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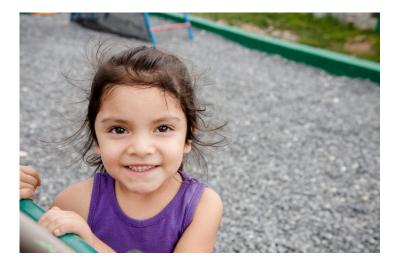
Intercultural Development Research Association
IDRA
Learning Goes On
A COVID-19 Resource for Education

November 19, 2020 Edition

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More resources and training for teachers, school administrators, families and communities are on our **Learning Goes On website**. See **Spanish-language version** of this edition.

Families and Education Policy

Families Share Insights on Young Emergent Bilingual Children to Inform Policy & Practice

For many years, IDRA has hosted
Mesas Comunitarias, or

community roundtables, to bring together families to discuss pressing education issues facing their children and schools. These gatherings are part of IDRA's **community-centered approach to policymaking**, which supports local advocacy work and ensures that communities with lived expertise are partners in state-level policy efforts.

At a **virtual roundtable event this week**, IDRA brought together community members from across Texas to discuss opportunities to support young emergent bilingual (English learner) students and their families.

Previous Mesas Comunitarias hosted by IDRA focused on the impact of state policies like Texas' House Bill 5. This law, passed in 2013, changed graduation requirements for students across the state, potentially putting students at a disadvantage in their education attainment process. Through a **previous roundtable focused on this law**, community partners in the lower Rio Grande Valley identified opportunities to advocate for college readiness and higher graduation standards for the students in their community.

Like previous events, the purpose of the most recent Mesa Comunitaria was to identify opportunities for policy change, driven by families across Texas. The session, held primarily in Spanish with translation provided throughout, focused specifically on the experiences of families of young emergent bilingual students and aimed to identify family advocates for a **statewide advocacy effort called the Early Childhood English Learner Initiative**.*

Family advocate partners will help to advance the policy agenda of the initiative and will provide invaluable perspectives and expertise to ensure equitable and excellent educational opportunities for young emergent bilingual students.

Some of the most impactful input from the family participants includes the following:

- Parents of emergent bilingual students believe their children should be bilingual not only to be competitive in a globalizing workforce, but because their language is part of their cultural identity and connects them to their roots. Many participants noted that bilingualism connects their children to cultural identity and wisdom.

- Participants emphasized the power in collective action and advocacy for young students, acknowledging the importance of advocating for policy change together.

- Families want more information on the different types of bilingual education programs that are offered in schools. This need points to a

concerning lack of information from the state education agency and local school districts about even basic programs for young emergent bilingual students.

- Participants have concerns about how dual language education is implemented in their districts. Though recent school funding policies provided for a small increase in funding for dual language programs, families continue to see problems with implementation of these programs for their students.

These insights were invaluable to connect participants and reveal common challenges families and young emergent bilingual students face. Importantly, the information will influence local and state-level efforts to change educational policy and practice.

IDRA will continue to host regional Mesas Comunitarias over the next several months. We encourage families from across the state to participate to help to ensure educational policies and practices at all levels are driven by the students and families impacted by them.

For more information about participating in a Mesa Comunitaria or partnering as a family advocate in the Early Childhood English Learner Initiative, contact IDRA's Deputy Director of Policy, Dr. Chloe Latham Sikes at **chloe.sikes@idra.org**.

*The **Early Childhood English Learner initiative** is funded through the generous support of Philanthropy Advocates with the leadership of Texans Care for Children and in partnership with IDRA and other advocacy organizations and experts. IDRA serves as a steering committee co-leader with Texans Care for Children; Philanthropy Advocates; Dr. Dina Castro, UNT Denton; and Texas Association for the Education of Young Children (TxAEYC).

Instructional Tools

Making ELAR Alive with Virtual Experiences

by Dr. Nilka Avilés, Jeanne Cantu, Gerald Sharp

Building literacy skills in English language arts and reading lessons is a challenge for online instruction. Teachers seek ways to offer students opportunities through whole group and small group activities in reading, analyzing texts, and writing and ways for students to share their own thoughts with peers. Following are some strategies for making ELAR come alive online.

When choosing both literary (narrative) and informational (expository) texts for students to read, identify books and stories from culturally-relevant sources. When students see themselves in a text, they engage with it more deeply and connect with characters and settings.

Ask questions from texts requiring higher levels of thinking and analysis, such as the author's purpose, character motives, and other possibilities for a character. As students share differing points from the same text, they can see avenues to explore in their own written answers.

Following an introductory lesson to a unit or topic, create opportunities for students to interact in small groups. Using your online platform, such as Zoom, Collaborate, or Microsoft Teams, form groups of four to five students who will work together on assigned projects and cooperatively discuss their thoughts and ideas.

Other times, you can set up a discussion board or white board where students can respond to a teacher-posted question. Students then comment on each other's responses. They also can keep a digital notebook where they record their responses to a reading.

Provide multiple ways for students to display their responses and written products. Students can use graphic organizers or posters, for example, to show understanding of a topic. Then you can set up a virtual gallery walk where students can view each other's products and comment on them.

For a writing activity, you can set-up a Google Doc so students can collaboratively write a composition. Additionally, you can assign a project to a group of students where they, cooperatively, design slides for a PowerPoint or Google Sheets presentation and then present that to the whole class.

Seek opportunities for training on online tools for virtual courses so that you can have options for different learning objectives. Practice using different tools for collaborative writing, group sharing, project development and demonstrating mastery. See below for resource links.

Online Learning Resources and Tools

Question-Answer-Relationship (QAR)

Question-Answer Relationship (QAR), Reading Rockets

Question-Answer Relationships, Teacher Vision

QAR (Question-Answer-Relationship), Instructional Strategies to Increase Comprehension for Adolescents

Q-Matrix

Q-Matrix, TRC Teaching Routine Cards, Zaner-Bloser, Inc.

The Q-Matrix-Question starters for higher order thinking, Gardner's Multiple Intelligences

Question Matrix: How to Develop the Right Questions, Dr. Jamie Schwandt

The Question Matrix, TeacherToolKit

Depth of Knowledge Questions

Depth of Knowledge (DoK) for Reading, Edulastic

Integrating Cognitive Rigor with Webb's Depth of Knowledge, Edulastic

Depth of Knowledge Levels Descriptions for Reading and Writing, Iowa Core

What Is Depth of Knowledge?, ThoughtCo

Depth of Knowledge (DOK) Levels, AchieveNJ

Using Webb's Depth of Knowledge to Increase Rigor, George Lucas Educational Foundation - Edutopia

Hess' Cognitive Rigor Matrix

Hess' Cognitive Rigor Matrix & Curricular Examples: Applying Webb's Depth-of-Knowledge Levels to Bloom's Cognitive Process Dimensions, ELA, Karin K. Hess: Hess' Cognitive Rigor Matrix Center for Assessment

Hess Cognitive Rigor Matrix & Curricular Examples: Applying Webb's Depth-of-Knowledge Levels to Bloom's Cognitive Process Dimensions – ELA, Hess Cognitive Rigor Matrix (CRM) in Linking Research with Practice: A Local Assessment Toolkit to Guide School Leaders

World Language Cognitive Rigor Matrix, Hess CRM adapted for World Language, by Karin K. Hess & Rachel Gilbert

Putting DOK into Practice with Hess' Cognitive Rigor Matrix, CORE - Consortium on Reaching Excellence in Education

Hess' Cognitive Rigor Matrix & Curricular Examples: Applying Webb's Depth-of-Knowledge Levels to Bloom's Cognitive Process Dimensions - Writing, Karin K. Hess. Hess' Cognitive Rigor Matrix for Writing: Applying Types of Arguments Across Content Areas to the CRM

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ELAR Instruction Webinars On-Demand

English Language Arts Webinar Series

Part 1: Journal Writing About the Present for the Future

Lead your students as they create a primary source for future historians. In Part 1 of this three-part webinar series, trainers outline literacy lessons adaptable for all grades as students use journal writing to record their responses to a pandemic that has upended their school year.

See Part 1

Part 2: From Journaling to Personal Narratives

In the second of this three-part webinar series, trainers demonstrate a process where students select one of their journal entries to expand it into a fully developed personal narrative, reflecting the significance of the COVID-19 event.

See Part 2

Part 3: From Journaling and Personal Narratives to Letter Writing

In the final installment of this three-part webinar series, trainers present steps for students to select from their journal entries one issue important to them.

Students expand their writing into a letter to someone in authority suggesting how the issue and its outcome could have been improved upon.

See Part 3

See more free webinar recordings available for viewing at your convenience.

See Webinar Hub

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Reach Out To Us

The Intercultural Development Research Association is an independent, non-profit organization. Our mission is to achieve equal educational opportunity for every child through strong public schools that prepare all students to access and succeed in college. IDRA strengthens and transforms public education by providing dynamic training; useful research, evaluation, and frameworks for action; timely policy analyses; and innovative materials and programs.

IDRA works hand-in-hand with hundreds of thousands of educators and families each year in communities and classrooms around the country. All our work rests on an unwavering commitment to creating self-renewing schools that value and promote the success of students of all backgrounds.