special Education Parent Advisory Councils (SEPACS)
 - Strengthen the representation of ELs throughout the district
 - Include EL parents who would like to participate in these groups
 - Share information and experiences,
 - Hold joint meetings, and
 - Promote collaboration through other activities

Think, Pair, Share

What community partners are part of your parents and families outside of school?

How could they support the ELPAC and school community?



3- Best Practices: Developing and Supporting Effective ELPACs

Collaborating with Community Partners

- Districts and schools can support the success of ELPACs by connecting with community partners such as:
 - local community organizations,
 - businesses,
 - non-profit organizations,
 - youth organizations,
 - universities,
 - libraries, and
 - family centers

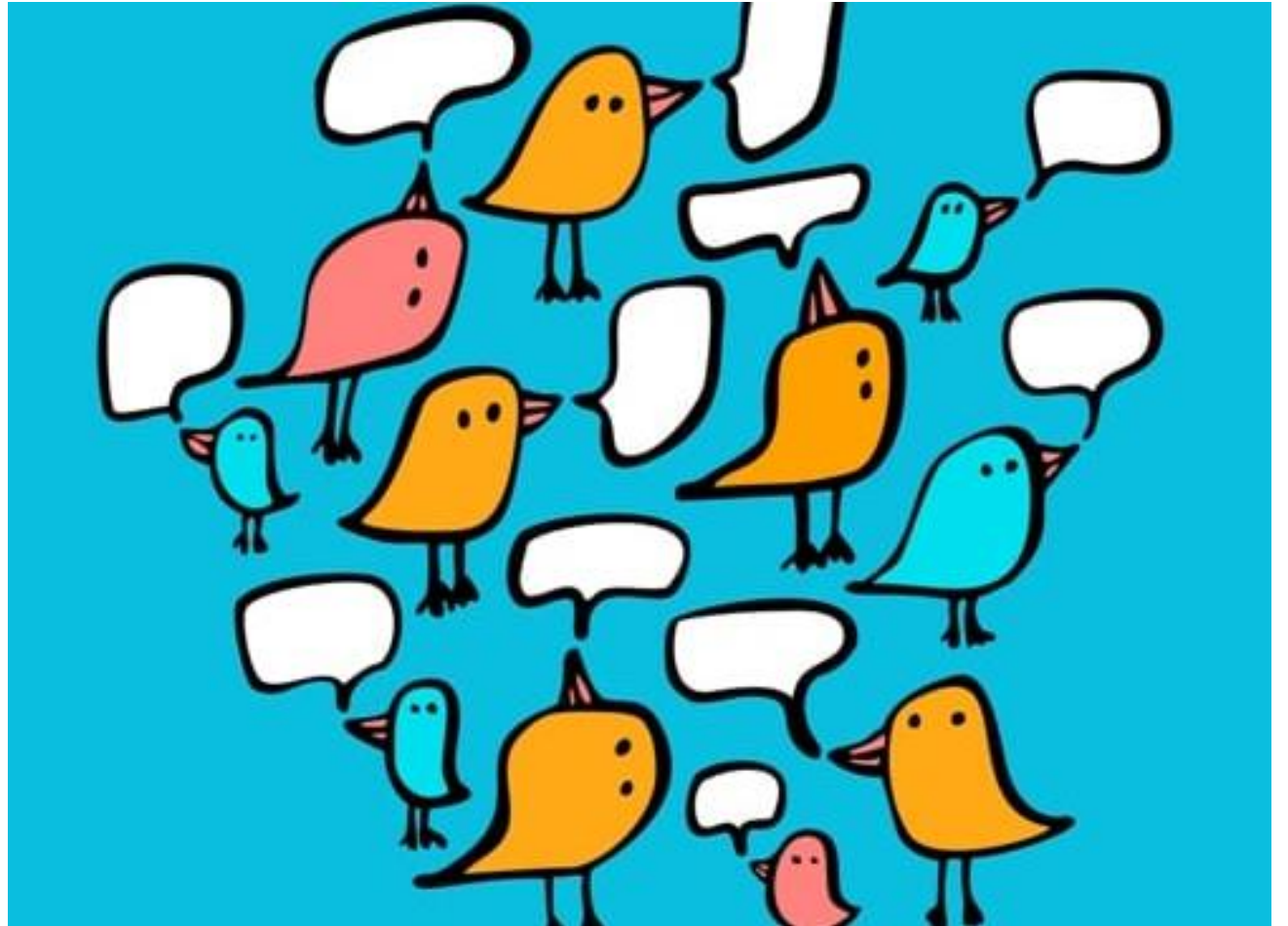
3-Questions to Build Partnerships with Community Organizations, p. 12

- How can the organization support our council?
- How are parents in our school community involved in the organization?
- Do any parents have active or leadership roles in the organization?
- What is the best way for us to communicate and work together?



Think, Pair, Share

What are your next steps for developing or supporting your ELPAC?



Questions



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THANK YOU

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Parent Engagement Resources

- Latino Education Institute. <https://www.worcester.edu/Latino-Education-Institute/>
- Massachusetts Parents United (MPU). <https://www.maparents.org/education>
- Parent Institute for Quality Education (PIQE). www.piqe.org
- Right Question Institute (RQI). <https://rightquestion.org/about/leadership/>
- TESOL International Association Community and Family Toolkit. <http://www.tesol.org/docs/default-source/advocacy/tesol-community-and-family-toolkit.pdf?sfvrsn=0>

