**Top 10 Rules**

**For communicating with Hispanic Parents**

Being courteous is the key to establishing trust with your students and their families. Throughout the Spanish speaking world, a smile and a pleasant word can lead to respect and complete cooperation. **Remember that respect is essential**.

Many expressions in English can be confusing to people who are second language learners. To communicate most effectively, try to avoid idioms and pay attention to words that have multiple meanings. **Remember to avoid technical language and explain things simply and clearly.**

Feel free to open up about yourself, your family, work and home. Be honest and make them feel welcome. Show interest in their families and homes, too. **Remember that the Hispanic culture is focused on building personal connections more than on getting down to business.**

Many cultures place less value on beating the clock than we do. Be sure to explain the importance of punctuality when you schedule. **Remember that Hispanics have a different concept of time – be patient.**

10. Be Polite

9. If at 1st you don’t succeed, try again another way.

8. There is more than one way to skin a cat.

7. Show your true colors.

6. Time isn’t money and a stitch in time doesn’t always save nine.

If you get stuck, don’t be afraid to use hand gestures or facial expressions to get your point across. **Remember there is nothing wrong with asking them to repeat what they have said to you if you didn’t understand it the 1st time**

Parents may not always have the same ideas or expectations that we have, but they do have high hopes for their child’s future. **Remember that your students and their parents have a lot to share with you. Appreciate their experiences and expertise.**

5. Respect alternative viewpoints.

Most of Latin America is Roman Catholic and you may notice the religious influence when dealing with parents. Using the word God *– Díos* – is common. You will heara phrases such as *Gracias a Díos or Si Díos lo permite* commonly.

4. Separation of Church and State isn’t always possible.

The traditional Hispanic family includes more than just the immediate family. Be sure to recognize the importance of grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins, godparents and other close family friends. **Remember that one family member’s business is every family member’s business. Don’t be surprised if a whole crowd comes to meet with you instead of just the parent.**

3. We are family – all my brothers, sisters, cousins, godparents… and me

Many family events require the attendance of all family members. Students may miss days of school because they were needed by their parents. This is especially common when someone is sick or in the hospital. **Remember that sometimes you may not feel that the reason for an absence is not really acceptable, but that doesn’t mean that the Hispanic parents would agree with you.**

2. All for one and one for all.

Your message cannot always be communicated in a few simple sentences. When you have something serious to discuss with a parent, use an interpreter. **Remember all parents deserve to receive important school news, participate in conferences, and have some input into their child’s education.**

1. Call for help when you need it.