

Editors' Note

The summer 2022 issue of JFDE features scholarship that illuminates the education experiences of several different historically marginalized communities and expands scholarly boundaries in multiple important ways. In this issue we are also pleased to introduce a new feature “Community Conversations” that seeks to make good on our editorial commitment to support, “educators, community stakeholders, organizers, scholar activists and public scholarship by publishing and promoting timely work that advances social justice agendas.”

In the first article, Drs. María Isolina Bravo-Ruiz & Linda Flynn center the experiences of first-generation Latina/o/x parents “of children with disabilities navigating the special education system and how those experiences influenced their participation in the special education process.” This work builds on earlier scholarship that centers Latina/o/x immigrant families by focusing specifically on the experiences Latina/o/x immigrant families have navigating special education systems and processes.

The second article also centers on an experience often overlooked in the literature – the role families, in this case HMong parents, play in supporting their undergraduate students. As Drs. Her and Gloria noted, “Because relatively little research exists about HMong parents’ processes specific to higher education [...], this exploratory study provides directives to university personnel in relation to parent and family involvement on campus and subsequent community-based engagement and programming.” This study not only extends the work on HMong parents and families but it also moves beyond the K-12 schooling experience to discuss the importance of family support in the college-going experience of students.

The third article moves JFDE readers to consider the role that multilingual cultural assistants (MCAs) have as not only cultural brokers but as social justice leaders in and beyond schools. Through their collaborative work, Drs. Lewis Grant, Lee, Hoekje, and Escalante push us to broaden our preconceived notions of leadership by further conceptualizing the enactment of community cultural wealth from MCAs as a form of social justice leadership. As they note, “we challenge the traditional view of cultural brokers to reveal the leadership required to effectively advocate for and include multilingual families as valuable members of their children’s school communities. Through social justice leadership [...], MCAs in this study leveraged multilingual [community cultural wealth] in ways that expanded the traditional practices of schools.”

Finally, we are proud to introduce a new feature for the JFDE, “Community Conversations.” The JFDE editorial board strives to be an inclusive, affirming, and validating space for historically marginalized people, communities, and those working to resist oppressive policies and practices. Sometimes the issues facing these communities require a swift response and traditionally academic journals have been slow to respond. Of course, there is great value to be found in careful scholarship that has been through a rigorous peer-review process. But we also believe that the JFDE can be utilized

as a platform to help elevate diverse voices and address timely topics. To accomplish this goal, we are planning to occasionally include “Community Conversations” that seek to bring researchers, community members and activists into dialogue with one another about important issues.

Our first community conversation involved critical scholars and activists discussing the impact anti-LGBTQ+ policies are having on students, teachers, and building leaders. Over the last several years, we have seen a significant uptick in anti-LGBTQ+ policies across the nation. Such policies have, for instance, criminalized healthcare for trans youth, restricted trans students from participating in school sports, and restricted teachers’ ability to discuss LGBTQ+ topics in the classroom¹. JFDE readers will have access to the full transcript of this community conversation in this issue. We hope that after reading and gaining critical insights on the implications these anti-LGBTQ+ policies have on schools readers will feel compelled to act or to continue in their activism or advocacy work.

Collectively the work included in this volume challenges deficit and racist ideologies that perpetually surround historically marginalized families, parents, and communities. We hope that these pieces and community conversation serve as a reminder for JFDE readers to continue engaging in practices, research, and work that creates equitable, collectivist, liberatory, and humanizing spaces *with* and *alongside* historically marginalized families, parents, and communities.

In Solidarity,

Michael P. Evans & Érica Fernández
Co-Editors JFDE

¹ ACLU. (2022, August 12). *Legislation affecting LGBTQ rights across the country*. ACLU. <https://www.aclu.org/legislation-affecting-lgbtq-rights-across-country>