Universal Design for Partnerships: Promoting Culturally Responsive Family and Professional Collaboration in Schools

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Abstract

Family engagement with teachers is critical for the academic success of students, especially students receiving special education services. The purpose of this article is to promote the use of proactive engagement techniques for promoting learning opportunities in the home. Recommendations for family engagement are offered through a critical race lens using Yosso's (2005) community cultural wealth. Principles of Universal Design for Learning (UDL; CAST, 2024; Rose & Meyer, 2002), typically used in PreK–12 education settings, are adapted to apply to families in a proposed framework: Universal Design for Partnerships. Traditional engagement strategies are often deficit-based and ignore the contributions of the diverse families represented in today's classroom setting. Practical implications on how to apply Universal Design for Partnerships are provided with useful resources for sharing culturally responsive literacy practices with families.

Key Words: universal design for learning, special education, collaboration, family, parents, engagement, culturally responsive, reading instruction

Introduction

The demographic diversity in the United States continues to grow (Frey, 2024), expanding the unique and wonderful landscape of culture

and history. Despite the benefits of diversity in the classroom, the variety in strengths, needs, values, and skills can prevent engagement between teachers and families, particularly for culturally and linguistically diverse students and special education students (Conroy, 2012; Lim & Cheatham, 2020; Rossetti et al., 2018). Considering the large representation of such diverse students in special education (Bekele, 2019; Larios & Zetlin, 2018), teachers need additional supports in fostering collaboration with the variety of families represented in their classrooms.

The purpose of this article is to propose a way to universally design family–school partnerships that recognize, promote, and strengthen family contributions in supporting learning for special education students. Parent engagement benefits both parents and teachers by upholding a Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE), improving academic achievement for students (Park & Holloway, 2017), increasing attendance, and reducing delinquent behaviors, such as dropping out of school and engaging in substance abuse (Whitford & Addis, 2017). To embrace inclusivity, the term "parent" is used to refer to anyone serving the parental role in a child's life, and "family" will refer to any person of close relation. "Diversity" refers to the assets produced by a wide range of intersections between race/ethnicity, culture, and ability (Annamma & Morrison, 2018). Partnerships are defined as "reciprocal relationships to which families and professionals both contribute and from which they both benefit" (Haines et al., 2017, p. 234) and are understood to require communication, trust, and understanding (Angell et al., 2009; Cobb, 2014; Haines et al., 2017).

In this article, we apply community cultural wealth (Yosso, 2005) to professional–family partnership practices in special education. Proposed engagement strategies will involve teachers anticipating the needs of all families and proactively creating an array of opportunities for collaboration by using three principles of Universal Design for Learning (UDL; CAST, 2024; Rose & Meyer, 2002). In doing so, a contemporary framework emerges, termed the Universal Design for Partnerships (UDP).

Theoretical Framework: Community Cultural Wealth

To provide examples of the proposed UDP framework, we draw on Yosso's community cultural wealth framework. Through community cultural wealth, Yosso acknowledges historically accumulated assets and values the resources from the lived experiences of communities of color, creating six new categories for cultural capital: aspirational, familial, linguistic, navigational, resistant, and social (Yosso, 2005). See Table 1 for brief definitions of each type of capital; see Yosso (2005) for full definitions and examples

from the author's work. Although this framework is used for these examples, practitioners may find other frameworks more useful, depending on the population of students with whom they work or their own theoretical worldview. For example, many educators of Black students use culturally relevant pedagogy (Ladson-Billings, 1995) or culturally responsive teaching (Gay, 2002a). See Table 2 for more examples of frameworks teachers may find useful.

Table 1. Definitions of Types of Capital

Type of Capital	Definition
Aspirational Capital	"the ability to maintain hopes and dreams for the future, even in the face of real and perceived barriers" (Yosso, 2005, p. 76)
Linguistic Capital	"the intellectual and social skills attained through communication experiences in more than one language and/or style" (Yosso, 2005, p. 78)
Familial Capital	"those cultural knowledges nurtured among *familia* (kin) that carry a sense of community history, memory, and cultural intuition" (Yosso, 2005, p. 79)
Social Capital	"networks of people and community resources" (Yosso, 2005, p. 79)
Navigational Capital	"skills of maneuvering through social institutions" (Yosso, 2005, p. 80)
Resistant Capital	"knowledges and skills fostered through oppositional behavior that challenges inequality" (Yosso, 2005, p. 80)

Table 2. Culturally Responsive Frameworks

Framework	Population(s)	Citation
Culturally Relevant Pedagogy	African American students	Ladson-Billings, 1995
Culturally Responsive Teaching	Students of color in special and regular education classrooms	Gay, 2002a
Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy	Multiethnic and multilingual communities	Paris & Alim, 2014
Culturally Revitalizing Pedagogy	Native American learners	McCarty & Lee, 2014
Funds of Knowledge	Mexican communities in the U.S.	Moll et al., 2006

Note. "Populations" refers to the original demographics of those observed by the authors, using the language the authors used in the cited article.

Community cultural wealth aspects have research implications in many areas; some examples pertinent to the application section in this article include: teacher training (Burciaga & Kohli, 2018; Margherio et al., 2020; Miller, 2019), parent–teacher interactions in Individual Education Plan meetings (Larios & Zetlin, 2018), experiences of Black parents and students (Bolgatz et al., 2020; James-Gallaway, 2021), school engagement with Latino/a families (Fernández & Paredes Scribner, 2018; Guzmán et al., 2021), inclusivity of deaf parents and students (Braun et al., 2017; Musyoka & Adeoye, 2021), and family literacy practices (Gutiérrez et al., 2009; Larrotta & Yamamura, 2011; López-Robertson, 2017; Lynch, 2018; Morphis & Yuan, 2021; Msengi, 2021; Pratt et al., 2021). Specific examples of Yosso's (2005) categories applied to the educational setting are discussed in the application section of this article.

Universal Design for Partnerships

This proposed framework, UDP, draws on the guidelines of UDL (CAST, 2024; Rose & Meyer, 2002). The UDP framework creates consistent and flexible opportunities for teachers to engage with parents by having a proactive system in place that anticipates the need for various supports. The UDL framework, typically used for student learning, promotes the science of how people learn by including multiple ways to: (a) engage learners, (b) represent information, and (c) allow learners to express their understanding of content (CAST, 2024; Nelson & Basham, 2014). Use of UDL in classrooms proactively sets up a learning environment that is inclusive, flexible, and anticipatory of the needs of diverse learners (Capp, 2017; Rogers-Shaw et al., 2018).

While UDL has been most often applied in PreK–12 settings, its use has been expanded to include workplace trainings (CAST, 2024; Gronseth & Hutchins, 2020), higher education (CAST, 2024; Griful-Freixenet et al., 2017; Rogers-Shaw et al., 2018), and conveyance of information in public spaces, such as museums (CAST, 2024). In these ways, applications of UDL's guidelines continue to support learning by removing barriers and facilitating access beyond traditional K–12 schooling as well as in community contexts. UDL guidelines continue to evolve to be more inclusive and equitable in response to feedback from the communities served (CAST, 2024). School professionals have also begun to "develop family communications that considers things such as alternative languages and adult illiteracy and encourage teachers to use engaging activities, such as video, to communicate student achievement" (Nelson & Basham, 2014, p. 16). Likewise, UDL principles can be applied to engagement practices and guidelines that

support partnerships and working relationships between teachers, school professionals, and families of students with disabilities.

Components of Universal Design for Partnerships

The purpose of UDP is to create a system that provides proactive, flexible, and responsive techniques to: (a) engage diverse families, ensuring that each family's strengths, preferences, and values are honored in the classroom; (b) represent classroom instructional practices that can be implemented in the home; and (c) allow families various ways of communicating how they provide learning activities in their homes. Four components are necessary for UDP to be effective: reflexivity, multiple means of engagement, multiple means of representation, and multiple means of feedback and input. The following sections offer discussion of how to use these components (i.e., recommended guidelines) while being respectful of the two-way collaborative approach best suited for engaging parents (Friend, 2021).

To intentionally plan for variability, teachers proactively create a variety of easily accessible choices (CAST, 2024) from which parents can use their preferred method. Just as teachers draw on UDL principles for students with various perceptual, language, and cognitive skills (Nelson & Basham, 2014), they could also anticipate a variety of parent attributes that should be provided for. Use of flexible methods and materials for parent engagement provides for the needs of parents and families with various sensory, learning, language, or cultural backgrounds. Providing options in multimedia formats anticipates these needs and can provide accessibility tools and assistive technology without parents needing to request them (CAST, 2024).

While technology can be an important tool for promoting accessibility, it is crucial to note that use of technology must be purposeful (Nelson & Basham, 2014), and teachers must provide options that do not rely on technology. Despite widespread use of technology, inequalities still exist in terms of access to technology services and devices (Huffman, 2018). According to the *Condition of Education* (National Center for Education Statistics, 2023), 97% of children between the ages of 3 and 18 years old have internet access at home. Inequity is reflected in that the data varied based on household income, with those reporting $25,000 or less having the least access to internet, desk or laptop computers, and/or mobile devices (e.g., tablets, smartphones). Providing only internet-enabled resources would not anticipate the needs of these families.

The following sections include recommendations from previous research and how to use UDP in culturally responsive ways. However, despite the importance of fostering engagement opportunities, it is also crucial to

avoid professionalizing parents (Posey-Maddox, 2013). Some parents have the capacity to devote time and energy to extending learning opportunities in the home, while others do not have the resources needed to take on this responsibility. This means teachers must provide various opportunities so that parents can easily access information in their home language and give feedback at the level that is appropriate for their family. Most importantly, creating a classroom environment that views family input as an asset supporting the classroom instruction of students with disabilities and that honors each family's culture and experience (Noguerón-Liu, 2020) increases opportunities to engage parents (Harwood & Murray, 2019). See Figure 1 for ideas on incorporating multiple means of engagement, representation, and input and feedback.

Figure 1. Examples of Universal Design for Partnerships in Action
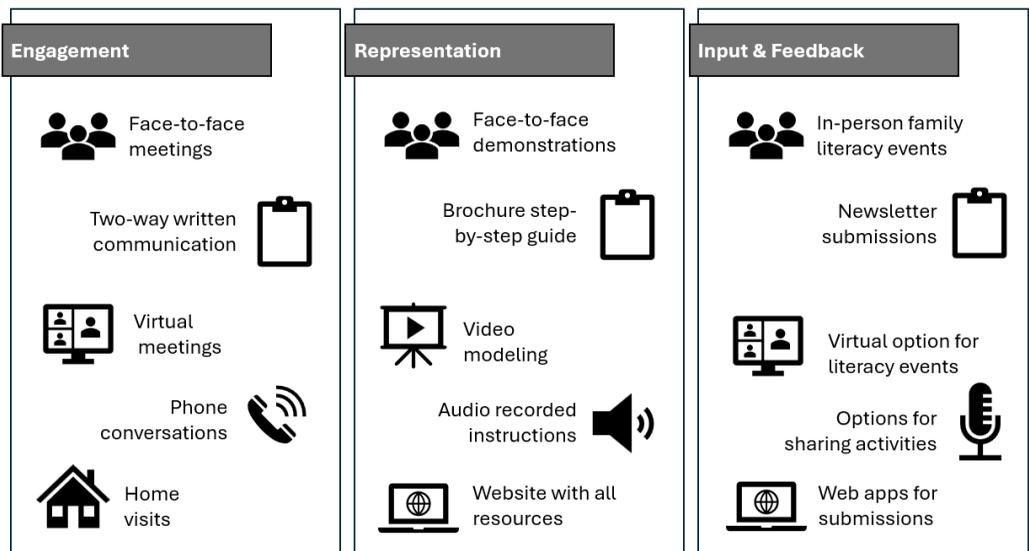
Application: UDP Using Community Cultural Wealth in a Literacy Classroom Setting

This section explores the implementation of UDP using a theoretical base of community cultural wealth in a special education literacy/reading classroom. Although the examples here are specific to reading and literacy, UDP has the potential for application in any content area and with any theoretical framework. Further, just as UDL is used along with other models (e.g., Multi-Tiered Systems of Support [MTSS]; Thomas et al., 2023), UDP can also be used in conjunction with other parent engagement

models, such as the tiered approach of the Sunshine Model (Chatenoud & Odier-Guedj, 2022; Haines et al., 2017).

Literacy as a subject matter was chosen for this application because literacy skills begin to emerge through social interactions in the child's immediate environment, typically their home (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Buchholz & Riley, 2020). Thus, it is important to assess how these skills are being fostered in the home. Fortunately, many parents agree that reading skills are important (Jimenez et al., 2018). This matters because beliefs about reading and writing practices can influence how students develop literacy skills (Noguerón-Liu, 2020). When teachers and families engage to co-create literacy partnerships, they support not only students' willingness to engage in reading and writing but also their confidence in viewing themselves as strong readers and writers (Simone et al., 2019). For example, parents who regularly participate in shared reading experiences with their children found the activity to be both relaxing and joyful for the family (Jimenez et al., 2018), which in turn begins to build on their own familial capital (Yosso, 2005).

Here, we review some examples of family engaged literacy research including cultural capital wealth (Yosso, 2005) and how those research-based practices fit into the proposed UDP framework. In this application, Yosso's (2005) aspirational, familial, social, and linguistic capitals are included. In terms of literacy instruction, navigational and resistant capitals are not as prevalent; however, it is important to note that these types of capital are still important for teachers and families to be aware of and use when building partnerships with school personnel.

Reflexivity

A crucial detail of UDP is that this framework is intended to be culturally responsive. The first step in doing so is for teachers to practice reflexivity. Wanda Pillow (2003) described reflexivity in the realm of research as "requir[ing] the researcher to be critically conscious through personal accounting of how the researcher's self-location (across, e.g., gender, race, ethnicity, class, sexuality, nationality), position, and interests influence all stages of the research process" (p. 178). For UDP, teachers must adopt this same form of self-examination.

Reflexive exercises may be helpful for teachers who are seeking to gain a broader understanding of the cultures represented in their classrooms. Learning about different cultural value systems, such as the individualism prevalent in the United States compared to the collectivism inherent in many immigrant cultures present in the U.S., could be a helpful exercise.

Trumbull and colleagues (2000) used this approach in their Bridging Cultures project, wherein they sought to determine how these contrasting value systems are expressed in school settings by students and their families. In another example, Cooper (2007) had preservice teachers participate in six exercises to promote reflection and community-based learning where they were student teaching, beginning with writing exercises designed to reflect on who they are as individuals and leading up to participation in in-depth community experiences. Overall, teachers should seek to move beyond simply understanding and awareness of cultural differences within their classrooms and move towards seeking factual information from students and their families about their home cultures to create engaging and responsive educational opportunities for all students (Gay, 2002b). Reflection on oneself, in addition to accurate knowledge about culture, is imperative.

Multiple Means of Engagement

Engagement provides opportunities for parents and teachers to interact around student learning. It is important to use two-way communication options that honor parents' strengths and knowledge (Simone et al., 2019; Vélez-Ibáñez & Greenberg, 1992) for authentic partnerships (Friend, 2021; Turnbull et al., 1999), which benefit families as well as teachers (Gross et al., 2015). Fostering partnership requires seeking parental preferences about how they best communicate as well as sharing information about a variety of options for engagement. Because 99% of adults in the U.S. own a cell phone (Pew Research Center, 2024), texting is one of the most effective ways to inform families of what is happening in the classroom (York et al., 2019) and to consistently offer support (Magnuson & Schindler, 2016). Password protected cell phone apps, such as Remind or Class Dojo (see Table 3 for additional communication tools), add a layer of confidentiality with the added accessibility bonus that most apps have audio, video, and translation capabilities (Snell et al., 2020).

For a low-tech option, engaging brochures can be sent home regularly (Nguyen et al., 2021). Unlike texting (Snell et al., 2020), brochures do not offer two-way communication but are an easy addition to a regular communication routine (Nguyen et al., 2021). Brochures mailed or sent home with students can also be included in electronic communication and on class websites. Providing opportunities for parents to submit feedback, whether through technology or written communication logs, would create the two-way flow of information required for engaging partnerships.

Table 3. Useful Websites for Communication

Technology	Website	Sources for More Information
Zoom Video Conferencing 🦻 🎥 📄	zoom.us	https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/206618765-Zoom-Video-Tutorials see also: Chamberlain et al., 2020
Seesaw 🦻 🎥 📄 ⇄	web.seesaw.me	https://web.seesaw.me/training see also: Buchholz & Riley, 2020; Chamberlain et al., 2020: Shamash et al., 2022
Class Dojo 🦻 🎥 📄 ⇄	classdojo.com	https://www.classdojo.com/resources/ see also: Snell et al., 2020; Shamash et al., 2022
Remind 🦻 🎥 📄 ⇄	remind.com	https://www.remind.com/resources/ see also: Snell et al., 2020; Shamash et al., 2022

Note. 🦻 denotes audio options, 🎥 denotes video options, 📄 denotes text options, and ⇄ denotes included language translation capabilities.

Family literacy events are effective opportunities for engagement, which can be hosted in a variety of ways (Brown et al., 2019; Buchholz & Riley, 2020; Segal & Martin-Chang, 2019; Simone et al., 2019; Smith & Grant, 2024), including options that support the collectivist approach some cultures value (Trumbull et al., 2020). Bolstering social capital (Yosso, 2005), literacy events highlight family strengths and are outlets to share knowledge and experiences. In-person and virtual options include family literacy events (Smith & Grant, 2024), roundtable discussions (Brown et al., 2019), and joint sessions for parents and teachers to learn from each other (Segal & Martin-Chang, 2019).

For example, Building Bonds (Smith & Grant, 2024) is a monthly family literacy program providing culturally relevant activities through books, discussions, and family involvement. This program started by assembling an action team, consisting of a general education teacher, a culturally and linguistically diverse specialist, members of a Spanish-speaking family, and a community liaison. The team assigned roles, then met with students, the school principal, and district personnel to garner interest in the event and plan for logistics such as meeting time, space, and food for the event. The liaison then contacted family members of students who were interested to communicate information about the event and incentivize the experience by sharing that each family that participated in all meetings would

receive a $50 gift card for the school book fair. Three one-hour sessions were held in the school cafeteria in the fall semester. All families received the same book with discussion questions (in Spanish or English) and were instructed which chapters to read between meetings. At the conclusion of the experience, some families discovered that they became literate together, enhanced their literacy-rich home environment, and increased interactions with their children (Smith & Grant, 2024).

Another example, round-table discussions (Brown et al., 2019) included teachers modeling read-aloud techniques, with parents then having opportunities to practice the techniques in real time with teacher feedback. This study was conducted with a third-grade class with a large representation of English Language Learners who needed more support in reading and whose primary home language was Spanish. Books were selected for each session based on engaging content, stimulating visuals, cultural connections, student's reading level, and availability of a Spanish version. Families received books in their home language for the first five sessions, then received books in English for the remaining sessions. Discussion questions were given to family members for all sessions in the family's home language. Parents were coached on how to lead discussions and ask questions during the reading and were then given laminated cards with reminders of these techniques for use at home. As a result, students showed increased confidence in reading and began asking teachers for high-interest books (Brown et al., 2019).

These school-based events enhance social and linguistic capital during sessions and extend to the home where familial and linguistic capital are increased (Yosso, 2005). These events are also excellent opportunities to gain useful information about family literacy activities. Recordings of sessions (with permission from parents and teachers) or similar video modeling recordings can be uploaded to class websites or apps for those not able to attend in person (Buchholz & Riley, 2020; Shamash et al., 2022). To enhance engagement for those who could not attend, feedback opportunities should be offered for recordings and video modeling.

Family literacy projects can also promote discussions of culturally responsive readings in the home (Larrotta & Yamamaura, 2011). In another project, literacy-based conversations in the home inspired further storytelling opportunities for parents and children, and life stories and culture were shared from the cultural experts in the home. Families were given two sets of culturally responsive readings, one for parents and another for students. For parents, culturally specific topics were included in readings, such as immigration, economics, and ethics. Children received age-appropriate

readings on high interest topics such as animals and adventures. Parents were able to practice reading comprehension strategies used in schools, including think-aloud, concept mapping, and K-W-L charts (what do I Know, what do I Want to know, what did I Learn) with their children. All participants reported an improvement in communication skills and relationships of family members (Larrotta & Yamamura, 2011).

For technology-enabled collaboration during the school day, video conferencing apps, such as SeeSaw or Zoom, can be used to engage families in a mystery reader program where family members read with expression while sharing their personal favorite books, enhancing fluency for students through modeling (Chamberlain et al., 2020). Vocabulary lessons in a transitional bilingual classroom included student use of their own family experiences to define a word through relationship to a family practice (Lynch, 2018). These forms of in-class engagement bring culture and experiences into the classroom to create cohesion and a community atmosphere, making the classroom a welcoming place for families to engage and feel accepted (Chamberlain et al., 2020), thus supporting social, linguistic, and familial capital (Yosso, 2005).

Multiple Means of Representation

Representation involves teachers sharing classroom practices and recommending ways for parents to incorporate them into their home literacy approaches. Providing multiple representations of information connects literacy concepts from school to home and promotes the transfer of these practices from one context to another (CAST, 2024). Multiple means of representation also promote accessibility of the content, with the goal of using literacy techniques specifically designed for the individual children in the classroom (Buchholz & Riley, 2020). This requires some work in re-creating materials, but each representation does not need to be completely unique; the same information can be represented in multiple ways. For example, a scripted video model can be represented in writing by adapting the script into text in the classroom brochure or newsletter (Nguyen et al., 2021) and recorded as an audio file for families that prefer automated phone calls. These representations can be uploaded to an ADA compliant classroom website (see Huss, 2022 for assessment options and strategies for maintaining ADA compliance for websites).

In addition to texting as a means for sharing basic communication and increasing home involvement, teachers have been able to use texting—or texting apps such as SeeSaw—to represent what and how students are learning in the classroom (Buchholz & Riley, 2020). For example, texting can be

used to model vocabulary techniques and add a family component to vocabulary instruction. Offering authentic experiences to practice vocabulary words in everyday conversations increases exposure to words, opportunities to use words in context, and development of a deeper understanding of vocabulary (Snell et al., 2020) while bolstering familial and linguistic capital (Yosso, 2005). There are several benefits to using this type of technology, including availability of apps for a wide range of mobile devices, multiple ways to communicate within the app, and parent access to student learning artifacts (Buchholz & Riley, 2020). Including video models of effective practices and written instructions in take-home brochures provide multiple means for representing these and other literacy activities for home use.

By becoming actively involved in the community (Cooper, 2007; Hohlfeld et al., 2010; Peralta, 2019), teachers can experience social capital firsthand while also becoming aware of community resources. Because access to books in the home has been linked to increased interest in reading and literacy-related skills (de Bondt et al., 2020), teachers can share community resources, such as book giveaways (see Table 4) which can help bolster home libraries (de Bondt et al., 2020). Teachers can also share information on accessing libraries to use digital services, participate in story time activities, and enjoy other programming (Clark Hunt, 2020; Mills et al., 2018). Some communities also include literacy activities in other public spaces such as laundromats (Neuman et al., 2020), which teachers will become more aware of as they take part in their communities.

Maintaining family partnerships into the summer is recommended to provide literacy experiences throughout the year (Allington et al., 2010). Summer intervention bags, which include books for each student based on their skills and interests, can facilitate continued learning (Albee et al., 2019) and draw on familial capital (Yosso, 2005). Teachers can include books designated to be read by someone else (parent, grandparent, older sibling) as well as books designated for the student to read independently to continue building literacy skills (Albee et al., 2019). Interactive reading bookmarks for family members with suggestions of types of questions to ask during shared reading can reflect classroom practice and promote linguistic capital (Yosso, 2005). Training for family members on how to incorporate materials can be included in a digital format (Albee et al., 2019), including video modeling, audio recordings, and text.

Table 4. Useful Websites for Family Literacy Engagement

Technology	Website	Sources for More Information
Booktrust	booktrust.org.uk	https://www.booktrust.org.uk/what-we-do/impact-and-research/ see also: de Bondt et al., 2020
Dolly Parton's Imagination Library	imaginationli-brary.com	https://imaginationlibrary.com/news-resources/research/ see also: de Bondt et al., 2020
Reach Out and Read	reachoutan-dread.org	https://reachoutandread.org/why-we-matter/the-evidence/ see also: de Bondt et al., 2020
Bloomz	bloomz.com	https://support.bloomz.com/support/home see also: Shamash et al., 2022
Talking Points	talkingpts.org/families/	https://resources.talkingpts.org/en see also: Shamash et al., 2022

Note. ⟨ear icon⟩ denotes audio options, ⟨video icon⟩ denotes video options, ⟨text icon⟩ denotes text options, and ⟨arrows icon⟩ denotes included language translation capabilities.

Multiple Means of Input and Feedback

Input and feedback serve as opportunities for parents to give information to teachers on how they are using literacy activities, respond to classroom literacy activities initiated in the home, ask questions, and share their experiences. For UDP, teachers need to provide multiple ways for families to report back that will anticipate the needs of parents who may have movement impairments, need for executive functioning supports, or a primary language other than English. Providing specific recommendations for tools and assistive technologies for parents (CAST, 2024) promotes trust in the relationships being built.

Parents want to support their children in their learning. Allowing parents multiple means of input may help teachers better understand literacy practices happening in the home. Parent involvement in learning activities in the home is an asset (Noguerón-Liu, 2020; Peralta, 2019), and teachers can seek information of home literacy practices as a starting point for enhancing family practices with evidence-based practices used in school. In

doing so, teachers further support parents by placing value on their practices and providing additional literacy techniques to use in their homes. By encouraging parent input, teachers can also enhance their literacy curriculum to reflect experiences of their students' families (López-Robertson, 2017) and expand their literacy activities beyond discrete reading and writing skills (Morphis & Yuan, 2021) to be inclusive of oral language traditions practiced by the cultures of their students (Hoffman et al., 2020; Souto-Manning & Yoon, 2018). This exemplifies the flow of information between homes and school and highlights the expertise of both teachers and parents in the two-way collaborative approach necessary for effective parent engagement (Friend, 2021).

Teacher-initiated, in-person opportunities for families to express their literacy practices can include visits to the family home (as appropriate), observing students outside of the school environment, and interviews with community members to understand how families invest in their children's education. These activities can improve the sense of community within a classroom by helping teachers make informed decisions around curriculum based on each family's values and strengths as well as student needs (Peralta, 2019). To create this sense of community, Nguyen and colleagues (2021) also suggested accepting contributions from families sharing literacy strategies for how they work with their children in the home to feature in classroom brochures or newsletters. Providing digital and other representations of this information would continue to build on the concepts of UDP.

When teachers value parental aspirations by providing multiple means of input, the parent–teacher relationship can continue to grow stronger. Yosso's (2005) aspirational capital is evident in individuals who continue to strive for their goals, despite perceived failures. Guzmán and colleagues (2021) found aspirational capital to be the most common form of cultural wealth reported by Latino/a families. In their family literacy project, Larrotta and Yamamura (2011) found that parents had aspirational capital in the form of hopes for their children as well as aspirations for themselves; the focus of their project was to "translate those aspirations into action" (p. 77). Parent aspirations included wanting their children to do well academically by making good grades and doing well on standardized tests. Some aspirations for themselves involved being role models for their children by attending school literacy sessions, so that their children would see them working for something that was important to them. Having multiple outlets in which to express these aspirations highlights the value teachers place on parental input.

Conclusion

In this article, the Universal Design for Partnerships framework was proposed and explained using a scenario of how teachers could use the concepts in a special education reading classroom. Beyond the example described, there is potential for UDP to be useful in other content areas as well as general education contexts. Similarly, the theoretical framework of community cultural wealth (Yosso, 2005) was used in the development and discussion of UDP, but other culturally informed frameworks may be more applicable to specific classroom settings, depending on the population of students, families, and community members represented in the school. As such, Universal Design for Partnerships can be a flexible approach, useful in a variety of situations. As this article proposes the combined use of components of Universal Design for Learning and culturally informed practices to engage with families, further investigation of UDP in practical settings is needed to continue to develop the framework and implement it in the field of education.

Overall, this framework seeks to address a systemic issue: many culturally and linguistically diverse families have long been disempowered in the United States (Noguerón-Liu, 2020; Peralta, 2019; Ryan & Quinlan, 2018). Understanding the value of various types of cultural capital (Yosso, 2005) enhances teacher and family relationships and helps build a sense of community for students (Lynch, 2018). UDP could meet various family needs and promote their strengths by engaging families in literacy practices that recognize the value of their history, culture, and experiences, which in turn empowers students as readers and continues to support their growing literacy skills.

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