

**Peñaflor, Chile**

# **Escuela Emilia Lascar**

**How a school TV channel inspired students during the pandemic**



**WORLD'S  
BEST SCHOOL**  
Innovation

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**WORLD'S  
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# Introduction

During the global pandemic, Escuela Emilia Lascar realised it could overcome the challenge of getting its students to focus on their studies while in isolation by creating Emilia TV as part of their distance learning program. The project also helped create an innovative educational model that aided students who struggled with their education when face-to-face learning returned.



# Profile:

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“Despite the fact we are in a vulnerable context and we may work with vulnerable students, that doesn’t really matter since we place value on what our students are as people. We highly value the human capital that they represent.”- María Elena Fernández, Principal, Escuela Emilia Lascar



**Country:**  
Chile



**Region:**  
Peñaflor



**School type:**  
Public school



**Location area:**  
Town



**Student population:**  
1001 to 1500



**Prize Category:**  
Innovation



# In-depth look

## CONTEXT AND CHALLENGE

The Emilia Lascar School is a public school in the Peñaflor district, 40 kilometres from Santiago, Chile. Currently, 91% of the school's student population has been categorised as belonging to vulnerable families. With the help of her staff, the school's Principal, María Elena Fernández, has improved the school's academic reputation within its wider community. The school had increased its enrolment over the years and most of its students go on to graduate from the eighth grade of elementary school.

During the pandemic, however, the school faced the problem of getting their students to engage with their studies from home due to a lack of access to technological devices and tools. .

“We conducted a diagnosis to determine whether the students had the tools to connect with us and use these resources,” said Fernández. “Most families and students do not have the means to connect, like a computer or internet connection, so we had to make sure that they would get the content.”


Another challenge was the need to generate spaces for socio-emotional support since isolation considerably affected students' self-esteem, social skills, and ability to express their emotions.



In August 2021, the school conducted a survey and found that 74.4% of its students were bored, with another 47% feeling sad and having a lack of energy, and close to 40% of them also expressing feelings of loss, anger, a loss of appetite and insomnia.

When the idea of Emilia TV came up, students were initially reluctant to combine social media with their studies, and so the faculty was faced with the task of combining the two in an engaging, supportive tool.





**“We have been able to strengthen the bonds within the community as students and parents have realized that the social and emotional bonds go beyond challenges.”**

**Antonio Briones, School Counsellor of  
Escuela Emilia Lascar**



# EXPERTISE AND APPROACH

In its 80-year history, Escuela Emilia Lascar has mostly taught elementary school children from less privileged backgrounds. However, the school takes pride in helping to shape the character of its students, believing in their potential and ability to succeed: “For us,” said Francisca Parraguez, one of the English teachers, “we believe that nothing is impossible.”

Emilia TV is an audio-visual space that was born in April 2020 in the hopes that the relationship between the school and the wider community would be strengthened to the area’s lack of access to strong technological tools. Many people didn’t have access to a high-quality internet connection, and families were used to having students learn in classrooms.

The communication difficulties also led to weakened student-teacher relationships. The school, therefore, decided to broadcast live transmissions through the RSS web feed to reach the wider school community. “We had to identify the issues of what we were facing as a school community,” said Fernández, “such as to keep the communication with our students and their families. We learned how to use technological tools.”

This novel initiative provided a playful and dynamic space to help develop the students' learning. It went on to become a unique and unprecedented resource in Peñaflor city and incorporates the use of professional filming and editing tools, the dynamic interaction with children and their families, Google forms, and online quizzes, among other forms of digital learning.

Initially, only faculty created and broadcast the content for Emilia TV but, over time, the students began designing their own segments.



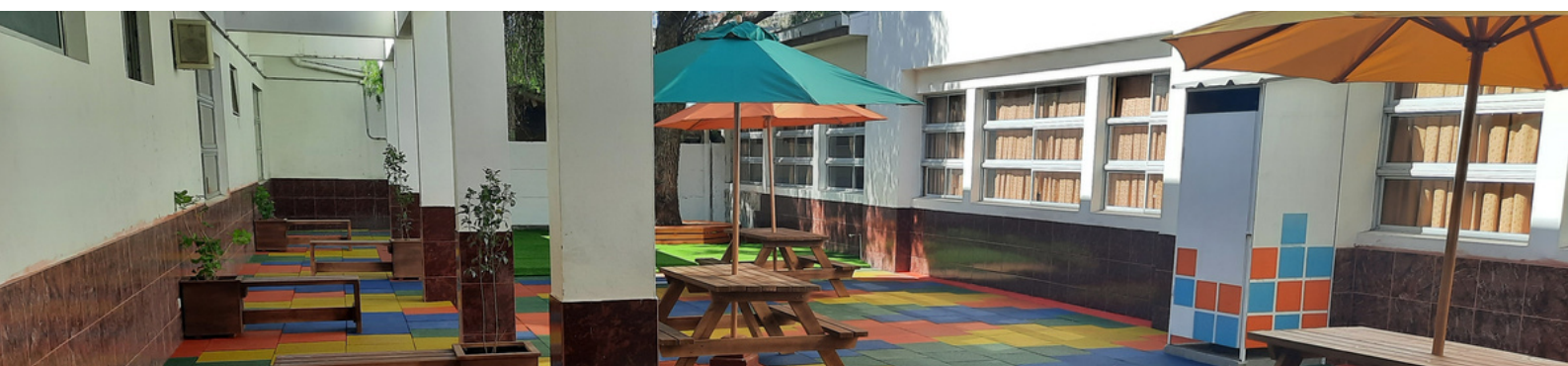


They arranged interviews and produced and filmed content on issues they found interesting. Through their involvement in the day-to-day operations of Emilia TV, students became involved in journalism, filmmaking, and other forms of content creation, all of which helped uncover some of their hidden talents.

Everyone discusses and agrees on the programme's content – from students, teachers, directors, and parents to professional and non-professional support teams. Teachers instruct students on how to analyse content and how to improve it. The content is then shared in formal classroom spaces and in parent-teacher meetings.

Upon realising that students and their families would be best reached through a combination of social media platforms, Emilia TV was initially broadcast live, every week, through Facebook. The school then became aware it had to change its strategy. “We realised that the students don't use Facebook as much as we do,” said a teacher, “so we changed platforms.”

That new platform was YouTube, which helped mobilise the entire school community. In the years since the initial launch, Emilia TV has evolved, incorporating new tools and adapting its educational style to better suit the needs of the school's students.



**“The key challenge we faced with Emilia TV was conveying to our students that social media can be used not only as a tool for entertainment purposes but as a pedagogical tool for them for socio-emotional strategies that they could use.”**

**-Antonio Briones, School Counsellor at Escuela Emilia Lascar**

# OUTCOMES AND RESULTS

“This initiative was very successful,” said Fernández. “It had such a great impact that 98% of parents tried to get any device so they could better connect to Emilia TV.” Thanks to this, Emilia TV has also won two national awards.

Within the school, the project has fostered a hugely collaborative environment, where teachers develop ideas and work together on programmes to be shown. It has also promoted meaningful learning experiences for faculty and boosted student participation, both in their studies and their social interactions with each other. As a result, other schools across Peñaflores have also begun to replicate Emilia TV.

Escuela Emilia Lascar has become an enabler for these other schools, by providing other teachers and schools tools for replicating the Emilia TV experience appropriately

and helping them understand which skills they need to implement the project.

Thanks to its success, Emilia TV now incorporates various current topics such as gender identity, healthy lifestyle habits, emotional expression, physical activity, citizenship training, and culture, among others. Over time, the project has transformed the school’s pedagogical methods, highlighting the use of media technology as a resource to motivate the children.

For those in the wider community, Emilia TV became an ally in developing contemporary and contextualized learning. Students from different levels began to actively participate in the creation of audio-visual material, which allowed them to express their ideas, emotions, and opinions. This, in turn, established Emilia TV as a space where students could build their own socio-emotional and cognitive processes, and further develop their personal talents.



# Key Steps



## IDENTIFY

The first step was to identify the problems the school community was facing. These involved difficulties in communicating with families and the significant degree of anxiety caused by the pandemic. This was first reported by the head teachers, who, from a distance, tried to provide the emotional support that was required by students.



## LIVE TRANSMISSION

When live lessons on Facebook were well received, the school decided to incorporate new spaces, such as interviews with people who were in other countries, live music, and short films. Gradually, students were invited to send in videos with movie recommendations, cooking recipes, and their thoughts and feelings on the ongoing pandemic, among other things.



In addition, the school defined a schedule, duration, and format for these live transmissions and the programme was renamed Emilia TV.



## **ESTABLISHING STRUCTURE**

Once Emilia TV and its space were established, the school then needed to enable conversations and virtual diagnostics (google forms, emails) between teachers, assistants, parents, and children, with the aim of improving the content and promoting active participation. This led to new sections, such as Emilia Freak, Talent School, and Emi and Lía.



## **SHARING THE PROJECT WITH OTHER SCHOOLS**

The municipality of Peñaflores recognised the initiative's potential and proposed for similar initiatives to be carried out in other schools in the area. From the studios of Emilia TV, programmes were broadcast throughout 2020 to strengthen the link between all the different schools.



This initiative was called Peñaeduca TV and was included in the Communal Education Department's annual planning, which promoted topics such as environmental care, school coexistence, different artistic disciplines, strategies to face the pandemic, healthy eating, and socio-emotional development.



## **INVOLVING STUDENTS**

The fifth step was to get the students themselves to participate in Emilia TV. This only became possible as the pandemic-related mobility restrictions began to ease.



## **DATA GATHERING AND EVALUATION**

The sixth step was to hold meetings between the work team, management team, and teacher head of department to evaluate the ETV project. The school also consulted with the rest of the community through Google forms or e-mails. At the time of writing, the school is planning on reimplementing face-to-face meetings. This would drastically cut down the TV audience, which is why the school has begun to think of ways to adapt Emilia TV for in-person learning.





## PROMOTION

Finally, the school applied for the ELIGE EDUCAR foundation's ELIGE INNOVAR contest. This helped showcase the important work the school had done and helped promote it, in the hopes that other schools and communities (outside the district) might replicate the project.



# Advice and Guidance

The school advises that institutions should begin by diagnosing the community to have a strong understanding of what the biggest issues are. It's also key to creating teams that can work collaboratively and address challenges together. Finally, there should be confidence in the power and capabilities of your institutions to implement these projects successfully; if there is trust in the staff's abilities, there is a higher chance the initiative will be successful.

## More information

 <https://emilialascar.cl/>

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