

# Building Trust: Voices of Educators

## Video Transcript

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### Molly Martin

How I get to know my multilingual students and their families is, from day one, having a welcoming attitude and persona and just being very receptive and glad that they're in my class. Welcoming them to parent conferences, working around their schedules to make sure that we can meet at times that are convenient for them. How I learn about what's important to them is by listening.

Some of the questions I like to ask, personally, are just finding out about what their school experience was like, where they came from, or maybe, if they were raised in our town, just what school was like, what the ESL program was like when they were growing up, and how that impacted them. And then, what they are expecting their children to go through in my class.

One thing that our school asks all of our families is how aligned are the expectations of our school, particularly with positive behavior and support—how aligned is that with what they expect at home. We do this through conferences pretty regularly, multiple times a year. And we also have a digital electronic survey that goes out that all of our families are encouraged to participate in just to give us some feedback of what they're thinking is happening at school and what they expect from us and how they view their role as families partnering alongside us.

### Rainbow Dye

You know, I think American culture is very focused on objectives, and I notice [for] our multilingual families, it's, "How's your day? How are your kids? How's your health? How's your job?" Like, be curious, ask questions, get to know people, be genuine. People respond to that. I know it's a little bit different, you know, we're always focused on our goals, but it's helpful.

How do you understand multilingual families' expectations of you and your school? I think expectations—it's interesting, because it's different for everybody. But I think [it's] asking and empowering them. To say, "Hey, if you want something, do you feel comfortable talking? If you don't feel comfortable talking, I can go with you, if you have questions, if there's. . .," just empowering people.

I think—[it's] not the case for everyone; I don't wanna speak for everyone—but I think it's pretty common for multilingual families to believe that the school is more powerful than they are, and they relinquish their kids to us. And we should just educate them, and they don't really have a say in that. Versus American families, who feel very entitled to how their children are educated and wanna have a say in how they're educated.

So, really, helping to empower them is important, and letting them know, "You see something, or you want to. . . you have questions. You can do that. You can go in and you can ask, or if you want an accommodation or you have a concern about something that's going on in the school, you can talk to the administration. And if you feel nervous talking to them on your own, you can ask for someone to go with you. You know, you can bring a friend, you can ask a trusted person in the school to go with you. We work for you."

You know, I always like to ask people if they feel comfortable here, if they. . . do you feel welcomed? Do you feel comfortable? Do you feel that your children's needs are being met? I think, you know, needs being met and if they're feeling comfortable are important.