

ELD Student Leadership Team Provides School Tours for Multilingual Families

Rocky Top Middle School, Adams 12 Five Star Schools

Submitted by A'ndra Warren, andra.n.warren@adams12.org

The English Language Development (ELD) Student Leadership Team at Rocky Top Middle School (RTMS) provided school tours for multilingual families to increase family engagement through improved language access and to foster a sense of belonging for students. RTMS recognized that Spanish-speaking families needed more support to navigate school systems while multilingual learners (MLs) could benefit from leadership opportunities to enhance their speaking and listening skills. The result was training ELD students to give tours to new Spanish-speaking students and families.

The planning and implementation of the practice involved the school's principal, the Spanish-Language Support Liaison, and the ELD teachers. The ELD teachers provided class time to teach presentation skills and prepare students to take on leadership roles.

The practice included personalized intakes for all new students, where families met with the Spanish-Language Support Liaison. Following the intake, the Liaison made follow-up phone calls to families. She also conducted class visits and provided in-class lessons on public speaking. These lessons aligned with World-class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) skills in speaking and listening, giving students practical applications for their language development. The Spanish-Language Support Liaison conducted one-on-one check-ins with all students, not just ELD students, and connected with students in the cafeteria when possible. The program has fostered student leaders, like one who noticed a nervous new student and took the initiative to welcome him with questions that eased his anxiety. As part of the welcoming experience, students received RTMS t-shirts and pizza.



School staff evaluated the practice through student engagement and enthusiasm for leadership roles, as well as increased participation from Spanish-speaking families. One challenge was carving out time during the school day to practice presentation skills, as it sometimes conflicted with instructional time.

For those looking to replicate this practice, the team emphasizes patience and persistence with students, especially when building public speaking skills. Selecting students for leadership roles should prioritize marginalized students, such as ELD learners or those with frequent behavior issues, giving them a chance to shine.