

Latina/o parent perceptions of the value of dual language schooling for their children



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Key Components of ODE Grant

- Technical assistance – to develop or enhance programs (provided by ATDLE)
- Staff training – to improve understanding of DL program models & practices
- Assessment of student outcomes – proficiency in both languages & academic achievement
- Family engagement initiatives – to strengthen community ties and improve student outcomes

Family Engagement

Examined in three ways:

1. Grant site reports about the activities programs facilitated
2. Parent surveys about satisfaction and engagement
3. Qualitative focus groups

Survey

Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with the following statements. The term “target language” refers to the second language your child is learning in addition to English (e.g., Spanish, Vietnamese).

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1 I am satisfied that the dual language program is giving my child access to the subject matter that s/he needs.	1	2	3	4	5
2 Students and parents from all backgrounds are made to feel like a valuable part of our school culture.	1	2	3	4	5
3 I believe my child will be bilingual after completing the program.	1	2	3	4	5
4 I know what my child is supposed to learn at his/her grade level (academic standards).	1	2	3	4	5
5 I am actively involved in the school.	1	2	3	4	5
6 I would recommend the dual language program to other parents.	1	2	3	4	5
7 Studying the Target language is important for my child because:					
it will allow him/her to meet and talk with more people from different backgrounds.	1	2	3	4	5
s/he will need it for his/her future career.	1	2	3	4	5
it will make him/her a more knowledgeable person.	1	2	3	4	5

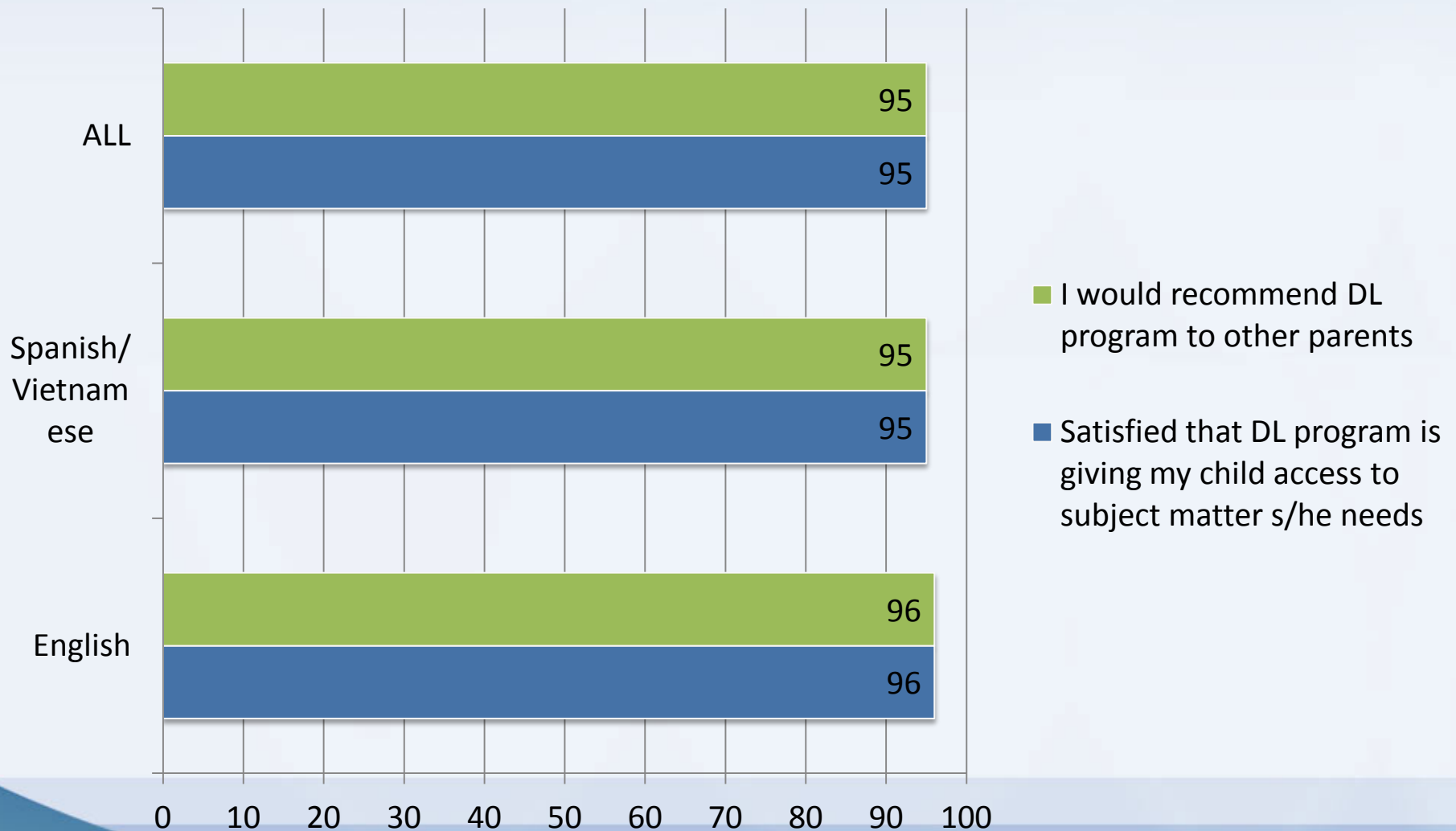
Please indicate how often you participate in the following activities.

	Almost Never	1-2 times per year	1-2 times per month	1-2 times per week	Usually Daily
1 I/We spouse read with my/our child in the target language or English	1	2	3	4	5
2 I/We check out library books or buy books in the target language	1	2	3	4	5
3 I/We help my/our child with his/her homework	1	2	3	4	5
4 We attend cultural events that celebrate the target language and culture	1	2	3	4	5

Any additional comments?

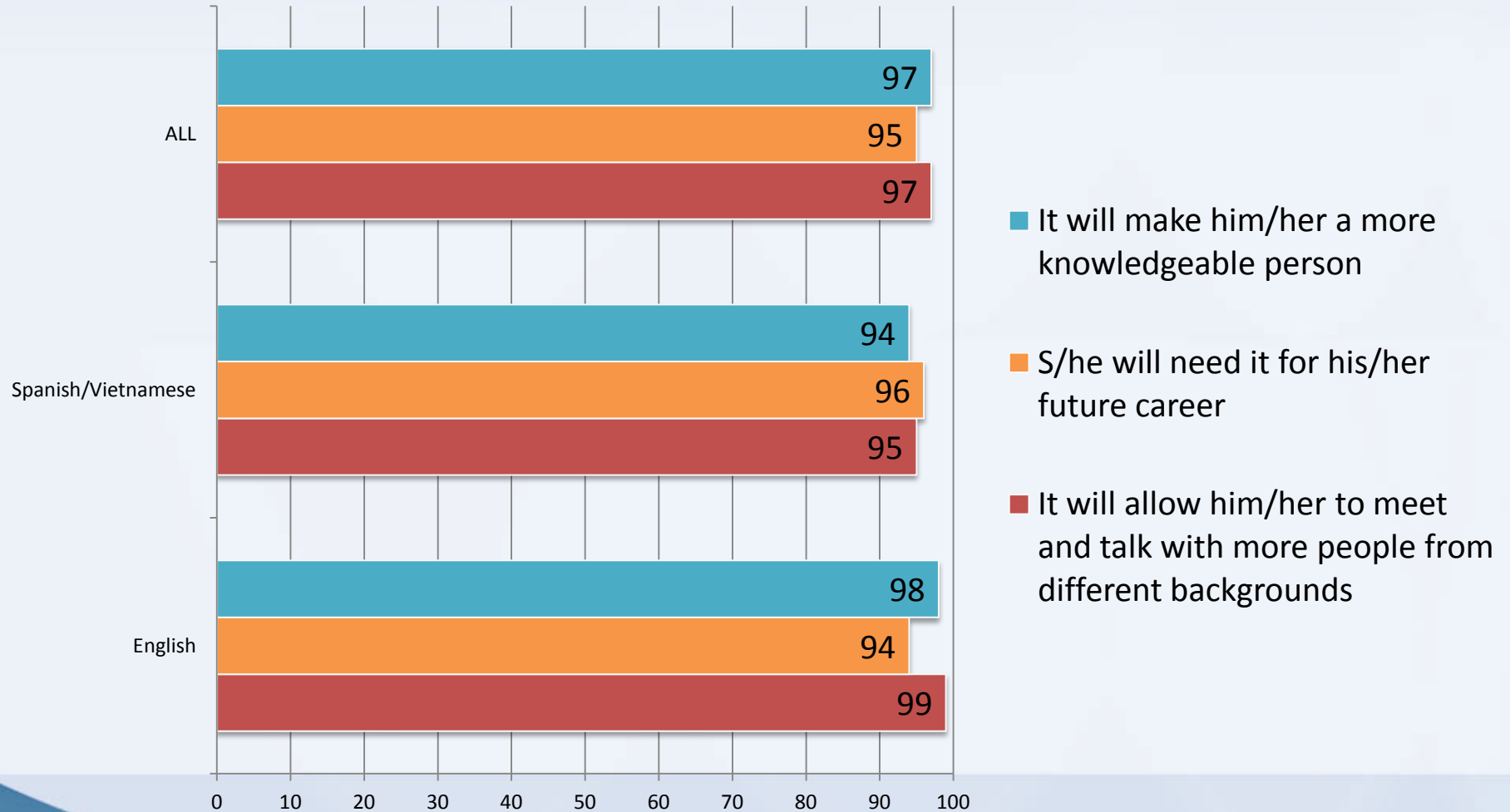
Thank you for your participation.

Parent Satisfaction & Recommendation of DL Program (Percent who Agree or Strongly Agree)



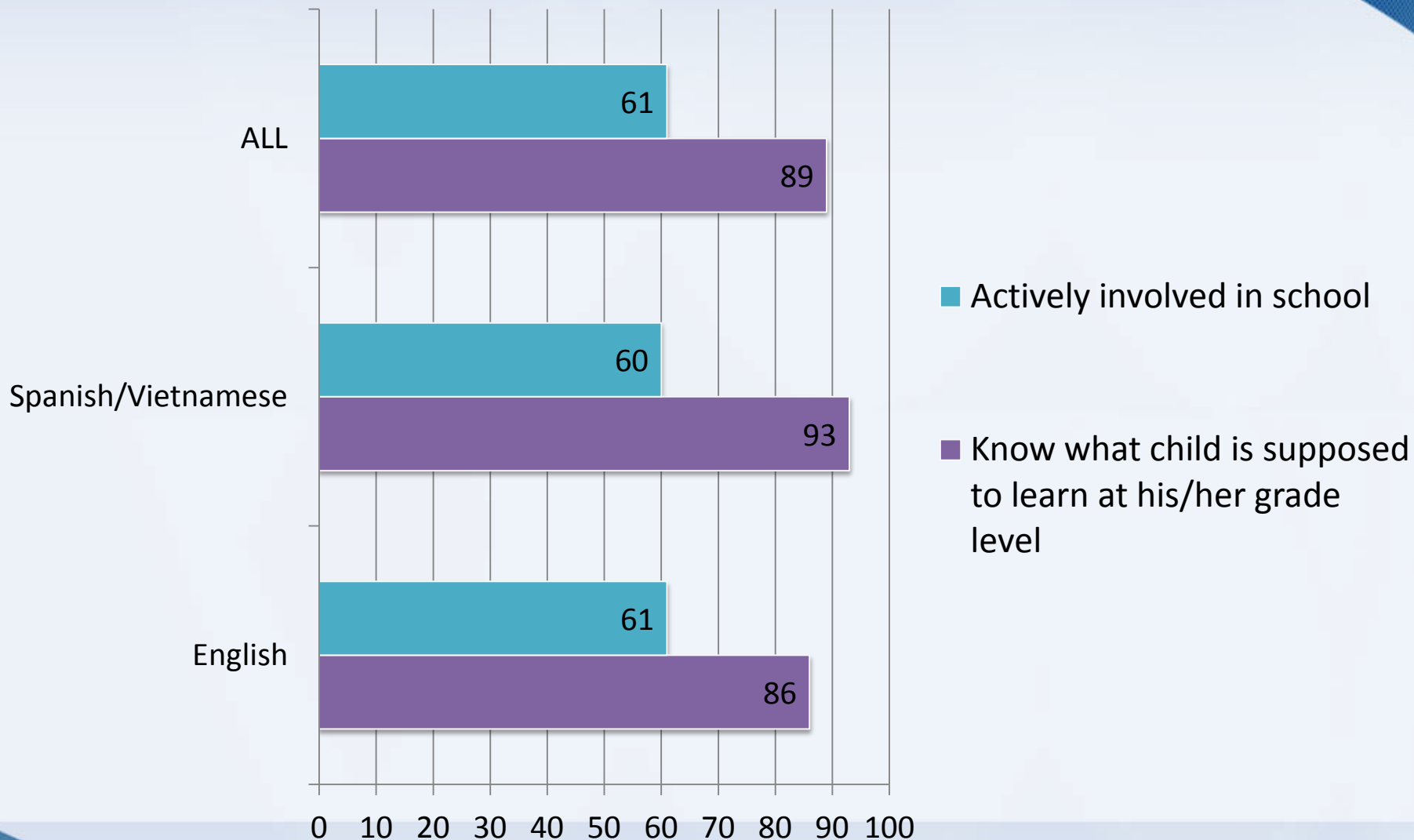
Parent Views of Importance of Partner Language (Percent who Agree or Strongly Agree)

Studying the Partner language is important for my child because:

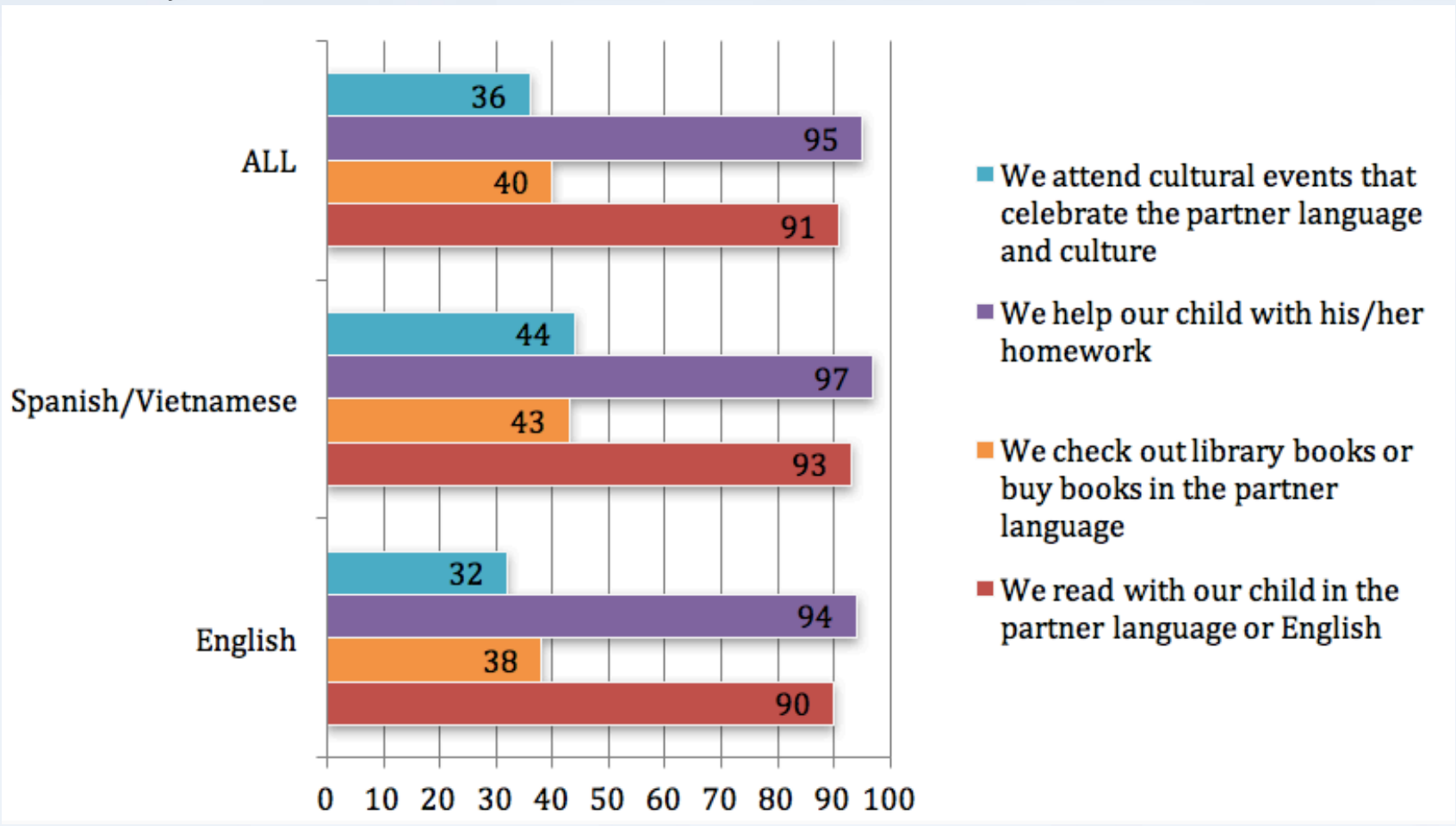


Parent Engagement

(Percent who Agree or Strongly Agree)



Family Engagement (Frequency of Participation at least 1-2 X week)



Summary of Survey Findings

- Parents from both language groups reported overall satisfaction with the DL program at their children's school
- Parents from both language groups are actively involved in some aspects of their children's education, especially in terms of reading at home and helping with homework

Qualitative Follow-up

Spring 2015

- Conducted focus groups at 4 sites (2 new, 2 existing)
- Conducted in Spanish and English
- Parents were invited by the schools, lunch or snacks were provided
- Groups ranged in size from 2-9 parents
- No identifying information was requested or recorded

Why focus on Latin@ parents?

Past research has indicated that Latin@ parents are often excluded from decision-making about their children's education (Olivos, 2006), even in DL programs (Shannon, 2011).

Our Guiding Question

What are Latin@ parent perceptions of the dual language programs in which their children are enrolled?

Focus Groups with Latin@ parents

Would you recommend this program to other families?

a. If so, why? Please be specific.

Would you recommend this program for everyone?

b. If not, who would you specifically recommend it to?

c. Who would you not recommend it to?

Do you feel that the DL program allows your child to meet and engage meaningfully with people from different backgrounds?

d. If so, how does the DL program facilitate these interactions?

Do you consider yourself to be actively engaged in your child's school?

e. If so, how do you define "active"?

f. Please give specific examples of how you are actively involved.

How/why did you become active in your child's school?

What has the school done to engage you in being actively involved?

Theme 1:

General satisfaction with DL programs

- ❖ Parents feel more a part of school community

- ❖ Parents appreciate the fact that English-speaking parents want their children to learn Spanish

“me gusta ver cuando otras personas, como los Americanos, quieren que sus hijos aprendan Español. Entonces es motivante para nosotros, como hispanos, que ellos quieran aprender de nuestra cultura”

- ❖ Children are more likely to retain Spanish and speak it with pride

“es muy bueno para los niños aprender su idioma de origen, de uno de los padres”

Theme 2:

The importance of language equity

- ❖ Parents stressed the importance children having access to both social and academic language

“Si necesitan ayuda en español, en español les ayudan. Si necesitan ayuda en inglés, en inglés.”

- ❖ In general, they felt that their children’s schools valued both languages equitably

“Yo veo que todo está bilingüe ya y la próxima, last year no estaba. Y también afuera donde tienen todo a un lado está en inglés y al otro, en español.”

Theme 3:

Active involvement in their children's education

- ❖ Similar to survey results, parents were most likely to be involved in home-based activities
- ❖ Parents were most likely to be involved when they felt their presence or contributions were appreciated

“por lo que yo me siento como bienvenida o en un grado de confianza, es que tienen personal que es bilingüe. Porque algunas de las veces te sientes como incómodo llegar donde... ‘¿qué le voy a decir? ¿y si no me entiende?’”

- ❖ Parents also perceived some barriers to participation, either for them or for fellow parents

“No hay transporte. Eso sí es algo que es necesario. Necesitan para que haiga muchos... porque hay muchas personas que están interesados pero no tienen manera de traer a sus hijos y como hay que traerlos.”

What's Still Needed

To identify:

- ❖ Concrete steps programs have taken/can take to create a schoolwide environment that is support of dual language education
- ❖ Concrete steps programs have taken/can take to facilitate active involvement of Latino parents in their children's education
- ❖ Possible barriers to at different schools to create schoolwide support and facilitate parent engagement

Takeaways

- ❖ DL Programs can meet the academic and social needs of families and children when they are well-resourced
- ❖ Parents who are less involved in traditional ways may have different perspectives than these parents
- ❖ The challenges of implementing and sustaining successful DL programs should not be underestimated