Tips for Latino Family Engagement

Use their preferred language
This is an essential place to start. Without a common language, very little communication can take place. Here are some ways to build an ongoing relationship with parents by reaching out through their native language.

Find a fully bilingual interpreter.
Whether a school employee, parent liaison, family member, friend, or community member, this person can translate for parent-teacher conferences, back-to-school nights, PTA meetings, and regular communication. It is best to find an adult and not rely on the student as the translator, as this practice can disempower the parent.

Translate the written communications that you send home.
Find a way to send home personal notes and materials in Spanish. This will keep parents in the loop on issues such as report cards, school events, and homework. Try to offer complete translations in a straightforward Spanish that parents can understand.

Learn some Spanish yourself.
Even if it is just some common words and greetings, using Spanish with parents will make them feel welcome. For starters, here are a few common classroom words and phrases in Spanish.

Put parents in touch with bilingual staff.
Give parents a list of names and phone numbers of bilingual staff in the school and district who they can contact to deal with educational concerns. Also encourage them to reach out to other parents who are bilingual or monolingual so they can share experiences and help one another.

Host a Spanish-language back-to-school night
Host an evening event at the beginning of the school year for Spanish-speaking parents. Make sure ahead of time that a good interpreter will be in attendance. For this important first meeting, try to accommodate parents' requests for scheduling, transportation, and child care. Take this time to get to know them, communicate your expectations, and answer questions. Also find out the best way to maintain regular communication with each of these parents.

Arrange for a "tour" of the school
Within the first semester, organize a general school orientation session for parents of English language learners. With a bilingual facilitator, explain and answer any questions about things such as state standards, assessments, school expectations, language program options, etc. It would be helpful to actually walk parents around the school and introduce them to key people on staff. Some states, districts, and schools already do this.

Source: http://www.colorincolorado.org/article/how-reach-out-parents-ells