Thank You!

This Community Needs and Assets Assessment was made possible by the parents, educators, students, and administrators in Morris, MN who were willing to share their time and ideas through the various research studies presented in this assessment. Their perspectives and visions for the future were vital in better understanding how the community currently works with newcomers in the school and what can be improved in the future. They will ultimately guide the use of this assessment and the future of the Morris Intercultural Education Initiative.

I would like to express a special thank you to Argie Manolis, my supervisor and mentor as an AmeriCorps VISTA; Dr. Cristina (Nina) Ortiz, Dr. Oscar Baldeomar, and their dedicated research assistants; Ken Gagner, Morris Area Elementary School Principal; Craig Peterson, Morris Area High School Principal; Tony Reimers, Director of Morris Area Community Education and Recreation; women from the Latina Support and Friendship Group; Angie Lopez de Baldeomar, the coordinator of the Latina Support and Friendship Group; and members of Lazos for their immense support of the Morris Intercultural Education Initiative.

This assessment was funded by the University of Minnesota, Morris Office of Community Engagement and was made possible by Morris Area Schools and the Minnesota Literacy Council VISTA project.

Assessment Authors

Argie Manolis, Office of Community Engagement Coordinator
Dr. Cristina Ortiz, Assistant Professor, Anthropology; Service-learning Practitioner
Keni Zenner, Minnesota Literacy Council AmeriCorps VISTA (2013-2014)
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PART I

INTRODUCTION TO MORRIS INTERCULTURAL EDUCATION INITIATIVE
I. ENVISIONING AN INTERCULTURAL EDUCATION SYSTEM

This document is the culmination of a year-long research project, which was conceived in December 2012, when a group of stakeholders from Lazos, Morris Area Community Education, and the University of Minnesota, Morris met to discuss submitting a proposal for a Minnesota Literacy Council AmeriCorps Volunteer In Service To America (VISTA) position. Our aim was to utilize the skills of a VISTA to more effectively plan, coordinate, and support literacy programming for children whose first language is Spanish and to ensure that children’s first language is not a barrier to educational achievement.

Before December 2012, many community stakeholders had been working for several years to determine how to meet the needs of a growing Latino population. Morris Area Community Education had established a bilingual preschool and was providing English classes for adults. UMM had been providing ESL classes to adults and coordinating weekly bilingual discussion groups through the Jane Addams program. A Latina Support and Friendship Group had formed to provide peer support to Latinas in the community. College student volunteers were caring for children during these classes and meetings. Lazos, a community organization aimed at bridging the broader Morris community and the Latino community, had formed and begun advocating for a more inclusive community and school. We felt that we had great momentum and many committed partners, and the time was right to develop a clearer vision for our work.

In August 2013, a first-year VISTA was hired for this three year project, which has since been named the Morris Intercultural Education Initiative. The first-year VISTA’s position included two primary goals: 1) to transform the existing childcare program during ESL classes and the Latina Support and Friendship Group into a literacy program through more effective recruitment and training of tutors and more intentional curricula and assessment practices; and 2) to coordinate a study of the current status of Morris area second language learners—to determine both the assets second language learners bring to Morris Area Schools and other educational settings, and the needs that must be addressed for second language learners to be fully included and successful in these educational settings.

This assessment is based on intensive research projects that were conducted in collaboration with an anthropology professor, a psychology professor, and many UMM students through independent research opportunities and service-learning classes. They include input from parents, children, and educators who were generous enough to spend time providing feedback about the needs and assets they perceived or they themselves had experienced. In addition, the study includes a list of assets documented in an earlier research study conducted by 2 university Spanish faculty members which also provided a framework for community-based research with the Latino community. Finally, data available to the public through a variety of sources and data collected directly from partners are included as well.
The goals of this assessment are the following:

- To share local context and community stakeholder visions for how a truly inclusive intercultural education system should look;
- To reveal underlying causes of academic achievement differences between Latino students and non-Latino students by exploring the perspectives of students, educators, and parents;
- To outline opportunities and assets that exist in Morris, MN that are being or could be utilized to meet the goal of an inclusive intercultural education;
- To present short- and long-term recommendations for the development of new and utilization of existing assets [Although this assessment focuses primarily on Hispanic/Latino students in Morris, recommendations outlined in this report will enhance the way we respond to and anticipate multiculturalism in local education generally.]; and
- To inform strategic planning that will launch the Morris Intercultural Education Initiative.

We hope that this document will serve as the kick-off of the Morris Intercultural Education Initiative, which we envision as an ongoing conversation and continued work among dynamic partners who share the same goal: to create a truly inclusive intercultural education system in Morris. The VISTA project will continue for two more years; a VISTA member will be available to work with campus and community partners to prioritize and address the recommendations that came out of this assessment. The goal is that the Morris Intercultural Education Initiative will continue to exist after the VISTA project is over, and that all partners will be able to proactively adapt to changes in the demographic changes in our schools.
ii. COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

“Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much.”

- Helen Keller

- Latina Support & Friendship Group
- Lazos
- Minnesota Literacy Council
- Minnesota Literacy Council VISTA
- Morris Area Community Education & Recreation
- Morris Area School District
- University of Minnesota, Morris Center for Small Towns (CST)
- University of Minnesota, Morris Office of Community Engagement (OCE)
The Morris Intercultural Education Initiative has been a collaborative project since its launch in 2013. The initiative has been led by the University of Minnesota, Morris Office of Community Engagement and its programs and the Morris Area School District. A number of other community organizations have been critical to this initiative including Lazos, Morris Area Community Education & Recreation, Minnesota Literacy Council, and the Latina Support and Friendship Group.

Information about the Morris Intercultural Education Initiative partners follows (in alphabetical order):

**Latina Support and Friendship Group:**
The Latina Support and Friendship Group meets weekly and serves as an opportunity for Latinas to build a support network and learn about the community through weekly guest speakers and programming. The ESL TREC program (described on page 11-12) serves the children of the women who gather weekly for the support group.

**Key contacts:**
Maria de los Angeles (Angie) Lopez de Baldeomar, Coordinator

**Lazos:**
Lazos’ mission is as follows: “Lazos is dedicated to helping Latino immigrants build relationships within Stevens County. We hope to do this with activities and events that provide opportunities for the diverse cultures of Stevens County to interact. Through this interaction, our goal is to maintain a healthy, dynamic and prosperous community.” Lazos board members participated in the initial Minnesota Literacy Council VISTA proposal (described below) and have provided input for the VISTA project. Lazos was instrumental in beginning conversations with school administrators about implementing a Latino parent orientation and providing translation for Latino families. These efforts established the ground work for the work of the Minnesota Literacy Council VISTA.
I. Introduction to Morris Intercultural Education Initiative

**Key contacts:**
Robert Frischmon  
Hilda Ladner  
Windy González Roberts

**Minnesota Literacy Council:**
The Minnesota Literacy Council’s mission is “to share the power of learning through education, community building and advocacy.” The Minnesota Literacy Council is involved in the Morris Intercultural Education Initiative in two major ways: by providing training, oversight, and assessment for the VISTA project noted above, and by providing a twelve hour training twice yearly in Morris for Community ESL volunteers (who are teaching and assisting with English classes for adult second language learners).

**Key contacts:**
Burgen Young, Adult ESL trainer  
Ellen Bergstrom, Literacy VISTA manager

**Minnesota Literacy Council VISTA:**
In December 2012, the Morris Area School District, Lazos, and UMM’s Office of Community Engagement (OCE) worked together on envisioning a VISTA position to be housed in OCE. The Minnesota Literacy Council coordinates VISTA positions focus on improving literacy among low income populations. The VISTA position description includes two major projects. First, the VISTA will work with partners to complete a community needs and assets assessment focused on literacy support for children from Spanish-speaking households in year one, and collaborate with partners to prioritize and act on recommendations generated in that report in years two and three. Second, the VISTA was charged with creating an ESL TREC (Tutoring, Reading, and Empowering Children) program to serve children from Spanish-speaking households. The ESL TREC program provides literacy activities for children ages 0-18 and takes during adult ESL classes and the Latina Support and Friendship group. The VISTA project was awarded for August 2014-2016 and provides a full-time VISTA member who will work on these projects and ensure sustainability after 2016.

**Key contacts:**
VISTA supervisor: Argie Manolis, Community Engagement Coordinator  
Year One VISTA (completing her term in August 2014): Keni Zenner  
Year Two VISTA (August 2014-August 2015): Michael Peters
**Morris Area Community Education and Recreation:**
The Morris Area Community Education and Recreation’s programs that are closely tied to the Morris Intercultural Education Initiative include the bilingual preschool, the Zone after school program, and adult ABE and ESL classes taught on Wednesday nights. MACE staff have been involved in the Morris Intercultural Education Initiative in many ways. Pre-K staff attended an intercultural competence training provided by the year one VISTA and UMM faculty. The bilingual preschool has served as a site for UMM service-learning students. Staff have been involved in providing data for the community needs and assets assessment and will be involved in prioritizing and enacting the recommendations that come from this community needs and assets assessment.

**Key contacts:**
Tony Reimers, Morris Area Community Education and Recreation Director  
Michele Hanson, Zone coordinator  
Ashley Bennett, Bilingual Preschool Teacher  
Diane Strobel, Early Childhood Education Coordinator

**Morris Area School District (Elementary and High Schools):**
The Morris Area School District’s administrators and teachers have been involved in the Morris Intercultural Education Initiative in many ways. They participated in interviews and focus groups through the Morris Educator Study outlined later in this assessment. They have helped with framing and providing data for the community needs and assets assessment and have served as supervisors for ESL TREC tutors placed in classrooms. They will be involved in prioritizing and enacting the recommendations that come from this community needs and assets assessment.

**Key contacts:**
Ken Gagner, Principal, Morris Area Elementary School  
Craig Peterson, Principal, Morris Area High School  
Megan Ceballos, ELL Teacher, Morris Area School District

**University of Minnesota, Morris Center for Small Towns (CST):**
CST’s mission is to “focus the University’s attention and marshal its resources toward assisting Minnesota’s small towns with locally identified issues while creating applied learning opportunities for faculty and students. CST is dedicated to creating a bright future for small towns throughout the state.” CST has provided grant funding for several initiatives that built the ground work for the Minnesota Literacy Council VISTA project, including the initial study of the history of the Latino experience in Morris (summarized in this report).
University of Minnesota, Morris’ Office of Community Engagement (OCE):
OCE’s mission is “to engage members of the broader community and University of Minnesota, Morris students, faculty, and staff in meaningful, reciprocal course-based and co-curricular partnerships. These partnerships will meet identified community needs; advance the campus mission, learning outcomes, and key campus priorities; and work toward more vibrant, just, and intercultural communities.” OCE serves as the host site for the Minnesota Literacy Council VISTA project described on page 16. In addition, three of OCE’s programs have been involved in the Morris Intercultural Education Initiative.

Academic Service-Learning Program:
The Academic Service-Learning Program supports classroom experiences that utilize community service, community-based research, or other civic engagement activities along with regular reflection to meet course goals and community needs. Three service-learning classes have been involved in data collection and analysis related to the Morris Intercultural Education Initiative. In addition, students in three service-learning classes provided lessons and special activities for the ESL TREC program, Morris Area Elementary School, and Morris Area bilingual preschool.

Community ESL Program:
The Community ESL Program’s mission is: to provide UMM students and community members with opportunities to plan and implement lesson plans for non-native speakers of English, particularly targeting new Latino immigrants; to provide opportunities for UMM students to develop intercultural competence, critical thinking, and leadership and collaboration skills; and to provide quality English language classes to new Latino immigrants to improve their ability to participate as fully as possible in the county professionally, civically, and personally. UMM students serve as ESL teachers and class assistants for adult learners. ESL TREC sessions take place during the Community ESL Program classes.

ESL TREC:
The ESL TREC program’s mission is: to promote literacy in Pre-K and school-aged children; to provide Pre-K and school-aged children with meaningful tutoring and mentoring experiences; to provide
UMM students with meaningful work-study, volunteer, and service-learning opportunities; and to provide opportunities for children and UMM students to value, respect, and learn from each others’ diverse life experiences and cultures. ESL TREC tutors are UMM students who serve as service-learning, volunteer, or federal work-study employees. They tutor at a variety of sites including in-class tutoring at the Morris Area School District, the UMM Community ESL Program, Morris Area Community Education and Recreation ESL classes, the Latina Support and Friendship Group, and Women’s ESL classes. The ESL TREC program was developed in response to an increase in the number of Latino youth who speak English as a learned language.

Community Engagement Leaders Program:
Students in this program are paid through federal work-study, Morris Student Administrative Fellows, and OCE institutional funding to serve as leaders for service-learning classes and other programs. This program has provided student researchers for the Morris Intercultural Education Initiative and lead Community ESL and ESL TREC tutors.

The Jane Addams Project:
The Jane Addams Project’s mission is: to create an environment in which everyone is a teacher, and everyone is a learner; to create an environment in which all cultures are honored; to create an environment in which citizenship is understood to mean contributions to the community; to inspire people to create collective change; and to provide leadership opportunities for student interns and community members. Morris area community members and UMM students are the main participants of The Jane Addams Project. The Jane Addams Project was developed by UMM students in 2011 as a way for UMM students and Spanish-speaking community members to form relationships and learn from each other’s life experiences.

Key contacts:
Argie Manolis, Community Engagement Coordinator
### iii. 2013–2014 MORRIS INTERCULTURAL EDUCATION INITIATIVE TIMELINE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>January 2013</td>
<td>Awarded Minnesota Literacy Council VISTA grant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 2013</td>
<td>An interview committee interviewed qualified VISTA candidates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 2013</td>
<td>Keni Zenner began as first-year VISTA for the Morris Intercultural Education Initiative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Initial introductions with stakeholders, described roles in project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Established partnerships with UMM Professors Cristina (Nina) Ortiz &amp; Oscar Baldelomar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Beginning of Anthropological Research Methods Course – Introduced university students to project and their role as student researchers for Morris Educator Study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 2013</td>
<td>Oscar’s research assistants begin to interview Latino and non-Latino students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 2013</td>
<td>Gained approval to begin interviews and focus groups with educators</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Professional development opportunity at Morris Area Elementary School and Morris Area High School regarding how to work with an interpreter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 2013</td>
<td>Student researchers transcribed and coded interviews and focus groups with educators</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Meeting with MASD administrators to discuss preliminary research findings and create action plan for future</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 2013</td>
<td>Student researchers presented preliminary findings and recommendations at Morris Area Elementary School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 2014</td>
<td>Beginning of Latinos in the Midwest Course and Anthropology of Education course – Introduced students to project and their role</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Students in courses begin to research best practices for Latino Parent Advisory Board, Latino Youth Group, and Cultural Liaison</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 2014</td>
<td>Awarded IDEA Grant, which provided $7,000 in funding for interviewing Latino parents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 2014</td>
<td>Cultural Competency Professional development opportunity at Morris Area Preschool and ECFE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 2014</td>
<td>Students from Latinos in the Midwest course and Anthropology of Education course completed best practice handouts for Latino Parent Advisory Board, Latino Youth Group, &amp; Cultural Liaison</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 2014</td>
<td>Began interviewing Latino parents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>An interview committee interviewed qualified second-year VISTA candidates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 2014</td>
<td>Michael Peters was offered position as second-year VISTA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Data analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 2014</td>
<td>Began writing Community Needs and Assets Assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 2014</td>
<td>Michael Peters began as second-year VISTA for Morris Intercultural Education Initiative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Presentation of Community Needs and Assets Assessment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
PART

NATIONAL AND LOCAL PERSPECTIVES AND CONTEXT
National and Local Perspectives & Context

National Perspective

The national narrative for Hispanic or Latino youth in education is grim. Headlines announce: “The Latino Education Crisis,” “Latinos Lag in Early Childhood Development,” and “Latino Academic Achievement Gap Persists.”

National standardized assessments point to disparities in academic achievement between Hispanic/Latino students and students of other racial/ethnic groups (see side bar). Yet, they provide little explanation for the underlying causes of these inequalities. Often, the media place responsibility for the low test scores, graduation rates, and other “success” indicators on Latino students.

The Pew Hispanic Center published a report in 2009 stating that, “Nearly nine-in ten (89%) Latino young adults say that a college education is important for success in life, yet only about half that number — 48% — say that they themselves plan to get a college degree” (Lopez, p.1). Based on this study, the main reason Latino young adults did not pursue a college education, despite valuing it, was because of financial limitations that led them to get jobs in order to support their families.

We are more likely to hear about a Latino achievement gap than a success story. We often hear of generalized statistics, but rarely of local, context- and asset-driven figures.

Students Proficient in Reading & Math, 2013

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>White</th>
<th>Hispanic</th>
<th>Asian/ Pacific Islander</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Students at or above proficiency in reading in 4th grade (%)</strong></td>
<td>46</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Students at or above proficiency in math in 4th grade (%)</strong></td>
<td>54</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Data retrieved from The Nation's Report Card, National Center for Education Statistics, 2013**

In 2011, Minnesota had the largest Hispanic-White graduation gap with only 51% of Latinos graduating from high school (the lowest graduation rate for Hispanics of the participating states) and 84% of White students graduating from high school (U.S. Department of Education, 2012).
Creating an Asset-Based Education Narrative

The national narrative should not determine how we think about Latinos in local education institutions. It is important to recognize that disparities exist in standardized tests and graduation rates. However, it is more important to understand what contextual factors contribute to those disparities. Differences in native language and culture are often seen as barriers or limiting factors in creating positive educations settings. A goal of this assessment is to demonstrate that differences in native language and culture should be viewed as assets and an opportunity to create a positive, intercultural setting for relationship building and learning.

Local Context

According to the Department of Labor Census records, the Hispanic/Latino population in Stevens County increased by 274.44% from 2000 to 2010. Most of these newcomers arrived as a result of employment opportunities offered by businesses such as Riverview Dairy, LLP, a multi-state agricultural operation, and Superior Industries, a large-scale equipment manufacturer. In 2010, 96 of the 337 self-identified Hispanic/Latino individuals in Stevens County were between the ages of 0-17.

![Bar Chart: Hispanic/Latino Population of Stevens County from 1990 to 2010. Data retrieved from U.S. Census Bureau, 2010.](image)

It is important to reflect on the challenges and successes of Latino students at the national and local education levels.

I. Introduction to Morris Intercultural Education Initiative

**Morris Area Schools Hispanic/Latino Enrollment**
Since the 2010 Census, Hispanic/Latino student enrollment in the Morris Area School District increased. According to the Minnesota Department of Education, 83 Latino students enrolled at Morris Area School District for the 2013-2014 school year. 55 Latino students enrolled at Morris Area Elementary School (MAES), and 28 enrolled at Morris Area High School. Hispanic/Latino students make up the second largest ethnicity represented in Morris Area Schools. In the elementary level, 10% of students identify as Hispanic or Latino. A smaller percentage (5.7%) identify as Hispanic or Latino in the high school.
Academic Test Scores
Minnesota standardized tests show lower scores for Hispanic/Latino students than their White student counterparts. However, Hispanic/Latino students in Morris had higher assessment achievement in reading, math, and science than Hispanic/Latino students statewide.

The following bar graphs show the percent of students who were proficient in reading and math based on assessments done during the 2012-2013 school year. The graph does not show data for Hispanic students’ reading level at Morris Area High School because the student sample size was too small.

English Language Levels
Students’ English language levels is one factor known to affect scores on standardized assessments. In Morris, more than 50% of the Hispanic/Latino students in elementary school qualified for English language assistance (ELL). More than 25% of the Hispanic/Latino students in the high school qualified (Minnesota Depart-
I. Introduction to Morris Intercultural Education Initiative

At Morris Area Elementary School, whether a student qualified for ELL services seemed to affect students’ reading scores. Of the Hispanic/Latino students who qualified for ELL services, 30.8% were proficient in reading. 44.0% of all Hispanic/Latino students at the school were proficient.

Participation Rates in Out-of-School Programming
Besides academic scores, participation rates in extracurricular activities are a way to gauge a school’s ability to engage families from diverse cultures.

A number of out-of-school academic programs exist for youth in Morris, including, but not limited to Targeted Services (also known as Tiger Targets), the Zone afterschool program, and ESL TREC. All three programs are characterized by smaller group sizes than a typical classroom and hands-on approaches to learning. They provide extra English language assistance outside of school time for those students who qualify for English as a Learned Language (ELL) services. Hispanic/Latino students’ participation in these programs is quite varied.

Students who qualify for English as a Learned Language services (ELL) also qualify for Targeted Services (Tiger Targets). During the 2013-2014 academic year, 4 of the 31 (12.9%) Hispanic/Latino students who qualified for Targeted Services attended. 12 of the 31 qualifying Hispanic/Latino students enrolled in Targeted Services (Tiger Targets) for the summer programming.

5 out of 71 students enrolled in the ZONE afterschool homework help and enrichment program were Hispanic/Latino.
The ESL Teaching Reading, Empowering Children (ESL TREC) literacy program, a bilingual learning environment for children with Spanish-speaking parents ages 6 months old and older, takes place during adult English classes and the Latina Support and Friendship Group. During the 2013-2014 academic year, 25 children ages birth to Kindergarten and 30 school-aged children were enrolled in the program. The week by week attendance was much lower than the total number of students enrolled, however.

Morris Area Community Education offers numerous enrichment classes and activities during the academic year and during the summer including music lessons, art/craft classes, summer recreation sports, and more. During the 2013-2014 academic year, 39 different Latino youth (about 47% of Latino youth in the district) participated in classes or activities through Morris Area Community Education. Many of those students registered for multiple classes or activities. 636 students overall (60.7% of students in the district) participated in Morris Area Community Education and Recreation classes and activities during the 2013-2014 academic year/summer.

The Morris Area Bilingual Preschool began in 2009 as a way to reach out to Hispanic/Latino families in the area and to encourage Spanish-language learning in native English-speaking youth. During the 2013-2014 academic year, 6 out of the 23 students who attended the Morris Area Bilingual Preschool were Hispanic/Latino. Three of those 6 students also participated in the English language preschool classes as well as the bilingual classes.

**Parent Engagement**

Parental engagement in a school is often measured by attendance at school meetings, parent-teacher conference attendance, and volunteering or serving on school committees. While we do not have data on Hispanic/Latino parents’ parent-teacher conference attendance or attendance at school meetings, we do know that of the 20 parent volunteers at Morris Area Schools, 5 are Latina mothers. We also know that no Hispanic/Latino families participated in Early Childhood Family Education (ECFE) courses through Morris Area Community Education from 2013-2014.

One possible barrier to parent engagement is language as most Hispanic/Latino parents in the Morris area do not speak English as a first language. During the 2012-2013 academic year, 23 families requested translating or interpreting services in the school. From 2013-2014, 11 families requested these services.

**All data were requested from various community partners. Reported numbers may vary slightly depending on how Hispanic/Latino students were counted and identified.
PART

COMMUNITY-BASED RESEARCH
Intro to Community-Based Supporting Research

This section of Community Needs and Assets Assessment will outline 4 research projects that have taken place (or are currently in progress) in the Morris area since 2011. The featured research projects were developed to improve community outreach efforts with Latino community members.

History of the Latino Experience in Morris Area

The first study was conducted by Stacey Parker Aronson, Windy González Roberts, and two student research assistants. The study's title is, "History of the Latino Experience in the Morris Area." The study documents community resources that exist because of changing local demographics. Focus groups with Latinos living in Morris make up the second half of Parker Aronson and González Roberts' study.

Parker Aronson & González Robert’s study established a protocol for community-based research with Latinos in Morris. Their research provided background information for the Minnesota Literacy Council VISTA application and introduced a list of Morris community assets.

Morris School Study

The next three studies are distinct, yet complementary. The three studies, “Student Identity Study,” “Educator Study,” and “Latino Parent Study” make up the “Morris School Study.”

Researchers, Dr. Cristina (Nina) Ortiz, Dr. Oscar BaldeLomar, Argie Manolis, and Keni Zenner, collaboratively developed interview and focus group questions for Morris area students, educators, and Latino parents. They wanted to gain an understanding of students’, educators’, and Latino parents’ experiences in the local schools. Researchers asked many of the same questions to participants in all three studies to understand varying perspectives of participants.

Many student researchers were engaged to make the scope of this study possible. Although not all data collection and analysis is complete at the time of publishing this assessment, the assessment presents preliminary findings from the Morris Educator Study and the Latino Parent Study.
III. Community-Based Research

HISTORY OF THE LATINO EXPERIENCE IN THE MORRIS AREA

Principle Investigators: Stacey Parker Aronson & Windy González Roberts
Student Researchers: Cristina Montañez & Jordan Wente

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- Where have Latinos in Morris, MN lived before moving to Morris?
- What brings Latinos to Morris, MN?
- Where do Latinos in Morris, MN work?
- Do Latinos in Morris, MN move here with their families?
- How long do Latinos in Morris, MN stay in the community?
- How many Latino children attend Morris Area Schools?
- Do Latinos in Morris, MN attend local churches?
- What resources or programs exist in the community for Latino individuals or families?
- What resources or programs are being utilized by Latino individuals or families?

METHODOLOGY

This study was qualitative in nature, relying on histories gathered via personal interviews or written (or recorded) histories and community focus groups. Researchers started by recruiting two groups of participants. The first group of participants consisted of volunteers from the Morris, MN area who had been involved with projects affecting the Latino community. These participants provided their accounts of the history of the Latino experience in the Morris Area. The second group consisted of local members of the Latino community. These participants contributed to two focus groups. Letters were sent to interview/history participants inviting them to participate in this study, and posters were placed in the Morris area inviting the participation of local Latino community members.

The following individuals provided oral histories for this study:

- Stacey Parker Aronson, UMM faculty and Morris resident
- Robert Frischmon, Riverview Dairy Employee and Morris resident
- Nancy Huot, Original owner of La Tienda and Morris resident
- Citlalli Ibañez, Morris resident
- Yuri Maschakov, UMM 2011 graduate and (now former) Morris resident
- Cindy Perkins, Former director of Morris Community Education and Morris resident
- Lynn Riser, Former ESL teacher Morris Area Schools and Morris resident
- Windy González Roberts, UMM faculty and Morris resident
- Lisandra Sperr, UMM Dining Services employee and Morris resident
**FINDINGS**

Parker Aronson and González Roberts’ study established a protocol for how to conduct community-based research and how to involve Latino families in research. Additionally, their research confirmed the belief that the demographics of the Latino population in Morris were changing. While in the early 2000’s most Latinos in Morris were young, single men, by 2010 and beyond, more Latino families were moving to the area. This information was important not only for the community as a whole, but also for initial conversations for what could be done at Morris Area Schools to adapt to changing demographics and for writing the Minnesota Literacy Council VISTA grant.

**Community Assets**

One of the most significant outputs from this study was the launching of a list of community assets in relation to Latino outreach in Morris, MN. Below are some of the programs or activities mentioned in Parker Aronson and González Roberts’ study. All programs mentioned existed sometime between 2002 and 2012. Many of the programs have adapted since the study was completed in 2012, so this should not be considered a current list of assets.

**Community Assets from 2002-2012 (in alphabetical order)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Asset</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adult ESL classes at Morris Area Community Education</td>
<td>Morris Area Community Education offers English classes to individuals with many different native languages, such as Mandarin, French, and Russian every Wednesday night. In order to make the classes more accessible to families, in 2011 they created an internship program for a UMM student to create lessons for children who attended with their parents.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adult ESL at the University of Minnesota, Morris</td>
<td>Adult ESL classes began with 5-6 students at different language levels and 1-3 UMM student volunteers and have grown to multiple levels and more than 60 adult students. In 2011, program coordinators recruited UMM student volunteers to teach and partnered with the Minnesota Literacy Council to provide volunteer tutors the training necessary to create lessons for the Spanish-speaking students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bilingual phone system at the hospital and county office</td>
<td>One interviewee discussed being an interpreter for a bilingual phone system in which a bilingual individual could interpret over the phone for a Hispanic community member and the other party.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESL at Morris Area School District</td>
<td>Morris Area Schools has had an English as a Second Language (ESL) teacher on and off (based on need) since at least 1989. The student population in ESL classes has changed over the years from mostly Hmong students to now mostly Hispanic students.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### La Tienda grocery store

The original La Tienda grocery store was opened by Nancy Huot after she noticed that Hispanic residents were traveling to communities outside of Morris to buy grocery and household products they were familiar with. Nany Huot owned the store for two years and then sold it to Edna del Mar and her husband Cruz, who expanded services offered at the store.

### Lazos Intercommunity Organization

The intercommunity organization, Lazos, was formed during the 2010-2011 academic year after a Fulbright Scholar at the UMM, Marisol Reyes, engaged community members who had already been facilitating Latino outreach efforts in Morris. The initial members of Lazos included: Windy Roberts, UMM Spanish Teaching Specialist, Robert Frischmon, Spanish/English teacher at Riverview, LLP, Edna del Mar, owner of the former La Tienda grocery store, Lisandra Sperr, UMM Dining Services employee, Hilda Ladner, director of Equity, Diversity and Intercultural Programs at UMM, and Yuri Maschakov, UMM 2011 graduate.

### Money wiring services to Mexico

Willie’s and La Tienda offer money wiring services to Mexico.

### Service Learning at UMM:

Advanced Spanish Language students participated in a number of service-learning projects from 2002-2012 including translating for local businesses and service organizations, tutoring children, teenagers, and adults whose heritage language was Spanish, and tutoring elementary students in the acquisition of basic Spanish vocabulary.

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These paper hands created at a Jane Addams Project event on Oct. 23, 2012 on the campus of the University of Minnesota, Morris. The photo was taken by Ann Arbor Miller of MPR News. MPR News came to Morris to do a piece after hearing about the Latino outreach initiatives occurring in the Morris area.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Soccer League</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Approximately 50 men were reported to have attended the winter soccer league offered through Morris Area Community Education.</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spanish Conversation Table</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Spanish Conversation Table (or Mesa de Conversación) takes place weekly at UMM for university students studying Spanish and Spanish native speakers from the community to develop friendships and grow in language speaking abilities.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spanish Language Film Festival (2008-2012)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Spanish Language Film Festival has taken place since the fall of 2008 with the intention to engage more members of the Hispanic community in Morris and provide opportunities for cultural education and empathy for others through films.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spanish language mass at Assumption Catholic Church</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A native-Spanish-speaking priest travels to Morris once per month to offer mass services in Spanish.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spanish language services at Morris Evangelical Free Church</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Morris Evangelical Free Church has a bilingual pastor who offers worship services in Spanish every week.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spanish-speaking teller at Riverwood Bank</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Riverwood bank, where data show most Latinos in Morris bank, has a Spanish-speaking bank teller on staff to make their services more accessible to Spanish-speaking families.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stevens County Human Services Internship</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In the spring of 2009, 2 advanced Spanish students completed an internship in which they worked with Hispanic clients to inform them of their eligibility for services at Stevens County Human Services and help them fill out any and all forms required for those services.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Jane Addams Project</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Jane Addams Project was founded by 3 university students in 2011. The goal of the group is to bring together Hispanic/Latino families, university students, and other community members for bilingual discussions, presentations, and friendship-building.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Translated material at local organizations and businesses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The following organizations/businesses have at least some of their documents translated into Spanish: Morris Red Cross Chapter, Dental Depot, Morris Area Farmer’s Market, HeadStart, Home Town Solutions, Morris Human Rights Commission, Morris Area Elementary School, Morris Police Department, Some Place Safe Women’s Shelter, Stevens Community Medical Center, Stevens County Food Shelf, Stevens County Mental Health</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
MORRIS STUDENT IDENTITY STUDY

Principle Investigators: Dr. Oscar Baldelomar, Dr. Cristina (Nina) Ortiz, & Argie Manolis
Student Researchers: Catelyn Grueneich, Jennifer Guadarrama, Yessica Zuniga-Tapango, Tyler Ulsby, Kassandra Brandvold, Abigail Paustian, Bailey Stottrup, Matthew O'Leary, and Sarah Chambers

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. Acculturation process:
   - What aspects of the school context increase or decrease the levels of acculturation stress?
   - How does immigrant children’s understanding of social inclusion (i.e., inclusion of Latinos into the American category) affect children's levels of acculturation stress?

2. School experiences:
   - What factors support immigrant children’s sense of belonging to their local school in Morris?
   - What are the perceptions immigrant children have about their European-American peers and teachers in this context?
   - What are the perceptions of European-American kids about their Latino peers?
   - What positive school experiences support a sense of school belonging in Latino immigrant children?
   - What type of school experiences facilitate the acculturation process?

3. Sense of self:
   - When do immigrant children begin to develop an American identity and what triggers its development?
   - What is the impact of acculturation stress on immigrant children’s sense of self worth and ethnic identity?

METHODOLOGY

The aim of this study was to examine how the school experiences of Latino immigrant children have an effect on their sense of self as these children adapt to the Morris area. We recruited a sample of European-American students for comparison purposes. Participants were 70 students enrolled in the Morris Area Elementary School and High School. Researchers conducted individual sessions of data collection in which they asked children about their school experiences and their ethnic and national identities. Interviews with more Latino children are ongoing. Because of this, we cannot yet provide preliminary results.
**MORRIS EDUCATOR STUDY**

**Principle Investigators:** Dr. Cristina (Nina) Ortiz, Argie Manolis, Keni Zenner  
**Student Researchers:** Alexandra Regeimbal, Bridge McKye, Alexander Short, Colby Peterson, Shelby Spry, Joelle Langworthy, Zachary Johnson

**RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

- Do PreK-grade 12 educators at Morris Area School District feel they have the necessary skills and support to serve diverse students?  
  - If not, what skills or support would educators like to have?  
- How do educators involve Spanish-speaking families in their children’s education?  
- What are educators’ perceptions of Latino families’ relationships with the school and understanding of educational processes in the United States?  
- What assets exist at Morris Area Schools for working with Spanish-speaking students and their families?

**METHODOLOGY**

The majority of this study was conducted by UMM students as a service-learning project in the Seminar in Anthropological Methodology course under the supervision of professor Cristina Ortiz and in collaboration with the Office of Community Engagement coordinator, Argie Manolis, and AmeriCorps VISTA, Keni Zenner.

To recruit for interviews and focus groups with educational providers, principle investigators made announcements at school staff meetings explaining the purpose of the study. At each meeting, surveys were distributed to gauge educators’ interest in participating. Investigators followed up with educators who indicated interest or willingness to participate to review the consent process and schedule interviews or focus groups at the educators’ convenience.

UMM student researchers facilitated 2 focus groups; 6 Morris Area High School educators and 4 Morris Area Elementary School educators participated in these focus groups. Sixteen interviews were also facilitated by the student researchers in the Seminar in Anthropological Methodology course. Data from interviews and focus groups were hand-coded for themes and analyzed by student researchers in the course under the guidance of professor Cristina Ortiz. In December of 2013, student researchers in the course presented their preliminary findings and recommendations at an open presentation at the Morris Area Elementary School Media Center.

Since the conclusion of the Seminar in Anthropological Methodology course, independent student researchers and principle investigators conducted 11 more interviews. The interviews and focus groups with 37 educator participants were transcribed by student researchers and analyzed using MaxQDA, qualitative data analysis software.
III. Community-Based Research

FINDINGS

Needs/Assets:

A primary concern for educators was communication. They were very conscious about the utility of communicating among themselves as well as with students and parents. Educators expressed the desire to learn more Spanish as a way to improve their communication with students and parents. Twenty-one out of 37 different educators discussed translating or interpreting as their key tool for communication. The loss of an educator who was acting as a de facto cultural liaison and who was the primary person responsible for all the translating and interpreting in the district represented a significant challenge to communication with Spanish-speaking families in the 2013-2014 academic year. This liaison-educator was mentioned 28 times by at least 21 different participants. Teachers were uncertain about how to compensate for the absence of this educator, particularly her language and cultural-brokering skills. References to accessing interpreting services (for oral communication) centered on parent nights and parent-teacher conferences. Translation services (for written communication) seemed to be primarily in use at the elementary level.

Educators were aware that a handful of well-educated, Spanish-speaking, stay-at-home moms served as parent volunteers at the school. These moms represent a significant resource for both the community and the
school district. Our data suggest that the translating/interpreting and culture-brokering skills of women like these could be more widely and effectively utilized.

Participants rarely mentioned local programs that were implemented to support the education needs of Latino students and families. It is possible that the phrasing of the interview questions influenced educators to focus on in-school programming. Sparse references to the programs listed below indicates the need for more effective communication between school district educators, service providers, and community members so that all are aware of existing services and programming.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>After-school Programs</th>
<th>Targeted Services</th>
<th>Literacy &amp; math assistance provided through the district for qualified students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Zone</td>
<td>Tutoring &amp; mentoring provided by UMM students</td>
<td></td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bilingual Programs</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bilingual Preschool</td>
<td>Part of Morris Community Education, housed in the Morris Area Elementary School building</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESL TREC (Teaching Reading, Empowering Children)</td>
<td>Spanish &amp; English enrichment activities provided by UMM students.</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

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<tr>
<th>Bullying Prevention</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>OLWEUS</td>
<td>K-12 Bullying Prevention provided through the Morris Area School District</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adult Community Engagement</th>
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<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jane Addams</td>
<td>Bilingual community conversation group</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lazos</td>
<td>Latino community advocacy group</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latina Support &amp; Friendship Group</td>
<td>Support and social group for Latina women</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adult ESL (English as a Second Language)</td>
<td>English-language programming provided by Morris Area Community Education, UMM students, and Morris area community members</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Intercultural Strategies**

We found that the Morris Area School District, like many schools, relies heavily on written communication. Teachers viewed the option of having these documents translated into Spanish as a key avenue to overcoming language barriers and building relationships with Spanish-speaking parents. In practice, this strategy was employed primarily by elementary school teachers and was constrained by limited resources (one teacher whose work as translator/interpreter was limited to several hours a week). Upper level educators tended to rely more heavily on oral communication via students themselves. It is also important to note that some teachers were interested in community feedback about the effectiveness of their translated communications.

Teachers in interviews and focus groups overwhelmingly expressed explicit acceptance of multiple perspectives, experiences and worldviews. Some teachers made an intentional effort to include culturally relevant content and explicitly empowering messages. For example, one teacher anticipated that not all students would be familiar with teeter totters and demonstrated how he explained the notion by balancing a ruler on
his finger. This awareness that not all children enter a classroom with similar experiences points toward sensitivity to diversity.

Individual teachers reflected in nuanced ways on their own identities and life experiences. Many expressed an empathetic appreciation for immigrant and minority student experiences that they felt enhanced their teaching. Teachers’ empathetic positions made them aware that some students would not want to feel different from their peers. At the moment, the intercultural awareness of these teachers is not being fostered as a pedagogical practice but rather exists as a personal choice enacted by individual educators.

Other teachers subscribed to a colorblind philosophy, in which teachers attempt to enact equality by avoiding racial/ethnic distinctions. For example one teacher said, “I was raised in a manner that you didn’t ever judge anyone on anything. So, in my opinion, which could be skewed because I don’t really see color when I look at people, I think that as long as they work hard just like everybody else and they learn how to communicate in the United States of America and in our community and they have methods to communicate, they can do whatever they want.” Another teacher asserted that, “I don’t really sort out their racial or ethnic background, a kid’s a kid in my classroom.” Both of these statements emphasize a desire for equality and highlight the teacher’s openness to all students. Teachers miss opportunities to affirm students’ diverse lives, experiences, and worldviews when they focus exclusively on equality.

Teachers expressed uncertainty about which ethnic/racial labels applied to their students and which labels

This comic can be used to illustrate a colorblind philosophy, in which life experiences and parts of students’ identities are not taken into consideration.

supported their desire to speak about students/families in the most appropriate and respectful way. One teacher illustrated this uncertainty wondering, “I think I have one student from Puerto Rico but I guess that would still be considered Latino? I’m not really sure.” These kinds of explicit questions indicate the desire of educators to know more; such willingness creates an opportunity for growth that can be easily supported within the school system.

Educators recognized a variety of factors that would promote or prevent intercultural socializing among students including students’ level of English proficiency, socioeconomic status, length of local residence, and individual personality. Educators also expressed diverse perspectives on whether they observed students socializing across cultural, ethnic, or linguistic boundaries. No matter what they observed, teachers thought those choices “made sense,” indicating recognition of contextual factors at play. Socioeconomic constraints (like access to transportation) and the circumstances of parents’ local employment (such as parental work schedules) were frequently highlighted as factors influencing socialization opportunities and participation in extracurricular activities.

Overall educators believed that Latino parents they’ve come to know in Morris value education. This counters a popular narrative that Latinos (and other minorities) do not “value education” or prioritize academic achievement. One participant highlighted this difference in Morris saying, “some of the other schools that we’ve talked to, that’s kind of their culture - once they [students] hit 17, they’re going to drop out and they’re going to go to work - whereas here the culture seems to be more focused on education. Get a good education, get your classes, get your stuff done. There seems to be that support here.” Morris teachers also felt that Latino parents supported their teaching and discipline styles.
LATINO PARENT STUDY

Principle Investigators: Dr. Cristina (Nina) Ortiz, Dr. Oscar Baldeomar, & Argie Manolis
Student Researchers: Jennifer Guadarrama, Yessica Zuniga-Tepango, Nathan Torrell

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- How do Latino immigrants perceive their reception by the Morris community?
- How do highly educated Mexican immigrants adapt to their new labor conditions of rural Midwest industrial employment?
- How do their families become involved in community and educational systems?
- Given the constraints of visa conditions on spouses (they are often not permitted to acquire employment), how is the mental health of both workers and spouses affected?
- How do parents perceive the effects of long work hours and social class implications of industrial labor on their children?
- How does the immigration experience (particularly in the context of the rural Midwest) impact the identities of parents?
- How do they see the effects of immigration on their children?

METHODOLOGY

This study is longitudinal in nature, taking place from the spring of 2014 to the spring of 2017. Approximately 30 male and 30 female Latino parent participants will respond to both semi-structured interview protocols and survey instruments that address mental health. Initial interviews of around 90 minutes will collect both information about the circumstances of immigration and issues of identity, community, and familial relationships. Subsequent interviews at roughly 6-month intervals will focus on any changes in those same arenas. Researchers will strive to interview both mothers and fathers when possible, although each person in the couple will be interviewed separately when possible.

Researchers invited women to participate in this study at the Latina Support and Friendship Group in Morris. The principle investigators also drew on their personal connections to invite participants. As of August, 2014, 25 interviews with Latina mothers and 5 interviews with Latino fathers had been completed. Transcriptions of interviews are still in progress.

The following findings are preliminary and are based on 13 of the 30 conducted interviews. Of the 13 participants’ interviews analyzed, all were mothers of children who are enrolled in the Morris Area Preschool or Morris Area Elementary School. Only 1 mother interviewed had a child in the Morris Area High School. Conclusions from this data are limited by the small sample size and the fact that parents with high school aged children were not included in the 13 interviews analyzed for this assessment. We believe the themes expressed in these 13 interviews will prove representative of the whole sample as analysis continues. Preliminary themes about families’ reasons for moving to Morris, their general experiences in the community and
with the school, and parents’ identity awareness are outlined in this section.

**FINDINGS**

**Reasons for Moving to Morris**

Three major themes arose for why Latino families decided to move to Morris, MN: employment opportunities, better education for their children, and to avoid the current threats of violence in certain areas in Mexico. Mothers discussed how difficult it can be to find a good-paying job in Mexico, despite having a degree. Often their husbands heard about job opportunities with local industries in Morris through friends from their university or from university faculty members in Mexico. Their husbands usually moved to Morris first, and the rest of the family joined them later. Mothers expressed that they moved to the United States with the hope that their children would have opportunities to learn English and learn about another culture. For some mothers, the insecurity and violence where they were living made them feel like they had no choice but to look for a safer place for their children.

**Experiences in the Community**

Generally, Latino mothers described their experiences living in Morris positively. Although many mothers interviewed moved to Morris from large cities, they described benefits of living in a small community, such as their sense of safety and that their kids can play freely and ride their bikes in town. One parent said, “En el principio fue difícil [adaptarse vivir en Morris] porque no está uno acostumbrado a un pueblo tan pequeño pero es bueno porque hay mucho respeto, la gente es linda, la originalidad de acá...la comunidad de Anglo, la que perdura aquí es amable, linda. Y se acostumbra uno.” (“At first it was difficult [to adapt to living in Morris] because one isn’t used to a town so small, but it’s good because there is a lot of respect. People are nice, those who originated from here...the Anglo community, the people who last here are friendly.” personal translation) When asked what is the most difficult thing to do in Morris, most respondents said communicating in English. Sometimes communication difficulties prevented mothers from doing daily activities in the community alone. The cold climate was cited as the most difficult part of living in Morris, in addition to being so far from family, friends, and Mexican culture.

Mothers described diverse social support networks. First degree relatives (spouses and children) made up an integral part of mothers’ social support network because of the distance from other family members and friends. However, many women described meeting friends in Morris at their children’s school (often their children’s teachers), in their
neighborhoods, at the park, through their husbands’ coworkers, or at the Latina Support and Friendship Group. Many of the mothers interviewed had both European American friends and Latino friends. Three mothers noted their desire for more unity among Latinos in Morris. The Latina Support and Friendship Group was frequently noted as “a savior” for Latina women in the community. It was described as a place where they received support as new community members and that has positively affected their well-being.

Parents who had been living in Morris for more than three years noted that Morris has become a more welcoming place for Latinos as more Latinos move to the area. Nevertheless, mothers did perceive discrimination in the community. While the discrimination they described was rarely verbal and explicit, many respondents noted having experienced overt, negative reactions from employees when shopping in a significant local business in Morris.

Experiences with the School

Education and the Morris Area Schools were described as fundamental reasons Latino families moved to and stay in Morris. Largely, parents expressed satisfaction with the school, its teachers, and its programs. Many shared that a comparable school in Mexico would be very expensive for their children to attend. They expressed appreciation that Morris Area Schools was a public school that any student could attend. The most notable positive comments about the school related to the English as a Learned Language (ELL) program and the accessibility of teachers. Twelve of the 13 mothers whose interviews were analyzed were aware of whether their children received additional English assistance through the ELL program. These parents were pleased that the program exists and can see the academic effects it has had on their children’s English language learning. Parents shared having positive experiences with most of their children’s teachers. They believed their children’s teachers desired to treat each child fairly and provide individual attention.

Some parents have had negative experiences with the school. These experiences included concerns about teachers respecting parental decisions, recognizing ethnic identities or cultural practices, and not resolving conflicts effectively. Future research will seek to better understand these issues.

Communication was a key concern of mothers who were not fluent in English. They noted that the experiences they’ve had with interpreters have been positive, but there is not always an interpreter available when necessary. Often parents must find their own interpreter or use their children to effectively communicate with school personnel. Communication was hindered by the availability and quality of translations, both on paper and online. Unavailable or poor quality translations can be perceived as disrespectful.
Mothers talked about barriers to their children’s participation in extracurricular activities. One of the main barriers was the schedule of activities. Often, activities occur at night when mothers may need to pick up their spouses from work, when their family is having dinner, or when they are attending English classes. Many parents expressed that they would like to see year-round extracurricular activities, instead of seasonal activities as they are now. Soccer was requested as an additional activity. These requests reflect different cultural expectations about afterschool activities. Parents were interpreting schedules, prices, and available activities in comparison to those in Mexico. A couple of parents also noted that cost can be a barrier to participation. Mothers felt they were aware of all the activity options for their children. Most had heard about activities through the activity book sent through the mail by Morris Community Education and Recreation.

Identity Awareness
Race-based bullying or discrimination has occurred on multiple occasions in the school. Some respondents mentioned incidents in which their children were bullied because of race, ethnicity, or social class. One young girl asked her mother, “Why do they say they don’t want to play with me because I’m Mexican?” Almost all parents said they had heard of children experiencing race or ethnicity-based discrimination in the school.

Even though parents want their children to become fluent in English and learn about a new culture, Spanish language and culture preservation was an important goal and challenge for Latino parents. When asked about the most difficult part of living in Morris for their children, many parents said being bicultural. Parents were concerned that their children would lose touch with their Mexican identity as they adapt to American culture. Most parents intend to move back to Mexico (although they don’t know when), so knowing how to read, write, and speak in Spanish and maintaining Mexican culture is of great importance.
PART IV

FROM RESEARCH TO ACTION: RECOMMENDATIONS FOR AN INTERCULTURAL EDUCATION
Introduction to Recommendations

The findings outlined in this document are preliminary (the research began in the fall of 2013 and is still in progress). However, clear themes have emerged from the data we have collected. Based on preliminary conclusions from research, we have identified five short-term recommendations and five long-term recommendations that are intended to:

- Enhance the ability of students and families from diverse backgrounds to form relationships with educators;
- Ensure that all students and families feel heard and understood;
- Empower families to fully utilize Morris Area Schools as a learning environment; and
- Encourage intercultural respect.

Our recommendations mainly focus on improving the school environment to be one that affirms diversity and enhances relationships with parents. However, these recommendations will likely affect students’ learning as well. When students and their parents feel like they belong in a school, are supported as they maneuver complex identities, and sense that teachers understand their cultural backgrounds, they are better equipped to focus on their academic school work.

“...able to say they reached their full potential. I know that’s a daunting task. I think that’s a perfect school.”

Stakeholder Visions

Throughout 2013-2014, we’ve asked partners, educators, and Latino parents and students to draw pictures of how an ideal school would look or what they would like to see as a result of the Morris Intercultural Education Initiative.

Their drawings and excerpts from educators’ and parents’ interviews are included alongside our recommendations.
i. SHORT-TERM RECOMMENDATIONS

Diversity of Community Members/Students is Reflected in the School Environment

Rationale:
In both explicit and implicit ways, the school environment (through things like posters, music, classroom literature, heroes/heroines, organization of schedules, the ways students are lined up, etc.) transmits values. When children do not see their identities and cultures reflected in visual representations, curriculum choices, or customs at school, they can feel that the school does not value them or is not a place where they belong. We know from interviews that Latino parents want their children to maintain their identity as Mexicans while adapting to American culture. Creating school and classroom environments that affirm diversity generally and Latino identity specifically is an opportunity for the school to show that it values Latino students’ complex identities. Implicit depictions of welcoming diverse people and treating all people kindly also supports the explicit messages against bullying that are highly visible around the school buildings.

Current Status:
In a mapping exercise completed by students in Dr. Ortiz’s Seminar in Anthropological Methodology course, student researchers noted that there were a number of Spanish-English bilingual posters and depictions of Mexican culture near the Morris Area Bilingual Preschool pod and near the Spanish classroom, but very few such visual depictions in the rest of the school. Student researchers also conducted a small number of classroom observations and discussed the potential for including more diverse and affirming elements in everyday ways within classrooms.

Next Steps:
Intentionally place positive visuals that match community members’ and students’ racial and ethnic identities, native languages, and cultures around the school. In addition to visual representations, the school can demonstrate that it values diversity by exposing all children to role models, languages, and customs that are diverse. School personnel who would like to work on this issue but are not sure how to proceed or do not have the time to find appropriate resources, may be able to work with UMM faculty and/or students through the Office of Community Engagement to find and access resources specific to their needs and classroom contexts.

“People of all kinds (ages, languages, national origin, etc.) feel welcome, supported, and see themselves reflected in the school environment.”
Strengthening Intentional Relationship Building

Rationale:
Because of cultural differences, Latino parents may perceive behaviors that seem “normal” to parents more familiar with regional culture as rude or unwelcoming. For instance, in Latino culture, a quick hello in a hallway or grocery aisle may be considered rude because it doesn’t lead to further conversation, whereas a parent who was raised in Minnesota will experience this as the norm. All parents want to be heard and understood, but for Latino parents, the barriers to feeling heard and understood can feel insurmountable. Policies that work for parents whose first language is English and who are familiar with the culture of U.S. schools, such as opportunities to make appointments with administrators and teachers, check grades online, speak at school board meetings, and participate in conferences, may not be understood by Latino parents. Even if a parent understands these processes, they may not feel welcomed to make an appointment unless they are sure they will be understood or unless they are explicitly invited.

Current Status:
Lazos worked with the Morris Area School District to provide an orientation specifically for families whose primary language is Spanish in 2013; this orientation will happen again this year. The orientation was geared toward specific cultural differences between education in Mexico and in the U.S. and provided parents with some initial information about the school in Spanish, as well as an opportunity to meet administrators. In addition, high school principal Mr. Peterson and other school staff have met with the Latina Support and Friendship group to get to know mothers in a safe and supportive setting. Preliminary data and anecdotal evidence point to the positive reception of these efforts among Latino parents.

Next steps:
All of our short and long-term recommendations relate to the goal of building relationships intentionally and continually, rather than viewing relationship building as a one-time responsibility that happens at the first point of contact or at specific events like orientations and conferences. In the meantime, school staff can
make small efforts that will go a long way. For instance, when Latino parents are in the school building, or when running into a parent in the community, take the time to shake hands, make eye contact, and have a short conversation. We encourage school personnel to continue making visits to the Latina Support and Friendship Group and to continue to look for opportunities to empower Spanish-speaking parents to understand and participate in the Morris Area Schools. In addition, there should be an option to leave a message in Spanish when calling the school.

**Latino Parent Advisory Board**

**Rationale:**
In English we have a saying that, “The squeaky wheel gets the grease.” In a context of scarce time and resources, this can mean that it is easy to hear only the voices of the people who happen to be loudest or nearest. A Latino Parent Advisory Board would provide a mechanism by which diverse voices from the Latino community can be heard and have input as parents. Although we often discuss “the Latino community” as a single entity, a Parent Advisory Board is an explicit recognition that there is intra-community diversity and that not all Latino parents will have the same experiences, ideas, concerns, or familiarity with the school system. It is important that an advisory board be diverse in a variety of ways: profession, education levels, gender, length of time in the US, language proficiency, current involvement/visibility at school events, and ages of children. An advisory group also provides a safe and welcoming context for Latino parents to address questions or concerns they might have about the school without fear that they might not be understood (especially in the context of public meetings where information is being interpreted into Spanish, parents can feel like their questions will take too much time to answer or that their questions won’t be correctly understood).

**Current Status:**
Students in the Spring 2014 Latinos in the Midwest course researched examples and best practices for Latino Parent Advisory groups. A summary of their findings is provided in Appendix B.

**Next Steps:**
Because there are a number of possible options, it will be important to decide on a specific structure in or-
In order to constitute a successful and durable group. School stakeholders can work with the VISTA to formalize an action plan and capitalize on relationships established in the 2013-2014 school year to recruit/invite advisory board participants and begin convening meetings in the fall of 2014. Recruitment should be intentional and will need to include explanations about what an advisory board is, what members’ roles are, and why we are asking specific community members to participate. This element of clarity about roles and expectations is particularly important in a context where some potential board members have little or no experience with the concept of an advisory board or may doubt their ability to contribute because they are not experts in issues of education. It will be important to consider cultural norms for meetings with an awareness that these vary cross-culturally. Examples of key considerations include: beginning with an opportunity to socialize, serving food, providing childcare, and considering meeting time and location.

**Intentionally Build a Parent Volunteer System**

**Rationale:**
The Latino community in Morris is unique in that only one parent in two-parent families is usually eligible for work in the U.S., based on current visa policies. Most Latinas in Morris are highly educated, and all are committed to their children’s education. They bring incredible assets: cultural understanding, language skills, and specific professional skills. Parents may not know that volunteering opportunities are available. Some parents who had volunteered were disappointed because their skills were not fully utilized or their efforts did not seem to be appreciated.

**Current Status:**
Five Latino parents and 20 total parents volunteered in the last year at the Morris Area Elementary School, but there is no list of potential parent volunteers with specific interests or skills available.

**Next Steps:**
Building a volunteer system includes multiple steps. See Appendix E for details.

**Interpreter/Translator Training and Contact System**

**Rationale:**
Currently, the system for getting an interpreter is very informal and relies primarily on a single stakeholder as a point of access. There is no systematic way to identify interpreters or their availability, ensure that they understand their ethical obligations, the school system or the language at a level appropriate for their specific task. This situation presents some serious risks for all involved including: confidentiality, conflicts-of-interest, quality of communication, unreliable access to interpreters, and misunderstanding by both Spanish-speaking parents and educators about whether interpretation will be available. In some cases, particularly with older students, teachers rely primarily on students themselves to communicate with their parents,
which can also be risky. At a minimum, the current situation is problematic and at worst it opens the school to allegations of discrimination or misconduct. The creation of a system for identifying and accessing appropriate and available interpreters/translators would minimize these risks as well as provide an infrastructure for future possible changes in the local population (for example, an influx of people who speak another language could easily be accommodated within an existing process). Additionally, participation in a more formal system of interpreters/translators can also serve as a mechanism for some volunteers to advance into other professional positions such as bilingual para-educators with their highly desirable skills.

Current Status:
Based on the interest and support expressed by various stakeholders including Lazos, Spanish-speaking community members/volunteers, and school personnel, Dr. Ortiz and Argie Manolis have initiated a meeting with Community Education Director Tony Reimers to plan a Fall 2014 initial training for interpreters/translators. Such training can then be used by the school to identify appropriate and available interpreters/translators for specific needs. Training will include not only best practices and skills for interpreting and translating but also address issues of confidentiality with particular attention to the context of a small community like Morris.

Next Steps:
Institute, invest in, and support regular training for all interpreters/translators (both new experienced volunteers). Keep the information about trained and available volunteers up-to-date. Make regular use of the process for identifying interpreters/translators. Ensure that all school personnel understand and use the process for accessing interpreters/translators. Ensure that all communication is available in both Spanish and English (especially those that can seem more informal like greeting parents at an open-house event or explaining classroom procedures). See Appendix E for best practices for volunteer management.

“Parents feel comfortable if they need to come in and talk, they can. Good communication.”
ii. LONG-TERM RECOMMENDATIONS

Cultural Liaison

Rationale:
Given the recommendations included in this report and the amount of coordination, action, and resource-seeking that they entail, it seems prudent to create a full-time position at the Morris Area School District that would have as their primary duties fulfilling these functions. Many schools around the country and some schools in Minnesota employ liaisons. A liaison incorporates a variety of duties including: advocacy, translating/interpreting, cultural brokering, education, supporting and problem-solving with educators or other school personnel, and cultivating and maintaining relationships with community members (by doing things like attending baby showers, church services, informal soccer games, book clubs). The most effective cultural liaisons are ones that can be hired long-term, so that trust and relationships can be established. Having an official position established to fulfill these duties is necessary in order to be proactive about providing the best educational experiences not only for Latino students and their families but also for non-Latino students and families.

Current Status:
Students in the Spring 2014 Anthropology of Education course researched models and best practices for liaison positions. A summary of their findings is provided in Appendix D.

Next Steps:
The VISTA will work with the Morris Intercultural Education Initiative leadership team (described on page 48) to seek funding for a liaison position and move towards filling the position once it has been established. Strategic planning with community partners will need to take place in order for this position to be a success. The leadership team should consider the location of the liaison’s office, to whom the liaison will report, the job description, and how the liaison will connect with other faculty and staff, as well as with Latino families.

Ensure Diversity is Part of Professional Development at All Staffing Levels (from Building Services Personnel to Administration)

Rationale:
The data collected indicate that there are some misunderstandings between school staff, parents, and children based on cultural differences. High quality professional development that focuses on bridging cultural differences and ensuring that individuals and school culture overall are welcoming and affirming is an important part of demonstrating an institutional commitment. Given the school’s commitment to proactively dealing with bullying, training that addresses how teachers can effectively approach ethnic and class-based discrimination would complement existing efforts.

Current Status:
In 2014, Pre-K staff participated in a six hour training provided by UMM staff and community members famil-
iv. From Research to Action: Recommendations for an Intercultural Education

There is no racism. There is no bullying. Everybody has the opportunity to learn, have a school full of great teachers...The opportunities for all kids are the same.

A systematic approach to intercultural training should be developed by the leadership team (described on page 48). This should include the following considerations:

Topics and Trainers:
What topics ought to be covered, based on data in this report and concerns expressed by educators and parents? Who is available to provide training on these topics in the Morris area, region, and state? This would include people with expertise on the topics and experience facilitating trainings, as well as members of the Latino community interested in sharing personal experiences as part of the training.

Availability and format of trainings:
When is the best time to provide such trainings in small or large group settings? What trainings can be provided through technologies that don’t require face-to-face interactions between trainer and trainee? What resources should the school have on hand for teachers to access to answer their own questions and educate themselves? Getting more feedback from educators about these and other similar questions is important.

Thinking outside the box:
It is tempting to plug in a two hour training at a time when educators are used to receiving training. But, there are many ways to provide support, including classroom observations and consultations, providing funding to a small group of teachers to attend conferences and share what they learned with their peers, webinars, etc. Considering all the ways training could be viewed as ongoing and dynamic is important.

Funding:
Good training is not always available for free. Resources will be needed to provide compensation to trainers, pay for travel to trainings, and pay for technologies needed to make training available. Having a clear vision and requesting funding from private donors or grants will be an important part of this process.
Institutional Commitment to Providing High-Quality Translations of All School Communications (Including Website and Digital Material)

Rationale:
Through interviews with educators and Latino parents, we know that currently not all written communication is translated and that what is being translated is not always high quality. While this is a logistical challenge, it can also be interpreted by Latino community members as discriminatory or disrespectful. High quality communication includes an awareness that translation is complex and involves cultural brokering or cultural explanations. For example, a parent who is familiar with local culture will understand a tradition like pajama day, but for parents who are less familiar with American culture, this might require more explanation.

Current Status:
Presently, one teacher is expected to do all translations for the school district as an assigned duty for a few hours per week, which is not enough time to effectively complete this task. A preliminary plan is in place to conduct a training for potential interpreters and translators in the fall of 2014. Attendees at this training will complete self-assessments of their language abilities so that the school will be able to contact volunteers whose abilities match the particular translating/interpreting needs.

Next Steps:
School policy should be that all communication be accessible in Spanish and English. Resources need to be allocated so that all the documents can be effectively translated. Interpreter and translator training is listed as a short-term recommendation in this assessment. Once available translators are identified, others will be able to assist the current assigned translator/educator with the large workload. Translators on this list will also serve as resources for each other when they have documents that are difficult to translate. In the future, a cultural liaison can also provide and help coordinate translating/interpreting services in the school.

Increased Promotion and Better Communication Among Service Providers

Rationale:
Several times in the studies, it became clear that parents and educators were not aware of all the services available to Latino families. There are many assets in the community, but at times they seem to provide duplicate services, or the process for connecting to them is not clear. For instance, ESL classes are provided for adults four days of the week in Morris in a variety of locations, and in most cases, corresponding literacy services are provided for children at the same time, but the school does not have access to a comprehensive list of these opportunities to share with parents who make contact with the school. There is currently no comprehensive list of how a family can...
qualify for particular resources or services. Additionally, parents do not always have the ability to connect with these resources without the assistance of an advocate or a translator/interpreter.

**Current status:**
Parents seem to learn about community opportunities and resources primarily through their peers; many noted that they learned about these opportunities through the Latina Support and Friendship group, from other families who had been in the area longer, or through their employer or coworkers.

**Next steps:**
School staff and other service providers should continue to connect with peer support networks like the Latina Support and Friendship group. A comprehensive list of services, including up-to-date contact information, should be developed by the Morris Intercultural Education Initiative leadership team and be available at every point of contact a Latino might make with a service provider. This list should go beyond educational services and include healthcare, social services, food assistance, financial services, religious organizations, legal services, and community organizations. In addition, the school’s liaison, when he or she is hired, should connect with service providers to advocate for families in need of services.

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**Latino Youth Group**

**Rationale:**
Latino students are a historically underrepresented and disadvantaged social group in the U.S. Research on the so-called “achievement gap” also indicates that Latino students face particular social experiences that put them at risk of not completing their high-school education or of poor performance in the US school system generally. As such, it is particularly important to support these students, affirm their identities, support their language skills in both Spanish and English, and recognize their unique contributions to the school environment. A Latino Youth Group can contribute to minimizing these risks and support parents in affirming their children’s bicultural, bilingual identities.

**Current Status:**
Students in the Spring 2014 Latinos in the Midwest course researched models and best practices for Latino Youth Groups. A summary of their findings is provided in Appendix C.

**Next Steps:**
Identify and recruit effective leadership for such a group, possibly employing a co-leadership model with a Latino parent and an educator working together. Recruit student participants and, with their input, identify appropriate activities. Recognize and affirm their activities with the presence/participation of school personnel and/or media when appropriate. Identify appropriate funding sources to support group activities.
iii. FIRST ACTION STEPS

Institute Regular Meetings with a Leadership Team for the Morris Intercultural Education Initiative

Rationale:
A leadership team for the Morris Intercultural Education Initiative is necessary based on the scope of the goals outlined in this recommendation section. A number of community partners already have large stakes in this project, but the current communication among partners has been limited to a few introductory meetings. A leadership team will make it possible to clearly define roles and responsibilities and will improve communication among stakeholders.

Current Status:
A current roster of stakeholders in the Morris Intercultural Education Initiative can be found in Appendix A of this assessment. These stakeholders have already shown leadership and interest in being involved in this initiative. Argie Manolis, UMM Office of Community Engagement Coordinator, and Keni Zenner, Minnesota Literacy Council first-year VISTA, have met with all stakeholders listed in Appendix A at least individually, but all stakeholders have never been in the same room working together to achieve their common goal.

Next Steps:
Select representatives from the stakeholder roster to attend monthly strategic planning meetings for the Morris Intercultural Education Initiative. In addition to individuals on the stakeholder roster, the leadership team should include additional educators from Morris Area Schools and Latino parent representatives. Define roles among the leadership team at a first meeting and leave each meeting with action items.
Strategic Planning (Fundraising, Grant Writing, etc.) to Achieve Goals

Rationale:
Strategic planning will be an essential short-term goal in order to achieve the long-term goals recommended in the section below. Just because they are listed as long-term goals does not make them any less urgent than the short-term goals. The main reason they are long-term is because they require funding and progress on achieving them is currently less advanced than the goals listed in this short-term section.

Current Status:
This community needs and assets assessment and all the research that was completed in order to develop it serve as a base for future strategic planning. As noted in this assessment, two service-learning courses have already begun strategic planning for three of the recommendations noted in this report including a cultural liaison, a Latino parent advisory board, and a Latino youth group. Best practices and examples of cultural liaisons, Latino parent advisory boards, and Latino youth groups are included in appendices B, C, and D.

Next Steps:
Over the next two years (2014-2016), a Minnesota Literacy Council VISTA will work with community partners to prioritize next steps for the Morris Intercultural Education Initiative. Once steps are prioritized, it will be important to clearly define the roles of community partners and who is responsible for each action item necessary to achieve a goal. We recommend that strategic planning with partners occurs on a regular basis and priorities be reassessed regularly. Assessment of whether we are achieving our goals will be an additional important step in the strategic planning process.
PART V

APPENDICES
## APPENDIX A: INITIATIVE ROSTER

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Email Address</th>
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<tbody>
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### Lazos (continued)

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### Morris Area Community Education & Recreation

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### Minnesota Literacy Council

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### Latina Support and Friendship Group

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APPENDIX B: BEST PRACTICES FOR LATINO PARENT ADVISORY BOARD

The following best practices for parent advisory boards were researched and compiled by students in Dr. Cristina (Nina) Ortiz’s Latinos in the Midwest anthropology course during the Spring 2014 semester.

Best Practices for Parent Advisory Board

- Be composed of diverse parent representatives (in terms of social class, educational experience, length of local residence, English ability, etc.).
- Meet regularly (monthly) with school administrators, school board members, and other relevant staff.
- Promote better communication and understanding between school district officials and members of the Hispanic community by discussing a variety of topics and sharing information.
- Serve as a forum to express concerns and make recommendations pertaining to the education of Spanish-speaking students.
- Inform parents about the school district and its practices/policies so they can participate in their children's education.
- Advise school administrators about how to increase parent involvement and eliminate achievement gaps for Latino students.

Some examples:

Hispanic Parent Advisory Committee- McMinnville School District, Oregon
http://www.msd.k12.or.us/node/7443

Minority Student Achievement Advisory Committee (MSAAC)- Ashburn, Virginia
http://www.lcps.org/Page/1494

Latino Consent Decree Parent Advisory Committee (LCD PAC)- St. Paul
http://mll.spps.org/lcd_pac

A grantee of the Kellogg Foundation- A Spanish-speaking PTA model

The PTA Comunitario Model was created by the Intercultural Development Research Association. Photo retrieved from http://www.wkkf.org/what-we-do/featured-work/reaching-families-and-inspiring-leadership
LATINO PARENT ADVISORY BOARD IDEAS
AUTHORS: KAELYN OLSON, BRENAND STERMER, MICHAEL KURTZ, ALEX REGEIMBAL, SHELBY SPRY, CORY SCHROEDER, BRIDGE MCKYE, & BRIDGETT KARELS

Recruitment (who, how, when?)
Recruit face-to-face as much as possible, though initial meeting may start with phone calls or other forms of communication.

Post all recruitment flyers and informational material in both English and Spanish.

Be up-front and honest about time commitment for board membership.

Utilize social media sites (ex. Facebook) to spread information regarding upcoming meetings and goals. All information should be paired with another form of communication, such as letters or phone calls.

Ensure participants are not excluded from meetings by having potential board members decide meeting times.

Ensure that membership is as diverse as possible.

Meeting Structure
Meet in a space where participants feel welcome to discuss the school district freely.

Conduct meetings bilingually and always have someone who is able to interpret present.

Meet regularly. Frequency and timing of meetings will need to be determined and set by the parents themselves.

Structure and facilitate meetings so those who show up feel like their time is spent valuably. Have a set meeting agenda.

Record meeting minutes and topics so people who miss or want to gain access to material have it easily accessible.

Conduct both open and closed meetings, depending on the agenda.

Ensure that the board is not overlapping tasks/projects with existing organizations or groups in the school/community.

Facilitate some fun activities in place of meetings, like bowling or cookouts to encourage relationship-building.

Goals (projects, things the board should focus on/accomplish?)
Increase communication between the school and all Latinos.

Promote dialogue about expectations of both the school and Latino parents. Clarify misunderstandings.

Empower Latino parents to better understand the Morris school and American school system in general.

Provide opportunities for educators to learn more about Latino culture and the experiences of Latinos in Morris.

Create a website/reading material in order to:
- inform the general public of the board's function;
- allow members who missed a meeting to be up-to-date on the board's activity; and
- make information accessible for people interested in events or joining the board.

Advisory Board Structure
Be flexible about board structure. Preferences of the members should be discussed at the first meeting.

Include a position to ensure effective communication between advisory board and MASD school administration.

Create committees that are under the main board so all parents can participate on different levels.

Allow members to vote for the board leaders.
Students from Dr. Cristina (Nina) Ortiz’s Latinos in the Midwest Anthropology course in the Spring 2014 semester wrote the following report for creating and sustaining a student group for Latino youth.

**Morris Area High School Latino Cultural Group**

**Abstract:**
Following research during the Fall of 2013, we have identified the benefit a Latino cultural student group at the Morris Area High School can provide. Empirical evidence shows that students involved in extracurricular, engaging, and meaningful activity perform better academically, build greater social capital, and experience greater social mobility. The function of the proposed group is to bridge cultural barriers, expand Spanish language competency among Latino and Anglo participants, explore pan-ethnic identities, and to provide a venue for Latino and Anglo students to gain meaningful experience in co-leadership, community engagement, and cultural understanding.

**Introduction**
Demographics in Western Minnesota are rapidly changing; these changes will affect area schools. Rural populations are rapidly aging. However, this decline is offset by two factors: the brain-gain phenomenon of 30-40 year olds returning to rural communities, and by the influx of immigrant populations. From 2000 to 2010, the Latino population in Stevens County, MN rose by 274%. The Latino population is expected to continue growing as families settle and begin to raise families. Due to cultural, linguistic, and social differences, it is often hard to foster communication and integration between Anglos and Latinos. While the community has made great advances in reaching out to Latino immigrants, barriers still exist to
constructive integration. The public school can serve as a vehicle to facilitate constructive intercultural communication and learning. Thus, we propose the following high school Latino Cultural Group that address these phenomena in various capacities.

Cultivate and Recruitment
In terms of cultivating community interest and awareness of the Latino student group, that process should begin widespread and ample in order to achieve maximum attention—posters, t-shirts, billboards, signs, informal information sessions, flyers, tabling information at various businesses/activities around town, etc. could be utilized in order to familiarize the Morris area local community members with the group’s presence and purpose. Furthermore, through these informational outlets the mission, intentions, and purpose of the Latino student group should be loosely outlined in order to account for critiques, improvements, and suggestions that could be given by the Morris area local community members. While there certainly needs to be some kind of group purpose, mission statement, and format, it is equally important that the Morris area community members feel they are able to incorporate their own opinions and suggestions into the group’s function—their needs are the ones that really matter. After all, the Latino student group is meant to operate based on the needs and wants of the Morris area community members—specifically the Latino student high school population.

During preliminary outreach efforts, there needs to be some kind of organized contact coordination between local community members and the coordinators of the Latino student group. We can consider a student registration form and an email compilation of the interested community members. Ultimately, creating intimate contacts with the local area community members is essential because it will allow for open communication between the both the coordinators of the Latino student group and the interested local community members. Open and continual communication is critical for both the longevity and the function of the Latino student group.

Next off, based on the interest expressed by the Morris area local community members (evident through the collected contacts and the registered students), coordinators can begin networking with community members in order to establish group goals, missions, intentions, and responsibilities. While also, recruiting and identifying the dedicated community members and/or students who are interested in being more involved with the group’s active functions. The key with this step is that coordinators for the Latino student group are diligent in contacting the interested community members and genuinely concerned in recognizing why and what the local community members are suggesting and recommending.

The “Proud of my Identity” Youth Group in Cold Spring, MN is led by two interns from the College of St. Benedict.

Photo retrieved from http://www.mycasagmc.net/youth-programs
Based on the level of commitment, availability, and dedication of these interested community members, the Latino student group can begin establishing what the individual responsibilities are for each member/participant. What are the goals? What are the community needs and opinions? What is the group’s mission statement?

As a whole, the coordinators of the Latino student group should be engaged in creating and promoting thoughtful discussion between the local community members. Find out what will ensure their committed involvement? When and how much are they willing to contribute? Do they have a dedicated preparedness to serve? Also -once again- logistically speaking, early communications should start off informal (over the phone, email, text messaging, etc.), but as communication develops, communication should become significantly more personal (one-on-one meetings, in-person conversation). The interested community members, participants, and group coordinators should meet as a group, perhaps several times a week if need be. Coordinators should formulate meeting times and frequency based on the willingness and involvement of its members. And once that is established, there needs to be consistent reminders and expectations of each participant otherwise the group’s longevity and function will suffer.

**Leadership**

Good leadership is critical to promoting prolonged involvement and to successful student-led initiatives. Students benefit from the leadership experience. Furthermore, a sense of ownership and autonomy fosters success; the students are accountable for their own successes and failures. Contingent on a substantial level of student involvement, we suggest a semi-formal leadership structure with student elections. We first and foremost suggest a group of core leadership:

**Co-chairs:**
These students are considered co-leaders of the organization. They are the voice representing the group. These students meet with administration and coordinate community outreach. These students direct meetings and guide conversation. They will work most directly with a faculty adviser as they develop programming. The co-chairs marshal information and tasks to students.

**Treasurer:**
The treasurer maintains and manages the group’s financial assets. As the school will likely be the group’s fiscal agent, this student will also gain valuable experience and knowledge forming a budget and planning possible expenses. The treasurer also contributes directly by helping to plan to direct fundraising initiatives.

**Secretary:**
The secretary keeps minutes and tracks progress.

This core leadership will lead meetings and will work directly with faculty mentor. We also suggest that the core leadership meet and work with a UMM student. The student will act as a “youth mentor” leading the students through different cultural activities. The student offers an unique perspective and can serve as a positive role model from the college setting. This presents a constructive partnership between the college and the High School. We believe that such a connection can offer immense benefit to students.

Elections will be held every year to rotate leadership.
Assessment and Evaluation

Exceptional student groups are results-oriented. The group will need to assess progress towards the group’s established mission and evaluate performance of major programs and services. Every semester, the UMM student will work with the core leadership to assess progress. The students will answer the following questions:

- What is average weekly attendance?
- How are other participants?
  - Are they engaged? Are they benefiting from involvement?
  - Disposition towards current programming?
  - What do other participants want to do?
- What cultural topics have you covered over the semester?
- What have you learned? What issues have you learned about? What can you take from this semester?
- What major community events have you completed?
  - What was attendance?
  - Financials?
  - Results? -- how was the public reception?
- What major events do you have planned for the following semester?
  - How will you use momentum from this semester and carry forward?
  - What challenges stand in your way for future programming?
- What would you like to see at the end of the year?
  - What accomplishments -- topics covered, events, trips etc.. -- barriers to overcome?
- Do we need to do fundraising to meet objectives?
  - If yes, engage in financial planning meeting.
- Whose help do we need to advance programming?
  - Key players?
Throughout the semester, the UMM student and faculty adviser will serve as counselors, providing insight and resources to the group. These advisers should identify issues before they expand; by meeting with students regularly, they can help mitigate these issues as they arise. Their role is fundamental as they guide core leadership through self assessment.

**Involvement**

Involvement of members is something that the group should hold as a top priority. Enthusiastic involvement will ensure success and perpetuation of the group in the future. This could be promoted by keeping strong ties with the university and community to ensure that the students feel as though the group is worthwhile. Students will only be motivated to spend time and involvement in a group if a positive and laid-back atmosphere.

It would be worth outlining specific responsibilities and expectations of members to keep students prepared. Effectively delegating responsibilities for event planning and group organization is crucial. Unclear and unorganized leadership will result in a lack of involvement and group success.

Examples of involvement:
- Cultural event
- Movie showing
- Fundraising
- Group Trip
- Discussion

**Orient**

New board members should be oriented into the group by a representative of the group. This person should know the mission, goals, and guidelines of the Student Advisory board. If the new board member is taking a specific role in the group he/she should be oriented by the person who is currently in that position. For example if there is a new person taking the treasurers position the current treasurer should orient the new board member.

Things that all board members should know or be aware of:
- Current issues pertaining the group
- Leaders
- Groups history
- Finances
- Organization within the group
- Key staff members
- Mission statement
- Responsibilities of board members
- Rule guidelines/rules
- Meeting times
- Structure of the meetings

New board members should be oriented prior to joining the group. They should be oriented on the issues/topics listed above.
Identify and Educate
Although these issues can all be addressed within the group itself, there are some issues that the school administration will need to investigate before the creation of the group. This includes identification tasks, such as: the specific needs of the Latino students, what is currently available for Latino students, what additional amenities could the Latino students benefit from, and what students would serve as good leaders or mentors for the group. The school will also have to address how to educate students on the issues that administration identifies. Before the group is created, the school administrators will need to develop these issues so that the group will be best served and useful to the school community.

Additional Resources
A pdf brochure about starting and sustaining a diversity club for high school students:

Latino club in Las Vegas school:
http://www.fronterasdesk.org/content/latino-gap-clubs-model-encourage-educational-achievement

Latino Youth Group in Cold Spring, MN (near St. Cloud):
http://www.mycasagmc.net/

Photo retrieved from http://seattletimes.com/html/localnews/2004399964_osbaldo08e.html
APPENDIX D: BEST PRACTICES FOR CULTURAL LIAISONS IN SCHOOLS

The following list of best practices for cultural liaisons in schools was researched and compiled by students in Dr. Cristina (Nina) Ortiz’s Anthropology of Education students during the Spring 2014 semester.

Best practices for Liaison

- Develop preventative plans that reduce roadblocks for student success.
- Not take over duties for teachers but rather support them with translation/interpretation and cultural brokering.
- Support school personnel in creating a welcoming & diverse school environment.
- Create awareness events about culture and identity for the school and community members.
- Assist staff in understanding cultural norms and practices in order to engage families and increase student achievement.
- Be instrumental in bringing together diverse stakeholders to exchange ideas and gather input.
- Establish personal relationships with Latino parents & students and establish a presence in the Latino community.
- Be in contact with Spanish-speaking parents and students in a variety of methods (face-to-face, by phone, in writing).
- Understand local, state, and federal education policies, procedures, and programs.

Students from the Anthropology of Education course researched schools in greater Minnesota with large Latino student populations to gain an understanding of who has cultural liaisons, how they are funded, and how they are being utilized in schools. The table on the following page summarizes some of their findings. Two sample job descriptions found by Dr. Ortiz’s students are also included.
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Monroe Public Schools
Job Description

Source: http://www.monroe.wednet.edu/PERSONNEL/JOB%20DESCRIPTIONS/PSE/HispanicLiaison.pdf

TITLE: Hispanic Liaison

REPORTS TO: Assistant Director for Instructional Programs

POSITION SUMMARY:
The position of Hispanic Liaison has three components: 1) Contact person for parents and the community at large as the intermediary between parents with issues/concerns and the district and 2) be available district-wide for individual staff and family issues as referred by building/district administrators; and 3) Migrant coordinator to identify students who qualify for migrant status and to support families in their transition into the community.

PREFERRED QUALIFICATIONS:
1. High school graduate
2. Associate degree or two years of college

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS & ABILITIES
• Word processing and database skills with the ability to maintain accurate information in electronic databases
• Written and oral communication skills with proficiency in both Spanish and English required
• Organizational and management skills with the ability to work independently
• Positive human relations’ skills working with students, parents, staff, and other adults.
• Experience working with a variety of school and community groups.
• Ability to work independently, in the community and in the public school setting, with students and parents/guardians from different heritages and cultures.

ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS:
• Ability to write legibly and speak clearly in Spanish and English.
• Ability to work at a computer, use the telephone and other office machines.
• Ability to drive personal or District automobile or van.

Reasonable accommodation may be made to enable a person with a disability to perform the essential functions of the job.
POSITION RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Establish ongoing written and oral communication with Hispanic families in the district.
- Continue community outreach activities and maintain connections with the Hispanic community (including parent groups, medical and dental health providers, and other available services.)
- Act as the contact person between parents and the district when concerns or questions arise. Attend evening meetings with parents as directed by district administration.
- Enroll qualified students in the Migrant Registry, coordinate information with the Migrant Registry and maintain enrollment records.
- Monitor currently qualified migrant students in the district to verify migrant status.
- Respond to registration information that a student potentially qualifies for the migrant program by contacting families.
- Maintain accurate records and coordinate information with migrant records clerk to ensure accuracy of migrant status in Skyward.
- Other duties as assigned by the Superintendent and/or his/her designee.

EMPLOYMENT CONDITIONS:

This position is that of Hispanic Liaison and is represented by the PSE collective bargaining unit.

This position will work a 215-day schedule, with a number of predetermined hours to be held for meetings outside the regularly scheduled work-day (parent meetings, registration, discipline meetings, etc.) The work calendar must include the two weeks before school begins in September. Ability to work at a variety of times and dates based on an approved work calendar is required. The work schedule, however, will be designed to be flexible to allow for peak times, nights, weekend, and summer activities. Salary and benefits as determined by the current collective bargaining agreement.

EVALUATION PROCEDURES:

Performance shall be evaluated annually according to Board and administrative policies and procedures.
Cultural Liaisons serve as on-staff interpreters for the Hmong and Spanish speaking families in our school district. They are able to build long-term relationships with our culturally diverse families resulting in more parent involvement and student success. The Liaisons work district-wide and can be accessed by school staff or parents at any time for academic issues.

Requests will generally be prioritized in the following order given the situation:

**Communication**
- Translations of critical and time sensitive communications.
- Make phone calls to non-English speaking Hmong & Hispanic families on re-occurring academic, missing school work, attendance, health, lunch accounts, field trips or behavior issues only after school staff have 1st called themselves using the AT&T Language Line and made reasonable efforts to communicate with the family

**Family Services**
- Be a resource to school staff about working with students and families from other cultures
- Help families fill out school paperwork: School Registration, Immunizations, Free & Reduced Lunch, Transportation, Scholarships, Targeted Services, Summer School, etc.
- Title I and ELL communication, paperwork, and arrange family events
- Parent-Teacher Conferences: pre-arranged with families & liaisons. Time priority for these events will be given to the schools with higher language diversity.
- Make home visits only as an interpreter for school staff who are doing the home visit
- Open Houses & Orientations: If staff time is available and only if extra outreach efforts have been done to encourage bi-lingual families to attend. Time priority for these events will be given to the schools with higher language diversity.

**Building Responsibilities**
- Interpret for Early Childhood Screening and ECSE assessments
- Interpret for MCA & BST Testing

**Special Education**
- Interpret for Special Ed Screenings, IEP meetings, other parent meetings and paperwork

**What Liaisons are NOT to be used for:**
- Tutoring students in the mainstream classroom (role of an ELL Para)
- Provide transportation for students and families
- Liaison may interpret for staff when communicating with non-English speaking students and parents, however, Liaisons do not do other staff’s job duties just because there is a language barrier.
- Interpret for Social Events, Social Services, Law Enforcement, Sports or non-academic issues.
APPENDIX E: BEST PRACTICES FOR VOLUNTEER MANAGEMENT

Recruitment:
Parents must be intentionally sought out and welcomed as volunteers. This should happen multiple times and in multiple ways. Some schools even have a room dedicated to volunteer space so that parent volunteers have a place to put their things and work on some of the projects they may be helping with. Parents should be encouraged to volunteer in one-on-one conversations that demonstrate school staff recognize a parent’s skills and commitment. Once a volunteer system is in place, volunteers can be encouraged to recruit their friends and colleagues. Volunteer forms (in both English and Spanish) should be widely available in the school building and distributed at orientations, open houses, and at other times parents are in the building. These forms should include both specific volunteer roles that already exist and an opportunity for parents to note skills and ideas they have for ways they could support the school. They should also include specific questions about when parents are available and when and how they would prefer to be contacted. There should be a clear place where parents can drop off these forms, and if they prefer to talk about their interests rather than write them down, there should be a way to complete the form in a conversation. A process that matches volunteer skills and teachers’ needs will support broader use of community volunteers.

Preparation:
Once a parent has signed on as a volunteer, it’s important for him or her to receive some official preparation for the task of volunteering. This preparation should include a conversation about expectations on both ends. Information about confidentiality, school policies and practices, how many hours a week the parent wishes to volunteer, etc. should be covered in a one-on-one or small group meeting and collected in writing. In addition to going over this information in person, providing a volunteer packet in writing (in both English and Spanish) with contact information for key people in the district is important. Finally, when parents sign on to a regular volunteer placement—for instance, if they will be reading to children each week for an hour—they should receive some more specific training for that task, as well as provided with the contact information for the school staff who will be directly supervising them.

Record keeping:
A database of people who have completed a pre-volunteer orientation should be developed and include interests, skills, and times available. School staff interested in meeting a specific, one-time need, as well as those who are looking for more regular volunteers, will have a place to start. The database should include a way to keep a record of when volunteers have been contacted, by whom, for what purpose, and with what outcome. This way, the same volunteer will not be contacted multiple times a week, and volunteers who have signed on for ongoing volunteer opportunities will not be overtasked. Also, a system like this will ensure that all potential volunteers are contacted within a month of offering to be of service. The database should also include data about the number of hours volunteers have committed to the school. These data are important both for grant writing and volunteer recognition.

Volunteer recognition:
Volunteer recognition is multi-faceted. Be sure to thank volunteers at each point of contact in a culturally appropriate way—i.e., after they have completed the volunteer form, after the initial meeting, each time they agree to take on a task, and each time they complete a task. Volunteers will keep coming back if they feel
Providing ongoing opportunities for volunteers to meet one another and build community—as well as to provide feedback—is another form of recognition. A volunteer luncheon, even just twice each year, will provide volunteers with opportunities to share with each other what they have been doing and discuss the volunteer system.

An end-of-year recognition event at which volunteers receive certificates that include the number of hours they contributed is important. If this event can be covered by local media, it will encourage more parents to get involved and demonstrate to the community that the district appreciates volunteers. Those who are in the U.S. temporarily and do not have the opportunity to work will be able to use documentation like this to show they remained engaged with their community and have developed marketable skills when they are seeking paid employment again.
## APPENDIX F: BILINGUAL PROGRAMS AND RESOURCES IN MORRIS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>What</th>
<th>When</th>
<th>For more information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Community ESL Program</strong></td>
<td>The Community ESL Program provides quality English language classes to new Latino immigrants. The program offers 6 levels of English classes, and an average of 65 adults attended the Community ESL Program during the Monday and Thursday night classes at UMM for the Fall 2013 semester. All classes are taught by Morris community members or UMM students.</td>
<td>Monday and Thursday classes are at UMM from 7:30-9:00 pm – Imholte Hall, UMM (during the university school year).</td>
<td>E-mail Argie Manolis at <a href="mailto:engagmnt@morris.umn.edu">engagmnt@morris.umn.edu</a>. You can also visit the Facebook page called Morris Community ESL.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Morris Community Ed and Recreation ESL Classes</strong></td>
<td>Classes are for adults who do not speak English as a first language and who want to improve their speaking, reading, spelling, or writing skills. Classes are open, so students are welcome to come during the session when it is most convenient. Tutors are available to work with children who come with their parents.</td>
<td>Wednesday nights from 5:30-8:30 pm – Morris Area Elementary School Parent Education Room (Come when you can).</td>
<td>Contact Rollie Finke at <a href="mailto:rfinke@alexandria.k12.mn.us">rfinke@alexandria.k12.mn.us</a>. You can also visit the Facebook page called Morris Literacy Project.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>English Classes for Women</strong></td>
<td>English classes for women take place on Friday afternoons during the University of Minnesota, Morris’ school year. There are two class levels – beginner and advanced. Classes take place in Federated Church (200 S Columbia Ave, Morris).</td>
<td>Friday afternoons (the exact hour changes every semester) – Federated Church (during the university school year)</td>
<td>Contact Windy Roberts at <a href="mailto:wroberts@morris.umn.edu">wroberts@morris.umn.edu</a> or 320-589-6294.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The Jane Addams Project</strong></td>
<td>The Jane Addams Project is a UMM student-led organization that fosters intercultural and bilingual dialogue in an atmosphere in which everyone is a teacher and everyone is a learner. Anyone is invited to attend; no prior Spanish experience is necessary.</td>
<td>Each Tuesday from 7:30-9:00 pm in Imholte 111, UMM campus.</td>
<td>Just show up! Jane Addams is open to anyone! For more information contact Windy Roberts, the advisor for this program, at <a href="mailto:wroberts@morris.umn.edu">wroberts@morris.umn.edu</a>, or visit their Facebook page called The Jane Addams Project.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**ESL TREC**  
*Tutoring, Reading, and Empowering Children*

**What?** The ESL TREC literacy program includes multiple sites, all of which are bilingual learning environments where children practice pre-literacy and school-aged literacy skills in both Spanish and English. Depending on the age group, this may include play time with songs and games that are literacy-rich, read-alouds and related activities in both Spanish and English, and bilingual book clubs. Any child older than 6 months is welcome to attend.

**When?**
- Monday and Thursday nights from 7:30-9:00 pm during Community ESL – Imholte Hall 111
- Wednesday afternoons from 12:30-3:00 during Latina Support and Friendship Group – Federated Church
- Wednesday nights from 5:30-8:30 pm during Morris Community Ed and Recreation ESL classes - Morris Area Elementary School Parent Education Room (Come when you can).
- Friday afternoons during English Classes for Women – Federated Church

**Want to get involved?** E-mail Argie Manolis at engagmnt@morris.umn.edu to learn more about program and the various tutoring opportunities.

**Lazos**

**What?** Lazos is dedicated to helping Latino immigrants build relationships within Stevens County. They do this through activities and events that provide opportunities for the diverse cultures of Stevens County to interact. Through these interactions, their goal is to maintain a healthy, dynamic, and prosperous community.

**When?** The second Saturday of each month at the Otter Tail Power Company building

**Want to get involved?** E-mail Lazos at lazos4sc@gmail.com or add Lazos as a friend on Facebook (Lazos Stevens) for more information.

**Latina Support and Friendship Group**

**What?** A goal of the Latina Support and Friendship Group is to create a warm and welcoming place for newcomers of Latino ethnicity. Women meet weekly, often bringing in community organizations or individuals such as health insurance providers, education cooperatives, bankers, or mental health representatives to provide information and segue into valuable discussions.

**When?** Wednesday afternoons at Federated Church from 12:30-3:00 pm

**Want to get involved?** E-mail Angie Lopez at marialopez.b@gmail.com for more information.
**Bilingual Book Club**

**What?** The bilingual book club is Spanish/English book club in which individuals read a common book in either English or Spanish and then come together to discuss it (generally in Spanish). This book club is welcome to individuals with basic Spanish skills who are looking to bring their reading and conversation skills to the next level.

**When?** Contact the individuals listed below for times and dates of meetings.

**Want to get involved?** E-mail Windy Roberts at wroberts@morris.umn.edu, Hilda Ladner at hladner@morris.umn.edu, or Citlalli Ibañez at galvanic@gmail.com for more information.

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**Morris Area Community Education Adult Indoor Soccer**

**What?** Every winter, the Morris Area Community Ed and Recreation office offers an indoor soccer league for adults. They meet every Wednesday night for 15 weeks and usually costs $15 per participant.

**When?** Starting in January, Wednesdays from 7:30-9:30pm in the Morris Area High School gym.

**Want to get involved?** Contact Tony Reimers, the Community Education Manager at treimers@morris.k12.mn.us or visit the Morris Area Community Education website at www.morris.k12.mn.us/page/2982 for more information.
APPENDIX G: VALUABLE WEBSITES

Teaching Tolerance
A place for educators to find thought-provoking news, conversation and support for those who care about diversity, equal opportunity and respect for differences in schools.
www.tolerance.org

Best Practices: Engaging Limited English Proficient Students and Families
tolerance.org/publication/best-practices-engaging-limited-english-proficient-students

Teaching Diverse Students School Survey
Assess whether conditions in your school support teaching that addresses the needs of all students in racially and ethnically diverse classrooms.
tolerance.org/tdsi/schools-survey

Enhancing Teachers’ Cross-Cultural Communication Skills
A short video with insight for developing teachers’ abilities to engage in cross-race interactions with families.
thttp://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_3eAVz7v07E

Inviting Engagement
Strategies for better serving diverse parent populations.
tolerance.org/activity/inviting-engagement

Translated School Forms
Downloadable example forms in Spanish and English
tolerance.org/translated-school-forms

Diversity Responsive Schools
A paper for school leaders describing characteristics of schools that are likely to be particularly successful in facilitating the learning of racially and ethnically diverse students.
tolerance.org/activity/diversity-responsive-schools

¡Colorín Colorado!
A bilingual site for families and educators of English language learners.
www.colorincolorado.org

Essential Actions: 15 Research-based Practices to Increase ELL Student Achievement
www.colorincolorado.org/article/61084/
Building Strong Parent-Educator Partnerships
This section offers numerous resources for both educators and parents in order to strengthen the school-home partnership.

www.colorincolorado.org/families/partnerships/

U.S. Department of Education
The U.S. Department of Education has developed a webpage to help Spanish-speaking families obtain educational resources and information on how to enhance achievement and navigate the educational system.

Education Resources for Spanish Speakers

Minnesota Minority Education Partnership
MMEP’s mission is to increase the success of students of color in Minnesota’s public and private schools, colleges and universities. Its website includes research reports and policy data briefings, as well as networks of others engaged in providing equitable education.

mme.org
**APPENDIX H: TERMINOLOGY**

For the purposes of this assessment, we are using the following terminology with the corresponding definitions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>a Spanish-speaking person living in the U.S., especially one of Latin American descent. In this assessment, Hispanic and Latino are used interchangeably.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latino</td>
<td>(in North America) a person of Latin American origin or descent, can refer to men or men and women. In this assessment, Hispanic and Latino are used interchangeably.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latina</td>
<td>(in North America) a person of Latin American origin or descent, refers specifically to a woman or girl.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mexican</td>
<td>a person with Mexican nationality or Mexican descent</td>
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<tr>
<td>Culture</td>
<td>a system of knowledge, beliefs, patterns of behavior, artifacts, and institutions that are created, learned, and shared by a group of people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnicity</td>
<td>the fact or state of belonging to a social group that has a common cultural tradition</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nationality</td>
<td>country where a person holds citizenship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race</td>
<td>used to refer to groupings of people according to common origin or background and associated with perceived biological markers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural Competency</td>
<td>a set of congruent behaviors, attitudes, and policies that come together in a system, agency, or among professionals and enables that system, agency, or those professionals to work effectively in cross-cultural situations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intercultural</td>
<td>pertaining to or taking place across two or more cultures</td>
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<tr>
<td>English language learner</td>
<td>a person who is learning the English language in addition to his or her native language</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX I: WORKS CITED


**All photos not cited by a URL were taken by the Office of Community Engagement Staff at UMM or were obtained through Microsoft Clip Art.
HELP US BECOME A MODEL FOR WELCOMING AND INCLUDING NEWCOMERS FROM DIVERSE BACKGROUNDS

MORRIS INTERCULTURAL EDUCATION INITIATIVE

To get involved in this initiative, contact Argie Manolis at manolis.umn.edu.