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*New Brunswick High School*  
Y.P.A.R Action Research

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# **OUR MISSION:**

Our mission is to make English Language Learners (previously known as ESL students) feel as if they are part of the New Brunswick High School community, from extracurricular activities to different educational opportunities.

# WHY?

- Through each one of our members' educational experiences we have noticed persistent language barriers that exist amongst our school and community, especially when it comes to English Language Learners.
- We want to put an end to those barriers, and make them feel like they are part of our school and community.

# HOW?

- Find English Language Learners' point of view on the situation
- Get the point of view of Monolingual students, teachers and club leaders
- Analyze existing research and collect data on the different point of views of the situation

# OUR RESEARCH METHODS:

- Survey
- One on one interviews
- Existing research analyzation

# SURVEY

- The survey was created on a google form and it was distributed to ELL classes
- It included a total of 10 questions having to do with the involvement of ELL in after-school activities, and also questions revolving around whether their included in the student body.

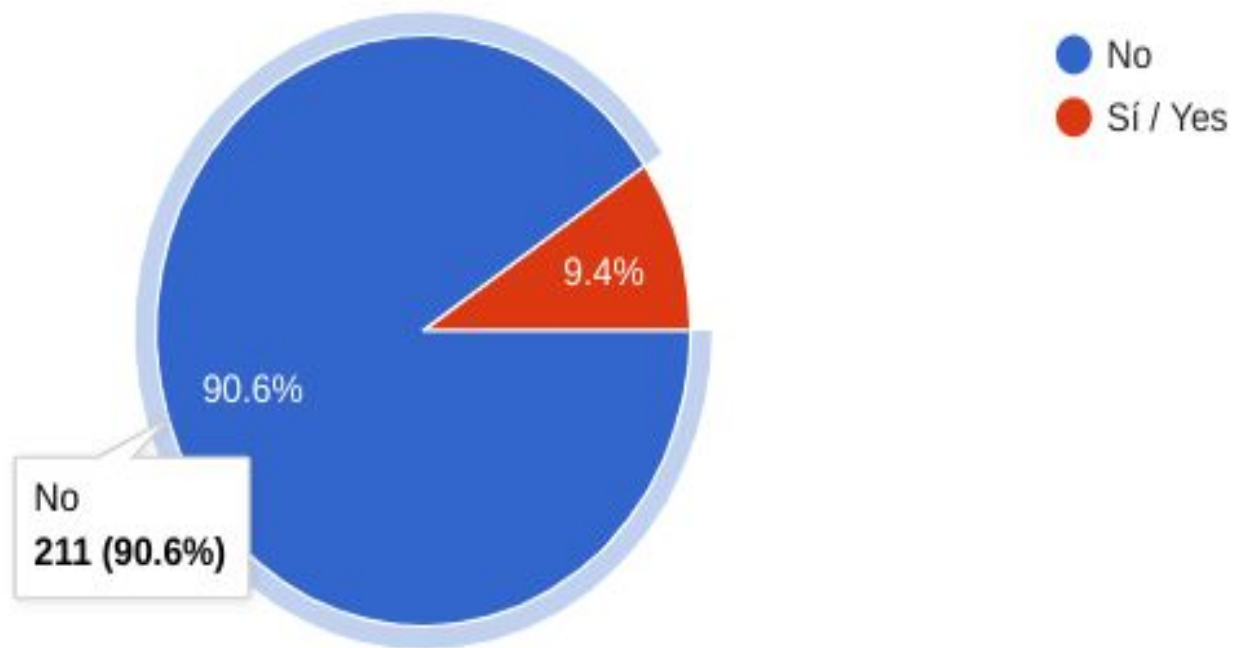
# SURVEY RESULTS:

## 233 responses were received

- Only 19 of 233 students play a sport
  - The majority of those 19 students mainly played baseball or softball.
- 3.4% of the students were involved in an after school activity; 8 total people from a group of 233 people.
- Almost as many ELL students felt comfortable in ELL class (14) than all other core classes combined (17)
- More than half of the students (154/233) said that on a scale of 0-10, they were less than likely to attend an after school event.
- ***Many ELL Students had declared that they were a part of the student body (83.7%), yet the evidence does not support that.***

# 1. ¿Formas parte de un equipo deportivo de la escuela? / Are you part of a school sports team?

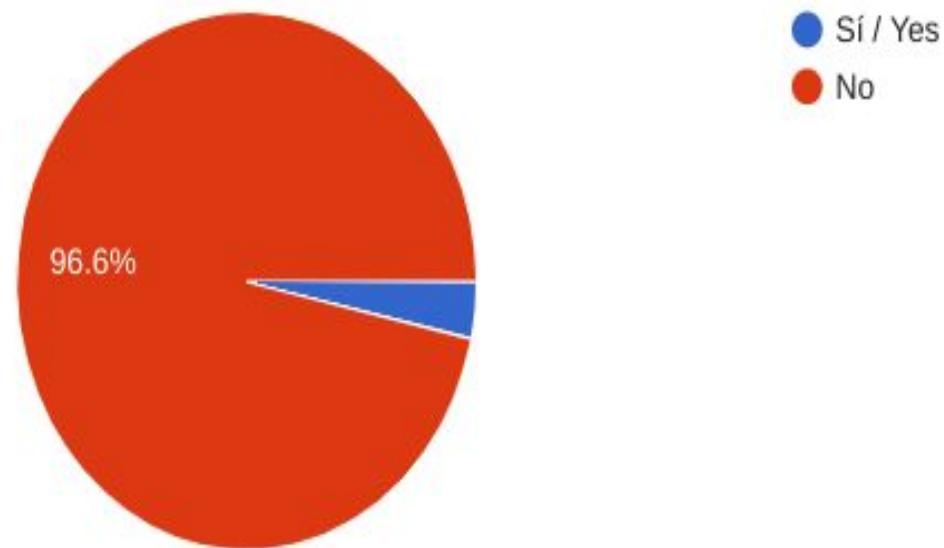
233 responses





3. ¿Formas de algún club escolar después la escuela? (Ejemplo- STEM, Teatro, Robotica) / Are you part of a school club after school? (Example- STEM, Theater, Robotics)

233 responses



## A student's response in the survey when asked to specify why they might not feel part of this school:

- ❖ **Original Response:** “Yo no me siento parte de esta escuela por el simple hecho de que en esta escuela hay racismo de parte de algunos estudiantes latinos y estudiantes africanos americanos contra los estudiantes que no hablan inglés bien. Muchos llaman a otros ‘hicks’ por el hecho de no hablar ingles, y tambien mismos estudiantes latinos que saben un poco mas de ingles que otro, lo llama ‘hick’.”
- ❖ **Translation:** “I do not feel part of this school for the simple fact that in this school there is racism on the part of some Latino students and African American students against students who do not speak English well. Many call other ‘hicks’ for not speaking English, and also Latino students who know a little more English than another, calls him ‘hick’.”

# ONE ON ONE INTERVIEWS:

- Many of our members took the initiative to formally interview our school's demographic, including teachers, coaches, club leaders, ELL and non-ELL students.
- We got distinct answers to our various questions but one thing that remained substantial between almost all interviews was the inescapable language barriers for many of our schools ESL students.
- Some questions included:
  - Why do you believe that ELL students don't participate as much in extracurricular activities? -
  - What do you think we should do to make ELL students feel more welcomed in the school?
  - Do you know any ELL students who dropped out of school? If so, do you know why they dropped out?
  - Do you think that the teachers push ELL students to do well in school? If not, what can we do to help ELL students improve academically and feel more welcomed in the school?

# RESULTS:

From the one on one interviews we derived the following:

- **Teachers:** All teachers we interviewed were aware of challenges of language barriers or at home responsibilities.
- **Club leaders:** Many club leaders noticed that there are very few to no english language learners in their clubs. A main reason is the lack of feeling of belonging.
- **English language learning students:** Out of all school activities english language learners do not participate in sports the most, many coaches try recruiting members and try encouraging students to join
- **English language learning students not in sports:** There are many things in the way of those english language learners who are not in sports or clubs, many don't feel comfortable without having friends or someone to understand them
- **Non-English language learners:** in our school there are students like us who are aware of these issues and decide to take action and then there are students who fail to acknowledge or take in consideration the struggles and challenges of their peers

# Words from Interviews:

“Need a community and connection”- Ms. Donatelli

“Lack of home support”- Mr. Garcia

“...coming to another country is hard because you do not know the language and you can not understand what others are saying or what they mean” - ELL student

“I want to join a sport but I’m scared of being rejected”- ELL student

# EXISTING RESEARCH:

- Using the Y.P.A.R Handbook research strategies, and state reports on our school, we searched for data that would assist us in reaching our goal.
- The state reports offered insight on the demographic, academic achievement, college and career readiness, grad postsecondary, and the climate and environment of our school.

# EXISTING RESEARCH FOUND INFORMATION:

- 16.8% students in NBHS are English Learners
- 85% of the school is Hispanic
- 64.8% English Learners graduated in 2018
  - Out of that 64.8% only 22.2% pursued a postsecondary education
- 17.8% of English Learner students are chronically absenteeism

# POTENTIAL SOLUTIONS:

- A possible solution is to start as soon as middle school with language barrier-breaking clubs where they focus on intermingling ELL students and non-ELL students. This could also be another civic engagement group that focuses on helping their communities. This gives the students a chance to get to know the people of their town and feel involved in their school.
- Another solution we could test out is placing Spanish speaking people in a place of authority for example a co-leader of a club or people in the administration that speak Spanish. This will allow english learners to be more comfortable with approaching and confiding in them as well as feel more comfortable in being part of the club.



# CONCLUSION (SUMMARY)

In conclusion, our mission is to...

- Bridge the social gap between the English Learners Community (previously known as ESL students) and monolingual students at New Brunswick High School.
- Completely include & integrate these students in every aspect, which will ensure that the English Learners Community will feel more welcomed at New Brunswick High School.
- And as a result, this will not only encourage them to participate in clubs, sports, and other activities/cohorts that our school offers, but it will also be a positive step towards decreasing their dropout rates.

# THANK YOU!

**WE ARE ZEBRAS!**



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