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Sent: Tuesday, February 23, 2021 2:28 PM
To: JHS.MailList <JHS.MailList@everettsd.org>
Cc: Mejia, Sandra <SMejia@everettsd.org>
Subject: Natural Leaders at Jackson High School

I would love to take the chance to introduce myself. My name is Jennifer Larson and you might recognize my name because I work in the front office at Jackson High School. I live on Camano Island and have 5 children (20, 19, 18, 15, and 14 years old—2 girls and 3 boys).

This year I joined our Equity Leadership Team at JHS. Our mission statement is this:

*****JHS EQUITY TEAM MISSION STATEMENT*****

To practice Courageous Conversations; examine our school policies, practices, programs, structures, climate, and culture to identify barriers to racial equity and excellence. The team will lead systemic change efforts that result in high levels of achievement for each and every student at Jackson High School.

We were asked recently if anyone would be willing to help in starting a Natural Leadership Program here at JHS along with one of our administrators—Michelle Renée—and Sandra Mejia, Family and Community Engagement Consultant, who is the lead for our district. I volunteered because I have a passion for helping, especially children who may struggle with language and cultural barriers in the school environment. Our family adopted our son from Haiti, and English wasn't his first language (Creole is his first language). This program is new to me but I'm so excited to begin the process to develop this program here at JHS.

What is the Natural Leadership Program, you might ask?

NATURAL LEADERS = EQUITABLE FAMILY ENGAGEMENT: This is a collaborative of 11 school districts that leverages resources, talent, and intellectual capital to help over a quarter million students graduate career and college ready. Too often, language and cultural barriers leave many families feeling lost in the school environment. An innovative leadership program, Natural Leaders works to engage and empower these families. We equip Natural Leaders with the knowledge, skills, and tools needed to build relationships with other families and ensure they have a voice in their school communities. Natural Leader groups plan and execute a variety of family engagement activities at their schools. With increased family engagement, both family/school relations and student learning improve.

Today I'm reaching out to each one of you to build a staff support system for our program. This program to begin with will be reaching out to our Latinx community. Would you be willing to help us out as we begin this journey? To begin with we aren't asking for anything but looking for connections and a support system of staff members who would be willing to come along and stand by us, etc. By supporting this program, our hope is that our student learning will improve.

Ways you could support us would be:

- **Share life experiences, traveling experiences, etc., with parent group/students.**
- **Share your educational choices after high school, college experience, and career experiences with parent group/students.**
- **Introduce yourself, the course you teach here at JHS, etc., with parent group/students.**
- **We are open to ideas or ways to involve parents/students in our Latinx communities.**

Thank you for your consideration. 😊

If you have any questions, feel free to reach out to me, Michelle Renée, or Sandra Mejia. I'm learning as I go, and I'm very excited about having this program here at JHS!!

Warmest wishes,

Jennifer Larson



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"The meaning of life is to find your gift. The purpose of life is to give it away." William Shakespeare