

## Quick Reference Guide for FACE Terms

In this section, we define several key concepts and terms that recur throughout the book.

**Family:** We use the word *family* instead of *parent* to recognize that all adult family members—siblings, grandparents, aunts, uncles, friends, and neighbors—contribute to a child’s learning and development. If a study contains the word *parent*, however, we stick to it when describing the findings.

**Nondominant:** Nondominant families are those affected by systemic oppression, such as being marginalized based on race, class, language, or immigration status. This term explicitly references relationships to the dominant power structure. (Ishimaru, *Just Schools*, pg. 8). We use this term when referring to all families who have been marginalized or undervalued.

**Multilingual:** Many students are proficient in more than one language, even if they are not proficient in English. We acknowledge this as an asset by using the term *multilingual* instead of the phrases *English language learners* or *emergent bilingual*.

**Engagement:** Earlier editions from the Evidence series contained a variety of terms: *participation*, *involvement*, *connections*, and *engagement*. In this book, we also use *partnership*. Looking at this through the lens of courtship, we can see evolution: When we meet someone special, we *participate* in enjoyable activities together. As the relationship develops, we become *involved*. We make *connections* with our partner’s friends and families and get to know them more deeply. If we

become *engaged*, we commit to be together for the rest of our lives. When we wed or enter a legally binding *partnership*, we make all important decisions together as equals.

**High-impact:** Traditional family engagement practices tend to have important, but minor, effects, such as a bump in test scores, school attendance, or homework completion. High-impact practices yield major, long-lasting effects. They improve students’ academic outcomes, as well as their motivation, self-confidence, and agency. For example, contrast the tradition of sending home quarterly report cards with a set of practices where teachers meet each family face-to-face (in person or virtually), send home interactive learning materials, and regularly share progress via text message and folders of work. Combining high-impact practices like that can lead to:

**Transformation:** What we see in transformational change is a shift in beliefs and mindsets, from negative biases toward an appreciation of strengths and assets. That kind of change builds trust, which has pervasive and positive ripple effects on school culture. When relationships change from being cool, distant, and cautious to warm, collaborative, and inclusive, people work better together, and they enjoy each other’s company more. Teacher morale improves. Students feel that being at school

"is like being with family." This has a liberating effect on students, teachers, and families because it enables people to be who they are and bring their whole selves to the table.

Transformational change helps schools to become:

**Equity-driven:** By equity, we mean giving all children what they need to succeed. As a parent explained: "I have three children. One has Down Syndrome, one is super athletic, and the third is terribly shy. I love them all equally, but they need different things. If I treated them all the same, it wouldn't be fair." In schools that use high-impact practices, students receive the level of support and intervention that their needs require. The goal is a family-school partnership that enables all students to learn at high levels. To achieve that, power imbalances must be leveled so that everyone can contribute and be honored for what they bring.

**Belief versus Mindset:**

*Belief:* something that is accepted, considered to be true, or held as an opinion; *Mindset:* a way of being; a mental attitude or inclination

**Implicit Bias:** Thoughts and feelings are "implicit" if we are unaware of them or mistaken about their nature. We have a bias when we have a preference for (or aversion to) a person or group of people. Thus, we use the term "implicit bias" to describe the tendency to hold attitudes toward people, or to stereotype them, without being conscious of doing it. (Perception Institute: [perception.org/research/implicit-bias](https://perception.org/research/implicit-bias))

**Critical Participatory Action Research (CPAR) Method:**

The CPAR method is "rooted in the belief that those most impacted by research should take the lead in framing the questions, design, methods, analysis and determining what products and actions might be most useful in effecting change" (Torre, 2009, p. 1).

**Portraiture:** Portraiture is a method of social science inquiry recognized for its blending of art and science, capturing the complexity, dynamics, and subtlety of human experience and organizational life. Sara Lawrence-Lightfoot pioneered and used portraiture to document cultures of institutions, life stories of individuals, stages of human development, and essential relationships, processes, and concepts. (From [saralawrencelightfoot.com/portraiture1.html](https://saralawrencelightfoot.com/portraiture1.html))

**"Concerted *Sacrificios*":** Cuevas defines "concerted *sacrificios*" as the "conscious decisions and investments undocumented Latinx parents make to support their children's educational attainment, which comes at a very high personal cost due to the sociopolitical context they face as undocumented immigrants" (Cuevas, 2019, p. 475).

**Social Capital:** Social capital is the goodwill, sympathy, and connections created by social interaction within and between people and their social networks.