

# Supporting Dual Language Learners

## Our Classroom Language Plan

We strive to support dual language learners and all children by creating an ecosystem that supports their learning, and values and respects all assets - linguistic and cultural - they bring to the classroom. We value families and the partnerships we build with them.

Use the information families have shared with you through the Family Language and Culture Survey to brainstorm and plan ways to best meet the needs of DLLs in your classroom.

### Getting to know who's in your classroom

#### LANGUAGES: What languages are represented?

*What did the surveys reflect about children's first language and English skills?*

**First Language 1:** *Spanish*

**Children :**

*Luna, Oscar, Maria, Jorge, Paula, Mario*

**First Language 2:** *Arabic*

**Children:**

*Amira, Ali, Samir, Fathi*

**First Language 3:**

*Punjabi*

**Children:**

*Ekam, Daler*

**Children who speak only English:**

*James, Caroline, Charlotte, Chase, Audrey*

**COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN: Where do the children and families come from?**

*Mexico, Honduras, Colombia, Egypt, Syria, Lybia and India*

### Engaging families as partners in their children's development

*What will you do to learn more about families? How can you help families and how can families help you?*

**What activities will you plan to get to know families better?**

*"All About My Family Book," Family tree (asking for family pictures), monthly phone check-in calls*

**How do you plan to involve them as partners?**

*Sharing a newsletter monthly in Spanish and English with the parents, Class reader weekly, Breakfast or Coffee Session, asking them to record key words in their first languages and send them to us for use throughout the day*

### Taking stock of all your resources

**HUMAN RESOURCES:** Who can you count on (staff in your classroom or center-wide, families, community volunteers) to help you support children's first languages in your classroom? How you will use them effectively, e.g., to help you learn words in a child's first language, or to read stories to children in a first language.

- *Ms. Yolanda and Ms. Luisa (Bilingual teachers): Story time in Spanish*
- *Luciana's Mom: She will be helping me with props, visuals, and different materials in the classroom*
- *Ali's Mom: She will be coming every Wednesday to read a book in a small group in Arabic for my three Arabic Speaking children*
- *Explore possibilities of volunteers from high school service club to connect with young people whose first language is Punjabi who could serve in our classroom*

**MATERIAL RESOURCES:** What materials do you have to support teaching DLLs? What do you need to add? Consider materials that reflect children's diversity and support their first language e.g., bilingual books or books in other languages, music, cultural artifacts, games, etc.

**Brief inventory of what's available:**

*Some books in Spanish, songs in Spanish*

**Short list of materials and resources you'd like to add to your classroom:**

- *Books in Arabic, Punjabi, and Spanish*
- *Books in English that reflect the cultures of the children in our classroom*
- *Greeting songs in Spanish, Punjabi, and Arabic (I can ask for this from the parents )*
- *Music and songs for my morning meetings in Arabic and Punjabi*

### Creating a culturally and linguistically responsive classroom environment

*How will you use all these resources to create a classroom environment that reflects children's culture and language? What evidence will visitors see?*

**A classroom environment that is culturally and linguistically responsive looks like this:**

*Family pictures that represent their cultures, maps of the countries that represent the cultures I have in my classroom. (I can use the flags from these countries to decorate our classroom). I can ask families for clothing, kitchen tools and food packaging items for the dramatic play center and musical instruments.*

*Greetings in the three languages I have in my classroom (Arabic, Spanish, Punjabi. Parents will help me with this information). Find songs in first languages of my children for morning meeting and music and movement.*

*I will learn key words from families in the first languages of children and post them to remind me to use them throughout the day.*

(adapted from Sancho Passe, A. 2013. DLLs Birth to Grade 3: Strategies for Teaching English, Redleaf Press.)