

# FAMILY ENGAGEMENT LEARNING SERIES

## NEWSLETTER *for Leaders*

### **Founder's Focus:** *Engaging Families in Accelerating Learning for Diverse Students*

Effectively supporting the heterogeneous needs of diverse learners in the classroom can be challenging. This challenge is well documented: it is clearly communicated in national studies of teachers. I saw it firsthand when providing school psychological services, and I see it today as Family Engagement Lab works closely with teachers and schools.



It is clear that we need to do more and *do better* at supporting teachers who work with diverse learners each day. One way to do this is to help teachers engage and collaborate with the other key adults in their students' lives: parents and caregivers. Parents can play a big role in supporting teachers by reinforcing classroom learning at home—and their engagement in a child's learning has consistently been shown to make a positive difference on student outcomes. Moreover, diverse learners have diverse needs, and parents know their children best. They know their child's motivators and their barriers; they help their children practice the skills outlined on their IEPs; they support their child's language development every day. Partnering with the "experts" who deeply understand their child's unique strengths and challenges can help teachers ensure more diverse learners reach their potential.

As a school-psychologist-turned-family-engagement-advocate, I've had the unique opportunity to identify, design, and study innovative technology solutions like FASTalk that help teachers activate the power of families to support the success of diverse learners. It will take time and effort to accelerate the learning of all these students, but the process will be less challenging and more children will benefit when parents and teachers collaborate.

Sincerely,

Elisabeth O'Bryon  
Co-Founder, Family Engagement Lab

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### **FASTalk Connection: Supporting Diverse Learners**

- [FASTalk](#) provides English Learner (EL) families with curriculum-aligned activities that are translated into over 100 languages, boosting their confidence in

supporting their child's learning at home.

- As a result, EL students whose parents used FASTalk saw an acceleration in their academic performance of 1.5-3 months ahead of their peers not using FASTalk.
- The Chatbox built into FASTalk allows teachers to have one-on-one conversations with parents in their native language.

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## News You Can Use: Engaging Families to Support Diverse Learners

- [The Case for a Two-Generation Approach to Educating English Learners](#) (Center for American Progress)
- [Connecting with English Learner Families: 5 Ideas to Help Schools](#) (EdWeek)
- [What We've Learned: Administrators share advice for engaging families](#) (Education Drive)

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### Featured Partner: Na Talkaam



Family Engagement Lab believes that one of the most important steps schools can take to build relationships with non-English speaking parents is to provide school-related information and resources in their native language. NaTakallam offers high-quality, curated language and translation services for both individual learners and academic settings. Additionally, they offer teachers and students the opportunity to speak with refugees and displaced persons to learn about their experience and how they can make refugees in their own school feel safe and welcomed.

[Learn More](#)

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## Share the Good News

As school system leaders, you can encourage parents to become more involved in their child's learning by providing them with quick tips on how to support learning at home. Here are a few social media posts to use this month to help build family engagement in your district.



Accelerating the learning of students with diverse needs can be challenging. We are partnering with @FamilyELab's



Parents, it's important to talk openly with your child about their learning differences so that they are comfortable



Parents, the holidays are a perfect time to teach kids about compassion. This "pleasant events" calendar is a

tool FASTalk to engage parents in at-home, curriculum-aligned, literacy activities.

[www.familyengagementlab.org](http://www.familyengagementlab.org)

thinking or learning differently from their peers. Here are some tips to guide this convo:

<https://www.understood.org/en/learning-thinking-differences/understanding-childrens-challenges/talking-with-your-child/how-to-talk-to-your-child-about-learning-and-thinking-differences>

great activity to do with your child during the Christmas break.

[https://ggia.berkeley.edu/practice/pleasant\\_events\\_calendar\\_for\\_kids](https://ggia.berkeley.edu/practice/pleasant_events_calendar_for_kids)

## Contact Us

Have questions? Email us at [felcommunications@fastalk.org](mailto:felcommunications@fastalk.org).

Don't forget to **follow us on social media** for the latest tools and resources to support family engagement.

