

February 2020



Preschool Initiative Program Highlights



Background

- **F5SJ Preschool Initiative** supports programs to serve vulnerable children and families, including children who are learning English as a second language.
- **Evaluation** explored how programs support dual language learners (DLLs) as well as the effect of their efforts on school readiness, parent engagement, and classroom quality.



Methods

- Conducted interviews with preschool program staff
- Administered a short survey on DLL supports to preschool parents
- Analyzed classroom assessment and survey data
- Prepared fact sheets that incorporated input from preschool program staff and the parent survey

First 5 San Joaquin Preschool Program Manteca Unified School District Supporting Dual Language Learners



The Manteca Unified School District (MUSD) receives funding from First 5 San Joaquin to invest in preschool in partnership with Creative Child Care, Inc. and Kids Academy to serve vulnerable children and families. This includes children who are learning English as a second language (i.e., dual language learners).

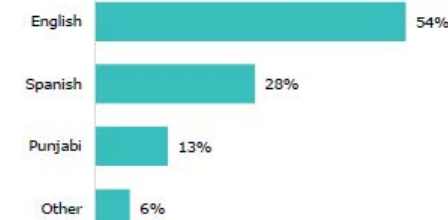
The purpose of this brief is to highlight the key strategies used across First 5 San Joaquin funded preschool programs to support and engage dual language learners and their families. It also presents data specific to MUSD First 5 Preschools. This includes the diversity of languages spoken by children in their care as well as the impact of their engagement efforts on participating dual language learners, their families, and classroom quality.

Strategies to Engage Dual Language Learners and their Families

First 5 San Joaquin preschools implement a number of strategies to welcome, support, and engage dual language learners and their families. They include:

- **Materials in multiple languages** to support children's early literacy and language development in English and their primary language.
- **Parent Advisory Meetings** with translation services to keep families informed and engaged.
- **Staff** that represent the different cultures and languages of children and families in their care.
- **Professional development** to help teachers increase their capacity to support dual language learners and their families.
- **Asset-based approaches** to recognize all home languages as contributing to the learning environment.

Languages Spoken by Preschool Children



Percentages may not total to 100% due to rounding of decimal places.

In Fiscal Year 2018-2019, Creative Child Care and Kids Academy First 5 Preschools served 350 children ages 3-5 across seven sites: Great Valley, Joshua Cowell, Kids Academy, Lathrop, Lincoln, Sequoia, and Widmer Elementary Schools. Of the children who participated, slightly more than half (54%) spoke English as their primary language, 28 percent spoke Spanish, 13 percent spoke Punjabi, and six percent spoke another language such as Tagalog, American Sign Language, Farsi, Laotian, and Arabic.

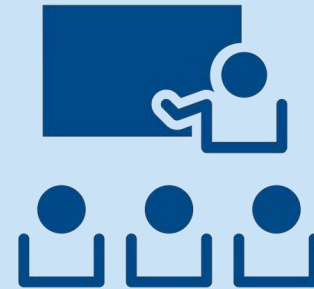
Child Abuse Prevention Council



Early Literacy Development

- Hire bilingual staff
- Provide books in Spanish
- Label classroom items in English and Spanish

100%



of sessions met quality standards related to emotional support, classroom organization, and instructional support

Parent Engagement

- Provide translation services at parent meetings
- Be attuned to dialect differences

100%



of parents reported their preschool communicates with them in a language with which they feel comfortable

Lincoln Unified School District



Early Literacy Development

- Focus on early literacy at parent meetings
- Provide books in Spanish
- Provide resources for teachers to support dual language learners

"Raising a Reader is helping us to promote literacy and get good research-based literature in the hands and the homes of our preschoolers."

- LUSD Administrator

Parent Engagement

- Use multilingual center resources
- Hire bilingual staff
- Develop trusting relationships with parents

100%



of parents reported their preschool respects all cultures and diversity

Manteca Unified School District



Early Literacy Development

- Hire Spanish speaking staff
- Include experience-based learning

93%



of dual language learners were “building” or “integrating” English into their language at the end of the program, compared to just **39%** at the start of the program

Parent Engagement

- Connect with parents early on
- Offer parent involvement activities
- Provide child care

100%



of parents reported their preschool communicates with them in a language with which they feel comfortable

Stockton Unified School District



Early Literacy Development

- Use interactive instructional approaches
- Provide flexible professional development opportunities
- Offer adult learning classes

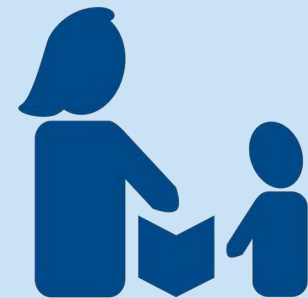
"We use an interactive approach in the classroom so children are immersed in the learning and can understand even if they might not have the vocabulary quite yet to express themselves."

- SUSD Administrator of Early Childhood Education Department

Parent Engagement

- Offer multiple levels of parent engagement
- Provide a bilingual social service case manager

100%



of parents reported their child gets exposed to their home language(s) at their preschool

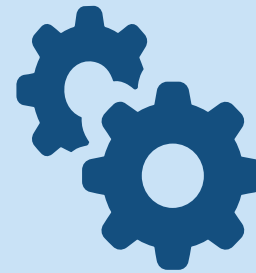
Tracy Unified School District



Early Literacy Development

- Use parent helpers in the classroom
- Include experiential learning
- Use innovative methods

71%



of dual language learners were “building” or “integrating” English into their language at the end of the program, compared to just **16%** at the start of the program

Parent Engagement

- Send weekly parent communication folders
- Hold monthly parent workshops
- Hold parent conferences

"The preschool is very informative and does an excellent job of keeping parents in the loop."

- TUSD parent of a dual language learner

Challenges

- Programs don't have the **resources** needed to support all languages spoken by children in their program
- Not all families **support** a DLL curriculum
- It takes **time** for DLLs to feel comfortable speaking English

Opportunities

- Encourage teachers to participate in DLL-related **professional development** opportunities
- Explore **innovative strategies** to increase parent involvement
- Review **assessment data** to better understand needs and outcomes
- Explore opportunities to **collaborate** with other district departments

A hand is shown in the upper left quadrant, pointing upwards with the index finger. The entire image has a blue tint. The word "Questions" is written in a large, white, sans-serif font across the center of the image.

Questions