

Latino Parent Advisory Council

Boulder Valley School District

Boulder, CO



Boulder Valley School District's (BVSD) superintendent and Office of Family Partnerships launched the Latino Parent Advisory Council (CAPL in Spanish) to facilitate deeper dialogue between Boulder County's community of Latino parents and the school district. It is a valuable forum for traditionally under-represented voices to provide their input, seek out information that supports their advocacy, and holds BVSD accountable to making positive changes.

To design the new council, BVSD staff gathered a small working group that contained Latino parents, a community leader, and a representative from the district's English Language Development department. The team engaged school principals in sending out information about how parents could apply to join the council.

The Latino Parent Advisory Council met with the superintendent every six to eight weeks throughout the 2018-19 school year. The gatherings were co-facilitated by the Director of Family Partnerships, an elementary principal, and a high school assistant principal. The meetings typically had 20-30 parents in attendance across the PK-12 spectrum.

The superintendent was always an enthusiastic and supportive presence. Meeting facilitators spent several hours designing the agenda for each meeting to ensure that the sessions were engaging and meaningful. Parents shared valuable insights, requested data that was informative for all involved, and offered feedback that continues to inform our efforts to bridge our achievement gap and build stronger ties with Latino families across all of our schools. BVSD staff engaged them as a group in both our Equity Summit and our strategic planning community input sessions

District staff met a few times throughout the year with some members of the council to listen to their feedback on how to improve both the structure of our meetings and increase turn-out. One key takeaway was that more communication via text or phone between meetings will be crucial moving forward, and that email messages are insufficient. Committee members also recommended that in order to maintain momentum, meetings should happen on a consistent and predictable schedule. The aim moving forward is to identify a few parent leaders to help co-facilitate future sessions.

The council continues to be a vital advisory group to guide multiple layers of district work with students and families. As one participant put it, "Thank you for organizing the council to improve the inclusion, communication, and support for the second largest population of families in our district..."