



NATIONAL
CHARTER SCHOOL
RESOURCE CENTER

English Learners in Charter Schools

*A Learning Experience Focused on English Learner Instruction
Part 2 – Implementation Support*

2021

charterschoolcenter.ed.gov

About the NCSRC

The National Charter School Resource Center (NCSRC) provides technical assistance to federal grantees and resources supporting charter sector stakeholders. NCSRC is funded by the U.S. Department of Education (ED) and managed by Manhattan Strategy Group (MSG) in partnership with WestEd.

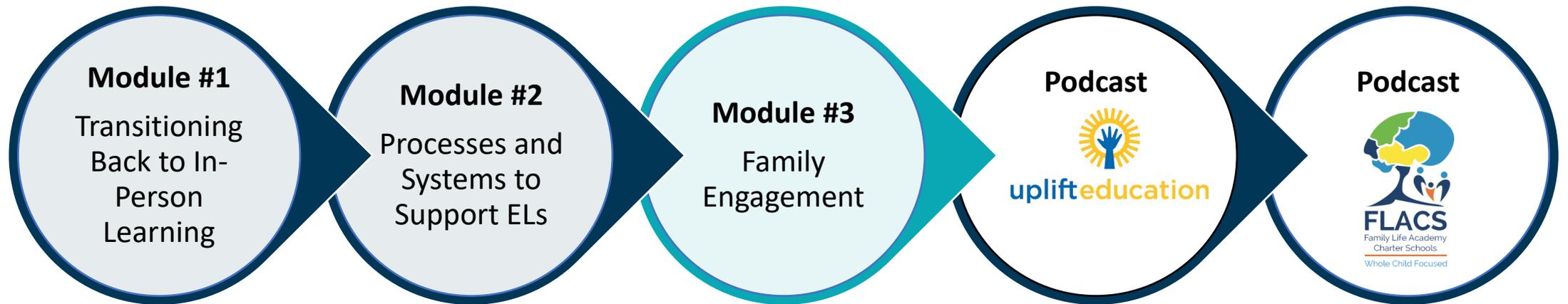


Family Engagement: From Recruitment to Ongoing Engagement

Learning Module #3



Overview of Your Learning Experience



Learning Experience Audience



Charter School Leaders, Directors of Academic Programming, Charter School Authorizers

Learning Objective:

To provide charter schools with practical tips for fostering EL family engagement within their schools.



At the end of this learning module, you should understand:



The importance of engaging with EL student families



Concrete ideas to implement within your own schools



A process for creating and sustaining meaningful engagement with EL families



To best meet the academic and social-emotional needs of ELs, schools must engage families in culturally and linguistically appropriate ways.

Overview of Compliance Requirements for Engaging Families

With the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) of 2015...



Focus shifted from parental involvement to family engagement.



Introduced new requirements in family engagement activities for schools receiving Title I and Title III funds.



Introduced a requirement for meaningful communication between family members and school staff in a language and format family members can understand.



www.ed.gov/essa

Opportunities and Challenges for Recruiting EL students

OPPORTUNITIES

- Strong commitment to education
- Value community and personal relationships

CHALLENGES

Every family is unique, but some EL families:

- May work multiple jobs
- May care for small children
- May have limited transportation
- May have different expectations about parental involvement
- May fear anti-immigrant sentiments

Breiseth, L. Getting to Know ELLs' Families. *Educational Leadership*, [s. l.], v. 73, n. 5, p. 46–50, 2016



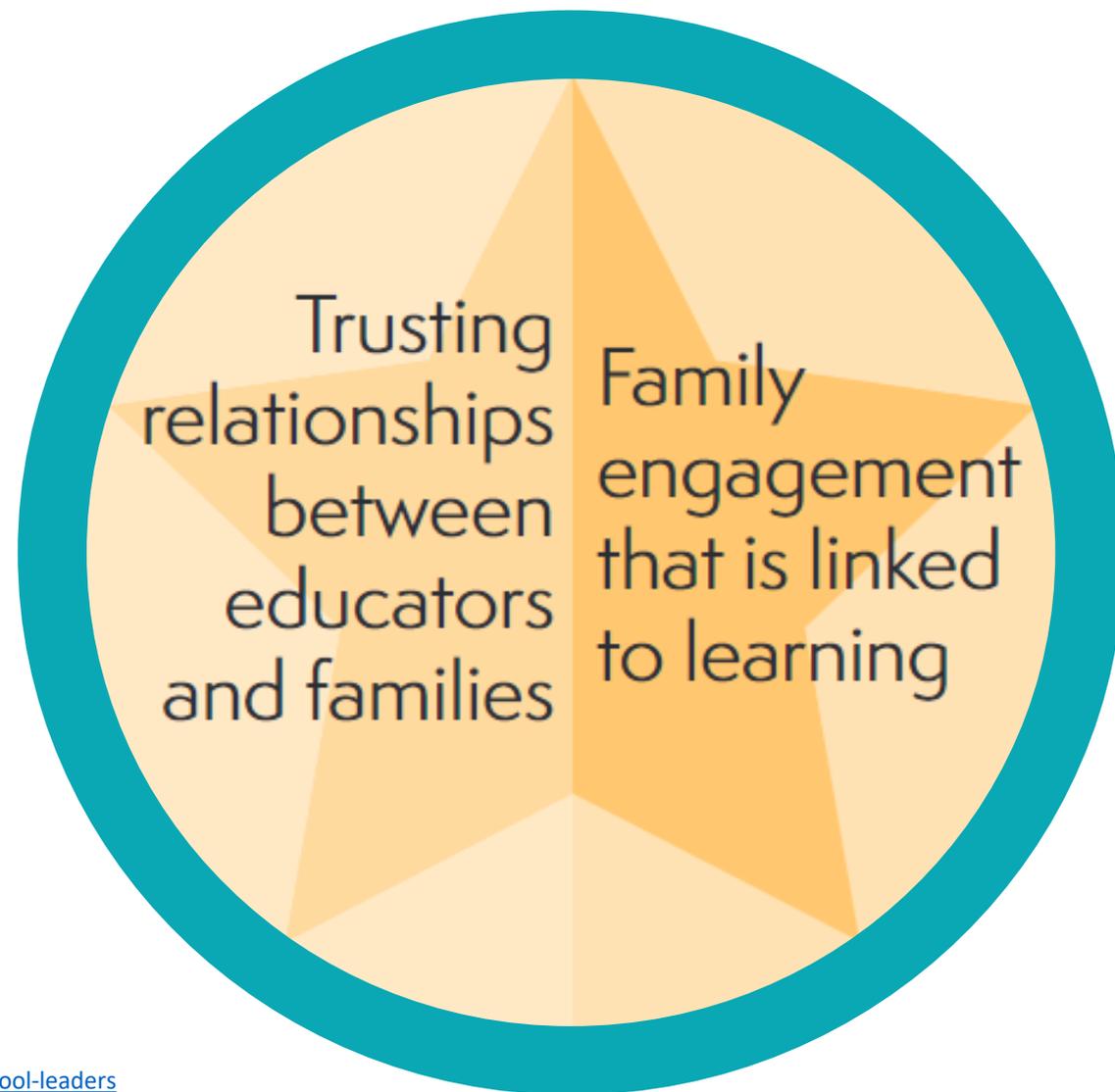


What is Family Engagement?



Your North Star in Fostering High-Impact Family Engagement

High-impact family engagement requires the **continuous strengthening of trusting relationships between educators and families** and the **connection of family engagement activities and efforts to student learning**.



<https://charterschoolcenter.ed.gov/publication/planning-family-engagement-charter-school-life-cycle-toolkit-school-leaders>



When Done Well...

Students are more likely to:

- Improve their grades
- Attend school more regularly
- Enroll in higher-level programs
- Graduate and go on to college
- Be more excited and positive about school and learning
- Have fewer discipline issues inside and outside of class

Schools are more likely to:

- Sustain improvement efforts
- Improve student attendance
- Decrease disciplinary issues
- Develop positive school climate and culture
- Reduce teacher turnover and improve teacher job satisfaction

Dual Capacity-Building Framework for Family-School Partnerships

Access the Framework at <https://sedl.org/pubs/framework/FE-Cap-Building.pdf>

Mapp, K. L. & Bergman, E. (2019). Partners in Education: A Dual Capacity-Building Framework for Family-School Partnerships. <https://sedl.org/pubs/framework/FE-Cap-Building.pdf>

Figure 2: The Dual Capacity-Building Framework for Family-School Partnerships



Increasing Teacher Capacity in the Dual Capacity Framework

Teachers benefit from professional learning that recognizes families as equal partners.



To meaningfully engage with EL families, teachers must:

Understand and enact school's values

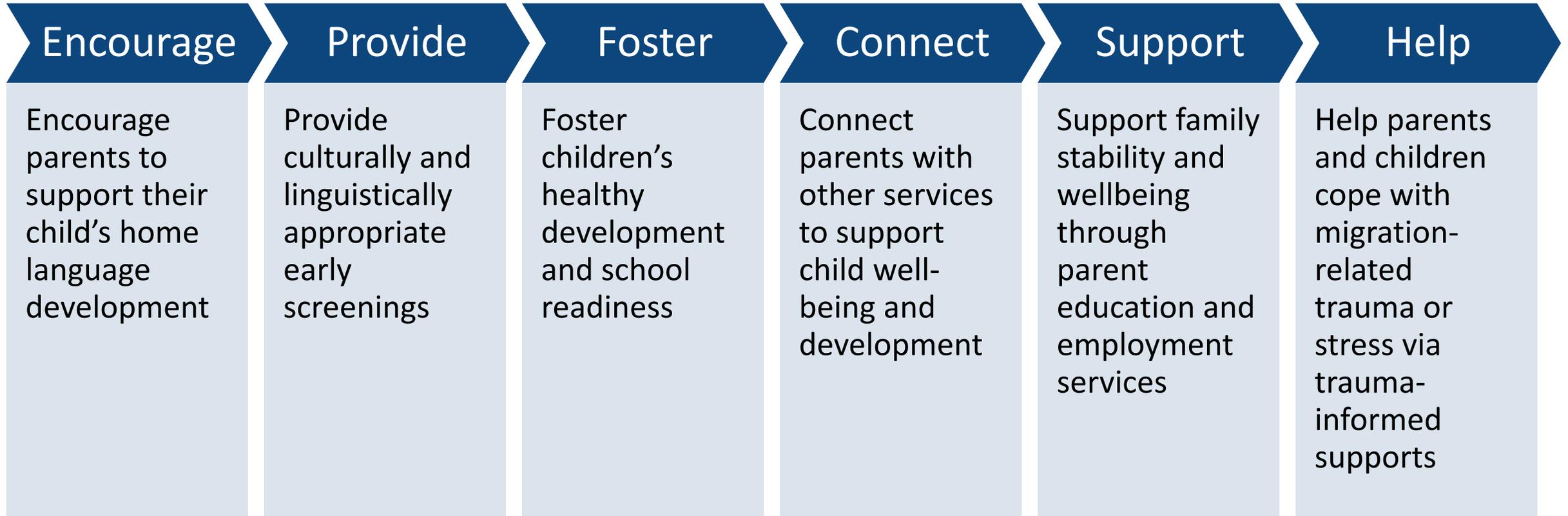
Know how to productively establish relationships with EL families

Actively build trust with EL families



To ameliorate challenges that EL families face, it is important for schools to connect with community-based organizations that support and work with EL families. By partnering with communities (e.g., businesses, faith-based organizations, community centers), schools can maximize the strengths of EL families.

Community-Based Organizations Can...



Promising Engagement Strategies for Non-English Speaking Families

Provide information about registration and enrollment in families' home languages

Find out how families prefer to communicate

Secure language translators and learn how to effectively use them

Be sensitive to cultural differences

Ensure families feel welcomed at school events and teacher conferences

Provide or help families with transportation

Provide information about after-school programming

Ensure families understand the types of assessments given and how the data is used

Questions to Ask Yourself



How does the school honor and reflect the diversity of families, including their languages and cultures?

Are staff members trained in engaging diverse families and communities?

Are parent meetings and school events scheduled with interpreters present on dates and times that facilitate EL parent participation?

A Few More Ideas...



Encourage parents to write teachers a letter about their child



Conduct home visits



Share student successes often



Encourage families to volunteer



Fostering family engagement doesn't just happen. You need a thoughtful plan to be successful.

Create a Planning Team

Who can contribute to developing core beliefs, a vision, key objectives, policies and practices, capacity development, strategies, and evaluation?

Who is missing from your current team focused on family engagement?

Educators

School Leaders

Board Members

Staff Members

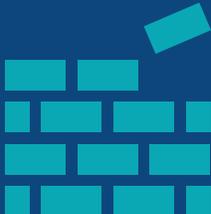
Families

Community Partners

Building a Plan for Authentic Sustainable Engagement



Articulate Your Overarching Family Engagement Goals



Build a Collaborative Culture to Drive Engagement and Build Educator Capacity to Form Partnerships with Families



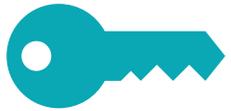
Select and Design Effective Family Engagement Strategies



Strategy Implementation, Measurement, and Continuous Improvement



Key Takeaways



Focus on trusting relationships between families and educators.



Connect family engagement activities and efforts to student learning.



Build an inclusive team to help tackle family engagement efforts.



Make a plan, with the North Star as guidance.



Use continuous improvement to keep your plan alive.

Reflection Questions



What is one thing you learned from this module that you can apply to your current family and community engagement practices?

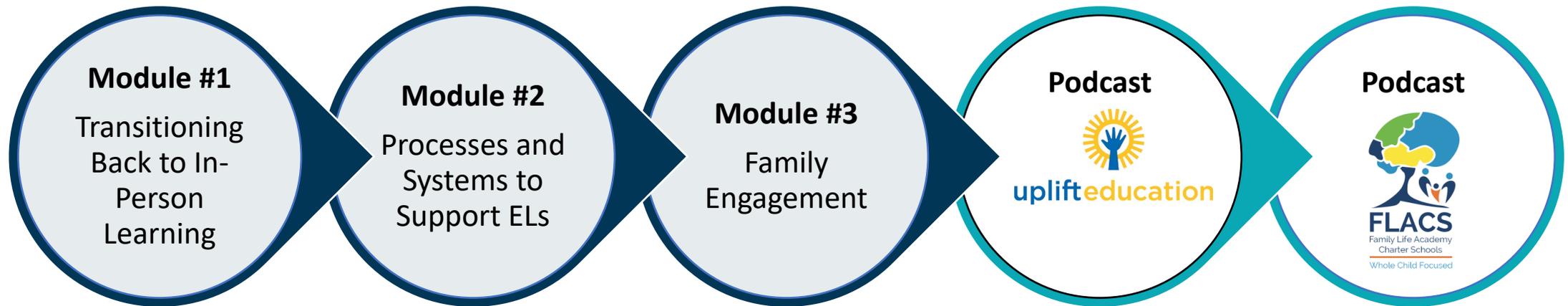


How is your school currently doing engaging the families and communities of your EL students? What can you do better?



How can you further involve your staff in family and community engagement?

What's Next in Your Learning Experience



Updated November 2016

CHAPTER 10



TOOLS AND RESOURCES FOR ENSURING MEANINGFUL COMMUNICATION WITH LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENT PARENTS

ESSA UPDATE INCLUDED*

This is the tenth chapter of the English Learner Tool Kit, which is intended to help state and local education agencies (SEAs and LEAs) meet their obligations to English Learners (ELs). This tool kit should be read in conjunction with the U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights' (OCR) and the U.S. Department of Justice's (DOJ) Dear Colleague Letter on "English Learner Students and Limited English Proficient Parents," published in January 2015, which outlines SEAs' and LEAs' legal obligations to ELs under civil rights laws and other federal requirements. The Dear Colleague Letter can be found at <http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/allresources.html>.

ENSURING MEANINGFUL COMMUNICATION WITH LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENT PARENTS

KEY POINTS

- SEAs and LEAs have an obligation to communicate meaningfully with limited English proficient (LEP) parents and to notify LEP parents adequately of information about any program, service, or activity called to the attention of non-LEP parents.
- LEAs must have a process to identify LEP parents and provide them with free and effective language assistance, such as translated materials or an appropriate and competent interpreter.
- Appropriate and competent translators or interpreters should have proficiency in target languages; ease of written and oral expression; knowledge of specialized terms or concepts; as well as be trained on their role, the ethics of interpreting and translating, and the need for confidentiality.



Research shows that strong family-school relationships are an indicator of student success (Weiss, López, & Rosenberg, 2011). Communication with limited English proficient (LEP) parents in a language they can understand provides a foundation for students' academic success and creates a welcoming school community; it provides these parents with access to all the necessary information about their child's education.

SEAs and LEAs have an obligation to communicate meaningfully with LEP parents and to adequately notify them of information about any program, service, or

activity called to the attention of non-LEP parents. Successful communication provides LEP parents the school-related information they need to make informed decisions about, and be helpful participants in, their children's education. This may include but not be limited to information about language assistance programs, special education and related services, Individualized Education Program (IEP) meetings, grievance procedures, notices of nondiscrimination, student discipline policies and procedures, registration and enrollment, report cards, requests for parent permission for student participation

*This chapter has been updated to reflect changes in the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015 (ESSA). The U.S. Department of Education has released a non-regulatory guidance (NRG) about ESSA and ELs that is available at <http://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/elsec/els/ellguidance/ellguidance092016.pdf>. The text of the ESEA, as amended by ESSA, can be found at <http://www2.ed.gov/documents/essa-act-of-1395.pdf>.

<https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/oela/english-learner-toolkit/chap10.pdf>

Planning for Family Engagement in the Charter School Life Cycle

A Toolkit for School Leaders

November 2020



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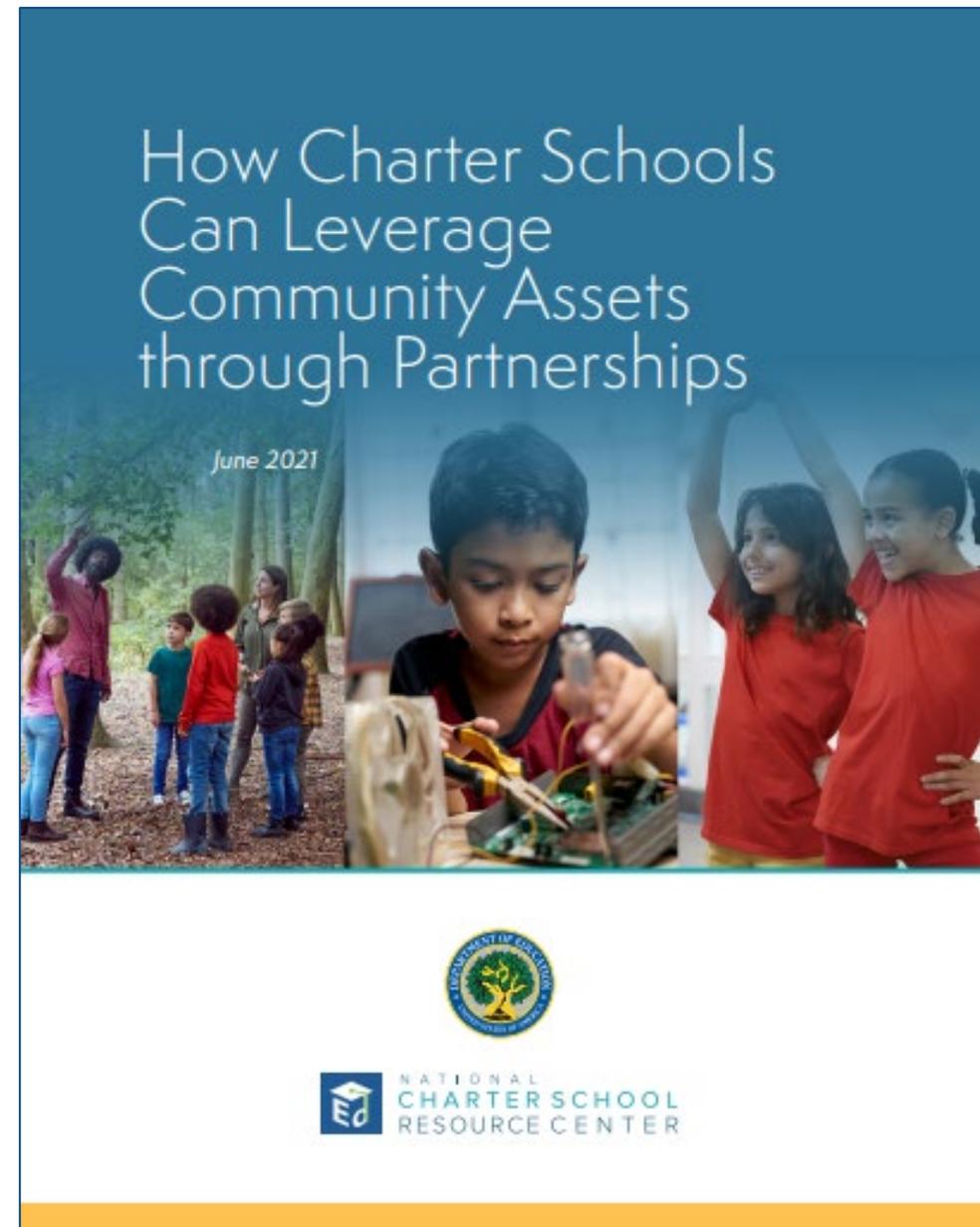
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New NCSRC Resource!

<https://charterschoolcenter.ed.gov/publication/how-charter-schools-can-leverage-community-assets-through-partnerships>



Additional Resources

- Institute on Community Integration: [Working with Language Interpreters: Information for Principals](#)
- Colorín Colorado: [Making Your First ELL Home Visit: A Guide for Classroom Teachers](#)