

ACTION REPORT

ENGLISH LEARNERS COLLABORATIVE

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The English Learners Collaborative (ELC) continued to serve as a cross-sector partnership between Metro Nashville Public Schools and community organizations supporting immigrant, refugee, and multilingual families across Nashville. The Collaborative brings together educators, nonprofit organizations, public agencies, faith-based partners, and advocacy groups to strengthen coordination, improve access to resources, and ensure English learner (EL) students and families receive meaningful academic, social-emotional, and community support.

Throughout the 2025–2026 school year, the Collaborative focused heavily on responding to evolving challenges impacting English learner students and families, while continuing to align with the MNPS EL Department’s strategic priorities around academic achievement, family engagement, inclusion, and equitable access to services.

Meetings centered on student outcome data, attendance trends, academic performance, graduation rates, community outreach, family learning opportunities, and the broader policy landscape affecting immigrant communities.



**Discussion groups
at the February 2026
ELC meeting**

ENGLISH LEARNERS COLLABORATIVE

25-26 OUTCOMES

KEY FINDINGS

- English learner students continue to demonstrate strong academic growth across multiple content areas.
- Graduation rates for English learner students and several historically underserved groups have improved over time.
- Inclusive instructional models and co-teaching approaches are helping expand access to grade-level coursework.
- Immigration-related fear and uncertainty continue to negatively impact attendance and family engagement.
- Strong family-school relationships remain critical to improving student outcomes and school connectedness.

The Collaborative placed a strong emphasis on data-informed decision making and collective problem-solving. MNPS district leaders regularly shared updates related to EL enrollment, attendance, discipline, graduation rates, academic proficiency, and growth metrics.

Collaborative discussions highlighted several major themes throughout the year:

- Significant academic growth among EL students across multiple subject areas and grade levels
- Continued implementation of inclusive instructional models centered on grade-level access and co-teaching supports
- Growing concern around absenteeism linked to immigration-related fears, housing instability, and family disengagement
- The importance of culturally responsive family engagement and parent learning opportunities
- Increased need for coordinated advocacy, resource sharing, and rapid response communication among community partners
- The need to support newcomer students and families navigating unfamiliar educational systems and standardized testing environments

The Collaborative additionally reinforced the importance of strengthening systems-level coordination between schools and community organizations. Discussions throughout the year emphasized:

- Expanding family access to multilingual communication and learning opportunities
- Supporting stronger relationships between schools and immigrant families
- Improving awareness of student rights and available community resources
- Increasing collaboration between school staff and community-based organizations
- Using data and community voice to guide decision making and resource allocation
- Creating welcoming and inclusive school environments that support belonging and academic success

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25-26 OUTCOMES

KEY FINDINGS

- Many newcomer and refugee students require additional support navigating standardized testing environments.
- Community organizations play a vital role in connecting families to resources, advocacy, and educational opportunities.
- Multilingual parent learning opportunities and ESL classes remain a significant area of community need.
- Partners emphasized the importance of culturally responsive communication, trust-building, and belonging.
- Ongoing collaboration between schools and community organizations strengthens support systems for immigrant and refugee families.

The Collaborative also continued to elevate community-informed strategies and culturally responsive practices. Partners shared updates related to bilingual programming, youth leadership initiatives, refugee and immigrant outreach, anti-bullying efforts, parent advocacy, and expanded access to ESL and family learning opportunities.

During the spring, Collaborative meetings shifted to focus more directly on legislative developments and the growing uncertainty impacting immigrant and refugee families. Partners discussed the emotional, educational, and operational impacts of policy changes and community fear, while emphasizing the importance of trust-building, coordinated communication, and maintaining strong school-community relationships.

As the needs of immigrant and multilingual communities continue to evolve, the English Learners Collaborative is well positioned to serve as a trusted space for partnership, learning, and coordinated action. By deepening relationships, sharing resources, and aligning efforts across sectors, the Collaborative will continue working toward more equitable opportunities and stronger outcomes for English learner students and their families.



Snapshots of programming held this year by EL Collaborative member organizations: Tennessee Immigrant and Refugee Rights Coalition (left), American Muslim Advisory Council of TN (middle), Nations Ministry Center (right)

25-26 LEADERSHIP

Molly Hegwood (MNPS)
Vanessa Lazón (MNPS)
Monica Reyna (MNPS)
Jazmin Ramirez (Barrio Education &
Tennessee Immigrant & Refugee Rights Coalition)

25-26 ALIGNMENT STAFF

Nathan Shulman (Alignment Nashville)

25-26 MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS

American Muslim Advisory
Council
Catholic Charities
Conexion Americas
EdTrust
Elmahaba Center
Hispanic Family Foundation

Hispanic Family Foundation
Legacy Mission Village
Metro Nashville Police
Department
MNPd Family Intervention
Program
Metro Nashville Public Schools

Nations Ministry Center
Nashville International Center
for Empowerment (NICE)
Planned Parenthood of TN
Siloam Health
Tennessee Immigrant and
Refugee Rights Coalition