

The Latinx ESL Crisis in Cobb County

During our research for the Marietta Museum of History Project, we have found that ESL (English as a Second Language) programs in Cobb County lack funding, mobilization, and awareness. The growing language barrier caused by poorly implemented ESL programs hurts the academic performance of Latinx students. For this reason, it is imperative that ESL programs in Cobb receive more attention. We recommend prevalent community leaders use their influence and take initiative in advocating for this cause. We have already seen strong community involvement among local leaders, such as restaurant owner Juan Violantes, who runs Giovanni's Children Foundation, a nonprofit organization. We need more people like Violantes to be at the vanguard of a grassroots movement to support ESL programs in the county. Building a coalition of concerned families, educators, and business leaders is the best way to petition Cobb County School Board members and demand change. Creating an improvement in ESL programs in Cobb County starts with the families and community. It is only after they gain more support and knowledge of ESLs can we hope to get more funding from government resources.

In partnership with the Marietta Museum of History, we are striving to document the history of the Latinx community of Cobb County that has gone unnoticed. Our research will be given to the museum for documentation in the hopes of better representation for the community. For our research process, we were given framing questions on education and country of origin to steer us towards our areas of research. We focused on sources that were able to have conversations with each other, ending with a strong lead toward ESL programs in Cobb County. Cobb has experienced massive growth in its Latinx school-age population since the turn of the century, making it more important than ever to have successful ESL programs.