**San Diego State University**

 **Program in Educational Leadership Dissertation Defense Announcement**

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Title of Dissertation: Latinx Parents Of Middle School English Language Learners: Parent Involvement in Support of Reclassification

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**Abstract**

The growing population of Latinx students in the American educational system faces significant academic challenges, particularly English learners, who graduate at a lower rate compared to their white peers. This achievement gap necessitates urgent intervention within the U.S. educational system. One promising approach to address this issue is through enhancing parental involvement. This study employs a qualitative analysis of interview data methodology to explore the experiences and perceptions of Latinx parents with middle school English learners who have not yet completed the reclassification process, aiming to identify effective strategies for parental engagement.

The study highlights the critical role of family support in improving English learner students' academic outcomes and reclassification readiness. Despite numerous barriers, such as language proficiency, socio-economic constraints, and parents' limited educational backgrounds, their involvement remains a potent resource for academic improvement. These barriers often manifest in difficulties understanding school policies, lack of access to educational resources, and limited communication with school staff. The findings suggest that middle schools must revise their policies and practices to better support Latinx English learner families, emphasizing the need for inclusive and tailored parent involvement programs.

California, with the largest population of English learners in the U.S., presents a compelling case for this study, particularly given the significant percentage of middle school English learners who need to reclassify and consequently have limited access to rigorous coursework. This research provides valuable insights into how school administrators can enhance parent engagement frameworks, ultimately supporting the academic success and reclassification process of Latinx English learner students. Through collaborative efforts between schools, families, and communities, it is possible to create an educational environment where every English learner can thrive and achieve their full potential.