

# ACTION REPORT

## ENGLISH LEARNERS COLLABORATIVE

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The purpose of the English Learners Collaborative (formerly known as the English Learners Advisory Board) is to strengthen the collaboration between the EL office and community partners serving our international families. Community partners have strong connections with families and students, and MNPS aims to leverage that connection to ensure that families know their rights, understand the resources and programs that are offered to them, and what kind of education and support their child is receiving in school. Community partners are also able to share the needs they are seeing in the communities they serve to inform the MNPS EL Office's programming and initiatives.

The primary focus of the 24-25 school year was aligning the Collaborative's efforts with the MNPS EL Department's newly established Five-Year Strategic Plan. The Collaborative prioritized four core goals:

- Fostering shared responsibility for EL education across all levels of MNPS staff
- Ensuring meaningful access to standards-aligned, language-integrated instruction
- Creating a welcoming and inclusive environment that supports both academic and social-emotional growth
- Deepening family and community engagement

### **ALIGNMENT** NASHVILLE

#### NEWS AND UPDATES FROM THE ENGLISH LEARNERS COLLABORATIVE

The goal of this publication is to highlight partner updates and community needs related to Nashville's EL families and their support systems. We are dedicated to meeting the goals of our [Strategic Plan](#) and appreciate your support in this effort.

Thank you for helping make Nashville more welcoming to all who call it home!



Header for the quarterly EL Collaborative  
Newsletter, which the collaborative  
uses to share community updates with one another

## ENGLISH LEARNERS COLLABORATIVE

**24-25  
OUTCOMES**

### KEY FINDINGS

- Ongoing communication and collaboration between schools and community partners strengthens supports for international families.
- Collaborative members participated in a Vanderbilt University study that underscored the need for stronger coalition-building, candid dialogue, and community-driven solutions to overcome funding gaps, policy misalignment, and service silos.
- The fear and uncertainty of the current political climate is directly linked to increased levels of student absenteeism, even among EL families with lawful status or work authorization.

Throughout the year, the Collaborative structured its meetings to spotlight these goals, sharing updates, identifying challenges, and developing coordinated action steps. Representatives of relevant community initiatives and a Vanderbilt University Assistant Professor were invited to share resources and opportunities for collaboration.

In 2025, the English Learners Collaborative responded to a rapidly changing landscape marked by new immigration-related policies, increased community anxiety, and ongoing uncertainty around state and federal funding. These shifts created both immediate challenges and long-term implications for the organizations supporting English learners and their families.

In response to this crisis, the Collaborative took deliberate action to support its partners and the communities they serve. These efforts included gathering input from members through surveys and facilitated discussions to better understand emerging concerns, identify resource gaps, and uplift community-informed strategies. The Collaborative prioritized building trust, expanding access to essential services, and promoting the well-being of immigrant and refugee families through coordinated planning, shared data, and consistent communication. Collectively, these actions reinforced the Collaborative's role as a central hub for advocacy, strategic alignment, and responsive innovation in support of English learners across Nashville



**Snapshots of programming held this year by EL Collaborative member organizations**  
From L to R: Tennessee Immigrant and Refugee Rights Coalition, Hispanic Family Foundation,  
Nashville International Center for Empowerment

## **24-25 LEADERSHIP**

Vanessa Lazón (MNPS)  
Molly Hegwood (MNPS)  
Monica Reyna (MNPS)

## **24-25 ALIGNMENT STAFF**

Nathan Shulman (Alignment Nashville)

## **24-25 MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS**

American Muslim Advisory Council  
Catholic Charities  
Conexión Américas  
EdTrust  
Elmahaba Center  
Hispanic Family Foundation  
Legacy Mission Village  
Mayor's Office—Education  
MNPd Family Intervention Program  
MNPS  
Nashville Public Library  
Nations Ministry Center

NICE (Nashville International  
Center for Empowerment)  
Oasis Center  
PENCIL  
Planned Parenthood of  
Tennessee and North  
Mississippi  
Rolling Hills Community Church  
Siloam Health  
Tennessee Immigrant and  
Refugee Rights Coalition  
Urban Promises Nashville