



CADRE

the center for appropriate dispute
resolution in special education

***Engaging Diverse Communities
and Stakeholders in Special
Education and Early Intervention
Dispute Resolutions: The Essential
Role of Cultural Brokering***

Tawara D. Goode

Associate Professor

Georgetown University National Center for Cultural Competence
University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities
Center for Child and Human Development
Georgetown University Medical Center

March 1, 2022

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Engaging Diverse Communities and Stakeholders in Special Education and Early Intervention Dispute Resolutions: The Essential Role of Cultural Brokering

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GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY
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Participants will:

1. Define the concept of cultural brokering.
2. List the attributes, knowledge, and skills of a cultural broker.
3. Cite guiding principles of cultural brokering.
4. List six key strategies for engaging diverse communities.
5. Apply the concept, principles, and practices of cultural brokering to dispute resolution in special education and early intervention including their relationship to cultural and linguistic competence.



Scenario



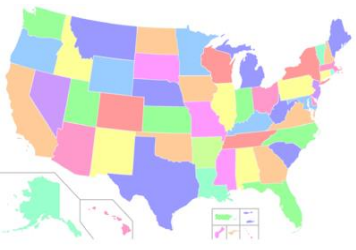
The State Department of Education’s Dispute Resolution office relies on several mechanisms to gather stakeholder feedback including but not limited to:

- 1) exit surveys from mediation and state complaint options;
- 2) commentary and recommendations from the state’s federally funded Parent Center; and
- 3) quarterly presentations to the state’s special education advisory panel typically given by a representative from the Parent Center and two additional parents.

The State Superintendent received a complaint asserting that the parents on the special education advisory panel are neither representative of the diverse populations that reside in the state in general, nor those racial and ethnic groups who reside in rural areas in particular. Specifically, the complaint stated that the two parents appointed to the panel are “metropolitan, upper middle class, women who know nothing about the struggles of children with disabilities and their families with numerous challenges and who live in under resourced communities.” The parents appointed to the panel live in the largest metro area where the Department of Education is housed and were recommended by the Parent Center.

Exactly who are the diverse communities and stakeholders in your state?





ACS 2020 United States Demographic Estimates

One Race or Latino or Hispanic and Race

Total Population = 329,484,119

RACE	NUMBER	Percent of POPULATION
One Race	297,600,338	
White	206,619,960	76.3%
Black or African American	39,839,863	13.4%
American Indian or Alaska Native	3,239,492	1.3%
Asian	18,943,940	5.9%
Native Hawaiian & Other Pacific Islander	601,228	0.2%
Some Other Race	22,316,584	
Two or More Races	37,923,052	2.8%
HISPANIC OR LATINO AND RACE		
Hispanic or Latino of any Race	61,133,492	18.5%



Languages Spoken at Home in the U.S. in 2019

Estimated Total Population 5 years and over **308,834,688**

Speak only English **241,032,343** **78.0%**

Speak a language other than English **67,802,345** **22.0%**

Speak Spanish **41,757,391** **13.5%**

Speak Indo European languages **11,465,631** **3.7%**

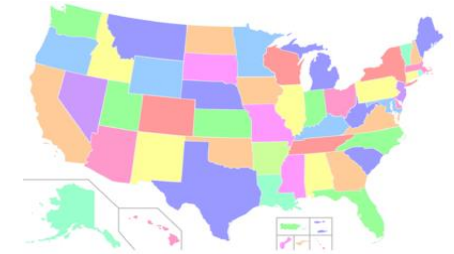
[French (Patois, Cajun), French Creole, Italian, Portuguese, Portuguese Creole, German, Yiddish, Other West Germanic languages, Scandinavian languages, Greek, Russian, Polish, Serbo-Croatian, Other Slavic languages, Armenian, Persian, Gujarathi, Hindi, Urdu, Other Indic languages]

Speak Asian and Pacific Island languages **10,973,317** **3.6%**

[Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Mon-Khmer, Cambodian, Miao, Hmong, Thai, Laotian, Vietnamese, Tagalog, other Pacific Island languages]

Other Languages **3,606,006** **1.2%**

[Navajo, Other Native American languages, Hungarian, Arabic, Hebrew, African languages, other unspecified languages]



Languages Spoken at Home other than English in the U.S. by number of Speakers in 2019

■ Spanish	41,757,391
■ Chinese (Mandarin & Cantonese)	3,494,544
■ Tagalog	1,763,585
■ Vietnamese	1,570,526
■ Arabic	1,260,437
■ French (includes Cajun)	1,171,775
■ Korean	1,075,247
■ Russian	941,454
■ Haitian	924,817
■ German	895,309



Limited English Speaking Households

Limited English Speaking Households formerly (linguistic isolation) refers to households in which no member 14 years old and over: (1) speaks only English or (2) speaks a non-English language and speaks English “very well.”

Limited English Speaking Households in the United States in 2019

All households



4.3%

Households speaking--

- Spanish
- Other Indo-European languages
- Asian and Pacific Island languages
- Other languages

20.5%

14.7%

23.5%

15.0%



Quick Facts about U.S. School-Age Children who Speak Languages other than English

- In 2019, about 23% of school-age children spoke a language other than English at home, and 4% of school-age children both spoke a language other than English at home and had difficulty speaking English.
- In 2019, about 5% of school-age children spoke a language other than English at home and lived in limited-English-speaking households.
- The percentage of school-age children who spoke a language other than English at home varied by region of the country in 2019, from a low of 13% in the Midwest to a high of 32% in the West.
- In 2019, the percentage of school-age children who had difficulty speaking English also varied by region, from a low of 3% in the Midwest to a high of 5% in the West.
- Approximately 55% of school-age Asian-alone children and 60% of school-age Hispanic children spoke a language other than English at home in 2019 compared with 6% of White-alone, non-Hispanic and 8% of Black-alone, non-Hispanic school-age children.
- In 2019, approximately 12% of school-age Asian-alone and 11% of school-age Hispanic children spoke another language at home and had difficulty speaking English compared with about 1% of White-alone, non-Hispanic and 1% of Black-alone, non-Hispanic school-age children.





Polling Questions 1-2

Does your state system routinely collect and analyze data to:

1. Compare the racial and ethnic demographic makeup of children and families involved in dispute resolution to those receiving special education or early intervention services?

yes no “I think so” in progress

2. Determine the number of families who request and receive dispute resolution services in languages other than English?

yes no “I think so” in progress



Let's Take a Closer Look at these Concepts



Community Outreach vs. Community Engagement

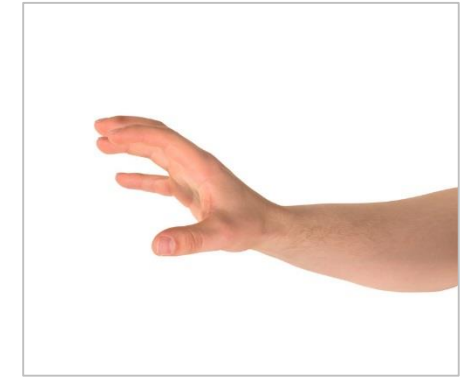
The NCCC asserts that there is a distinct philosophical difference between outreach and engagement, particularly as it relates to the values and principles of cultural and linguistic competence.

Outreach implies a unilateral or one-way approach from the organization or agency to the community, whereas engagement implies the bilateral or two-way exchange.



Differentiating Community Outreach from Community Engagement

Community outreach is defined as the act of reaching out by an organization, program, or other entity for extending assistance or services to the community, generally as acts of goodwill, information dissemination, or education.



Differentiating Community Outreach from Community Engagement

Community Engagement is “the process of working collaboratively with and through groups of people affiliated by geographic proximity, special interest, or similar situations to address issues affecting the well-being of those people.”

Principles of Community Engagement, Center for Disease Control and Prevention, Second Edition U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (2011). Retrieved on 2/21/22 from https://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/communityengagement/pdf/PCE_Report_508_FINAL.pdf



A Word About Family Engagement



“...Building and maintaining relationships is a shared responsibility of families and professionals that requires mutual respect for the roles and strengths each has to offer. *Family engagement means **doing with— not doing to or for—families.***”



Data Source: Parent, Family, & Community Engagement Framework for Early Childhood Systems
https://childcareta.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/public/pfce-framework_for_ec_systems_final_508.pdf



THOUGHTS ABOUT COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

If truth be told... some within our special education systems

Give lip service to community engagement

Fail to recognize and appreciate the knowledge and resilience of diverse communities

Want members of diverse communities to believe, think, and act “like us”

Have minimum capacity to learn from and partner with diverse communities

Have few staff who are members of the diverse communities they serve



Polling Question3

Does your Dispute Resolution System differentiate community outreach from community engagement for families and stakeholders in your state?

- yes
- no
- “not sure”



Rationales for Cultural Brokering in Special Education and Early Intervention Dispute Resolution

Current and projected demographic trends among children ages birth-21 years

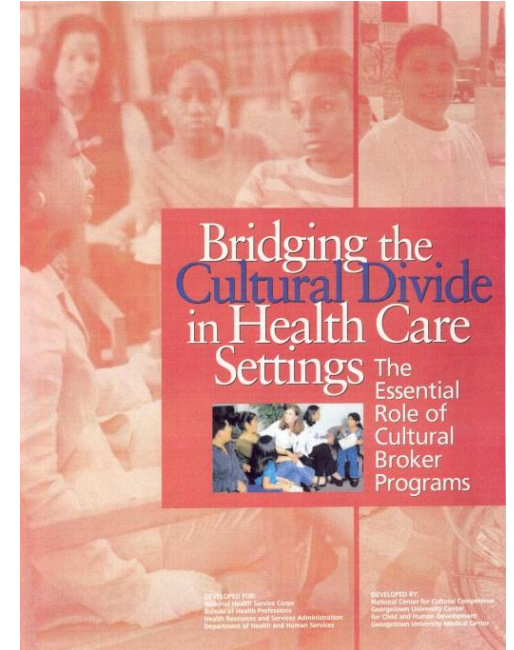
Cultural beliefs and practices about conflict resolution

Experiences of marginalization and discrimination in education and human services

Growing evidence base

Concept of Cultural Brokering

The act of bridging, linking or mediating between groups or persons of different cultural backgrounds for the purpose of reducing conflict or producing change (Jezewski, 1990).



Definition of Cultural Broker

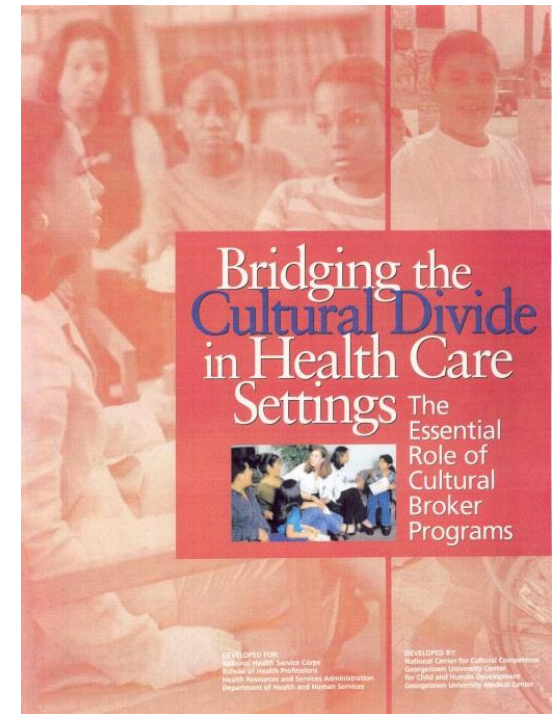
a go-between,
one who advocates
on behalf of an
individual or group

(Jezewski & Sotnik, 2001)



Who is the Cultural Broker?

- liaison
- cultural guide
- mediator
- catalyst for change



Characteristics & Attributes of a Cultural Broker



- Trust & respect of the community
- Knowledge of values and beliefs about disability of diverse racial, ethnic, and cultural groups
- Understanding and connections with traditional and indigenous networks of support within diverse communities
- Experience navigating disability, education, and social services systems



Guiding Principles for Cultural Broker Programs



Cultural brokering ...

- honors and respects cultural differences among populations and communities
- is community-driven
- provides services and supports that are accessible and tailored to cultural contexts of communities served
- acknowledges reciprocity and the transfer of assets between communities and organizations and programs



What's Getting in the Way?



- **TRUST.** Some members of racially, ethnically, and culturally diverse groups are reticent to trust educational systems because of historical and present day experiences with bias, stereotyping, discrimination, and racism in education, and social services.
- **EQUITY.** Some communities have not equitably benefited from legal proceedings.
- **DIFFERING WORLD VIEWS.** Differing values and social and cultural beliefs related to conflict resolution.
- **LACK OF TRUE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & CLC.** Many educational systems continue to struggle with how to engage racially, ethnically, culturally, and linguistically diverse communities (in any geographic locale) using culturally and linguistically competent principles and practices.



Key Strategies to Engage Diverse Communities in Special Education and Early Intervention Dispute Resolution



Learn about communities.



Enter communities respectfully.



Elicit and consider the interests and needs of communities *before* declaring the goals of your program.



Explore areas of mutual interests and benefits.



Foster relationships and partnerships that are built on mutual trust, reciprocity, and respect.



Commit to the long-haul.

Polling Questions 4-5

4. To what extent has your State Dispute Resolution System used cultural brokering (by any other name) to engage diverse communities and stakeholders?

- Never Seldom Sometimes Often

2. How likely is your State Dispute Resolution System to use cultural brokering as an approach to engage diverse communities and stakeholders?

- Never Seldom Sometimes Often



Let's revisit the scenario.
Small group dialogues for 20 minutes.



Scenario



The State Department of Education’s Dispute Resolution office relies on several mechanisms to gather stakeholder feedback including but not limited to: 1) exit surveys from mediation and state complaint options; 3) commentary and recommendations from the state’s federally funded Parent Center; and 4) quarterly presentations to the state’s special education advisory panel typically given by a representative from the Parent Center and two additional parents.

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Small group reflection and discussion questions

- What are the implications for engaging diverse communities raised by this scenario?
- What actions can be taken to ensure that the special education advisory panel’s demographic makeup and diversity of interests are represented?

Applying Principles and Practices of CLC to Cultural Brokering

Value diversity

- Implement approaches to community engagement and stakeholder engagement that are responsive to the diversity among children, families, and the communities in which they live.
- Support and maintain a workforce that is representative of the diverse populations in the state.

Conduct self-assessment

- Take a go at the CADRE's Cultural and Linguistic Assessment for Dispute Resolution Systems to determine program/system strengths and areas for growth.

Manage the dynamics of difference

- Prepare and support staff, at all levels of the system/program, to communicate with and to interact effectively with each other as well as with students, their families, and stakeholders who are members of diverse cultural groups and/or who speak languages different from their own.

Embed cultural knowledge

- Share knowledge and experiences about cultural practices, traditions, and norms related to disability, special education, early intervention, and related social services.
- Engage cultural brokers to acquire knowledge about lived experience of students with disabilities, their families, and the communities in which they live.

Adapt to diversity and cultural contexts of children, families, and communities served

- Use cultural brokers, linking to community-based organizations concerned special education and disability rights to engage families/stakeholders to serve as liaisons that are both vested in and reflect the communities served.



To Engage Communities Successfully, Dispute Resolution Systems and Programs must understand...



Their own organizational culture and the cultures of their personnel

The diverse cultures represented within the communities they serve or seek to serve

The social and political climates that affect communities historically and in real time

The inherent strength within communities to recognize their own problems and intervene appropriately on their own behalf



In many instances, what it takes to engage diverse communities and stakeholders is



CONTACT US



Georgetown University National Center for Cultural Competence

<http://nccc.georgetown.edu>
cultural@georgetown.edu

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