

Understanding, Supporting, and Engaging Newcomer Students and Their Families



CHAPTER 1:

Who Are Our Newcomers?

ABOUT THIS CHAPTER

Newcomers to the United States are a highly heterogeneous group. This chapter of the tool kit discusses diverse situations and circumstances among newcomers; the assets they bring; and ways schools can support newcomer students and their families as they adapt to U.S. schools, society, and culture.

Special Features

- **Typology of newcomers and immigrant spotlights:** Segments that highlight various aspects of newcomers' adaptation and contributions to American society.
- **Classroom tool:** Ideas and resources teachers can use to help students understand, appreciate, and share their own stories about newcomers' social, cultural, and economic contributions.
- **Professional reflection and discussion activity:** Instructions and handouts for professional learning communities or staff meetings. (The activity takes about an hour if participants read the chapter in advance.)
- **Resources:** Annotated references to resources cited in this chapter; relevant federal guidance, policy, and data; and other helpful information.

Who Are Our Newcomers?

For the purposes of this tool kit, the term “newcomers” refers to any foreign-born students and their families who have recently arrived in the United States. Throughout our country’s history, people from around the world have immigrated to the United States to start a new life, bringing their customs, religions, and languages with them. The United States is, to a great extent, a nation of immigrants. Newcomers play an important role in weaving our nation’s social and economic fabric, and U.S. schools play an important role in helping newcomers adapt and contribute as they integrate into American society.



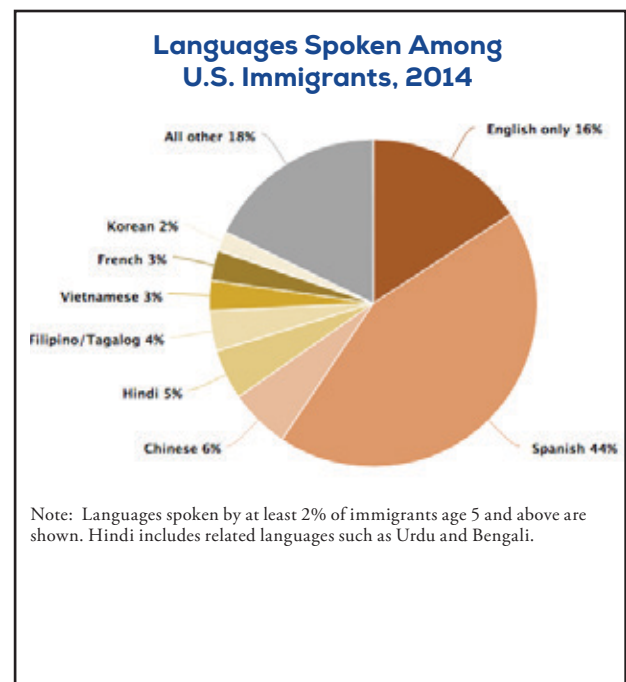
Kenji Hakuta (1986), who has researched and written extensively about issues related to newcomers and English Learners (ELs), criticized an early 20th century distinction between favored “old immigrants”—those who came in the early 19th century mainly from Germany, Ireland, and Britain, were overwhelmingly Protestant, and seemed to integrate easily into American life—and so-called “new immigrants,” who came between 1880 and 1910, primarily from southern and Eastern Europe, represented many religions (e.g., Catholicism, Orthodox Christianity, and Judaism), had more varied customs and cultures, and were not as readily accepted into American society. (Chinese and East Asians who came as temporary laborers were not viewed in this schema as potential citizens or permanent immigrants.) Those for whom integration into American culture was not a choice (such as Native Americans and enslaved Africans) must of course be noted, but even those who have chosen to come here from abroad—nearly all immigrants and immigrant groups—have faced challenges integrating into American society.

Throughout the 20th and into the 21st centuries, immigrants to the United States have often arrived from war-torn or politically unstable countries, whether in Europe, Asia, Africa, the Caribbean, Central and South America, or elsewhere. They have represented, and continue to represent, a wide variety of religions, cultural backgrounds, customs, and beliefs.

The challenge of integrating into their new home is compounded for newcomers who attend school, since they must learn not only how to navigate a new culture socially, but also how to function effectively in an education system and language that typically differs from their prior experience (Jacoby, 2004; Suárez-Orozco & Suárez-Orozco, 2009).

According to the 2014 American Community Survey, 1.3 million foreign-born individuals moved to the United States that year, an 11 percent increase from 1.2 million in 2013 (Zong & Batalova, 2016). The largest numbers of newcomers in the United States came from India, China, and Mexico (Zong & Batalova, 2016). India was the leading country of origin for recent immigrants,¹ with 147,500 arriving in 2014, followed by China with 131,800, Mexico with 130,000, Canada with 41,200, and the Philippines with 40,500. Included in these numbers are children adopted internationally; in 2014, these numbered 6,438, with 2,743 age 5 or over (U.S. Department of State, n.d.).

Within the total population of immigrants in 2014, approximately 50 percent (20.9 million) of the 42.1 million immigrants ages 5 and older were not English proficient (Zong & Batalova, 2016). Among immigrants ages 5 and older, 44 percent speak Spanish (the most predominant non-English language spoken), 6 percent speak Chinese (including Mandarin and Cantonese), 5 percent speak Hindi or a related language, 4 percent speak Filipino/Tagalog, 3 percent speak Vietnamese, 3 percent speak French or Haitian Creole, and 2 percent speak Korean (Brown & Stepler, 2016).



Terms Used to Describe Newcomers

“Newcomer” is an umbrella term that includes various categories of immigrants who are born outside of the United States. For example, all immigrants are not necessarily ELs, as some are fluent in English, while others speak little or no English. Students identified as ELs require assistance with language acquisition (though more than 40 percent of identified ELs are born in the United States). Some ELs may need help integrating into U.S. culture. Depending on the school district, newcomers of school age who attend public school may be placed in a newcomer program or mainstreamed (National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition, n.d.c). The following table describes terms used by various entities to describe newcomer populations.

Term	Definition
Asylees	Asylees are individuals who, on their own, travel to the United States and subsequently apply for or receive a grant of asylum. Asylees do not enter the United States as refugees. They may enter as students, tourists, or businessmen, or with “undocumented” status (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, n.d.a).
English Learner (EL)	An individual (A) who is aged 3 through 21; (B) who is enrolled or preparing to enroll in an elementary school or secondary school; (C)(i) who was not born in the United States or whose native language is a language other than English; (ii)(I) who is a Native American or Alaska Native, or a native resident of the outlying areas; and (II) who comes from an environment where a language other than English has had a significant impact on the individual’s level of English language proficiency; or (iii) who is migratory, whose native language is not English, and who comes from an environment where a language other than English is dominant; and (D) whose difficulties in speaking, reading, writing, or understanding English may be sufficient to deny the individual (i) the ability to meet the challenging state academic standards; (ii) the ability to successfully achieve in classrooms where the language of instruction is English; or (iii) the opportunity to participate fully in society (<i>ESEA</i> , as amended by <i>ESSA</i> , Section 8101[20]).
Foreign born	People who are not U.S. citizens at birth (U.S. Census Bureau, n.d.).
Immigrant children and youth (<i>Title III</i>)	Immigrant children and youth are those who (A) are aged 3 through 21; (B) were not born in any state; and (C) have not been attending one or more schools in any one or more states for more than for more than 3 full academic years (<i>ESEA</i> , as amended by the <i>No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB)</i> , Section 3301[6]).
New American	An all-encompassing term that includes foreign-born individuals (and their children and families) who seek to become fully integrated into their new community in the United States (White House Task Force on New Americans, 2015).
Refugee	A refugee is a person who has fled his or her country of origin because of past persecution or a fear of future persecution based upon race, religion, nationality, political opinion, or membership in a particular social group (U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, 2015).
Student with interrupted formal education (SIFE)	Students in grades four through 12 who have experienced disruptions in their educations in their native countries and/or the United States, and/or are unfamiliar with the culture of schooling (Calderón, 2008).
Unaccompanied youth	Children who come into the United States from other countries without an adult guardian (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, n.d.b).

Newcomers' Contributions to American Society

The description of the United States as a “melting pot”—a term coined in 1908 by British playwright Israel Zangwill and widely used for nearly a century—suggests an amalgam of the varied traditions, cultures, and values of diverse communities of people from all over the world who assimilate into a cohesive whole. Others have suggested that more apt metaphors to describe the United States might be “salad bowl,” “mosaic,” or “kaleidoscope,” conveying that immigrant peoples’ customs and cultures are not blended or melted together in the United States but rather remain distinct and thereby contribute to the richness of our nation as a whole (Jacoby, 2004). This rich mosaic of immigrants positively impacts the United States in a multitude of ways, including socially, culturally, and economically.

According to the U.S. Department of State, the majority of Americans travel *within* the United States much more than they travel *outside* the United States. The number of U.S. citizens who travel abroad each year hovers around 10 percent of the population; the number of U.S. citizens who hold valid passports is roughly 30 percent (U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Consular Affairs, n.d.). Given this reality, many Americans’ cultural knowledge of the world can be greatly enhanced by the immigrants they encounter here in the United States. Immigrants bring customs, cultural lenses, and linguistic knowledge from their mother countries, and the totality of these perspectives and experiences has the potential to expand U.S. citizens’ collective knowledge and understanding of the world (Portes & Rumbaut, 2001).

In schools, the very presence of immigrant students provides a rich opportunity for all students to expand their cultural knowledge and their capacity to participate fully in a multicultural democracy and engaged with an increasingly interconnected world. When students attempt to communicate with, listen to, and learn from peers who have experiences and perspectives different from their own, they expand their knowledge base and at the same time gain the necessary intercommunication skills that are essential to success in their higher education, business, civic, political and social lives.

Scientific and Mathematic Contributions

There are many examples of foreign-born Americans who excelled in math and science. Tobocman (2015) noted that many foreign-born Americans won Nobel Prizes in science in 2009 and 2013:

- In 2009, eight of the nine Nobel Prize winners in science were Americans, and five of those eight Americans were foreign born. Foreign-born Americans won more Nobel Prizes that year than those who won from all the other nations combined.
- In 2013, six of the eight Nobel Prize winners in science were Americans, and four of those six Americans were foreign born. As in 2009, foreign-born Americans won more Nobel Prizes in science than winners from all the other nations of the world combined.

In the field of teaching mathematics, Jaime Escalante, born in Bolivia, was known for his outstanding work in teaching students calculus from 1974 to 1991 at Garfield High School in East Los Angeles, California. The students who entered his classroom were predominantly Hispanic and came from working-class families—and they performed below grade level in all academic areas and experienced behavioral problems. Escalante sought to change the school culture by helping his students tap into their full potential and excel in calculus. He had all of his students take the Advanced Placement calculus exam by their senior year. Escalante was the subject of the 1988 film *Stand and Deliver*, in which he was portrayed by Edward James Olmos.

Cultural Contributions

Immigrants bring varied and extensive cultural assets to this nation. The United States has long benefited from the knowledge, innovation, and artistry immigrants have contributed in numerous fields. In literature, for example, immigrants from every continent have for decades added a breadth of perspectives about the world by sharing their experiences and contributing new knowledge and understanding to the U.S. (Frederick, 2013).

- John Muir, prolific author, preservationist, and co-founder of the Sierra Club, immigrated with his family from Scotland. His biographer, John Holmes, contends that Muir “profoundly shaped the very categories through which Americans understand and envision their relationships with the natural world.” (Holmes, 1999)
- Francisco Jimenez was born in Mexico and spent his childhood helping to support his family as a migrant worker. Despite living a life that did not provide him with a permanent home or regular opportunities for formal schooling, Jimenez became a distinguished writer and professor. He is the author of several books, including *The Circuit: Stories From the Life of a Migrant Child* and *Breaking Through*.
- Chinua Achebe, renowned Nigerian author of *Things Fall Apart* and numerous other writings, immigrated to the United States as a university professor and helped to solidify the presence of the African voice in the field of literature.
- Jhumpa Lahiri came to the United States from India at the age of 3. She won a Pulitzer Prize in 2000 for her short story collection, *Interpreter of Maladies*.
- Edwidge Danticat immigrated from Haiti to New York as an adolescent. She is the author of several stories and novels, and the recipient of an American Book Award (1999), a National Book Critics Circle Award (2007), and a MacArthur “Genius” Fellowship (2009).
- Khaled Hosseini, author of *The Kite Runner* and *A Thousand Splendid Suns*, was born in Afghanistan and immigrated to the United States, where he became a citizen in 1980.
- Vladimir Nabokov, author of *Lolita*, was born and raised in Russia. After immigrating to the United States in 1940, he became a professor at Harvard and Cornell universities. *Lolita* is considered to be one of the best English-language novels of the 20th century.
- Junot Diaz immigrated to New Jersey from the Dominican Republic at the age of 7. Diaz began writing as a graduate student at Cornell University, and later published several acclaimed novels, including *Drown* and *The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao*.

In music, immigrants have utilized their talents and vision to greatly influence the sound of this nation. They brought their instruments, along with unique rhythms, sounds, phrasing, and songs from their home countries, all of which have been woven into the music created in America.

Immigrants in the United States have also excelled in sports, acting, culinary arts, and other professions.



Khaled Hosseini



Jhumpa Lahiri



Junot Diaz



Edwidge Danticat



Chinua Achebe

IMMIGRANT SPOTLIGHT

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, Author



Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie was born in Nigeria in 1977. At the age of 19, she immigrated to the United States to attend college, first studying communications at Drexel University in Philadelphia, and later completing a degree in communications and political science at Eastern Connecticut State University. Adichie went on to earn a master's degree in African Studies from Yale University in 2008. While at Eastern Connecticut State, she began writing her first novel, *Purple Hibiscus*, which was short-listed for the Orange Prize for Fiction in 2004 and awarded the Commonwealth Writers' Prize for Best First Book in 2005. Her subsequent books, including *Half a Yellow Sun* and *The Thing Around Your Neck*, were well-received around the world and have been translated into more than 30 languages. *Americanah*, published in 2013, received numerous awards and accolades, including the National Book Critics Circle Award for Fiction and The Chicago Tribune Heartland Prize for Fiction, and was listed in *The New York Times'* Best Books of the Year. Her most recent book, an extended personal essay titled *We Should All be Feminists*, was published in 2014.

Source: The Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie website. (n.d.). Retrieved from <http://www.l3.ulg.ac.be/adichie/>.

Economic Contributions

The Partnership for a New American Economy (Fairlie, 2012) found that, in 2011, immigrants “started 28% of all new U.S. businesses ... despite accounting for just 12.9% of the U.S. population.” In California, the percentages are even higher: In six years (between 2006 and 2012), 44 percent of new tech startups in Silicon Valley were founded by immigrants. Nationally, 40 percent of Fortune 500 companies were founded by either first- or second-generation immigrants. The Small Business Administration concurs that almost 30 percent of all new businesses in the United States are started by immigrants and that these businesses, in turn, employ more than 5 million people nationwide. Fortune 500 companies employ more than 10 million people and generate annual revenues of \$4.2 trillion.

These business endeavors speak to a tradition of strong civic participation by new Americans that serves to reinvigorate and support a healthy democracy. In addition to these contributions, immigrants, both documented and undocumented, pay billions of dollars in U.S. taxes annually. A 50-state analysis by the Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy (2015) found that undocumented workers in the United States contributed more than \$11.8 billion in state and local taxes in 2012. This amount represents an even greater value than it appears, since undocumented families typically do not take advantage of the public programs that their tax dollars help fund, due to their legal status.

IMMIGRANT SPOTLIGHT

Paola Moya, CEO and Principal at Marshall Moya Design



Paola Moya was born in Colombia, and she and her family immigrated to the United States just before she turned 18. Moya had a penchant for design and architecture, but she lacked the resources to attend a university, so she went to work to help support the family, taking a job as a dog walker despite her “tremendous fear of dogs.” She continued this work for several years before earning a bachelor’s degree, followed by a master’s degree in architecture. Just one year after earning her master’s, Moya won the Visionary Award from the National Organization of Minority Architects (NOMA) because of her thesis

project, a plan for building sustainable housing for displaced people in Cartagena, Colombia. Moya was hired by one of the judges for the award, Michael Marshall, and has since become a co-partner and principal in Marshall’s firm, now called Marshall Moya Design. She is actively involved in the design and development of all projects for the firm, and also cultivates new business opportunities, oversees the firm’s daily business operations, and leads the firm’s strategic planning.

Source: Cristancho-Ahn, M. (2012, June 6). Our American Dream: Paola Moya, from dog walker to architect. *Fox News Latino*. Retrieved from <http://latino.foxnews.com/latino/community/2012/06/06/our-american-dream-paola-moya-from-dog-walker-to-architect/>

How Schools Can Support Newcomers

In order to achieve integration into American culture and society—and into American schools in particular—newcomer students and their families need myriad forms of support from multiple sources. Newcomers and their families have four basic needs, each of which are discussed in this tool kit:

1. A welcoming environment (Chapter 2)
2. High-quality academic programs designed to meet the academic and language development needs of newcomer students (Chapter 3)
3. Social emotional support and skills development to be successful in school and beyond (Chapter 4)
4. Encouragement and support to engage in the education process (Chapter 5)

By recognizing these needs and developing strategies to meet them, schools can help newcomers build the necessary foundation to thrive both socially and emotionally and to achieve academic success.

Teaching Students About the Contributions of Newcomers

Listed below are links to numerous activities that classroom teachers can use to help students understand newcomers' experiences and the various ways newcomers contribute to the United States.

Biography.com offers background histories of famous people who immigrated to the United States.

<http://www.biography.com/people/groups/immigration-us-immigrant>

Edutopia provides suggestions for creating a safe, welcoming environment for students to tell about their family's immigration stories through digital storytelling.

<http://www.edutopia.org/blog/teach-empathy-digital-immigration-stories-sara-burnett>

The Integration of Immigrants into American Society, edited by Mary C. Waters and Marisa Gerstein Pineau, describes many ways immigrants have served and contributed to our society.

<http://www.nap.edu/catalog/21746/the-integration-of-immigrants-into-american-society>

The Public Broadcasting System (PBS) teacher site features personal stories, resources, and programs about immigration. http://www-tc.pbs.org/independentlens/newamericans/pdfs/tna5_contribs.pdf

- Newcomers of all ages can see what happens when families immigrate together, what it means to be “undocumented,” and how to find help for a variety of issues. <http://pbskids.org/itsmylife/family/immigration/>
- Blended lessons support literacy skills through a documentary video about four teens who immigrated to the United States. Students develop their literacy skills as they explore a social studies focus on the factors that drive immigration and the challenges immigrants face in the United States, particularly in learning English. <http://www.pbslearningmedia.org/resource/midl11.soc.splimmig/american-stories-teens-and-immigration/>

Teaching Vision contains statistics on U.S. immigration, lessons on Ellis Island, information on the Pilgrims, and much more for grades k–12. <https://www.teachervision.com/immigration/teacher-resources/6633.html>

The American Immigration Council offers a series about teaching immigrant heritage to access a shared past and present. The council's website provides strategies for developing reading and writing skills, building empathy, and engaging students about immigration. <http://www.americanimmigrationcouncil.org/education/8-tips-teaching-how-write-digital-story-immigration>

Scholastic Magazine offers lessons plans about immigrants for teachers in grades k–12. Included are ideas on how to conduct an oral history workshop, video resources, an interactive tour of Ellis Island, immigration research topics, and strategies for conducting interviews with immigrant and their families.

<http://teacher.scholastic.com/activities/immigration/>

"See Me": Understanding Newcomers' Experiences, Challenges, and Strengths (Jigsaw)

Purpose

K–12 school administrators and teachers can use this jigsaw activity in a staff meeting or professional learning community to discuss the experiences, challenges, and strengths of students who are newcomers; to examine their own assumptions about newcomers; and to identify ways to support such students.

Preparation for Activity

- A few days in advance, ask participants to read Chapter 1 of this tool kit.
- Make copies of the four Vignettes (one set for each group of four participants) and the Reading Jigsaw Note-Taker Matrix (one for each participant).

Time Required for Activity

1 hour

Instructions for Facilitator

STEP	ACTION
1	Participants sit in table groups, four per table. The table is their base group. Those in each base group number off, one through four, to determine which learning group they will be in.
2	Participants move to their learning groups (all ones together, all twos together, etc.). Each person in the first learning group receives a copy of Vignette 1, each person in the second learning group receives a copy of Vignette 2, and so forth. There will be one learning group per vignette. If there are more than 24 participants, consider forming two learning groups per number to create smaller groups in which discussion will be more easily facilitated.
3	Participants read their assigned vignette silently on their own and consider the three questions at the bottom of the page. They may underline text or jot notes on the page if desired.
4	Teachers discuss the reading and their responses to the questions with others in their learning group.
5	Each participant receives a copy of the Reading Jigsaw Note-Taker Matrix. Within each learning group, participants discuss how they will fill out the cells that correspond to their assigned vignette. Once they reach consensus, each participant fills in his or her copy of the matrix.

STEP	ACTION
6	Teachers return to their original base groups. There, they take turns (starting with Vignette 1) briefly summarizing their assigned vignette, the associated questions, and the consensus responses from their learning group, referring to their matrix as needed. As each person speaks, the others in the base group listen and add notes to the empty cells in the matrix.
7	Facilitate a large-group discussion by asking the following questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How were the vignettes similar to things you've seen in our school? How were they different? • What new ideas or insights did you gain during this activity? • What are the implications for practice? • What do you think you might try or do differently in your classroom as a result of this activity? • What do you think we as a school might try or do differently?



Vignette #1

Newcomer Profile: Fathima

Fathima is a 13-year-old girl who recently arrived from Indonesia. Fathima speaks Indonesian and Arabic at home with her parents and her little brother. Her mother enrolled her in a dual immersion program upon arriving in the United States with the hope that Fathima will be able to improve her English, as well as maintain her Arabic language. Her mother is pleased that the school district offers a dual language program in English and Arabic.

When Fathima is with her two best friends, there is a lot of laughter. Today, the trio of girls is performing a play for their classmates. Fathima speaks rapidly and animatedly in Arabic. The story the girls have written is funny, and their classmates seem captivated by the story the girls have created. When Fathima's character speaks, she interjects English phrases. During the show, Fathima's character exclaims, "No way!" and "Let's go!" and "See you tomorrow!" During the girls' performance, they are expressive and talkative. Their classmates applaud loudly when the performance is over.

Later in the morning, the teacher is reading with the class. They are reading a version of the Indonesian folktale "Deer Mouse and the Farmer" in English. Throughout the lesson, Fathima adjusts her hijab and seems distracted. As the lesson progresses, Fathima continues to sit quietly, sometimes appearing not to be paying attention. Each time the teacher asks a question of the students, the English-speaking students call out excitedly, sometimes speaking over each other. Fathima remains silent during this time.

As the students leave for lunch, the teacher asks Fathima if she liked the book. She tells the teacher in Arabic that the story reminds her of home. When asked why she did not offer that observation during the lesson, she comments, "I understand the story, but I don't understand the words."

In your learning group, consider and discuss the following questions:

- What strengths does Fathima bring to the classroom?
- If the teachers were to observe Fathima and her friends performing their play, what conclusion could they make about Fathima as a student and a member of the classroom community?
- What changes can Fathima's teachers make to the lesson that would provide opportunities for Fathima to be more engaged and to participate in the discussion?

Vignette #2

Newcomer Profile: Margaret

Margaret, a fourth-grade student, loves to read and play the piano. Her parents, her two brothers, and she immigrated to the United States from England three months ago. In England, Margaret's mother was the head of the human resources department for a successful publishing company. The company recently opened an office in the United States, and Margaret's family decided to leave England and become permanent residents here.

In England, Margaret was popular and outgoing. She did very well in school; her favorite class was math. Margaret played on a netball team, and she also played the piano.

Margaret often draws in the library during recess and she describes her friends in England and says she misses her teammates. "They don't play netball here. All of the girls in my class here play on a softball team, but I don't play softball."

Margaret's mother had told her that there would be little difference between her life in England and her life in the United States, but Margaret is finding that this is not the case. First, Margaret says, the English is different. "There are a lot of words I don't know, and when I first came, the other kids laughed at my accent. Sometimes I didn't understand them, and sometimes they didn't understand me." Second, Margaret was surprised that, even though her favorite subject is math, she did not understand a lot of the math problems she had to do in class and for homework. "The numbers are different! We used pounds in England and here we use dollars. We used kilometers and here we use miles. And I have to learn about pounds and ounces, because all I know is that I weigh six stones!"

In your learning group, consider and discuss the following questions:

- In what ways is Margaret's experience in school similar to that of non-English speaking immigrants?
- In what ways is it different?
- What structures need to be in place to ensure that Margaret feels comfortable and safe in her new school?

Vignette #3

Newcomer Profile: Emilio

Emilio, a shy boy from Mexico, arrived with his family in the United States at the age of 5. He is now 12 years old and in the seventh grade; he has missed the past three days of school and has fallen behind on several projects. When asked why he has missed school, he shrugs and says that sometimes he just “can’t take it anymore.” His math teacher adds that she cannot understand why Emilio has not integrated more with the other students from Mexico, adding, “Over half of our student population is from Mexico.”

When Emilio is asked where he is from, he says he is from Oaxaca. “The teachers think that all Mexicans are the same, but I am from Oaxaca, and they make fun of me.” The *they* Emilio refers to are a group of fellow Mexican students who call Emilio and other students from Oaxaca names, such as “indito,” referring to the indigenous roots of many Oaxacans. “When I speak Mixteco, they laugh at me and tell me I should go home. In middle school, the kids used to tell me I was dumb, because I didn’t speak Spanish.”

While many of Emilio’s teachers do not know that this bullying takes place, the ESL teacher acknowledges the struggles that his students from Oaxaca face in school. “Mexico is actually an extremely diverse country, and many students come to the United States not speaking Spanish, or have parents who do not speak Spanish. There are racial and linguistic distinctions within Mexican society that we teachers are only now realizing. We used to think of our students as one big group, but that simply is not true.”

Emilio says he has learned some Spanish since coming to the United States in the second grade and explains, “When they found out I was from Mexico, they put me in a class for Spanish speakers.” Emilio laughs when he adds, “I’m practically trilingual now!”

In your learning group, consider and discuss the following questions:

- Because Emilio is from Mexico, certain assumptions were made about him, by students as well as teachers. What were these assumptions? Why were they made?
- Thinking of your own school and district, what assumptions are sometimes made about particular student populations? What are the consequences of these assumptions?
- What steps can the school take to address the bullying of the Oaxacan students?

Vignette #4

Newcomer Profile: Igor

Igor grew up in Russia, where he attended school regularly, was an excellent student, and enjoyed his childhood and early adolescence. When he was 14, his family moved to New York. Igor had studied some English in school, but like the rest of his family, he knew only a few phrases. His father had been an elementary school teacher in Russia, but in New York, with extremely limited English skills, he could only get a job as a janitor in a department store.

Igor's father studied English at night and dreamed of some day working in a school again. Igor and his family lived in Astoria, Queens, where they kept in close contact with the Russian community. At first, Igor attended a neighborhood high school, but a year later, encouraged by immigrant friends of the family, he transferred to International High School at LaGuardia Community College, where he is a 17-year-old junior.

At home, the family converses in Russian, and Igor, his two younger brothers, and his teenage friends speak Russian with the adults in their circle. Among themselves, they speak English.

A warm, open, and energetic young man, Igor had made friends easily. At school he speaks primarily English, except when he talks with other Russian-speaking students who are new to the school. His English has developed rapidly since his arrival, and he can read fairly well in English. He still does not understand everything in his school texts, but knows how to persevere and be patient. When he writes in English, he makes errors, but, as he put it, he feels he has "come a long way." Because he is doing well, and he feels that he has enough of a foundation in English to succeed, Igor has decided to take the test for his GED rather than stay in school and graduate with his class.

In your learning group, consider and discuss the following questions:

- What strengths and experiences does Igor have that helped him in being a successful student in the United States?
- What are some of the consequences for Igor leaving school with a GED?
- What advantages might Igor have had if he had stayed in high school and graduated with his class?

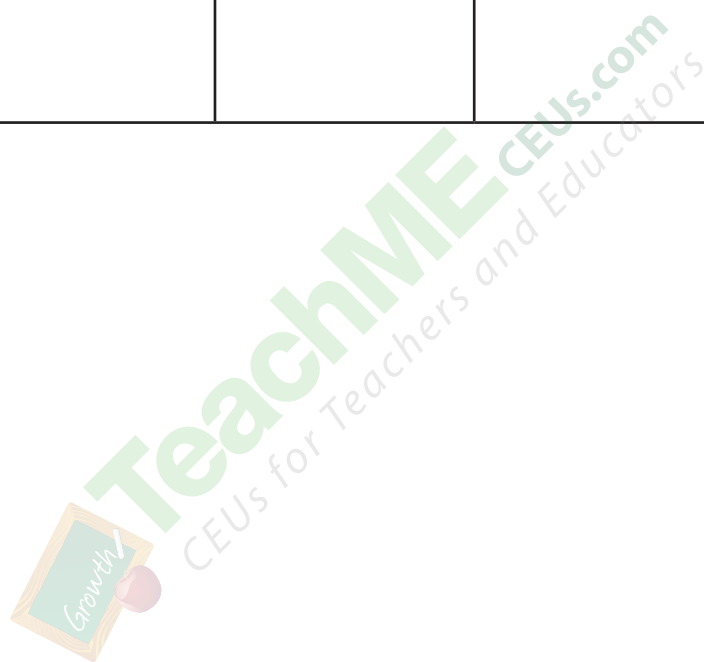
Reading Jigsaw Note-Taker Matrix

	Fathima	Margaret	Emilio	Igor
List the student's age, grade, and country of origin. At what age did the student immigrate?				
How many similar students do we have in our school? How prepared are we to offer them quality learning opportunities? What do we need to learn to be able to do it?				
Record three key points to keep in mind programmatically from your learning group discussion.				

Reading Jigsaw Note-Taker Matrix

Continued from previous page

	Fathima	Margaret	Emilio	Igor
Record one question you have about the student in your vignette.				



CHAPTER 2:

Welcoming Newcomers to a Safe and Thriving School Environment

ABOUT THIS CHAPTER

Welcoming newcomers and ensuring that they thrive in a new school and community is a responsibility shared among school staff, newcomers and their families, and the wider community. This chapter of the tool kit describes those responsibilities, including supports schools may provide to create inclusive school communities. It also discusses what newcomer families need to know about schooling and school systems to support their children's learning.

Special Features

- **Fundamentals for welcoming newcomers and their families:** Information that should be conveyed to parents—in their home language—to help them support their newcomer children's rights and navigate school policies.
- **Six best practices for welcoming newcomers:** An explanation of each practice, followed by authentic examples of each.
- **Best practices of designated newcomer programs:** Descriptions of practices and processes, along with examples of each, and links to newcomer schools and programs cited.
- **Classroom tools:** Tips for orienting newcomer students, and examples of activities that can help teachers get to know newcomers better.
- **School-wide tools:** Sample parents' bill of rights and responsibilities and a framework for safe and supportive schools.
- **Professional reflection and discussion activity:** Instructions and handouts for professional learning communities or staff meetings. (The activity takes about an hour if participants read the chapter in advance.)
- **Resources:** Annotated references to resources cited in this chapter; relevant federal guidance, policy, and data; and other helpful resources on rights and responsibilities, welcoming newcomers, and successful programs or schools.

Fundamentals for Welcoming Newcomers and Their Families

When newcomer students and their families enter the United States, they must become familiar with their new country's culture and customs as well as a new school system and its myriad structures, expectations, and legal requirements. Children who are international adoptees or unaccompanied youth may also be adjusting to life in a new family or home environment. On top of these challenges, many newcomers may have had journeys here that involved hardship and trauma.

Welcoming newcomers into a school community necessitates empathy and understanding of the unique challenges faced by newcomers and their families. It also necessitates an understanding of the benefits of creating environments that are inclusive, informing, welcoming, and conducive to full participation and academic success for all students.

Often, the challenge of negotiating, navigating, and becoming part of a school falls solely on the newcomer. A more effective integration approach is one in which the school staff, the surrounding community, families, and students collaborate to share that responsibility. For all newcomers, being welcomed by school representatives who are culturally competent and communicate in a language the students and parents understand (whether in spoken or written form) is key.

Who is a parent?

For the purposes of this tool kit, “parent” is defined to include, in addition to a natural parent, a legal guardian or other person standing in loco parentis (such as a grandparent or stepparent with whom the child lives, or a person who is legally responsible for the child’s welfare).

Source: U.S. Department of Education. (2004). Parental Involvement: Title I, Part A (Non-regulatory guidance). Retrieved from <http://www2.ed.gov/programs/titleiparta/parentinguid.doc>

Helping Parents Understand Their Children’s Rights

There are legal practices particular to newcomers and ELs that newcomer parents should understand; sharing knowledge of these practices among newcomers can encourage parent and family engagement in the school. Schools, local education agencies (LEAs), and state education agencies (SEAs) should, for instance, strive to increase awareness and understanding of the legal precedents that laid the foundation for newcomers to receive educational services in the United States. Here are some examples:

In *Lau v. Nichols* (1974), the Supreme Court ruled that in order for school districts to comply with their legal obligations under *Title VI* of the *Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Title VI)*, they must take affirmative steps to ensure that ELs can meaningfully participate in their educational programs and services.

In *Plyler v. Doe* (1982), the Supreme Court ruled that states cannot constitutionally deny students a free public education based on their immigration status.

In *Castañeda v. Pickard* (1981), the Fifth Circuit Court established a three-part test to evaluate the adequacy of a district’s program for ELs, and that test is used by the U.S. Department of Justice and the U.S. Department of Education’s Office for Civil Rights in evaluating school districts’ and states’ compliance with the civil rights laws.

It is fundamental to schools’ work of providing welcoming environments to newcomers, and a legal requirement for schools and LEAs, to inform parents and students of these and all other relevant legal practices and requirements in a language they understand. Such awareness is essential to ensuring that newcomer children and adolescents are supported in achieving their educational and life goals and aspirations.



Providing Information About School Systems and Policies

Newcomer students and their families may not be familiar with school systems and educational policies in our country and would benefit from specific information provided in a language they understand. As the families feel more comfortable and welcome in the schools, they may want to participate in the process of reviewing or creating procedures and policies to positively impact their child's academic experience.

Information Schools Should Provide to Newcomer Families to Support Integration

- Course schedules (e.g., child will have more than one teacher and more than one classroom)
- Physical layout of the school
- Homework policy and purpose
- Attendance policy (e.g., mandatory phone call and note when child is sick)
- Discipline policy
- Immunization policy
- Dress code, winter clothing, physical education uniforms
- Cafeteria options
- Subsidized lunch applications
- Transportation options to and from school
- Back to School Night information
- Progress report and report card descriptions
- Parent-teacher conference dates and purpose
- After-school clubs and sports options
- Special education services
- Summer school availability
- The role of guidance counselors and other non-teaching staff



Implementing Best Practices for Welcoming Newcomers

Schools with successful newcomer programs have in place a variety of practices that are effective in welcoming newcomers. According to Breiseth, Robertson, & Lafond (2011) and Castellón et al. (2015), schools with successful newcomer programs have created systems of supports in six key areas to ensure that newcomers can thrive in the school community:

1. Knowledge about students, including their prior schooling and life experiences

To integrate newcomer students into U.S. schools, and to ensure they are receiving the appropriate academic program and supports, it is necessary to assess students' educational needs, including the need for appropriate language assistance services and whether the student requires an evaluation to determine if he or she has a disability and as a result requires special education and/or related aids and services under the *Individuals With Disabilities in Education Act (IDEA)* or *Section 504* of the *Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504)*. Beyond that, teachers and school staff should find ways to build their knowledge of the general country and cultural origins of their newcomer students, and also strive to get to know the individual students—their personalities, hobbies, cultural backgrounds, and family circumstances, as well as the stories of their journeys to their new lives. Inviting the sharing of this information, while respecting boundaries of privacy, may help increase the student's confidence, build trust, and enable the school to develop strategies to capitalize on the students' strengths. (NCELA, n.d.a).

2. Program structures to support students' learning

In order to meet the needs of newcomer students, especially those in middle and high school who need to learn enough English to earn academic credits and graduate in a short period of time, some schools offer alternatives to the mainstream school schedules and academic programs. Some examples are block scheduling, extended school days or years, and smaller class sizes. Since newcomers may be accustomed to different types of scheduling or teacher assignments in schools in their home countries, or may be adjusting to middle school or high school upon entry into U.S. schools, structures that provide consistency for students across multiple school years may be helpful. An innovative practice that can contribute to the success of high school newcomers is called "looping," a strategy that provides students with consistency across their school years by having the same teacher two or more years in a row. In all circumstances, schools should carry out their chosen programs in the least segregative manner consistent with achieving the program's stated educational goals (U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, & U.S. Department of Justice, Civil Rights Division, 2015, January).

3. **Communication with students and their families**

In some newcomer programs, the schools use practices that promote hallway and classroom communication among students who share the same home language. This may occur in bilingual, two-way bilingual, or dual language programs. In some cases, parents may request that their child attend a program that focuses on attainment of English language proficiency without attending a bilingual program; these schools or programs can still integrate use of a student's home language in instruction, as this provides a strong base for newcomers to learn both academic content and English and also helps those who are ELs make the transition to learning in English. It is also important to communicate with parents in their home language(s), and to recognize that even as students gain proficiency in English, their parents may still rely on their home language for school communications.

4. **Parent and family engagement in the school community**

As detailed in Chapter 5 of this tool kit, parent and family engagement is critical to ensure newcomer students' success in school. It is important for schools to reach out to parents in multiple ways and offer multiple means of participation.

5. **Cultural and language integration**

Newcomer students have diverse backgrounds and needs, which depends on previous school experiences, their level of literacy in English and in their home language (or language of wider communication), their immigration status, and their home living status. To ensure students feel welcomed into the school community, schools should address each student's individual situation, seek understanding of their home country and culture, and provide support when and where students need it.

6. **Community integration**

Creating partnerships with community organizations is helpful for providing a welcoming school and community. Schools may partner with a range of community organizations, and the focus may include refugee resettlement, social services and health, the arts, religion and ethnicity, and postsecondary education, to name a few (Short & Boyson, 2012, pp. 55–58).

MULTIMEDIA IN THE CLASSROOM

Building Bridges Project: Student Video Diaries

Newcomers High School in Long Island City specializes in teaching recent immigrants. In a project that reflects many of the best practices outlined here (and includes instruction in English language arts), the high school collaborated with St. Luke's, a private middle school in Manhattan, to establish a conversation about diversity and combatting bias. ELs at the high school exchange letters with their St. Luke's "buddies," and meet with them several times a year. The St. Luke's buddies help the students edit their personal immigration stories, and then, in turn, develop research papers on immigration based on interviews with their Newcomers buddies. Several Newcomers students also created video diaries so that they could share their personal stories with more people. More information about the Building Bridges project can be found at <https://www.niot.org/nios/newcomers>.

Below and on the following pages are specific examples of these practices as implemented in a number of newcomer elementary and secondary schools. All practices focus on supporting college and career readiness, and supporting both ELs and newcomers.

1. **Knowledge about students:**

When a student enrolls at **Manhattan Bridges High School**, “counselors and teachers work together to build an educational program designed specifically for that student, based on her educational history and test scores. Because many students are newcomers who bring transcripts from foreign schools with them, the guidance counselors work to validate the coursework students took in their home countries to determine their progress toward graduation” (Castellón et al., 2015, p. 116).

Boston International High School and Newcomers Academy (BINcA) “starts by paying close attention to who its students are, with profound respect for and acknowledgement of their varied histories, cultures, and personal experiences. Using this deep understanding of their students, the staff is able to tailor a comprehensive set of social, emotional, and physical services to support each child’s well-being. An understanding of students’ cultural backgrounds allows staff members to mediate potential conflicts among students with sensitivity. In addition, extensive academic support structures ensure that students are able to meet the rigor of classroom demands. Throughout, the adults are guided by the belief that regardless of a student’s personal or educational history, BINcA can figure out a path for her educational success. ... Starting with the initial intake interview that BINcA has with each student and family in their home language, the team builds knowledge and understanding of the student’s personal and academic history in planning out the necessary supports and services that will help the student succeed in this new environment” (Castellón et al., 2015, pp. 12–13).¹

Thi Bui, a teacher at **Oakland International High School**, in Oakland California, asked her newcomer students to “reach down, pull your heart out and show it to the world.” Their assignment was to draw pictures depicting their experiences. The end result was a graphic novel. Oakland International High School is part of the Internationals Network for Public Schools and is attended by students residing in the United States for four years or less (Murphy, 2010, August 26).

2. **Program structures to support students’ learning:**

At **New World High School**, looping “enables teachers to assume a cohort of students in ninth grade and stay with them until graduation. Although there are some scheduling challenges—for example, 11th and 12th graders may need to take different Advanced Placement (AP) courses and therefore may have different teachers—all students generally have the same content teachers all four years. This system allows for an extraordinary sense of consistency and accountability. ... One teacher stated, ‘We get to know them, but they also get to know us. They really form a bond with you. ... If they come here from another country, it can be so overwhelming. But this [looping] is something that is consistent for them’” (Castellón et al., 2015, p. 182).

Marble Hill School for International Studies “implements a ‘looping’ model, which allows teachers to instructionally follow a group of students for a set number of years. ... Careful planning goes into the decision making process when determining which content areas and which teachers to include in the model. ... Additionally, the school ensures that teachers who participate in the looping model receive multiple professional learning opportunities and support [to meet students’ needs with excellence]. Typically, new teachers are not assigned to participate in the model. Instead they are given two to three years to prepare and adjust” (Castellón et al., 2015, pp. 138–139).

3. **Communication with students and their families:**

“In Illinois’ Evanston/Skokie School District 65, parents are continually encouraged to use their native language at home and read to their children in their native languages daily. **Washington Elementary School**, a two-way immersion school, offers a family literacy program funded with a state grant in which parents participate in afternoon and evening literacy activities at the school and public libraries. Parents also learn how to help their children with homework—all in their native language” (Breiseth, Robertson & Lafond, 2011, p. 14).

“At **Webster Elementary School** in Long Beach, California, the school library has a large collection of books in Spanish and Samoan, the two dominant languages of the schools’ ELLs. Parents are encouraged to borrow books and bring younger siblings to the library” (Breiseth, Robertson & Lafond, 2011, p. 14).

It Takes a Village Academy (ITAVA) “is not a bilingual education school, because the parents chose not to have this model, but many content area teachers are fluent in (and often native speakers of) the students’ home languages, and the school structures its program so that these teachers help to facilitate the ELL students’ transition to an all-English instructional program. Teachers provide academic subject instruction in the home language to the extent necessary, so that students are able to negotiate content in their home language, but the ultimate goal for students is English proficiency, and to this end, students also have exposure to teachers who are native speakers of English. For example, newcomer students will have two math teachers, one from Haiti who speaks Haitian Creole, French, and Spanish, and another who has a strong native command of English. A teacher also remarked that, especially at the beginning of the school year when students have very limited English, students discuss issues in their home languages in groups, and then teachers choose one person to represent the group’s discussion to the class in English. Home language materials and bilingual dictionaries are provided in all of the ITAVA classrooms. Students use translation applications on the computer” (Castellón et al., 2015, pp. 88–89).

School staff at **Marble Hill School for International Studies** have sometimes faced difficulties reaching out to immigrant parents with little formal education or English proficiency; they have addressed this issue by “hiring translators, creating a welcoming environment, and providing support for all families. For example, ...they have a staff that speaks Spanish, Bengali, Urdu, and several African languages, and they frequently use the New York City Department of Education’s phone translation services, specifically for some African languages” (Castellón et al., 2015, p. 162).



4. **Parent and family engagement in the school community:**

It Takes a Village Academy (ITAVA) provides families of their students a variety of support networks, resources, and learning opportunities. “For instance, English classes are offered, along with computer literacy and other offerings. ...The school has also provided various supports to caregivers with regard to housing information, resources for free or low-cost medical providers, culturally relevant mental health services, and immigration referrals. These are integral supports that will improve the quality of life for students and their caregivers, leading to better student learning and healthier communities.

“**ITAVA** staff has identified some barriers to family and caregiver engagement that make it a challenge to create and sustain meaningful involvement. Parents come into the school community with a variety of prior cultural backgrounds and experiences with schools. They may also face a variety of conflicting pressures and expectations such as work obligations that may impede their active involvement. Furthermore, many ITAVA students immigrated to New York without their parents and may live with other family members or with members of church organizations that took the children in. To better overcome these challenges, ITAVA is working hard on practices and policies that will support strategic and continual engagement between home and school more systemically. For instance, a parent coordinator was recently hired to help further engage parents in the school community, to liaison between the families and the school, and to act as a contact with the community organizations that provide services to students and their families. In order to improve attendance at the school’s annual open house, ITAVA holds two open houses at different times of the day so that caregivers who cannot take time off from work may attend” (Castellón et al., 2015, pp. 70–71).

5. **Cultural and language integration:**

“Although **New World** has a relatively low number of Students with Interrupted Formal Education (SIFE), the school allocates numerous supports for these students. All teachers at the school receive a file to notify them of the SIFE in their classes. Furthermore, an English as a Second Language (ESL) teacher spends three days a week after school working with these students to get them up to speed. This extra class in the afternoons allows students to develop skills that they missed. Peer tutors are also assigned to students for individual assistance. Teachers report that the range in academic proficiency varies across students—some students require heavy levels of supports while others are able to advance more quickly. New arrival students are also given similar support services. When a student is admitted after the start of the school year, they are required to attend extra classes in the afternoons in order to help them catch up” (Castellón et al., 2015, pp. 198–199).

At **BINca**, curriculum units encourage students to engage with issues relevant to the immigrant community as part of their academic work. “For a 9th grade cross-curricular unit in English and History, students explore whether the American Dream is still possible, presenting arguments related to jobs, education, and public safety. For the 12th grade capstone project, which is a requirement for every senior, students research a social issue that affects the immigrant community by reading background literature, conducting interviews with outside experts, and collecting survey data. Students present their completed capstone projects to a panel of staff members as well as their parents, in both English and their home language” (Castellón et al., 2015, p. 36).

6. **Community integration:**

“**Highland Elementary School** in Montgomery County, Maryland, was chosen as a Blue Ribbon turnaround school by the Maryland State Department of Education in 2008. Part of its success, according to [the] school principal, was its increased inclusion of the families. As noted in *The Washington Post*, ‘The school positioned itself as the center of its community, offering weekend soccer tournaments, English and computer

classes for parents, and an array of other community services, from housing assistance to mental health counseling” (Breiseth, Robertson, & Lafond, 2011, p. 31).

At the high school level, **Manhattan Bridges High School** has constructed the following deliberate partnerships with key community organizations:

- Cornell University Hydroponics Program and Internship: pays student interns to do hydroponics research after school with a university professor.
- College Now at the City University of New York: grants students access to courses including “College 101,” psychology, and criminal justice courses, earning participant college credits.
- St. Joseph’s College New York and Fordham University: provide students with summer programs on SAT preparation.
- Options Center at Goddard Riverside Community Center: provides students additional one-on-one college counseling.
- Verizon, Juniper, AT&T, Ernst & Young, and American Express: offer students job-shadowing experiences; professionals from Verizon and Juniper come to campus to work with students on their résumés and coach them in their personal and professional learning.
- iMentor: matches students in ninth, 10th, and 11th grades to professional mentors from across New York City; mentors meet with their mentees during monthly events and provide another layer of support to help students focus on their college and career goals (Castellón et al., 2015, p. 127).



For further information on the schools named in this section, refer to the following websites:

School (Location)	Website
Boston International High School and Newcomers Academy (BINcA)	http://www.bostonpublicschools.org/binca
Highland Elementary School	http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/schools/highlandes/
It Takes a Village Academy (ITAVA)	http://schools.nyc.gov/SchoolPortals/18/K563/default.htm
Manhattan Bridges School	http://schools.nyc.gov/SchoolPortals/02/M542/default.htm
Marble Hill School for International Studies	http://www.marblehillschool.org/
New World High School	http://www.newworldhighschool.com/
Oakland International High School	http://www.oaklandinternational.org
Washington Elementary School	http://www.district65.net/washington
Webster Elementary School	http://webster-lbusd-ca.schoolloop.com/



Process and Practice Components of Newcomer Programs

Creating an inclusive school community requires designing and sustaining school structures and processes that help to ensure newcomers are both welcomed and provided information and resources they need to thrive in the school environment. This includes a broad spectrum of support, from initial entry through the learning of rigorous academic content, to transitioning to a mainstream program or to postsecondary options in education and careers. Many of the recommended components listed below are district based; however, schools may implement these practices or advocate for particular components (Castellón et al., 2015; Horwitz et al., 2009; Short & Boyson, 2012).

Newcomer Program Component with Examples of Processes or Practices
<p>Develop a clear vision and goals for newcomer students.</p> <p><i>Examples:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Set academic and social goals for the students and build a program to meet them.• Define entry criteria and exit criteria for the students in the program.• Hold newcomer students to the same high standards as other students.• Communicate the vision and goals to school, district, and community stakeholders.• Conduct initial intake interviews with students and families in their home language.
<p>Develop a set of common values about newcomer students and accept shared accountability for the education of newcomers.</p> <p><i>Examples:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Put forth an ambitious mission focused on preparing all students for college and career success.• Hold a mind-set of continuous improvement.• Recognize that the entire school shares responsibility for students' success.• Determine the needs of the students and their families, and design and adapt school structures that meet those needs, with continuous improvement based on evidence.• Maintain a strong sense of pride in and respect for all cultures.
<p>Design specific courses for students with interrupted formal education (SIFE).</p> <p><i>Example:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop a separate literacy course or set of courses for students with interrupted educational backgrounds if the program has both preliterate and literate newcomers.

Newcomer Program Components with Examples of Processes or Practices

Continued from previous page

Design instruction for students' development of conceptual, analytic, and language practices simultaneously.

Examples:

- Create or adopt a unified language development framework integrating content, analytic practices, and language learning.
- Consider developing bilingual, dual language, or two-way immersion programs to support newcomers' home languages and English.
- Review general education and EL programs to ensure that there is an explicit focus on building academic literacy and cultivating English language development.
- Promote cross-disciplinary and cross-grade literacy expectations and teacher collaboration.
- Be aware of the second language acquisition process and be able to detect when a delay may not be due to the language learning process, but the result of a disability.

Promote the use and development of students' home languages at school and in the community.

Examples:

- Promote development of students' native language skills and incorporate native language instruction into the curriculum where possible.
- Promote use and maintenance of home languages through community partnerships.

Provide alternative school day and school year schedules and structures based on student and family needs.

Examples:

- Provide extra learning time through after-school, summer school, Saturday school, and/or vacation institutes.
- Determine student and family needs and design schedules and structures to meet those needs.
- Optimize student engagement, learning, and effort through creative scheduling and rigorous coursework.

Newcomer Program Components with Examples of Processes or Practices

Continued from previous page

Engage families and community stakeholders in school programs and other supports to ensure students' success.

Examples:

- Engage families by teaching them about schooling in the United States and showing them how to be involved in their children's education.
- Create opportunities for family input and involvement in school planning and implementation of programs.
- Plan support groups and activities to address family reunification issues.
- Make connections in the community for social-emotional support, health and mental health services, and immigrant and refugee services.
- Make connections in the community for career exploration, work experience, and internships for high school newcomers.
- Pursue community support for initiatives designed to accelerate achievement among newcomers.

Establish processes for student transition to a mainstream program or postsecondary options.

Examples:

- Smooth the transition process for students exiting the newcomer program (e.g., classroom and school visits, field trips, student mentors, auditing a course, cross-program teacher meetings).
- Work on postsecondary options for high school newcomers (e.g., connect with community colleges and trade schools, explore scholarship options, provide career education).
- Create strategic community partnerships for students to expand extracurricular options and explore college and career opportunities.

Recruit, place, and retain qualified teachers and provide ongoing professional learning.

Examples:

- Continue to recruit and retain teachers who are specifically trained to teach newcomers and have English as a Second Language (ESL) or bilingual credentials or endorsements. Provide ongoing professional learning for them.
- Assess district standards for hiring, placing, and retaining teachers, paraprofessionals, and staff members who work directly with newcomers and ELs to ensure that these students have access to highly effective personnel.
- Share leadership among principals, assistant principals, teachers, and other staff, and expect them to work collectively to support the school's vision, values, and goals.
- Ensure that all school staff have appreciation of and sensitivity to cultural diversity.
- Provide professional learning for mainstream teachers who receive newcomers after they exit temporary newcomer programs.
- Ensure that all teachers of newcomers and ELs have access to high-quality professional learning that provides differentiated instructional strategies, promotes the effective use of student assessment data, and develops skills for supporting second-language acquisition across the curriculum, as well as for resources for understanding the impact of early life trauma on the developing child.

Newcomer Program Components with Examples of Processes or Practices

Continued from previous page

Develop protocols to ensure newcomers have access to all course offerings and educational services.

Examples:

- Create processes and structures to ensure that newcomers have access to the entire spectrum of district course offerings, including gifted and talented programs, special education, advanced placement courses, and other programs or courses offered to mainstream students.
- Work with the department in charge of special education to design an eligibility process for newcomers suspected of needing special education services because of a disability, so that they can be evaluated and, if found eligible, provided with an individualized education plan (IEP) in a timely manner (U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, & U.S. Department of Justice, Civil Rights Division, 2015, January, Section F, pp. 24–27).

Collect and analyze student and program data to drive continuous improvement.

Examples:

- Collect student data and conduct regular program evaluations.
- Develop a system for tracking multiple measures of newcomers' educational progress.
- Assess student capacities thoughtfully and in detail from entry through graduation and beyond, and update instruction, course offerings and structures based on these data.
- Work closely with students and their families, both formally and informally, to gather relevant information about the knowledge, background, and needs of students and their families.
- Implement extensive formative assessment practices in classrooms to inform instruction.
- Ensure that, if there are concerns of a disability, the student's status as an EL doesn't delay the eligibility process.

Allocate appropriate resources.

Examples:

- Ensure that resources generated by and allocated for newcomers are properly and effectively expended to provide quality instruction and services.
- Encourage school leadership to seek resources for newcomer programs and services from the district and community partners.

Orienting and Accommodating Newly Arrived Refugees and Immigrant Students

Orientation for refugee and immigrant students helps to familiarize these newcomers with school routines and educational expectations. For example, newcomer students may need explanations related to:

- Sitting still for long periods of time
- Riding a school bus
- Physical exams and immunizations
- Attendance and report cards
- Wearing or not wearing a uniform
- Raising a hand to speak
- Lining up to leave the classroom
- Co-ed classes
- Using a locker
- Working independently and/or quietly
- Discipline in the school context
- Following a schedule and rotating classrooms or teachers
- Using a planner
- Changing clothes for gym in an open locker room
- How students and teachers relate to, and address, one another
- The role of school personnel and who to go to with specific concerns
- Preparing for field trips
- What to do in emergency drills

Connecting With Newcomers Through Literature

Using literature to learn more about newcomers' ethnic diversity may serve two purposes. First, the literature may help newcomers feel more comfortable talking about their experiences. Second, other students in the classroom may gain a more global understanding of the world and learn more about what it can be like to come to a new country and build a new life. Below are several sources of literature for use in the classroom.

1. The New York City Public Library has prepared resources that focus on students from numerous countries. http://www.nypl.org/browse/recommendations/lists/nypl_collections/102454042
2. The American Immigration Council presents a unit that “chronicles the experience of Celiane Esperance, a young girl living in Haiti, who is forced to flee political violence to the US with her mother and brother and reunite with her father in Brooklyn, NY.” <http://www.communityeducationcenter.org/education/behind-mountains-edwidge-danticat>
3. The Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute developed a unit entitled “Crossing the Border, A Study of Immigration Through Literature,” which “allows students to gain an appreciation for their own family histories as well as a understanding of the hopes and challenges faced by immigrants.” <http://www.yale.edu/ynhti/curriculum/units/1996/4/96.04.07.x.html#a>
4. Bridging Refugee Youth and Children's Services (BRYCS) has a webpage that features a list of children's books about the refugee/immigrant experience. <http://www.brycs.org/clearinghouse/Highlighted-Resources-Children-Books-about-the-Refugee-Immigrant-Experience.cfm>
5. Teaching for Change identifies multicultural and social justice books for children and educators, and organizes them by theme, including countries and continents of interest. <http://www.tfcbooks.org/best-recommended/booklist>
6. *The Guardian*, a newspaper published in London, England, printed 100 stories from young people who immigrated to England from many countries. The website focused on how the immigrants add to the country's prosperity and cultural richness. <http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/ng-interactive/2015/mar/24/immigrants-in-their-own-words-100-stories>

Fact Sheets and Sample Parents' Bill of Rights and Responsibilities

The U.S. Departments of Justice and Education issued these fact sheets that schools can use to support their own practices and to communicate with families of ELs, including those who are newcomers:

- Ensuring That English Learners Can Participate Meaningfully and Equally in Educational Programs <http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/dcl-factsheet-el-students-201501.pdf>
- Information for Limited English Proficient (LEP) Parents and Guardians and for Schools and School Districts That Communicate With Them <http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/dcl-factsheet-lep-parents-201501.pdf>

These fact sheets are available in Spanish and other languages: <http://www.ed.gov/news/press-releases/us-departments-education-and-justice-release-joint-guidance-ensure-english-learn>

The New York City Department of Education developed the Parents' Bill of Rights and Responsibilities, which says, "Each child's potential can best be achieved through a partnership between parents and schools. To foster active engagement between parents and schools, parents have certain rights and responsibilities as spelled out in the Bill of Rights and Responsibilities." A sample of this document's content is included on the following page.



Parents' Bill of Rights and Responsibilities: New York City Sample

Each child's maximum potential can best be achieved through a partnership between parents and the education community. To foster active engagement between parents and schools, parents have certain rights and responsibilities.

ALL PARENTS HAVE THE FOLLOWING RIGHTS:

1) *THE RIGHT TO A FREE PUBLIC SCHOOL EDUCATION*

Parents have the right to a free public school education for their child in a safe and supportive learning environment.

Parents have the right to:

- a) a free public school education for their child, from kindergarten until age 21, or receipt of a high school diploma, whichever comes first, as provided by law;
- b) an evaluation for their child with a disability and, if found to be in need of special education, receive a free, appropriate education from age 3 through age 21, in accordance with applicable laws and regulations;
- c) bilingual education or English as a Second Language services, for their child with limited English proficiency, as required by law and regulations;
- d) have their child receive his or her full instructional schedule in accordance with the Department of Education school year calendar;
- e) have their child learn in a safe and supportive learning environment, free from discrimination, harassment, bullying, and bigotry;
- f) have their child receive courtesy and respect from others and equal educational opportunities regardless of actual or perceived race, color, religion, age, creed, ethnicity, national origin, alienage, citizenship status, disability, sexual orientation, gender (sex) or weight;
- g) have a child accorded all the rights set forth in the Bill of Student Rights and Responsibilities found within the New York City Department of Education's Citywide Standards of Intervention and Discipline Measures.

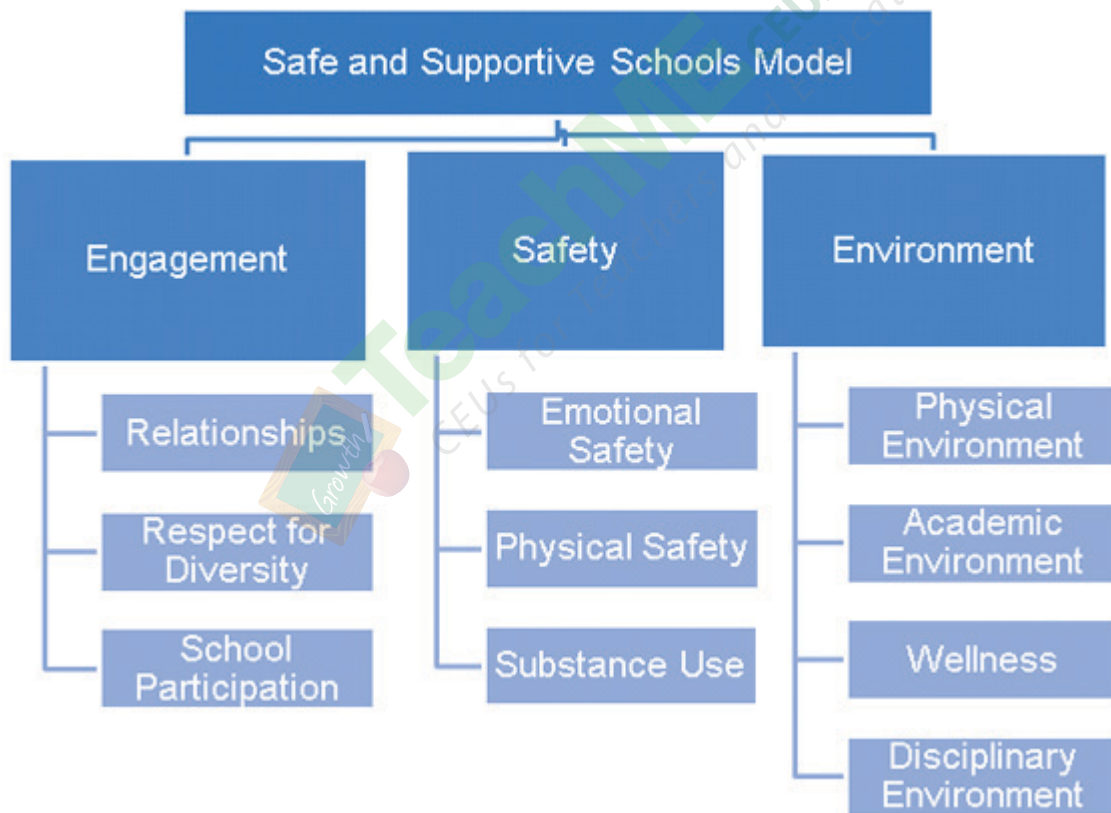
Source: New York City Department of Education. (n.d.). Parent bill of rights. Retrieved from <http://schools.nyc.gov/RulesPolicies/ParentBillOfRights/default.htm>

Framework for Safe and Supportive Schools

According to the Safe and Supportive Schools Model (see below), which was developed by a national panel of researchers and other experts, positive school climate involves three key elements:

1. **Engagement:** Strong relationships between students, teachers, families, and schools, and strong connections between schools and the broader community
2. **Safety:** Schools and school-related activities where students are safe from violence, bullying, harassment, and controlled-substance use
3. **Environment:** Appropriate facilities, well-managed classrooms, available school-based health supports, and a clear, fair disciplinary policy

These areas overlap in many existing frameworks of school climate, and it is critical that all three areas be considered as a single issue in policy and practice.



Parent and Family Engagement Practices to Support Students

Purpose

School administrators and teachers of pre-K through grade 12 can use this jigsaw activity in a staff meeting or professional learning community to examine parent and family engagement practices that exhibit the characteristics of family-school partnerships and that prepare students to graduate college and career ready.

Preparation for Activity

- A few days in advance, ask participants to read Chapter 2 of this tool kit.
- Make copies of the following:
 - Four scenarios of schools that serve newcomers, included at the end of these instructions. (Make one set for each group of four participants.) *Scenarios have been excerpted and adapted with permission from Castellón et al (2015).*
 - The two other handouts included at the end of the instructions—“Consultation Sheet: Characteristics of Effective Engagement Programs for Newcomer Parents and Families” and “Note Taking Sheet: Identification of Examples of Parent and Family Engagement Practices.” (Make one copy of each for every participant.)

Time Required for Activity

1 hour

Instructions for Facilitator

1. Divide participants into groups of four and distribute the handouts described above. Each group should have one copy each of the four scenarios, four copies of the “consultation sheet,” and four copies of the “note-taking sheet.” Ask everyone to read the consultation sheet, which describes five characteristics of strong partnerships with newcomer families and effective school policies and practices.
2. Assign a different scenario (1, 2, 3, or 4) to each person in the group.
3. Ask each person in the group to pick a partner. Thus, there will be two pairs of participants per group.
4. Instruct each participant to read his or her assigned scenario independently and to complete the column in the note-taking sheet that corresponds with the assigned scenario (1, 2, 3, or 4). Tell everyone to ignore the question in the last row, as this question will be discussed at the end of the activity.
5. After 10 minutes, ask each participant to describe the practices reflected in their assigned scenario to his or her partner, while the partner takes notes. After this is complete, the participants should switch roles. The partner who took the notes on each scenario will report back to the larger group of four.
6. Instruct participants to return to their original groups and allow 1–2 minutes for each person to summarize their scenario.
7. After sharing each scenario, allow time for each group to (a) discuss the question included in the last row of the note-taking page, (b) record the group’s suggestions for adopting or adapting one of the scenarios, and (c) critically consider necessary steps in the process.
8. Ask each group to report its observations and recommendations to the larger group. Facilitate a discussion of implications for their school’s culture, policy, and practices relevant to supporting newcomer students.

FAMILY ENGAGEMENT SCHOOL SCENARIO: School #1

SCHOOL #1 staff implicitly understand the importance of relating to caregivers as strategic partners in the education of their children and see it as their role to do everything that they can to promote this relationship. Evidence of this ethic starts the minute the students and their families or other caregivers enter the campus, and a full-time family coordinator facilitates these efforts. Staff works diligently and conscientiously to convey that the school is a warm, caring place, ensuring that visitors are greeted by welcoming signs and responsive staff and that information and guidance is provided in a language that parents understand, impressive in a school with such a wide array of language backgrounds represented. Teachers make it a point to invite parents to take part in classroom activities and communicate an open-door policy in their classrooms.

One key way that SCHOOL #1 continually and strategically connects with caregivers is through regular communication with the home through phone calls and electronic communication in the language chosen by the caregivers. Caregivers also receive regular updates in their language of choice on the student's progress and timely notice when performance is slipping.

The school's philosophy of care is evident in the support networks, resources, and learning opportunities they provide to the families of their students. For instance, English classes are offered, along with computer literacy and other offerings. One parent reported feeling excited to participate in the upcoming, free CPR class because he's able to learn crucial life-saving skills that would otherwise be inaccessible to him. The school has also provided various supports to caregivers with regard to housing information, resources for free or low-cost medical providers, culturally-relevant mental health services, and immigration referrals. These are integral supports that will improve the quality of life for students and their caregivers, leading to better student learning and healthier communities.

SCHOOL #1 parents come into the school community with a variety of prior cultural backgrounds and experiences with schools. They may also face a variety of conflicting pressures and expectations such as work obligations that may impede their active involvement. Furthermore, many SCHOOL #1 students immigrated without their parents and may live with other family members or with members of church organizations that took the children in. To better overcome these challenges, SCHOOL #1 is working hard on practices and policies that will support strategic and continual engagement between home and school. For instance, a parent coordinator was recently hired to help further engage parents in the school community, to liaison between the families and the school, and to act as a contact with the community organizations that provide services to students and their families.

FAMILY ENGAGEMENT SCHOOL SCENARIO: School #2

At SCHOOL #2, leaders and staff recognize that partnering with parents is a major component in ensuring that students can meet high expectations for college and career success. Typically involved in everything from attendance, dress code, and diversity, to college preparation, parents report feeling welcomed as a part of the school.

Because SCHOOL #2 has been identified as a top school in its district in recent years, the parent population is changing to include middle-class, well-educated parents in addition to the many immigrant parents with little formal education or English proficiency. Balancing these dynamics is at times challenging for school staff. They sometimes face difficulties in reaching out to the non-English speaking families, but they overcome this barrier by hiring translators, creating a welcoming environment, and providing support for all families. For example, to address language barriers, they have a staff that speaks Spanish, Bengali, Urdu, and several African languages, and they frequently use their district department of education's phone translation services, specifically for some African languages. The school taps their students for help with translation, which has an added advantage of helping parents see how valuable it is to speak more than one language. The school also hosts events to acknowledge and celebrate diversity. They boast of their "International Dinner," in which over 150 parents bring food and everyone wears traditional outfits.

Furthermore, SCHOOL #2 provides workshops for parents on a variety of topics, including drugs, bullying, immigration, ESL, graduation, college, and financial aid. Representatives from the local police department also come in to talk about gang prevention and safety. In the spirit of maintaining open communication with parents, the school hosts frequent parent-teacher conferences, sends parent newsletters in preferred languages, and hosts an online grading and homework site. The principal makes it a goal to call five parents a day to check in, as a way of encouraging ongoing trust and engagement in school activities.

SCHOOL #2 has a full-time Parent Coordinator who serves as a liaison between the school and the parents. Her role is to answer enrollment questions about the school and to provide workshops for parents on a variety of topics, but also to help explain graduation requirements and to aid in navigating the college system. Parents explained that there are various events that focus on college applications and financial aid. Some also mentioned that there are field trips to universities and Saturday college-prep programs. One staff member reported that the school also ensures that parents are aware of some of the instructional elements of schooling: "[Our role also involves] making parents understand new regulations or new systems, ...even the Common Core [State Standards], and having them understand this in their languages."

FAMILY ENGAGEMENT SCHOOL SCENARIO: School #3

Recognizing that the school must work in collaboration with parents and families to ensure college and career readiness, SCHOOL #3 makes a significant effort to reach out to parents with the goal of involving them in the school experience. The principal noted, “In terms of outside support, it is extensive counseling and outreach. I meet with 90-95% of the families once their kids come to my school... Right [from] the beginning, I tell them, ‘This school is different than other schools, and this is what we are going to expect.’”

One of the main ways in which the school connects with parents is by ensuring positive and consistent communication. By maintaining a welcoming environment for parents from the very first interactions with SCHOOL #3, the staff is able to maintain strong and trusting relationships. The school makes a concerted effort to make regular phone calls to parents in the language of choice. SCHOOL #3 has interpreters in most languages through a service provided by the city’s department of education. Teachers also have one period each Wednesday for parent outreach.

One teacher shared, “We call home all the time. The office calls, we call home, we log when we call home... We all know when something is wrong. And we all try to help the students.” As evidence of the incredibly high expectations that SCHOOL #3 sets not just for students but also families, one parent recounted: “They call or send a letter before an event. Most of the time they call... If my daughter is even a minute late, they call.” The increased attention on attendance and tardiness relates directly back to their mission of rigorous academic instruction—if students are not in school on time every day, then they are missing valuable learning time.

The school also provides a variety of parent education courses, which are geared at preparing families to support their children for college and careers. The network administrator explained that they help to put on workshops for parents and they help with questions about financial aid. They invite parents to two all-day college fairs, with over eighty college representatives in- and out-of-state.

Parent outreach, school staff admits, is not without its challenges. Staff members spoke of cultural barriers that needed to be addressed. The network administrator explained some of the parent interactions, saying, “We met with the parents—some parents were a little uncomfortable with certain school practices... There is a cultural context. So we alleviated concerns by answering questions.” A support member of the staff emphasized the importance of constant follow-up: “Parents work a lot, some have more than one job, so it is difficult for them to come to school. So we call them. We follow up if they don’t respond.”

FAMILY ENGAGEMENT SCHOOL SCENARIO: School #4

One critical driver of SCHOOL #4's success is the strength of its relationships with parents and community partners. The school believes that collaborating closely with parents and community-based organizations is essential to providing students with a full range of supports and opportunities, and it has worked very hard to cultivate relationships with these crucial allies.

To improve attendance at the school's annual open house, SCHOOL #4 holds two open houses at different times of the day so that caregivers who cannot take time off from work may attend. Having bilingual and bicultural staff at the school and district is instrumental in helping ELs' parents communicate with the school and in resolving any issues or concerns that these parents might have about their children's education. The parent coordinator, office staff, guidance counselors, and many teachers and administrators are bilingual in English and Spanish, which further helps parents feel comfortable visiting and becoming involved at the school.

At a typical SCHOOL #4 parent teacher association (PTA) meeting, 55 to 60 parents are in attendance, for a school that has just over 500 students. This high attendance rate is the result of relentless and persistent work on the part of the staff to outreach to parents as partners in their children's education. The parent coordinator calls and sends newsletters to parents constantly to maintain open lines of communication and keep parents informed and engaged. She and other staff members have an open-door policy for parents and are conscious of the challenges that prevent some parents from coming to the school. For instance, the coordinator provides parents who have inflexible work schedules with a letter to give to their employer certifying that they were at their children's school. The school has found that such measures have increased parent participation.

Using the family's language of choice, the staff routinely seek feedback from parents and families on what is working well or not as well in terms of school practices, policies, or communication. Forms are sent home asking for feedback, and staff solicit feedback in most one-one-one conversations.

Parents themselves also appreciate the open communication provided by SCHOOL #4. One parent said that in preparation for parent conferences, the school provided parents with questions to ask teachers, which was a useful tool to help her share responsibility for her child's education. She is grateful that her son's teachers call or email her if her son is experiencing any problems, and work with her to develop an improvement plan. She feels comfortable reaching out to anyone on the staff and trusts that they are there to help her child.

CONSULTATION SHEET:

Characteristics of Effective Practices to Engage Newcomer Parents and Families

Schools can foster strong parent engagement partnerships with newcomer parents by supporting the particular needs of newcomer students and their families with effective policies and practices. Strong partnerships with newcomers, and the effective policies and practices that support them, exhibit most of the following characteristics: co-construction and collaboration, capacity development, assets orientation, language supports, and continuous improvement.

Characteristic	Brief Description
Co-construction and Collaboration	Bring newcomer parents and staff together to co-construct meaningful communications and resources for parents and to collaborate in the delivery of learning and support activities for parents.
Capacity Development	Build newcomers' and staff's capacities to effectively carry out the multiple engagement roles (advocate, supporter, encourager, decision-maker, etc.) expected of parents.
Assets Orientation	Build partnerships that listen to and hear parents and strive to meet high expectations, aspirations, and hopes as they draw on newcomers' culture, language, knowledge, and skills.
Multimodal Communications and Language Supports	Use multiple methods and structures to communicate and ensure that language supports are available for all educational communications and activities.
Continuous Improvement	Continuously improve family engagement by examining multiple data sources for impact of policies and practices on the newcomers.

NOTETAKING SHEET: Identification of Examples of Parent and Family Engagement Practices

Characteristic	School #1	School #2	School #3	School #4
Co-construction and Collaboration				
Capacity Development				
Assets Orientation				
Multimodal Communications and Language Supports				
Continuous Improvement				
Any practices that our school could adopt or adapt? What would it take to do so?				

CHAPTER 3:

High-Quality Instruction for Newcomer Students

ABOUT THIS CHAPTER

High-quality education for newcomer students builds on their unique strengths and supports their development in ways that enable them to reach their full potential. Newcomers who need to develop English proficiency require instruction that addresses the simultaneous development of English proficiency and grade-level concepts and skills. This chapter includes guidelines for teaching newcomers and, in particular, principles for teaching English Learners (ELs); common misconceptions about teaching ELs; and a sample list of academic programs for newcomers. The guidelines in this chapter are useful for strengthening existing programs or creating new ones to ensure that all newcomers have access to ambitious, high-quality instruction.

Special Features

- **Discussion of the cultivation of global competencies among all students:** Exploration of the diverse, global perspectives that newcomers bring to the classroom, and how they can benefit all students.
- **Guidelines and principles for providing high-quality instruction to ELs:** Discussion that includes formative assessment and special education.
- **Ways to overcome four common misconceptions about newcomers:** Practices that can build the skills newcomers need to participate at school and in the community.
- **Program types and examples:** Examples of designated newcomer programs, and a chart with key attributes of dual language education programs, by program type.
- **Classroom tools:** Subject-specific teaching tools for newcomers, checklists for teachers in assessing classroom plans, and “teacher actions” for success.
- **School-wide tool:** Principles for encouraging successful integration and education for newcomers.
- **Professional reflection and discussion activity:** Instructions and handouts for professional learning communities or staff meetings. (The activity takes about an hour if participants read the chapter in advance.)
- **Resources:** Annotated references to resources cited in this chapter; relevant federal guidance, policy, and data; and other helpful resources on providing high-quality education to newcomer ELs.

Cultivating Global Competencies

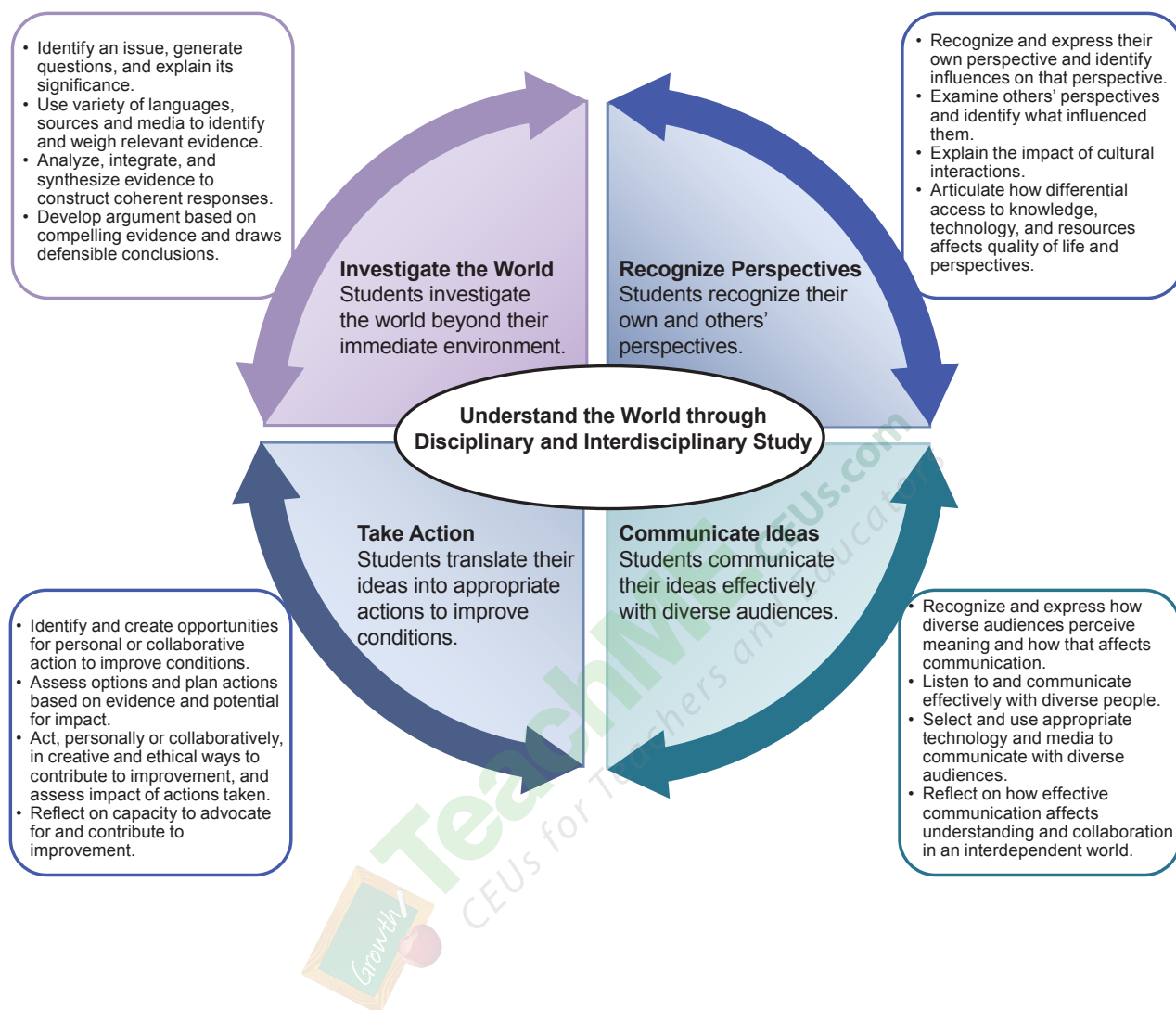
Newcomers bring a wealth of knowledge, experience, and a global perspective to their education in U.S. schools. Their cultural backgrounds, linguistic resources, and prior knowledge provide a foundation for new learning. When schools recognize these assets, and provide purposeful academic and social emotional supports and skill developments, they offer newcomers the opportunity to achieve at very high levels (White House Task Force on New Americans, 2015).

The global perspectives newcomers bring to U.S. classrooms—perspectives at least as diverse as the range of students' countries and cultures of origin—can also help all students understand and act on issues of global significance (Mansilla & Jackson, 2011). As newcomers enter classrooms in the United States, students can explore and use ideas, tools, methods, and languages in all content areas (mathematics, literature, history, science, and the arts) to learn about current events while learning 21st century skills as they apply to the world (Mansilla & Jackson, 2011).

The Global Competencies Matrix, on the following page, outlines four skill areas for students: (1) investigate the world beyond their immediate environment; (2) recognize perspectives, both others' and their own; (3) communicate ideas effectively with diverse audiences; and (4) take action to improve conditions. These skill areas will help all students—newcomers and U.S.-born students alike—in a world of increasing social, cultural, ethnic, linguistic, and religious diversity. Incorporating these diverse academic skills, cultures, and languages may create stronger and academically more inclusive classrooms and schools, while broadening the global competence of U.S.-born students (Mansilla & Jackson, 2011).



Global Competencies: 21st Century Skills Applied to the World



Guidelines for Teaching English Learners and Newcomers

High-quality instruction for all students anticipates all students' potential and provides the supports they need to attain challenging academic goals. Educators can help students achieve at high levels and reach their potential by engaging them in rigorous, deep, and accelerated learning (Walqui & van Lier, 2010; Leseaux & Harris, 2015).

Many newcomers may arrive in the U.S. needing to learn English while also needing to learn academic content. Thus, high-quality education for newcomers is based in large part on quality teaching practices for ELs.

Perspectives about high-quality education for ELs that are grounded in sociocultural theories of learning often challenge common assumptions and practices (Gibbons, 2009; Lantolf & Thorne, 2006; and van Lier, 2004).

These perspectives provide a platform for (a) rethinking instruction for both newcomers and ELs, and (b) providing a high-quality education that is or does the following:

- **Is future-oriented and asset-oriented, with high expectations for success.** Teaching is focused on students' goals, rather than students' deficits. Thus, instruction should provide supports that help students develop new understandings and skills, understand complex concepts, think analytically, and communicate ideas effectively in both social and academic situations.
- **Provides students authentic opportunities to simultaneously develop language and discourse; analytic and problem-solving skills; and competency in academic subjects such as mathematics, science, and social studies.** Simultaneous development of these three areas will help students begin to develop their own agency¹ and autonomy² as learners and thinkers (Valdés, Kibler, & Walqui, 2014).
- **Provides rich opportunities to learn.** Educators ensure that (a) the curriculum is rich in content and connects disciplinary (subject-matter) practices and uses of language in that discipline; and (b) instruction intentionally scaffolds newcomer students' participation to enable them to access complex ideas and engage in rigorous analytic and problem-solving skills on level with their grade in school.
- **Reflects a cultural orientation.** Educators recognize and use the rich cognitive, cultural, and linguistic resources that newcomers bring to their classrooms. Recognizing that newcomer students arrive with valuable knowledge, skills, and language that frame their social, physical, and symbolic worlds (Walqui & van Lier, 2010), teachers use the assets to leverage student learning. High-quality instruction pays close attention to the language, academic experiences, and proficiencies of students.
- **Develops student autonomy and agency by fostering metacognition.** Educators help students become self-aware about their developing skills and knowledge, and they provide opportunities for students to apply their knowledge and skills in a variety of academic areas and in problem-solving settings. Ongoing assessment can provide feedback about how a student's conceptual, analytical, and language development is progressing.

Framing Principles

The Understanding Language District Engagement Subcommittee at Stanford University (2013) developed six key principles to encourage high-quality instruction for all students who need to learn English and meet rigorous, grade-level academic standards. The principles, presented here as published, are meant to help guide educators and administrators as they align instruction with standards.

1. **Instruction focuses on providing ELLs³ with opportunities to engage in discipline-specific practices, which are designed to build conceptual understanding and language competence in tandem.** Learning is a social process that requires teachers to intentionally design learning opportunities that integrate reading, writing, speaking, and listening with the practices of each discipline.

2. **Instruction leverages ELLs' home language(s), cultural assets, and prior knowledge.** ELLs' home language(s) and culture(s) are regarded as assets and are used by the teacher in bridging prior knowledge to new knowledge, and in making content meaningful and comprehensible.
3. **Standards-aligned instruction for ELLs is rigorous, grade-level appropriate, and provides deliberate and appropriate scaffolds. Instruction that is rigorous and standards-aligned reflects the key shifts in the CCSS [Common Core State Standards] and NGSS [Next Generation Science Standards].** Such shifts require that teachers provide students with opportunities to describe their reasoning, share explanations, make conjectures, justify conclusions, argue from evidence, and negotiate meaning from complex texts. Students with developing levels of English proficiency will require instruction that carefully supports their understanding and use of emerging language as they participate in these activities.
4. **Instruction moves ELLs forward by taking into account their English proficiency level(s) and prior schooling experiences.** ELLs within a single classroom can be heterogeneous in terms of home language(s) proficiency, proficiency in English, literacy levels in English and students' home language(s), previous experiences in schools, and time in the U.S. Teachers must be attentive to these differences and design instruction accordingly.
5. **Instruction fosters ELLs' autonomy by equipping them with the strategies necessary to comprehend and use language in a variety of academic settings.** ELLs must learn to use a broad repertoire of strategies to construct meaning from academic talk and complex text, to participate in academic discussions, and to express themselves in writing across a variety of academic situations. Tasks must be designed to ultimately foster student independence.
6. **Diagnostic tools and formative assessment practices are employed to measure students' content knowledge, academic language competence, and participation in disciplinary practices.** These assessment practices allow teachers to monitor students' learning so that they may adjust instruction accordingly, provide students with timely and useful feedback, and encourage students to reflect on their own thinking and learning.

Key Thoughts

Both newcomers and ELs may learn concepts in each core subject through simultaneously engaging in subject-specific analytic practices and related language practices. Students should be encouraged in deliberately constructed, stimulating, and supportive ways to carry out tasks beyond what they can do independently. This repeated engagement apprentices⁴ them into being able to perform those academic practices independently, using appropriate academic language, over time. In guiding students in this way, it is important to focus on the following key concepts:

1. **Instruction in language is not separate from the learning of content.** As students learn new concepts and skills (for example, in mathematics or history) they learn the language. This idea runs counter to the idea proposed by traditional language acquisition curricula and programs, which assume that first students need to learn English, and then they can learn disciplinary content. That traditional view also holds that language learning is a linear and progressive (step by step, with increasing difficulty) process and that the learner should not move forward until the formal and structural aspects of language (grammar, roots and parts of words, vocabulary, sentence structures, parts of speech, and the like) are learned. Learning is not, however, a linear

process; learning a second language is complex, gradual, nonlinear, and dynamic. Thus, instruction that focuses solely on acquiring English is insufficient for newcomers.

2. **Pedagogical scaffolds (instructional supports) help students engage and learn rigorous, grade-level content and related uses of English** (Walqui, 2006; Goldenberg, 2008; Kareva & Echevarria, 2013). Such scaffolds include inviting students to make intellectual claims based on evidence in their experience, or providing academic and linguistic support for expressing ideas in different disciplines (e.g., describing their observations and proposing hypotheses in science, or explaining their solutions to mathematical problems) (Kibler, Valdés, & Walqui, 2014; van Lier & Walqui, 2010).

This kind of scaffolding supports students' learning through a deliberately constructed sequence of activities that leads to the targeted academic goals. Scaffolding does not mean simplifying tasks or academic expectations. On the contrary, it is about structuring engagement in activities that challenge students' thinking, and introducing big ideas in a way that is accessible and prepares them for more complex analysis of those ideas and texts. Providing the appropriate kind of support and the intellectual push required for students to work beyond their current competence builds their autonomy in the field of study.

3. **Higher-order academic learning requires scaffolding and conceptual, analytic, and linguistic development.** Newcomers bring a powerful learning platform, and have learned the everyday language practices of their families, communities, and culture through interactions with others (Heath, 1983). These skills, and the norms, values, and beliefs of their families and communities, constitute the basis of their linguistic and cultural worlds (van Lier, 2004).

As newcomers learn English and academic content, they apprentice into new, additional worlds and ways of expressing themselves that may take time and support. In the beginning they may not speak English accurately or correctly. They will achieve accuracy as they continue to communicate in places where their messages and contributions are valued. This process will help students feel valued and want to be part of the community that uses English in appropriate ways. Throughout the process, educators may wish to emphasize what is being communicated first, and then develop new, academic concepts and uses of language.

4. **Engagement and expression should evolve as students learn English.** Those who are learning English should be treated as capable, not as having limited intelligence (Leseaux & Harris, 2015). Both newcomers and ELs are intelligent, willing to learn, and are legitimate participants in classes; they can make partial sense of ideas and processes if invited to engage. Teachers can encourage better learning outcomes by providing opportunities for students to actively participate and interact with one another in relation to the subject matter (Haynes & Zacarian, 2010). The more students participate in diverse engagements around a theme, the clearer their understanding of ideas and relationships will become. Newcomers need support for tolerating ambiguity, making efforts to express themselves and to understand others. In these attempts, students may use phrases or words in their home language to get meaning across. Teachers need to understand that this use of the student's family language is appropriate and necessary.
5. **Prior knowledge should be tapped to activate and connect it to new learning.** It has been suggested that students build schemas (clusters of interrelated understandings) that increase content learning and language development simultaneously (Walqui, 2006). Moreover, knowing that their family and community culture(s) and language(s) are valued in school develops newcomers' confidence in their new schools, their teachers, and their own learning. Viewing newcomers as valued contributors to the school and community builds strong bridges between the unfamiliar world of school and students' home worlds, and strengthens new learning. (González, Moll, & Amanti, C., 2005).

6. **Student grouping should be purposeful for instruction, and should vary between homogeneous and heterogeneous groupings, depending on students' literacy and language skills** (Saunders, Goldenberg, & Marcelletti, 2013). Heterogeneous groups provide students who are not strong English speakers with peer modeling and support. Homogeneous groups help teachers to pay close attention to students' needs related to the theme of the lesson, or the discipline-specific uses of English. In all circumstances, schools should carry out their chosen programs in the least segregative manner consistent with achieving the program's stated educational goals (U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, & U.S. Department of Justice, Civil Rights Division, 2015, January).
7. **Independent learning uses various metacognitive strategies for learning.** The ability to think about one's own thinking, and to identify and "own" new ideas or consciously use those ideas to determine how to proceed, is a key component of becoming an independent learner. Newcomers use metacognitive strategies to construct meaning from texts written or spoken in a new language. For example, a student may recall hearing peers say, "One possible solution to this problem is to..." in order to express a hypothesis. They then consciously decide to begin their participation in the same way. As they negotiate meaning when interacting with others, they may signal agreement in ways they have observed before. To write sequential reports, they learn to recognize the need to use connecting words such as *first*, *after that*, *meanwhile*, *simultaneously*, and *finally*. In this way they gain awareness of conventions used in written and visual literacies across a variety of academic situations (Stanford University, 2012). Providing students the strategies for engaging in academic dialogue with others (for asking questions and analyzing information) and giving them the tools to choose those strategies when needed is setting the stage for their autonomy and agency as learners. Newcomers need a range of supports to participate in grade-level disciplinary learning while learning a new language.

Formative Assessment

Formative assessment is an informal assessment process that helps provide students and teachers with ongoing feedback throughout a course of learning (Teaching Excellence in Adult Literacy, 2012). It is important to have formative assessment in all learning (Stiggins & DuFour, 2009). Educators should make sure that formative assessment practices are culturally appropriate. In working with newcomers and ELs, formative assessment will help teachers to

- understand that newcomers are a heterogeneous group, and that each student learns differently;
- continually assess achievement;
- obtain evidence of how students' thinking and language use evolve during the learning process;
- determine if students act on what they hear and see in real time;
- continually monitor the emergence of language and adapt to students' needs by designing new strategies that advance language learning; and
- observe student performance to change instruction while it is happening and provide feedback and support that allows the student to self-assess performance (Heritage, 2010).

Culturally-appropriate formative assessment will also help teachers discern whether an EL requires an evaluation to determine whether he or she has a disability and as a result requires special education or other aids and services under *IDEA* or *Section 504* (see Special Education Needs on the following page).

Using formative assessment also involves students in the process; it enhances their agency in the learning process and helps them self-monitor and determine if they need any type of support. This is an opportunity for teachers and students to collaborate in monitoring learning progress and planning and adjusting immediate learning accordingly. When students engage in formative assessment, they may

- analyze their performance against what they understand counts as optimal performance and begin to realize the distance between one and the other;
- plan future action to increasingly approximate the model;

- gain control of their own learning and identify what they see they must accomplish;
- provide opportunity for personal reflections; and
- receive timely information that is pivotal in developing subject-area knowledge, analytical skills, and language proficiency (Heritage, Walqui, & Linquanti, 2015).

Special Education Needs

The *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act* (IDEA) and *Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973* (Section 504) address the rights of students with disabilities in school and other educational settings. If an EL is suspected of having one or more disabilities, the LEA [local education agency] must evaluate the EL promptly to determine if the EL has a disability or disabilities and whether the EL needs disability-related services (which are special education and related services under IDEA or regular or special education and related aids and services under Section 504). Disability evaluations may not be delayed because of a student's limited English language proficiency (ELP) or the student's participation in a language instruction educational program (LIEP). Also, a student's ELP cannot be the basis for determining that a student has a disability.

It is important for educators to accurately determine whether ELs are eligible for disability-related services. Researchers have identified four potential factors that may contribute to the misidentification of special education needs, and learning disabilities in particular, among students who are ELs: (1) the evaluating professional's lack of knowledge of second-language development and disabilities, (2) poor instructional practices, (3) weak intervention strategies, and (4) inappropriate assessment tools (Sánchez, Parker, Akbayin, & McTigue, 2010).

Appropriate disability identification processes that evaluate the student's disability-related educational needs and not the student's English language skills will help school personnel to accurately identify students in need of disability-related services. In addition, LEAs must ensure that a student's special education evaluation is provided and administered in the student's native language or other mode of communication and in the form most likely to yield accurate information about what the student knows and can do, unless it is clearly not feasible to do so. Assessing whether a student has a disability in his or her native language or other mode of communication can help educators ascertain whether a need stems from lack of ELP and/or a student's disability-related educational needs.

When an EL student is determined to be a child with a disability—as defined in IDEA, or an individual with a disability under the broader definition of disability in Section 504—the student's EL and disability-related educational needs must be met. For EL students, in addition to the required IEP [Individualized Education Plan] team participants under IDEA, it is essential that the IEP team include participants who have knowledge of the student's language needs. It is also important that the IEP team include professionals with training, and preferably expertise, in second-language acquisition and how to differentiate between the student's needs stemming from a disability or lack of ELP.

In addition, under IDEA, the LEA must take whatever action is necessary to ensure that the student's parents understand the proceedings of the IEP team meeting, including arranging for an interpreter for parents with limited English proficiency [LEP] or parents who are deaf. Under *Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964*, and the *Equal Educational Opportunities Act*, for a LEP parent to have meaningful access to an IEP or Section 504 plan meeting, it also may be necessary to have the IEP, Section 504 plan, or related documents translated into the parent's primary language.

Common Misconceptions About Newcomers

Schools often need support in implementing educational practices. This may encompass recognizing and helping to shift schools' and educators' misconceptions about educating newcomers and ELs. Without consciously addressing misconceptions, schools may not develop specifically designed policies, procedures, and strategies to help newcomers learn content and language as rapidly as needed.

Below are four common misconceptions about educating newcomers, along with current practices that may help prepare newcomers to acquire the skills needed to actively participate in their education and community environments.

Misconceptions, Current Understandings, and Suggested Practices

MISCONCEPTION 1:

Newcomers must develop significant language proficiency prior to participating in disciplinary learning.

Current Understanding: Students learn language to do things in the world. To help students develop academic language, they need to participate in meaningful and authentic activities about academic ideas and concepts (van Lier & Walqui, 2012).

- Orient students to the different types of texts they use in school and how language is used in each content area.
- Help students use academic language to promote English language development and support academic learning.

Example: Provide newcomers with diverse types of text and help them understand different types of text (e.g., narratives, temporary expressions such as “first” and “later”) and content-specific language. This will help students create their own academic practices and language.

- Focus on how students use key phrases associated with the type of text, and convey meaning about the content through written, oral, visual, and symbolic texts, thus moving away from a focus on errors (such as verb tense and pronunciation). Initially, student efforts may be inaccurate, but proficiency will evolve.

Example: Observe students' written and oral expression, and support and check on their development over time. Also create opportunities for newcomers to use language in a variety of academic situations, both formal and informal, helping the student to increasingly use subject-specific English.

MISCONCEPTION 2:

Students need simplified content and language as they learn English.

Current Understanding: Simplified language decreases, rather than increases, meaning. Removing connections between sentences and paragraphs and using simple sentences, for example, reduces the content and meaning of a text. Instead, texts for newcomers should be amplified, not simplified (van Lier and Walqui, 2010).

Continued on next page

Misconceptions (continued)

Develop connections between sentences and paragraphs to help students navigate a text.

Example: Identify text that contains illustrative examples and connections in both sentences and paragraphs. These include embedding definitions, repeating and rewording key terms, and adding connections between sentences and paragraphs.

- Expose and invite students to participate in content-related English so they may respond when provided with metacognitive strategies.

MISCONCEPTION 3: Students can learn only one language at a time, and bilingualism is counterproductive. Use of a student's home language will negatively affect academic and language learning.

Current Understanding: Literacy in a student's first language positively affects the learning of a new language (August & Shanahan, 2006).

- Develop programs in which the student's first language supports learning a new language such as bilingual or dual language programs and classes (August & Shanahan, 2006).
- Help students learn English by using the home language as a tool for learning English and academic content (van Lier, 2004).

Examples:

- Provide amplified models of how to use English appropriately in academic contexts. In doing so, also accept the students' need to create and share meaning in their native language(s).
- Invite students to develop their native language by reading books in that language.

MISCONCEPTION 4: Not all educators working with ELs or newcomers need to be specially trained. If teachers speak English, they can teach English.

Current Understanding: Teachers need specialized knowledge to teach English and academic content to ELs, and to support the other needs of newcomers. Without pedagogical and socio-emotional supports for newcomers and ELs in particular, we will fail to support the attainment of ambitious futures by these students.

- Provide class teachers, administrators, curriculum specialists, and EL teachers with sustained and high-quality professional learning opportunities about strategies for supporting the academic content and language knowledge of newcomers.
- Focus professional learning on effective pedagogical and social emotional supports for newcomers.

Example: Enrich and contextualize academic language to increase its accessibility for EL and newcomer students, particularly in upper grades.

High-Quality Core Academic Programs for Newcomer Students

High-quality core academic programs for newcomers provide the support needed to participate in rigorous, grade-level academic learning. High-quality programs build on the newcomers' assets and provide supports for students to learn both English and academic content. All teachers and staff are responsible for the students' academic success and social emotional development. Programs for newcomers include both of the following:

- **Integrated programs** are designed to meet the needs of varied populations, including newcomers, children of immigrant families, and English-only students at the same time—and are usually dual or bilingual language programs that enroll newcomers, children of immigrants, and English-only students in varying combinations.
- **Designated programs** are designed specifically to meet the unique needs of newcomers enrolled in a district, and include newcomer centers and international schools that provide academic and social emotional support and development to students who attend until they transition to elementary or secondary schools within a district.

Dual Language, Integrated Programs

Two-way and one-way dual language programs may benefit ELs and newcomers because their home languages are used in teaching and learning. Using an EL's native language in a strong, supportive learning environment can build their confidence as learners, build English skills, and help them acquire academic content to become successful in school (Alanís & Rodríguez, 2008; Lindholm-Leary, 2001). In a randomized study of dual language outcomes in one large district, both ELs and native English speakers receiving dual language instruction (DLI) did better. However, when controlled (i.e., only students randomly assigned to DLI or not DLI), differences were observed in reading outcomes in grades 5 and 8 (Steele, Slater, Zamarro, Miler, Li, Burkhauser, & Bacon, 2015).



Key Attributes of Dual Language Education Programs, by Program Type

	Two-Way Dual Language Programs*	One-Way Dual Language Programs		
	Two-Way Immersion/ Dual Language Immersion	World Language Immersion Programs	Developmental Bilingual Education Programs	Heritage Language Immersion
Student Population Served	ELs and non-ELs (ideally 50 percent in each group, or a minimum of 33 percent)	Primarily English speakers; can include ELs and heritage speakers	ELs and former ELs only	Students whose families' heritage language is/was the partner language
Languages	English and the ELs' languages	English and a partner language	English and the ELs' home (partner) language	English and the heritage (partner) language
Staffing	One bilingual teacher, who teaches in both languages, or one teacher per language	One bilingual teacher who teaches in both languages, or one teacher per language	One bilingual teacher who teaches in both languages, or one teacher per language	One bilingual teacher who teaches in both languages, or one teacher per language
Time Allocation per Language	Primarily 50:50, or a combination that starts with more of the partner language (90:10, 80:20, and so on)			
Language of Academic Subjects	Varies by program			
Language Allocation	Language of instruction allocated by time, content area, or teacher			
Duration of Program	Throughout elementary school, with some programs continuing at the secondary level			
Size of Program	Strand or whole school			
*Two-way dual language programs, also known as two-way immersion or dual language immersion programs, serve a student population consisting of both ELs and non-ELs (ideally, 50 percent in each group, or a minimum of 33 percent).				

Designated Core Academic Programs for Newcomers

High-quality designated programs for newcomers provide students with the academic and social emotional support and development students need to engage in rigorous, grade-level academic learning (Castellón et al., 2015). Designated programs such as newcomer centers and international schools enroll only newcomer students. Newcomer centers are the entry point for many students enrolled in districts with large numbers of newcomers. Students enroll in these programs until they are prepared to transition to a school in the district (typically no more than one year). In contrast, students at international schools usually remain in the school until they graduate. However, newcomer programs for international schools must be carried out in the least segregated manner possible, consistent with the program's educational goals (U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, & U.S. Department of Justice, Civil Rights Division, 2015, January, pp. 22–24).

The three programs described below illustrate components of high-quality core academic programs in specially designated schools for newcomer students. The descriptions include an elementary newcomer center in White Plains, New York; a secondary newcomer center in Arlington Heights, Illinois; and an international high school in Boston, Massachusetts.

Newcomer Center, White Plains, New York¹

The Newcomer Center values the cultural and linguistic resources that students bring to their education. Staff members believe that education should develop the academic and social emotional well-being of students, and that students learn best in a safe and comforting environment. Staff are committed to supporting students' content and language development. Teachers in grades one through six plan units for each grade level, as newcomers may enter the program at any point in these years. All units are content-based ESL. The curriculum integrates content-area concepts and state ESL standards. Students participate in English language arts (ELA), science, and social studies instruction; related mathematics concepts are integrated within grade level units. The ELA instruction engages students in interacting with high-quality texts, learning about text features and associated English language features, and writing instruction that builds within and across the grades. In social studies, students learn how to read maps, charts, timelines, and texts typical of the discipline. Science instruction focuses on recording and interpreting data. Students develop culminating projects in each unit.

District 214 Newcomer Center in Arlington Heights, Illinois²

The Newcomer Center (Center) meets the learning and acculturation needs of recently arrived high school students who are new to the English language. Students are at the beginning levels of English fluency and may be students with interrupted formal education (SIFE). The academic core program focuses on intensive English language and content instruction. Students enroll in a full academic program, consisting of a double block of English and math, social studies, physical education and health, and reading instruction, where Spanish-speaking students have a Spanish reading class and non-Spanish-speaking students have an English reading class. Enrollment is on a voluntary basis, and the length of time students attend the program depends

on their individual needs. The focus of the academic core program is on ensuring that students are able to transition successfully to the full academic program at their high schools. The Center believes the experiences and diversity that students and their families bring with them are assets to the community. Educators and staff meet with families in their homes to connect them to community resources and adult school evening classes. Newcomer students participate in after-school programs that connect what they are learning at the Center with their culture, prior knowledge, and previous experiences. They also participate in home-school extracurricular sports and clubs.

Boston International High School and Newcomers Academy (BINcA)³

BINcA has a clear vision of excellence—students will graduate ready for success in college and careers. All students are immigrants and ELs. Newcomers who are identified as SIFE enter the Newcomers Academy. There they are enrolled in classes in their home language and they also learn English so they can transfer into 9th grade in one or two years. Students in the program are engaged in rigorous academic learning as they are learning English. One-fifth of a recent graduating class began as SIFE students. Now they are ready for college. What characterizes the core academic program that makes this school so successful? All teachers share responsibility for supporting students' learning of a rigorous college curriculum, focusing on developing all students' conceptual, analytical, and language practices throughout their education. Each student in the school has an adult mentor who speaks the student's home language, connects with the student's family, and checks in regularly with the student about his or her academic progress and well-being.

Key Elements of High-Quality Educational Programs for Newcomers

As described earlier in this chapter, and evidenced in these examples of outstanding dedicated newcomer programs, optimal academic programs for newcomer students share a number of elements and reflect the following key elements of effective instruction:

- clear mission of excellence in the education of newcomers that values the positive contributions to the school and community that newcomers bring;
- rich learning opportunities for newcomers that are rigorous and include grade-level content and literacy learning in English and newcomers' home languages whenever possible;
- agreed-upon educational pathways for students that promote coherence across grade levels or school settings;
- school adults directly supporting students' education and socio-emotional well-being, agency, and autonomy;
- regular check-ins with students, and efforts to connect families with needed services;
- program with an asset orientation that values newcomers' home languages, cultures, families, and experiences; and
- educators and staff who focus on continuous improvement of the core academic program with the goal of integrating rigorous academic and language learning to nurture and ripen newcomer students' potential.

Subject-Specific Teaching Strategies for Newcomer English Learners

Schools must provide ELs with access to the core curriculum in order to ensure they are able to meaningfully participate in the educational programs (U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, & U.S. Department of Justice, Civil Rights Division, 2015, January, p. 18). The links in the chart below provide strategies, by subject area, for helping newcomer ELs access academic content. Unless otherwise indicated, these resources can be used at all grade levels.

Teaching Civics and Social Studies

Lesson Plan on American Immigration for Middle School. From American Immigration Council website: <http://www.immigrationpolicy.org/category/lesson-plans/middle-school-lesson-plans>

Lesson Plan on American Immigration for Elementary School. From Kennedy Center website: http://artsedge.kennedy-center.org/educators/lessons/grade-3-4/America_A_Home_for_Every_Culture#Preparation

Lesson Plan Ideas From The New Americans Series: Grades 7–12. From PBS website: http://www.pbs.org/independentlens/newamericans/foreducators_index.html

Library of Congress Lesson Plans on Immigration. From Library of Congress website: <http://www.loc.gov/teachers/classroommaterials/themes/immigration/lessonplans.htm>

Library of Congress Lesson Plan: “What is an American?,” Grades 9–12. From Library of Congress website: <http://www.loc.gov/teachers/classroommaterials/lessons/american/index.html>

Preparing Social Studies Lessons. From Colorín Colorado website: <http://www.colorincolorado.org/article/preparing-engaging-social-studies-lesson-english-language-learners>

Teaching Science

Strategies for Teaching Science. From The Sourcebook for Teaching Science webpage: <https://www.csun.edu/science/ref/language/teaching-ell.html>

National Science Teachers Association Strategies for Teaching Science. From NSTA website: <http://www.nsta.org/about/positions/ell.aspx>

Strategies for Teaching Science Vocabulary. From Learn NC website: <http://www.learnnc.org/lp/pages/7079>

Lesson and Materials for Teaching Science. From Your Dictionary website: <http://esl.yourdictionary.com/esl/esl-lessons-and-materials/tips-for-teaching-science-to-esl-students.html>

Helping English Learners Understand Science. From United Federation of Teachers website: <http://www.uft.org/teacher-teacher/helping-esl-students-science-class>

Subject-Specific Teaching Strategies for Newcomer English Learners

Continued from previous page

Teaching Math

Ten Tips for Teaching Math. From Scholastic website:

<http://www.scholastic.com/teachers/article/10-ways-help-ells-succeed-math>

Academic Supports for Math. From Stanford University website:

http://ell.stanford.edu/teaching_resources/math

Tips for EL Math Instruction. From Colorín Colorado website:

<http://www.colorincolorado.org/article/math-instruction-english-language-learners>

EL Classroom Supports. From Education Development Center website:

<http://ltd.edc.org/supporting-english-learners-mathematics-classroom>

Teaching English Language Arts

English Language Arts (ELA) Instructional Ideas. From ASCD website:

<http://www.ascd.org/ascd-express/vol5/511-breiseth.aspx>

Literacy Instruction for ELs. From Colorín Colorado website:

<http://www.colorincolorado.org/literacy-instruction-ells>

Research on Teaching Reading. From WETA website: <http://www.readingrockets.org/article/what-does-research-tell-us-about-teaching-reading-english-language-learners>

Effective ELA Instruction for ELs in Elementary Grades. From Institute of Education Sciences website:

http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/pdf/practice_guides/20074011.pdf

Checklist for Teaching for Global Competence

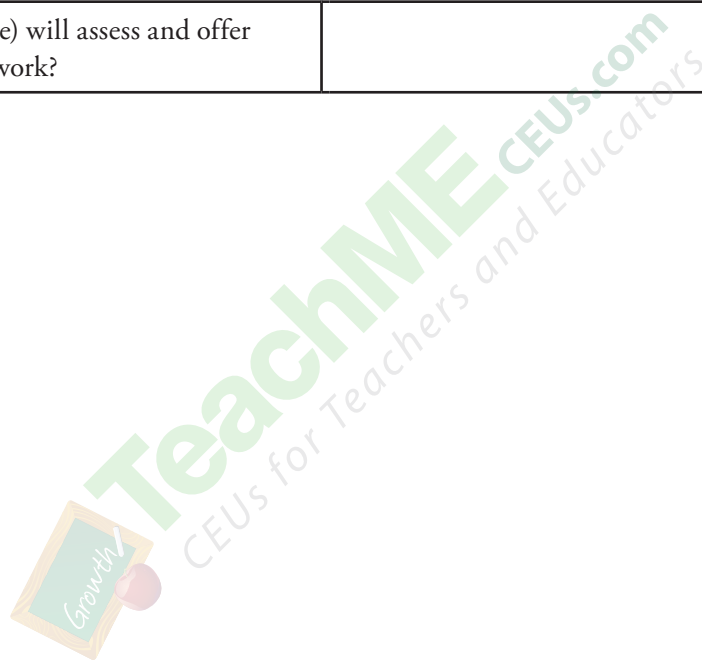
Teaching for global competence may allow newcomers to connect with their new classroom and for other students to connect with them. Creating lessons that focus on issues that are global in nature and allowing for analysis and investigation of these issues may assist in promoting a more inclusive classroom. The following is a checklist to use when thinking about teaching for global competence.

CRITERIA	COMMENTS FOR EDUCATORS
Have I selected a topic of local and global significance for this unit/project/visit/course?	
• Does the topic invite deep engagement?	
• Does the topic embody local and global significance?	
• Does the topic embody global significance?	
• Does the topic invite disciplinary and interdisciplinary grounding?	
Have I planned learning outcomes that are disciplinarily grounded and focused on global competence?	
• Do learning goals capture important knowledge and skills in one or more disciplines?	
• Do the selected learning outcomes capture relevant global competence?	
• Are learning goals shared with students and stakeholders?	
Have I planned performances of global competence for this unit/project/visit/course?	
• Do my performances of global competence involve using disciplinary and interdisciplinary knowledge and skill in novel situations?	
• Do my performances focus on targeted global competences?	
• Do my performances link local and global spheres?	
• Do my performances engage students' cognitive, social, and emotional development?	
• Do they invite a personal synthesis?	

Checklist for Teaching for Global Competence

Continued from previous page

CRITERIA	COMMENTS FOR EDUCATORS
Have I planned global competence–centered assessments for this unit/project/visit/course?	
• Is my assessment focused on global competence?	
• How will I assess student work over time?	
• How will my feedback be informative to my students?	
• Who (in addition to me) will assess and offer feedback on students' work?	



Sample Core Principles for Educating Newcomer ELs

The Internationals Network for Public Schools is a group of public high schools that work with newcomer students. The Internationals Network's mission is to "provide quality education for recently arrived immigrants by growing and sustaining a strong national network of innovative International High Schools, while broadening our impact by sharing proven best practices and influencing policy for English learners on a national scale." The Internationals schools base their pedagogical approach on the following five "core principles."

Principle	Explanation
Heterogeneity and Collaboration	Heterogeneous schools and classrooms are collaborative structures that build on the strengths of each member of the school community to optimize learning.
Experiential Learning	Twenty-first century schools that expand beyond the four walls of the building motivate adolescents and enhance their capacity to successfully participate in modern society.
Language and Content Integration	Purposeful, language-rich, interdisciplinary, and experiential programs allow strong language skills to develop most effectively in context and emerge most naturally.
Localized Autonomy and Responsibility	Linking autonomy and responsibility at every level within a learning community allows all members to contribute to their fullest potential.
One Learning Model for All	Every member of our school community experiences the same learning model, maximizing an environment of mutual academic support. Thus all members of our school community work in diverse, collaborative groups on hands-on projects; put another way, the model for adult learning and student learning mirror each other.

“Teach Me”: Instructional Practices That Support Newcomers’ Participation and Academic Success (Discussion Cards)

Purpose

K-12 school administrators and teachers can use the discussion cards provided with this activity in a staff meeting or professional learning community to seed a discussion about instructional practices that support newcomers’ participation and academic success.

Preparation for Activity

- A few days in advance, ask participants to read Chapter 3 of this tool kit.
- Make copies of the discussion cards included on the next page (one set for each group of four participants)

Time Required for Activity

1 hour

Instructions for Facilitator

1. Establish table groups with four participants at each table. In the center of each table, place a set of discussion cards, facedown. (Each table gets the same set of cards.)
2. Provide an overview of the activity. Participants will use what they learned from their reading of Chapter 3 about high-quality instruction for newcomer ELs to sort the cards into two categories: (1) presence of a feature of high-quality instruction with newcomers or (2) presence of a misconception about the education of newcomers. (It is helpful to write or post these two categories where all can see them.) Participants are to work collaboratively in their groups to decide whether a particular practice belongs in one category or the other.
3. Provide instructions for the process each group is to use. To begin the activity, one person in the group draws a discussion card from the deck and reads it aloud to the group. That person decides what category it belongs to and provides a rationale for that choice. The other group members can agree or disagree, and say why. The group must reach consensus about the choice before the card is placed face up on the table (in either category 1 or category 2). The next person draws another card, and the process continues. When all cards have been sorted, the group discusses recommendations about the changes in practice needed for the cards that do not align with high-quality instruction for ELs.
4. Have each group report out, and facilitate a whole-group discussion. Focus on recommended changes in practice, and ask for ideas on what teachers and administrators can do to support such practices in your school.

Discussion Cards for “Teach Me” Reflection and Discussion Activity

Copy a complete set of the following discussion cards on paper or cardstock for every four participants. You can add additional examples to this set if you wish.

A teacher gives her newcomer ELs a test on English grammar once a week to gauge their progress in learning English.

A sixth-grade teacher uses a second-grade text with her newcomers. She claims that the language is at the students’ level and that if she gave them grade-level materials they would not understand texts.

A literacy coach walks into a teacher’s classroom. The class has a mix of ELs who are newcomers, children of immigrants, and native speakers of English. All the students are engaged and animated, working on grade-level materials in activities that have them analyze texts and support the conclusions they draw from their reading. As the coach approaches a group, he notices that one student speaks in Spanish to another student while the rest of the group is working. He asks the other two students in the group what the Spanish-speaking students are doing. They say one student is a newcomer who had trouble understanding the assignment, and the other student is explaining what they are doing in the group. Before the coach leaves, he makes a note that students need to use English when they work in groups together.

Continued on next page

Discussion Cards

Continued from previous page

In a lesson about human rights for high school newcomers, the teacher uses a jigsaw project that addresses the needs of four different types of students through four different texts. The tasks and requirements for each group reading a different text are the same. To complete the activity, students will all share collective findings with new partners and then apply expertise and newly gained knowledge to produce a poster that explains the characteristics of good speeches.

The teacher provides students with appropriate scientific language to assist students in discussing their observations of a science simulation.

Overall, the teacher in a class speaks about 30 percent of the time and the students talk to each other through carefully constructed activities 70 percent of the time.

Discussion Cards

Continued from previous page

Most of the questions asked of newcomers about concepts or texts are factual and ask students to recall information.

A parent volunteers in an 80:20 ratio second-grade dual language program with ELs and Spanish learners. The parent, who is Spanish/English bilingual, notices that the academic learning in Spanish is at a lower level than she expected. Her child is learning Spanish, and she is concerned that he will be behind his peers in other second-grade classes.



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CHAPTER 4:

How Do We Support Newcomers' Social Emotional Needs?

ABOUT THIS CHAPTER

Educators are becoming increasingly aware of the link between social emotional competencies and academic achievement. To help newcomers develop the social emotional knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behaviors needed for success in school and beyond, schools may provide formal and informal supports for social emotional learning (sometimes referred to in the literature as SEL). This chapter discusses why and how schools can contribute to the development of newcomers' social emotional well-being. Topics include the relationship between social emotional well-being and student success, culturally appropriate supports for newcomers, ways to develop their social emotional skills, the role of informal social interactions, safe learning environments, adult- and student-led supports, and integration of social emotional and academic programs.

Special Features

- **Overview of stressors for newcomers:** Unique aspects of the immigrant experience and examples of how these experiences can affect students.
- **Ideas for conflict resolution and problem solving:** Ideas critical to the development of newcomer students' social emotional skills.
- **Five concepts central to social emotional development:** These concepts are present in four frameworks for SEL program standards.
- **Examples of four types of social emotional supports:** Formal and informal supports led by adults or students.
- **Five approaches to integrating social emotional and academic programs:** Illustrative examples from successful programs.
- **Classroom tools:** A description of 10 instructional practices that support social emotional learning, a basic approach to modeling and teaching conflict resolution skills, and a lesson plan for addressing discrimination.
- **School-wide tools:** A graphic organizer and accompanying chart with core stressors for newcomers, and ideas for preventing or responding to hate crimes that target particular racial or ethnic groups.
- **Professional reflection and discussion activities:** Instructions and handouts for professional learning communities or staff meetings. (Each activity takes about an hour if participants read the chapter in advance.)
- **Resources:** Annotated references to resources cited in this chapter; relevant federal guidance, policy, and data; and other helpful resources on supporting newcomers' social emotional needs.



Social Emotional Well-Being and Student Success

Positive emotional well-being correlates with higher rates of academic engagement, a sense of belonging and connectedness in school, and academic motivation, and may reduce conduct problems, drug use, and violence (Suárez-Orozco, Pimental, & Martin, 2009; Botvin, Baker, Dusenbery, Botvin, & Diaz, 1995; Chiu, Pong, Mori, & Chow, 2012). There is evidence to suggest that integrating social emotional competencies with academics enhances student learning (Elias, 2004). Thus, an effective education for all students addresses academic performance and achievement—and nurtures their interpersonal and intrapersonal development.¹

Even though newcomers are as capable and willing to succeed as their U.S.-born peers, many face unique challenges, and they may have distinct social emotional needs. For example, some newcomers may have trauma from fleeing war-torn countries or being separated from family members during the immigration process; they are dealing with this trauma while simultaneously negotiating new roles and identities in an unfamiliar cultural context. Those in this situation sometimes go through a “silent period” as the student and the student’s family adjusts to their new surroundings and takes in information (Igoa, 2015). This silent period may last from a few days to a few months (Paradis, Genesee, & Crago, 2004). To ensure that newcomers not only adjust but thrive academically, socially, and emotionally, school staff can offer an array of strategies and supports to develop newcomers’ skills in the classroom, in the school, and in the community at large.

Social Emotional Supports

Upon migrating to the United States, newcomers often leave behind well-established social support networks such as family, friends, and neighborhood institutions (e.g., schools and houses of worship). Consequently, newcomer students are often navigating new cultural landscapes and social norms without much support. Schools can play an important role in helping students establish new social support networks.

Suarez-Orozco, Pimentel, and Martin (2009) note that “successful adaptations among immigrant students appear to be linked to the quality of relationships that they forge in their school settings. ...Social relations provide a variety of protective functions—a sense of belonging, emotional support, tangible assistance and information,

cognitive guidance, and positive feedback. ...Relationships with peers, for example, provide emotional sustenance that supports the development of significant psychosocial competencies in youth. ...In addition, connections with teachers, counselors, coaches, and other supportive adults in school are important in the academic and social adaptation of adolescents and appear to be particularly important to immigrant adolescents” (p. 717).

As school staff establish culturally relevant programs and practices that support newcomers, it is critical for them to consider the unique aspects of immigration and how being an immigrant can affect a student. For example:

- Immigrants and refugees may experience stress from cultural changes and acculturation (Birman, 2002).
- As immigrants learn new cultural expectations and customs (and sometimes, a new language), they may feel pressured to become more “American” without understanding what that means (Birman, 2002).
- Many immigrants may feel that they must choose between their home culture and the new culture (Berry & Vedder, 2016) while establishing a secure identity amidst competing social pressures (Chiu et al., 2012; Suárez-Orozco, Rhodes, & Milburn, 2009; Suárez-Orozco & Suárez-Orozco, 2001; Bal & Perzigian, 2013).
- Immigrant students may feel alienated culturally and socially, even if they experience academic success (Ladson-Billings, 1995).
- Immigrants may experience stressors that differ from those experienced by their non-immigrant peers, such as loss of social support, the need to learn a new language, and navigation of unfamiliar systems to access services when they arrive in the United States (Suárez-Orozco & Suárez-Orozco, 2001).
- Current events and media coverage may contribute to a rise in discrimination, bullying, racial slurs, and possible hate crimes against individuals based upon their actual or perceived race, ethnicity, national origin, or religion, such as those from Arab or majority-Muslim countries, from Mexico, or from Central or South American countries.

To help newcomers succeed as they experience these and other stressors, social supports are necessary on several fronts, and should offer multiple avenues for students to develop new relationships with adults and peers in a new school community and to build a sense of social integration.

To establish supports that are appropriate and effective, it is critical for educators to acknowledge newcomers’ individual strengths, the resilience they developed through the immigration process, and their rich potential for building on life experiences and prior schooling (Birman, 2002). Moreover, educators need to recognize that newcomers have diverse characteristics, including home language, age at entry, family structure, and socioeconomic status. A student’s culture may limit interactions with different genders or professions. For example, Latino cultures may be used to resolving conflict within the family or with the help of clergy rather than consulting mental health professionals (Kramer, Guarnaccia, Resendez, & Lu, 2009). Offering supports or services that are not culturally responsive may be unproductive.

Social Emotional Skills Development

Students learn social emotional skills in the classroom when teachers provide them with opportunities and strategies to learn and apply these skills (Durlak, Weissberg, Dymnicki, Taylor, & Schellinger, 2011). Educators can build upon students’ individual identities and strengths as they seek to bolster students’ overall social emotional skills.

Stavsky (2015) analyzed four frameworks that have been developed to identify skills, attitudes, and behaviors associated with long-term social emotional development. According to Stavsky these frameworks have in common five competencies central to social emotional development:

1. Intrinsic motivation (initiative, persistence, self-direction)
2. Critical thinking skills (problem solving, metacognitive skills, reasoning and judgment skills)
3. Relational skills (communication, cooperation, empathy)
4. Emotional self-regulation (impulse control, stress management, behavior)
5. Self-concept (knowing one's own strengths and limitations, believing in one's ability to succeed, believing that competence grows with effort). (p. 7)

Schools can actively develop students' social emotional skills by (1) creating an environment where it is safe to express emotions; (2) being emotionally responsive and modeling empathy; (3) setting clear expectations and limits; (4) separating emotions from actions; (5) encouraging and reinforcing social skills such as greeting others and taking turns; and (6) creating opportunities for children to solve problems (Center for the Study of Social Policy, n.d.).

Social Emotional Development and Informal Social Interactions

Newcomers' social emotional development also depends on informal interactions between adults and students and between students and their peers (Suárez-Orozco, Suárez-Orozco, & Todorova, 2008). Educating newcomers on conflict resolution and problem-solving skills may increase the likelihood that pairs or groups of students will be able to resolve conflicts on their own. These skills may help relationships with their peers, who may converse with them in English or another language (Carhill-Poza, 2015). There is evidence to suggest that newcomers who engage in informal social interactions in English develop higher English language proficiency (Carhill, Suárez-Orozco, & Paez, 2008). Basic skills that can help students resolve conflicts without adult intervention include the following:

1. Cooling off when upset
2. Speaking directly to each other
3. Speaking assertively, honestly, and kindly
4. Listening carefully to others and accurately paraphrasing their words
5. Proposing solutions and agreeing on a solution to try (Responsive Classroom, n.d.).

Social Emotional Well-Being and Bullying

Bullying is aggressive behavior that is repetitive and that plays upon a power imbalance between the aggressor and the victim. "Immigrant bullying" is based on the victim's immigrant status or family history of immigration, and can take the form of (1) derogatory remarks about a student's or student's family members' immigration status or history, (2) physical violence or threat, (3) manipulation, or (4) shunning (Bridging Refugee Youth and Children's Services, n.d.). Newcomers may be bullied due to their race or ethnicity, language, accent, clothing, and religion. Factors such as misinterpreting language and culture, fear of authority figures, and immigration experiences may prevent newcomers from identifying and reporting bullying.

Bullies may be American-born students or other immigrant students who have lived longer in the United States. Newcomers may bully other students in efforts to try to fit in and belong. Factors such as survival skills developed in previous environments, misinterpretation of behavior, and deeply rooted opinions of particular cultural groups may contribute to the bullying (Bridging Refugee Youth and Children's Services, n.d.).

Moreover, newcomers may befriend gangs or students who appear to accept them in order to be part of the group. However, these individuals may have a negative influence on the newcomers.

By working with students, families, and community groups, schools can create safe learning environments in which all students can participate in a robust exchange of ideas to stop bullying of newcomers. The U.S. Department of Education (2015, December 31) suggests that schools use the following strategies to counter bullying:

- Value the diverse linguistic, cultural, racial, and ethnic backgrounds of all students.
- Encourage students on all sides of an issue to express disagreement over ideas or beliefs in a respectful manner.
- Communicate a clear message to students that harassment and bullying will not be tolerated, and that school is a safe place for all students.
- Create opportunities—for example, by engaging interfaith leaders or campus ministries and others in the school or community—for students to enhance their cultural competency by being exposed to various cultures and faiths, such as through co-curricular activities in which students work on service projects so they discover commonalities and appreciate differences.
- Encourage students, staff, and parents² to report all incidents of harassment and bullying so that the school can address them before the situation escalates.
- Have a system in place to intervene if a student's conduct could endanger others.
- Ensure that information about the steps outlined above is easily understandable for all students, families, and school or college personnel—including those from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

Four Types of Support for Newcomers' Social Emotional Development

Formal and informal programs and structures led by teachers, leaders, school staff, and peers can provide newcomer students with a sense of stability and are critical to supporting their social emotional development. A structured school environment that provides emotional and social supports can alleviate newcomer students' fears of acculturation and enable them to concentrate on academic and personal success (Center for Mental Health in Schools at UCLA, 2011; Gonzalez, Eades, & Supple, 2014; Suárez-Orozco, Rhodes, et al., 2009).

While formal school programs are essential to meeting newcomers' social emotional needs, often it is the informal caring relationships between school staff and newcomers that matter most. Such relationships enable teachers to understand and tap into students' interests and attitudes to engage students and strengthen their learning experiences—and thereby bolster their academic success (García Woodley, Flores, & Chu, 2013). Interactions with peers can also support academic learning and help newcomers gain access to institutional resources and college pathways (Stanton-Salazar, 2011). While peers can provide one another linguistic support when they are from the same cultural background, positive interethnic peer relations are also associated with English proficiency and academic achievement (Barrett, Barile, Malm, & Weaver, 2012).

While schools typically focus initially on formal and informal supports led by adults, students can also provide supports for their peers, if the school provides appropriate structures and opportunities for them to own and lead such supports. For example, schools can engage students in developing and leading anti-bullying and peer mentoring programs. The table on the next page highlights examples and benefits of adult- and student-led formal and informal supports for newcomers' social emotional development.

Adult- and Student-Led, Formal and Informal, Social Emotional Supports for Newcomers

Type of Support	Examples and Benefits
Formal, Adult-led	<p><i>Examples</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic collaborations with culturally relevant community-based organizations and faith-based institutions • Sessions for “newcomers only” where they can learn about college planning, why and how to get involved in service-learning projects, or other topics related to college applications • Formal extended-day programs that provide opportunities (e.g., clubs, sports, service learning) to learn in interactive, interest-driven environments • Parent and family workshops in home languages on topic such as college planning; tax preparation; immigration assistance; medical, dental, mental health clinics (if families are receptive to these services); and computer and internet skills <p><i>Benefits</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offers a sense of stability, minimizes fear of acculturation, provides companionship to bolster student’s sense of belonging and contribution to the school and community • Helps student focus their efforts to achieve social emotional and academic success • Offers consistent communication to help strengthen relations among families, students, schools, and the community
Informal, Adult-led	<p><i>Examples</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advisory programs or a daily advisory period in which student checks in with a homeroom teacher or another adult every day • Student check-in times with the school counselors to identify any changes and to help students develop a positive sense of themselves, their potential roles with others, and their unique contributions to the school <p><i>Benefits</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offers regular support for the student • Provides a one-on-one opportunity to speak with adults in an informal, confidential environment • Establishes a reciprocal sense of trust and caring • Allows adults to work with teachers and support staff to connect student with relevant services and supports • Provides opportunities to strengthen problem-solving skills, attitudes, and experiences in ways that help students become engaged learners and members of their new community

Social Emotional Supports (continued)

Type of Support	Examples and Benefits
Formal, Peer-based	<p><i>Examples</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cross-age peer mentoring between students of different ages; for example, pair a high school junior with an elementary student• Cross-age programs (e.g., tutors, sports assistants, junior counselors, partnerships with community groups that work with youth) <p><i>Benefits</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Benefits both peers and mentors through their relationship• Helps students gain independence, understand and respect diverse people and experiences, and move toward functioning effectively
Informal, Peer-based	<p><i>Examples</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Opportunities for newcomers to speak in informal social situations• Opportunities for students to have access to linguistic support and opportunities to interact with others from the same cultural background <p><i>Benefits</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Allows students to begin to assume leadership roles• Encourages positive interethnic interactions that support English proficiency and academic achievement

Sources: Gonzalez et al., 2014; Suárez-Orozco et al., 2008; Center for Mental Health in Schools at UCLA, 2011; Suárez-Orozco, Rhodes, et al., 2009; Roffman, Suárez-Orozco, & Rhodes, 2003; Suárez-Orozco & Todorova, 2003; Walqui, 2000; Castellón et al., 2015; Gonzalez et al., 2014; Osofsky, Sinner, & Wolk, 2003; García et al., 2013; Karcher, 2007; Carhill, Suárez-Orozco, & Paez, 2008; Stanton-Salazar, 2011; Barrett, Barile, Malm, & Weaver, 2012.

Integrating Social Emotional and Academic Support for Newcomers: Examples from the Field

Schools can take a variety of approaches as they integrate social emotional supports and skills development with rigorous academic structures. The approaches and programs described below have demonstrated success with newcomer students, including those who are English Learners (ELs).

1. A Focus on the Whole Child:

At **Place Bridge Academy** for newcomer students in kindergarten through grade eight in Denver, Colorado, “school administrators, teachers, parents, and other school stakeholders continually reference the idea that the school has intentionally focused on the development of the whole child and attention to their needs rather than solely focusing on academics. School leadership has built all programs based upon the premise that children cannot learn or pay attention if they have a toothache, haven’t eaten during the course of the day, and have psychosocial needs that have not been addressed. Moving beyond a focus on test results and standardized achievement scores only, the school has consciously chosen to focus its efforts on the whole child, which includes a child’s academic progress, but also includes the child’s psychosocial development and growth as a whole person” (Roxas, 2011, Fall, pp. 30–31).

At **New World High School** in Bronx, New York, “a team of support staff, which includes an attendance clerk, a school admissions secretary, a community assistant, a data assistant, a technology consultant, and the university counselor, works in collaboration to monitor attendance, academic achievement, and student behavior. These positions exist to ensure that students’ academic and social emotional well-being is attended to. The principal explained, ‘Besides instruction, there is the social emotional support. We have students that on the surface may look happy, but they come with so many challenges. And we have to make sure they overcome those’” (Castellón et al., 2015, p. 198).

2. **Comprehensive Services and Supports:**

“Knowing that many of their students have faced trauma and upheaval in their recent transitions to the U.S., staff members at **Boston International Newcomer Academy (BINcA)** believe it is extremely important to create stability for their students from day one. They do this formally through an extensive array of wrap-around services designed to meet individual students’ needs, and informally through the constant expression of care and support” (Castellón et al., 2015, p. 15).

“Noticing that many students entered 9th grade unprepared for the transition to high school, teachers at BINcA developed a summer bridge program to ease the adjustment for students. For four weeks during the summer, rising 9th graders attend school for four half-days each week to build up their literacy and numeracy skills, and spend the fifth day each week on field trips throughout Boston. The program provides a valuable opportunity for students to build their cultural knowledge of their city while getting to know their teachers and peers before they start high school” (Castellón et al., 2015, p. 23).

3. **Collaboration With Local Community Organizations:**

“Having a community clinic in the school helps the **Columbus Global Academy** identify student health needs and connect them to local services. For example, if indicated from the nurse’s exam, students who are enrolling in Columbus Global Academy receive vouchers for free chest X-rays at Children’s Hospital to check for tuberculosis. A mobile dental clinic comes to the school twice a year as well. Medical students at the Ohio State University eye clinic perform eye exams once a year, and Lenscrafters provides free eyeglasses to those in need. Local hospitals and agencies, such as St. Vincent’s and Rosemount respectively, provide mental health counseling” (Short & Boyson, 2012, p. 57).

4. **Advisory Programs:**

At **Marble Hill School for International Studies** in Bronx, New York, “an advisory teacher follows a cohort of students throughout their academic career and serves as an advocate for each student. As part of this role, advisors are encouraged to oversee student academic progress by gathering information about grades, attendance, and behavior; provide support whenever needed; and foster communication between the school and home. In 9th grade, the focus of advisory is on socializing, adjusting to high school, learning study skills, and beginning to familiarize students with the college process. In later years, students are taken on college visits and their focus is more on postsecondary college and career success. Teacher lessons for advisory courses are continuously being ‘created, adapted, and shifted’ to fit the needs of the students” (Castellón et al., 2015, p. 158).

At the **International High School at LaGuardia Community College** in New York, “the culture of support and development extends well beyond...formal course- and curriculum-based sources of home language development. There is a variety of clubs and afterschool programs, which draw on and develop students’ home languages. The Chinese club, for example, is a Wednesday afternoon elective in which students organize cultural events, as well as publish an extensive magazine in Chinese each year. Partnerships with groups such as South Asian Youth Action, a community-based organization, also connect students to communities. Other

students, through their internships, are placed at community-based organizations, such as Make the Road New York (which advocates primarily in English and Spanish), Asian Americans for Equality, Desis Rising Up and Moving, and Students for a Free Tibet. Thus, the school facilitates connecting students with communities where their home languages are an undeniable and indispensable resource” (García et al., 2011, p. 11).

5. **A Caring School Environment:**

At **O'Donnell Elementary** in East Boston, “The immigrant experience of many teachers who are of Italian descent...focuses teachers on finding instructional materials that work for their students. The Literacy Coach grew up in East Boston, and also lived in Greece, which provides her with an understanding of how hard it is to adapt to a new language and culture. ... The immigrant experience [is] a point of reference for teachers often. For example, a teacher begins his discussion of his views about education by stating ‘I am an immigrant.’ He then recounts memories of being misunderstood and mistreated. These are the experiences that inform how he instructs and treats his students. Another teacher... [says], ‘I see them and I see myself,’ adding that ‘We all come from the same boat.’ The immediacy of the immigrant experience generates great responsibility on the part of the teachers, who see it as their mission to create a linguistic and cultural bridge for immigrant students and their families” (de los Reyes, Nieto, & Diez, 2008, p. 34).



10 Teaching Practices for Social Emotional Development

The Center on Great Teachers and Leaders identified the 10 teaching practices that occurred most frequently across the six social emotional learning (SEL) programs. These instructional strategies can be used in classrooms to support positive learning environments, social emotional competencies, and academic learning. Each practice can be modified to fit various grade-level and content areas, and can generally be applied to multiple contexts.

Teaching Practice	Description
Student-Centered Discipline	Student-centered discipline refers to the types of classroom management strategies teachers use. To be effective at student-centered discipline, teachers need to use disciplinary strategies that are developmentally appropriate for their students and that motivate students to want to behave in the classroom.
Teacher Language	Teachers should encourage student effort and work, restating what the student did and what that student needs to do in order to improve. For example, teacher language should not be simply praise (e.g., “You did a great job”) but should encourage students (e.g., “I see you worked hard on your math paper. When you really think about your work, and when you explain your thinking, you get more correct answers”).
Responsibility and Choice	Teachers should create a classroom environment where democratic norms are put into place and where students provide meaningful input into the development of the norms and procedures of the classroom as well as the academic content or how the academic content is learned. Democratic norms do not mean that everything the students say gets done, but the teacher provides structures so that the students have a voice in the classroom.
Warmth and Support (Teacher and Peer)	Warmth and support refers to the academic and social support that students receive from their teacher and from their peers. The teacher creates a classroom where the students know that teachers care about them. Teachers can demonstrate that they care about their students by asking students questions (academic and nonacademic) and following up with students when they have a problem or concern.
Cooperative Learning	Cooperative learning refers to a specific instructional task in which teachers have students work together toward a collective goal. Teachers ask students to do more than group work; students are actively working with their peers around content in a meaningful way.

10 Teaching Practices for Social Emotional Development*Continued from previous page*

Teaching Practice	Description
Classroom Discussions	Classroom discussions are conversations students and teachers have around content. During classroom discussions, teachers ask open-ended questions and ask students to elaborate on their own thinking and on the thinking of their peers.
Self-Reflection and Self-Assessment	Self-reflection and self-assessment are instructional tasks whereby teachers ask students to actively think about their own work. For students to self-reflect on their work, teachers should ask them to assess their own work using criteria and rubrics.
Balanced Instruction	Teachers should use an appropriate balance between active instruction and direct instruction, and between individual and collaborative learning.
Academic Press and Expectations	Academic press refers to a teacher's implementation of meaningful and challenging work and academic expectations based on the belief that all students can and will succeed. Students should sense that academics are extremely important, that the teacher wants them to succeed, and that they have to exert effort in challenging work in order to succeed.
Competence Building, Modeling, Practicing, Providing feedback, and Coaching	Competence-building occurs when teachers help develop social emotional competencies systematically through the typical instructional cycle: lesson goals and objectives; introduction to new material, and modeling; group and individual practice; and conclusion and reflection.

Problem-Solving Steps for Modeling and Teaching Conflict Resolution

Beginning with the first days of the school year, students have predictable conflicts about sharing materials, choosing work partners, or deciding whom to play with. These are times when teachers can teach the basic skills of conflict resolution by navigating students through a difficult interpersonal moment. Modeling and teaching these skills sends a strong message about how disagreements will be handled in your class. It also gives children opportunities to experience problem-solving in situations that really matter to them.

Step 1: Cooling off when upset

Research shows that stress-induced changes in our bodies impede logical thinking and increase aggression. Taking steps to calm ourselves allows us to do the clear thinking and careful listening needed for peacefully resolving interpersonal problems.

Step 2: The upset student states the issue

Children experienced with student-to-student conflict resolution use “I-statements” to say why they’re upset: “I felt bad when you said I couldn’t play with you.” By focusing on her own feelings, the upset child gives the other child space to listen calmly and openly, without feeling attacked or defensive. But when you’re guiding children who are just learning the basic skills, “you-statements” are acceptable.

Step 3: The second student listens and paraphrases what has been stated

Often children can’t state their understanding because rather than listening carefully, they were busy preparing their defense. Sometimes they need to have their partner repeat what he or she said.

Step 4: The second student states his or her opinion

This experience shows children that in such conversations, they will have an opportunity to speak. This helps them wait their turn and focus on listening.

Step 5: The process continues until both students feel that they have been fully heard

It’s important to model patience and thoroughness in stating all the reasons for a conflict. Unspoken grievances will fester and result in more conflict, sooner or later.

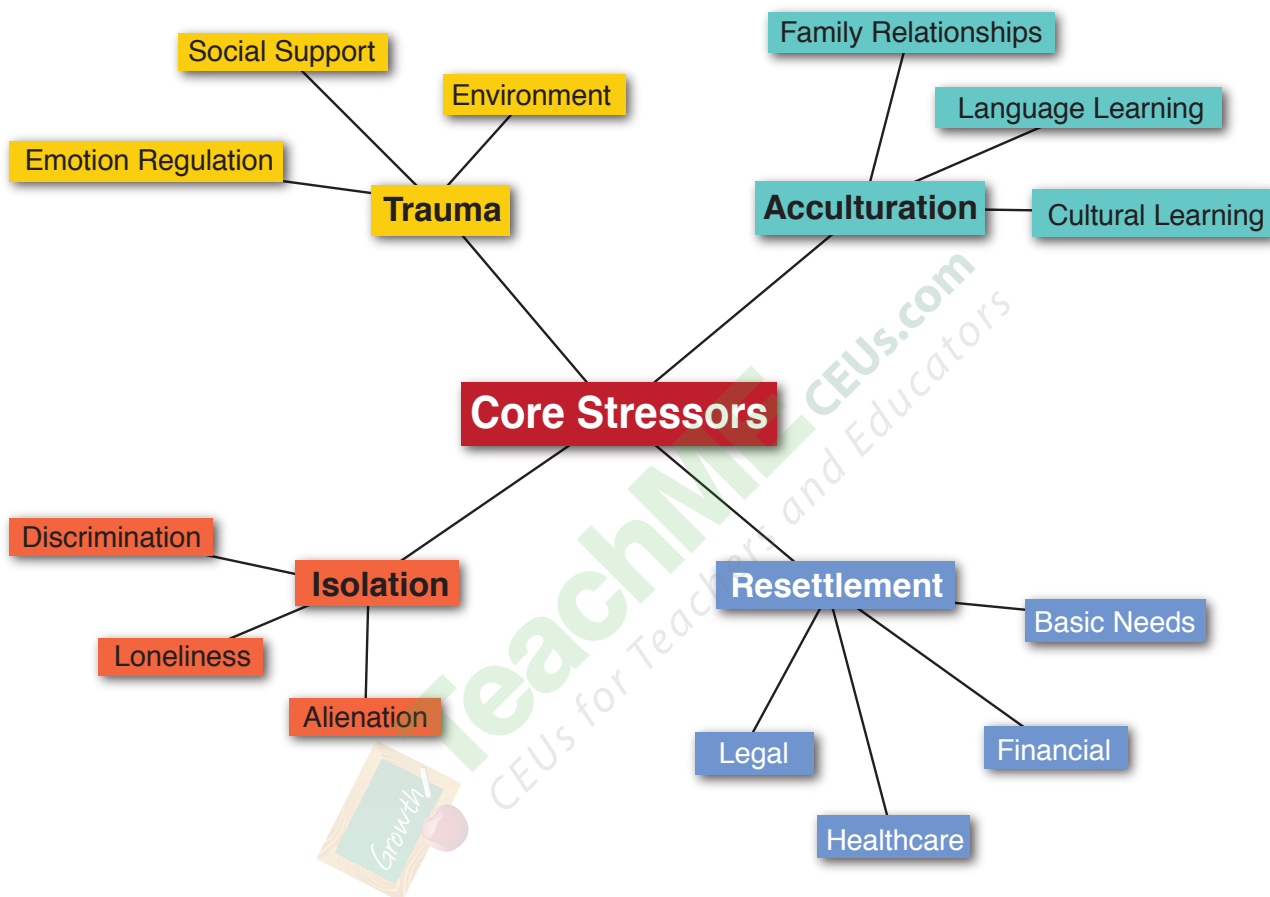
Step 6: The children reach a solution

Agreeing on a plan is one thing; actually following through is another. When children are just learning to resolve interpersonal problems, they especially need your supportive check-in to make sure the agreed-upon solution is working for both of them. Within a few days after coaching, you can simply ask each of them, “How’s that plan going?” Sometimes, all you need to do is notice if their behavior toward one another has changed.

Adapted from Crowe, Caltha. (2009, February 1). Coaching children in handling everyday conflicts. Retrieved from the Responsive Classroom website: <https://www.responsiveclassroom.org/coaching-children-in-handling-everyday-conflicts/>

Core Stressors for Newcomers

This graphic organizer and chart on the following page can inform teaching practices, school routines, parent engagement efforts, and program planning.



Core Stressors for Newcomers

Continued from previous page

Definitions and Causes of Core Stressors for Newcomers

Stressor	Definition	Possible Cause
Trauma	Child experiences an intense event that threatens or causes harm and trauma to his or her emotional and physical well-being.	War and persecution Displacement from home Flight and migration Poverty Family and Community Violence
Acculturation	Children and families experience acculturation as they try to navigate between their new culture and their culture of origin	Conflicts between children and parents over new and old cultural values Conflicts with peers related to cultural misunderstandings The necessity to translate for family members who are not fluent in English Problems trying to fit in at school Struggle to form an integrated identity including elements of their new culture and their culture of origin
Resettlement	Children and families who have relocated try to make a new life for themselves	Financial stressors Difficulties finding adequate housing Difficulties finding employment Loss of community support Lack of access to resources Transportation difficulties
Isolation	Children and families experience isolation as new immigrants in a new country	Discrimination Experiences of harassment from peers, adults, or law enforcement Experiences of mistrust with host population Feelings of not “fitting in” with others Loss of social status

Discrimination and Hate Crimes Against Arab Americans

The American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee (ADC) provides educational resources to help teachers increase their awareness of anti-Arab stereotypes, discrimination, and hate crimes. Below is a portion of one lesson plan, which can be found in its entirety, with exercises, from the source listed. The ADC also offers lesson plans about Kahlil Gibran, how students can overcome anti-Arab discrimination, and Arab culture and society. The resources can be found at <http://www.adc.org/education/educational-resources/>.

LESSON PLAN

Anti-Arab Stereotypes, Discrimination, and Hate Crimes

Objectives

- Students will learn to recognize stereotypes, discrimination, and hate crimes against Arab Americans.
- Students will learn ways in which to dispel stereotypes and prevent discrimination and hate crimes against others, particularly the Arab-American community.
- Students will have a broadened appreciation for the culture and accomplishments of the Arab-American community.

Stereotypes: Images and Reality

Discussion Questions: (Write student responses on the blackboard.)

Stereotyping:

- What is stereotyping? What stereotypes might you have about another ethnic or racial group?
- Have you ever been stereotyped by someone? How did it feel?
- Do you know of any stereotypes of Arabs or Arab Americans?

Arab Americans:

- What is an Arab American?
- Do you know any Arab Americans?

Discrimination and Hate Crimes Against Arab Americans

Continued from previous page

Arabs in the media:

- When you hear the word Arab what are the first things that come to mind?
- What are the images of Arabs that we see most frequently on TV, in the movies, in books? Make a list of images and ideas that students associate with Arabs.
- How many positive Arabs or Arab-American characters can you identify on TV, in movies? Key point: Media images of Arabs focus on the sensational, the violent, and the picturesque. Not on normal life.

Views of Arabs:

- What does an “Arab” typically look like?
- What does an Arab women look like?
- Where do Arabs live? What do their homes look like?

Arab World:

- What is the Arab world?
- Which countries are Arab countries? (Have the students name as many countries as they can.)
- How is the Arab world different from the “Middle East?” Select several Arab countries. Ask students to tell what they know about each country
- What makes them distinct? What do they have in common?
- Do you have distinctive images of different countries?

Emphasize the diversity in the Arab world: Rich and poor, urban and rural, traditional and modern, multiple religious, ethnic, and linguistic groups.

Twenty-Plus Things Schools Can Do to Respond to or Prevent Hate Incidents Against Arab, Muslim, Sikh, and South Asian Community Members

The U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) created this list in response to increased incidents of hate crimes against this particular population in the United States. DOJ's website explains, "When a person is targeted because of his or her identity, community members who share the victim's identity may also feel unsafe and threatened. This can exacerbate already existing tension within the community, especially if community members already feel marginalized because of their identity." Some of the tips that follow are specific to the particular population, but most can be generalized to other newcomer populations that may be targeted.

Take Immediate Concerted Action

1. Undertake and coordinate activities according to a pre-established policy and action plan.
2. Treat all anti-Arab, anti-Muslim, or anti-Sikh incidents seriously. Issue public messages urging tolerance and restraint and pledge prompt, full investigation and action.
3. Report all hate incidents to the local police department.
4. Institute joint initiatives and partnerships with police departments, local officials, parent groups, and community-based organizations. Consider organizing specific projects that give people constructive ways to express perspectives and concerns, such as rallies, forums, dialogues and unity events.
5. Gather and disseminate accurate and current information on hate incidents and any official actions taken as a result.

Conduct School Assessments

6. Reach out to potentially vulnerable groups in your schools. Identify special concerns by Arab, Muslim, or Sikh staff or students. Conduct a full assessment of tensions in your school.
7. Hold periodic debriefings on staff assessments of racial and ethnic tensions in and around your school.
8. Hold open office hours for students to share concerns and perspectives with administrators, counselors, and other staff.

Establish a Written Memorandum of Understanding With Local Police Officials

9. Ensure that the school district and each school within the district have a memorandum of understanding with local law enforcement agencies in place that specifies the responsibilities and roles of school and police officials for notifying and responding to hate incidents.
10. Review or revise plans and protocols with local police officials for responding to demonstrations and special events.

Develop and Publicize Your Policy Against Discrimination and Harassment

11. Ensure that your school has a clearly defined and publicized policy statement on discrimination and harassment.
12. Make periodic public statements about your school's policy or policies against discrimination and harassment.

Create and Improve Ways to Detect and Respond to Escalating Racial Tensions

13. Be alert to early warning signs that may indicate an escalation of racial tensions and conflict in your school, including student groupings; graffiti; increase in interracial fighting; and conflicts over language, dress, or hair styles.
14. Maintain and use a checklist of "crisis indicators" tailored to your school's own population.
15. Routinely survey students, faculty, and staff about potential sources of racial tensions.
16. Assume that tensions will fluctuate. Anticipate actions your school might take following a hate incident, including special assemblies and announcements, periodic reports on new developments, statements of reassurance to students and parents, or an orientation on safety precautions and evacuation plans.

Conduct Training

17. Make cultural awareness learning opportunities concerning Arab Americans, Muslims, and Sikhs available to staff, students, and the general community. Use the leadership of these groups to help with the training.
18. Provide hate prevention training to all school staff, including teachers, administrators, school security personnel, and support staff.
19. Ensure that all students receive hate prevention training through age-appropriate classroom activities, assemblies, and other school-related activities.
20. Train staff on the culture, language, and customs of racial and ethnic groups. Use "ethnic experts" to help conduct the training.

Use a Free Federal Resource

Contact the Community Relations Service (CRS) at the U.S. Department of Justice, your free "on-call" resource to help you reduce and resolve community racial and ethnic tensions. CRS can provide technical assistance on how to implement many of these recommendations, including how to facilitate dialogues, monitor school tensions, establish school-police agreements, and manage demonstrations and special events. Visit the CRS website at www.usdoj.gov/crs or call 202-305-2935.

Tips on Responding to Discrimination in School

The American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee (ADC) provides the following suggestions for parents on how to respond to incidents of discrimination in schools. Below is a portion of their suggestions, the remainder of which can be found in the source listed. Other suggestions focus on educational resources and guidance for helping children handle harassment incidents.

If students believe that other students, teachers, or school staff members are treating them in a discriminatory way, here are some steps which may remedy the situation. While not all prejudicial attitudes are overt, you must be able to cite specific words or actions which demonstrate anti-Arab bias (negative references to Arabs or Muslims). Otherwise, there is no proof, which will persuade the objective observer. It is wise to keep detailed notes of such words and actions as they occur. Witnesses are also important, or else it often comes down to the word of one person against another.

1. First Steps

Parents should first approach the teacher or principal. Describe the incident(s) and the effect on your child. If appropriate, listen to the person who is the alleged offender and get their version of any incidents. Ask for appropriate action to correct the situation.

If the results are unsatisfactory, go to the next higher authority—a principal or a school district office. Most school districts will have an office of Human Relations or Multiculturalism and Equality, which handles such complaints. Give them the details of your situation (outline the problem, but don't overload them with details in your initial contact). Also provide them with ADC information about the larger problem of discrimination which Arab Americans have encountered in schools around the country, especially since September 11. You can also contact the local ADC chapter or other Arab-American organizations. Ask for their support. Some chapters have Education Committees.

You will be in a stronger position if you first research the multicultural and anti-discrimination policies and regulations of your school district and your state's Department of Education. There will be a procedure to file an official complaint. They will have websites with relevant information, as well as print material available to the general public.

Also, consider the school atmosphere and larger context within which any particular incident takes place. Is there a history of discriminatory behavior against Arab Americans or others? What kind of corrective action has the school taken? What pro-active steps has it taken to foster mutual understanding among those of different ethnic, racial and religious backgrounds?

"Support Me": Creating Social Emotional Supports for Newcomer Students (Activity 1—Scenarios and Discussion)

Purpose

This activity will help school administrators and teachers process and apply the information included in Chapter 4 of this tool kit. Participants are presented with various student scenarios and asked to consider what social emotional supports could be enacted to help the students in each scenario.

Preparation for Activity

- A few days in advance, ask participants to read pages in Chapter 4 of this tool kit.
- Prepare "student support" cards (see Activity Handout 1) and student scenario cards (see Activity Handout 2)—one set for every group of four participants).

Time Required for Activity

1 hour

Instructions for Facilitator

Step 1: Organize participants into groups of four. Give each group one set of 20 student support cards (eight of which are blank) and one set of four student scenario cards. Explain that the support cards identify student supports for social emotional learning that are discussed in Chapter 4 of the tool kit. Ask participants to place the support cards deck in a pile, upside down on their table, with the blank cards on the bottom of the deck. Have each participant take one of the four scenario cards.

Step 2: Instruct the groups as follows: Each participant should read his or her scenario card aloud to his or her group, then put the card faceup on the table. Do this until all four scenarios have been read. Group members then take turns drawing support cards from the deck. Upon drawing a card, each reads it aloud. As a group, discuss which of the four students would benefit the most from that support. Once the group reaches consensus, place the support card next to the selected scenario card. Continue until all 12 support cards have been matched to a student scenario. Participants can then suggest additional supports that the school provides (or needs to create) in order to serve the students; these suggestions should be written on the blank support cards.

Step 3: Facilitate a full-group discussion focused on implications for the school's approach to developing social emotional supports for newcomers. Ask a group member to capture the main ideas and to collect any ideas recorded on the blank support cards. Use this input for school improvement planning.

"Support Me": Creating Social Emotional Supports for Newcomer Students Activity 1/Handout 1–Support Cards

(One set of cards—including the eight blank cards—is required per group of four participants.)

Cross-age peer mentoring	Youth leadership program	Social services referral (housing, health services, etc.)	Family coordinator engages with family
After-school enrichment activity	After-school athletics	Student support teams	Advisory program
Family programs hosted at the school	Group counseling	Summer bridge program	Informal caring from school staff

“Support Me”: Creating Social Emotional Supports for Newcomer Students

Activity 1/Handout 2–Student Scenario Cards

(One set of cards is required per group of four participants.)

<p>Scenario A: Mario</p> <p>Mario immigrated to the United States with his family two years ago from central Mexico. Now in the ninth grade, Mario is frequently suspended for fighting and has lately started to skip school. Mario’s science teacher reached out to him in an effort to find out why he is having such a difficult time socially in school. Mario explained he is feeling very unhappy and that he is worried about his mother, who is frightened to go out on her own, because she speaks neither Spanish nor English; she speaks Nahuatl, an indigenous language of Mexico. Mario says that while he thinks his mother needs to get out more and socialize, he understands her hesitation. He adds, “I feel the same way at school. How can I make friends when no one is like me?”</p>	<p>Scenario B: Mariam</p> <p>Mariam is the daughter of an Iranian diplomat. She and her two brothers attend the same high school for newcomers, and she has been placed in the 10th grade. Mariam was educated in international schools previously, but has moved around as frequently as her father’s post has changed. She wears a head scarf, and she has occasionally been yelled at in public by strangers. Unlike her brothers, she is required to go straight home after school. Other students are impressed by her academic abilities, but they also make fun of her by calling her “smartphone.” Because she is expected to apply to competitive colleges, Mariam is very concerned about her academic performance, and considers a score of 95 percent a failure. She and her brothers compete when it comes to test scores.</p>
<p>Scenario C: Ariette</p> <p>Ariette is an 11-year-old newcomer from Kenya. However, Ariette is not originally from Kenya; her family is from Somalia. For the past two years, Ariette has lived with her family in a series of refugee camps along the Kenyan border with Somalia; the camp also had refugees from Ethiopia and South Sudan. Ariette had some schooling in the refugee camps, but often the grades were mixed, and the schools were temporary structures, without electricity or water. Ariette learned many jump rope songs in Swahili, which she loves to sing at recess in her new school. In class, however, Ariette never speaks, and she usually sits with her head down.</p>	<p>Scenario D: Ming</p> <p>Ming is an 11th-grader in a diverse urban school. He attended a local school in China before immigrating with his family to the United States a few months ago. Ming excelled academically in China, but he is finding it difficult to keep up with his classes in his new school because he is struggling with English. He knows that in a few months, his classmates will be taking the SAT and the ACT, and several of his new friends are discussing the colleges they hope to attend. Many students are driving to school, dating or going to parties, and volunteering in the community. Ming feels left behind and confused.</p>

“Support Me”: Creating Social Emotional Supports for Newcomer Students

(Activity 2—School Self-Assessment and Action Planning)

Purpose

This activity can help teams of teachers and other school staff assess the school’s existing supports for newcomers’ social emotional development and plan actions to improve the continuum of supports offered to newcomer students.

Preparation for Activity

- A few days in advance, ask participants to read “Four Types of Support for Newcomers’ Social Emotional Development” in Chapter 4 of this tool kit.
- Make copies of the activity handout, “Continua for Classifying Types of Supports” (one copy for each participant).
- On two large poster boards (or flip chart pages), re-create the diagram shown in the activity handout.
- Have magic markers or Sharpies on hand for use during the activity.

Time Required for Activity

1 hour

Instructions for Facilitator

Step One: Self-assessment. Each participant receives a copy of the activity handout—a diagram with four quadrants: formal adult-led practices, informal adult-led practices, formal student peer-led practices, and informal student peer-led practices. Explain to participants that the social emotional supports available to newcomers who attend U.S. schools fit into a variety of categories across practices (formal and informal) and people (adults and students). Tell them that participants will draw on their reading from Chapter 4 (“Four Types of Support for Newcomers’ Social Emotional Development”) as they classify supports that are in place at the school to meet all the social emotional needs of newcomers.

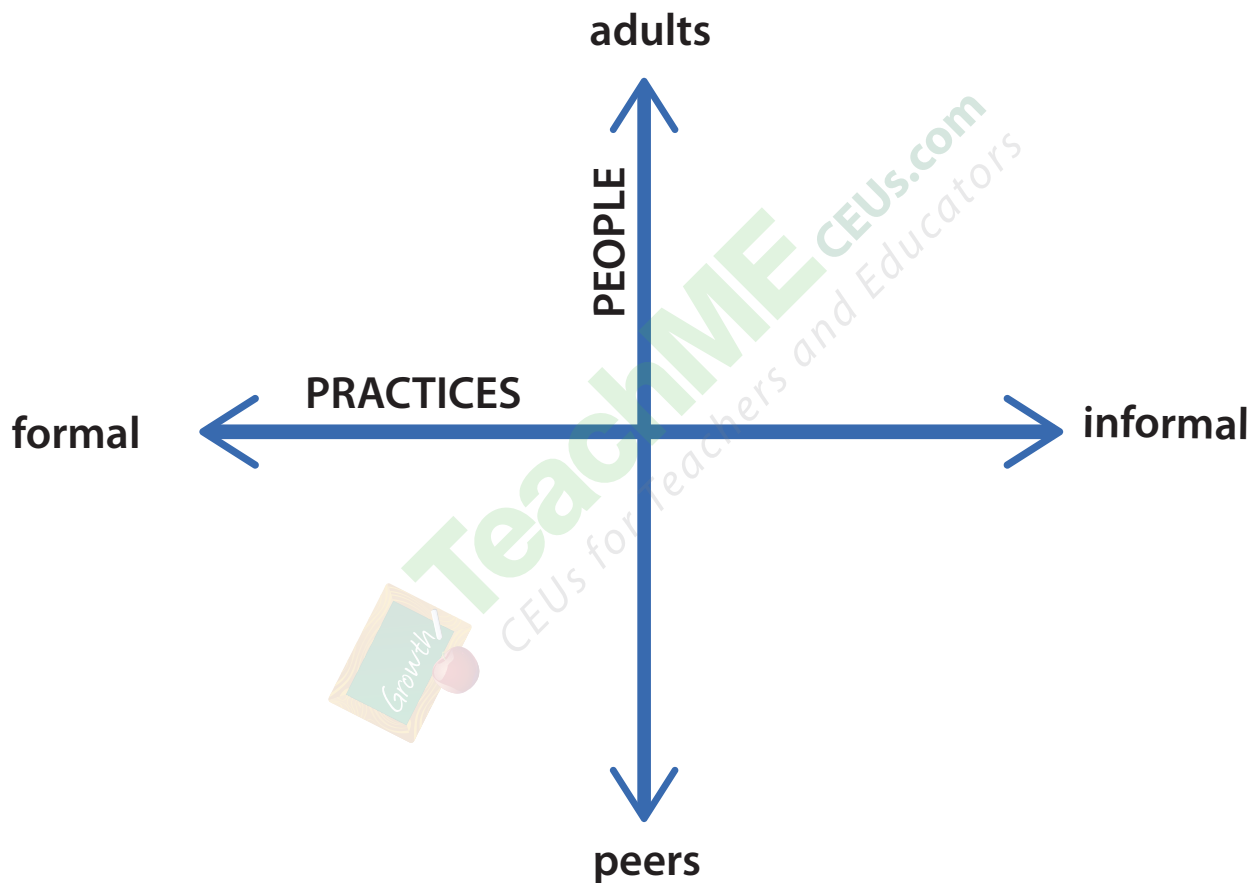
Instruct participants to think of social emotional supports the school provides to students and to record these practices on the handout in the appropriate quadrant. Next, ask each participant to find a partner and discuss one another’s ideas, with each partner elaborating on the supports recorded on his or her handout through the discussion. Then facilitate a whole-group discussion in which participants contribute their findings to create a single public poster that displays the social emotional supports provided by the school along two axes (“people” and “planning”).

Step Two: Action Planning. Guide participants as they jointly (1) examine the poster created during the self-assessment activity, (2) identify areas of strength and areas for needed improvements in the school, and (3) create a second poster with ideas for new formal or informal supports, and include possible “main providers” of those supports.

"Support Me": Creating Social Emotional Supports for Newcomer Students

Activity 2/Handout–Continua for Classifying Types of Supports

School teams can use this diagram to identify the types of social emotional supports offered to students and to plan improvements and additions. On this diagram, supports provided in a school can be organized according to who delivers that support and the extent to which that support is provided in formal or informal ways.



CHAPTER 5:

Establishing Partnerships With Families

ABOUT THIS CHAPTER

When schools welcome newcomer families and collaborate with them in ways that respect their cultures, assets, aspirations, and needs, the entire community and the schools themselves are enriched. This chapter discusses the variety of characteristics among newcomer families, as well as cultural barriers to school-family partnerships and ways to overcome them. It also describes essential components of strong parent and family engagement; characteristics of quality programs; and examples of effective collaborative, sustained, and supportive partnerships with newcomer families.

Special Features

- **The four stages of immigrant parent involvement:** Stages that can help schools develop effective strategies and supports.
- **Five processes for facilitating effective newcomer parent engagement:** A chart showing strategies related to each process.
- **Stories from the field:** Blog posts with snapshots of innovative ideas for engaging newcomer families.
- **School-wide tools:** A conceptual model for partnering with families to increase student achievement (with ideas and examples related to various components of the model), examples of newcomer family engagement, and a tool for evaluating family engagement.
- **Professional reflection and discussion activity:** Instructions and handouts for professional learning communities or staff meetings. (The activity takes about an hour if participants read the chapter in advance.)
- **Resources:** Annotated references to resources cited in this chapter; relevant federal guidance, policy, and data; and other helpful resources on establishing partnerships with families.

The Diverse Characteristics of Newcomer Families

Families usually leave their country of origin for one or more of the following reasons: (1) to seek better educational opportunities, (2) to enhance economic opportunity, (3) to unify the family, and/or (4) to escape political unrest (Center for Mental Health in Schools at UCLA, 2011; Fuligni, 2005). Parents want their children to thrive in school and reach their full potential. Most want their children to graduate from high school and take advantage of college and career options. They understand the value of educational assets in a global society and expect their children to leverage those assets as they enter the workforce.

Highly successful schools spend time with families when they enroll their children to build trust and establish engagement expectations and methods for families (Kreider, Cape, Kennedy, & Weiss, 2007; Arias & Morillo-Campbell, 2008; Castellón et al., 2015). These effective schools regularly communicate with families and visit with them in their homes to address challenges and opportunities. Newcomer families also need specific information on how to support their children's learning and development as these families adapt to a new culture and, in many cases, a new language (Castellón et al., 2015).

It is important to remember that not all students arrive with their parents; some arrive alone, some stay with relatives, and others may be in foster homes or with a sponsor. Upon enrollment of a newcomer, the school should identify who is responsible for the student and work with families to determine their children's language proficiency. The most common tool used by districts as part of the identification process is the home language survey (HLS). There is a great deal of variation in HLS instruments across the United States (Bailey & Kelly, 2010; Bailey & Kelly, 2013; Liquanti & Bailey, 2014). However, an HLS typically includes questions about what language(s) the student first learned, understands, uses, and hears, and in what contexts. Additional questions about a student's language exposure and background (e.g., languages used in the home) can help ensure that ELs are not missed, and guard against inaccurate reporting of the student's English abilities.

To obtain accurate information, schools may need to reassure parents that the HLS is used solely to offer appropriate educational services (e.g., to inform placement into a language assistance program), not for determining legal status or for immigration purposes. Parents and guardians should also be informed that, even if their child is identified as an EL, they may decline the EL program or particular EL services in the program.

The Four Stages of Immigrant Parent Involvement

The more schools know about why each newcomer family came to the United States, what their hopes and aspirations are, and how well prepared they are to partner with the school, the better schools are positioned to help these families transition to a new school and community culture. Han and Love (2015) contend that immigrant parents move through four stages of parent involvement: cultural survivor, cultural learner, cultural connector, and cultural leader. The level of involvement depends on the parent's needs, skills, and interests. The amount of time in the United States does not determine a parent's stage of involvement, and parents may transition from one stage to another.

Cultural survivors may be recently arrived immigrants. Many will be concerned about securing food and shelter and may not have much time to learn about and navigate the U.S. school system.

Cultural learners may feel somewhat at ease with the school and want to learn more about what is taught, the school culture, and other aspects of the school. Han and Love contend that cultural learners are more comfortable than cultural survivors with the new school culture and the U.S. education system. "With the help of qualified and trained interpreters and translated documents, parents communicate with schools and learn to navigate the U.S. school system. They feel more comfortable attending workshops in their native language and are likely to participate in parent-teacher conferences with language support" (Han & Love, 2015).

Who is a parent?

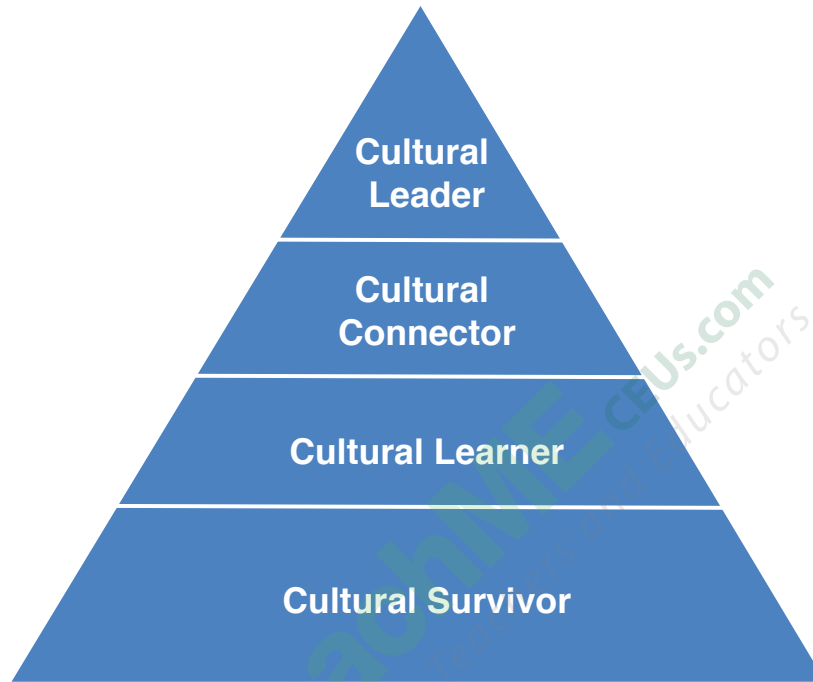
For the purposes of this tool kit, "parent" is defined to include, in addition to a natural parent, a legal guardian or other person standing in loco parentis (such as a grandparent or stepparent with whom the child lives, or a person who is legally responsible for the child's welfare).

Source: U.S. Department of Education. (2004). Parental Involvement: Title I, Part A (Non-regulatory guidance). Retrieved from <http://www2.ed.gov/programs/titleiparta/parentinvguid.doc>

Cultural connectors become familiar with educational terminology, policies, and procedures. They may wish to work with cultural survivors and cultural learners, to encourage them, and to help them understand and engage in school programs and activities that support children and parents.

Cultural leaders often become the “voice” of their ethnic and language community and advocate for parents in the other stages. They may become leaders and participate in trainings.

Han’s Four Stages of Immigrant Involvement



Understanding these four stages of immigrant parent involvement can help schools address the unique challenges of newcomer families and develop strategies to support parents across all four stages.

Addressing Cultural Barriers to School–Newcomer Family Partnerships

The culture of U.S. schools and the expectations explicit or implicit for families will be foreign to most newcomer families (Short & Boyson, 2012). In their home countries, many newcomer families did not collaborate with the school because such action was viewed as interfering with professionals. So they may need help adjusting to U.S. schools' expectation that families take an active role in their child's learning, engage with the school, and take on diverse roles on behalf of their child and school (Arias & Morillo-Campbell, 2008). For example, parents of children in U.S. schools are encouraged to

- advocate for their children and school;
- encourage their children's achievement, positive behavior, persistence and active participation in learning and school activities;
- ensure that their children attend school every day ready to learn;
- communicate with the school about absences and any special circumstances affecting the student; and
- collaborate, volunteer, and engage in decision-making to improve the quality of the school.

Schools should develop strategies to communicate these expectations to the parents. Additionally, families may need support in building their capacity to engage productively in this partnership on behalf of their children (Mapp & Kuttner, 2013). Research shows that it can help students thrive when schools and parents establish partnerships that focus on student achievement and school improvement, shared responsibility, trust building, and respectful home-school relationships (Patrikakou et al., 2005).

Schools may need to explicitly reach out to newcomer families and request that they participate in two-way communication, and collaborate with teachers and school leaders, to support their child's learning and development. Newcomer families need to know that their voices count, and they need to learn how to be heard in the school. The school can link parents to adult education opportunities as well as social and cultural resources. School leaders can organize family engagement that impacts the quality of the newcomer's transition, taking into consideration the multiple challenges and opportunities newcomer students (and their families) may be experiencing in the United States.

When parents come to the school for events such as student performances and parent-teacher conferences, schools can introduce these families to the wealth of resources the school offers and explain how they can be used to support children's academic, social, and emotional development. Schools should also encourage families to avail themselves of community resources that are free and open to all.

Transportation and busy work schedules are often cited as challenges to parent engagement (Casper, Lopez, & Wolos, 2006/2007; Arias & Morillo-Campbell, 2008). Other factors can also hinder parents' full participation in their child's education. Schools should carefully and respectfully offer recommendations about supports available to help families with sensitive issues such as trauma, domestic violence, health, nutrition, food, social support, and disability. An understanding of the values and cultural norms of the newcomer will help schools become effective resource brokers and help families thrive.

Processes and Strategies to Facilitate Effective Newcomer Parent Engagement

Effective newcomer parent engagement programs start with attention to the strengths and needs of parents who send their children to your school—and aim to empower parents with the knowledge and skills they need to support their children's academic success. When schools empower parents, they can maximize learning not only at school, but also outside of school hours, where students spend the majority of their time (Paredes, 2010; Arias & Morillo-Campbell, 2008).

The table on the following page suggests five processes schools can harness to engage newcomer parents effectively: (1) collaboration among school staff, parents, and community members; (2) development of staff and newcomers' capacities to re-envision their roles and take actions that support student success; (3) acknowledgement of newcomers' assets and focus on how they can strengthen the school; (4) taking a multi-pronged approach to communicating with parents and providing language supports such as interpreters and translated materials; and (5) making parent and family engagement a standard part of the school's continuous improvement efforts.



Processes and Strategies to Facilitate Effective Newcomer Parent Engagement

Processes	Strategies
Collaboration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Examine assumptions and cultural biases, recognize and employ newcomer families' assets, bring parent voices into planning for their child and the school's success, craft multi-modal informational resources on everything families need to know and do. Bring newcomer families and staff together to co-construct meaningful communications and resources for families and to collaborate in the delivery of learning and support activities for families (Patrikakou et al., 2005). Encourage and help parents develop leadership skills to participate in decision making throughout the school and the community. Enlist newcomer parents to design and conduct parent learning opportunities on parenting across cultures, promoting child development, supporting learning, and planning for college and careers.
Capacity Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build newcomers' and staff members' capacity to effectively carry out multiple roles (advocate, supporter, encourager, decision maker, etc.) Build staff capacity to challenge deficit mind-sets related to the traditional expectations for newcomers and encourage an asset orientation (Arias & Morillo-Campbell, 2008). Create parent and family welcome kits with information about the school. Include parent rights and responsibilities; school schedules; phone numbers; procedures; and any other information that will help parents feel welcome, informed, and integrated into the school. Sponsor and encourage parents to attend family literacy events where parents or students can read books together.
Assets Orientation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish opportunities for listening to parents, and strive to meet high expectations, aspirations, and hopes by drawing on newcomers' cultures, language, knowledge, and skills. Incorporate the cultural strengths of families and the community into the school curriculum and activities. Ensure that newcomer families are represented in the school's decision-making bodies (Arias & Morillo-Campbell, 2008).

Processes and Strategies to Facilitate Effective Newcomer Parent Engagement

Continued from previous page

Processes	Strategies
Multi-Modal Communications and Language Supports	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Use multiple methods (newsletters translated in the languages represented in the school, telephone trees, school website, parent outreach workers) and structures to communicate.• Conduct newcomer focus groups and/or newcomer advisory committees to get input on decision-making structures, concerns, questions, and recommendations.• Ensure that language supports are available for all educational communications and activities.• Use suggestion boxes, surveys, targeted and short interviews, or polling with the appropriate language supports to encourage newcomer parents to voice their concerns and ideas to inform school planning.
Continuous Improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identify strategies so that newcomer families can enrich the school community's culture by sharing their personal and cultural assets (Arias & Morillo-Campbell, 2008; Mapp & Kuttner, 2013).• Continuously improve family engagement by examining multiple data sources to assess the impact of policies and practices on the newcomers.• Include newcomer families' values and perspectives to promote cross-cultural understanding, and strengthen their 21st century skills through volunteer experiences.



Special Considerations for Parent Engagement in Secondary Schools

Secondary schools should be aware of the diverse needs and aspiration of newcomer families as they strive to help them understand the various pathways to graduation and the relative advantages of the options available to high school students (Kreider et al., 2007). Newcomer parents may need help developing the knowledge and skills to advocate for their child's inclusion in college preparatory, career pathway, Advanced Placement, and concurrent enrollment courses. They may also need information on adolescent development, gang affiliation, identifying and responding to drug use, financial aid for college, college exploration, and filling out application forms for college and financial aid. High schools can include such topics in their newcomer parent-education programming. In addition, schools can support parent and newcomers by developing individual graduation plans that are regularly reviewed with counselors to ensure that students are on track to graduate from high school ready for college and careers.

Core Components of Parent Engagement Programs

When designing family engagement programs for newcomers, schools may wish to take into account these three goals for family participation:

1. **Academic Success:** Strengthen newcomer families' capacity to support academic achievement by increasing their awareness of instructional programs and ways they can support their own child's learning.
2. **Advocacy and Decision-Making:** Strengthen families' understanding of how to advocate for their child and how to participate in decisions to improve learning for their children and for others in the school.
3. **Awareness and Use of Resources:** Strengthen families' awareness of resources available in the school and community and how to access these resources to support their family's well-being and their own personal growth.

The Important Role of Parent Centers

Parent centers are valuable tools for engaging and supporting newcomer parents and families. A thoughtfully designed center can do the following things:

Welcome Newcomer Families

A parent center can provide a welcoming place within the school for all parents. Families should be informed about the center and its purpose. They need to know that it is a place they can get information about the school and the community, feel safe asking questions, and meet other parents. Those who staff the center—usually a parent coordinator or volunteer—should be informed about the special needs of newcomer families and ways the center can make newcomer parents feel welcome and comfortable.

Serve as a Hub for Information and Communications

The parent center staff can introduce newcomer parents to the center and provide orientation materials, such as a fact sheet about the school. Parents should be informed that parent centers are places where parents can gather to learn, share resources about external and internal opportunities for learning, exchange expertise, and connect with school and community resources. They provide up-to-date information about employment, medical and dental services, food stamps, and citizenship applications. Parent centers often offer a variety of classes, based on families' needs and interests.

Model and Support Parents' Engagement With Their Child's Learning

Parent centers can help parents identify learning opportunities at home and take advantage of museums, libraries, parks, and other resources. Centers often sponsor classes to introduce families with young children to early literacy activities in the language the family feels most comfortable speaking. The children will benefit from reading materials in their home language, and the newcomer parent can become familiar with various cultures by discussing ideas, exploring characters in fiction, and being introduced through social studies to new perspectives. Staff in the center may model questioning and engagement strategies that parents can use to facilitate their children's learning at home. Families should be encouraged to monitor their child's reading and to talk about text every day; centers can empower families by building their capacity to do so in English and/or the home language.

Provide Disability Resources

Parent resource centers including Parent Training and Information (PTI) Centers and Community Parent Resource Centers (CPRCs) provide resources to families who have a child with a disability. They can provide information about the disability of the child, early intervening services, school services, therapy, transportation, and additional resources that are available. CPRCs may have some additional resources, as they are designed to reach underserved children with disabilities including those who are English Learners (ELs). Having a child with a disability may carry a cultural stigma for some newcomers, and parent resource centers can provide supports and help families to navigate the special education process within the school system.

Provide Access to Technology and Digital Know-How

Parent centers provide opportunities for families to use technological resources. Rideout and Katz (2016) found that many immigrant families have mobile-only access (e.g., cell phones), and no home access (that is, no laptop or desktop computer and no internet connection). Center staff should be aware of newcomers' families' access and attitudes related to technology:

- The main reason some families do not have home computers or internet access is because they cannot afford it.
- Parents use the internet for a broad range of purposes, but mobile-only families are less likely to do certain online activities.
- Children from low- and moderate-income families use computers and the internet for a variety of educational activities, but those without home access are less likely to go online to pursue their interests.
- Parents feel largely positive about the internet and digital technology, but many also have concerns about inappropriate content online, distractions from important activities, online bullying, and the possibility that classroom technology might be a distraction that hurts children's education.
- Children and parents frequently learn with and about technology together, especially in families with the lowest incomes and where parents have less education.

Parent centers can be good places to build meaningful and equitable digital skills and connections for all families. However, Katz, Levine, and Gonzalez (2015) stated that "parents' relationships with administrators and teachers are crucial to how they integrate technology at home. Many parents depend on teacher-recommended online resources to guide children's out-of-school learning. Schools' outreach to parents when adopting new digital learning platforms—specifically how a district promotes the program to families, and how programs respond to parents' needs and concerns—is also critical to maintaining families' trust."

In schools without parent centers, teachers and administrators may wish to explore other practical and easily accessible and sustainable places to support families' digital use. For example, partnerships with libraries, internet cafes, and public-private ventures may help families gain access to the internet. Schools should be mindful that "rapid, uncritical adoption of technological innovations is very likely to leave parents behind, reduce their capabilities to help with their children's schoolwork, and exacerbate intergenerational differences that ultimately disadvantage students' academic advancement, rather than enhance it" (Katz, Levine, & Gonzalez, 2015).

Stories From the Field: Four Blog Posts on Innovative Newcomer Family Engagement

Here are some ways other schools are engaging newcomer families in U.S. schools. See if these stories spark ideas for your school. See the second school-wide tool at the end of this chapter for additional examples from the field.

Principals Engage Families in Diverse Communities

<http://www.naeyc.org/blogs/engaging-diverse-families-two-principals-share-their-stories>

Two elementary schools principals who work in diverse communities share their experiences engaging families. They describe such strategies as working with a family liaison or parent-community coordinator and hosting math, science, and literacy nights:

"We value children and families' different cultures and experiences. ...Teachers learn about children and families. ...Families can share about their cultures, home languages, and how their children learn best. This helps families feel invested in their children's education from the start."

"Teachers share good ideas and work together to plan engaging events. For example, if I hear one kindergarten teacher is planning an event, I may encourage the other kindergarten teachers to get involved. And after encouraging teamwork, I find it now happens naturally among teachers."

Future Educators Acquire Skills to Partner With Families in Their Communities

<http://hfrp.org/publications-resources/browse-our-publications/new-stories-of-innovation-in-family-engagement>

A teacher educator at the College of Charleston partnered with a family literacy program for Hispanic immigrant mothers to provide "opportunities to teacher candidates about how to engage culturally and linguistically diverse families in meaningful ways within a community-based program." This type of partnership could also be implemented with new and experienced teachers in schools.

Academic Parent-Teacher Teams Reorganize Parent-Teacher Conferences

<http://www.hfrp.org/publications-resources/browse-our-publications/academic-parent-teacher-teams-reorganizing-parent-teacher-conferences-around-data>

The developer of a family engagement strategy that focuses on academic learning activities and student performance data explains how the parent-teacher teams are organized with groups of families and a parent liaison. "A surprising result has been the high numbers of fathers who have come to team meetings—more than in classrooms with conventional parent-teacher conferences. When fathers were asked what made them more interested in coming to team meetings, they said that they were specifically interested in academics and wanted to be involved in understanding their child's progress."

Opening Doors/Abriendo Puertas Validates Contributions of Migrant Parents

<http://www.tolerance.org/magazine/number-33-spring-2008/feature/opening-doors-border>

Available in English and Spanish, this blog post describes a program first developed with migrant families on the Texas-Mexico border. The program involves families by bringing English classes into their homes. The author, who researched the program, shares the following insights:

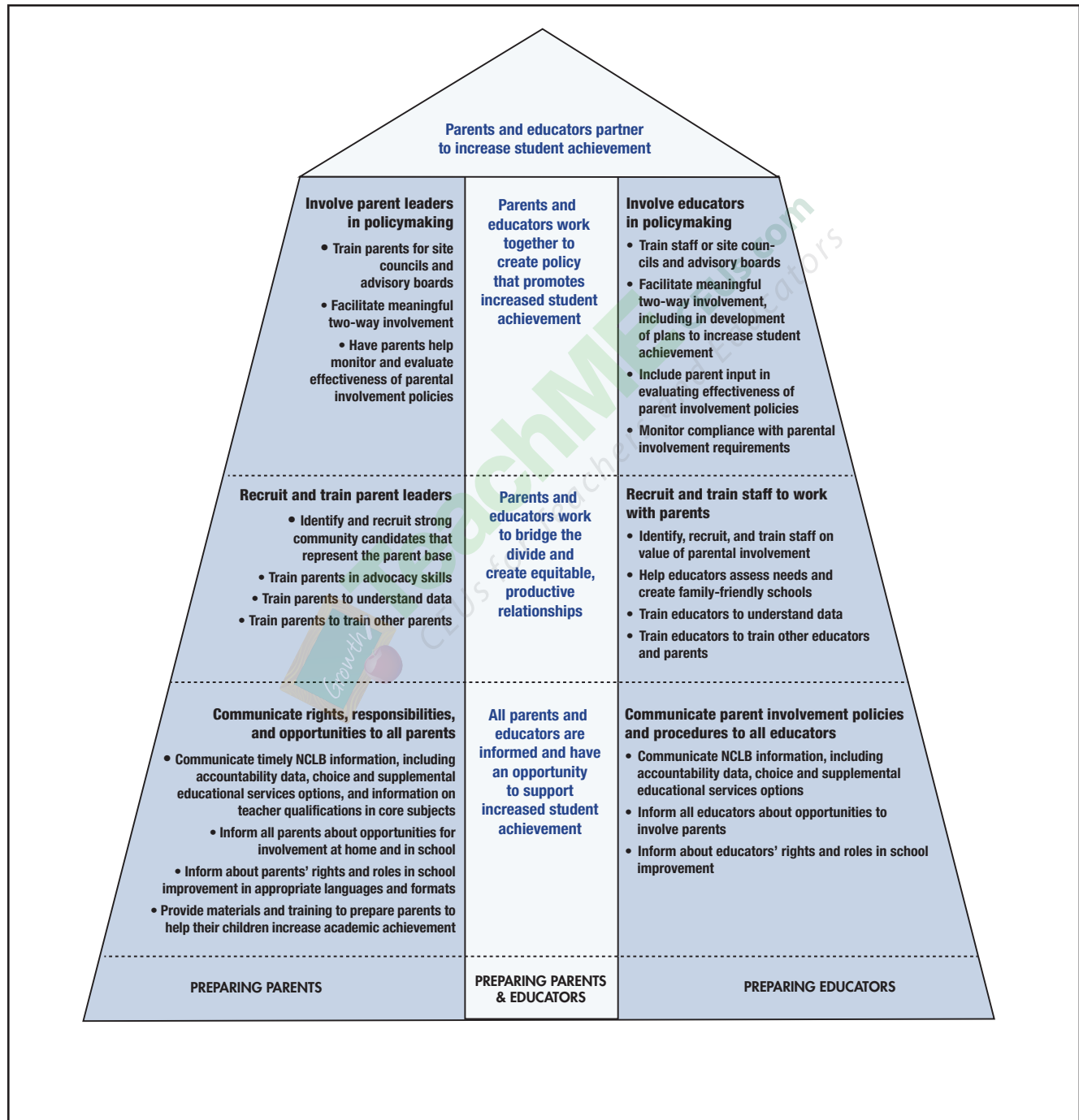
“[O]utreach means more than just inviting parents to PTA meetings, because there are multiple ways parents can be involved. ...It’s equally as important to stress home-based knowledge and validate the contributions parents are making to motivate their kids through their involvement in everyday life.”

“[Y]ou also have to meet the needs of the migrant parents. School involvement has traditionally been seen as parents doing something or coming to the building—very unidirectional—whereas the broader concept of school-community collaboration is a two-way street. Schools, teachers and administrators are meeting parents halfway, going into the community and establishing a presence there.”



Conceptual Model for Parent Involvement in Education

Depicted below is a model for successful parent and educator partnerships that increase student achievement. Your school community can use this model to examine and improve partnerships with all families, including those who are newcomers.



Engaging Newcomer Families: Five Examples From the Field

These examples demonstrate a wide range of approaches schools can take to engage newcomer parents and families. Use them to help your school staff gain insight and inspiration.

Example 1: Engaging Families in Decision-Making (California)

A quarter of the students in the Alhambra Unified Schools District in California arrived in the U.S. less than three years ago from various parts of the world. The district engaged families in decision making as part of a Safe Schools/Healthy Students (SS/HS) initiative. This initiative “focuses on enabling students, teachers, families, and clinicians to come together to work on education and health issues... . To this end, the SS/HS Initiative created an ethnically diverse parent advisory board to provide a forum for family concerns. SS/HS staff worked with the schools to identify a variety of families, not just community leaders. Forty families joined the advisory board; many came as couples, demonstrating their commitment to their children’s success. To reach out to immigrants, every flyer, poster, and communication is translated into Cantonese, Spanish, and Vietnamese, and at every meeting, translations of speakers’ comments are provided via headphones.

“The Parent Advisory Board surveyed the diverse community about concerns and created Parent University, a daylong event to address barriers to children’s success. Gateway to Success also created a diverse student advisory board to provide a forum for student voices.”

Source: Education Development Center. (2011). *Strategies for engaging refugee and immigrant families*. Retrieved from http://www.promoteprevent.org/sites/www.promoteprevent.org/files/resources/strategies_for_engaging_immigrant_and_refugee_families_2.pdf (See p. 8; also see pp. 8-9 for additional successful activities and outcomes of Parent University and Gateway to Success.)

Example 2: Parent Ambassadors Program (Tennessee)

Launched in September 2014, the Parent Ambassadors program is a bridge between Metro Nashville Public Schools (MNPS) and Nashville’s New American community. Twenty-five volunteer parent ambassadors have been trained and paired with families who are new to Nashville schools and come from their same home country and/or speak their same native language.

As part of this free program, the parent ambassadors “provide families with information and guidance on navigating the school system. They also serve as advisers to Metro Schools, assisting school leaders on policies and practices that ease the transition into schools for new families and their students.”

The Parent Ambassadors program is a collaborative effort between the office of Mayor Karl Dean and the MNPS’ Office of English Learners. It grew, in part, out of Mayor Dean’s New Americans Advisory Council.

Example 3: Family Resource Center at an Elementary School (California)

The Family Resource Center (FRC) housed at an elementary school in the Franklin-McKinley School District in Santa Clara County, California, offers parents a range of resources and learning opportunities. Parents can learn about topics such as early literacy, parent advocacy, and health and nutrition in a collaborative environment where parents and volunteers from the community can share information and ideas with each other. The FRC, an initiative of First 5 Santa Clara, sends community workers into the local community to reach out to families to provide them with information and connect them with resources offered by the FRC.

“Oftentimes you find parents—especially the immigrant, monolingual, Spanish-speaking parents who may not have any other family here—who feel they are the only ones struggling with these issues, whether it be learning their child may have a learning disability, or their husband just got laid off. By building a sense of community, parents look to each other for support and information-sharing. So a lot of activities are about helping the parents learn from each other. ... So we find that the parents do end up connecting, and becoming a community in the FRC, which really spills out into other areas of the neighborhood and community, because then those parents start taking a leadership role and then they bring other parents in, or they go out and talk to other families about what they’re learning.” — Laura Buzo, Program Director for the Family Resource Centers

Source: Mapp, K. L., & Kuttner, P. J. (2013). *Partners in education: A dual capacity-building framework for family-school partnerships*. Austin, TX: SEDL. Retrieved from <http://www.sedl.org/pubs/framework/> (See pp. 20-21.)

Example 4: South Gate High School (California)

South Gate High School (SGHS) “serves a predominantly Latina/o student population. Created on campus in 1991, the SGHS Parent Center began as a space for families to discuss concerns and issues regarding their children’s school experiences. ... Within the last couple of years, the Parent Center has become a central place on campus for college preparation and education about eligibility requirements, admissions and financial aid. A Community Liaison manages the Parent Center and is selected by a committee of families. Educational workshops ... are a large part of the work of the SGHS Parent Center. Workshops are created based on families’ interests as expressed in parent surveys sent home each year. ... Workshops teach families about curriculum, standards, assessment and evaluation, and the educational policies that govern the school system. The sessions are intended to empower families to become advocates for their children, particularly with respect to preparing for college.”

Source: MacDonald, M. F., & Dorr, A. (2008), *Engaging Parents as Partners in Creating College Going Cultures*. Retrieved from <http://apep.gseis.ucla.edu/bestla/BEST-EngagingParentsAsPartners-DevelopingParentCenters-PracticalGuide.pdf> (See p. 7.)

Example 5: Partnering With a Refugee and Immigrant Assistance Center (Massachusetts)

Project SHIFA in Boston, Massachusetts, serves Somali immigrants and refugees, who may have untreated mental health problems due to trauma and stress. Two key program leaders are Somali; one trains local Somalis to become clinicians in social work, and another, with the Refugee and Immigrant Assistance Center, serves as a school-based parent liaison. The programs support the youth in local schools and focus on serving a range of student and family needs.

Based at the Lilia G. Frederick Pilot Middle School in Boston, the project provides culturally appropriate services along a continuum of care—from prevention to full intervention:

- Parent workshops focused on education about mental health issues, breaking down the stigma attached to them
- Home visits and phone calls to build relationships with the families
- Teacher training on culture and identification of mental health issues
- Student groups to build communication and life skills
- Direct intervention for students, using Trauma Systems Therapy.



Assessing the Effectiveness of Family–School–Community Partnerships

School communities may wish to examine the effectiveness of their practices. Multiple data sources and data-gathering processes such as interviews, focus groups and informal conversations can help identify what is working for families (Castellón et al., 2015). Once a vision and framework for newcomer parent engagement is in place, its effectiveness needs to be assessed. The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction offers this tool to help schools evaluate their family engagement, with attention to six types of partnerships highlighted by the work of Joyce Epstein.

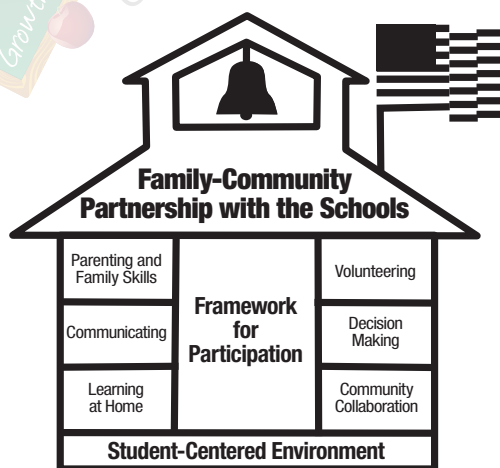
Wisconsin Department of Public Education: Measuring Your Family–School–Community Partnerships—A Tool for Schools

How does your school reach out to and involve families and the community in children’s learning?

This tool is based on the six types of partnerships: parenting and family skills; communicating; learning at home; volunteering; decision making; and community collaboration. It may help your school do these three things:

1. Assess the strength of the partnerships it conducts.
2. Indicate the focus or direction of your partnerships.
3. Identify areas that can be changed.

Your school may do all, some, or none of the activities or approaches listed. Not every activity is appropriate for every grade level. The items listed were selected because they show that schools in which they happen are meeting the challenge to involve families in many different ways. These activities can improve school climate, strengthen families, and increase student learning. Your school may also be conducting other activities. Be sure to add them under each type of involvement and include them in your school’s assessment of its key partnership practices.



“The Three As”: Academics, Advocacy, and Awareness

CORE COMPONENTS OF STRONG FAMILY ENGAGEMENT PROGRAMS (PLANNING TOOL)

Purpose

This exercise will help your school team build a common understanding of the core components of strong family engagement programs for newcomers (academics, advocacy, and awareness and use of resources), and reflect on your school’s practices related to each component. It includes a template to help organize your team’s thinking and planning.

Preparation for Activity

- A few days in advance, ask participants to read Chapter 5 of this tool kit.
- Make a poster (or handout) that displays the “three As” of strong family engagement programs.
- Make copies of handouts A and B (one of each for each participant).

Time Required for Activity

1 hour

Instructions for Facilitator

Step 1: Individual Reflection on Core Components

Distribute handout A and instruct participants as follows: This handout presents three core components (focus points) of strong family engagement programs that influence newcomer families’ experiences with schooling in the United States. It describes each component and summarizes the potential impact of well-designed activities for families in each of these focus areas. The handout also describes effective delivery methods for each area of support and, ultimately, who needs to share the responsibility for engaging families. Take a few minutes to study the chart, and **underline areas that you think our school is not currently attending to** and **circle areas that are being addressed** in our school, particularly with regard to newcomer families. (Allow about 10 minutes for individual reflection.)

Step 2: Group Discussion

Facilitate a group discussion to make participants’ thinking visible to the group. You might want to record main ideas on a flip chart or whiteboard. (Allow 5-10 minutes for discussion.)

Step 3: Preparation for Planning Activity

Distribute handout B and instruct participants as follows: We will use this template to plan ways our school can address engagement of newcomer families in the coming year. Based on the exercise and discussion we just completed, and on what you know about research on effective parent engagement programs, jot down five

things you think are priorities for our school. These should be actions you think our school absolutely must address. They can include aspects we are currently addressing, as well as aspects you think we should start addressing. (Allow about 3–5 minutes for individual thinking.)

Step 4: Group Planning Activity

Facilitate a group process for coming to consensus on priorities to include in your school's family engagement plan. Record the priorities and make sure they are used to inform your school's planning for the coming year.

The Three As (Core Components) of Family Engagement Programs for Newcomers

When school communities design family engagement programs for newcomers, they should consider including in their plans three core components or areas of focus:

1. **Academic Success:** strengthening newcomer families' capacity to support academic achievement by increasing their awareness of instructional programs and ways they can support their own child's learning
2. **Advocacy and Decision-Making:** strengthening families' understanding of how to advocate for their child and participate in decisions to improve learning for their children and others in the school
3. **Awareness and Use of Resources:** strengthening families' awareness of resources available in the school and community and how to access them to support their family's well-being as well as their own personal growth



HANDOUT A: Organizing Family and Community Engagement for Impact

Component 1 Academic Success	Component 2 Advocacy and Decision-Making	Component 3 Awareness and Use of Resources
<p><i>Opportunities for engagement:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Directly linked to student grade-level learning goals • About two-way communication and collaboration with teachers and school leaders 	<p><i>Opportunities for engagement:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Related to school academic and nonacademic programming • Connected to exercising advocacy and shared decision-making • About successful transitions 	<p><i>Opportunities for engagement:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Linked to social services • Connected to adult education • About information and access to school and community resources
Impact (why)	Impact (why)	Impact (why)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family knowledge and understanding of key grade-level learning concepts • Greater ability to apply strategies that support grade-level learning concepts anywhere and anytime • Strong collaboration between teachers and families • Higher expectations for learning and achievement • Improved student achievement, attendance, and behavior • Family ability and access to monitor progress regularly • Increased interaction with learning between families and their children 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased family participation in the life of the school community through organized meetings, groups, and committees • Increased knowledge and understanding about families' rights and responsibilities • More families as thought partners for district and school improvement • Access to academic and nonacademic resources and after-school programs • Better understanding of curriculum, academic standards, and benchmarks • Knowledge of district and school vision, mission, and policies • More volunteers supporting the school and all students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased number of partnerships with specialized community organizations • Greater selection of services and resources for families throughout the community • Increased number of academic and nonacademic opportunities for children beyond the school day • Efficient and effective use of fiscal and human resources across the community • An increased number of community organizations are engaged in supporting district and school goals

Organizing Family and Community Engagement for Impact

Continued from previous page

Component 1 Academic Success	Component 2 Advocacy and Decision-Making	Component 3 Awareness and Use of Resources
Approach (how)	Approach (how)	Approach (how)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing professional learning opportunities for school leaders, teachers, and support staff Systematic application of research and evidence-based practices in engagements Personal outreach by teachers Integration of family engagement into the fabric of teaching and learning Effective and targeted use of time and human and fiscal resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Personal invitations Coordinated parent and family orientation that includes transition years, academic milestones, and college and career readiness Redesigned compacts Quarterly newsletter Structured and targeted open house events Welcome centers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A district/school strategic plan for community partnerships that targets the needs of the school community An organized family and community engagement leadership team that meets regularly and includes partners across service areas Marketing
People Responsible (who)	People Responsible (who)	People Responsible (who)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> District/school leadership team Teachers Parents and families Support staff Family and Community Engagement (FACE) Coordinators 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> District/school leadership team Family and Community Engagement (FACE) Coordinators <i>Title I</i> staff Volunteers Front office staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategic community partners Volunteers Family and Community Engagement (FACE) Coordinators District leadership

HANDOUT B: Planning Template for Addressing Three Core Components of Strong Family Engagement Programs

Year	Component 1 Academic Success	Component 2 Advocacy and Decision-Making	Component 3 Awareness and Use of Resources
What do newcomer families and staff need to know?			
How will you assess their needs?			
What will be the focus of engagement activities?			
What assets do the families and staff have that can be leveraged?			
Who will be involved in planning the engagement activities?			
How will you create a safe and welcoming environment for participants?			
What capacities need to be developed or strengthened for families and staff to improve the impact of the engagements?			
How will the required capacities be developed for both families and staff?			

Planning Template for Addressing Three Core Components of Strong Family Engagement Programs

Continued from previous page

Year	Component 1 Academic Success	Component 2 Advocacy and Decision-Making	Component 3 Awareness and Use of Resources
What resources and structures will be used to recruit participants?			
What resources and structures will be used to have strong engagements and communications?			
What is the expected impact of activities?			
How will the impact be measured?			



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