

Valentina

Mr. Mike

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Why the Learning Community Charter School Started

In 2004, a new charter school was started in Central Falls, Rhode Island, called The Learning Community. The plan was to open with 180 students. One of the school's main goals was to train new teachers. Another goal was to serve the Latino community. Statistics show that Latinos are falling behind and more likely to drop out of school than whites, blacks and Asians. The Learning Community was built to help people of culture get a higher education, get higher degrees and a better future so that people in our community can get good jobs and become something and not drop out of school. Ms. Sarah Friedman, one of the founders and co-directors, came to speak to us. She said, "When we were planning the school, we thought that one of our biggest goals for the school was to be an influence for the other schools, we want to take care of the kids with respect and we want them to honor that." She wanted us to feel respected by them and they wanted everyone to have an education whether they had money or not. "I think everyone should be able to have an education," said Ms. Sarah.

When a parent, Ms. Jossie Betancourt, came into the classroom, her story was very inspiring and should be heard by other schools. She said that, "before my kids came to this school they didn't even know their colors or their numbers." When the school was announced in the newspapers, one of her family members suggested that she should consider going to the school. After her kids were at the school for a while, she was very happy and very pleased because she knew that her kids were learning. Whenever there was something they didn't understand, she knew that the teachers would help until they did. "Now my kid is an A student. There is a big change from when he didn't know anything, to him being an A student. I owe it all to the school who helped my kid become what he is now." Said Ms.

Betancourt. She was happy that the school started. She also said, “The school let me be involved in everything my child was doing. The parents were also involved in building the school playground for the kids over the summer. We were cooperating and building as a community and at that point I knew that this was a good place for my kids.” I think that every parent should feel that the school they are putting their kid in is a good school, that they can be involved and talk and know more about what their kids are good at or what they need to improve on so that they can help too, out of school. The Learning Community changed her kid’s lives and made them become stronger learners.

Finally, the school's goals were not only to train the teachers, but to also serve the Latino community and build a strong community for us to share and grow all together. As a school and as part of the Latino community, we worked cooperatively and proved the statistics wrong. We proved to them that a good education doesn't come from where you're from or where you were born. It shouldn't matter if we have money or not to have an education. What should matter is the hard work and the dedication of the students, teachers and parents as a community to help each other.