

PEDAGOGY AND CULTURE OF IMMIGRATION IN  
EUGENE SPANISH BILINGUAL ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS  
IN THE TRUMP ERA

by

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A THESIS

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## **An Abstract of the Thesis of**

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This thesis explores the culture and pedagogy of immigration in Eugene, Oregon Spanish bilingual elementary schools in the Trump era. Under the administration of President Trump, immigration enforcement has become inhumane and deeply rooted in xenophobia. This has had serious implications for immigrants throughout the United States, especially immigrant children. In light of this, this study seeks to explore how Spanish bilingual elementary schools in Eugene, El Camino del Rio and Buena Vista, are cultivating safe and empowering spaces for immigrant Latinx youth and their families. At both elementary schools, there is a conscious effort to cherish and protect immigrants, which can be observed throughout their physical structures where posters and art exhibit pro-immigrant rhetoric, and in the individual support the teachers and staff provide to students and their families. Ultimately, I intend to show how the Spanish bilingual models of El Camino del Rio and Buena Vista create a community culture that actively seeks to protect their most vulnerable participants—immigrants.

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## **Introduction:**

Throughout American history, the topic of immigration has remained one of the most contentious issues in society. For the past two decades, politicians have been attempting to negotiate a comprehensive immigration reform that would appeal to both parties. Yet, immense political barriers have rendered this effort unsuccessful. These barriers include “intraparty conflicts, elusive problem definition, difficult compromises, and unpopular outcomes” (Tichenor, 2016), which have caused previous presidential administrations to avoid addressing this flawed system. With the election of President Trump, US immigration policy has adopted principles of economic nationalism, creating major restrictions on migrants, refugees, and asylum-seekers. It is evident through President Trump’s rhetoric and policies that there is an undertone of racism and xenophobia in his actions regarding immigration (Arce, 2019). There exist rare amounts of dignity and humanity in his reforms (Dickerson, 2019). As a result, immigrants of color, specifically those originating from South America, Central America, Middle East, Africa, and the Caribbean, are being excluded from communities and democratic practices because of their ethnicity and race. On top of this, the most vulnerable population, children, are experiencing intense, damaging ramifications from President Trump’s immigration enforcement. The marginalization of immigrant communities of color in the United States in the Trump era has strongly informed the direction of my thesis.

My research aims to focus on *immigration pedagogy* in Spanish bilingual elementary schools in Eugene, Oregon. I define immigration pedagogy as an approach to teaching immigration, which can involve content but also culture and community

structure in a classroom. I specifically explore to what extent teachers are explicitly and/or implicitly educating their students about the current challenges facing immigrant communities of color within Eugene, and also nationally. In addition to that, I observe how teachers are cultivating communities in their classes that value inclusivity, multiculturalism, and activism. Importantly, I investigate the challenges and benefits for elementary teachers in Spanish bilingual schools to teach about immigration and delve into the reasons why they may not be including this topic in their curriculum.

*Context:*

Since the outset of President Trump's presidential campaign in 2015, he promised the American public a crackdown on immigration, documented and undocumented. In various ways, he has delivered on this commitment. Within their first year, the Trump administration accomplished the following: banned nationals from eight majority-Muslim countries, reduced refugee admissions to the lowest level since the creation of the resettlement program in 1980, cancelled the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA), and increased the number of arrests of unauthorized immigrants in the U.S. interior (Pierce & Selee, 2017). Subsequently, in 2018 and 2019, restrictions on immigrants have only worsened. Early in July 2019, U.S. Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez tweeted: "This administration has established concentration camps on the southern border of the United States for immigrants, where they are being brutalized with dehumanizing conditions and dying. This is not hyperbole. It is the conclusion of expert analysis". Numerous, ground-breaking reports have released information about these migrant detention centers, as the current administration calls

them; there exist alarming overcrowding and inhumane conditions in these facilities, prompting a severe mental health crisis (Rayasam, 2019). On top of that, the United States administration has been committing another human rights violation: family separation. In mid-2018 President Donald Trump declared the end to his family separation policy that targets migrants at the U.S.- Mexico border. However, advocates claim that this practice continues to exist, for vague and unsustainable reasons (Roldan & Rocha). These severe limitations on documented and undocumented immigration, along with President Trump's harsh rhetoric on immigrants, have led to deplorable effects in communities throughout the United States.

To begin with, the immediate response of most immigrant families is to stay “under the radar” (Pierce, Bolter, & Selee, 2018, p.10). Mounting evidence indicates this type of reaction leads to major adverse consequences for immigrants. For example, there has been a decline in crime reporting, especially of domestic violence (Pierce, Bolter, & Selee, 2018). Ongoing threats of deportation and family separation make it less likely for immigrant victims to seek help. In addition, many families are forgoing assistance that would help them meet their basic needs (Pierce, Bolter, & Selee, 2018). Health coverage among immigrant children has significantly dropped; Hispanic children have seen the harshest rise in uninsured coverage—from 7.7% to 8.7% (Simmons-Duffin, 2019). On a psychological level, fear of deportation creates a state of toxicity that significantly impacts the mental health of individuals, especially that of children. The mere idea of being separated from a parent or caregiver can expose young kids to trauma and stress. To extend, “many young children also have a misunderstanding of legal status in general, often equating being an immigrant with

being unauthorized. These children may believe that they or their authorized relatives are also in danger of being deported, further escalating fear” (Schochet, 2017, p.1).

Over the course of time, the emotional well-being of children affected by the increased stress of immigration politics will be compromised. Chronic anxiety and persistent fear have been proven to create permanent changes in the brain architecture of individuals (National Scientific Council on Developing Child, 2010). The current fabrication of a more xenophobic, racist society under the Trump administration has led to irreversible consequences in the lives of millions, particularly among young immigrant children.

In the state of Oregon, roughly ten percent of all residents are foreign-born and over twelve percent of native-born residents have at least one immigrant parent (American Immigration Council, 2017). Out of the foreign-born population, approximately 43.2 percent were born in Latin America (Migration Policy Institute, 2018). This figure has informed my decision to focus my research on Spanish bilingual Eugene elementary schools, as they are more likely to assist immigrant families and students in the area. Immigrants are an integral part of communities throughout Oregon; one in eight workers in the state’s labor force is an immigrant, which significantly strengthens the economy (American Immigration Council, 2017). It is important to note, however, that their value and contributions go far beyond economics. Just like throughout the country, documented and undocumented immigrant families are indispensable to the social and cultural fabric of Oregon. As my thesis research will take place in Eugene, it should be noted that there are no exact figures on how many immigrants live in the area. However, census data indicates that about 8.1 percent of the population is foreign-born (United States Census Bureau, 2019). Seemingly, Eugene

and the state of Oregon are relatively safer for immigrants of color than other places across the nation; as a sanctuary city, it provides vital protections for undocumented immigrants. Although conducting research in this area may not be representative of most places in the nation, it will provide a unique perspective on how Spanish bilingual elementary school teachers in a predominantly white college town teach their students about immigration and provide support for their immigrant students and families.

*Existing Literature:*

Overall, there is limited scholarship about immigration pedagogy in elementary schools in the Trump era. Because this research is taking place three years after the inauguration of President Trump, it is difficult to find research that fully examines the various approaches teachers have taken and are currently taking to cultivate inclusive, safe classroom environments. Thus, I rely on relatively contemporary explorations of immigration pedagogy and scholarship focused on creating classrooms that value multiculturalism, intersectionality, and the empowerment of students of color.

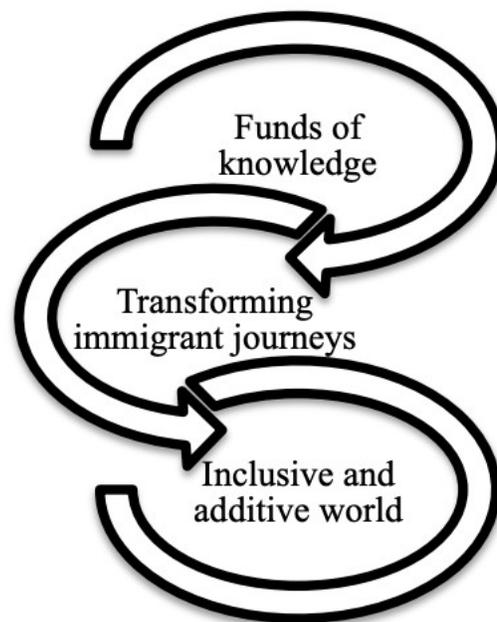
As of January 2020, the Civil Rights Project, UCLA has been one of the only organizations that has conducted a national survey of teachers, administrators, and other school personnel to study the impact of immigration enforcement on teaching and learning in United States schools (Gándara & Ee, 2019). From across the country, there was a total of 5,400 responses; two-thirds of respondents testified that immigration enforcement impacted their school environment (Gándara & Ee, 2019). The Civil Rights Project at UCLA found that the most negatively impacted region in the nation is the South and that schools with higher percentages of immigrant students experience a

greater impact. The majority of administrators surveyed found behavioral or emotional problems in immigrant students. Their definition of “immigrant students” “refers to students from immigrant families, both those born abroad and those born in the US. It is estimated that about 88% of children of immigrants are US born” (Gándara & Ee, 2019, p.1). Moreover, eighty-four percent of educators stated that students expressed concerns about immigration enforcement issues at their schools, leading to absenteeism and academic decline among immigrant students (Gándara & Ee, 2019). Many give up on school because they lose hope for a future for themselves. Immigration enforcement has also led parents to become less involved in their child’s success at school. The fear of deportation has caused a large number of them to remain in their homes, increasing rates of homelessness and food insecurity. The Civil Rights Project concluded that “as long as these enforcement policies persist, the nation’s most vulnerable students and schools will continue to suffer, through no fault of their own. This is the unintended consequence of a policy that did not take schools into account” (Gándara & Ee, 2019). This systematic attempt to understand the influence of President Trump’s immigration policies in schools provides a concrete overview of the damaging consequences on students all of ages.

For educators, providing a welcoming immigration pedagogy in the classroom has proven to be an important method in empowering immigrant students against the draconian rhetoric and policies of the Trump administration. Author and teacher Fernando Rodríguez-Valls provides useful information on creating inclusive classrooms based on his experience as an immigrant teacher and instructor of immigrant students in his article “Pedagogy of the Immigrant: A Journey Towards Inclusive Classrooms”. He

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expresses his belief that multicultural education often falls short in exploring the unique characteristics of immigrant students and their families (Rodríguez-Valls, 2016). As a result, Rodríguez-Valls has created an educational model titled “Pedagogy of the Immigrant”. This was produced “in an inquiry-based environment where students, parents and myself constantly reflected on: a) how we used the funds of knowledge/immigrant experiences as tools to enrich the texts analyzed and discussed in the classroom; b) how we constantly transformed and questioned our learning journey (Kozol, 2012); and c) how we as immigrants are essential when constructing a more inclusive and additive world” (Rodríguez-Valls, 2016, p.44).



The intended consequence of implementing this model in classrooms is to promote equity over equality. In his article, Rodríguez-Valls notes how educators often avoid talking about privilege in the name of equality, which unfortunately prevents vital conversations about challenges of mobility and the lack of sense of belonging. His

recommendation for educators is to create a link between teacher preparation programs, school districts, and stakeholders to “move away from conceptualizations of immigrant students as taking up resources, and toward a view that they are deserving of an investment of resources” (Rodríguez-Valls, 2016, p.46). With the increase in poverty and inequality pushing families to move to new countries, teachers need to have an inclusive pedagogy that creates democratic and participatory citizens that challenge xenophobia. Rodríguez-Valls provides the necessary tools to achieve this goal.

Building upon this concept of creating inclusive pedagogy around immigration, there exists important scholarly work regarding the methods of teaching specific immigrant communities. This literature is relevant to immigration pedagogy, as the cultural backgrounds of student inevitably creates a learning opportunity for all students to learn about the political and social challenges of migrants in the United States. Takafor and Jordan explore the challenges that African immigrant children face in American schools and proposes a *culturally responsive teaching* (CRT) approach for these students (Takafor & Jordan, 2017). The concept of CRT originates from Gloria Ladson-Billings, a pedagogical theorist, who proposed a form of teaching that “uses student culture in order to maintain it and to transcend the negative effects of the dominant culture. The negative effects are brought about, for example, by not seeing one’s history, culture, or background represented in the textbook or curriculum or by seeing that history, culture, or background distorted” (Ladson-Billings, 1995, p.19). Going back to Takafor and Jordan, they define African immigrant students as first or second-generation students who voluntarily or involuntarily migrated to the United States. According to these scholars, in order for American educators to more effectively

attend to the needs of these students, “they need to apply the concepts of CRT by amassing pre-immigration information about the immigrant families so as to understand why they may initially speak, read, write, learn, and engage differently—and not deficiently—from other students” (Takafor & Jordan, 2017, p.74). This specifically involves amassing authentic knowledge about students’ cultures and not relying on stereotypes. Approximately, 2,000 languages are spoken in Africa, along with a plethora of educational systems (Takafor & Jordan, 2017). Although most are bilingual or even multilingual, it is important for teachers to understand this linguistic diversity in order to cater to the specific needs of an African immigrant student, as they may require more basic language acquisition opportunities or more advanced ones. Similar to Rodríguez-Valls, Takafor & Jordan believe that immigrant identities should be “used as a scaffold to attain new knowledge” (Takafor & Jordan, 2017, p.81). They offer various arguments as to why educators should engage in culturally responsive pedagogy, specific to African immigrant students but also on a general level, as it naturally enhances the culture of multiculturalism within a classroom.

I examined the book “Educating Immigrant Students in the 21st Century, What Educators Need to Know” by Xue Lan Rong and Judith Preissle (2009), which is perhaps the most relevant scholarly work to my research topic. To begin with, they assess various patterns of race and ethnicity in immigrant children compared to the general population of children. By looking at data from the U.S. census, Rong and Preissle conclude that foreign-born children, as a whole and within racial-ethnic groups, have lower-enrollment rates within the general child population; this means that foreign-born children are less likely to be enrolled in schools, leading to less

educational attainment. It is important to note that the disparity for Hispanic students is larger than all other ethnicities. Not only do they have lower enrollment rates, but they are also the least likely to enroll in private schools, and they are the most likely racial-ethnic group to dropout. Returning to a broader outlook, these rates among immigrant students are altered depending on their English proficiency, length of U.S. residency, and age of arrival. Rong and Preissle make clear that most school districts across the nation are unprepared to adequately respond to incoming immigrant students, especially those coming from situations of political turmoil because they are unaware of the deeply complex disadvantages that these youth face. I want to highlight a particular section that goes into detail about the adverse circumstance's immigrant students encounter:

1. Most immigrant students lack the English proficiency required for classroom learning in U.S. schools, because English is neither their primary language nor effectively used at home.

2. Immigrant children may lack adequate support from their families; their parents may not speak English well, or may not be aware of or understand the U.S. educational system. Contact between immigrant parents and schools may be negligible.

3. Immigrant parents' ideas, norms, and beliefs about schooling and raising children may conflict with those espoused in schools.

4. Many immigrants and their families suffer from uncertain legal status. The anxiety this produces in families may affect children's health and development.

5. A gap occurs between institutional integration—access to governmental institutions—and social integration—access to interpersonal contacts. Because of this gap, discrimination that is forbidden by law nevertheless occurs in everyday life.

6. The majority of students who are recent immigrants are members of racial-ethnic minorities who have historically had lower educational attainment than White

students, for many social, economic, and political reasons (Rong & Preissle. 2009, p.127).

With this in mind, they provide several recommendations for educators. The first one that teachers need to acknowledge the wide range of identities within one's classroom and to educate oneself on how to support the various needs of immigrant students. Next, they recommend adapting one's curriculum to meet the needs of these students, drawing on parents and communities as resources for strategies and support. Finally, they suggest improving each school by building networks that are educating educators on how to work with immigrants.

As my research project will focus on Spanish bilingual schools, the immigrant population I will be concentrating on is the Latinx community. Consequently, it is important to examine scholarship written about Latinx youth, such as the book "Growing Critically Conscious Teachers: A Social Justice Curriculum for Educators of Latino/a Youth" published by the National Latino/a Education Research and Policy Project (Valenzuela & Nieto, 2016). This volume provides a critical framework on how higher education institutions can cultivate culturally responsive teachers that honor Latino/a children, students of color, and language-minority youth. Contributors of this academic work recognize that "complicating matters is an ongoing tawdry history of colonization and Americanization (also called assimilation), the schooling of Latina and Latino children and youth—and children of color, generally—is characteristically vexed. The Latino folk model of education, or *educación*, is simply invisible" (Valenzuela & Nieto, 2016, p.5-6). In respect to that unfortunate reality, NLERAP's

curriculum proposals are guided by the following principles: teaching from a social justice paradigm, naming and interrogating practices and policies in public schools, using critical race theory and pedagogy, using sociocultural teaching/learning theory, honoring language, literacy and culture, and finally implementing creative praxes. Subsequently, they advocate for the *PAR (Participatory Action Research) Entremundos* pedagogy, which strives to empower Latinx students to recognize their agency in upholding justice-oriented practices within the structure of education and broader society. More specifically, “the thinking behind this approach is that those who are most affected by inequities or injustices have important insights and knowledge about to apply remedies. Therefore, this group should play an important part in the research process and outcome(s)” (Valenzuela & Nieto, 2016, p.70). The NLERAP present a variety of classroom exercises that follow this pedagogy, such as the Problem Tree activity where students are instructed to use the image of a tree to identify real-life policies and practices that sustain the root causes of racism, sexism, and other types of isms. Overall, this book supplies the teaching community with frameworks and tangible exercises that if applied correctly, can revolutionize the education of Latinx youth. As I delve into my research, keeping the pedagogical frameworks by Rong & Presissle, Rodríguez-Valls (2009), Takafor & Jordan (2017), Ladson-Billings (1995), and Valenzuela & Nieto (2016) in mind will provide guidance on how to assess the immigration pedagogy in the two Spanish bilingual elementary schools within the Eugene 4J district, El Camino del Rio and Buena Vista.

### **Research Questions:**

- To what extent are teachers in public Spanish bilingual elementary schools in the Eugene 4J School District teaching about immigration?  
How?
- What contextual factors influence teachers' pedagogy of immigration?
- To what extent are these teachers in Eugene cultivating inclusive classrooms for immigrants of color? If so, how?

### **Methods:**

For my research, I examined the existing literature about immigration pedagogy in my literature review. This includes books, academic journals, and articles. I also conducted six interviews with elementary school teachers in the Eugene 4J School District that work at either Buena Vista or El Camino del Rio; these are the only schools in the district whose educational models allow youth to be fully bilingual in Spanish. The first elementary school, Buena Vista, is a *Spanish immersion program*, which according to their website consists of a “descending model [that] begins with a nearly full immersion experience in the primary grades, and gradually increases English instruction as the grade level increases”. Next, there is El Camino del Rio, also known as River Road Elementary School, which is a *dual immersion program* where half of the content is taught in English, and the other half in Spanish. Because of the nature of these different models, the demographics of each school vary. According to the Oregon Department of Education 2018-2019 “At-A-Glance Profile” of Buena Vista, 34 percent of students are Hispanic/ Latino, 54 percent are White, 9 percent are Multiracial, 2

percent are Black/African American, and 2 percent are Asian (Oregon Department of Education). The 2018-19 “At-A-Glance Profile” for River Road/ El Camino del Rio reports that 49 percent of students are Hispanic/ Latino, 42 percent are White, 6 percent are multiracial, 1 percent are American Indian/ Alaska Native, 1 percent are Asian, and 1 percent are Black/ African American (Oregon Department of Education). Notably, these reports also demonstrate that at Buena Vista, 59 percent of teachers are Hispanic/ Latino, while at El Camino del Rio it is 39 percent. As the purpose of this thesis is to examine how Spanish bilingual elementary schools in Eugene cultivate an active immigration pedagogy, acknowledging these demographics is an important part of that process.

These six interviews happened in person, and they took up to an hour. I asked questions such as:

- Do students express concerns about immigration enforcement issues in class?
- What type of activities do you teach to promote multi-culturalism?
- Has there been an increased effort by your school to teach about immigration under the Trump era?
- How do you build an inclusive community?
- How much does the school talk about these issues?
- What resources help support you in teaching about multiculturalism and immigration? What resources do you need?
- How do you talk about empathy and compassion in regard to “other”?

For the sake of anonymity, I will be using pseudonyms for the six teachers I interviewed. In the table below, I present these fictitious names along with the ethnic identity of each individual, as this plays an important role in the pedagogy of teachers at these Spanish bilingual elementary schools.

Name:	Ethnic Identity:
Stephanie	White
Luis	Latinx
Emily	White
Valentina	Latinx
Juan	Latinx
Kristen	White

### **Findings:**

After transcribing all of the interviews, I created a coding system that divided the findings into different themes. The following are the four different themes I focused on, a table of my findings, and the conclusions I drew from this qualitative data.

- **Funds of Knowledge:** What different funds of knowledge do teachers rely on in their teaching?
- **Inclusive and Additive World:** How are teachers and/or schools educating students on how immigrants are essential in constructing a more inclusive and additive world?
- **Community Support:** In what ways are teachers and/or schools providing support to the immigrant community?
- **Pedagogy Cultivating Understanding:** What type of teaching practices are being used to cultivate understanding among students from different backgrounds?

Elementary School Teacher:	<b>Funds of Knowledge</b>	<b>Inclusive and Additive World</b>	<b>Community Support</b>	<b>Pedagogy Cultivating Understanding</b>
<b>Juan</b>	<p>- “What I do a lot is show myself. I’m a migrant and I come from a very different place... I show how I try to cope... I show myself and encourage students to share.”</p> <p>- “I do have a good number of games that are like from my childhood, and I know that they won't necessarily be something that they will play here. So, we play here, and we play outside, and we do Ronda de Canciones that we play and sing with.”</p> <p>- “In this year, we're going to have a project</p>	<p>- “What I do a lot is show myself. I’m a migrant and I come from a very different place... I show how I try to cope... I show myself and encourage students to share.”</p> <p>-“In third and fourth grade there's readings that are full of examples of people that are in the US that were migrants. From Celia Cruz to singers to players, to astronauts, to legislators. And you read about them, you talk about their background, what they do. And so often, you begin to use more social</p>	<p>- “In regard to the impact of immigration enforcement on non-immigrant students: “I see a lot of compassion and trying to understand, but also they don’t really know how to react to that, so they try to be kind or welcoming.”</p> <p>- “I remind them that it’s okay to feel different from what people say that they should feel like.”</p> <p>- “The school offers community and also offers a physical space for things like migrant rights, workshops or</p>	<p>- “We have an emotional curriculum that tries to deal with how we can try to understand and learn that when things happen, it doesn’t necessarily mean what a kid really wants to say.”</p> <p>- In regard to his identity as a Latinx man: “If I have a connection with a kid that struggles or comes with school with these views, I can have a certain level of conversation if I have a connection with them. Because then they relate to me, they might be like really fighting strong with feelings of their friends.”</p>

<p><b>Juan Continued.</b></p>	<p>related to science and birdwatching and migration and birdwatching ... the whole kindergarten cohort is going to write a letter to a kindergarten class in Oaxaca, or we're going to talk about the birds that we see in the birds that migrate. We're also linking that to the way we humans migrate and go from one place to the other to do our existence.”</p> <p>- “In third and fourth grade there's readings that are full of examples of people that are in the US that were migrants. From Celia Cruz to singers to players, to astronauts, to legislators. And you read about them, you talk about</p>	<p>issues and social studies into the classes.”</p> <p>- “Migrant people, we bring many things to the community here.”</p>	<p>parent readiness sessions where they invite families to access everything they need in a situation where they might need it...With the student body, we do a couple of mini celebrations during the school year, and many of them are related to mostly Latin American culture and worldwide culture, but mostly Latin American because we have Spanish as a language.”</p> <p>- In regard to teaching about immigrant enforcement in the Trump Era: “You have to do it, even if you don't want to, you have to talk about it. Students will definitely express anxiety and fear and</p>	<p>- “We have reading stories that always bring multicultural elements of it.”</p> <p>- “We talk about our backgrounds and where we come from, where we grow up, where our parents come from, what are our traditions are.”</p> <p>- “So, I feel like I do a lot of politics in my class because I'm always reminding them: is that fair for you? I know you're are going through a really hard time, but I wonder if that something that you can do in a different way because otherwise everybody's social space.”</p> <p>- “There are many materials produced about community workers and community organizations</p>
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<p><b>Juan Continued.</b></p>	<p>their background, what they do. And so often, you begin to use more social issues and social studies into the classes.”</p> <p>- In regard to teaching about immigrant enforcement in the Trump Era: “You have to do it, even if you don’t want to, you have to talk about it. Students will definitely express anxiety and fear and the students will also argue and like fight. So, there’s the need to talk about why people migrate and how they got here.”</p>		<p>the students will also argue and like fight. So, there’s the need to talk about why people migrate and how they got here.”</p> <p>- “If something’s happening in the community regarding migration, somebody will make a list of resources to understand what is happening.”</p> <p>- In regard to the hate crime: “ Regardless of the fear and anger, the grades were able to meet and talk and reflect and write about it and publish what they thought about it... they expressed a lot in terms of how pleased they were of being in the school and learning Spanish and the fact that</p>	<p>that do really good work... bringing that reality helps the students to make sure that what is happening here is not just a bubble.”</p> <p>-“When you’re talking about animals, you can try to make a connection to the culture of the people that live with those animals. Rather than just saying ‘Oh, they’re so cute’ or ‘They’re beautiful’.”</p> <p>- “We started a multicultural event that we invite people from all over in Eugene to come and present on their culture and their history of migration.”</p>
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			<p>they get to learn from people from many other places and their language and their culture.”</p> <p>- In regard to the hate crime: “ There was a number of families that expressed a lot of support. Mostly, again, it's mostly those educated families that were like I have privilege that I can use now.”</p>	
<b>Stephanie</b>	<p>- “Currently we're doing a study on Dolores Huerta and the labor union movement and all the intersections that happened within the labor movement. Because everybody knows about Martin Luther King Jr while at the same time a lot of other</p>	<p>- “Currently we're doing a study on Dolores Huerta and the labor union movement and all the intersections that happened within the labor movement. Because everybody knows about Martin Luther King Jr while at the same time a lot of other</p>	<p>- “Our school does provide a space for immigration type events.”</p> <p>- “I think it helps to have representation in our office. We have a family resource manager, I don't know her exact title. She'll contact the teachers and send out notifications when events</p>	<p>- In regard to conversations about identity and immigration: “It is definitely intentional. Our third grade team has done this for six years together. So we are intentional about it. Within that intentionality, we have a lot of these conversations happen organically.”</p> <p>- “Especially in</p>

<p><b>Stephanie Continued.</b></p>	<p>movements were happening simultaneously . There was a lot of support and crossover.”</p> <p>- “Especially in third grade, we talk a lot about family identities and what are the different families. How a family can look, live, and love. Last year, the black lives matter curriculum came out and I used it to kind of support us through that part of the year.”</p> <p>- In regard to teaching immigration in the Trump era: “That was definitely a pivotal year in incorporating more discussion around immigration. The day he was voted into office, we were at an</p>	<p>movements were happening simultaneously . There was a lot of support and crossover.”</p>	<p>are happening or information where we might want to pass on to families. That's awesome. She's well known in our building. Everybody kind of knows who she is and what services she can help with.”</p>	<p>third grade, we talk a lot about family identities and what are the different families. How a family can look, live, and love. Last year, the black lives matter curriculum came out and I used it to kind of support us through that part of the year.”</p> <p>- “I feel like there's probably never enough resources or websites. Current events alone will feed and fuel this conversation. I think our current curriculum that we're using is actually been kind of the jumping off point, especially with talking about the labor movement, because it's in our curriculum. Documentaries, websites like PBS, they have a lot of really good videos that are certainly school</p>
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<p><b>Stephanie Continued.</b></p>	<p>educational conference in another state. The feedback we got was this is rough. There was a lot of fear. There was a lot of inaccurate knowledge from the students. A lot of it was there was a lot of fear and just general concern in the building for a long time.”</p> <p>- In regard to the hate crime: “We definitely had conversations. There’s a lot more work in conversation around immigration and how migration is beautiful. And I know a fourth grade class specifically talked about the butterfly migration and kind of painted this different perspective of it. To turn this really ugly</p>			<p>appropriate. In the past we’ve talked about red lining and how that impacts voting.”</p>
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	<p>thing, racist thing into something that's beautiful and should be honored.”</p>			
<p><b>Emily</b></p>	<p>- Two years ago, there was more of a discussion about immigration in the classroom. Mostly because of the 2016 election and the rhetoric of Donald Trump.</p> <p>- Student's retaliated hate crime with art such as murals with butterflies.</p> <p>- Read and recite the In Lak'ech. This is a Mayan poem celebrating our collective human being/universality. Often used for restorative justice and racism free zones.</p>	<p>- Created Noche Cultural: dancers and international students from UO came to share their cultural.</p>	<p>- Student's retaliated hate crime art such as murals with butterflies.</p> <p>- Created Noche Cultural: dancers and international students from UO came to share their cultural.</p> <p>- Every morning, Alexis tries to do a morning meeting with her students. This creates a space where people can voice their concerns, talk about things they are excited for or worried about, etc.</p> <p>- Camino del Rio Constitution (inspired by In</p>	<p>- Student's retaliated hate crime art such as murals with butterflies.</p> <p>- All the teachers at this school use the Second Step social-emotional curriculum. This is a curriculum intended to help create a more empathetic society. There is a HW component that most children really enjoy</p> <p>- Every morning, Alexis tries to do a morning meeting with her students. This creates a space where people can voice their concerns, talk about things they are excited for or worried about, etc.</p> <p>- Read and recite the In Lak'ech.</p>

<p><b>Emily Continued.</b></p>			<p>Lak’ech).          Consists of rules and values by which students, teachers, and faculties must follow. In each classroom, they sign classroom rules that students follow.</p> <p>- Among older and younger students, there is the concept of “Classroom Buddies”. Each grade gets paired up with another grade and students get assigned a buddy. This allows for younger students to have a mentor and for older students to be a role model. Enhances the community all around the school, instead of just the classroom.</p> <p>- Because Camino del Rio is a Dual</p>	<p>This is a Mayan poem celebrating our collective human being/universality. Often used for restorative justice and racism free zones.</p> <p>- Camino del Rio Constitution (inspired by In Lak’ech).          Consists of rules and values by which students, teachers, and faculties must follow. In each classroom, they sign classroom rules that students follow.</p>
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			immersion school, they receive a lot of items, flyers, and recourses for migrant families.	
<b>Kristen</b>	- “They need to know who Cesar Chavez is. They need to know who Frida Kahlo is. Because if you go somewhere and somebody says Frida Kahlo and you have no idea what they're talking about, that's ridiculous. And you're going to get laughed at. We want to prepare them to be international citizens. In that regard, we do have more potential for sharing different information in different cultural	- “We have an Amity program, which is basically international interns who are all also Spanish speaking and part of their responsibility through their program is to teach lessons on culture. My kids have learned this year a whole bunch El Salvador because both of our interns have been from there.”	- “We have a mom who works for Centro Latino Americano, and she's been forming a parent group. I don't know what they're talking about. I know, when there were threatening and doing raids in the community, we got some communication to ourselves as teachers about what we are not obligated to do. The expectation is for us protect the kid.”  -“Let's make sure that we have not books	- “I feel like we're pretty intentional. We read a book today about a little girl who, it was like a self-compassion book, but it started out with like how she was being kind to other people.”  - “We definitely do have some explicit and intentional conversations around like just because you don't understand Spanish right now, think about how your peers are feeling literally all the time out of school.”  - “We do a lot of

<p><b>Kristen Continued.</b></p>	<p>experiences.”</p> <p>- “We have what's called a descending model. So second grade is 80-20 Spanish to English. Third grade is 70-30, 4th grade is 40-60 and fifth grade is 50-50. And part of that is because, you know, while it would enrich them to continue with a fuller immersion program, they do need to learn how to read, write, spell and specifically communicate mathematical vocabulary for their state testing.”</p> <p>-“Let's make sure that we have not books and materials that are not just about white kids. Let's make sure that we are teaching lessons that are</p>		<p>and materials that are not just about white kids. Let's make sure that we are teaching lessons that are not just about white history.”</p>	<p>things. We have morning meeting. In that way, the program really does lend itself to some common experience because a lot of the time everybody's confused.”</p> <p>-“We play name games at the beginning of the year. We do a lot of art. We do a lot of opinion writing and a lot of speaking and interacting, which also a unique component of an immersion program. Because what I tell the kids, if you can't say it, you can't write it.”</p> <p>-“Let's make sure that we have not books and materials that are not just about white kids. Let's make sure that we are teaching lessons that are not just about white history.”</p>
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<p><b>Kristen Continued.</b></p>	<p>not just about white history."</p> <p>- "Students who have me are likely at sort of, I don't want to say disadvantage, but like none of those things are my home culture, so I can teach what I know about them. Whereas other teachers are like "Oh yeah, we had an altar for Día de los Muertos in my house. And so like, I know I can really tell you about that."</p> <p>- "We have an Amity program, which is basically international interns who are all also Spanish speaking and part of their responsibility through their program is to teach lessons on culture. My kids have learned this</p>			<p>- "We have an Amity program, which is basically international interns who are all also Spanish speaking and part of their responsibility through their program is to teach lessons on culture. My kids have learned this year a whole bunch El Salvador because both of our interns have been from there."</p> <p>- It's important for us as the white teachers to step back and not constantly be the authority figure. Like you need to have control of your class and it needs to be a respectful and kind place to be, and kids need to feel safe. But for our voice not to be the only voice of authority in matters of culture, in matters of what is important, in matters of</p>
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<p><b>Kristen Continued.</b></p>	<p>year a whole bunch El Salvador because both of our interns have been from there.”</p> <p>- It's important for us as the white teachers to step back and not constantly be the authority figure. Like you need to have control of your class and it needs to be a respectful and kind place to be, and kids need to feel safe. But for our voice not to be the only voice of authority in matters of culture, in matters of what is important, in matters of feelings. And so letting kids voice that and finding ways to help them voice that, hopefully they can leave first grade with some sense that other</p>			<p>feelings. And so letting kids voice that and finding ways to help them voice that, hopefully they can leave first grade with some sense that other people have feelings too. I feel like we've done a pretty good job because they're still at an age where they're developmentally very self-centered. So if we can just open that envelope a little bit, and as they go through, really create those kind interactions with them, I feel like we're doing something.”</p>
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	<p>people have feelings too. I feel like we've done a pretty good job because they're still at an age where they're developmentally very self-centered. So if we can just open that envelope a little bit, and as they go through, really create those kind interactions with them, I feel like we're doing something.”</p>			
<b>Luis</b>	<p>In terms of playing song dedicated to the community of Woodburn: “It’s a little too dark for these guys.”</p> <p>-“In our basal reader, or in our curriculum, there's some stories on immigration and emigration. We discussed why would people want to leave their</p>	<p>-“We have Amity students who are teachers that come from more, right now, from El Salvador, Columbia, and Spain. They are here for the whole year. Our last semester we had an MBA student from El Salvador... They show their experiences and all that...</p>	<p>- In regard to playing song dedicated to the community of Woodburn: “The song that we did, it was called ghost town. Just like she was saying, the parents went to work and never came back. There's all this, abandonment of a culture. I think people just stopped going to school or people</p>	<p>- “If they can speak in English and in Spanish, you can communicate with like 80% of the world, pretty well at some point, or at least 60% of the world. Actually, I can't remember the number. Besides the ability to communicate, it's just the cultural connection because you can understand. If</p>

<p><b>Luis Continued.</b></p>	<p>countries?” - “We have Amity students who are teachers that come from more, right now, from El Salvador, Columbia, and Spain. They are here for the whole year. Our last semester we had an MBA student from El Salvador... They show their experiences and all that... They ended up bringing a lot of this great rich, authentic culture to the school.”</p> <p>- “Why else would people want to leave their family, leave everything they've known all their lives to go to another place. Some people it's for work or cause they're trying to escape something.</p>	<p>They ended up bringing a lot of this great rich, authentic culture to the school.”</p> <p>- “Hopefully people have recognized at this point what a benefit it is to have these families here. Culturally and economically. We're coming in, paying into this security and pay taxes and doing all this other stuff, and people are like “They're getting everything for free”. It's like, no. They're working and they're getting paid and they're paying into the same system that you are. Under the table work still exists, but it's a lot fewer and farther than people think.”</p>	<p>stopped going to work just because they were afraid of what was going to happen or afraid that if they left that they wouldn't come back.”</p> <p>- In terms of concerns about immigration enforcement: “I did not have very many families that were directly affected by it or the kids did not really know about it. But it definitely seemed like more of our English only families, like those kids were far more concerned than my Latino kids.”</p> <p>- In regard to immigration enforcement: “Initially when it came out, there were some groups that were meeting for</p>	<p>you can understand where somebody is coming from, you don't have to agree with them. But if you can understand where somebody is coming from, then you're more apt to show some empathy and to be patient with how they perceive the world.”</p> <p>- “That whole idea of bilingualism, that the fact that if we can understand what somebody is saying, we're more apt to be patient with them or have to try to connect with them. We don't have to like each other, and we don't have to agree with each other, but if we can show respect, everything's going to be better. And if you can understand why they're saying that regardless of</p>
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<p><b>Luis Continued.</b></p>	<p>Sometimes in some place there's not enough food. Or it's just a dangerous place to be. And so they're trying to come here to live safer or to provide more opportunities for their families or maybe to come here to try to make some money to send back to their families, to help them out.”</p> <p>- “I think I have one student who often speaks about how his dad came from here. It's like, I know he came here for this and he's really trying to do this. I tried to relate [to him], both of my parents were from Mexico, this is what happened with my dad. He came over illegally. He got caught</p>		<p>people who weren't understanding. Eugene actually in particular, they were offering some outreach in the community and some of my friends were trying to gather and do some postcard writing, get some stuff to the government and trying to establish Eugene as a sanctuary city...I know there was a few more that went to River Road. I believe it was tied in with Central Latino, and so they kind of reached out to the community through us and through some other places. I know it could have been probably pushed out a little bit more.”</p> <p>- “I think it's really about</p>	<p>whether you agree with it or not, then it's easier to communicate.”</p> <p>- “We talk a lot about community and how we listen to each other. We try to do our best to listen without judgment. Currently we're doing opinion writing, which is the hardest thing for kids to listen without agreeing or disagree. Everybody sits around a circle and whether you agree, I want you to have no reaction... You have to be able to listen without judgment first, which is super hard for most people to do.”</p> <p>- “In our basal reader, or in our curriculum, there's some stories on immigration and emigration. We discussed why would people want to leave their countries?”</p>
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<p><b>Luis Continued.</b></p>	<p>somehow. He was supposed to be put on the bus and he went into the restroom when he was at the bus station and the bus left without him. He kind of got out of getting deported. He called his boss and he's like "this is what happened". [The boss] was like, "why didn't you tell me? You should've told me. I can sponsor you and I can help you get your citizenship faster, or at least get your green card." So he did sponsor and my dad went home and got married."</p>		<p>educating everybody else. Nobody really is going to listen to me as a teacher, but if I can get as many people as I can in our community to support whatever's happening for these people, because we spent time in class together and established our little classroom community and hopefully people have recognized at this point what a benefit it is to have these families here."</p>	<p>- "We have Amity students who are teachers that come from more, right now, from El Salvador, Columbia, and Spain. They are here for the whole year. Our last semester we had an MBA student from El Salvador...They show their experiences and all that... They ended up bringing a lot of this great rich, authentic culture to the school."</p> <p>- "Why else would people want to leave their family, leave everything they've known all their lives to go to another place. Some people it's for work or cause they're trying to escape something. Sometimes in some place there's not enough food. Or it's just a dangerous place</p>
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				to be. And so they're trying to come here to live safer or to provide more opportunities for their families or maybe to come here to try to make some money to send back to their families, to help them out.”
<b>Valentina</b>	<p>- “To be as a teacher, fully transparent and be a human. I think that to me, that was the most obvious time. I was around during the 90s when we had the raids. I am also a 4J product, so I remember that. I remember that we moved to the other side of the tracks just in time.”</p> <p>- “I just remember a lot of anxiety around my own family and I remember just a lot of hush</p>	<p>- In regard to their Latinx identity: “I think that it makes me stand out in some spaces. Especially to my students who it connects to them. I think that just some of the way that I am, it reflects to them, it sounds similar.”</p> <p>- “As an immersion schools in our community, we highly lack the cultural component of it. It's important to me that I reflect as</p>	<p>- “I will never forget the year that Trump was inaugurated because that was a very difficult time. Still. I almost didn't come to work the next day, but I couldn't imagine another place that I could be of better support and service than my students and that community that really needed me because I had students that were crying and terrified, not just for their families</p>	<p>- “I provided a space within their classroom where it was a place where they could come together and say I'm mad. Cause he's seen this and he's saying that. And how does that hurt you? How does that impact you? And so I just remember thinking to myself and another coworker, while everybody's up here with the adult and just not really being supportive, we were down here with the kids. That ripple effect that all of this political climate,</p>

<p><b>Valentina Continued.</b></p>	<p>hush. I feel that, wow, what an opportunity for me to have been put in that place. While it happened, I was like gosh why did this happen to my family? And now it has placed me as a teacher in a position to be able to identify and quickly be able to really serve and support my students and what I believe.”</p> <p>- “...being able to be in my own box and still be able to be powerful, be able to still have a voice and be able to still do something with that. There's a whole other level of identity that my students deserve, and I want them to be able to experience. From things</p>	<p>authentically, as much of myself, as much as possible. So that they can know that that's okay for them too.”</p>	<p>but for me. They thought that I was going to get taken away and then I wouldn't be able to be their teacher anymore because I was Latina.”</p> <p>- In regard to Trump winning the 2016 election: “So that day there was not a lot of absorbing information in academics. There was more support. It was more of a day to be together.”</p> <p>- In regard to creating an inclusive classroom: “ I make sure that there are beautiful, successful, talented people of color all around my classroom. Visible. Astronauts, scientists, principals, teachers. I</p>	<p>all this intensity, they turn into adults eventually. So how are we caring for our future right now?”</p> <p>- “I have to share as a teacher my expectations and what I receive from home. That's another component of being able to understand your students is really understanding what their home life is like. And if I'm always putting the desk in front of me, always just keeping my students at bay, not really having a relationship with them and getting to know than I'm never going to achieve that. So I can't really support them and what they're going through at home if they're not going to divulge what's going on at home with me. I have to provide the space.”</p>
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<p><b>Valentina Continued.</b></p>	<p>like my hair to just what I eat and like how I dance. In my team, I teach the social-emotional learning. I really love being able to be a part of that.”</p> <p>- In regard to activities used to teach about multiculturalism and immigration: “I know a lot of teachers, white teachers who have no problem being like this book and this book and this book. I don't have that luxury. I do have one who's name is Duncan Tonhatiu. He's Colombian, but from Mexico city, and he's an author. All of his books use drawings and images from the 1800's. He's using children's books to</p>		<p>really beef it up for them because I want them to see what their options are versus what they already know.”</p> <p>- “My students is who I serve, and my families are my allies. They are who supports me. Because I'm not excluding my families and bringing in the district to tell me how to support my students. The district can take a back seat because the district doesn't know the students specifically. The families do.”</p> <p>- “Last year, I had students from Oaxaca and some of them spoke Zapotec and different dialects. I encouraged them every day</p>	<p>- In regard to creating an inclusive classroom: “ I make sure that there are beautiful, successful, talented people of color all around my classroom. Visible. Astronauts, scientists, principals, teachers. I really beef it up for them because I want them to see what their options are versus what they already know.”</p> <p>- “Right now in kindergarten, I love this. I have a little pillow. It's a fire pit. I took it out first day of school. I'm trying to get them to sit around to sit long enough to hear 25 of them share and listen and want to. So I had to go through this whole thing about how I love camping, I love</p>
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<p><b>Valentina Continued.</b></p>	<p>illustrate their books. Because of the way that the noses are shaped and the way that the eyes are shaped, it gives people who look like that representation.”</p> <p>- “If you are attentive and you are connected to your students, you have plenty of material to support them and how to get through that. These books reflect the people accurately. Everybody asks me like, where do you get your curriculum? It's experiences. It's what I've seen. Stories are really helpful. It goes way back to our indigenous roots. We are storytellers. We gather around a</p>		<p>to speak it. Share it Because the last thing I want you to do is let it go and be embarrassed. Cause that's how we got here. It's so hard, I want to say that but I'm not at a high school level to where I can drop it like that.”</p>	<p>being outside and we all talk about camping and we talked about sharing and stories, listening and why we listen. They think that we're just talking, but really we're building our little blocks to be able to understand each other when we're sitting in a circle.”</p> <p>- “This curriculum, it's called Kimochis, it's what BV provided me. I like it because I'm all about pillows and visuals and palpable learning. I kind of combine it with my own, which is In La Kech. It's a Mayan poem. And so I use it with attaching it to emotions and letting them know that all of your emotions are acceptable. All of them are. How you handle</p>
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<p><b>Valentina Continued.</b></p>	<p>circle.”</p> <p>- “ Because critical thinking without it being forced, there's a difference. Critical thinking without it being forced is something amazing.”</p> <p>- “ I want to come away from this top down perspective. We're here together. I'm here to facilitate. I don't know more than you and I always told my kids, no matter what grade, you will teach me. I will learn from you. So it's important that they know that and that they feel that.”</p> <p>- In regard to cultivating understanding on Latinx community in Eugene:</p>			<p>it, however, that's different... I tell my kids that it's a mirror. When I tell them to do In La Kech, In La Kech is a mirror. If I were to stick my tongue out at you, I don't see it. Put a mirror up there, now tell me, how am I going to look at myself now? Pretend that that person isn't there, but just look at the mirror. What do you see? Do that. Make your face. Make that hurtful face. It's not about shame. It's about acknowledging what you're doing with your emotional abilities.”</p> <p>- “So breaking down our feelings and emotions, anger, frustration, jealousy, being left out. Those are all very similar feelings, but not all of them are mad. All of them are</p>
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<p><b>Valentina Continued.</b></p>	<p>“You're not going to get that if you never speak to the people. And, and I don't mean that. I mean speaking to them, literally, metaphorically , talking about them, presenting them.”</p> <p>- “So I require my families and my students to use their language, not at home and homework and by themselves, like no, take it out into the community, talk to somebody, socialize with somebody, shake someone's hand. And not every stranger is danger. Right? And so like those are things that like I use to support what I do. Even that, it's still hard. So there's still a</p>			<p>very different. Through emotions, through faces, role play, storytelling is how I teach about. It's okay to be feel like that.”</p> <p>- In regard to cultivating understanding in schools with whiter demographics: “ I'm going to break it down for you here for a second. Not only are we not supporting and not speaking to them, but also like, there's a lot of confusion as to what we display on the media, what we're hearing some of our leaders say, and then at the same time, how we are celebrating Cinco de Mayo. There's a disconnect because you're separating a group of people and the culture when it's convenient. You</p>
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<p><b>Valentina Continued.</b></p>	<p>lot of work to be done around breaking down some of those barriers.”</p> <p>- “Affinity groups and groups where people can feel comfortable to share are crucial. But they're not going to happen if they're communities of people that don't really know each other. That's kind of something that I'm working on right now. I'm really excited that BV might may be getting a black student union at our school. We're working together with the NAACP and being able to do things like that, but it's not feasible if there isn't those connections.”</p> <p>- “My students in my class,</p>			<p>can feel it.”</p> <p>- “What I've done is create homework activities where families together go and participate in an activity in Spanish in our community. So, the Día de los Muertos events, these are free. But also go have dinner at a restaurant. Go use your Spanish, go practice. Go talk to somebody in your community.”</p>
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	<p>my students of color, I let them take time to be able have conversations. They are five and we've already had the conversation of why we don't touch people's hair. Why? Because one of my students was touching another student's hair. They were like, why does their hair look like that? Why does they feel like that? So I busted out my book "I love my hair", and so it had the braids, the texture and everything. I use myself as an example."</p>			
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*Funds of Knowledge:*

Identity proved to play a major role in the general pedagogy of the teachers I interviewed, especially in the context of teaching in Spanish immersion schools.

Naturally, teachers coming from a Latinx background are able to use their personal and family history as a means for transmitting knowledge about culture, integration, and minority hardships. I want to be mindful of how I am displaying this data, as I think it is important for this information to come from the source. As a result, I am using quotes from teachers about how they use their Latinx identity in the classroom. To begin with, Juan noted:

“What I do is show myself. I’m a migrant and I come from a very different place. I always try to communicate how I was brought up and how sometimes it’s difficult for me to be here. I show how I try to cope, and I communicate how I feel and integrate...If I have a connection with a kid that struggles or comes to school with [anti-immigrant] views, I can have certain level of conversation if I have a connection with them...I could use that to open a different way to think about it.”

Following Juan, I was able to interview Luis who shared:

“We have a family from Oaxaca, another family from Ecuador. They have a taste of why their family came here or why they left. That's great because they can offer some authentic perspective, if they feel open to sharing about it. Most don't, or they write about it privately. I think I have one student who often speaks about how his dad came from here. It's like, I know he came here for this and he's really trying to do this. I tried to relate [to him], both of my parents were from Mexico, this is what happened with my dad. He came over illegally. He got caught somehow. He was supposed to be put on the bus and he went into the restroom when he was at the bus station and the bus left without him. He

kind of got out of getting deported. He called his boss and he's like “this is what happened”. [The boss] was like, “why didn't you tell me? You should've told me. I can sponsor you and I can help you get your citizenship faster, or at least get your green card. So he did sponsor him...His whole reason for trying to be here was too have a better opportunity, big family...We try to build on where people come from. If you can understand where somebody might be coming from or what they might be seeing as their position in life, you can comprehend why people leave their country.”

Finally, I was able to interview Valentina who reflected that:

“I do a lot of things intentionally in my teaching. Whether if I share something that I like to eat, there's a specific reason why I share. As an immersion schools in our community, we highly lack the cultural component of it. It's important to me that I reflect as authentically, as much of myself, as much as possible. So that they can know that that's okay for them too. Because it's the difference between being confined in the box where the society likes to put us in and we are assimilated, meaning that I just look and sound just like everyone else. But being able to be in my own box and still be able to be powerful, be able to still have a voice and be able to still do something with that. There's a whole other level of identity that my students deserve, and I want them to be able to experience.”

In the context of immigration pedagogy, the identity of a teacher can provide a unique experience—for immigrant students they can provide solidarity and guidance, and for non-immigrants it gives them a personal connection that may further their compassion

for the immigrant journey. Ultimately, this does not imply that white teachers can't equally transmit their support and knowledge about immigration, simply that Latinx identifying teachers can provide a unique perspective for students, especially in the Eugene community.

*Inclusive and Additive World:*

Among all interviewees, representation is a crucial matter that they take seriously in their classrooms. They have all sought curricula and resources that not only teach about diverse individuals and experiences, but visually show people of various ethnicities. In reality, this is a difficult task—a large number of books, posters, and other materials only show white bodies or tokenize people of color. Nonetheless, there is an intentional effort by teachers at Buena Vista and El Camino del Rio to cultivate works that authentically honor the voices of minorities and demonstrate how immigrants are indispensable in creating a more inclusive and additive world. For instance, one of my interviewees, Stephanie, stated “We’re currently doing a study on Dolores Huerta and the labor union movement and all the intersections that happened within the labor movement. Because everybody knows about Martin Luther King Jr while at the same time a lot of other movements were happening simultaneously. There was a lot of support and crossover.” A constant theme throughout the interviews was that there is a lack of material that exists for children about immigrants and the immigrant experience in the United States, especially under President Trump’s administration. Perhaps, as mentioned by several interviewees, this is because this topic is simply too disturbing to delve into at the elementary school level. However, various

pedagogues of understanding are used by these teachers to overcome the predicament of teaching United States immigration politics to children.

*Community Support:*

Conducting interviews at Buena Vista and El Camino del Rio provided important insight into how the structures of bilingual schools can provide essential support to immigrant children and their families. Support does not only manifest within the classroom culture—it is equally seen on the institutional level. Based on these interviews, it is evident that the demographics of these schools play a huge role in their ability to help the immigrant community in Eugene. Naturally, El Camino del Rio’s dual immersion program permits a wider network of immigrant attendees, mostly originating from Latin American countries. This school has become a hub for immigrant resources; they often provide a physical space for migrant rights workshops, parent readiness sessions, multicultural events, and more. Unfortunately, it also makes it a target for discrimination. In 2018, a contractor working at the school removed posters stating, “Immigrants Welcome” and posted about it on their Facebook. This event got major media attention in the Eugene community. Not publicized was the wave of prejudice that occurred after El Camino del Rio was put in the spotlight. According to teachers I interviewed, the school would get endless calls by strangers questioning why the school supported the immigrant community, why they taught Spanish, and other questions along these lines. Thankfully, this school took this as an opportunity to demonstrate ways to rise above hate. Not only did teachers cultivate meaningful conversations about ignorance and apathy, the administration created a mural with

butterflies that honors migration and put into place a yearly cultural night to celebrate diversity. By standing strong, El Camino del Rio showed their solidarity with immigrants. Importantly, Buena Vista equally provides resources for their families, however perhaps to a lesser extent because their demographics include less Latinx families.

*Pedagogy Cultivating Understanding:*

The methods implemented to develop understanding, empathy, and access to truth among all teachers interviewed are quite similar. Active communication as a classroom is a recurring theme, especially in the form of ‘morning meetings’. This activity allows students to express their feelings and to work through various hardships as a group. Further, both institutions have social-emotional curricula, such as Second Step and Kimochis, that provide holistic approaches to improving learning environments to be more supportive and empathetic. On a structural level, these types of curricula create continuity among the education of students. This encourages positive relationship building across different grade levels. Besides these social-emotional curricula, teachers also reported using materials from indigenous cultures, such as the Mayan poem “In Lak’ech” that speaks about honoring each other’s presence. For example, Valentina uses books by Duncan Tonatiuh who utilizes Pre-Columbian art to speak on social justice issues, history, and more. As Spanish bilingual schools, it is noteworthy that they incorporate indigenous materials, as the unfortunate reality of Latin America is that the Spanish language is a colonial force in the region. On another note, writing proved to be an important tool for developing understanding. One of my

interviewees, Luis, noted that: “Currently we’re doing opinion writing, which is the hardest thing for kids to listen without agreeing or disagreeing... Because if you’re having a reaction, then you’re getting stuck on I agree with them or I don’t like what they’re saying. Just listen...And if you can listen then you can make up your mind based on whatever your beliefs, your values, your decisions, your logic”. This type of pedagogy is crucial for youth to experience because it encourages critical thinking without it being forced. From my findings, I found that teachers at these schools are intentional about not being the voice of authority on these matters.

### **Implications:**

Through this research, it has become evident that Spanish immersion programs allow for exceptional relationship building, especially in regard to cultivating empathy for the “other”. When comparing to monolingual schools, we can examine how this type of structure can have immense benefits for non-immigrant and immigrant students alike. Firstly, by having native Spanish speakers learn English and native English speakers learn Spanish, they are put on an equal playing field. Both types of students are put into challenging scenarios when practicing their second language, thus creating empathy for one another. Adversely, this may not occur as naturally or strongly in a non-immersion program. The conscious intention to make all students continuously experience discomfort in language acquisition breeds unity. As mentioned by one of my interviewees, English as a second language (ESL) learners in “traditional” schools are regularly misunderstood. For example, they may be misdiagnosed with a learning disability or perceived to be less engaged in the classroom. The unfortunate reality is

that these students, majoritarian coming from Latin American countries, often do not understand enough English to participate in the classroom. Within this scope, it is clear that Spanish bilingual schools can mitigate this issue by having teachers and peers who can communicate with ESL students and help them with comprehension. For immigrant students coming from Spanish-speaking homes, this can revolutionize their educational experience. Kristen described it perfectly by stating: “Depending on the circumstances that brought them here, they don’t necessarily have all of that background, what I call educational capital. They don’t have a ton of books at home. Maybe their parents don’t know how to read because they come from a different educational background... If you don’t come in with that [educational capital], then you’re already behind”. Thus, the Spanish immersion model of Buena Vista and the dual immersion model of El Camino del Rio have great benefits for Spanish immigrant students in the Eugene 4J district.

While conducting this research, it became evident that the animosity towards immigrants in this country stems from larger root causes: apathy, ignorance, and lack of access to truth. These are also qualities that manifest in other forms of oppression, such as racism, sexism, ableism, etc. It became evident that at the elementary school level, addressing these root causes and promoting empathy, understanding, and access to truth is the priority. Presumably, this is an obvious fact of an elementary education; its purpose is to provide youth with basic knowledge and socialization strategies to advance effectively in higher institutions. Even so, because of the extreme violence and prejudice exhibited toward immigrant communities on the national and local level that directly affects children and their families, I believe that students in Eugene, at the very least, should be exposed to how immigrants add value to our country. The bilingual

structure of El Camino del Rio and Buena Vista lend excellently to these types of conversations, and more broadly towards exploring the injustices that immigrants face on a daily basis. For example, both of these schools are intentional about providing a safe space for students to express their concerns with President Trump's negative rhetoric of immigrants and harsh immigration enforcement policies. As previously mentioned, the demographics of El Camino del Rio make it simultaneously an important hub for immigration advocacy and a larger target for prejudice.

Consequently, pro-immigrant rhetoric is present throughout the entire building, making it a part of the daily consciousness of students, teachers and staff that allows for organic exchange about immigration politics. Since the demographics of Buena Vista include fewer native Spanish speakers, this phenomenon is reasonably felt to a smaller extent. Ultimately, I found that teachers at these schools are navigating an important balance—cultivating a culture of understanding, while also addressing the pressing issue of immigrant discrimination.

Perhaps one of the biggest benefits of Buena Vista and El Camino del Rio is their capacity to fundamentally empower Latinx immigrants. Often, these students suffer academically because there is a lack of contact between their teachers and parents due to language barriers. When a child's support network is not being included in their education, they will naturally have a more difficult time being motivated at school. Because the Spanish language is equally spoken and understood at these schools, Latinx students are not being neglected in terms of parent involvement. In addition, both institutions value representation among their faculty, allowing Latinx immigrants to have mentors that share their same identity. This is extremely important, as there exists

a complex convergence of oppression that Latinx immigrants face, so it can be life-changing for immigrant students to be exposed to immigrant teachers. For instance, one of my Latinx interviewees noted “My students in my class and I take time to have important conversations. They are five and we've already had the conversation of why we don't touch people's hair. Why? Because one of my students was touching another student's hair. They were like, ‘Why does their hair look like that? Why does it feel like that?’ So I busted out my book ‘I Love My Hair’, which talks about braids, texture, everything. I use myself as an example”. These types of conversations lead to critical thinking. Developmentally, it is important for children to be empowered to think critically as this will prove to be useful to them throughout their lives; specifically, when it comes to critiquing the structures of oppression within society that affect their lives, the lives of their loved ones, and strangers. It can be easy to accept the status quo, which only perpetuates destructive practices. Thus, by creating a space where young students can deeply acquire the skills of understanding, empathy, and critical thinking, teachers at Buena Vista and El Camino del Rio are establishing a foundation for these kids to make positive change in the world.

**Discussion:**

My journey with this thesis project has been informative in its own right. Originally, I had planned to interview teachers from all types of elementary schools in the Eugene 4J district, not just Spanish bilingual ones. As I started asking people in my network if they knew teachers who would be open to discussing the topic of immigration pedagogy, a majority steered me to El Camino del Rio and Buena Vista.

This inspired me to narrow my research to these two schools and analyze in what ways the culture and pedagogy of these Spanish immersion programs cultivate a space for immigrant support and broader discussions about the injustice immigrants face in the United States. Importantly, it made me realize how much demographics play a major role in the extent of how much immigration pedagogy is carried out. At Camino del Rio, where almost half of the student population comes from Spanish speaking households, there is a very conscious effort to cherish and protect immigrants; this can be observed throughout the physical structure of the school, where posters and art exhibit pro-immigrant rhetoric, and in the individual support the teachers and staff provide to students and their families. In the classroom setting, there is an intentional effort to address immigrant abuse on the local and national level, especially as their school has experienced hate by anti-immigrant groups. Contrastingly, the culture and pedagogy of immigration at Buena Vista is felt to a lesser extent, albeit still quite present because of the nature of their school. They collaborate with the Amity Institute, which is a non-profit organization that invites young people from other countries to be involved in American education and community life. As a result, the students at this school are consistently exposed to individuals from other cultures, which allows them to have a personal connection to immigrants and the concept of immigration. It may be presumed that as the demographics of Spanish-speaking students in Eugene elementary schools decrease, the intentional effort to cultivate a culture and pedagogy of immigration lessens. While I completely recognize the logic of why immigration pedagogy is higher in schools where the demographics have a greater proportion of native Spanish speakers, I believe it is equally important for predominantly white

Eugene elementary schools to cultivate strong cultures and pedagogues of immigration, especially during President Trump's administration whose rhetoric towards all foreign people has a destructive tone of racism.

Taking a broader outlook, students of color in the American education system are certainly at a greater disadvantage than their white peers. The unfortunate but true reality is that this institution mirrors the oppressive nature of society toward minorities. Children of color are limited by huge structural barriers; to name a few, they have to face racism, concentrated poverty, discrimination, and access to college (Love 10). Going back to the concept of majority-white schools, I want to observe educational theorist Bettina Love's perspective that "When White students attend nearly all-White schools, intentionally removed from America's darkness to reinforce White dominance, that is anti-darkness. When dark people are presented in school curriculums as unfortunate circumstances of history, that is antidarkness... The idea that dark people have had no impact on history or the progress of mankind is one of the foundational ideas of White supremacy" (Love 14). We need to save the state of our education system—we cannot continue perpetuating injustice and the disposability of our immigrant students of color. Professor Love calls for a complete re-imagining of schools that goes beyond making adjustment to the already existing system. More specifically, she states we must implement a system of abolitionist teaching, which "... asks educators to acknowledge and accept America and its policies as anti-Black, racist, discriminatory, and unjust and to be in solidarity with dark folx and poor folx fighting for their humanity and fighting to move beyond surviving. To learn the sociopolitical landscape of their students' communities through a historical, intersectional justice

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lens” (Love 12). In the Eugene 4J district, this type of radical reform would mitigate any lack of discussions surrounding race and inequality, especially in terms of immigrant abuse. For immigrant children throughout the country, their voices are not being protected and honored. Their basic right to matter is being ignored. To extend “How do you matter to a country that tears families apart because of arbitrary lines that instill terror, violence, and geographical separation rather than a compassion for humanity?” (Love 2). As a result, it is our job as a community to fundamentally love our immigrant students in Eugene by organizing to revolutionize our education system to make this vulnerable population protected and upheld.

Speaking of revolutionizing contemporary society, I believe it is vital to consider the work of activist Audre Lorde, as she provides exceptional insight on how to make sustainable changes. Specifically, her essay “The Master’s Tools Will Never Dismantle the Master’s House”, can be applied to the topic of this thesis. One of her main arguments is that liberation can only occur when all voices are included, not just tolerated. In the context of this essay, she is asserting that tokenizing feminists of color or ignoring differences only perpetuates systems of power that white feminists are contending to be working against. If education systems are attempting to make this world more equitable by implementing curricula that address racism and other systems of oppression, they need to go beyond the surface level by cultivating a devoted, intersectional community. Lorde claims that “Without community there is no liberation, only the most vulnerable and temporary armistice between an individual and her oppression” (Lorde 112). One of the most valuable benefits of El Camino del Rio and Buena Vista is that their Spanish bilingual models create a community culture that

actively seeks to protect their most vulnerable participants: immigrants. The mere fact that students are given the opportunity to develop their bilingualism in another language gives them the tools for building relationships with people from around the world. With hope, this will empower them to consider that all of humanity is intrinsically unified. For this reason, it is noteworthy to consider ways to cultivate equally intersectional communities in Eugene elementary schools where the demographics are whiter, and the educational model less conducive to multicultural and immigration pedagogies. Beyond implementing personal and cultural histories of immigrant people in their curricula, they can counteract their lack of diversity by creating assignments that make their students connect to their communities. This can manifest in a variety of ways, but I want to highlight a teaching method by one of my interviewees, Valentina, that perfectly relates to this concept:

“What I’ve done is create homework activities where families together go and participate in an activity in Spanish in our community. So, the Día de los Muertos events, these are free. But also go have dinner at a restaurant. Go use your Spanish, go practice. Go talk to somebody in your community... I require my families and my students to use their language, not at home and homework and by themselves, like no, take it out into the community, talk to somebody, socialize with somebody, shake someone's hand. And not every stranger is danger”.

By making students in less diverse schools come into contact with the Spanish-speaking community through classroom assignments, it will enlighten them to the value of having a multicultural society.

As mentioned in my implications, immigrant discrimination stems from larger root causes of apathy, ignorance, and lack of access to truth. The bilingual structure and social-emotional curricula of Buena Vista and El Camino del Rio allow students to be emotionally intelligent and respond to others with empathy, especially the immigrant community. Because of this finding, I have been deeply inquiring about the benefits of social-emotional curricula beyond the elementary school level. In fact, I have been exploring the idea of social-emotional teaching up to the college level. The more we grow as people, the more difficult life's challenges become; consequently, why are we stopping social-emotional learning at the elementary school? Why are we not teaching individuals how to cope with feelings as they become more complex? According to American College Testing Research Report Series (2014), they find that predictors of workplace and educational success include skills in "collaborative problem solving, critical thinking, dispositional self-efficacy, goal setting...personality, psychosocial factors, self-knowledge" (p.18). All of these stems from socio-emotional learning; consequently, those who are not taught how to effectively cope with their feelings and become emotionally self-sufficient suffer adversely. As indicated by this report, they are less likely to obtain workplace and educational success. For this reason, I find it imperative that we continue socio-emotional learning beyond elementary school. Ideally, this would extend throughout our lifetime, but realistically it should continue up till the college level. Not only will this help every individual lead healthier lives, it will likely lessen the rate of discrimination toward marginalization communities, as people will have built the skill set to be empathetic and critical about societal structures.

Educational theorist Bettina Love argues in her book about abolitionist teaching and

educational freedom that for black students, their ability to be in tune with their emotions, especially joy, is a great form of resistance and healing. Further, she argues that “A revolutionary spirit that embraces joy, self-care, and love is moving toward wholeness. Acknowledging joy is yourself aware of your humanity, creativity, self-determination, power, and ability to love abundantly” (p.120). If we want to dismantle immigrant oppression (or any other type of discrimination), we need to educate our youth not only through academic information but through socio-emotional learning that cultivates empathy and empowers individuals to dismantle oppressive forces in society.

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