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Family-Community Partnership: Advancing Technological Skills of Immigrant Families of Students with Disabilities

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Abstract

While having a desktop or laptop appears to be a necessity for many households in the U.S., the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (2020) reported that 72% of families do not own a desktop computer and 53% of them do not own a laptop. Additionally, over seven million families do not have internet access at home (National Telecommunications and Information Administration, 2020). This digital divide hit U.S. immigrants the hardest (Cherewka, 2020), especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. While U.S. PreK-12 schools attempted to provide a Chromebook or a mobile device, such as an iPad, to each student who needed one, not all families were technological savvy enough to support their children's remote learning and learning beyond school. The purpose of this presentation is to share the impact of how one community-based parent support group supported immigrant families of students with disabilities and enhanced their technological skills, so they could be prepared to support their child's learning. Recommendations on what schools can do to enhance their partnerships with immigrant families of students with disabilities will be shared.

Keywords: special education, immigrant families, disabilities, technology, advocacy