

Appendix B

LIEP Protocol: Families and Family Support Liaisons

This protocol will be used for conducting interviews with family support liaisons and families of ELs. Each family liaison will be encouraged to invite one or two parents/family members to participate, among parents/family members whose children attend multiple schools within a district. This protocol will need to be tailored to the participants in the group.

State:

District/School:

Date:

Facilitator:

Note-taker:

Participants, Roles and School/District: Sign-in Sheet:

Participant	Role (Parent/Family Member, Parent Liaison)	School/District

Introductory Script for District Interview: Good morning [afternoon]. First of all, thank you for being here and for participating in this study. My name is [name] and this is [name of the other site visitor], we are researchers from Synergy [and Ed Count], organizations that conduct research about education.

Before we start, I'd like to provide a little background on our work, and answer any questions you might have. We are conducting this study for the US Department of Education in order to explore promising programs that help children learn English and help them learn math, science, social studies and other subjects. We are interested in understanding what you think makes a good program for children. We want to talk to families and learn how the school (1) helps and supports families, (2) how families are part of the school, and (3) how the school lets families know about how their children are doing in school.

Do you have any questions right now about the study or about why we are here?

Next, I'd like to explain about this discussion. Today, I'll be asking questions and [other site visitor] will be taking notes. If you don't mind, I would like to record our conversation for note-taking purposes. No one outside of our research team will hear the recording; it will just be for our use. If you would like us to turn off the recorder at any point, just let me know. Would that be OK?

We will make every attempt to keep all the information you provide today private. It will only be used for the purposes of this study. We will not use your name or share anything we talk about with the school or anyone else. All the information will be secured in a secure manner and

we will talk about the results for all families in your school/district rather than by naming individuals. It is important to us that you feel comfortable saying what you really think and feel. It is OK to disagree with one another. If you do not feel like responding to a question, you do not have to. Your participation is completely voluntary.

I'd like to ask you to sign a consent form before we begin. It says exactly what I've just talked about with you, especially that we will not tell anyone what you discussed in this room. Please take a minute to read it and let me know if you have any questions. (Note: To the maximum extent possible, the consent form will be translated into the native language/languages of those families/liaisons that we talk with.)

Are there any questions before we get started?

Note to interviewer: Throughout the interview, possible probes are set aside following each general question. Asking these questions may help to move the interview pace or may prompt a less talkative respondent. However, **do not feel you need to ask each of these probes**; it is likely that the respondent will cover many of these issues when responding to your initial inquiry. Keep the tone conversational and comfortable.

Background

1. **To start, I'd like to ask each of you to introduce yourselves by saying your first name, the school(s) you are associated with, and whether you are a parent/family member or parent/family liaison. Briefly tell me how your school helps students learn English as well as subjects like math and science.**
 - *If you are a family member*, please say the grade levels of your children and language(s) you speak at home. Describe the EL Program in a sentence or two.
 - *If you are a liaison*, please say your position and your role with regard to parents of ELs. Describe the EL Program in a sentence or two.

Family Liaison Involvement

2. ***For family liaisons:* How would you describe your role as a family support liaison in your school? How do you support families at your school? In what ways are the family members of ELs involved in the education and overall development of their children? What mechanisms do you use to deal with challenges faced by families in your school?**
3. ***For family liaisons:* Tell me about the ways that you collaborate with different school staff members to achieve your priorities as family liaison.**

Communication with Family Members/Community

4. ***For family members:* Tell me about talking with teachers and others at the school about your child. When do you have a chance to do that? How often do you talk? What do you talk about? How do you feel about contacting teachers and other school staff?**

Listen/probe for:

- Frequency with which family members communicate with teachers and usefulness
- Types of information that family members receive on how their child is doing in school
- Ways in which family members learn about communication vehicles and how to make contact with school personnel
- Ways in which the unique needs of EL family members are accommodated (such as, communication in home language)
- Why other families do not talk with the school
- Usefulness of the information parents receive; includes achievement information

- If the school has someone who can communicate with them in their native language

5. *For family liaisons:* **What role do you play in working with school and district staff to identify the informational needs of family members?**

Listen/probe for:

- Ways in which the unique needs of EL family members are accommodated (such as, communication in home language).
- How is that information communicated to them? How often?
- Usefulness of the information family members receive
- Barriers that prevent families from communicating with the school

School/District Practices

6. *For family members:* **Does the school invite you to meetings or courses about helping your child in school? What kind of programs, workshops, meetings, or courses does the school have that teach you how to help your child in school? What did you learn there? Did you use what you learn with your children? Why or why not?**

Listen/probe for:

- Ways in which the unique needs of EL family members are accommodated (such as, communication in home language).
- How is that information communicated to them? How often?
- Usefulness of the information family members receive
- Barriers that prevent families communicating with the school

7. *For family members:* **Does your child's school offer other special programs (outside of regular classtime) for students who are learning English? If yes, how did you learn about special programs for students learning English? Are those programs helpful?**

Listen/probe for:

- Role of home language
- Extent to which parents have a choice in the program offerings available
- How they learned about special programs for students learning English
- Satisfaction and usefulness of programs
- If families know, why children are or aren't attending
- What is the benefit of their child attending these programs

8. *For family members:* **What programs does your school offer for helping your child with problems/challenges related to learning English?**
9. *For family liaisons:* **Is there a school or district advisory committee for families and advocates of ELs? How do you notify families about advisory/committees relevant to ELs? Are parents/family members involved in setting priorities and needs relevant to ELs and supportive programs?**
10. *For family liaisons:* **Now, I'd like to ask broadly about any practices in place at your school that benefit ELs. What are the practices and how do they help the children? What role do you as a liaison play in shaping these practices? Tell us about specific family and community outreach activities and services that are regular components of your school's LIEP.**

Listen/probe for:

- Valuing cross-cultural education and cultural sensitivity, including related professional development
- Specific strategies or approaches mentioned by district staff for which we'd like to get the perspective family liaisons (e.g. instructional approaches, curricula/text and materials, parent/family outreach program, district parent center, parent advisory committees, support for transitioning and monitoring ELs into mainstream, translation and other services, etc.)
- What is the focus? Who participates?
- Perceived effectiveness (measured by)
- Support/influence from the district
- Why or why not students/families participate in the programs
- Role of home language
- Extent to which parents have a choice in the program offerings available
- Use of data to identify, diagnose instructional need, etc; prepare for emerging demographics

Supports for Family Members

11. *For family members:* **How do you help your child with their education at school or home?** (This could include a range of ways, such as help with homework, attending parent conferences, maintaining native language at home, volunteering in classroom, volunteering for special school events, providing services that support school-based programs, individual education plan meetings, etc.)

Listen for:

- Role of family members in decision-making at the school and what types of decisions they are involved in
- Family members' understanding of the LIEP services
- Role of external partners in supporting services to ELs and their families
- What families do to support language development at home and in which language(s).

12. For family members: Do you attend any programs, classes or other activities for family members at your school? What do you learn there? How do they help you? (This could include parent outreach programs, parent classes, language classes, family liaison, etc.)

Probe for:

- Programs and supports that target parents of ELs to help support instruction
- Programs and supports that target social, emotional, and acculturation needs of EL families
- Perceived effectiveness and benefits (measured by)
- Perceived challenges (e.g., transportation, child care) or other reasons why they do not attend

13. For family liaisons: Are there any additional programs, classes or supports available for parents and families at your school? Which are targeted specifically to EL parents/families? How do they respond to the needs of parents/families of ELs? (This could include parent outreach programs, parent classes, language classes, parent liaison, etc.)

Listen for:

- Purpose of programs to meet the needs of EL families
- Which parents are targeted for these programs, who provides the support, the focus, etc.
- Extent to which parents access the supports
- Ways in which the unique needs of EL parents are accommodated (such as, communication in home language).
- Perceived effectiveness (measured by)
- Differences in supports for elementary parents vs. secondary parents
- Any district-wide parent supports identified by district officials
- What is not offered that families need and why is it not offered

Goals and Challenges

14. For family liaisons: How does your school and/or district communicate goals for ELs to parents and families? In what ways do you use those goals to work with and support parents?

15. Next, please tell us what success you have realized in working with and supporting family members. What are the challenges and constraints you face? How does the district (or state) help you address those challenges?

Probe for:

- Ways in which the school builds capacity to work with parents
- Specific components of successful parent/family programs
- Ways in which cultural sensitivity and awareness play a role

16. For family members: What are some of the things that your school does to help your child that you think are very helpful?

17. For family members: What would you change about what the school does to help your child learn English or help him learn math, science, history? What would make the programs better?

***Note to interviewer:** Thank participants for their time and the valuable information provided. Mention again our commitment to confidentiality. Remind them of how they can learn more about the progress and outcomes of this study. Mention that we might come back to them to clarify our notes after they have been developed.*