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WEBINAR

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PARTICIPANTS:

Introduction and Moderator:

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Discussion 1. Why is Family Engagement Important, and Why is It Particularly Important Now?

YAW OSEI ADUTWUM
Minister of Education
Republic of Ghana

SARAH BOUCHIE
Chief Impact Officer
LEGO Foundation

Discussion 2. How Can Family Engagement Help Improve and Transform Education Systems to Provide Breadth of Skills in the 21st Century?

CAROLINA PIÑEROS
Executive Director
Red PaPaz

KATARINA SANDOVAL
Deputy Secretary of Academic Engagement & Finance & Operations
New Mexico Public Education Department

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P R O C E E D I N G S

(Video shown)

MS. WINTHROP: Good morning, good afternoon, good evening, everybody who is participating. Thank you for joining us from around the world. I know we have a number of folks in different time zones. I'm thrilled on behalf of the entire team who has worked on this family-school engagement playbook to welcome you.

And I want to first start off a huge shout of thanks to our family engagement and education network members. I would name every single of them, but there are close to 50 partners on the ground leading jurisdictions, leading parent organizations, leading nonprofits, so I won't have time to name them, but you know who you are. And this was very much a co-creation process to get to this point. We're so grateful for all the time and effort and all the parents and teachers you helped input into this process, their voices.

We're also hugely grateful to our supporters. I want to give many thanks to them, particularly the LEGO Foundation and the BHP Foundation, for being incredible funders, because they were quite flexible when Covid hit and allowed us to pivot and continue this work in unplanned ways. And a big huge thanks also to our partners who joined us along the way, along the journey. This has been a three year project, half before Covid, half after. And huge thanks to the Grable Foundation who developed the Parents as Allies Project to join this effort and broaden Kidsburg and IDEO (phonetic) and HundrEd as partners developing this.

So thanks to everybody.

We are going to have a lively conversation today in two sessions, two dialogues. I'm so pleased to introduce very special guests with us. The first dialogue is — so I'm just going to introduce them and not yet invite them to the screen — the first dialogue is going to be with Minister Aduwum, the Minister of Education of Ghana, and Sarah Bouchie, the Chief Impact Officer of the LEGO Foundation. And I would be remiss here if I didn't say that we appreciate the LEGO Foundation for many, many reasons, but especially their respect of our independence. And I just want to reiterate — which is true for Sarah and every other panelist — that the views here are solely of those of the speakers.

And then in the second dialogue we will have Carolina Piñeros, who is the Executive

Director of Red PaPaz, and Deputy Director Sandoval, who is the Deputy Secretary of Education of the New Mexico Public Education Department in the U.S.

We are so pleased to have you.

We will be taking questions as we have this lively exchange and debate that will be fast moving. I just tweeted out — you can go to @RebeccaWinthrop — it's #FamilyEngagement. And the link to the playbook, because we've already had two questions in from Francis from Zion Basic School and Debbie from Johns Hopkins who have asked how can they get their hands on the playbook, how can they get more follow up information.

The other thing we will be doing is everyone who is participating today we will send you an email tomorrow with all the links that are on line, if you don't find them on Twitter, and also an invitation to sign up for guided workshop. If you are interested in having a more in depth discussion around the contents of the playbook with your teams, please do sign up for that.

And so with that, I would like to invite onto the screen Minister Adutwum and Ms. Bouchie and we will get started. Thank you both for being here.

Mr. Minister, is your video working?

MINISTER ADUTWUM: Yes.

MS. WINTHROP: Coming — perfect.

So huge thanks to both of you. There's a couple of topics and themes I want to talk about today with you. The first one is really around the importance of family-school engagement. And I want to share with you my motivation for why we did this playbook and why we thought it was so important. And I know both of you, over the long course of your public service in education have worked heavily on family-school engagement at different points in time.

Mr. Minister, I'm thinking about early on in your career when you were running a charter school network in Los Angeles in the United States, you heavily leaned on family-school engagement as an important strategy. And, Sarah, I'm thinking about your work prior to the LEGO Foundation where you led a global girls education initiation across many countries. And I know deep engagement with community was really essential for you too there.

So I'll first frame why we were motivated to this and then turn to you to see why you think

family engagement is so important, particularly in light of Covid.

So from my perspective you both well know that we have been working very hard and are quite worried about education and equality. And ever since several years ago now, I did this research with my colleague, Eileen McGivney, on the 100 Year Gap, which basically is this terrible finding that in many countries the kids who are most poorly served by the education system, it's going to take about 100 years to catch up to the kids who are well served by the education system given the current pace of change.

And we've been looking at leapfrogging strategies to accelerate progress. And one of those strategies that we've been looking on in our book, *Leapfrogging Inequality*, was around activating and tapping any sort of asset in the community that can come in and complement and support children's educational experience. And we were heavily looking at an educational experience that is rich, holistic, and, you know, fit for a 21st century, for all children, and develops a breadth of skills.

So we really felt that harnessing sort of the power of family and community is one way — it's not the only — to rapidly accelerate progress and address this education inequality gap. And I also think that because of Covid really putting family engagement on the map for education systems, it's a real moment to transform how we do family-school engagement long-term moving in the future. One of the insights we found in our playbook is that parents moving forward are really expecting to be more deeply engaged in their kids education. We see that in nationally representative surveys across multiple countries. I wanted to read one quote from a parent who we talked to in a focus group who I thought summarized the feeling. This parent says I felt like I knew more during the school closures what my child had been learning than the entire three and a half other years she's been in school.

So I wanted to start off with you, Minister Adutwum. You know, tell us about your perspective on family-school engagement. Why you thought it certainly has been important and how your perspective has changed because of Covid.

So over to you.

MINISTER ADUTWUM: Thank you so much. A wonderful opportunity. I hope you know that as the current ambassador of leapfrogging everywhere I have spoken I — if you follow my speeches on YouTube, you are more likely to hear about leapfrogging inequality. It has created a sense of urgency

for me even before I became Deputy Minister for Education and — I'm sorry, Minister for Education — I am now the Minister and I am better able to push policies and ideas to a very high level and to get the president to really give me the leverage to move things forward. But leapfrogging inequality has actually changed — of giving me the impetus and the sense of urgency. And I talk about who will be around in the next 100 years and if you want to catch up in the next 100 years, do think (inaudible) are waiting for you to catch up in the next 100 years? By the time you get there, they are gone, ahead of you. So in Ghana, leapfrogging inequality and alignment strategies are something that we are using in every facet of our education transformation agenda.

We believe that parent engagement, as you rightly pointed out, is critical as one of the leapfrogging strategies. The questions that are posed to educators in Ghana, are both teachers and members of the elite class and others, is this simple concept. I call it the 90-90-90 Plan. What it means is that by fourth grade, that is age 10, I want 90 percent of the students to be able to read and write proficiently. And I ask them that if I come to your village, a small village, if I get 90 percent of the students to read by age 10 and I get 90 percent of most of them to move onto high school, and from high school 90 percent of them to move on to tertiary, what will happen to that village. And everyone said there will be total transformation. This is not difficult to do.

So now we've created what we call communities of excellence where the chief of the village is the patron of education, the queen mother is the ambassador for education. The whole community, we told them, we need to find accommodations so that the teachers will live in the community. And we are going to have a small library. The Library Authority of Ghana is going to supply the books. With a set of books in this school they will have to coordinate who then support the literacy program at the school. And what it means is this, when this grade finishes with them, let's move the books to another grade. And the whole concept is that we're creating a community of excellence championed by the chief and the elders and the parents. And, in fact, in those communities, what we are doing differently is that for those parents who cannot read, there is going to be literacy classes for them so that they can really be absorbing.

We have selected a few communities across the country and what will happen in that community will commence before that community participation is key, because the entire community is

going to know that by primary 4, which is age 10, every child in this community should be helped to read. And if they can't read now there is a literacy coach. And, by the way, there's a library in this village and the children have access to books. And when they don't have access to books, then that really that is implementing the communities of excellence — we are sharing the books with them. And, consequently, what we are trying to do here is that we are trying to put into this community everything that a school needs in order for them to succeed, but it will be championed by the chief and educators will be in a support role so that the chief is the one who is going to say, ah, my children and this way the parents agree to come in and celebrate learning. And we've directed the parents whose children have 100 percent attendance will be recognized, the same way that I did in my schools in LA, where we had recognition events and parents were given certificates of recognition for the attendance of their students. Because we realized that if the parents were not involved, the kids were not going to show up in an urban school environment in Los Angeles. And when we were getting 98 percent average daily attendance, we give the credit to the parents and we supported them.

In Los Angeles we had what we call family development institutes. Once a month parents were coming to learn how they can support their children to succeed, understanding that in the Los Angeles environment that any grandparent who will not (inaudible) support his son in chemistry, it was left to us. But what we needed was the motivation of the parents to get the child to come to school, and when the child is there then we do extra classes and extra activities for them to succeed, so the path that the uneducated parent cannot bring to the table. They will compensate with that with their motivation through their children so that the children will come and sit there understanding that my mom wants me here, my dad wants me here, they want me to succeed. And in that case the school is telling the same thing to the child as the parent. Well, we were preaching to them about the fact they can succeed, we are preaching to them about the American dream and that everything is possible. And now the parent who is an immigrant is also telling the same story to the child, that you can succeed.

You know, African-American parent is also telling the child that, hey, what I couldn't do, you can. And I was always looking at that and looking at what my father, who was uneducated — he was actually the ambassador for education in my village as the chief. He went to every single class and motivated the children, telling them I want you to become who I didn't become.

MS. WINTHROP: That's a great story.

MR. ADUTWUM: Yeah, he didn't go to school, but he was a good motivator.

MS. WINTHROP: And you actually, Minister, already answered a question I was going to pose. We had three or four questions that came in — you're ahead of the game, as usual — three or four questions come in about how can you engage parents who are not educated themselves in low resource environments, et cetera.

So those are great examples.

Sarah, I'd like to shift to you. Tell us about your perspective on family-school engagement, why it's important, and do you also have some great examples about what might we do and what might give you hope?

MS. BOUCHIE: Thanks so much, Rebecca. And I think the Minister's examples are really sharp about the kinds of things that families and schools can do together.

You know, your reference of the 100 year gap, global pandemic, it really does bring about the urgency of the moment. Many years ago when I worked with these programs of really trying to target girls who are out of school or at risk of dropout, we knew that families were critical to supporting everything from changing workload patters and boosting self confidence to ensuring that children have really aspirations for their future, what did they see of themselves. Because we know that exposure and encouragement and exploration of different kinds of content and ways of thinking about the world, it supports that motivation and curiosity to learn that really undercuts children's success in an educational environment.

So it's important not only for parents to do that, but for older siblings and community members, just as the Minister was talking about.

Here at the Foundation we've seen many of those things repeated. Our recent experiences with Covid, for example, our partners have been telling us that parents with the best intentions, they want to support their kids, they really just don't know how. I think that the quote that you brought about of a parent sort of reflecting that this is the first time that I really understand what my child is doing, now that you understand that, how do you take on the teaching task, reinforcing learning at home, good learning habits, how do you encourage and really give the positive place and ensure that the

parents have the tools that they need. And we've certainly seen a lot of focus on that in our work at the Foundation.

We also know that we need to support teachers when they're working with children in new ways so that if we value these holistic learning skills, moving from maps and reading to include collaboration and problem solving and creativity, teachers really need parents and families to support this idea that you have to be a little chaotic to allow children to explore those things. And that can be a bit scary because it's less linear and less easy for skills to be quantified and assessed in those environments. And that way it's a true engagement where families can support teachers to act in that sort of way in order to develop these skills that we think are really important.

And I would just say, you know, what I find hopeful about the current moment is that the urgency of trying to make sure that children are staying on task and being able to still thrive and grow in the current environment, we know that there's a lot more partnerships that are being strengthened between school to home and home to school. And that strength and engagement I'm very hopeful will not sort of turn back even as things start to open up and hopefully get better with the pandemic.

MS. WINTHROP: That's great.

I want to go from hope and great strategies to a question that we have from Denise from the Institute of Education on really what are the barriers to good family-school engagement. What is it that's keeping us back?

And I wanted to say, to frame this in terms of — the insights that we've had in our team, is that it seems like schools have de facto, just normal — a kind of inward orientation. And we see that in the fact — OECD, for example did a survey of almost 60 countries during Covid about countries, how they were planning their school reopenings. And only 25 percent of countries even consulted parents and families on reopening plans even in the time of Covid. And so in some ways schools are caught in the cross hairs. We know this from a lot of the focus groups — teachers also — about, you know, language of instruction and who gets access to the good schools and how history is taught in my country. How race is taught is a huge issue at the moment. And I think might have made schools sort of put their walls up to try to protect themselves.

Also at the same time they need to reach out in all the strategies you guys just talked

about. So there's a bit of a tension there.

So I'd love to hear, Minister, from you what do you think the barriers are? What's stopping good family-school engagement in Ghana in particular?

MINISTER ADUTWUM: In Ghana you're going to realize that we have 30 percent of our student in private primary and junior high schools and 70 percent in public. The 30 percent happens to be your middle class, upper middle class. In the primary and junior high school they will go to private. And they prepare themselves very well so that they can then come and occupy the top level public high schools.

Now this 30 percent have engagement with schools. Then the 70 percent don't. Sometimes they don't even know that they have the role and their schools have made it as simply take it or leave it. Consequently, the outcomes then does not come out the way it should and they are less likely to then move onto high school to be part of the top performing. If they get there we have a system here in Ghana where based on your aggregate from the junior high school exam, that is how you get (inaudible). There is a science pathway, the arts pathway, the visuals pathway. We created a system that selects this on your performance in the junior high school exams. And now we have a serious inequity in terms of who gets to do science, like possibility of becoming engineer or medical (inaudible), for that matter; move up generally.

So in Ghana, in the private schools setting high parent participation, in the public school system it's limited and one main reason is we have not invited them in. We don't see them as part of the solution and consequently the quota has been created in such a way that parents don't feel welcome. And I see the same thing in urban America, where in my charter school we had to make a conscious effort to bring them in. Yesterday we were doing the National Education Week event and one of the leaders talked about where are the parents, why are they not coming. And I went up and responded and said have you invited them and have you motivated them, have you recognized them when they come? So we as a system now have to design strategies to bring them in. And that is what we are doing now, the Ghana Education Service, so that schools will implement strategies to bring the parents in.

And the good news for us is that now we are doing a student information system, setting up across the country. And what that is going to do is that every school report, parent, attendance are on

the report, there are parent meetings on the student information system. So sitting in that crowd we will be able to know, wow, this school has parents going to meetings, this school the parents are not going. They will be able to look at how do we invite them in.

but I'll tell you, the barrier is cultural. The barrier is that we haven't seen them as part of the solution. And with Covid-19, as you readily pointed out, the barrier is breaking. Now, the parents feel like I need to know where my child is when they go to school because I want to make sure they are safe. So that is an incentive for them to go to the school when you invite them because they want to locate whether their classroom arrangement — is my child safe. So Covid has brought a greater sense of urgency, which then makes it easier when we invite them to come for they want to physically see where my child is sitting. His safety is important to me and I want to —

MS. WINTHROP: Right. Those are a really good holistic outline of sort of the main barriers and strategies we need to move forward.

And I wanted to thank you, because I know you have to go back to cabinet now. I want to thank your president, who relieved you from the cabinet meeting to come participate with us. And I wish you luck. You have some really exciting parent engagement strategies coming up in Ghana, along with many other exciting work, and we wish you luck.

So thank you so much, Minister Adutwum.

And I'm going to turn to Sarah to answer the question.

Thank you, Minister.

MINISTER ADUTWUM: Thank you so much for the invitation.

MS. WINTHROP: Take care.

MS. BOUCHIE: Those were some great overviews I think from the Minister for sure. I think, you know, it just — this idea about inviting parents and families to be part of the solution is really important.

And we know there's a bigger spectrum of things. The way we've set up schools can be really intimidating when there's one right answer, we're imparting knowledge, it comes from textbooks or knowledge holders and knowledge recipients. That can be particularly intimidating for families that come from less status or power within communities. It's the system that we've grown up to and in and it's a

tension that we have to recognize for teachers.

So even if they're interested in positioning children as agents of their own learning, parents have to be brought along and really feel welcomed.

We also know that teachers have really difficult jobs. So any of us who have tried to invite more opinions and helpers into a process know that that also generates lots of ideas. And because many parents have had firsthand experience within education, it's easier to have an opinion about how it is that things should unfold. And sometimes that can be a lot to try to put together. So it's easier to keep families at bay sometimes. And you have to understand that teachers are balancing many different things with the curriculum and incentives that they have to move things. It's just an extremely challenging place to be in.

But when you can hit that sweet spot where you can invite families to be a part of the solution in a genuine thoughtful way, it really can accelerate learning for children. And that's the hard part to find, but it's certainly possible.

Wonderful. Thank you so much, Sarah. We appreciate it. Thank you for your thoughts and contributions. We'll see you a little later at the end.

I'm going to move us onto the next dialogue now.

One of the things I want to pick up on that conversation is all the interesting good different strategies that both the Minister and Sarah brought up. One of the parts of the playbook that we have is all about solutions and strategies, and that's sort of going to be the theme of the next dialogue.

We looked at 500 different strategies and approaches to family engagement across 60 countries and ended up mapping them in terms of their approaches. And I want to show you a visual. We have what we call a strategy landscape. And we think about this as a bit of a map. In the center you have the four goals that we've identified. The top two are around improving systems, improving attendance and completion and learning development. Goal three and four are really around transforming systems, transforming how the purpose of education for students and then for society. And any one of these goals you can have your approach be located in a different place. That's the green. In the home or the community, in the school or across the education system. In any one of these goals you can pull different levers and they go both ways. And the levers really — you see them in blue — go from

sort of providing information, and it could be parents providing information to teachers or teachers providing information to parents, to building relationships, which we have seen is absolutely essential, almost the bedrock to effective family engagement programs. All the way up to co-designing. Really having parents and teacher co-design programs or initiatives or approaches together.

And then there also is a range of different ways for families to engage. And you'll notice that one of the family roles is that actually you don't need families engaged at all, and when they're not engaged that usually means that it's really a strategy where it's on the education personnel. It could be training for teachers or school leaders on implicit bias or really trying to shift that inward orientation mindset to an outward orientation mindset, work that the education community needs to do to sort of see the assets and benefits that families and communities bring to the table.

So we're hoping this helps people locate where they're focused, your organization is focused on family-school engagement. And if you're interested in getting inspired around different strategies anywhere in this map, we have an interactive database in the playbook where you can go in and search by goal, you can search by country and student age level, tech level. Most of these don't require any special technology, quite a few are low tech, no broadband needed, et cetera. And you'll get a bunch of information on how the strategies were done, what the lessons learned were, follow up materials.

And I'm very pleased now to invite up on the screen people who represent two of the strategies that we've highlighted in the playbook, particularly around co-designing. Deputy Secretary Sandoval and Carolina, please join us on video. Thank you both so much for being here. You both were great examples in the playbook where you've really used sort of co-designing with communities and schools to advance one of the goals in the playbook. And I have to say that that was the area where we found least strategies, was the sort of using the design, co-design function — or lever, I would say.

So I'd love to explore, first with you, Carolina, a little bit. You started Red PaPaz. You were one of the founding member in 2003, I believe, and became president in 2004. It was a network of parents and 34 school in Colombia and it is now a national parent network across 22 departments of Colombia.

Could you just tell us a little bit about Red PaPaz?

MS. PIÑEROS: Thank you, Rebecca.

Yes, Red PaPaz is a Colombian civil society organization by a group founded by a group of parents and educators that wanted to help create a world where children are the priority and the most important actors in all decisions.

We established a parent network through a school. Now we are 523 schools, almost 750,000 parents in many regions of our country. Our pillars are common engagement, family-school partnership, children's rights, and development in a healthy and caring environment. We are more than 40 employees in Bogotá, but also in the region where we work with volunteers, schools, and families.

MS. WINTHROP: Wonderful. And I know that you have a really interesting model. I've been mentioning this model to people who have inquired after learning about it from you and you're sharing it with other members of the family engagement network. I know where you have Red PaPaz liaisons at schools who are sort of seeing how — what are the issues, what's going on in your schools, and then they — whatever the issues are you have this sort of systematic way of lifting up topics to regional representatives and then you take them sort of nationally. So it's a very bottom up approach with your basically three-quarters of a million parents you have in your network.

Do you want to share with us any other sort of unique features or reasons you think this is so effective, this model?

MS. PIÑEROS: I think because we really like hear them and we try to provide resources to parents and also to schools in educational and socio-emotional issues. But these issues are why they care about what the parents are worried about.

At the same time, we empower communities to advocate for children's rights in order to close the enormous gaps of inequities that we have. We also established four programs in Colombia, (speaking foreign language) PaPaz for parents and school resources, (speaking foreign language), it's a petition site, (speaking foreign language) is a hot line to receive reports related with people under 18 of violence, child safe from abuse materials, and the new one is (inaudible) and attendance. We also build partnerships with many experts and universities that support our work with evidence. With this evidence we provide technical support to the decision makers. We also translate the knowledge and raise awareness with families and schools.

MS. WINTHROP: Great. And actually I was hoping you could give an example, perhaps the example that we've showcased in the playbook of how that's worked from sort of start to finish. Perhaps the example of inclusive education, where it really started as a deep concern in schools and ended with you co-designing national legislation with the ministry?

MS. PIÑEROS: Okay. Since 2010 we were working with other organizations in Colombia in order to include children with disabilities in regular education. We established (speaking foreign language) and we are developing two called (speaking foreign language) in order to help families and school communities to embrace and respect diversity.

In July 2012 I found one of our partners, asked to help them in order to urge the government to be included because the campaign launched by them called (speaking foreign language) from (inaudible) focused on early education didn't include children with disabilities. We launched together an online petition called (speaking foreign language) — invisible no more. And in just two months the government accepted their mistake and issued the child with physical disability in the campaign, but also this kind of diversity in the government strategy.

MS. WINTHROP: Wonderful. Thank you, Carolina. It's a great sort of testament to the power of family and school collaboration.

Deputy Secretary Sandoval, I'd like to turn to you now. You have for a long time been an advocate of the community school approach. And whereas I think Carolina's story really illustrates the power of family-school collaboration for improving systems, improving attendance, improving completion, making sure there's inclusive education, I think your story and this idea of a community schools approach really illustrates the idea of transforming systems, transforming how you think about the purpose of education, both for students and for society.

And I'd like to take you back, if you wouldn't mind, to 1999 when you co-founded — or found solely or co-founded — I can't remember — South Valley Academy in New Mexico in Albuquerque. And I know that your experience of really hearing from families and communities transformed how you thought about that school and how you thought about schooling ever since.

Could you tell us a little bit about that experience?

MS. SANDOVAL: Absolutely, Rebecca.

Yeah, it's taking me back quite a ways and to some original home visits and home meetings where my co-founder and I were really intent on creating a charter school in the neighborhood I grew up in that would transform outcomes, not just for students who attended, but for their families. New Mexico is one of the poorest — economically poorest states in the United States. It's on the border, as you know. And so in my neighborhood many of us are children and grandchildren of immigrants. Like we know and the Minister was saying, many immigrants coming for that search for a better life, to escape the dire consequences many times of extreme poverty. And so we knew that we couldn't transform the system without being cognizant of the effects of poverty. And that really does require system level transformation and involves the community

So with those home visits we really heard and asked parents, what are your hopes and aspirations. We're creating this brand-new school, secondary school, high school. And one message that was loud and clear was we want our students to be academically successful, but we don't want them to forget who they are. And that was really the basis for one of our core values, which is as we know in the United States, the education system has been very intent, especially in New Mexico as well, measuring the core academics, reading and math. The entire system was designed reading and math scores and giving designations to schools depending on how well they did, which is appropriate. Let me first say that, that's completely appropriate. But if we really want to attend to the impacts of poverty and leapfrogging — I love that idea — of leapfrogging inequity, you have to do more than that and you have to involve the community. And the family could be part of the transformation.

And so we, together with our families, have this mantra that we're raising children first and test scores second, right. It's a yes and, but you've got to raise children first. And what that means is schools need an entire department who pay attention to these relationships, and they institutionalize it.

So at South Valley Academy we did just that. We did two things. One is we created an advisory program, which many schools across the world and in the U.S. have now, where each child has an advisor and it's their point of contact with the family and the child so that — and it's small. It's usually about 10 students. So you build those intentional relationships through text messages, through quarterly conferences. We found that that kind of personal relationship was much more effective with families, especially those who are working two or three jobs. they're not available to come to, for example, a

parent-teacher association meeting in the evening because they're at work. But if they're getting text messages or a phone call on the weekend, they will respond to that kind of outreach was our experience.

In addition to the advisory program, we also built out an entire department, just like there's a math department, a science department. It's called service learning. And so we hired teachers who were professionals and experts in developing relationships and being outwardly facing with the community. And the entire curriculum of service learning is built around community and the strengths that already exist there.

So these teachers would purposely build a curriculum and experiences for students. Where our students often in 9th grade would go back to their elementary schools and be literacy tutors and would read to their neighbors and their cousins and their little brothers and sisters and be role models. And we saw some of our students who just shined in that regard and really develop their skills. And then sophomore year was a focus on community-based organizations and understanding what a food bank was and really, again, being transformative so that they saw themselves as agents in their own community to fight against the impacts of poverty.

And that ultimately led to the school and their learning council being really intention about other opportunities to develop our parents. And so we found that many of our parents who were immigrants said we would love classes in the evening around how to use a computer, how to apply through the internet, English language acquisition. So we started developing all of those courses of our families in the evening.

And then they were looking for work, right. And so I said well, we have a food service program, we need people to cook breakfast and lunch and dinner. We created the process in such a way that our parents were able to be the ones to apply for those. And so, guess what, now they're working in the cafeteria cooking food for their own children and our students swear that this is the best food ever.

Many of our parents provide janitorial services in the office. I mean, again, it's our own community working at the school to serve our children.

MS. WINTHROP: Okay, thank you. There are two questions that have come in, I think you just answered beautifully.

Deputy Secretary, a question from Ross from the Jacobs Foundation about how can

engaging with families create sort of a community wide learning ecosystem where kids are learning not just in school, but across the platform.

And we also had a question from Pritica (phonetic) from the Akanksha Foundation talking about how can we expect families who are really, you know, struggling to put food on the table to engage with school. But if you employ them in the cafeteria or if you make, you know, sort of literacy classes that they need for their future betterment in the school, then obviously they're going to be engaged

So thank you for that. Did you want to add one thing there?

MS. SANDOVAL: I was just going to add the community school model, which many states in the U.S., including New Mexico, are promoting is providing just that. There's additional funding for schools to hire a full-time coordinator. And this person's job is to coordinate, map out the assets — it's called asset mapping. They develop those intentional relationships; they make sure that the school has a council where parents and community members are part of that council to help drive the instructional vision as well as the way the school is open and welcoming.

So we understand that schools now need that, they need departments, they need personnel to do this work.

MS. WINTHROP: And can you just in a brief sort of one-two minutes tell us a little bit about now, fast forward 20 plus years, from the founding of the school and that formative experience. And I know you were a teacher for many years and have a long and distinguished education career. You're sitting running — in charge of academic achievement and finance and many pieces of running the public education department in New Mexico, and I know you're looking at scaling this community schools approach. Can you just tell us some insights or lessons learned about how you take it from one school to an entire system, this community schools' model?

MS. SANDOVAL: Absolutely. So we as a state have been very fortunate to have community schools and have had them for quite some time before bringing it to scale.

So we had enough critical math, especially in the metropolitan areas of our state, where the county was involved, the city government was involved, and they had a model to say we have something that we'd love to share across our state and bring to scale. So our state legislature has invested millions of dollars into this model, our teacher unions very much support it, because again, they

understand that teachers need support, schools need people and personnel to do this work and how critical and transformative it can be.

So we've been very fortunate to have had this investment. We now are going into year four and it's actually a four-year grant program. So schools who are interested in the model can apply for a planning grant. They get \$50,000 just to plan it out and do the asset mapping and think with their community, what does that mean for us. And then they submit another grant at the end of the planning grant, which is \$150,000, to pay for the personnel to implement the model for three years.

And then we are now coming upon our very first cohort. They're ending their third year. And we are now working with our legislature to propose sustainability funding so that even if you go through the four year grant process, there's a mechanism by which you can continue to pay these additional folks at your school to do this work.

So very excited about that.

MS. WINTHROP: It's a very, very cool thing you're doing and we are watching closely.

I want to actually thank you both for your thoughts and contributions. I'm going to move us on to the next sort of final conclusion and we will invite you back on the screen in a little bit. So thank you, Carolina, and thank you, Deputy Secretary Sandoval.

So one of the questions we received was from Brendan from CITRS. And he asked, you know, what is the one thing that schools should really think about and do if they are to advance family-school engagement. And my answer and reflection from all the work on the playbook is really to build relational trust. And I'll show you some visuals from the playbook.

One of the deep insights that we've had is that it's incredibly important to make the space and time to have an intentional conversation around what a good quality education looks like with your families, with your teachers, with your school leaders, with your students, with your employers, et cetera. And part of why this is so important is it is a really good way to begin building relational trust.

One of the things we do note is that not any family engagement, school-family collaboration or engagement is very effective. The ones that are highly effective are those that have existing relational trust. And we also know that those that are high-cost effective are where schools are sharing information from trusted messengers. And in our surveys of parents — and we should say we

survey primary caregivers — we use parents and family member sand primary caregivers interchangeably — in our survey of parents and teachers we found that actually their beliefs are kind of different around what the purpose of education is, what a good quality teaching and learning experience looks like, what makes for a good quality school.

Here you'll see one little piece of our data and analysis. One the left-hand side are the teachers, on the right-hand side are the parents. This is a visualization of a question which we asked what was the most important purpose of school. And the blue is really around parents and teachers who answered socio-emotional development of children, sort of finding their personal sense of purpose, et cetera, and individual development is really the most important purpose of school. That's heavily where teachers landed and quite a bit also where parents landed. The orange is academic purpose of school, so preparation, rigorous content preparation for post-secondary. A lot more parents are interested in academic prep than teachers, interestingly. They gray is the economic purpose, sort of schools developing skills for work. And the yellow is the civic purpose, which is schools developing, you know, citizenship skills.

Now, schools do all of these things, but this really shows you where is the lean, where is the pull, where is the focus of parents and teachers. And you'll note actually that teachers are much more homogeneous in terms of their vision and parents are quite diverse, although they really do privilege — actually it's a little hard to see here, but most of the privilege socio-emotional. But what was very striking was when we asked parents their perception of what they thought the colored lines looked like for teachers. We said, you know, what do you think teachers answered to this question of what is the most important purpose of school. And they came back saying it's all orange, teachers only care about academics.

So we know from the system transformation literature that when you have sort of beliefs that are not aligned, and even more when you have perceptions of each other's beliefs that are even farther apart, it is a really good lever for change to bring people together and have a deep conversation about what is the purpose, what does good quality look like, and get on the same page and same vision. And that's why in the playbook we have put forward — this evidence was based on surveying 25,000 teachers and 6,000 parents across 10 countries. And from that inspiration we've put forward a series of

tools, conversation starter tools. They're very much prototypes. They are to help guide you to have an intentional conversation with the different stakeholders in your community about what you want for your children and what a good quality education looks like. We invite you to use them, try them. If you are doing it and adapting it and seeing how it goes, we would love to know about it. We are working with a series of partners after — starting tomorrow to pilot this conversation starter toolkit. And we would love to wrap you into that process or include you in that process if you're interested.

So given that, I wanted to invite back on the screen Sarah and Carolina and Deputy Secretary Sandoval to help finish this conversation and wrap us out.

I will ask you in a minute to just give a final quick lightening round closing comment, but I did want to hear your answer to Brendan's questions, which is what is the one thing that schools should do. I think it's relational trust, but do you agree? And if not, what else would you put out in front?

Carolina, let's start with you.

MS. PIÑEROS: Thank you, Rebecca.

I believe with the importance of building trust is crucial for having a strong and long lasting relationship with the families and school in order to work together and advance in the protection of the children. It is very important to always have in mind that children should be in the center of this relation. We have proposed seven actions to schools (inaudible) in order to build, strengthen, and maintain the confidence and a good work together. One is prioritizing the school-family relational work. The second is plan actions together. The third, maintain a proactive and persistent communication in a double way. The fourth, always give positive feedback. Five, personalize the communications. Six, give practical tips to parents. And, seven, build monitoring actions and programs.

MS. WINTHROP: That's incredibly helpful. Not only, yes, that's the most important, but here's the seven ways to do it.

Thank you so much, Carolina.

Sarah, I'd like to come to you. What do you think is — do you agree that establishing relational trust is kind of the most important or do you have something else that you think?

MS. BOUCHIE: Yeah, no, I'm in agreement and I think that Carolina's list is fantastic.

I just would add to this from our experience with lots of different partners and other

donors that it takes time. So so much of this is contextual and sort of staying persistent about it and setting up ways to learn and ensure that there is iteration about how you continually get that better. With reflection that involves children and families and school administrators and teachers themselves, I think is really important to that.

MS. WINTHROP: Okay, great.

Do you have anything else to add, Deputy Secretary?

MS. SANDOVAL: I completely agree and would encourage schools or institutions to find a way to hire at least one full-time coordinator to do this work and to build this trust. You will need a person whose energy and time is to make room for that relational trust. And there's lots of ways to do it, at least in the U.S. There are different funding mechanisms to do that and ways to do that.

So absolutely.

MS. WINTHROP: Okay, great.

All right, we're in agreement. So, Brendan, there's your answer.

Just to close out, you guys, all of you have seen the playbook, been part of its work over the months, years — months at least, and I'm wondering if you could just quick lightning round, 30 second each in our last minute here, give one piece of advice to your peers.

So, Carolina, what piece of advice would you give to other leaders of parent networks?

MS. PIÑEROS: The first one, become a positive leader, a leader that understands other parents' situations, especially what happened to the most vulnerable in the community. The second one, allow parents to have a voice. You will be their voice and then everyone will hear you. The third one, always try to find solutions with others that usually have a lot of worries, but they don't have answer. You will help them to find pathways and solutions. And the third one, build a network. Parents have an enormous power because our motive is the love for our children.

Thank you.

MS. WINTHROP: Thank you. Thank you, Carolina.

All right. Let's go from leaders of parent networks — Deputy Secretary, what would you tell to your other sort of state level policy makers?

MS. SANDOVAL: I would encourage them to find sustainable funding mechanisms so

that school districts and schools can actually hire these coordinators or these entire departments that would be building ongoing trust. And so schools need that. We've got funding for academic teachers, we need funding for folks to do this work.

MS. WINTHROP: Okay, great.

And last work, Sarah. What would you tell other funders and donors?

MS. BOUCHIE: I would just say, you know, it takes persistence, this kind of work. So give flexibility to your grantees to really think more about how to do this and make sure that you've got in the cycles of iteration. And then share it. Share it widely as much as you can and recognize that that's part of your responsibility and role in the ecosystem as a funder.

MS. WINTHROP: Wonderful. Well, that's it. Thank you all three for taking your time to be with us and thanks everybody for being with us. And check out the playbook on the Brookings.edu website.

Take care.

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