



Gustavo Torres
Executive Director

About CASA

As the largest grassroots immigrant advocacy and services organization in the Mid-Atlantic region, CASA has over 36 years of experience organizing over 115,000 lifetime immigrant and working class members.

Founded in 1986, our model focuses on blending human services, community organizing, and strategic campaigns in order to serve the full spectrum of the needs, dreams, and aspirations of our members.





CASA's Education Dept

CASA's Services Departments annually serve between 15,000 – 20,000 members with Health, Legal, Employment and Vocational Training services

Its Education Department employs a multigenerational approach through:

- Adult ESOL Instruction
- College and Career Readiness/Youth Enrichment Programming
- Learning Together Curriculum – Parent/Teacher/Student Engagement
- Policy Advocacy in coordination with Black and Brown Coalitions



Learning Together/Aprendiendo Juntos

Evidenced Based Approach toward Parent Engagement

- 2 Gen Approach Adapted From “*Abriendo Puertas*” Curriculum
 - Research based, Culturally Proficient,
Strategic Use of Popular Education Methodology
- Focus on generating positive academic outcomes for students through improving social outcomes for parents and family



CASA LT History

Initially conceptualized through larger DOE Promise Neighborhood Planning Grant (2013/2014)

Parent Engagement partially funded through DOE i3 Program (2016 – 19)

Work Linked to Opening of Langley Park and Largo International Schools in Prince George's County

No sustained funding secured once i3 funds expended in 2019

Pandemic exposes technology and associated achievement gap that exacerbates need for 2 gen holistic approach

LT Components

Holistic Approach

Youth Engagement/After School Programming – “Mi Espacio” - Robust college readiness after school programming 4 days a week

Community Resource Navigators – Parent promoters charged with conducting outreach, assessing individual needs and navigating to services to address social determinants

Parents as Teachers Sessions – Parent training courses focusing on strategies to support children academically as well as address socio-emotional issues with children, and healthy living practices.

Teacher-Parent Connections Institute – A specially designed professional development program for teachers working in schools with large immigrant populations



TPC Engagement Institute

Designed to increase the cultural competency and engagement skills of school staff to create more welcoming and inclusive school environments

- Mix of hands-on workshops, discussions, and roundtables for teachers on engaging immigrant parents, as well as sharing best practices and solutions for culturally responsive classroom practices and parent engagement strategies
- Participating teachers receive a small stipend to complete a parent/community engagement program at their schools after completion of the Summer Institute
- Participants were eligible to receive 3 Professional Development Credits if:



- 1) Completed 5 day (40 hour) Summer Institute,
- 2) Completed a school based parent engagement and project and report back on the outcomes.
- 3) One follow up professional development session

Emerging Newcomer Needs

RECENT STATISTICS

- Maryland ranks 6th among states receiving the largest Newcomer Youth population in FY 21 (DHS – Unaccompanied Minors)
- Several MD Counties rank in the top 15
- 72% of Population above age of 15 , 68% are boys
- Guatemala - largest country of origin (48%), large number of Spanish Language Learners –
Indigenous languages of Mayan decent prevalent





Approach

This Challenge Requires a More Strategic, Coordinated Approach

- Uneven reponse at local level – International School Enrollment challenges, no coordinated intercounty response
- Large proportion may result over-aged and under-credentialed
- Adaptive Career Readiness programs needed
- Non-profit/Community College infrastructure must be leveraged

Ex – CASA’s Vocational Training
Paired with Case Management/
and Soft Skill Development

THANK YOU!
¡SI SE PUEDE!

