

# Home Visits

## District 49

### Colorado Springs, CO



School District 49 currently serves approximately 1500 English Language Learner (ELL) students. The goal of the home visit program was to support newcomer families with navigating the school system and to be the bridge between the school/district and the family. Another goal was to help students be successful not just academically, but in all aspects of their acclimation to the community, including socially and emotionally. If the school and family work together, then this success will be optimized.

The CLDE Family Liaisons worked in conjunction with school staff such as classroom teachers, CLDE teachers, and school counselors to collaborate and determine needs and the best form of support. Once the team learned more about the family, communicated with the family, and determined specific needs, the team then worked to acquire resources for the family. These ranged from basic need resources such as food and clothing, to academic or mental health support such as tutoring, homework support, credit recovery, connections to mental health organizations, etc.

The team often referenced resources already accessible such as tutoring through the school, public library, the in-district Community Resource Center, or through a community partner such as a church. However, if the need was not something readily available, the team researched to find accessible resources and supported the family in accessing them. Each case connection is maintained through ongoing communication via phone calls and home visits. In this way, the families see the team as an ally in their journey of becoming more confident and independent within their new community.

Through parent surveys, families have shared their appreciation and gratitude for the connections created through the home visit and communication strategies, especially for the help they have received in working with the schools and acquiring needed resources. The schools have also expressed positive feedback regarding the impact these services have had on their students and families.

For those wishing to implement a home visit program, start with a plan that includes generating a system where you can determine the needs of your families with accuracy. Document the work that you are doing during the home visits, so you have data and records of what has been successful and what may need to be improved. Most importantly, have compassion and heart for your families. You need that in order to the job well.