

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.

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.

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>



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

Source: Short, D. J., & Boyson, B. A. (2012). *Helping newcomer students succeed in secondary schools and beyond*. Washington, DC: Center for Applied Linguistics (p. 52). Retrieved from <http://www.cal.org/resource-center/publications/helping-newcomer-students>



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).

¹For sample questions from the student intake interview, see the 2015 report released by the Carnegie Corporation, *Schools to Learn From: How Six High Schools Graduate English Language Learners College and Career Ready*, page 13. The PDF is available for download at <http://ell.stanford.edu/content/schools-learn>

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

Develop a clear vision and goals for newcomer students.

Examples:

- 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.

Develop a set of common values about newcomer students and accept shared accountability for the education of newcomers.

Examples:

- 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.

Design specific courses for students with interrupted formal education (SIFE).

Example:

- Develop a separate literacy course or set of courses for students with interrupted educational backgrounds if the program has both preliterate and literate newcomers.

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Newcomer Program Components with Examples of Processes or Practices

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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.

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Newcomer Program Components with Examples of Processes or Practices

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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.

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Newcomer Program Components with Examples of Processes or Practices

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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.

Source: Bridging Refugee Youth and Children's Services (BRYCS). (2008). Welcoming and orienting newcomer students to U.S. schools (Spring 2008 *Spotlight*). Washington, DC: United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. (©U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops.) Retrieved from http://www.brycs.org/documents/upload/brycs_spotspring2008-2.pdf

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

Source: Bridging Refugee Youth and Children's Services (BRYCS). (2008). *Welcoming and orienting newcomer students to U.S. schools* (Spring 2008 *Spotlight*). Washington, DC: United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. (©U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops.) Retrieved from http://www.brycs.org/documents/upload/brycs_spotspring2008-2.pdf

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 Celiene 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.

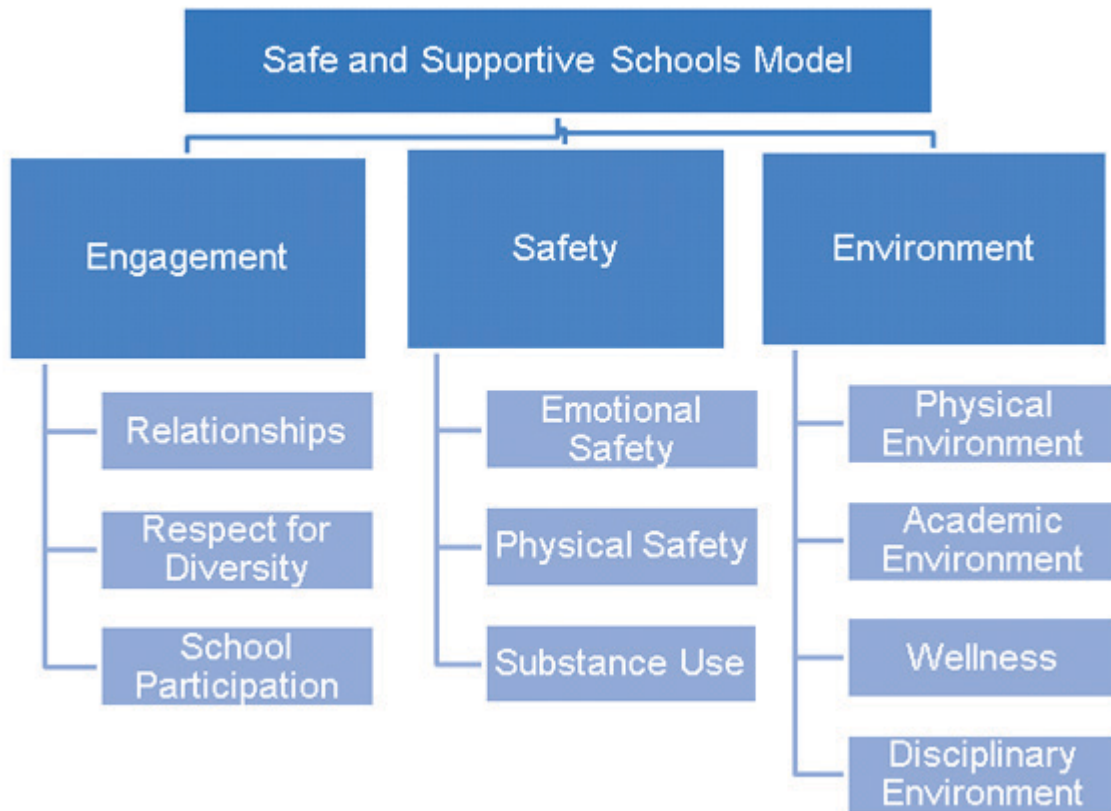
Source: New York City Department of Education. (n.d.). Parent bill of rights. Retrieved from <http://schools.nyc.gov/RulesPolicies/ParentBillOfRights/default.htm>

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.



Source: National Center on Safe Supportive Learning Environments (NCSSLE). (n.d.). Safe supportive learning [Website]. Retrieved from <https://safesupportivelearning.ed.gov/>

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?				

Resources

Breisetz, L., Robertson, K., & Lafond, S. (2011, August). *A guide for engaging ELL families: Twenty strategies for school leaders*. Retrieved from Colorín Colorado website:

http://www.colorincolorado.org/sites/default/files/Engaging_ELL_Families_FINAL.pdf

This guide provides family engagement strategies for leaders in schools serving ELs in pre-K through grade 12. It provides detailed explanations of a variety of strategies along with examples from schools and programs throughout the United States.

Bridging Refugee Youth and Children's Services (BRYCS). (2008). *Welcoming and orienting newcomer students to U.S. schools* (Spring 2008 *Spotlight*). Retrieved from http://www.brycs.org/documents/upload/brycs_spotspring2008-2.pdf

This edition of BRYCS' monthly *Spotlight* newsletter addresses different aspects of welcoming and orienting refugee and immigrant students, including understanding these students' particular histories, planning for an effective orientation for the students, classroom tips for welcoming and accommodating them, and more.

Burnett, S. (2016, January) Welcoming immigrant students into the classroom. Retrieved from Edutopia website: <http://www.edutopia.org/blog/welcoming-immigrant-students-into-classroom-sara-burnett>

This article compiles best practices for creating a welcoming classroom for immigrant students, as well as helpful dos and don'ts for building relationships with them and their families.

Castañeda v. Pickard. 648 F.2d 989 (5th Cir. 1981)

In this case, the Fifth Circuit Court established a three-part test to evaluate the adequacy of a district's programs for ELs.

Castellón, M., Cheuk, T., Greene, R., Mercado-Garcia, D., Santos, M., Skarin, R., & Zerkel, L. (2015, December). *Schools to learn from: How six high schools graduate English language learners college and career ready*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University, Stanford Graduate School of Education. Retrieved from <http://ell.stanford.edu/sites/default/files/Schools%20to%20Learn%20From%20.pdf>

This report presents detailed case studies of six schools with exemplary programs for newcomers and ELs; the studies are based on site visits and data gathered by teams of researchers. The executive summary presents shared values and innovative school design elements identified in the schools. Each case study provides a vignette of a class, background information on the school, descriptions of the programs, processes, practices, and supports in place for students and teachers, as well as examples of materials used by teachers for planning and instruction.

Center for Parent Information and Resources. (n.d.). Resources. Retrieved from <http://www.parentcenterhub.org/resources/>

This webpage serves as a central resource of information and products for the community of Parent Training Information (PTI) Centers and the Community Parent Resource Centers (CPRCs). Most resources are translated into Spanish.

de Vise, D. (2008, December 19). School turns English Learners into top achievers. *The Washington Post*. Retrieved from <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2008/12/18/AR2008121802192.html>

This article describes an elementary school in Maryland that implemented community involvement strategies and a rigorous English language program in order to successfully educate newcomers who did not speak English when they entered school.

Horwitz, A. R., Uro, G., Price-Baugh, R., Simon, C., Uzzell, R., Lewis, S., & Casserly, M. (2009, October). *Succeeding with English language learners: Lessons learned from the great city schools*. Washington, DC: Council of the Great City Schools. Retrieved from <http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED508234.pdf>

This report presents findings of a study of the experiences of large, urban districts with differing levels of success in raising EL students' achievement. The findings include a set of features and promising practices among successful schools as well as limiting factors in the comparison schools, and offers strategic and instructional recommendations. Snapshots of the four successful districts and two comparison districts are also provided.

Kareva, V. & Echevarria, J. (2013). Using the SIOP model for effective content teaching with second and foreign language learners. *Journal of Education and Training Studies*, 1(2), 239-248. Retrieved from <http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1054872.pdf>

This study looks at the SIOP (Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol) model of instruction in three settings. The authors find that in each of the settings, outcomes for ELs improve using the SIOP model.

Lau v. Nichols, 414 U.S. 563 (1974)

In this case, the Supreme Court determined that school districts must take affirmative steps to assure that ELs can meaningfully participate in the district's educational programs and services.

Los Angeles Unified School District Board of Education. Parents' rights and responsibilities to ensure your child's [sic] success. (n.d.). Retrieved from http://achieve.lausd.net/cms/lib08/CA01000043/Centricity/Domain/72/parents_bill_of_rights_english.pdf

This one-page document lists parents' rights and responsibilities in plain language. It is available in English and Spanish.

Murphy, Katy. (2010, August 26). Immigrant, refugee teens in Oakland tell their story. *East Bay Times*. Retrieved from http://www.eastbaytimes.com/oaklandtribune/localnews/ci_13751431?source=rss

This article describes a pilot project at Oakland International High School in Oakland, CA, through which newcomer students told of their experiences through art and which culminated in the publication of a graphic short story collection.

National Center on Safe Supportive Learning Environments (NCSSLE). (n.d.). Safe supportive learning [Website]. Retrieved from <https://safesupportivelearning.ed.gov/>

NCSSLE, funded by the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Safe and Healthy Students, seeks to "improve schools' conditions for learning through measurement and program implementation, so that all students have the opportunity to realize academic success in safe and supportive environments." This website "includes information about the Center's training and technical assistance, products and tools, and latest research findings."

National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition (NCELA). (n.d.a). *Elevating English Learners (ELs): Social and emotional supports for newcomers*. Retrieved from https://ncela.ed.gov/files/feature_topics/newcomers/ElevatingELs_SocialEmotionalSupportNewcomer.pdf

This paper, one of a series of three papers on newcomers, provides suggested practices for providing social emotional supports to newcomer students.

National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition (NCELA). (n.d.b). *Elevating English Learners (ELs): Programs for newcomer students*. Retrieved from http://www.ncela.us/files/feature_topics/newcomers/ElevatingELs_ProgramsForNewcomerStudents.pdf

This paper, one of a series of three papers on newcomers, provides an overview of features of newcomer programs and considerations for implementing them. It also has brief descriptions of five illustrative newcomer programs in various states, and lists resources for students with no-or-limited English and limited formal education.

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

This webpage provides links to a parents' bill of rights and responsibilities, which in turn cites local regulations related to them. There are links to the document in English and nine other languages (Arabic, Bengali, Chinese, French, Haitian Creole, Korean, Russian, Spanish, and Urdu).

Oakland Unified School District. (2016, March 2). Welcoming newcomers. Retrieved from <http://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/CAEDUOUSD/bulletins/139f884>

This bulletin includes a letter, available in English and six other languages, welcoming newcomers to the Oakland Unified School District community and describing some of the services and resources available to newcomers. The bulletin also provides quotes from a parent, a principal, and a teacher, as well as a link to a video of newcomer students.

O'Brennan, L., & Bradshaw, C. (2013). *Importance of school climate* (NEA Bully Free, It Starts With Me Research Brief). Washington, DC: National Education Association. Retrieved from https://www.nea.org/assets/docs/15584_Bully_Free_Research_Brief-4pg.pdf

This brief provides guidelines to measure school climate and suggestions on how schools can improve the climate.

Plyler v. Doe, 457 U.S. 202 (1982)

In this case, the Supreme Court ruled that states cannot deny students a free public education based on their immigration status.

Short, D. J., & Boyson, B. A. (2012). *Helping newcomer students succeed in secondary schools and beyond*. Washington, DC: Center for Applied Linguistics. Retrieved from <http://www.cal.org/resource-center/publications/helping-newcomer-students>

This report presents findings from a national survey of secondary school newcomer programs and case studies of 10 exemplary programs. It provides detailed information on program structures and practices, such as program design, instruction and assessment, and family and community engagement, as well as challenges, accomplishments, and recommendations for newcomer programs. The report includes resources useful for educators who want to create or refine a newcomer program.

U.S. Department of Education. (2014). Educational services for immigrant children and those recently arrived to the United States. Retrieved from <http://www2.ed.gov/policy/rights/guid/unaccompanied-children.html>

This webpage provides information and resources on the responsibilities of state and local educational agencies to enroll immigrant children in school and provide them with educational services

U.S. Department of Education. (2015). Educational resources for immigrants, refugees, asylees, and other new Americans. Retrieved from <http://www2.ed.gov/about/overview/focus/immigration-resources.html>

This webpage provides video and print (PDF) educational resources to support a number of immigrant populations and concerned parties, including immigrant children (e.g., unaccompanied youth) and the children of immigrants, Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) children and youth, immigrant families, adult immigrants (e.g. refugees, asylees), foreign-born professionals, migrant students, teachers of ELs, and receiving communities.

U.S. Department of Education. (2016a). ED School Climate Surveys. Retrieved from <https://safesupportivelearning.ed.gov/edscls/measures>

These surveys assist in analyzing three domains of school climate.

U.S. Department of Education. (2016b). Bright spots in Hispanic education fulfilling America's future. Retrieved from <http://www2.ed.gov/about/inits/list/hispanic-initiative/bright-spots.html>

This webpage provides a list of “bright spots” in Hispanic education across the nation whose programs support immigrant communities in the areas of early learning, k-12, college access, post-secondary completion, and STEM.

U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights. (2015). Schools' civil rights obligations to English Learner students and limited English proficient parents. Retrieved from <http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/ellresources.html>

This webpage provides online and print (PDF) information and resources for students, parents, and education officials related to the rights for (1) ELs to participate meaningfully in educational programs and services and (2) limited English proficient parents to receive communication from schools in a language they can understand. It includes a number of resources in multiple languages.

U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, & U.S. Department of Justice, Civil Rights Division. (2015, January). *Dear colleague letter: English learner students and limited English proficient parents*. Retrieved from <http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/letters/colleague-el-201501.pdf>

This document provides guidance to assist SEAs, LEAs, and all public schools in meeting their legal obligations to ensure that ELs can participate meaningfully and equally in educational programs and services.

U.S. Department of Education, Office of English Language Acquisition. (2015). English Learner tool kit. Retrieved from <http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/oela/english-learner-toolkit/index.html>

This webpage provides links to download the EL tool kit as one document or by individual chapters; the introduction is available in multiple languages. The EL tool kit is designed for state, district, and school administrators, and for teachers; it offers tools and resources to help them meet their legal obligations in providing support to ELs to learn English while meeting college- and career-readiness standards.

U.S. Department of Education, Office of English Language Acquisition. (2016). White House Task Force on New Americans educational and linguistic integration webinar series. Retrieved from <http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/oela/webinars/new-americans/index.html>

This webpage provides links to a series of webinars focused on the educational and linguistic integration of immigrants and refugees. Webinar #2, *Creating Welcoming Schools*, includes a presentation by Deborah Short on specific strategies for creating welcoming schools (<http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/oela/webinars/new-americans/web2.pptx>).

U.S. Department of Education, White House Initiative on Educational Excellence for Hispanics. (2014, May). *Graduate! A financial aid guide to success*. Retrieved from <http://sites.ed.gov/hispanic-initiative/graduate-financial-aid-guide-to-success/>

This guide, which is accessible in English and Spanish versions at the URL address offered, provides resources to help Hispanic students and families navigate the college application process.

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children & Families Children’s Bureau. (n.d.). Child welfare information gateway [Website]. Retrieved from <https://www.childwelfare.gov>

This website promotes the safety, permanency, and well-being of children, youth, and families by connecting child welfare, adoption, and related professionals as well as the public to information, resources, and tools related to child welfare, child abuse and neglect, out-of-home care, and more. The site provides access to print and electronic publications, websites, databases, and online learning tools for improving child welfare practice, including resources that can be shared with families.

U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services. (2015, September).

Welcome to the United States: A guide for new immigrants. Retrieved from <https://www.uscis.gov/sites/default/files/files/nativedocuments/M-618.pdf>

This guide provides information to new immigrants on their rights and responsibilities, as well as practical information for everyday life. It includes a chapter on “Understanding Education and Health Care” with sections on “Education in the United States” (which provides information for parents about American schools) and “Learn English” (which describes opportunities for children and adults to take English as a second language classes).