

FAMILY
ENGAGEMENT
INSTITUTE

A community approach to advancing equity.

IMPACT REPORT



EQUITY | HOPE | COURAGE | COLLABORATION

All families dream about raising healthy, successful children but not all families have equal access to the systems of support that turn this dream into a reality.

MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR >>

As funders, policy makers, educators, families, students and community leaders, we can all agree that the well-being of our society is directly connected to the health and well-being of our children. We must also realize that we live in a “Tale of Two School Systems” whereby too many children and youth are being left behind. California is home to 9,092,863 children (0-17 years old); 43% are low income and over half of our children are Latinx (52%).

Urgency Defined – Early Childhood Through College

- Only 13% of low-income children are enrolled in high-quality preschools.
- Only 1/3 of African-American and Latinx students meet or exceed standards for English language arts. Only 21% of economically disadvantaged students meet or exceed standards in math (*GreatSchools, 2017 Report*).
- Only 9% of low-income students will complete a 4-year degree compared with 77% of their affluent counterparts. (www.mercurynews.com/2017/05/02/educators-for-first-generation-college-students-getting-accepted-can-be-the-least-of-their-challenges).

Urgency Leads to Opportunity

The Family Engagement Institute (FEI) was formed in 2010 in partnership with Foothill College to promote college-going identities and aspirations for first-generation students, first in the family, and multigenerational pathways to college through educational opportunities for underserved children, youth, and families. Over nearly a decade, FEI has successfully focused on building the capacity of families, schools and communities to collectively ensure student success through equity and access to quality education at every stage of development, and to elevate the voice of marginalized communities. FEI serves as a college bridge program where families and educators together build the skills, tools, and agency to successfully navigate educational systems that promote family engagement, school and workforce readiness, and pathways to postsecondary education.

Through innovation and commitment, FEI has delivered culturally responsive dual capacity family engagement programs. We have enrolled more than 8000 parents/caregivers in college bridge courses; provided professional development to over 1700 educators; prepared more than 950 children to be school-ready; and mentored over 400 first generation college-bound youth in Silicon Valley. In 2016, FEI received the distinguished Foundation for California Community Colleges John W. Rice Diversity & Equity Award, recognizing our unique cradle-to-career initiative at Foothill College that has demonstrated success in promoting college-going aspirations and bridging educational inequities.

We need leadership and courage in our systems of education to step up and be responsive, agile and innovative in partnership with families, educators and communities to design programs and policies that work to ensure a shared vision of equity that results in an inclusive, diverse and thriving society and justice for all. It's not only right, it's smart! FEI is uniquely positioned at a California community college – an open access public institution of higher learning. The California Community College system of 115 schools is the largest higher education organization in the nation (2.1 million students). As we enter our 10th year, we are looking forward to strategically positioning FEI to continue our leadership and innovation in providing educational access for all of California's future generations.

Now, more than ever, there is a compelling need for parents to be powerfully engaged as advocates of improved public education for all children. This imperative is backed by 30 years of research. When parents are actively engaged, not just at home, but as advocates and decision-makers at schools and in the community, their children do better in school, and the schools get better.

~ **The Case for Parent Leadership**; Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence; Anne Henderson, Bonnie Jacob, Adam Kernan-Schloss, Bev Raimondo



Betsy Nikolchev

Executive Director, Family Engagement Institute

Family Engagement Matters!



OUR WORK >>

MISSION

FEI is a leader in responding, developing and delivering accessible programs to elevate the voice of underserved communities since 2010. As a cradle-to-career, grant-funded student equity initiative, FEI's mission is to provide opportunities that promote college-going aspirations for first generation students and families. FEI's partnership with Foothill College, an open access institution of higher education, is unique and supports a multigenerational pathway to college.

VISION

FEI's vision is that all children, youth and families in marginalized communities realize their full life potential and elevate their voices through equitable access to educational opportunities, tools and responsive systems of support critical to success and well-being.

APPROACH

- A collaborative, strength-based approach to learning
- Dual capacity family engagement for effective family and educator partnerships
- The development of college-going identities and multigenerational pathways to college in order to maximize the first-generation student experience
- Shared responsibility through the cultivation of leadership, advocacy and trusted relationships

STRATEGIES

- College-level courses for youth and families
- Professional development opportunities for educators and families working together
- Youth engagement opportunities, internships and mentorships that promote social connection and leadership

CAPACITY BUILDING AREAS

- Child Development and Readiness
- 21st Century Learning and Global Citizenship
- Communication and Connection
- Lifelong Learning
- Family Strengths
- Leadership and Advocacy

OUTCOMES

- Build knowledge, awareness, skills and tools
- Develop growth mindsets and intentional practices
- Deepen agency to leverage advocacy and catalyze action

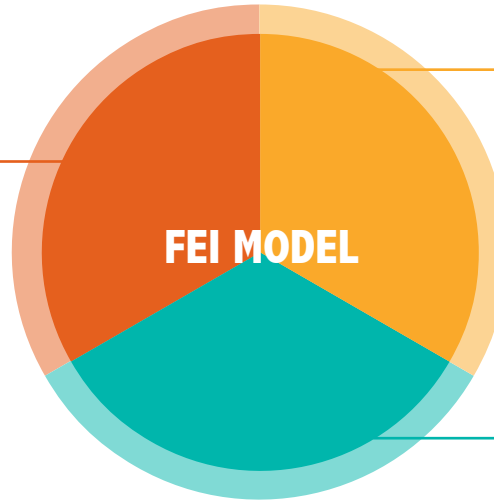
IMPACT

- A common language and shared vision of equity that results in justice for all
- Determination and space for children, youth and communities to work together to ensure an inclusive, diverse and thriving society

<< OUR APPROACH >>

DUAL CAPACITY

Learning opportunities for professionals and families together to build the capacity to engage in effective partnerships that support student achievement and development through adults gaining knowledge, skills and the confidence to engage in effective practices. Strong home and school connections develop and thrive when both families and staff have the requisite collective capacity to engage in partnership.



MULTI GENERATIONAL

Pathways to College for Two Generations

FEI believes that in order to break the cycle of poverty and cultivate a college-going identity among all children, we must start early and offer culturally responsive opportunities for continued education to families as well.

SHARED RESPONSIBILITY

Families, educators and community work together in a shared effort to engage families in authentic and meaningful ways that support children's learning and development.

<< FAMILY ENGAGEMENT INSTITUTE – BY THE NUMBERS >>

Did You Know?

- More than **84%** of FEI families are Latinx, immigrant, and bilingual with limited educational attainment
- More than **90%** of FEI families qualify for Title I/Free & Reduced-Price Meals

Since 2010 FEI Has:

Prepared

- **950** children and their families for kindergarten and beyond
- **400** first-generation college-bound youth to be leaders

Provided Support For

- **8,050** parents/caregivers
- **1,730** educators

Partnered With

- **21** priority schools offering Title I/Free & Reduced-Price Lunches
- **17** school districts to deliver culturally responsive programs

EARLY LEARNING >>

Stretch to Kindergarten (STK) has been FEI's cornerstone school readiness program since 2010. It was designed to strengthen the home-school-community connection through embedded and integrated family engagement, and bridge the articulation and alignment of curriculum and best practices across the continuum of early learning. STK provides a proven high-impact early childhood educational experience that prepares families for kindergarten and beyond. FEI's Early Learning Strong Start Noncredit Parenting (NCP) college courses engage families in meaningful ways to actively support their children's learning and development.

URGENCY

Only **13%** of low-income children are enrolled in high-quality preschools*

* GreatSchools, 2017 Report

FEI RESPONSE

Early Learning Opportunities such as Stretch to Kindergarten, Strong Start Noncredit Parenting courses, and Family Bridge to College

FEI IMPACT

STK CLASS (Classroom Assessment Scoring System) outcomes consistently exceed national averages in the areas of **emotional support, classroom organization & instructional support.**

STK BY THE NUMBERS

Since 2010 STK has >>

Prepared more than **950** children and families to be school-ready >>

Provided professional development to **112** STK teachers

CHILD OUTCOMES

As a result of STK, within six short weeks, children are school ready and have made statistically significant gains in both language development (**78%**) and math development (**74%**).*

* Children's Progress Academic Assessment (CPAA), STK Sample Highlights

FAMILY OUTCOMES

STK families gain knowledge and skills to support their child's school readiness and educational success as a result of STK:

100% agreed, "I better understand why school attendance matters for school success."

100% agreed, "I learned why it is important for my child to speak my home language."

100% agreed, "I am more confident in taking the initiative to share information with teachers about my child."

EDUCATOR OUTCOMES

STK educator outcomes demonstrate positive shifts in beliefs and attitudes as a result of STK:

100% agreed, "I learned strategies to be more responsive with culturally and linguistically diverse families."

100% agreed, "I gained a deeper understanding of the importance of honoring cultural diversity, affirming family strengths & building partnerships with my students' families."

100% agreed, "I am more confident in my ability to build a stronger community with my staff and families."



The Stretch to Kindergarten teachers were mindful of the children and families. My daughter was so happy to learn, which made me more comfortable to talk to her about kindergarten. Now I feel I can succeed as a father and an active partner in the education of my daughter, and that is very important to our family. — Parent, STK

The STK program was a glimpse of what kindergarten would be for my child and myself. The program was an important transition point for my family. — Parent, STK

YOUTH ENGAGEMENT >>

The FEI intern and mentor model provides first-generation youth with valuable service leadership opportunities, allowing them to develop a deeper awareness of the community they serve, and the ability to grow and learn under the mentorship of experienced educators. Students broaden their understanding of family engagement, social justice, and child development, and gain skills in communication and collaboration, critical thinking, growth mindset, cultural sensitivity and leadership. Opportunities include the Child Development Academy, summer internships in the Stretch to Kindergarten program, and year-round internships where students assist faculty and staff with all aspects of programming, from office work to community-based work. These experiences open doors for first-generation students to develop the skills essential to workforce development.

URGENCY

Only **9%** of low-income students will complete a 4-year degree compared to **77%** of affluent students*

* www.mercurynews.com/2017/05/02/educators-for-first-generation-college-students-getting-accepted-can-be-the-least-of-their-challenges

FEI RESPONSE

First-Generation Youth Mentorship Service Leadership Opportunities such as the Pathways, Exposure, Academic Connection & Knowledge (PEAK) program, Child Development Academy, and STK Internships

FEI IMPACT

Mentored and provided leadership opportunities for more than **400** first-generation, college-bound local youth

YOUTH OUTCOMES

FEI provides first-generation youth the opportunity to gain knowledge, skills and tools to be more successful in their personal and educational lives.

Critical Thinking, Decision Making & Creativity

94-97% agreed they improved decision-making skills, brainstorming solutions and considering multiple perspectives

Communication & Collaboration

95-100% agreed they learned new strategies to work as a team; are able to give and receive feedback

Growth Mindset & Initiative

94-100% agreed they can view mistakes as learning opportunities; are more reflective learners; are inspired to work harder to pursue dreams

Cultural Sensitivity & Social Justice

94-100% agreed they feel more connected with people of varied backgrounds and cultures; are more interested in educational equity issues; are making a difference in their community

Community Leadership

92-99% agreed they are more likely to be a leader in their community; learned ways to support their family, school or community; have more confidence in themselves

My internship was an eye-opening experience. I learned so much from the children and families. They taught me the importance of culture, self-identity, and most importantly, the power of education. — STK High School Student Intern

The Family Engagement Institute has deepened my understanding of the mutual responsibility and accountability among students, their families, and their communities to ensure academic success and expand opportunity. FEI has provided a space for me to exercise my leadership in my community, strengthen my cultural awareness and, ultimately, to discover my passion to support underrepresented communities in higher education. — FEI College Student Intern



FAMILY ENGAGEMENT & FAMILY BRIDGE TO COLLEGE >>

Dual Capacity Learning Opportunities for Families and Professionals, Together

FEI offers families with children in preschool through high school affordable and accessible continued multigenerational educational opportunities that are developmentally, culturally and linguistically responsive in six content areas through Noncredit Parenting (NCP) College Courses: Parenting (Preschool to College), Leadership Development, Family Literacy, Fatherhood/Male Involvement, Healthy Choices, and STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art & Math) Family Learning Labs.

Family Bridge to College

provides first hand experiences that support families in navigating systems of higher education. Family Bridge to College Day is an all-day Saturday field trip to experience the Foothill College campus. The day is designed to give both families and school staff a college campus experience. This successful event includes STEAM-inspired maker space activities, campus tours, and culturally and linguistically responsive presentations from college counselors and first-generation college students.

URGENCY

Only **31%** of African-American and **37%** of Latinx students meet or exceed standards for English Language Arts*

Only **21%** of economically disadvantaged students meet or exceed standards for grade-level Math**

* GreatSchools, 2017 Report

** www.mercurynews.com/2017/05/02/educators-for-first-generation-college-students-getting-accepted-can-be-the-least-of-their-challenges

FEI RESPONSE

Dual Capacity Programs that directly address this gap, such as NCP School Success and Navigating Middle School College Courses, STEAM Family Learning Labs, Leadership Development, Family Bridge to College

FEI IMPACT

Enrolled **8050** parents/caregivers from **21** priority schools* in **17** school districts to deliver culturally responsive programs

* Title I/Free & Reduced-Price Lunch eligibility



I learned that we can all reach our goals. We can motivate our children to fight for their dreams. — Parent

Family Bridge to College was a great experience. I learned that there are college opportunities for everyone – not just for my kids but for me as well. Thank you! — Parent

FEI has given me the courage to open up and go back to school to further my education and explore career opportunities. I gained confidence to step out of my comfort zone. — Parent

Family Bridge to College is a wonderful experience for the families I work with. It makes college tangible. — Teacher

FEI gave me the opportunity to connect with families and encourage students to see college as part of their future. — Principal



FAMILY ENGAGEMENT & FAMILY BRIDGE TO COLLEGE >>

FAMILY OUTCOMES >> Families gained knowledge, confidence and practices to support their children's education and their own education as a result of FEI:

- Strengthened College Expectations & Gained Resources** > **99%** agreed they learned to inspire their children to go to college, are better prepared to have conversations about college with their children, and learned about financial aid, scholarships and other college resources.
- Strengthened Social Connections & Community of Support** > **96-100%** agreed they have connected with families to form a network of support, and feel less isolated as a result.
- Increased Access to Services & Gained Leadership Skills** > **94-100%** agreed they now know how to advocate for educational, legal and health-related resources, are more confident to work with their community on important issues, and participate in leadership roles at school or within their community.



PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT & COACHING FOR EDUCATORS >>

FEI works closely with its partners to customize professional development, technical assistance, and coaching to maximize learning opportunities for educators and families together in order to build strong partnerships in realizing the influence of family on the healthy outcomes of children and youth. Recognizing families as partners in change invites us to ensure that family identity is visible and respected in the learning environment. Learning can no longer be understood as a one-way exchange where we teach, they learn.



This program allowed me to become the teacher I always wanted to be.
— Educator

Thank you for creating a space for educators and families to come together — to learn about, and with, one another. — Foothill College Faculty

FEI's professional development reminded me that we are one community. If we learn together, we become more connected and have a greater impact.
— Educator

My experience with FEI's professional development was an eye-opening one. It challenged many of my assumptions and provided a deep understanding of the families I work with every day. — Educator

EDUCATOR OUTCOMES >> Educators gained awareness, knowledge and skills, and were better able to engage families and value family assets and strengths as a result of FEI:

- Gained Knowledge of Research-Based Family Engagement Practices** > **90-100%** agreed they see the impact of Dual Capacity Family Engagement and the Cultural Wealth Framework on student success.
- Learned to Connect and Communicate with Families** > **90-100%** agreed they have a better understanding of their role engaging families, learned strategies to be more responsive to culturally and linguistically diverse families, and gained tools to communicate more effectively with families and share student data in meaningful ways.
- Learned to Capitalize on Family Strengths Using Asset-Based Strategies** > **100%** agreed they have a better understanding of what it means to value families' assets and strengths, and were able to increase opportunities for families to be in leadership roles.
- Learned to Promote College-Going Identities Among Families** > **100%** agreed they actively promote college to all students and families, and gained a better understanding of the positive impact of the multigenerational college-going identity on student success.

DREAMers UndocuALLY >>

The Family Engagement Institute defends human rights and values a diverse and equitable community. FEI leads the Foothill College DREAMers UndocuALLY, a safe space of resources, legal counsel and trainings to protect the hopes and dreams of immigrant families for their children to be first in the family to attend college. The DREAMers UndocuALLY project creates a college-wide culture where our undocumented community feels safe and encouraged to pursue education and engage in the campus community.



Thank you FEI for partnering in this important work. One of the best things that has happened to DREAMers is the groundswell of support and hope that FEI provides. — Guest Speaker, Immigration Attorney



URGENCY

There are approximately **75,000 undocumented young people** ages 18-32 in San Mateo & Santa Clara counties*

* Undocumented Youth: What Statistics Tells Us, *The Almanac*, 12/20/17

FEI RESPONSE

A wide range of resources for immigrant families, such as DREAMers UndocuALLY, Define American Club, Polynesian Club, Service Leadership, Family Bridge to College

FEI IMPACT

The majority of FEI families are **immigrant, first-generation, mixed status, Latinx, Dual-Language Learners**



This campus mural, titled “The DREAMers,” conveys the hopes and aspirations of Foothill College DREAMers (undocumented students who came to the U.S. as children). The imagery was inspired by their experiences and was painted by Foothill College students. The butterfly motif represents freedom and opportunity.



POLICY & COMMUNITY COLLABORATION >>

Local & National Contributions That Influence Policy Making

The Family Engagement Institute contributes to the local and national discussion by increasing awareness of effective systemic, integrated and sustained family engagement that influences policy making and practices. FEI has been featured in numerous publications, and received recognition and academic acknowledgement:

- Featured in Foothill-De Anza College District Report to the League For Innovation in the Community College, 2011 & 2017
- Featured in Early Edge CA Video: “Learn with Us,” 2014
- Provided input on a Harvard Family Research Project – Family Engagement Joint Federal Policy Statement, U.S. Department of Education and U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, 2015
- National Public Radio (NPR) Marketplace Interview with Deepa Fernandes: “Silicon Valley’s Economic Divide Starts in Preschool,” 2016
- Hosted a Bay Area premiere screening of Peabody Award-Winning Documentary, “Don’t Tell Anyone (No le Digas a Nadie)” – a film that follows immigrant activist Angy’s personal story from poverty in rural Colombia to the front page of *The New York Times*, 2016
- Hosted 11th Annual Kids In Common Children’s Summit “With Equity and Justice For All,” 2018
- Contributed chapter for book produced by University of Virginia, Center for Advanced Study of Teaching & Learning: “Kindergarten Transition & Readiness: Promoting Cognitive, Social-Emotional & Self-Regulatory Development,” 2018
- Contributed to the Advancement Project’s Early Childhood Education and Family Engagement, We Rise Learning Space – a learning community cohort of Bay Area nonprofits to inform policy and system change, 2018
- Panelist for Parent & Community Learning and Action Network – Carnegie Corporation, NY, 2019

Additionally, FEI has been an active participant in county-wide collaborative work groups and taskforce teams, including:

- Advisory Council and Revenue & Resource Governance Committees, Foothill College
- Global Family Research Project
- National Association for Family, School & Community
- Office of Institutional Equity, Diversity & Inclusion, Foothill College
- Santa Clara & San Mateo Bi-County Early Learning Family Engagement Summit, 2013-2014
- Santa Clara County
 - › Children’s Vision Council
 - › Strong Start
 - › School-Linked Services
- Santa Clara County Office of Education
 - › Head Start Planning Task Force
 - › Early Learning Master Plan
- Silicon Valley Council of Nonprofits
- Silicon Valley Children’s Advocacy Network
- West ED Center for Child and Family Studies

IDENTITY + VOICE = ENGAGEMENT & LEARNING

Recognizing families as partners in change invites us to ensure that family identity is visible and respected in the learning environment. Learning can no longer be understood as a one-way exchange where we teach, they learn.*

* Willms, Friesen, & Milton (2009)



OUR TEAM >>

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AWARDS >> FAMILY ENGAGEMENT INSTITUTE

2013 ATHENA Leadership Award -
Mountain View Chamber of Commerce



2016 Dr. John W. Rice Diversity & Equity Award -
Board of Governance, California Community Colleges



2018 Excellence in Parent Engagement Award -
Families In Schools



Family Engagement Institute

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<< Thank You To Our Key Partners & Donors >>

Sincere thanks for your contributions and commitment to the Family Engagement Institute. Your belief in our collective impact brings to life a community approach to advancing equity!



KEY FUNDING PARTNERS

Foothill-De Anza Chancellor's Circle • Heising-Simons Foundation • Kaiser Permanente, South Bay • Silicon Valley Community Foundation

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San Benito County Office of Education • San Jose Unified School District • San Mateo County Office of Education • Santa Clara County Office of Education • Sequoia Union High School District • Sunnyvale School District

Higher Education Community Partners

California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office • California State University, Channel Islands • John's Hopkins University, Graduate School of Education • Stanford University, Graduate School of Education

Community Partners

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Families in Schools • Hispanic Foundation of Silicon Valley • Immigrants Rising • Kids in Common • Los Altos Community Foundation

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