

Editors' Note

The JFDE is pleased to share with you our 2023/24 winter issue. Over the past year we have seen a continuation of many challenging issues that are facing education. The simmering culture wars persist, with district administrators, education leaders, teachers, community members and students experiencing the stresses of the moment. The post-Covid mental health crisis continues to impact both teachers and students and ongoing battles over anti-LGBTQ+ legislation threatens student well-being. Sadly, teachers and administrators are leaving the profession in record numbers and the public's trust in public education has been in decline since 2020.

Yet, despite these negative headlines, we continue to believe in the promise of public education and to be inspired by the work of families, students, community members and educators who are committed to collectively building a better future. The three research articles in this issue share the common thread of community-based innovation as a means to overcome significant challenges in education. We believe that each makes a unique and valuable contribution to their fields.

Alisha Nguyen's article, "In Solidarity: Development, Implementation, and Evaluation of a Family Engagement and Home Learning Program During the Covid-19 Pandemic", discusses the work of Home Connection, a Boston based program focused on working with immigrant families with bilingual children. This mixed methods study traces the origins of the Home Connection program based on community identified needs and the cultivation of local community assets to meet these challenges. Of particular note, are the concerns that the immigrant families felt about excessive screen time associated with distance learning, and the appreciation they felt for the bilingual learning materials that were developed to foster more hands-on learning at home. This article speaks to the benefits of empowering community members throughout the planning process for the delivery of services.

The work of Soyoung Park is also focused on the experiences of immigrant families. Dr. Park's article, "Reframing Deficit Narratives to Honor the Community Cultural Wealth of Immigrant Families of Children with Disabilities", uses qualitative research to surface the perspectives of educators, but then centers the voices of immigrant families working to navigate the special education process. The families articulation of the cultural wealth that they bring to the process and the aspirations that they have for their children offers a stark contrast to the deficit based perspectives of some educators. Dr. Park calls upon the field to reimagine parent-school connections in special education and offers several compelling suggestions.

Anne Valauri's article, "Reimagining Post-Covid Relationships with Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Families: Reflections with a Preschool Director," is based on an ethnographic research collected prior to and throughout the Covid-19 pandemic, which offers a unique real-time perspective on leadership challenges faced by early childhood educators. It also highlights the ways in which

systemic racism was made more explicit in the midst of pandemic policy implementation and how educational leaders and families collective perseverance helped transform historically unjust practices.

Finally, our winter issue concludes with a new JFDE feature “Community Spotlight.” This section seeks to highlight the work of innovative community organizations from around the world. If readers have suggestions for community organizations that should be featured in the future please reach out to the editors. Our first Community Spotlight features “Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters” or HIPPY program, contributed by Deborah Stark and Miriam Westheimer. This feature provides an overview of research insights related to the HIPPY approach, and highlights the evolution of the program as additional equity-oriented benefits for participants were identified. As an international program, HIPPY also demonstrates the importance of organizational flexibility to meet the needs of diverse cultural contexts.

We hope that you enjoy the winter 2023-2024 issue of the JFDE. Please share our articles widely with your friends and colleagues and consider making your own contribution to the journal.

In Solidarity,

Michael P. Evans & Érica Fernández
Co-Editors JFDE