

# TEAM YAKIMA

*LISTENING TO LEAD: UNLEASHING  
THE POWER OF MIGRANT FAMILIES*



**FLAMBOYAN**  
FOUNDATION

National Family Engagement Fellowship





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# TEAM OVERVIEW

// *Low expectations is a way to experience racism.* //

— Yakima parent

This is a quote that serves as a reminder of why reaching out and giving voice to the families, especially the historically marginalized migrant ones of the Yakima community is so integral to the efforts of the Yakima Team.

Nestled in the Yakima Valley among acres of vineyards and orchard, The Yakima Team represents the second largest Hispanic population in the state of Washington. They are a unique team in that they are comprised of three school districts: West Valley School District, Educational Service District 105, and Yakima School District, servicing a total of 67,500 students. The Yakima Team has an extensive network behind them from each district's superintendent, powerful non-profits, and community stakeholders with strong connections to communities most impacted by inequity. In all, they have a powerful contingency supporting their work in the Fellowship as they seek to elevate the voices of their community.

Team Yakima is working hard to champion the voice of the migrant community who have historically struggled to build deep, meaningful partnerships with their schools.



# TEAM OVERVIEW

During the Yakima Team's Landscape Assessment, families and the community appealed for a better understanding of their rights and power as stakeholders in their schools. They elevated three main concerns:

- ▶ The presence of a digital divide within the community where many families do not have consistent access to technology.
- ▶ Ineffective communication between Yakima Valley families and their schools.
- ▶ Inequity experienced by the Hispanic community of Yakima Valley.

These concerns led the Yakima Team to identify the need to support BiPOC families to build an effective system of communication along with an equitable interchange of contributions where all voices are heard and honored. Each member of the Yakima Team brings a unique passion and unique perspective for students who have experienced obstacles created by frequent moves, educational disruptions, cultural and language differences, and health-related problems.

Through their work, the Yakima Team has instituted a series of leadership workshop conferences for the Migrant Parent Advisory Council, a first for their families. In these sessions, parents learn techniques and strategies that will help build advocacy skills to support their students. As Fellows in the National Fellowship, Yakima aims to increase engagement in Parent Advisory Councils, create an environment where students are academically successful with a stronger sense of belonging in their schools, and open opportunities for the community and school staff to become more culturally and linguistically capable and aware of their own biases.



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# VISION

## *LISTENING TO LEAD: UNLEASHING THE POWER OF MIGRANT FAMILIES*

The Yakima Team seeks to support and build equitable connections between migrant families and their school communities by equipping staff, families, and students with tools and a system of communication that values and honors all cultures and values. Through this, families and schools will cultivate strong relationships and a sense of belonging.



# STRATEGIC PLAN

## OUTCOMES

(What needs to happen in the next 1-3 years to put your team on track to realizing your vision?)

1

Families actively engage in Yakima Valley Parent Advisory Committee (PAC) groups which focus on building parent leadership and advocacy skills.

2

Students across the Yakima Valley are academically successful and report a stronger sense of belonging in their school communities.

3

Community member and school staff are culturally and linguistically capable. Staff and community members are aware of their own bias towards students and families.



# BARRIERS

(What are the barriers to achieving your 1-3 year outcomes?)

- ◇ Limited access to trustworthy and economically accessible childcare.
- ◇ Families' work schedules affect their availability to engage in school activities.
- ◇ Educators have low expectations for migrant families and students.
- ◇ Language barriers between families and schools.
- ◇ Due to political attacks surrounding immigrants, families may not feel welcome or comfortable in school settings.

# STRATEGIES

(How can you overcome the barriers to achieving your outcomes?)

- ◇ Create networking opportunities that allow team members to listen to the experiences, needs, and problems of members of the PAC. Encourage PAC members to use their voices to elevate their needs to the larger school community.
- ◇ Create professional development and leadership opportunities for PAC families.
- ◇ Connect and align the needs of PAC members to community leadership opportunities.

# MEASURES OF SUCCESS

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(How will we know we have been successful?)

- ◇ Parents will take a pre- and post-event survey to evaluate the effectiveness of PAC trainings and conferences.
- ◇ Participants of Family Engagement 101 will take a pre- and post-event survey to evaluate the effectiveness of training.
- ◇ Measure website and social media analytics, communication platform engagement, and survey feedback about communication campaign.

# MEET THE TEAM



**Anita Quintana, Family + Community Engagement Supervisor, Yakima School District**

Anita currently serves as a Family + Community Engagement Supervisor for the Yakima School District (YSD). In her role, she works at the district level on Title 1 initiatives and with the YSD Migrant Education Program Parent Advisory Council.

Previously, Anita was Director of Office of Scholarly Activity at the local health sciences university. Anita earned her Bachelor's in Spanish and American Ethnic Studies from University of Washington and holds a Master's in Education Policy Research from University of California, Berkeley.



**Berenice Ponce, Family + Community Engagement Supervisor, Yakima School District**

Berenice has eight years of experience working in the education field, and is in her first with the Yakima School District. In her current role, she works alongside Anita to lead family engagement work in the Yakima School District. Berenice believes that building strong, trusting, and genuine relationships with families is key to the overall well-being and success of their children.

She is a proud daughter of immigrant parents and has dedicated the past 18 years of her career to providing social services in the Yakima Valley. Berenice is a champion of change, mentor, and advocate for underserved families and students.



**Claudia Dominguez, Migrant Family Engagement + Student Leadership Coordinator, Educational Service District #105**

Claudia's work is focused on making connections with families. In her current role, she works to teach and train Family Advocates and incorporate this strengths-based approach into program Policies and Protocols.

Claudia is a member of various community coalition groups where she can advocate for strong community and family engagement practices. Claudia is a first-generation graduate and holds a B.A. in Foreign Language and Cultures with an emphasis in Spanish and a Human Development minor from Washington State University.





**Maggie Mendoza, Early Education P-3 Coordinator,  
Educational Service District #105**

Maggie Mendoza is an Early Education P-3 (preschool to third grade) Coordinator at Educational Service District 105. In her current role, she provides professional development opportunities for PreK-3 educators that focuses on supporting the unique needs of migrant and bilingual students and families, developing curriculum, materials, and instruction for English language learners to promote inclusive high-quality early learning environments.

She joins the Fellowship team with over 18 years of experience in early learning and brings a wealth of experience in Head Start, ECEAP, Migrant Head Start, and more.

Maggie is a first-generation student and holds a B.A. in Education with a Teaching English as a Second Language minor from Central Washington University, a Master's Degree in Early Childhood Studies with an emphasis in Administration, Leadership + Management from Walden University. Maggie is currently pursuing a Doctorate in Education with a specialization in Early Childhood Education.



**Minerva Pardo, Family and Community Engagement and  
Migrant Program Coordinator**

Originally from Mexico City, Mexico, Minerva currently serves as the family engagement lead for the West Valley School District in Yakima, Washington.

She is an accomplished trainer – both serving as a lead trainer for “Becoming a Trusted Adult” which brings support and mentorship for teenagers and their families and as a national trainer for the Strengthening Families Five Protective Factors Framework.

Minerva holds two B.A. degrees in Bilingual Education from Universidad de las Americas and in Psychology from Universidad del Valle de México. She has a Master's Degree in Education from Universidad del Valle de México.

# NOTES









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