

**Testimony Before House Education Committee
Hearing on English Language Learners (ELLs)
May 14, 2013**

Chairperson Representative Gelser and Vice-Chairs Representatives Sprenger and Reardon, thank you for the opportunity to testify. For the record, my name is Eduardo Angulo, chairman and executive director of the Salem/Keizer Coalition for Equality. Our member organizations are PCUN, Oregon Farmworkers Union, CAUSA, the largest pro-immigrants' right coalition in the Northwest, Mano a Mano Family Center, Latinos Unidos Siempre (LUS), Willamette University Latino Students and our Oregon Parent Organizing Project.

Our Coalition is also a member of the Oregon Alliance for Education Equity (OEAA). The Alliance is an umbrella organization of over 25 African American, Latino, the 9 Tribes of Oregon Governments and Pacific, Micronesian and Asian Communities part of the APANO network.

The Alliance is a non-partisan coalition of community organizations that represent communities of color, English Language Learners (ELLs), education advocates, families/parents, allies and other stakeholders from around Oregon.

Our Coalition's organizations leaders and members and allies are all in full support of our request for this House Education Committee Hearing on Oregon's ELLs challenges. And to educate you on the incredible sense of urgency that our families have to see their children and youth become successful students who can contribute to our communities' wellbeing.

We also wanted to request that you consider becoming the champions of our children who are some of the most needy and farthest behind in their academic progress, and we have a specific request today regarding increasing staff available to support English Language Learning children.

Our current 50% graduation rate for English Language Learners is unacceptable to our communities and families and it should be unacceptable to all our Oregon legislators, education, civic, and business leaders.

We have all come together to be part of the solution in response to the vision and aspirations represented in the Governor's call to an effective and inclusive education reform from birth to college graduation.

Through the passage of the Oregon Senate Bill 253, the 2011 Legislature affirmed a clear and ambitious educational goal for the state that is known as Oregon's North Star 40-40-20 aspirational vision.

Now that we are in the process of implementing this ambitious and inclusive education reform effort we MUST examine what does it currently means for our English Language Learners.

Let's take it from the top; the Oregon Department of Education just hired the most respected ELL students' education expert in the Northwest: Mr. David Bautista.

For over 12 years now David has demonstrated to Oregonians what needs to be done to close the persistent achievement gap for our 56,000 ELLs. We are extremely excited that ODE has brought the leadership he showed in Woodburn Public Schools to the state of Oregon, as the director of Title III.

Now, the problem is that while David is a powerful leader, he is one FTE out of a team of only 1.25 FTE that must effectively help and support 132 school districts that have ELL students whose average achievement gap in reading alone is between 40% and 70%.

The **Governor's 40-40-20 aspirational vision** demands a robust investment of technical personnel who could effectively support the school districts with the effective strategies to help close the achievement gap for English Language Learners.

If, you, the Legislators really meant to invest in the implementation of the **Oregon Senate Bill 253, then you must set David Bautista and the 56,000 ELL students in the right path by supporting the personnel needed for him to effectively lead the transformation of the education for ELLs in Oregon.**

Otherwise you are going to continue perpetuating a great injustice to these 56,000 ELL students.

- Compare the **1.25** federally funded FTE dedicated to support 56,000 ELL children to the **45** federally funded FTE at the Department dedicated to improving outcomes for the state's approximately 75,000 Special Education students. Having only 1.25 FTE does not support best practice work across the state, instead only ensures federally required compliance for Title III (ELL) funds.

ODE's current resources and well-intentioned efforts cannot produce the level of improvement necessary to help schools keep ELL students in trajectory to fulfill the Governor's 40-40-20 Vision by 2025.

Now it's the right time to invest in what is right for the professionals who want to do the right thing for these 56,000 children but who lack the training and orientation on how to pursue a solid program for English language learners.

The Governor's aspirational goal of the 40-40-20 by 2025 and the Oregon Education Investment Board's recent approval of the Oregon English Learners Plan and the Equity Lens strategies to "overcome challenges associated with race, ethnicity, poverty and language" give our ELL's families a renewed hope for their future and that their children will have a chance to reach their full potential.

But if we really mean to not leave any child behind in their education in Oregon, we must include our 56,000 ELLs at the center of our current Oregon education reform and fund the ODE's Title III necessary personnel positions so they can help school districts effectively implement the new Oregon English Learners Plan.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak to you today.

OREGON ALLIANCE FOR EDUCATION EQUITY (OAEE)

MAY 14, 2013

VISION

Oregon Communities of Color, English Language Learners (ELLs), advocacy organizations, and other allies are united to ensure that schools promote equity, eliminate disparities, and value diversity so that *all* students are prepared to become successful adults.

MISSION

The Oregon Alliance for Education Equity is a non-partisan coalition of community organizations that represent communities of color, English Language Learners (ELLs), education advocates, families/parents, allies and other stakeholders. We are united to eliminate racial and ethnic disparities in education and ensure that students of color and students learning English graduate from high school prepared to be successful adults and global citizens. We educate, advocate, and engage with decision-makers to support policy changes that promote equity for students in and out of school.

ORGANIZATION MEMBERS ON MAY 14, 2013:

Salem/Keizer Coalition for Equality, APANO, NAACP Branches from Salem-Keizer, Corvallis, & Eugene/Springfield, Centro Cultural of Washington County, Latino Network of Portland, Portland Urban League, Unete from Medford, Stand for Children, Chalkboard Project, REAP Inc., Portland Teachers Program, Oregon Native American 9 Tribal Governments, Oregon Indian Education Association, Casa Latinos Unidos de Benton County, Adelante Mujeres, Siwash Resources, Oregon Commission on Black Affairs, Lyn and Benton Hispanic Advisory Committee, UNA VOZ: Latino Leadership and Advocacy Inc. & ACLU of Oregon

Supported in Principle By:

National Council of La Raza, Education Trust, Oregon Commissions on Hispanic, and Asian Affairs, Self Enhancement Inc., Oregon Diversity Institute, Latinos In Leadership from Reynolds, Portland Parent Union, BPI, & Si Se Puede Oregon, Mano a Mano Family Center, Una Voz Coalition from Jackson County, Latinos Unidos Siempre (LUS), PCUN, CAUSA, Blacks In Government & Center for Intercultural Organizing.



Salem/Keizer Coalition for Equality

Parent-Led Literacy: *Leyendo Avanzamos*

“Reading Together We Advance”

What Does the Coalition Do?

SKCE works to close the opportunity gap faced by low-income, minority students in Oregon. We speak up in state & district decision-making. We provide Latino youth with leadership development opportunities. Most of all, we organize and train low-income, Spanish-speaking parents to support their children. After all, a parent is the first teacher and best advocate for a child.

What Does *Leyendo* Do?

Leyendo Avanzamos supports low-income, Spanish-speaking parents so they can help their own children read on grade level at a young age and stay on track. We do this work in two ways:

- During the school year, groups of parents from select elementary schools meet weekly with highly trained parent facilitators from the same community. In these trainings, parents build their skills, practice working with their children, and learn how to engage with their children’s teachers.
- During the summer, we organize field trips designed to help parents build their children’s oral literacy. The trips are rich with activity-specific vocabulary and offer learning strategies parents can use to continue vocabulary development.

Why *Leyendo Avanzamos*?

Research shows that when parents read with their children and engage with their children’s schools, their children are more likely to succeed, even if parental support occurs in the parents’ native language. Building literacy skills in Spanish is shown to facilitate deeper learning and greater success in English. Parental support for early literacy will help students get and stay on track, closing the gaps in high school graduation and achievement faced by low-income Latino students in the Salem-Keizer School District and around the state.

How does *Leyendo* work? Who is involved?

Bilingual, bicultural Master Teachers coordinate the program and train the parent facilitators, ensuring

alignment with Salem-Keizer School District’s curricula and standards. For 2012-2013, we have partnered with three elementary schools in NE Salem (Four Corners, Scott, and Cesar E. Chavez). Families are invited to participate if their child’s kindergarten, first, or second-grade teacher identifies they are falling behind, and we anticipate serving more than 240 children.

A hot meal is served, and then children receive educational childcare while their parents learn new skills. Finally, parents – supported by trained parent facilitators – try their new skills with their children. Parent facilitators visit families at home if needed.



What are *Leyendo*’s Goals & Accomplishments?

In the short term, we aim for at least 80% of participating children to end the school year on or within one level of grade level in reading.

Long term, we hope to see Latino children at our partner schools catching up to their white peers on reading tests and more Latino youth who received this support graduating high school on-time.

In addition, we hope to see children enjoying reading and parents actively involved in their children’s schools, building a culture of learning among all parents there.

Our 2011-2012-13 pilot at Four Corners, where we trained parents during the school year, showed promise (see Reading Together We Advance Progress Report)

For more information, visit www.skcequality.org.



Student Outcomes from Oct.-Dec. 2012 Reading We Advance at Scott, Chavez, and Four Corners Elementary Schools

Overall Student Growth

cohorts of students at each school this year, and we will report on all students this summer.

Test Used

Scores are based on student performance on EDL2, the Spanish-language evaluation of reading development used by Salem-Keizer School District.

EDL levels are:

- Kindergarten: A, 1, 2, 3
- First Grade: 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, 14, 16
- Second Grade: 18, 20, 24, 28.

At the start of the year, Kindergarteners are tested using the official EDL pre-assessment, which tests letter and sound recognition. All scores for Kindergartners on this report utilize the pre-assessment.

Data Presented

In this report, line graphs demonstrate the progress of students in the "Reading We Advance" program (participants) relative to target scores for their grade level and the time of year. Pie graphs demonstrate the percentages of students on or below grade level entering the school year or after the seven week program.

Note: kindergarteners are expected to start out scoring a "0" on the pre-assessment, so "At Grade Level" at the start signifies a score of "0".

Grade	Target at Start	Target in Dec.	Participant at Start	Participant in Dec.
K	0	11	8.9	36.3
1 st	3	4 or 6	0.6	5.7
2 nd	16	18	12.8	15.7

Our Program

"Reading Together We Advance" – or "Leyendo Avanzamos" – is our family literacy program. Parents are empowered as their children's home teacher because they receive the tools they need in the workshops, led by parent facilitators who are native Spanish-speakers and share cultural heritage.

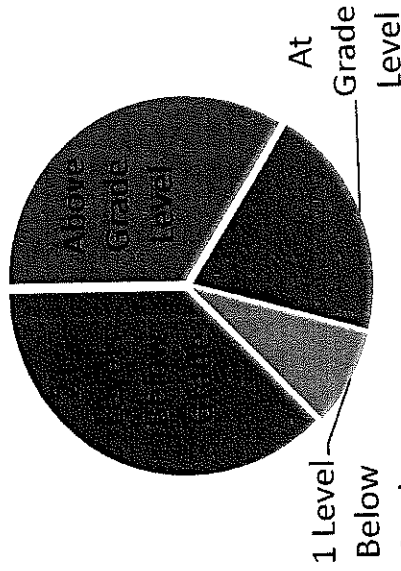
The program is a partnership between teachers and principals from three low-income schools in NE Salem (Scott, Four Corners, and César Chávez elementary schools) and SKCE. Designed by a bilingual, bicultural master teacher, our curriculum is district-aligned. We also use the district process monitoring assessment to measure reading growth. Plus, instructional assistants from each school work with the parents in each class, teachers identify students, and principals include the program in their budgets.

Initial Data

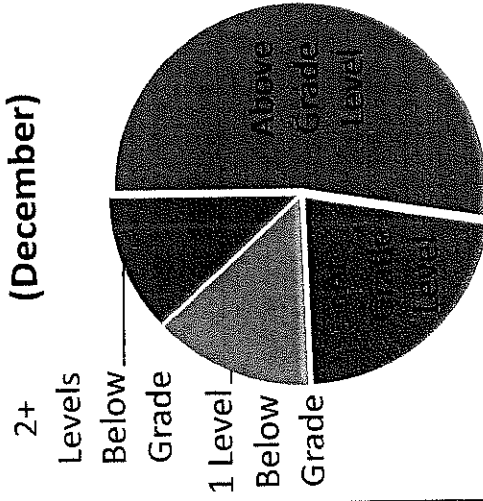
Data presented here reflects outcomes in the first seven weeks of the school year with our first cohort. Parents who attend at least four sessions with their child are active participants and are included in these results. We have found that attending four sessions is required for the program to make a difference.

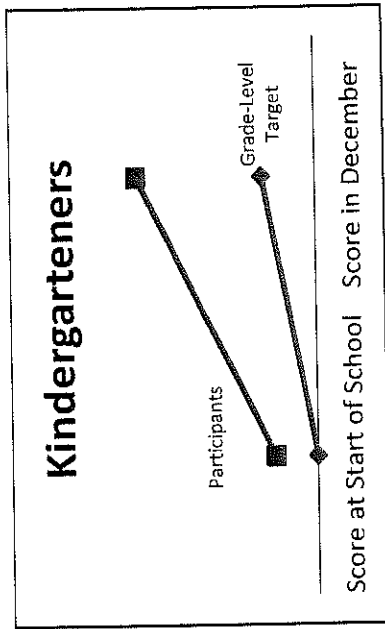
Students represented in data are from low-income schools in NE Salem with high percentages of English Language Learners. Specifically: 24 Kindergarteners at César Chávez Elementary, 15 First Graders at Four Corners Elementary, and 20 Second Graders at Scott Elementary. There will be two more

All Grades Averaged (Start of School)

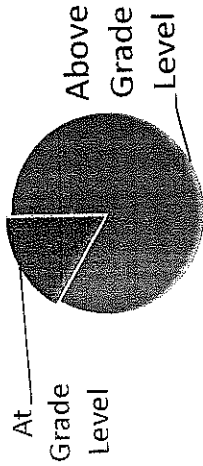


All Grades Averaged (December)

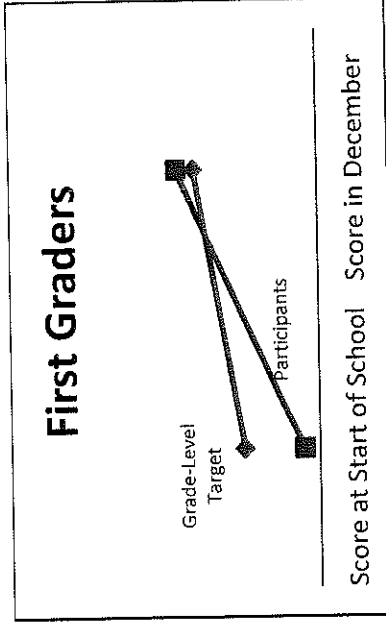
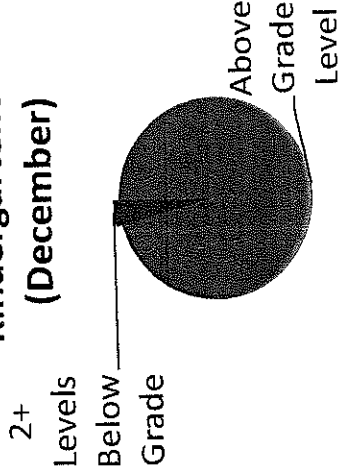




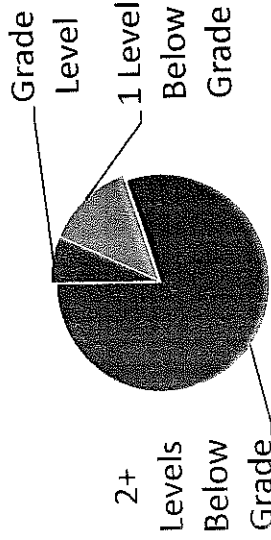
Kindergarteners (Start of School)



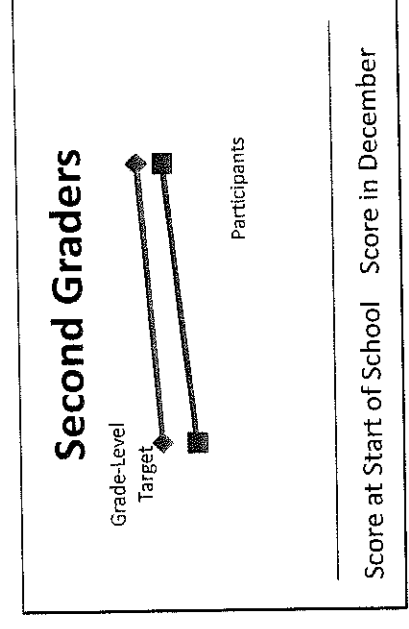
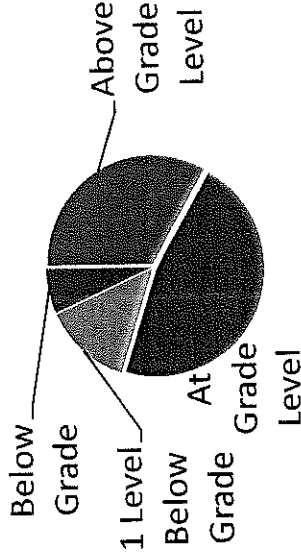
Kindergarteners (December)



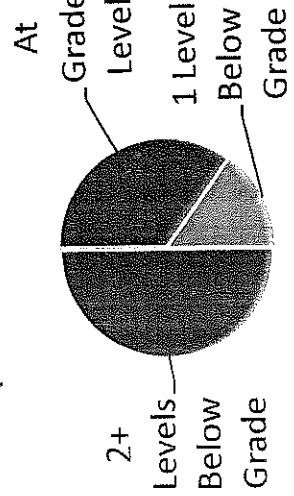
First Graders (Start of School)



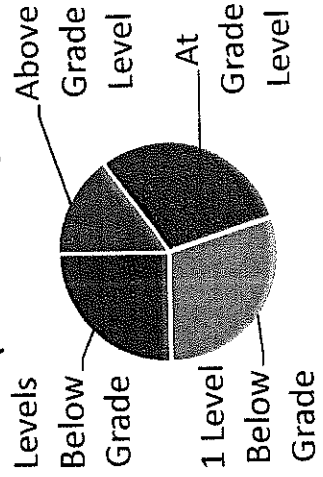
First Graders (December)



Second Graders (Start of School)



Second Graders 2+ (December)





Salem/Keizer Coalition for Equality

Youth Leadership Development

What Does the Coalition Do?

SKCE works to close the opportunity gap faced by low-income, minority students in Oregon. We speak up in state and district decision-making. We organize and train low-income, Spanish-speaking parents to support their children, since a parent is a child's first teacher and best advocate. Additionally, we provide Latino youth with leadership development opportunities.

How Do We Develop Youth Leadership?

The Coalition offers a cluster of youth programs, providing multiple pathways for youth to develop leadership and critical-thinking skills while working collaboratively on a meaningful project. Currently, our **Outcome Based Programs** are:

- **First Lego League Robotics**, competitive teams of 9-14 year olds that focuses on programming.
- **Video Production**, a group of youth aged 11-17 who create informational and/or short films.
- **Mock Trial**, competitive high school teams that build research skills and public speaking ability.[cv](http://www.skcequality.org)

These programs currently serve about 50 young people.

Why Develop Youth Leadership?

Our youth programs create opportunities to develop the leadership skills of low-income immigrant, first, and second generation Latino youth in the Salem/Keizer. When young people are more engaged and learning outside of the school day, they tend to be more successful in school. Each of our leadership development programs offers youth the opportunity to take on a challenge and increase their confidence and skills as they work to accomplish it.

These programs help students connect more with school and increase the likelihood they will graduate high school and go on to college or a career, thus helping to close the gaps in high school graduation and achievement faced by low-income Latino students in Salem-Keizer School District and around the state.

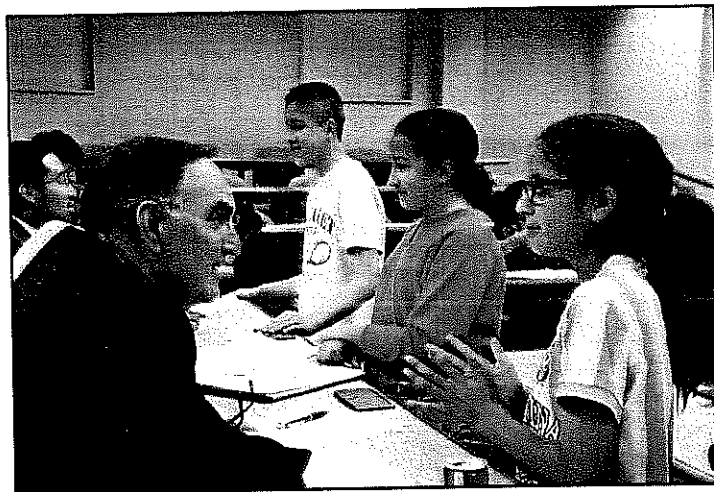
In addition, these programs are led by young Latinos who are themselves either immigrants or children of immigrants. Growing current and future leaders is critical to closing the achievement gap.

How Does each Youth Program Work?

First Lego League Robotics Teams – Twelve Latino students meet at least weekly to prepare for competition. They compete in three areas: programming robots to complete missions, presenting about the FLL core values and how they've exhibited these values, and presenting about the problem and solution they've identified on this year's theme. For 2012-13, the theme is "Senior Solutions": youth must find an innovative solution for a problem that a real senior faces.

Video Production & Summer Film Practicum – Youth in video production grow as leaders as they learn to film, edit, plan, and interview to create finished pieces. The group meets twice a week.

During the school year, eight students create a 30-minute monthly show, which is informational in nature and airs on cable-access television. During the summer, twelve students work together to create short films.



Mock Trial Teams & the Nathaniel Cordova Debate Team – Eighteen youth hone their research, critical-thinking, and public speaking skills, meeting weekly during the school year to prepare for the Oregon Mock Trial competitions. The teams also meet twice a week as the Nathaniel Cordova Debate Team in the summer to keep their skills sharp. This summer the coaches have added a three-day Summer Mock Trial Clinic.

Oregon retired Chief Justices Edwin J. Peterson and Paul J. De Muniz and Justice Martha Walters volunteer to support the teams, as do local attorneys. These experts provide the youth with mentoring and feedback.

For more information, visit www.skcequality.org.



Salem/Keizer Coalition for Equality

POP: Parent Organizing Program

What Does the Coalition Do?

SKCE works to close the opportunity and achievement gap faced by students of color and English Language Learners in Oregon. We stay involved in state & district decision-making. We provide leadership development opportunities for youth and parents. Most of all, we recruit, organize and train low-income, Spanish-speaking parents to support their children and get involved in their schools.

What Does Our Parent Organizing Program Do?

We reach out to Latino parents in the Spanish-speaking immigrant community and provide language appropriate training about the school system and how to help their children succeed. Our leadership model is peer to peer, and POP workshops are taught by trained parent facilitators who began as students of our first workshops. Ongoing events and volunteer opportunities throughout the year keep parents engaged, build skills, bring families together, and help children stay engaged in learning. POP parents also have the opportunity to learn how to advocate and participate in the larger community by attending hearings and speaking with civic leaders and administrators who are decision makers at state, district, and local levels.

Why the Parent Organizing Program?

We found that the majority of Latino and migrant families were un-informed about how to participate in the education of their children and advocate for their academic needs. Most speak little or no English, many experience significant poverty, and many lack a formal education even in their native language. These factors contribute to a great divide between families and schools, parents and children, and teachers and students. With no knowledge of our system and of their rights and responsibilities, schools previously assumed that most parents showed a lack of concern for the education of their children. We learned differently when we addressed the obstacles they faced.

How does the POP work? Who is involved?

For more information, visit www.skcequality.org.

All of the programmatic components of the Coalition—workshops, trainings, events, parent and youth leadership development, mentoring and literacy programs—grew from the original POP. Multiple venues allow for interaction with teachers, administrators, counselors, and other school staff—providing parents with experiences that contribute to their growth, the result of which makes them part of the solution: partners, collaborators, mentors, advocates, and community leaders.



Our curriculum, “Educate and Inspire,” was created by our own experts and parents working together, and is grounded in Popular Education philosophies and strategies. Bilingual, bicultural master teachers of ELL education provide professional training to parent facilitators. Parents learn best practices, how to work with peers, resolve conflicts, and how to mentor appropriately. Workshops and events are held both at SKCE’s Center and at local schools.

What are the POP’s Goals & Accomplishments?

With the mission of SKCE in mind, the Parent Organizing Project has, as its primary objective, the raising of consciousness among Latino families of the great necessity for their positive participation, for understanding of the state educational system, and for taking a role in the formal education of their children and in school decision-making in order to ensure a quality education for their children.

Since 2003, more than a thousand parents have been impacted by POP and the current line-up of programs we now have for youth and families have grown out of the work of the Parent Organizing Project.



Salem/Keizer Coalition for Equality
Educate & Inspire Curriculum
Parent & Family Workshop Overview
2012-2013

“Educate and Inspire: The Oregon Statewide Parent Leadership Training Series” was developed with the input of hundreds of Latino immigrant and migrant parents and is still growing: our team of master teachers and parent facilitators has developed and will continue to develop new workshops in response to requests from parents. The series is by and for parents, the true leaders of this project.

All workshops are designed to provide participants, typically low-income Spanish-speaking immigrants, with knowledge, skills, and tools that they can use to help their children succeed academically. **This curriculum is aligned with Oregon Governor’s 40-40-20 Education Vision.**

Unit 1: *The Reality of Latino Youth in Our Community: Recognizing the Importance of Education & Parent Involvement in Our Children’s Future Success* encourages parents to identify the importance that parent participation plays in their children’s educational achievement and lifelong success. It also gives parents information about the national and local data regarding student achievement and the reality of educational outcomes for Latino youth.

Unit 2: *No Latino Student Left Behind in Their Education: Federal Law “No Child Left Behind” (NCLB)* provides an opportunity for parents and families to understand their rights and their responsibilities according to the federal education law, as well as **information about the new Oregon’s Waiver Education System.**

Unit 3: *Education Programs and Your Child’s Learning: How Education Law has Evolved to Provide Special Programs Designed to Protect Your Children and Support Their Learning* provides an overview of how civil rights laws form the basis of educational laws and programs that protect and support all children’s potential for academic success. The workshop also explores a history of parent involvement activities that have resulted in new education laws.

Unit 4: *New Oregon Report Cards, State Tests & Understanding Your Child’s Learning Progress* equips parents and families to understand how their children’s learning is progressing so parents can participate in and support their children’s education. It also helps explain the difference between a child’s individual report card and school report cards.

Unit 5: *Effectively Communicating with Schools for the Success of Your Children* builds off of Unit 4, encouraging families and parents to take their knowledge of how their child is doing and use it to effectively communicate and partner with teachers and school staff in ways that promote and advance student achievement.

Unit 6: *Raising Achievement by Teaching & Supporting Your Children at Home* provides support to families and parents so that they can be equipped to help inspire and motivate their children, teach them language and literacy skills, assist them with school work, and help them be successful in school and life. It explores all the ways parents can be involved with their children’s education at home, like creating and communicating high expectations.

Unit 7: *School Leadership and Decision-Making* builds upon previous learning and helps parents explore the many ways they can be involved in school leadership and decision-making. It introduces them to site councils, parent advisory committees, and the parent involvement sections of a school's improvement plan.

Unit 8: *Planning and Preparing for Your Child's Future* helps parents plan for their child's future. It looks at early ways parents can encourage their children's education, including setting goals, encouraging their children to take the right courses, and talking about the future in concrete ways. The workshop is directed towards college or other post-secondary education (including vocational training, and it encourages parents to be involved from the early years in helping their kids dream (and plan) for becoming successful adults.

Unit 9: *Our Reality as Parents* provides an opportunity for parents to explore, reflect and discover obstacles that may challenge their level of engagement in their children's education and make a plan to keep each other motivated and engaged.

Unit 10: *Creating and Maintaining Effective Communication at Home* helps parents to recognize the importance of mutual communication agreements in the home among adults to create an atmosphere of consistent communication, affection and respect to help children focus on their academic progress in school. *(Part 1 of 3 in Effective Communication Series)*

Unit 11: *Reading and Understanding the Physical Expressions of Our Children and Youth* gives parents the opportunity to understand and analyze the feelings and actions of our children and youth with the purpose of creating an atmosphere of trust, support and understanding between family members, which will in turn support academic success. *(Part 2 of 3 in Effective Communication Series)*

Unit 12: *Developing Effective Disciplinary Strategies for Our Children and Youth* challenges parents to take responsibility, visualize their actions as parents, and learn techniques and strategies to guide their children and youth to empower themselves to make appropriate and mature decisions, an important skill for school success. *(Part 3 of 3 in Effective Communication Series)*

Unit 13: *Understanding Elementary Grade Level Standards (A Parent Workshop on Standards and Effective Partnerships with Teachers)* identifies different ways parents can create a relationship of mutual trust with teachers. Parents learn about academic standards and learn how to build a partnership with teachers.

Unit 14: *Gang Prevention* helps parents understand the facts about gangs, how they are harming the local community, and why youth typically become involved in gangs. Then, parents create plans to proactively ensure their children do not become involved in gangs.

Unit 15: *Preventing Teen Pregnancy* helps parents improve communication with their teenaged children. Parents learn how to explain the serious consequences of becoming parents at a young age. The workshop covers factors that lead youth to choose to be sexually active at a young age and what parents can do to help their teenaged children make different decisions.

Unit 16: *Drop Out Prevention* educates parents on why students typically drop out of school and how this can be prevented. During the workshop, parents create action plans for their own family with the goal of proactively preventing their children from dropping out.