

BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS, BRIDGING CULTURES: CULTURAL BROKERING IN FAMILY ENGAGEMENT BY THE EQUITABLE PARENT-SCHOOL COLLABORATION RESEARCH PROJECT AT THE UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON.

Research around the important role of “cultural brokers” play between families and schools. Cultural brokers serve as bridges and translators between family and schools and can adopt strategies for building parent and family capacity.

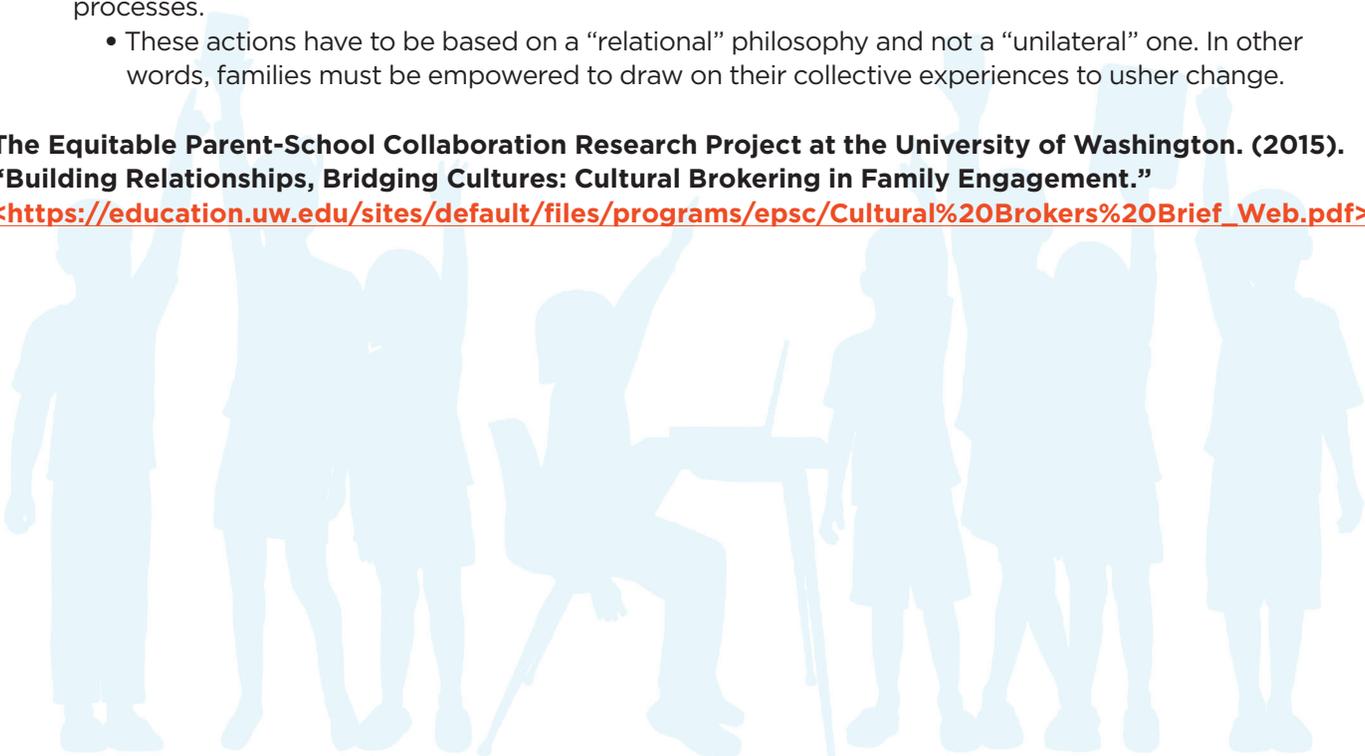
Using already existing research coupled with a case study, this report explains and describes the important role that “cultural brokers” play between families and schools. The report explains that cultural brokers, who serve as bridges and translators between family and schools, can adopt strategies for building the capacity of parents, enhancing culturally-specific relationships and constructing systemic capacity among needed stakeholders.

Cultural brokers serve a variety of purposes, including:

1. Helping families build knowledge and skills for navigating school to best meet their children’s needs
 - This knowledge building, like all work with families, must be “reciprocal” and not “unidirectional.” Specifically, this means that families’ personal knowledge and experiences must be used to support their students. It also means that parents must be engaged in face-to-face methods.
2. Creating individual and collective strategies among parents and school staff that are welcoming and inclusive.
 - The collective strategies involve working with all parents and creating family-dedicated spaces within schools.
3. Building the capacity for family voices and influence within school structures and decision-making processes.
 - These actions have to be based on a “relational” philosophy and not a “unilateral” one. In other words, families must be empowered to draw on their collective experiences to usher change.

The Equitable Parent-School Collaboration Research Project at the University of Washington. (2015). “Building Relationships, Bridging Cultures: Cultural Brokering in Family Engagement.”

https://education.uw.edu/sites/default/files/programs/epsc/Cultural%20Brokers%20Brief_Web.pdf



Thanks to generous support from the Carnegie Corporation of New York, *Our Neighborhood*, is a compilation of stories and research from the family engagement field. It is intended to be a living repository and guide for STEM Learning Ecosystems and other communities interested in cultivating strong community partnerships to prepare the next generation.

This annotated bibliography was compiled by TIES for *Our Neighborhood*.