

## A TARGETED APPROACH TO INTENSIVE FAMILY ENGAGEMENT IN EARLY EDUCATION

*Quality Improvement Efforts in the Educare Learning Network*



Programs where children learn and develop should build on family strengths and promote family wellness through family engagement. Strong parent–child relationships are essential for young children’s learning and development<sup>1</sup>; parents’ engagement in their children’s learning promotes social-emotional, language and mathematical development and predicts educational trajectories and long-term academic success<sup>2, 3</sup>. Family well-being has also been shown to contribute to children’s school readiness and attainment<sup>4</sup>. Family engagement and well-being have sustaining effects on children’s schooling and lifelong success. Therefore, the Educare Learning Network (ELN) has developed an Intensive Family Engagement framework. The current brief describes a quality improvement pilot within the Network to design, implement and investigate a targeted approach to supporting practitioners to advance their mindsets, knowledge and skills in this domain of practice within their programs.

## Implementing and Improving Program Practices That Promote Positive Relationships and Family Engagement

A key strategy for fostering positive, engaging relationships between families and early care and education (ECE) professionals is professional development or training with a clear focus on an approach and strategies for family engagement. However, limited research currently exists documenting evidence-based strategies and tools that improve the intensity and quality of family engagement efforts among ECE professionals, including both program leaders and staff.

### DEFINITION OF INTENSIVE FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

Intensive family engagement is partnering with families to build mutually respectful, goal-oriented relationships that support strong parent-child relationships, family well-being and ongoing learning and development for both parents and children.

There is some evidence on how **targeted training** contributes to school leaders' and staff mindset and knowledge about, professional goals regarding, and abilities to support family engagement<sup>5</sup>. For instance, participating in learning modules explicitly focused on family engagement can enable leaders and staff to better identify practices and professional goals that are supportive of family engagement, including: reflecting on and positively changing perceptions of parents as partners in children's learning; addressing barriers that prevent readily engaging families and determining strategies that mitigate such barriers; and drawing upon different approaches to communicate with families about their child's development<sup>6,7</sup>.

Intense, **individualized coaching** centered on family engagement can also promote positive attitudes among program leaders and staff about engaging families in children's learning<sup>8</sup>. When ECE professionals feel supported and encouraged by their coaches in their family engagement efforts, they report having a more positive mindset about building strong relationships with families. Participating in coaching can also encourage ECE leaders and staff to develop and execute professional goals and implement actionable steps that are aligned and ultimately prioritize family engagement efforts in the classroom and program<sup>8</sup>.

In addition, participating in **Communities of Practice (CoP)** that place a strong emphasis on family engagement—including opportunities to exchange resources and strategies, provide peer-to-peer feedback and engage in reflection about family engagement knowledge and practices—can be useful for ECE practitioners. Participation in communities of practice can enhance staff's positive beliefs about families and family involvement in children's learning<sup>8</sup>, as well as strengthen their understanding of and skills related to family engagement, like learning about techniques to effectively communicate with families and provide welcoming, warm and inclusive environments for families<sup>6</sup>.

## Educare Learning Network's Approach to Intensive Family Engagement

Currently, many ECE programs provide families with information and resources geared towards supporting their children's learning and development and meeting families' basic needs. However, programming often neglects to incorporate family voice in meaningful ways, and leadership or staff capacity is not often built to move toward such practice<sup>9,10</sup>. ELN's approach to intensive family engagement (IFE) was designed to develop professionals' capacity to employ intentional practices that support building strong relationships with families and amplifying family voices. Guided by robust evidence on the strong impact of family engagement on child and family outcomes, IFE is one of the four core domains of practice in the **Educare model**.

The Educare IFE Logic Model (presented below) provides a visual representation of the elements necessary to implement Educare's approach to IFE, including program strategies and activities and the intended outcomes for children and families. This logic model was developed over the course of several years in partnership with Network member staff, leaders and parents and serves as a framework that can be used in other ECE settings. The logic model depicts how Educare's approach to IFE is grounded in five systems and program-level strategies (the 5Rs): *Responsive and Collective Leadership, Relationship-Based Infrastructure, Research-Based and Data-Informed Learning Networks, Reciprocal and Strengths-Based Organizational Culture and Reflective Practice*. These strategies drive the work and represent the drivers or "how" of IFE. The short-term program outcomes and intermediate family outcomes in the Educare IFE Logic Model map directly onto the **Office of Head Start Parent, Family and Community Engagement (PFCE) Framework**.

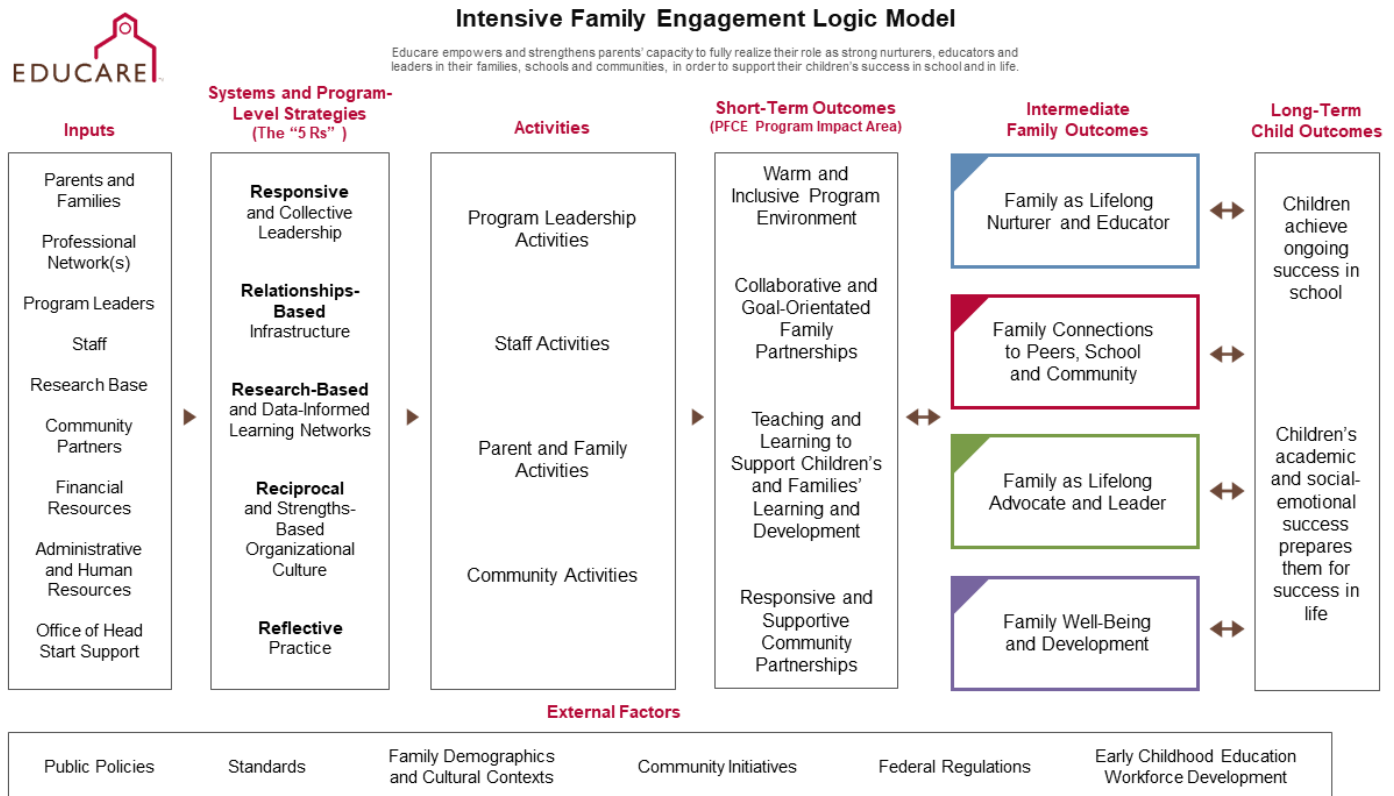
Data Utilization	Embedded Professional Development
High-Quality Teaching Practices	Intensive Family Engagement

### WHAT IS EDUCARE?

Educare schools provide full-day, year-round early education for children from six weeks to five years of age and their families from underserved communities. There are currently 25 operating Educare schools in diverse communities across the country, serving nearly 4,000 children and guiding the professional development for over 2,000 early childhood professionals in those schools. Educare schools are Early Head Start, Head Start and/or public Pre-K providers. All Educare schools leverage public-private partnerships, bringing together local school districts, philanthropic organizations, researchers, policymakers and families. These dynamic partnerships comprise the Educare Learning Network.

Educare's comprehensive model is grounded in research and includes four core features: 1) data utilization; 2) embedded professional development; 3) high-quality teaching practices; and 4) intensive family engagement. These features, in the context of strong leadership and community partner linkages, aim to enhance achievement and overall well-being among Educare children and families.





## Targeted Supports: An Approach to IFE Quality Improvement

### Purpose of Targeted Supports

Targeted Supports was created to help Educare schools cultivate, apply and strengthen their IFE practices. The goal of this quality improvement effort was to provide intense support to Educare leaders and staff around expanding their knowledge, attitudes and skillsets to create and sustain an empowering school culture that intentionally partners with families by leveraging the ELN IFE approach and tools. Each school received individualized consultation from members of the Network's early childhood practice consultation team\* tailored to their school's family engagement priorities and goals, and all schools participated in a set of core collaborative activities facilitated by the ELN practice consultation team.

\*The ELN early childhood practice consultation team is housed at Start Early, a nonprofit public-private partnership advancing quality early learning and care for families with children. The team collaborates with schools in the Network as a thought partner and provides professional development and quality improvement experiences to build capacity, facilitate peer connections between schools and identify and learn from innovations occurring across the Network.





The purpose of Targeted Supports is very simple. It is to support all staff in bringing intentionality to their work, authentically partnering with families. It is to identify the practices and skills that are critical to developing strong relationships with families and then implement them consistently. It is to change the culture of the schools so that the children, families and staff can see themselves.”

*Anita Harvey-Dixon,  
Former Director of Family Engagement at Educare*

## Delivery of Targeted Supports

The Targeted Supports inaugural cohort included four Educare schools (California at Silicon Valley, Flint, Los Angeles at Long Beach, and Winnebago) that represented the diversity of communities served by the Network. The enrollment at each of these schools ranged from 168-220 children. Families served by these schools largely identified as Latinx/Hispanic, Asian, Vietnamese, Black/African American or Native American, and children were taught in a variety of languages, including English, Spanish, Vietnamese and Ho-Chunk.

Each school began the Targeted Supports quality improvement effort with unique challenges and strengths in their existing knowledge, mindsets and practices pertaining to IFE. The ELN practice consultation team began this effort with a relationship-building **initial call** designed to foster trust, explore the schools’ goals related to IFE, understand the school’s context and plan the school visit. This was followed by an in-person **school visit** to observe each school’s environment and family-staff interactions and document ongoing family engagement activities. Based on observations and discussions with staff at participating schools, the initial year of Targeted Supports implementation was focused on the ELN IFE Logic Model short-term outcome, *Warm and Inclusive Environment*, which was assessed and explored via a **school visit protocol** developed to document strengths and opportunities for growth.

The school visits also included **on-site professional development** sessions for school leadership and staff that involved digging into the program-level strategies from the ELN IFE Logic Model, providing aligned messaging around the importance and interdisciplinary nature of family engagement and supporting the schools in using the ELN IFE Logic Model to create a shared, school-wide definition and vision for their family engagement work. The ELN IFE Logic Model and related tools also guided schools to implement their IFE goals in a systematic and intentional manner.

Based on their observations and ongoing dialogue with school leaders and staff, the ELN consultation team worked with school staff to incorporate IFE into their school-wide goals and implement activities to better engage their families throughout the year. All schools also participated in numerous **implementation calls** and **CoP** virtual sessions where they discussed challenges and successes around implementing what they learned from participating in Targeted Supports. Targeted Supports activities and their timing are summarized in the following table.

Targeted Supports Activity	Description	Timing
<b>Targeted Supports School Selection</b>	Identification of Educare schools that experienced staff and/or leadership turnover and wanted to deepen their family engagement practices.	Month 1
<b>Initial Call</b>	Introduction to the Targeted Supports quality improvement approach and activities. Opportunities for relationship building. School staff also shared their IFE goals.	Month 1
<b>School Visit</b>	On-site observation and learning conversation using observational school visit protocols.	Month 2
<b>On-Site Professional Development</b>	<p>Two full-day or half-day on-site professional development sessions (consecutively or about one month apart) bookended by planning and debrief conversations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Part 1 of the session: School staff created a shared definition of family engagement; distinguished family engagement and parent involvement; identified ways to use the systems and program-level strategies to implement innovative family engagement practices; and learned more about the ELN IFE Logic Model.</li> <li>Part 2 of the session: School staff continued to define and describe family engagement in their school; identified existing ways they addressed “the 5Rs” of intensive family engagement practices; and created SMART goals and action plans for implementing innovative family engagement practices in their school and classrooms.</li> </ul>	Months 3-4
<b>Ongoing Implementation Calls</b>	Monthly collaborative opportunity individualized per school for assistance with IFE goal setting and action planning; exploration of themes, strengths and opportunities in IFE practice; creation and implementation of a site-based professional learning community for family support staff.	Months 5-9
<b>CoP Sessions</b>	Quarterly virtual sessions with staff from all Educare schools engaged to Targeted Supports to provide opportunities for peer connection and collaboration by sharing lessons learned, successes and challenges in their work.	Months 9-12

## Overview of Lessons Learned from Implementing Targeted Supports

The ELN practice consultation and research teams closely partnered to design tools and methods to documents and examine the implementation of Targeted Supports and provide feedback for iterating this quality improvement approach. At the beginning of Year 1 Targeted Supports experience, surveys were administered to school leaders and staff documenting their current knowledge base and skills related to family engagement. Survey responses, as well as documentation completed by the ELN practice consultation team during each Targeted Supports activity, were analyzed by the research team to gauge participants' experiences with the delivery and content of Targeted Supports and understand how participants applied what they learned from Targeted Supports to their own practice. The research team also facilitated a data dialogue with the participating Targeted Supports schools to discuss and interpret evidence. Lessons learned emerged from the data and address the following two evaluation questions.



## How did school leaders and staff and the ELN practice consultation team experience Targeted Supports?

**Targeted Supports Implementation Successes.** Overall, school leaders and staff reported being very satisfied with Targeted Supports activities. When asked about what they found to be most valuable about their Targeted Supports experience, respondents shared that they valued engaging in professional development and ongoing implementation calls. Participation in professional development sessions ranged from 11 to 56 school leaders and staff per site and the most frequently engaged in Targeted Supports activity was the ongoing implementation calls. Both activities promoted opportunities for Educare leaders and staff to realize their role in family engagement and develop shared, school-wide definitions and goals related to IFE. In addition, participants highlighted their satisfaction with CoP sessions; coming together as a team to focus on IFE while also learning from and exchanging IFE practices and strategies from others within the Network were highly valued experiences.

The ELN practice consultation team emphasized similar sentiments about the success of Targeted Supports activities in strengthening and intensifying family engagement efforts. Both the on-site professional development and school visits undergirded the Targeted Supports experience; these activities allowed the ELN practice consultation team to observe and develop an understanding of school dynamics, fostering their ability to establish connections with school leaders, staff and parents and gain insights on family engagement efforts in action. Additionally, through these activities, the ELN practice consultation team was able to identify the strengths of participating schools that Targeted Supports could build upon such as: having strong, stable leadership teams that prioritized family engagement in their annual school goals; being connected to many community resources; and demonstrating school-wide commitments to engaging families through culturally relevant activities. The ELN practice consultation team capitalized on these strengths to intensify schools' efforts by challenging school leaders and staff to redefine family engagement by focusing on the *quality* of family engagement efforts and then the *quantity* of families being reached.



**Targeted Supports Implementation Challenges.** Despite overall positive experiences, it is important to note challenges and areas for improvement of Targeted Supports that were shared by the ELN practice consultation team and school leaders and staff. Early in the Targeted Supports implementation, the ELN practice consultation team identified opportunities for more regularly and clearly connecting the IFE logic model with each school's specific family engagement efforts as a foundational tool for guiding and building knowledge and practice. After reflecting on this area for improvement, the ELN practice consultation team used CoP sessions and ongoing implementation calls as opportunities to intentionally guide Educare leaders and staff on how to create linkages between the IFE logic model and the family engagement efforts they were already doing or were planning.



Furthermore, Year 1 of Targeted Supports was originally designed to provide several in-person activities to participating schools; however, the COVID-19 pandemic occurred early in the Targeted Supports implementation, causing its delivery to quickly shift. As such, scheduled school visits (aside from the initial school visit) were cancelled and all planned sessions, like CoPs, were modified to occur online through platforms like Zoom. Also, because the COVID-19 pandemic created many programming and operational uncertainties and challenges across ECE programs and settings, there was variation in the engagement with Targeted Supports

among Educare leaders and staff. Although participants of Targeted Supports shared that they had hoped to convene in-person to work with the ELN practice consultation team and other Network members, the implementation calls and CoP sessions allowed ongoing connections and still promoted a valuable delivery of Targeted Supports.

School leaders and staff also expressed facing new challenges supporting families at the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. Due to a myriad of stressors and fluctuating circumstances for families during this time, fewer families were able to engage in the same type and level of communication or activities with schools. After figuring out how to navigate programming efforts and new ways of working and communicating with families during the COVID-19 pandemic, Targeted Supports participants were able to get back on track.

Outside the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, the ELN practice consultation team described other challenges encountered in the delivery of Targeted Supports. Staff turnover reportedly led to fluctuations in participants' engagement with Targeted Supports across schools, as well as difficulties in assigning Targeted Supports activities to school leaders and staff. Experiencing staff turnover was challenging for the participating Educare schools, but school leaders navigated this obstacle by moving staff around and assigning them interim positions as recruiting and hiring processes occurred.





## How did school leaders and staff apply what they learned through Targeted Supports?

Educare leaders and staff shared that they often applied what they learned from engaging in Targeted Supports in their work with families. They attributed their successful implementation of IFE practices to the activities of Targeted Supports, such as working with the ELN practice consultation team during professional development sessions and implementation calls focused on developing a shared, school-wide definition of family engagement and learning about the IFE Logic Model and practice guidance. School leaders and staff expressed that their working understanding of the IFE Logic Model strengthened as a result of engaging in the Targeted Supports experience. Moreover, because they developed a richer understanding of the IFE Logic Model, Educare leaders and staff felt knowledgeable enough to support other staff in their direct relationships with families. School leaders and staff also shared that their participation in Targeted Supports helped spur positive change in mindsets about partnering with families and actionable change in creating warm, inclusive environments for families. Examples of newly developed activities that stemmed from Targeted Supports—especially because of its focus on the IFE Logic Model short-term outcome, *Warm and Inclusive Environment*—included a Lunar New Year Festival; a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion council; a strengthened Parent Ambassador program (a parent leadership and advocacy program); and the creation of spaces and opportunities for families to connect, such as a community garden and monthly coffee gatherings.



**We constantly refer to the Logic Model. We developed new procedures and supports for IFE and are now prioritizing IFE as an organization next year.”**

*Targeted Supports Participant*

In addition, school leaders and staff reportedly applied what they learned through Targeted Supports about infusing IFE in their school goals and action plans. IFE became a focus of team meetings and a priority within each school's school-wide staff goals. Targeted Supports participants also mentioned that through their IFE goal setting and action planning, a specific focus on family engagement was infused in their school's formal observation and feedback loop with staff; hiring and staffing practices that support family engagement and parent leadership; and creation of opportunities for families to participate in program governance, leadership development and program decision-making.

All school leaders and staff felt that their participation in Targeted Supports impacted how they connected with and supported families during the COVID-19 pandemic. They indicated that CoP sessions encouraged reflection on whether their school-wide definition and vision for their family engagement work were still appropriate for meeting families' needs in the context of the pandemic. School leaders and staff also shared in CoP sessions about the challenges and successes they encountered while quickly shifting their IFE efforts with families from in-person to virtual or socially distanced. Because of what they learned from Targeted Supports, participants felt that their relationships with families continued to evolve in a positive way, even in the presence of their modified family engagement efforts like hosting drive-through support services to communicate with families and meet their needs.

## Summary of Lessons Learned

Lessons learned from the Educare Learning Network on Targeted Supports:



Add to the growing evidence base demonstrating the components and benefits of a targeted approach to improving the intensity and quality of family engagement efforts in ECE programs.



Reveal that a program-wide definition, shared goal setting, and action planning that support consistency in intention and focus of practices among ECE leaders and staff can be effective strategies to improve family engagement efforts, especially efforts related to fostering a warm and inclusive program environment.



Show that creating and engaging in opportunities for focused consultation, peer-to-peer connections and/or CoPs among ECE leaders and staff help to elevate family engagement efforts and serve as opportunities to intentionally reimagine and implement family engagement practices during unprecedented, challenging times.

## IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PRACTICE, POLICY AND RESEARCH

This quality improvement effort and the initial evaluation findings of the pilot, together with other research literature exploring efforts to deepen family engagement in ECE and other learning settings, offer valuable insights into best practices and policies focused on IFE. Below we provide practice, policy and research recommendations to optimize the learning and development of young children and IFE in Educare schools and across the wider ECE field.

### 1 Prioritize IFE quality improvement in ECE settings.

Findings from the implementation of Targeted Supports indicate that school leaders and staff applied what they learned from the quality improvement effort and developed a specific focus on IFE in their school goals and action plans. **Practitioners who lead and participate in quality improvement in ECE settings must prioritize IFE and invest in ongoing supports.** To support ECE staff in their efforts to intentionally improve relationships with families, and ultimately cultivate a warm and inclusive program environment that forges family engagement and well-being, professionals responsible for quality improvement efforts should work to deepen their own understanding of IFE; focus on IFE in program-wide goals; and cultivate opportunities for ongoing professional development, dialogue and reflection centered on IFE<sup>11</sup>.



### 2 Enhance policy focus on and funding to support professional development on IFE.

Targeted Supports improved the knowledge base and use of IFE practices among school leaders and staff by building trust, collaborating to identify a goal, providing targeted professional development, and facilitating structures for ongoing dialogue and reflection. **There is a need for policies and funding that promote ongoing support for quality improvement of IFE in ECE settings.** Key policy strategies might include broadening policies and standards such as those contained within states' Quality Rating Improvement Systems (QRIS) to meaningfully support IFE; increasing state and federal investments in ECE programs and staff capacity; and offering grants/funding to ECE programs that can be allocated for long-term, embedded professional development opportunities. Adequate compensation and paid time engaging in professional development and equipment/materials for school leaders and staff are also necessary for equitable access to professional development on IFE.



### 3 Conduct additional research on and integrate more evidence-based approaches focused on improving IFE quality and outcomes in culturally and linguistically diverse ECE settings.

Not only was the pilot implementation of Targeted Supports useful for participating school leaders and staff, but also it also has contributed further practice evidence for the field, and recently guided the facilitation of this quality improvement effort with two additional schools, Educare's Chicago and Washington, D.C. However, **more research is necessary on program-level strategies for IFE, including the use of practical tools and examination of their links to family outcomes among culturally and linguistically diverse samples.** Obtaining this information could strengthen Targeted Supports and similar IFE-focused quality improvement efforts and can elucidate on more evidence about the effectiveness of IFE quality improvement initiatives on the learning and development of young children, family well-being and the quality of ECE programs in culturally and linguistically diverse settings or communities. Relatedly, **additional research on professional development interventions or coaching models centered on IFE practices that are comparable to those focused on teaching practices could help advance the field and provide evidence on improving the quality of programs serving culturally and linguistically diverse young children and families through IFE.**





## NETWORK SPOTLIGHT:

Highlighting one example of outstanding practice or innovation in the Educare Learning Network



### EDUCARE CALIFORNIA AT SILICON VALLEY

**Educare California at Silicon Valley (ECSV)** serves 168 children and families, most of whom identify as Latinx/Hispanic and Asian/Vietnamese. The ECSV school staff reflect both the languages and cultures of the students and families served. In 2019, ECSV school leadership expressed a challenge in implementing a cohesive family engagement plan and strategy across multiple program partners. Additionally, the school director was very new to their role and to the ELN IFE Logic Model when ECSV began working on family engagement through Targeted Supports. The ECSV team, comprised of school and community leaders, initially felt unsure about engaging in the Targeted Supports quality improvement effort at a time when they were juggling multiple priorities. However, with the Targeted Supports Community of Practice and other activities, ECSV embraced their IFE work. They created an aligned definition of family engagement across operating partners and advanced the IFE goals and related actions in their strategic plan. The school's IFE journey in their first year participating in Targeted Supports is documented in this Network Spotlight in the following section.

## ECSV's Strengths and Areas for Improvement Identified Through Educare IFE Targeted Supports

The initial school visit observation and reflective conversations early on in ECSV's engagement with ELN IFE Targeted Supports revealed the following strengths and opportunities for improvement:

### Strengths

- **Family Onboarding Process:** Work to create an orientation manual for new families and to build out processes for helping families to feel welcomed was already underway.
- **Facilities for Families:** The school had an atrium-style entry space with a satellite children's museum, front desk and community resources all geared towards families. In addition, these resources were available to families in the broader community through an on-site [Family Resource Center](#).
- **Emphasis on Cultural and Linguistic Relevance and Inclusion:** ECSV staff emphasized the importance of recognizing and integrating the different cultures and languages their families brought to the school community. This included intentional staffing efforts to match children with cultural and linguistic supports.
- **Professional Development Opportunities:** For multiple years, the organization has been engaged in professional development focused on supporting dual language learners and their families.

### Opportunities for Improvement

- **Underutilized Entry Space:** The school had a front desk with resources for families, however, it was not staffed. The atrium felt vacant - yet had the space to foster interactions.
- **More Informal Interactions with Families:** Staff asked parents about children's routines and checked in during pick up/drop off. However, there were opportunities for additional exchanges to occur between parents and staff and among families.

## ECSV's School Goals Established During Educare IFE Targeted Supports

**Goal #1:** Create a cohesive definition of family engagement and practices across program partners.

**Goal #2:** Reflect family engagement best practices in a dual language learning program with a philosophy inspired by the [Reggio Emilia Approach](#) that is evident in physical spaces around the school.

## ECSV's Progress During Educare IFE Targeted Supports

**Progress Toward Goal #1:** ECSV created a cohesive definition of family engagement across partners: *Educare California at Silicon Valley strives to be a home for families where they feel valued, represented, loved, and truly accepted. Family engagement is fostering mutually beneficial relationships among families and staff, in order to build a strong foundation in our community. We offer opportunities to meet the wellness needs of families in a culturally, linguistically responsive way and to empower families to be advocates for their children and communities to disrupt the cycle of poverty.*

**Progress Toward Goal #2:** ECSV's efforts to address their second goal around IFE were multifaceted, spurred into action by the ECSV team and families and tapped into multiple, short-term, program-level outcomes and intermediate family outcomes specified in the IFE Logic Model. Below are some highlights:

**Progress Toward Short-Term Program Outcome: Warm and Inclusive Program Environment**

- Hired a Spanish-speaking bilingual program coordinator to greet families at the front desk and be one of families' first points of contact.
- Built a community garden with native plants to provide families with access to culturally relevant foods, to support them in developing healthy eating habits and learning with their children, and to provide an ongoing opportunity for family/staff connection.
- Redesigned landscaping in the play yards to create welcoming gathering spaces for families.

**“The energy in the school felt different. There was someone to greet families in the front entrance, staff were smiling, and families were more present in the school. School leadership had something to work on together and that feeling of cohesiveness permeated the building.”**

**Anita Harvey-Dixon,  
Former Director of Family Engagement at Educare**

**Progress Toward Short-Term Program Outcome: Responsive and Supportive Community Partnerships**

- Developed innovative ways to virtually engage families during the pandemic, including hosting drive-thru pizza parties and partnering with the local children's museum to offer virtual art exploration events.

**Progress Toward Short-Term Program Outcome: Teaching and Learning to Support Children's and Families' Learning and Development**

- Developed and incorporated a family culture and language dialogue form for school staff to use with families to gain a deeper understanding of each unique family as they build relationships and to aid in the planning and implementation of dual language supports.
- Took reform around IFE a step further through its new role as an international leader in this space. ECSV began offering evidence-based family engagement courses online, **Positive Parenting Program**, or “triple P”, and **Abriendo Puertas** for family resource centers across their county. The courses were offered in English, Spanish and Vietnamese. They also invited families from other countries, including Chile and Mexico, who heard about these offerings through connections at Educare, to participate in these offerings at no cost.



### Progress Toward Intermediate Family Outcomes: Family Connections to Peers, School and Community

- Initiated monthly Coffee Connects in which school representatives connected regularly with families to discuss parent-driven topics, including kindergarten readiness and school choices in the area.



**We see more alignment between all partners in our program. We now have the tools to support us as we prioritize family engagement within our school and community. There is less resource duplication and we have built stronger relationships among staff and partners to support families in whichever way possible.”**

***Drew Giles  
Director of ECSV***



### Progress Toward Intermediate Family Outcomes: Parent as Lifelong Advocate and Leader

- Worked with partners to invite and recognize parents at an annual volunteer appreciation dinner.
- Parents led the planning and execution of a Lunar New Year Celebration. This event encouraged staff and others to consider how to consistently infuse both Vietnamese and Latinx/Hispanic cultural activities within the school in the future.



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### **ESSENTIAL PRACTICES OF EDUCARE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

Educare is offering a professional development series to provide practical instruction to center-based and school-based programs on how to improve program practice and ultimately deliver stronger outcomes for children and families. The Essential Practices of Educare is a flexible early childhood professional development program that helps practitioners develop their knowledge, behavior and practices to meet the increasingly rigorous quality standards in early education. Comprehensive training reaches four core practice areas, including intensive family engagement. For more information, [download The Essential Practices of Educare overview](#). For questions, contact us at [EducareInquiry@EducareNetwork.org](mailto:EducareInquiry@EducareNetwork.org).