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Welcoming, Registering, and Supporting Newcomer Students: A Toolkit for Educators of Immigrant and Refugee Students in Secondary Schools

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Welcoming, Registering, and Supporting Newcomer Students: A Toolkit for Educators of Immigrant and Refugee Students in Secondary Schools

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This resource is intended to help educators identify and use research-based policies, practices, and procedures for welcoming and registering newcomer immigrant and refugee students who are attending secondary schools in the United States and for supporting them once they are in school.

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INTRODUCTION

This toolkit is intended to help educators and other stakeholders identify and use research-based practices, policies, and procedures for welcoming, registering, and supporting newcomer immigrant and refugee students who are attending secondary schools in the United States, as well as their families (grades 6–12). The toolkit defines *newcomers* as students who were born outside the United States and who have arrived in the country within the past three years. Meeting the educational and social needs of these students is an ongoing challenge for educators and community stakeholders across the country (Faltis & Arias, 2007; Lucas, 1997; Rance-Roney, 2009; Ruiz-de-Velasco & Fix, 2000; Short & Boyson, 2012; Umansky et al., 2018).

This toolkit is designed for educators in a variety of roles, who can use it in different ways. It can help district administrators develop, implement, and improve research-based practices, policies, and procedures for newcomers and offer related professional development for district and school personnel. Teachers and school counselors who direct and work in newcomer programs can use this toolkit to adopt research-based practices to support newcomer immigrant and refugee students and their families.

Why this toolkit?

Educators need support in using research-based practices, policies, and procedures to better meet the unique needs of newcomer immigrant and refugee students. Immigrant and refugee students at the secondary school level who are new to the United States tend to be underserved in schools, particularly compared with younger immigrant English learner students (Ruiz-de-Velasco & Fix, 2000). Specifically, educators and schools often struggle to provide adequate linguistic, academic, and socioemotional supports for newcomer students who arrive in secondary grades.

Widely varying experiences of newcomer immigrant and refugee students

Immigrant and refugee students and their families bring strengths and assets that can be harnessed to support them, in addition to benefiting their U.S.-born peers (Phillips, 2014; Wells et al., 2016). These strengths and assets include the academic, cognitive, and economic benefits of their emerging bilingualism (Bialystok, 2011; Gándara, 2018; Saiz & Zoido, 2005). In addition, immigrant and refugee families sometimes have higher parental expectations and greater interest in school than U.S.-born families, which might support immigrant youth in their schooling (Crosnoe & Turley, 2011; Feliciano & Lanuza, 2016).

In addition to these strengths, newcomers confront many barriers as they enter the U.S. school system. They face challenges in accessing academic content while still developing their English proficiency. They are likely to arrive with gaps in their formal education, and schools encounter difficulties in providing instruction to address these gaps (Custodio & O’Loughlin, 2017; Potochnick, 2018). At the same time, these students are often expected to complete high school in four years (Short & Fitzsimmons, 2007; Sugarman, 2017; Umansky et al., 2018).

Given the challenges that educators and schools face in supporting newcomer students who arrive in secondary grades, a stronger understanding of these students' prior schooling can be an important consideration for policy and practice. Immigrant students' prior schooling has been identified as an important predictor of achievement but has received less attention in the research than other factors, such as the education programs and contexts students encounter after migration (Callahan, 2005; Cortina, 2009; Ruiz-de-Velasco & Fix, 2000; Short & Boyson, 2012). Consequently, schools might not collect data on newcomer students' prior schooling, and teachers tend to know little about the education experiences of individual students or the education system in their country of origin (Dryden-Peterson, 2018; Ruiz-de-Velasco & Fix, 2000).

Determining whether students have gaps in their schooling can be difficult, as students and their parents may be reluctant to disclose this information (Abedi, 2008; Advocates for Children of New York, 2015; Browder, 2015). Students with schooling gaps may arrive performing below grade level in some content areas, lacking academic skills, or having limited literacy in their home language. Even students who have attended school consistently may have academic gaps because of limited resources, different curricula, or low-quality instruction.

The lack of information on prior schooling is especially problematic because immigrants are a highly diverse group, with varying strengths and needs, ranging from students with high levels of English proficiency to those with low levels, students with interrupted or limited formal education and students with superior academic preparation, and students with special learning needs (Berliner, 2019; Francis et al., 2006). Within each of these categories, students differ by culture, language, social and educational background, and even the arduousness or ease of their journey to the United States, making it difficult to generalize about the needs of immigrant and refugee students.

Common abbreviations used in the toolkit resources related to immigrant and refugee students

EB: Emergent bilingual student. Student who is developing proficiency in a second language.

EL: English learner student.

ELL: English language learner student.

ELSWD: English learner student with disabilities.

ESOL/ESL: English for speakers of other languages/English as a second language.

PHLOTE: Primary home language other than English.

RAEL/RAIEL: Recently arrived English learner student/recently arrived immigrant English learner student.

RAINEL: Recently arrived immigrant who is not an English learner student (a newcomer who is assessed to be proficient in English).

SIFE/SLIFE: Student with interrupted formal education/student with limited or interrupted formal education (a newcomer with significant gaps in formal education).

Immigrant students with limited or interrupted formal education and those who are refugees may face additional challenges. These can include trauma from war and violence or stress when they arrive and move in with relatives whom they might not know well (Birman & Chan, 2008; Dryden-Peterson, 2018; Short & Boyson, 2012). These sources of trauma and stress are typically not well understood or documented during school intake and registration, and supporting immigrant students and their families who have experienced or are experiencing trauma is an increasing priority for regional and national stakeholders (Ee & Gándara, 2019).

Especially for refugee students, schools are an important provider of mental health services and an essential source of stability (Sullivan & Simonson, 2016). For refugee students who have experienced trauma, school can be crucial for restoring social and emotional health (Dryden-Peterson, 2018; Eisenbruch, 1988; Huyck & Fields, 1981). However, schools and educators are not always prepared to comprehend—let alone support—the difficulties and experiences of refugee students (McBrien, 2005).

Need for strong, research-based policies, practices, and procedures to guide newcomer students' transition to U.S. schools

In response to these challenges, districts and schools should consider developing and applying strong, research-based policies, practices, and procedures to guide newcomers' transition to schools in the United States. The initial registration process is a pivotal moment when students and their families first engage with the school or district. It offers an opportunity for schools to connect with families and students in a meaningful way while laying the foundation for successful student pathways through school. However, schools are often unprepared for this first encounter, and the interaction is often inadequate and so does not maximize students' chances of success (Dryden-Peterson, 2018; Martinez-Wenzl, 2018). For example, schools may narrowly focus on screening and assessing students for English language proficiency while overlooking important information, such as previous learning or literacy in students' home languages, that could inform supports, services, and pathways (Faltis & Arias, 2007; Lucas, 1997; Rance-Roney, 2009).

This toolkit provides resources on research-based practices, policies, and procedures that educators can use to support immigrant students as they arrive in U.S. schools. These resources are aimed at expanding typical intake practices to make them more holistic. The goal is to better understand the unique needs, assets, and experiences of newcomer immigrant and refugee students and, in turn, to improve the ability of schools to provide these students with the instructional and social supports they need to succeed.

How were the research and resources collected?

A Regional Educational Laboratory (REL) Northwest study team conducted a systematic search for research-based practices, policies, and procedures related to welcoming, registering, and supporting newcomer immigrant and refugee students attending secondary school in the United States. Searches were conducted in the Education Resources Information Center (ERIC) database and proprietary databases for peer-reviewed, empirical research on immigrant and refugee students. The focus was on the registration of newcomer students and on factors associated with positive academic and psychological outcomes during their transition to school.

Through web searches and conversations with regional intake experts, the study team also identified resources related to newcomer practices, policies, and procedures from school districts, immigrant and refugee organizations, and international education systems. Unless otherwise indicated, all the resources listed in this toolkit are free of charge. Mentions of specific resources, trade names, products, or organizations does not imply endorsement by the authors, the Institute of Education Sciences, the U.S. Department of Education, or the U.S. government.

The research studies and resources cited in this toolkit describe practices, policies, and procedures for welcoming, registering, and supporting newcomer immigrant and refugee students; however, those studies and resources have not always rigorously evaluated those practices. Consequently, although this toolkit describes newcomer practices, policies, and procedures discussed in peer-reviewed literature, it does not provide evidence of their effectiveness.

How is the toolkit structured?

This toolkit summarizes research and resources in four areas (table 1):

- Welcoming and engaging newcomer immigrant and refugee students and families.
- Registering newcomer immigrant and refugee students.
- Supporting the social, emotional, academic, and postsecondary needs of newcomer immigrant and refugee students.
- Building educators’ capacity to support newcomer immigrant and refugee students.

The toolkit provides information on resources for each area that support research-based practices, policies, and procedures. These resources include professional development curricula, policy and implementation guides, evaluation reports, and sample surveys and assessments.

Table 1. Research-based practices, policies, and procedures for welcoming, registering, and supporting newcomer immigrant and refugee students in secondary schools and for building educators' capacity to serve these students

Welcome	Register	Support	Build capacity
• Welcome immigrant and refugee students and families • Orient immigrant and refugee students and families • Support family access to schools and educators • Seek family input to inform student placement, instruction goals, and trajectories	• Collect and analyze newcomer student records and transcripts • Identify English learner students and assess English language proficiency • Assess home language literacy and content knowledge • Award competency-based credits • Assess students for disabilities and gifted and talented programs • Screen students for trauma	• Partner with outside organizations to engage immigrant and refugee students and families • Implement trauma-informed practices in the classroom • Create strategic individualized plans for immigrant and refugee students' graduation, postsecondary education, and careers • Establish a newcomer program	• Participate in professional learning to understand the needs, assets, and background of immigrant and refugee students • Build a shared understanding of trauma and its impact • Engage in ongoing efforts to align practices, policies, and procedures in a continuous improvement effort aligned with the principles of trauma-informed care

Note: Click on each item to access the referenced practices, policies, and procedures.

Source: Authors' compilation.

The toolkit includes an appendix on data management practices to protect student privacy in implementing these practices, policies, and procedures.

WELCOME AND ENGAGE NEWCOMER IMMIGRANT AND REFUGEE STUDENTS AND FAMILIES

> *"It is difficult for immigrant families and schools to build relationships across multiple lines of difference, including language, culture, race, country of origin, and educational norms of family participation and discipline …. Working together, teachers and immigrant families can engage in the kind of communication that links school- and home-based learning to improve academic achievement." (Dryden-Peterson, 2018, p. 487)*

Welcoming and engaging newcomer immigrant and refugee students and their families is an important step for schools. Building culturally responsive, relationship-based partnerships with families can support future engagement and involvement, which can in turn improve student outcomes (Arias & Morillo-Campbell, 2008; Dryden-Peterson, 2018; Niehaus & Adelson, 2014; Wilder, 2014).

Immigrant and refugee families face unique challenges as they engage in their children's education, including language barriers and lack of familiarity with the host country's education system (Antony-Newman, 2019). Specifically, immigrant and refugee families in the United States might not know enough about the U.S. education system and its norms to support their children in U.S. schools, and they might not know what expectations the U.S. school system has for how parents engage with their child's learning (Arias & Morillo-Campbell, 2008; Dryden-Peterson, 2018; Short & Boyson, 2012). In addition, educators might not recognize families' efforts to engage because those efforts occur through organizations and social networks outside the school or outside the school's knowledge (Poza et al., 2014).

Educators and schools can support immigrant and refugee families as they learn about the U.S. education system and about their expected roles in their child's learning and engagement with the school (Arias & Morillo-Campbell, 2008). Parents' involvement in their child's education is linked to improved academic achievement, including higher assessment scores and grades, as well as better school attendance and reduced dropout rates (Wilder, 2014). This appears to hold true regardless of a student's socioeconomic status, demographic characteristics, immigration status, or English learner status (Arias & Morillo-Campbell, 2008; Niehaus & Adelson, 2014).

Mutually respectful, trusting, and collaborative relationships between schools and families may play an

The meaning of "family"

Some immigrant and refugee students arrive in the Unites States with their parents. Others arrive with more distant relatives or guardians who may not be family members. Others arrive as unaccompanied minors.

This toolkit uses "families" to refer to all the guardians of immigrant and refugee students, including parents, relatives, and other guardians.

important role in lowering barriers to success among immigrant and refugee families and students (Dryden-Peterson, 2018). However, schools sometimes struggle to build such relationships (Antony-Newman, 2019; Dryden-Peterson, 2018; Horvat et al., 2003; Wilder, 2014). For example, schools might not have the resources or knowledge to effectively communicate with families and might not always seek family input on important decisions.

Schools can engage immigrant and refugee students and families in the following four ways:

1. Welcome newcomer students and families.

2. Orient newcomer students and families.

3. Support family access to schools and educators.

4. Seek family input to inform student placement, instruction goals, and trajectories.

Welcome newcomer students and families

Districts and schools can welcome newcomer immigrant and refugee students from the time of their initial engagement in multiple ways. A welcoming environment can benefit districts and schools by promoting positive relationships with families and students and allowing the district or school to collect and share information (Berliner, 2019; Francis et al., 2006; Short & Boyson, 2012).

Resources for creating a welcoming environment

This section contains information and resources on welcoming and engaging newcomer immigrant and refugee students and families by hiring multilingual staff members, establishing an intake center, creating a welcoming environment, and connecting newcomer families with outside agencies in advance of registration to streamline scheduling.

Hire multilingual staff members and plan for interpreters

As soon as possible, school staff members should identify a newcomer family's preferred language for communication and ensure that the school has a plan to support oral and written communication in that language (U.S. Department of Justice and Department of Education, 2015a). Communication between educators and families is critical for increasing engagement by immigrant and refugee families, who might not be comfortable speaking English and might need support and recognition to communicate and participate (Arias & Morillo-Campbell, 2008; Dryden-Peterson, 2018; Georgis et al., 2014; Poza et al., 2014; Short & Boyson, 2012). Employing multilingual staff at schools or an intake center can support communication and foster a more welcoming environment (Arias & Morillo-Campbell, 2008; Georgis et al., 2014).

It is not always possible for a district to hire staff who speak all the languages that their students speak. Instead, schools can plan ahead by arranging to have multilingual staff members from other schools or community organizations on call for events that many immigrant families are expected to attend, such as parent–teacher conferences (Borba, 2009). Schools might also consider creating pre-recorded phone messages in families' home languages, providing audio recordings with school-related information in families' home languages, and offering volunteer opportunities that do not require fluency in English (Borba, 2009). Many school districts contract with organizations that provide trained interpreters to speak with families and educators by phone.

While schools sometimes rely on students to act as language brokers or translators between their families and teachers (Kam, 2011; Tuttle & Johnson, 2018; Weisskirch, 2018), only trained staff members should act as translators because conversations may contain confidential information or require specialized knowledge to translate accurately (U.S. Department of Justice and Department of Education, 2015b).

Consider establishing a centralized intake center

As districts plan the registration process, one key decision is whether to centralize registration for all newcomer immigrant and refugee families at an intake center, a single location for registering all newcomers, rather than registering them at each school (Al-Hassan & Gardner, 2002; Berliner, 2019; Francis et al., 2006; Lucas, 1997). Centralized intake centers have both advantages and drawbacks.

Advantages include having in a single location trained multilingual personnel who specialize in immigrant student registration (Adelman & Taylor, 2015; Anderson & Tilbury, 2014; Rumpf, 2018; Umansky et al., 2018). It can be more economical to hire multilingual personnel for a single location since they can probably serve a larger number of schools and district offices than if they were located at individual schools. Some intake centers have staff members who interview parents while students are being tested, as well as social workers who can connect families to school-based resources such as preschool options for younger children or adult education. In addition, a centralized intake center can allow schools to have a dedicated safe and welcoming space (which may include an area for younger siblings while families register) for immigrant-specific enrollment processes (Sugarman, 2017; Rumpf, 2018). Centralized intake centers can also facilitate the collection and management of standardized data, since intake and protocol training take place in a single location rather than being dispersed across multiple schools (Anderson & Tilbury, 2014).

There may also be drawbacks to centralizing intake at one location. For example, registration might be more convenient for families at the student's neighborhood school, and registration at the neighborhood school can help families and students build relationships with school staff members (Sugarman, 2017).

Create a welcoming environment

Districts and schools can use many strategies to establish a welcoming school environment for newcomer immigrant and refugee students and families. They can produce welcome messages in multiple languages; post maps of schools or neighborhoods in multiple languages, without text, or with pictures accompanying text; display photos or artifacts of people and places from around the world; have staff members available who are trained in multilingual and multicultural communication; and set up an area to engage younger children, perhaps with books, toys, and comfortable seating (Adelman & Taylor, 2015; Colorado Department of Education, 2016; Rumpf, 2018; Umansky et al., 2018; Wainer, 2004). Districts and schools might also want to offer a school tour led by multilingual and multicultural staff members and a student tour led by peers (Colorado Department of Education, 2016).

Connect with outside agencies to schedule registration and prepare newcomer and refugee students and families

Districts can build relationships with resettlement agencies to broker contact between schools and newcomer refugee families, when appropriate (Umansky et al., 2018). Connecting with refugee resettlement agencies can enable districts and schools to contact families to schedule registration meetings as soon as they arrive in the district and use the advance notice to prepare for their registration. This could include making the necessary linguistic accommodations, having appropriate staff members present, or working with the refugee agency to better understand and respond to each family's unique needs (Umansky et al., 2018). (For more information on working with outside organizations, see the section "Partner with outside organizations to engage immigrant and refugee students and families.") Districts and schools can also establish relationships and channels of communication with multiple community agencies and then use the registration process as an opportunity to connect families with social service organizations or direct families to centralized information on key community resources and supports (Berliner, 2019; Umansky et al., 2018).

Orient newcomer students and families

Immigrant and refugee families might be unfamiliar with the U.S. education system and might feel uncomfortable in the new environment (Antony-Newman, 2019; Dryden-Peterson, 2018). Districts and schools can help newcomer immigrant and refugee students and families feel welcome by providing a clear and comprehensive orientation to education in the United States, which could include explaining school policies, procedures, and structures and graduation requirements and processes.

Resources for providing a clear and comprehensive orientation

Registration is an opportunity for districts and schools to offer clear and comprehensive orientation services that can provide immigrant and refugee students and families with critical information about the U.S. education system. As mentioned earlier, many families will have limited information on U.S. schooling norms and processes (Stegelin, 2017; Suárez-Orozco et al., 2016).

Resources for **providing information on schooling** in the United States:

- The Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's *Enrolling and Graduating English Learners* (Rumpf, 2018) lists important topics to cover during orientation, including school policies and structures and graduation requirements and processes.

- The Center for Applied Linguistics’ Cultural Orientation Resource Center website (Cultural Orientation Resource Center, 2020) lists resources for providing refugee orientation and training These include:

    - *Making Your Way: A Reception and Placement Orientation Curriculum* (Cultural Orientation Resource Center, 2013) provides educators with an orientation curriculum to help refugees navigate a new community.

    - *Welcome to the United States: A Guidebook for Refugees* (Cultural Orientation Resource Center, 2012) is a guidebook and video, available in 10 languages, to help refugees prepare for their first months in the United States.

Some districts and schools show welcome videos to families, and others share information through an in-person orientation meeting (Rumpf, 2019; Wainer, 2004).

Resource for **accessing welcome videos** for newcomer families:

- The New York State Education Department created a parent orientation video that is available in multiple languages.

Districts might want to adapt their parent handbooks with information tailored to newcomer immigrant and refugee families.

Resource for an example of a **parent handbook**:

- The International Rescue Committee-Seattle (2007) partnered with Tukwila School District in Washington to create a handbook for Somali parents.

Students can also benefit from orientation that focuses on schooling policies and procedures, such as schedules, attendance, discipline, credits, queuing, raising hands to speak, and using a schedule planner (Bridging Refugee Youth & Children’s Services, n.d. a) Providing pictures of the school and other common items can encourage communication. It also can be helpful to give students a map that has simple drawings accompanying text descriptions so that they will have support in navigating the school and understanding the role of different staff members (Umansky et al., 2018).

Resource for an example of a **newcomer handbook**:

- The Indianapolis Public Schools Newcomer Handbook is an example of how to use pictures to support comprehension.

To help families make informed choices, effective programs provide information for families in their preferred language (U.S. Department of Justice and Department of Education, 2015a). Districts and schools can partner with outside organizations or ask for state education agency support with translation; some state education agencies have employees or centralized online resources to help local education agencies (Bridging Refugee Youth &

Children's Services, n.d. a). To improve readability and make translation easier, communication that will be shared with families can use simple language, short sentences, active voice, and concrete examples and clear visuals (Francis et al., 2017; Nagro, 2015). Districts and schools should exercise caution in using free, automated online translation services, which often lack the precision to translate appropriately (Rodríguez-Castro et al., 2018).

Support family access to schools and educators

In addition to language barriers, immigrant and refugee families face some of the same barriers as other families do in meeting with teachers and attending school events. These include location, scheduling, and caring for other family members (Breiseth, 2011; Kugler & Price, 2009). Schools and districts might consider hosting events at community centers or other places where families might feel more comfortable, selecting meeting times to accommodate work schedules, and soliciting families' input on the timing of events (Breiseth, 2011; Bridging Refugee Youth & Children's Services, n.d. a; Colorín Colorado, 2018a).

Resources for supporting family access to schools and educators

Resources for **engaging newcomer families**:

- *A Guide for Engaging ELL Families: Twenty Strategies for School Leaders* (Breiseth, 2011) includes exercises for educators to consider how and where they schedule events, including questions for reflection and strategies for increasing families' participation.

- *How to Support Immigrant Students and Families* (Colorín Colorado, 2018a) provides engagement strategies for educators in schools and early childhood education settings.

- *Involving Refugee Parents in Their Children's Education* (Bridging Refugee Youth & Children's Services, n.d. a) provides cultural, linguistic, educational, and logistical considerations for districts and schools to support refugee families' engagement through improved access to schools and educators.

In addition, home visits by teachers or school administrators can be a way to reach out to immigrant and refugee families in a safe and convenient environment (Johnson, 2014).

Resource for **planning home visits**:

- *Making Your First ELL Home Visit: A Guide for Classroom Teachers* (Ernst-Slavit & Mason, n.d.) provides support for planning home visits with English learner students and their families, including steps to take before, during, and after the visit.

Seek family input to inform student placement, instruction goals, and trajectories

Soliciting and collecting input from immigrant and refugee students' families can enable districts and schools to better support positive student and family outcomes and student placement, define instruction goals and trajectories, and inform overall program design (Custodio & O'Loughlin, 2017; Fazily, 2012; González et al., 2006). While this is true for all families, it is especially important for immigrant and refugee students' families, who might be less likely to advocate for their children (Custodio & O'Loughlin, 2017). Schools can arrange initial meetings with families that focus on strengths and experiences, to collect important information on students' home lives, assets, and challenges (Custodio & O'Loughlin, 2017; Kugler, 2009). This information can also inform student mental health assessments, provide context for the school–family partnership, and guide the integration of students' strengths into instruction (Kugler, 2009; Michigan Department of Education, 2011).

Resources to support educators in seeking family input

Resources for collecting input from newcomer families:

- *Partnering with Parents and Families to Support Immigrant and Refugee Children at School* (Kugler, 2009) offers steps to form partnerships with families.

- *Collaborating for Success: Parent Engagement Toolkit* (Michigan Department of Education, 2011) has resources for families, as well as districts and schools, to support engagement, including information on language and culture.

REGISTER NEWCOMER IMMIGRANT AND REFUGEE STUDENTS

> *"School registration is a key opportunity for schools and districts to set newcomer students up for success. During this process, school personnel assess students' linguistic, academic, and (ideally) socioemotional needs to ensure they are placed in an appropriate instructional setting and connected with additional resources and assistance." (Sugarman, 2017, p. 2)*

Registration is the process of enrolling new students in a school. Registration might be the first time that a newcomer immigrant and refugee student and family engage with a school in the United States. Although processes vary across schools, registration regularly includes collecting and analyzing information on students to inform course placement, assessing students, and identifying needed services and supports.

Schools are often one of the first organizations with which immigrant students and families engage on arriving in a new country (Portes & Rumbaut, 2006; Sugarman, 2017). This means that registration is the first opportunity for district and school staff to form positive relationships—and share important information—with families and students.

Registration is a complex process dictated by federal, state, and local laws and policies. For example, federal law requires districts and schools to establish formal procedures for identifying and classifying English learner students, while each state's laws determine the specific procedures that districts and schools must follow (Every Student Succeeds Act, 2015).

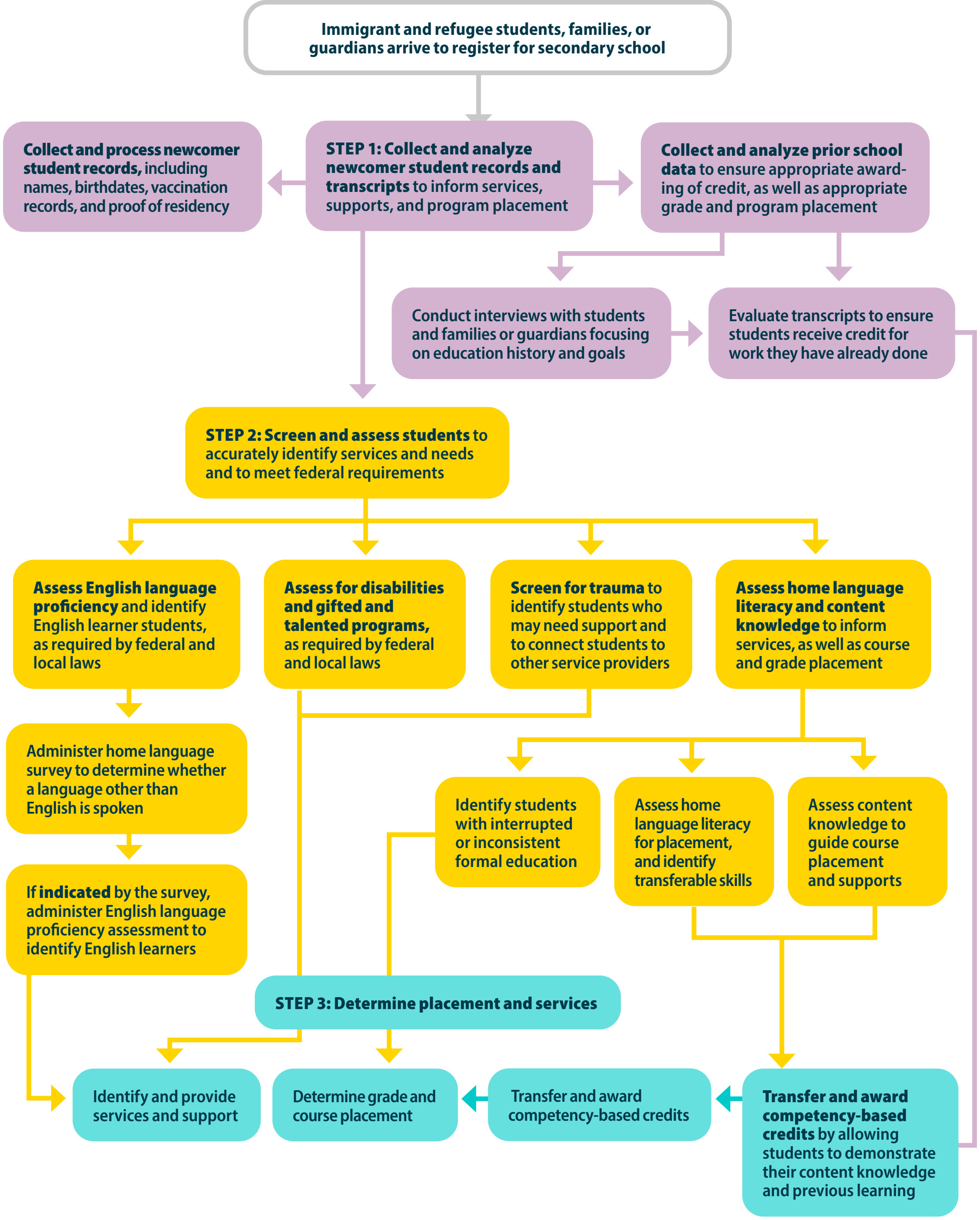
During registration, schools collect critical information on students' background that can inform services, supports, and program placement (Adelman & Taylor, 2015; Rumpf, 2018; Umansky et al., 2018). Having clear, uniform processes can make it more likely that the necessary data are collected, sufficient information is shared with families, and no inappropriate or illegal questions are asked (Californians Together, 2017; Colorado Department of Education, 2016; Colorín Colorado, 2018b).

This toolkit provides guidance on six areas related to registering immigrant and refugee students:

1. Collect and analyze newcomer student records and transcripts.
2. Identify English learner students and assess English language proficiency
3. Assess home language literacy and content knowledge
4. Award competency-based credits.
5. Assess newcomer students for disabilities and gifted and talented programs.
6. Screen newcomer students for trauma.

Each topic is discussed below, along with tools and resources to support districts and schools in their registration processes for newcomer immigrant and refugee students (figure 1).

Figure 1. A summary of the registration process for newcomer immigrant and refugee students


Immigrant and refugee students, families, or guardians arrive to register for secondary school
Collect and process newcomer student records, including names, birthdates, vaccination records, and proof of residency
STEP 1: Collect and analyze newcomer student records and transcripts to inform services, supports, and program placement
Collect and analyze prior school data to ensure appropriate awarding of credit, as well as appropriate grade and program placement
Conduct interviews with students and families or guardians focusing on education history and goals
Evaluate transcripts to ensure students receive credit for work they have already done
STEP 2: Screen and assess students to accurately identify services and needs and to meet federal requirements
Assess English language proficiency and identify English learner students, as required by federal and local laws
Assess for disabilities and gifted and talented programs, as required by federal and local laws
Screen for trauma to identify students who may need support and to connect students to other service providers
Assess home language literacy and content knowledge to inform services, as well as course and grade placement
Administer home language survey to determine whether a language other than English is spoken
If indicated by the survey, administer English language proficiency assessment to identify English learners
Identify students with interrupted or inconsistent formal education
Assess home language literacy for placement, and identify transferable skills
Assess content knowledge to guide course placement and supports
STEP 3: Determine placement and services
Identify and provide services and support
Determine grade and course placement
Transfer and award competency-based credits
Transfer and award competency-based credits by allowing students to demonstrate their content knowledge and previous learning

Note: Links to the relevant sections of this toolkit are embedded in each registration step summarized in this figure.

Source: Authors' compilation.

Collect and analyze newcomer student records and transcripts

Collecting data and analyzing student records and transcripts can guide the adequate provision of services and supports and appropriate program placement; determine correct grade, course, and credit assignment; and paint a fuller picture of a student's prior schooling (Colorado Department of Education, 2016; Martinez-Wenzl, 2018; Minnesota Department of Education, 2010). During registration, in addition to academic records, schools might need to collect a student's birthdate, vaccination record, proof of residency, and information about health and dietary needs (Boyson & Short, 2003).

Accurately tracking credits supports students in receiving credit for completed courses and helps keep them on track for graduation (see sections on "Award competency-based credits" and "Create strategic individualized plans for immigrant and refugee students' graduation, postsecondary education, and careers") (Martinez-Wenzl, 2018). These data can also support better understanding of the immigrant and refugee populations a school serves and their unique situations and needs (New York State Education Department, 2019).

Resources for collecting and processing student records

Some immigrant and refugee student records that are important for registration can be challenging for districts and schools to collect and accurately record. These include student name, age, and health records.

Schools can consult a guide to facilitate accurate recording of student names (Greenberg Motamedi et al., 2017) and assemble a team of professionals and families to estimate a student's age and decide on grade placement (Bridging Refugee Youth & Children's Services, n.d. b). In addition, schools can reach out to government agencies (in the case of unaccompanied minors) or refugee resettlement agencies for support (U.S. Department of Education, 2014).

Student health concerns can also be addressed during registration. Nurses can verify immunization records and discuss student health issues with students and their family members (Custodio & O'Loughlin, 2017). This information can be organized into individual newcomer student profiles that can be shared with principals, teachers, and school-based newcomer or English learner specialists, as long as doing so does not reveal private information (Umansky et al., 2018).

Resource for **correctly entering students' names**:

- *Getting It Right: Reference Guides for Registering Students with Non-English Names* (Greenberg Motamedi et al., 2017) provides details about naming conventions in 11 languages.

Resource for **estimating students' ages and collecting birth records**:

- *The Birthdates of Refugee Children and the Impact on Grade Placement* (Bridging Refugee Youth & Children's Services, n.d. b) provides guidance on collecting birth records and estimating a student's age.

Resource for **collecting vaccination records**:

- *Educational Services for Immigrant Children and Those Recently Arrived to the United States* (U.S. Department of Education, 2014) has guidance on obtaining vaccination records. When students do not have the required vaccination documents, schools can collaborate with refugee or government agencies to obtain records and help ensure that they meet the requirements of their state.

Resources for collecting and analyzing transcripts and data on prior schooling

Collecting and analyzing student transcripts and other data on prior schooling is a complex process. To support this process, this toolkit provides resources in three areas: international transcript conventions, transcript translation, and education history interview protocols. Rather than undertaking these complex tasks alone, some schools and districts pay organizations to do it for them (see table A2 in the appendix).

International transcript conventions

International transcripts can present challenges arising from language and curriculum differences, unfamiliar record-keeping practices, and difficulty proving authenticity (Minnesota Department of Education, 2010; NAGAP, The Association for Graduate Enrollment Management & International Education Research Foundation, 2019). Following a structured process for evaluating transcripts and transferring credits can support consistent, accurate evaluation (New Jersey Department of Education, 2018). This process might also involve closely examining transcripts to ensure that they are authentic (Minnesota Department of Education, 2010; NAGAP, The Association for Graduate Enrollment Management & International Education Research Foundation, 2019). Resource guides that provide equivalencies and information on other countries' grading systems can support the appropriate transfer of credits.

Resources for **country-specific transcript conventions**:

- *Evaluating Foreign Transcripts: A Resource Guide for School Districts* (Rhode Island Department of Education, 2012) contains transfer equivalencies that include information on more than 75 countries. (See also New York City Department of Education, 2006.)

- *Index of Secondary Credentials* (International Education Research Foundation, 2010) lists international secondary credentials, as well as a selection of sample documents.

Resource for **validating international transcripts**:

- Chapter 5 of *Working with Refugee Students in Secondary Schools: A Counselor's Companion* (Minnesota Department of Education, 2010) provides guidance on how to recognize and validate an international transcript and how to understand grading scales.

Resources for developing a **transcript evaluation process**:

- *Enrollment for Newcomers: Aligning Credentials across Academic Borders* (New Jersey Department of Education, 2018) provides guidance for developing a foreign transcript evaluation procedure and includes contact information for select embassies and consulates, a sample form for credit determination, and grading system information for select countries.

- *Taking out the Guesswork: A Guide to International Academic Records* (NAGAP, The Association for Graduate Enrollment Management & International Education Research Foundation, 2019) describes how to obtain, interpret, and validate international student records.

Transcript translation

Translating documents is another important step in evaluating student records and transcripts. If schools are unable to translate and interpret prior schooling records internally, outside agencies can provide this service for a fee (see table A2 in the appendix; Martinez-Wenzl, 2018). Schools might consider using staff members to help with translation, but it is important not to overburden them. Additionally, data security should be protected when viewing or sharing student records (see appendix), and schools cannot use students as translators or interpreters (U.S. Department of Justice and Department of Education, 2015b).

Education history interview protocols

In addition to the standard registration information collected from all students, districts can use family intake interviews to obtain rich information on newcomer immigrant and refugee students. Although intake interview structures and questions can vary, focusing on students' education history and goals can provide important and actionable information (Custodio & O'Loughlin, 2017; Flanbwayan Haitian Literacy Project, 2019). Interviews can be especially important when academic records are missing. Schools could consider re-creating these histories through a combination of interviews with families and students and content and language assessments.

Resources for **interviewing families about students' prior learning**:

- *Schools to Learn From* reproduces a set of student intake interview questions used by Boston International High School's Newcomers Academy (Castellón et al., 2015).

- This questionnaire for students with interrupted formal education (New York State Education Department, 2019) guides counselors and intake specialists through an interview process.

- The Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's *Enrolling & Graduating English Learners* provides a sample family interview protocol in appendix B (Rumpf, 2018).

Not all districts and schools collect and analyze prior schooling data themselves. Rather than developing the expertise to do this complex work, some districts and schools contract with outside organizations.

Resources for **fee-for-service agencies that collect and analyze prior schooling data**:

- The Electronic Database for Global Education from the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers.
- Online professional development modules on credential evaluation, as well as resources (such as descriptions of different countries' educational systems) from Educational Credential Evaluators.
- Guides to educational systems around the world from NAFSA: Association of International Educators.

Once translated and analyzed, transcript data can inform student placement in programs and courses. For example, in reviewing immigrant and refugee students' prior education records, school staff members might look for any mention of learning disabilities or special education services. In addition, to ensure that students are awarded appropriate credits school counselors can review translated and analyzed transcripts as they create strategic individualized plans for immigrant and refugee students' graduation, postsecondary education, and careers (see section below).

Identify English learner students and assess English language proficiency

Many—but not all—immigrant and refugee students enter the U.S. public school system as English learner students (Umansky et al., 2018). Federal law requires assessing the English language proficiency of students who speak a language other than English or who come from a home environment where another language is spoken in a way that could affect their English language development (Every Student Succeeds Act, 2015).

Resources for identifying English learner students and assessing English language proficiency

To provide appropriate services, districts and schools need clear procedures and guidelines to identify English learner students and to ensure the consistency and validity of the collected data (Bailey, 2010; Bailey & Kelly, 2010; 2013; Goldenberg & Rutherford-Quach, 2010; Kindler, 2002; Wolf et al., 2008). Box 1 summarizes steps for identifying English learner students.

Box 1. Identifying English learner students

To determine whether new students are eligible for English learner student services, schools can take the following steps:

1. Families complete a home language survey, which is a questionnaire that includes items about what language or languages the student first learned, understands, uses, and hears.
2. If the home language survey indicates that a student speaks a language other than English or lives in a household where members speak another language, the student is administered a standardized diagnostic English language assessment.
3. Teachers can also recommend that individual students' English language proficiency be assessed.
4. If the English language assessment indicates that the student is an English learner, appropriate language services are provided at the school.
5. Families are informed of those services within 30 days of the assessment. Families have the option of selecting or opting out of the services.

Source: National Center for English Language Acquisition, 2017a; U.S. Department of Justice and Department of Education, 2015b.

Resources for **identifying English learner students**:

- *Tools and Resources for Identifying All English Learners* (National Center for English Language Acquisition, 2017a)

- *Home Language Survey Data Quality Self-Assessment* (Henry et al., 2017)

If a home language survey or other data source indicates that a language other than English is used by the student or in the home, the next step is to assess the student's English language proficiency. Assessments differ by state and district, but they all assess students in four language domains: reading, writing, listening, and speaking.

Resource for **assessing English learner students**:

- The *English Learner Toolkit for State and Local Education Agencies* (National Center for English Language Acquisition, 2017a) provides guidance on English language proficiency assessments.

Language proficiency assessments are intended to determine only language proficiency, not whether a student should be further assessed for a learning disability (MacSwan & Rolstad, 2006).

Assess home language literacy and content knowledge

Assessments of students' home language literacy and content knowledge can inform their course placement and the provision of support services (Short & Boyson, 2012).

Resources for assessing home language proficiency

Districts and schools might want to assess newcomer immigrant and refugee students' proficiency in languages other than English, especially the language spoken in the home. Literacy skills in a student's home language are a good predictor of a student's ability to gain literacy skills in a second language (Callahan & Gándara, 2014; Genesee et al., 2005; Prevoo et al., 2016). These assessments can also guide placement in home language instruction courses and help teachers "focus on transferring skills already learned rather than on initial development of these skills" (Colorado Department of Education, 2016, p. 31; Short & Fitzsimmons, 2007).

Some districts and schools use proprietary assessments to evaluate home language proficiency (Boyson & Short, 2003). For example, Los Angeles Unified School District's assessment protocol for arriving immigrant students (2013) recommends that schools use a formal assessment to evaluate oral proficiency for students who speak one of the 33 languages in which the test is provided. Similarly, the New York State Education Department's multilingual literacy SIFE screener (2019) measures vocabulary, reading comprehension, and writing in multiple languages.

Other districts and schools use informal assessments of language skills. For example, students can be asked to write a short response to a basic question or have a short conversation with a staff member in their home language (Berliner, 2019; Colorado Department of Education, 2016; Minnesota Department of Education, 2010).

Resources for assessing content knowledge

Assessment of students' content knowledge in subjects such as math and science can inform course placement and the provision of additional supports (Boyson & Short, 2003; Custodio & O'Loughlin, 2017). Some districts assess newcomer immigrant and refugee students' content knowledge in English, and others do so in their home language or with language-neutral assessments, such as a math assessment that does not use written or spoken instructions (Berliner, 2019; Boyson & Short, 2003).

Resources for **content assessments in languages other than English**:

- *State Assessments in Languages Other than English* (Tabaku, Carbuccia-Abbott, & Saavedra, 2018) provides information about native language standardized assessments.

- *Working with Refugee Students in Secondary Schools: A Counselor's Companion* recommends asking students questions about their math background and then having them solve some problems to gauge their skills (Minnesota Department of Education, 2010).

- The *Multilingual Literacy SIFE Screener for Math* (New York State Education Department, 2019) measures math knowledge in multiple languages.

Award competency-based credits

Competency- or proficiency-based credits allow students to earn high school credit for performance on assessments that are aligned to district or state learning standards (Washington State Board of Education, 2016). The award of competency-based credits is one avenue for immigrant and refugee students to demonstrate their content knowledge and previous learning while earning high school credits toward graduation (Short & Fitzsimmons, 2007).

Immigrant and refugee students are expected to meet high school graduation requirements, including accruing the necessary credits for graduation, while also becoming proficient in English and while facing multiple barriers, as described in this toolkit's introduction (Short & Fitzsimmons, 2007; Sugarman, 2017). Consequently, these students often have lower graduation rates than their non-immigrant, English-speaking peers (Umansky et al., 2018).

Resources for awarding competency-based credits

One way districts and schools are helping immigrant and refugee students earn the credits necessary to graduate is by allowing these students "to demonstrate the content knowledge they gained from schooling in their home country by taking tests based on state content standards and receiving credit if they pass" (Short & Fitzsimmons, 2007, p. 32). For example, some districts and states have policies to award competency-based world language credits to students who achieve proficiency levels on language assessments, regardless of their English language proficiency (Greenberg Motamedi & Jaffery, 2014).

Districts and states might also consider awarding competency-based credits in other subjects, such as math or science. Students can prove their competency in several ways, including passing an end-of-course exam or passing a higher-level course. For example, in some Washington districts, a student can earn Algebra I credit by passing an end-of-course Algebra I exam or by passing an Algebra II course.

Resources on **competency-based world language credits**:

- The Washington Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (n.d.) has published a competency testing process for districts, which includes instructions and guidance for districts (such as lists of test vendors, as well as registration and communication support).

- The Washington State School Directors Association has created a sample district policy for competency-based world language credits (n.d. a) and a sample district procedure for earning competency-based world language credits (n.d. b).

Districts and schools might be interested in advocating for similar opportunities to award credit at the local level. School counselors can review student records to ensure that competency-based credits are awarded as they create strategic individualized plans for immigrant and refugee students' graduation, postsecondary education, and careers (see section below).

Some districts and schools also award English language arts credits for English language development classes, especially at advanced English proficiency levels. For example, Illinois has written into state law that "courses in [English as a second language] shall count toward English requirements for graduation" (Illinois Administrative Code 23 § 228.3). In addition, the Colorado Department of Education (2016) notes that school district policy in that state should indicate that English language development credits count toward required English credits.

Resource on **credit for English language development coursework**:

- *High School Credit and English Learners* (Indiana Department of Education, n.d.) outlines how a local education agency could award credit for English language development classes.

Assess newcomer students for disabilities and gifted and talented programs

Assessing newcomer immigrant and refugee students for learning disabilities and for gifted and talented programs has its challenges. Most notably, valid and reliable assessments are lacking for immigrant and refugee students who speak languages other than English (Mun et al., 2016; Park & Thomas, 2012). Translating assessments that are not developed for immigrant, refugee, or English learner students can result in erroneous diagnoses of learning disabilities, and uncertainty regarding identification can lead to delays in services or inappropriate alterations to students' education programs (Park & Thomas, 2012).

Similarly, eligible immigrant and refugee students might be overlooked for gifted and talented programs because of screeners that rely on English language proficiency or that are not culturally adapted (Ford et al., 2008). To ensure that immigrant and refugee students have opportunities to participate in gifted and talented programs, districts and schools can examine and adapt the process by which students are identified and screened with the needs of immigrant and refugee students in mind (Mun et al., 2016). Screening all students rather than relying on nominations or other means that might overlook immigrant and refugee students can support more diverse identification (Card & Giuliano, 2016). Using assessments that do not rely on fluent English proficiency can also help schools appropriately identify immigrant and refugee students for gifted and talented programs (Mun et al., 2016).

In all cases it is important for assessments to be culturally, developmentally, and linguistically appropriate. When assessing newcomer immigrant and refugee students for disabilities, schools must rely on a team of educators throughout the process, engage in multiple steps, and rule out other factors that might contribute to student misidentification (Gaviria & Tipton, 2012; Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, 2004; Park et al., 2017).

Resources for assessing students for disabilities

A full team of educators should be involved throughout the process of identifying learning disabilities and developing individualized education programs for students receiving special education services (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, 2004). Further, identification is often a multistep process, grounded in observations of students' learning and educators' knowledge of students' cultural and linguistic backgrounds (Park et al., 2017).

Resources on **special education referral processes for English learner students**:

- San Diego Unified School District's *CEP-EL: A Comprehensive Evaluation Process for English Learners* (Gaviria & Tipton, 2012) provides a flowchart outlining the initial referral and decisionmaking process for identifying English learner students with learning disabilities, with special attention to key factors that should be ruled out before identification.

- The Oregon Department of Education's *Special Education Assessment Process for Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CLD) Students* (Villegas-Gutiérrez, 2015) reviews different assessment approaches and addresses common misconceptions about multilingual students and learning disabilities.

Resource on federal law regarding the **evaluation of English learner students for special education**:

- The U.S. Department of Justice and Department of Education's "Dear Colleague Letter" (2015b) provides districts with guidance on evaluating English learner students for special education services and informing families.

Resource on accurately **identifying English learner students with disabilities**:

- Colorín Colorado's *The Over- and Under-Identification of ELLs in Special Education* (Zacarian, 2011) explains the importance of properly identifying English learner students with disabilities and provides two related case studies.

Resources for assessing students for gifted and talented programs

Universal screening can increase the diversity of students identified for gifted and talented education compared with individual nomination (Card & Giuliano, 2016). Some screeners have been developed as nonverbal assessments or performance-based, dynamic assessments, which can support more appropriate identification (Mun et al., 2016). However, validity research is mixed or limited, and "scores on these tests should be considered alongside other data that comprise a student's holistic profile" (Mun et al., 2016, p. 24).

Resources for **identifying students for gifted and talented programs**:

- The National Association for Gifted Children's Tests & Assessments webpage provides an overview of testing options, including nonverbal assessment options.

- The Iowa Department of Education's *Identifying Gifted and Talented English Language Learners* manual (2008) lists recommended practices.

Screen newcomer students for trauma

Newcomer immigrant and refugee students might have experienced traumatic events, such as ethnic conflict, war and violence, food insecurity, and unstable shelter and housing (Birman & Chan, 2008). Trauma occurs when an individual experiences an event or circumstances that are emotionally harmful, physically harmful, or life-threatening, with lasting adverse effects on their mental, physical, social, or emotional well-being (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2019; Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, 2011). Some traumatic experiences occur once in a lifetime, while others are ongoing. Traumatic events can lead to feelings of powerlessness over one's circumstances (Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 2019; Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, 2014).

Newcomer immigrant and refugee students might also be particularly vulnerable to stress on arrival in the United States. They can experience displacement and disorientation as they adjust to a new school, new friends, a new community, new peer networks, and in some cases, to reunification with their families or moving in with relatives whom they might not know well (Birman & Chan, 2008; d'Abreu et al., 2019; Short & Boyson, 2012). Further, some immigrants and refugees resettle in areas with high poverty or high crime rates (Kataoka et al., 2003).

Screening newcomer immigrant and refugee students for symptoms of anxiety, depression, post-traumatic stress disorder, and exposure to traumatic events will help identify students who need additional support. However, screening tools developed for one culture or language can yield inaccurate results in another (Ovitt et al., 2003), and screening tools might not be available in a student's native language. In these cases, schools can partner with local mental health service providers and help connect students to additional services (Umansky et al., 2018).

Resources for screening students for trauma

Educators can improve the accuracy of screening by using instruments that were developed in response to immigrant and refugee students' experiences or identified as appropriate for such students (Birman & Chan, 2008; Ovitt et al., 2003). Further, helping educators understand how trauma is experienced and expressed across cultures can support improved identification and support (d'Abreu et al., 2019).

Resources on **trauma screening instruments**:

- *Screening and Assessing Immigrant and Refugee Youth in School-Based Mental Health Programs* (Birman & Chan, 2008) describes the efficacy and effectiveness of screening instruments and types of screeners used to assess exposure to traumatic events.

- The National Child Traumatic Stress Network's screening and assessment resource includes a list of mental health measures that have been translated and implemented with some refugee groups.

SUPPORT THE SOCIAL, EMOTIONAL, ACADEMIC, AND POSTSECONDARY NEEDS OF NEWCOMER IMMIGRANT AND REFUGEE STUDENTS

> *"Adolescent students who are newly arrived immigrants and who need to learn English are among the most vulnerable subgroups of English language learners, especially those with gaps in their educational backgrounds. They are held to the same accountability standards as native English speakers while they are just beginning to develop their proficiency in academic English and are simultaneously studying core content areas .... New to the country and the language, they face acculturation issues too, making engagement with their schools, peers, and teachers challenging." (Short & Boyson 2012, p. v)*

Newcomer immigrant and refugee students can have different social, emotional, and academic needs than their peers. These needs can be met by educators in classrooms, by counselors in planning sessions, and by community organizations in partnership with schools. To meet these needs, educators and schools can:

1. Partner with outside organizations to engage newcomer students and families.
2. Implement trauma-informed practices in the classroom.
3. Create strategic individualized plans for newcomer students' graduation, postsecondary education, and careers.
4. Establish a newcomer program.

Partner with outside organizations to engage newcomer students and families

Newcomer immigrant and refugee families might feel more comfortable becoming involved in their child's education through community organizations, social networks, or religious organizations rather than through school-based networks and activities, such as parent–teacher associations. Educators and administrators might wish to reach out to such organizations, including resettlement agencies (Ellis et al., 2011; Poza et al., 2014; Umansky et al., 2018).

Resources to help schools partner with outside organizations

Some community partners offer wraparound services that include securing housing, food, clothing, health care, language learning services, and employment (Osterling & Garza, 2004;

Umansky et al., 2018). Community organizations can help schools reach out to newcomer immigrant and refugee families by providing resources that schools might not have at their disposal, such as interpretation and cultural liaisons (Ellis et al., 2011). In addition, these organizations can help schools arrange to hold meetings for families in local community centers, religious institutions, community rooms in housing complexes, and local libraries.

- *A Guide for Engaging ELL Families: Twenty Strategies for School Leaders* (Breiseth, 2011) has exercises for educators to identify and partner with community organizations (p. 30), including reflection questions and strategies for building relationships.

- *Working with Community Organizations to Support ELL Students* (Colorín Colorado, n.d.) includes links to videos that can guide educators who are seeking to reach out to community organizations.

Implement trauma-informed practices in the classroom

Districts and schools can implement trauma-informed practices to cultivate safe and supportive environments for all students and educators. A trauma-informed approach entails ongoing efforts to integrate trauma-informed principles into a school's practices, policies, and procedures and is not achieved through a singular change (Davidson, 2017). All staff members can work together with a sense of shared responsibility for the physical, social, emotional, and academic safety of every student (Perkins & Graham-Bermann, 2012; Rodenbush, 2015).

The research literature identifies three practices as key for serving all students, especially newcomer immigrant and refugee students: implementing trauma-informed instructional strategies, recognizing and promoting resilience, and addressing social and emotional learning needs.

Resources for implementing trauma-informed instructional strategies

Trauma-informed instructional strategies can validate and normalize students' experiences, help students understand how the past influences the present, and empower students to manage their lives more effectively (Knight, 2015). In classrooms where these strategies are implemented, teachers maintain a consistent schedule and classroom structure, model flexibility when faced with unexpected changes to their routine, and help trauma-affected students recognize their progress by highlighting their strengths and providing ongoing positive feedback in the face of obstacles (Rodenbush, 2015).

Resources identifying trauma-informed instructional strategies in the classroom:

- *Using a Strengths-Based Approach with ELs: Supporting Students Living with Trauma, Violence and Chronic Stress* (Zacarian et al., 2017) outlines an approach for educators to draw on students' strengths and capacities.

- *The Heart of Learning and Teaching: Compassion, Resiliency, and Academic Success* (Wolpow et al., 2016) outlines six instructional principles that guide interactions with students who have experienced trauma.

- *Calmer Classrooms: A Guide to Working with Traumatised Children* (Downey, 2007) helps educators understand and work with youth whose lives have been upended by trauma.

Resources for recognizing and promoting resilience

Resilience is "the process of adapting well in the face of adversity, trauma, tragedy, threats, or significant sources of stress" (American Psychological Association, 2014, p. 1). Every person demonstrates resilience in a different way (Teicher et al., 2003). Anyone can learn and develop resilience—at any stage of learning and life. As such, although many of the following resources address resilience in young children, they are also appropriate for school-age youth.

Resources from the Center on the Developing Child to **support the development of resilience and reduce the effects of significant trauma** on children:

- *In Brief: The Science of Resilience* (Center on the Developing Child, n.d. a) explains why some children do well despite early adversity and trauma. The resource can inform the design of policies and programs that help children reach their full potential.

- *Resilience: Overview* (Center on the Developing Child, n.d. b) identifies factors that help children achieve positive outcomes in the face of great adversity.

Resource on **working with refugees affected by trauma**:

- *The Resilience Guide: Strategies for Responding to Trauma in Refugee Children* (Savazzi, 2018) includes information about refugee trauma, potential developmental effects, and key strategies that foster the resilience of children and families.

Resource on **promoting grit and resilience in the classroom**:

- Character Lab's Grit webpage and *Grit Playbook* (Duckworth, 2018) provide an introduction to the idea of grit for teachers and include exercises for educators and students for developing grit.

Resources for addressing social and emotional learning needs

Social and emotional learning skills, such as perseverance and self-regulation, help individuals develop the life skills needed for healing and growing beyond childhood trauma and flourishing (Tough, 2016; Greenberg et al., 1996). Many of these skills can be learned (Cole et al., 2013).

Resources on teaching social and emotional learning skills in the classroom:

- *Trauma-Informed SEL Toolkit* (Transforming Education, 2020) describes strategies for implementing five trauma-informed classroom practices for social and emotional learning.

- *Trauma Toolkit: Tools to Support the Learning and Development of Students Experiencing Childhood and Adolescent Trauma* (FirstBook, n.d.) provides an overview of the causes and symptoms of trauma and actionable steps educators can take to support students' learning and development.

Create strategic individualized plans for newcomer students' graduation, postsecondary education, and careers

Districts and schools can make high school graduation and the postsecondary planning process key priorities for immigrant and refugee students who arrive during the secondary grades and work with them to create strategic individualized postsecondary plans (box 2; Hooker et al., 2015; Kanno & Varghese, 2010; Suárez-Orozco et al., 2010). This planning process should begin early, as many immigrant and refugee students who arrive in the secondary grades need extra time to earn the required credits to graduate, and that can prevent them from graduating in the expected four-year time frame (Sugarman, 2017; 2019; Umansky et al., 2018).

Common challenges and barriers include credit deficiencies, ineligibility for financial aid, challenges related to immigration status, and economic instability (Abrego, 2006; Gonzalez & Villalba, 2018; Kanno & Grosik, 2012; McWhirter et al., 2013; Schwartz et al., 2013; Umansky et al., 2018). In addition, without clear and complete information, immigrant and refugee students might discount viable pathways to postsecondary career and education opportunities (Abrego, 2006; McWhirter et al., 2013). Many immigrant and refugee secondary school students will be the first in their family to attend college, and their families might

Box 2. Suggested steps in the strategic planning process

1. **Translate and analyze records of prior schooling and ensure that students receive appropriate credit.** Students should be informed about whether the earned credits count toward graduation requirements or university application requirements (Colorado Department of Education, 2016).
2. **Seek students' input about their goals and use this information to develop education plans.** By drawing on students' skills and knowledge, this can help educators avoid tracking immigrant and refugee students into graduation-only pathways or career and technical education programs that may not be the students' preferred pathway (Enriquez, 2011; Suárez-Orozco et al., 2010; Sugarman, 2019).
3. **Provide clear and detailed information for students about their postsecondary options** and ask them to identify which options they would be interested in after completing high school (Kanno & Varghese, 2010).

not have information on navigating postsecondary education opportunities (Gonzalez & Villalba, 2018; Schwartz et al., 2013; Stebleton & Soria, 2012).

Planning toward high school graduation and beyond can be driven by student input, should respond to the unique challenges and experiences of immigrant and refugee students arriving in secondary grades, and can include information on clear pathways for students and family members engaged in the process (McWhirter et al., 2014; Rumpf, 2019; Suárez-Orozco et al., 2010; Watkinson & Hersi, 2014). Newcomer immigrant and refugee students can benefit from targeted information and supports describing their postsecondary options (McWhirter et al., 2014).

Resources for creating strategic plans for newcomer students' high school graduation

During meetings school counselors and other educators can establish goals for students and create a projected timeline for supporting students' in completing the necessary coursework (Enriquez, 2011; Suárez-Orozco et al., 2010). Educators can use the information gathered from transcripts, family interviews, and content proficiency assessments to ensure that students receive credit for the work they have already done and the knowledge they already have (see the section "Collect and analyze newcomer student records and transcripts").

High schools can offer credit-recovery programs to students who need additional credits to graduate (Sugarman, 2017, 2019). For example, immigrant and refugee students can take credit-recovery courses after school, during summer, on the weekend, and online. In designing graduation plans, educators might want to keep in mind and inform newcomer immigrant and refugee students and families that, although credit recovery is an important pathway to graduation for students arriving in high school, these programs do not provide the same learning experience as in-person coursework and that many of them require English proficiency (Sugarman, 2017).

Resources for **creating high school graduation plans**:

- *Enrolling & Graduating English Learners* (Rumpf, 2018) provides an individual career and academic plan for English learner students that can be adapted for newcomer immigrant and refugee students, including space to note different postsecondary options and to map out the necessary credits for graduation and beyond. There is also space to indicate whether a student will aim to receive a Seal of Biliteracy, which recognizes students' proficiency in two or more languages and provides evidence of skills that are attractive to future employers and college admissions offices (Gándara, 2014).

- The New York State Education Department's planning tool and exercises (2019) can be used to create a set of practices, programs, and policies to improve graduation rates among English learner students.

Resources for creating strategic plans for newcomer students' postsecondary education

Postsecondary planning for newcomer immigrant and refugee students can happen during or right after registration, because students' postsecondary goals can inform initial placement or programming decisions (Minnesota Department of Education, 2010). Districts and schools can identify staff members who can facilitate strategic postsecondary planning for newcomer immigrant and refugee students; school counselors might be a good fit for the role (Hooker et al., 2015; Suárez-Orozco et al., 2010).

With students' goals in hand, school counselors can work with students to determine what they need to do during high school to be eligible to apply for the postsecondary opportunities of interest to them (Enriquez, 2011; Suárez-Orozco et al., 2010). For example, counselors and students might want to consider course enrollment trajectories, credits to accumulate, assessments to take, summer opportunities (such as internships) to pursue, and college-access programs to explore.

Resource for **creating postsecondary plans**:

- *Building a Pathway to the Future: Maximizing High School Guidance and Advisory Support* (Fazekas & Warren, n.d.) provides a series of postsecondary-planning models and examples for all students that could be modified for newcomer immigrant and refugee students.

Newcomer immigrant and refugee students and families might have limited information on the U.S. postsecondary education system (Gonzalez & Villalba, 2018). Schools can provide information about both selecting and applying to an institution and about applying for financial aid (Auerbach, 2014). Students can be given information about how documentation and immigration status affect eligibility for financial aid so that students are not pressured into revealing their immigration status (Gonzalez & Villalba, 2018). Schools could offer workshops or information nights focused on postsecondary education for families and students (Auerbach, 2014; Henderson, 2010).

Resources on **applying for postsecondary education**:

- *Tip Sheet for Refugee and Asylee Students* (National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators, 2018) offers information on the federal student aid process, required documents, transcript provision, and scholarships for immigrant and refugee students.
- The *¡Gradúate! Guide to Success* series (U.S. Department of Education, 2014) presents information on postsecondary opportunities and a glossary defining terms such as "loan," "grant," and "scholarship."

Answering questions about citizenship as it relates to application or admission forms can be difficult for immigrant students who are undocumented or are not U.S. citizens. There is no federal law that bars undocumented students from attending public or private universities in the United States, but some states restrict undocumented students' access to public universities (Atfeh et al., 2018; National Council of La Raza, 2009).

Resources on **documentation status and postsecondary education**:

- *Financial Aid and Undocumented Students* (U.S. Department of Education, Federal Student Aid, 2019) addresses frequently asked questions regarding documentation status and filling out a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).

- *Keeping the Dream Alive: Resource Guide for Undocumented Students* (National Council of La Raza, 2009) contains information for educators, students, and families on applying to college, financing postsecondary education, and transitioning from high school to college.

- *Repository of Resources for Undocumented Students* (Rincón, 2012) provides national and state-specific information on university admissions laws, application questions, and access to financial aid for undocumented students.

- *Tip Sheet for Undocumented Students* (National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators, 2019) addresses some frequently asked questions for undocumented students.

In-state tuition policies for undocumented students vary by state. Counselors might want to familiarize themselves with their own state context so that they have accurate information on whether undocumented students are eligible for in-state tuition and how residency is defined in such cases.

Resource on **in-state tuition policies for undocumented students**:

- *Tuition Benefits for Immigrants* (National Conference of State Legislatures, 2019) summarizes in-state tuition policies for undocumented students.

In addition, districts and schools might want to provide information on outside scholarships, institution-specific scholarships, fellowships, and work-study options. They could also reach out to individual universities and ask about their scholarship opportunities for immigrant students.

Resources on **financial aid and scholarships for immigrant students**:

- *Scholarships for immigrants and refugees* (USA Hello, n.d.)

- *Financial Aid and Scholarships for Undocumented Students* (Illinois Association for College Admissions Counseling, n.d.)

- *Scholarship Resources* (Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund, n.d.)

Resources for providing newcomer students with information about careers

Districts and schools can also provide information for newcomer immigrant and refugee students about career opportunities and pathways. Although much of this information will be the same for immigrant and refugee students as for other students, some kinds of information might be especially helpful to share with immigrant and refugee students. Schools can connect immigrant and refugee students and families with potential employers, as well as with organizations that provide employment training. For example, the International Rescue Committee runs workforce development programs that train recent immigrants and connect them to in-demand job opportunities (International Rescue Committee, 2019).

In states that offer the Seal of Biliteracy, districts and schools can share with students information on the career benefits arising from official recognition of their multilingualism. Survey evidence suggests that employers are more likely to hire a candidate who has a Seal of Biliteracy (Gándara, 2014).

Establish a newcomer program

In response to the unique needs of newcomer immigrant and refugee students, some districts have created newcomer programs to meet the needs of students who have recently arrived in the United States (Berliner, 2019; Boyson & Short, 2003; Short & Boyson, 2012). Newcomer programs promote student success by providing newly arrived students with access to wide-ranging, culturally appropriate academic, health, social, emotional, and family support (Berliner, 2019).

In addition, newcomer programs teach grade-level content in core subjects and offer remediation services, as necessary, while immigrant and refugee students familiarize themselves with the U.S. school system. Newcomer programs can also support immigrant and refugee students in acquiring foundational academic English language skills and develop their home language literacy skills (Berliner, 2019; Boyson & Short, 2003; Short & Boyson, 2012).

Resources for establishing a newcomer program

Resources on **designing and implementing newcomer programs**:

- *Helping Newcomer Students Succeed in Secondary Schools and Beyond* (Short & Boyson, 2012) supports educators in designing newcomer programs.
- *Establishing an Effective Newcomer Program* (Short & Boyson, 2003) lists key steps in creating a newcomer program.

What is a newcomer program?

Newcomer programs, which vary in design and implementation, support newcomer immigrant and refugee students through designated coursework and classes. Newcomer programs also typically adapt school supports to the needs of recently arrived immigrant students. This adaptation can range from separate classes and coursework within a larger school to a separate school location (Berliner, 2019; Short & Boyson, 2003).

- *Programs for Newcomer Students* (National Center for English Language Acquisition, n.d. a) provides an overview of newcomer programs.

Resources on **evidence-based instructional practices for newcomer students**:

- *Beyond Teaching English: Supporting High School Completion by Immigrant and Refugee Students* (Sugarman, 2017) discusses the design and implementation of instructional newcomer programs.

- The *English Learner Toolkit for State and Local Education Agencies* (National Center for English Language Acquisition, 2017a) discusses promising high-quality instructional practices to meet the needs of newcomer students.

- *Research-Based Recommendations for Serving Adolescent Newcomers* (Francis et al., 2006) provides research-based recommendations for instructing newcomer students, including creating newcomer programs.

- *Academic Supports for Newcomer Students* (National Center for English Language Acquisition, n.d. b) highlights key academic supports for newcomer students.

BUILD EDUCATORS' CAPACITY TO SUPPORT NEWCOMER IMMIGRANT AND REFUGEE STUDENTS

> *"Collaboration can greatly improve the ways schools support immigrant families by bringing multiple perspectives to the table, increasing opportunities to share information, and allowing staff to identify ways to make their outreach more efficient and effective" (Colorín Colorado, 2018a, p. 147).*

To properly support the social, emotional, and academic needs of immigrant and refugee students in secondary schools, responsibility for these students' learning and family engagement needs to be assumed by all educators not just English learner teachers or newcomer coordinators (Berliner, 2019; Block et al., 2014; Borba, 2009; Dryden-Peterson, 2018). Thus, all school staff members need to understand the background of newcomer immigrant and refugee students and the potential impact of trauma (Chafouleas et al., 2016; Kugler & Price, 2009; National Child Traumatic Stress Network, 2017; National Center for English Language Acquisition, 2017b).

A lack of understanding of the background and needs of immigrant and refugee students by educators and school staff can contribute to misinterpretations, negative attitudes, persistence of stereotypes, and discrimination—which can in turn exacerbate these students' difficulties in school (Block et al., 2014). Raising educators' awareness of the specific needs of immigrant and refugee students has been shown to motivate and facilitate changes to school practices and culture (Block et al., 2014). Educators might want to consider taking the following steps:

1. Participate in professional learning to understand the needs, assets, and background of newcomer students.

2. Build a shared understanding of trauma and its impact.

3. Engage in ongoing efforts to align practices, policies, and procedures in a continuous improvement effort aligned with the principles of trauma-informed care

Participate in professional learning to understand the needs, assets, and background of newcomer students

Professional learning can build educators' knowledge of newcomer immigrant and refugee students' culture and home country, as well as their family circumstances and personal journey to the United States (Block et al., 2014; Dryden-Peterson, 2018; Kugler & Price, 2009). Educators can also learn about students' assets, including their academic and personal background knowledge, life experiences, and skills (González et al., 2006).

Resources for professional learning

The *Newcomer Toolkit* (National Center for English Language Acquisition, 2017b) provides four professional learning activities for school staff. These activities provide educators with the opportunity to discuss the experiences, challenges, and strengths of immigrant and refugee students; examine their own assumptions; and identify ways to better support immigrant and refugee students.

Resources **from the *Newcomer Toolkit* for professional learning**:

- "Teach Me" (chapter 3, p. 20) consists of discussion cards and an activity that K–12 school administrators and teachers can use to prompt discussion about instructional practices that support immigrant and refugee students' academic participation and success.
- "Parent and Family Engagement Practices to Support Students" (chapter 2, p. 20) is a jigsaw activity that examines family engagement practices for family–school partnerships that prepare students to graduate from high school ready for college or a career.
- "Support Me" (chapter 4, p. 20) consists of an activity, cards, and scenarios to help school administrators and teachers understand and create social and emotional supports for immigrant and refugee students.
- "The Three As: Academics, Advocacy, and Awareness" (chapter 5, p. 16) helps school administrators and teachers build a common understanding of the core components of strong family engagement programs for immigrant and refugee students.

Colorín Colorado's website and publications provide professional learning activities for teachers and suggest how and when to build these activities into already-busy school schedules.

Resources **from Colorín Colorado for professional learning**:

- *A Guide for Engaging ELL Families: Twenty Strategies for School Leaders* (Breiseth, 2011) has exercises to enable teachers to learn about their students, which can help teachers match students with appropriate services and programs.
- *How Staff Can Collaborate on Behalf of Immigrant Students and Families* (Colorín Colorado, 2018c) describes the roles educators can play in collaboration efforts and answers questions on outreach to immigrant families.

Resource for **professional learning for teachers of students with interrupted formal education**:

- Bridges to Academic Success provides curricula and teacher training to meet the language, literacy, academic, and social and emotional needs of newcomer students who have had limited or interrupted formal education.

Build a shared understanding of trauma and its impact

Young children who experience five or more serious adverse incidents in their first three years are 76 percent more likely to have at least one delay in their language, emotional, or brain development (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, 2011). Trauma can cause physiological changes to the developing brain, resulting in cognitive losses and delays in physical, emotional, and social development, which can provoke emotional and behavioral responses that interfere with learning, sensory processing, social relationships, and engagement in school (Burke et al., 2011; Center on the Developing Child, 2007; National Child Traumatic Stress Network, 2008; Streeck-Fischer & van der Kolk, 2000; van der Kolk, 2003).

These behaviors and mental health conditions can have long-lasting effects on students' success in school. Without addressing the impacts and building the capacity of educators to support these students, schools will continue to struggle to help students meet their academic and social goals (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, 2014).

For educators a first step in supporting students who have experienced trauma is to build a shared understanding of trauma and its impacts (Chafouleas et al., 2016; National Child Traumatic Stress Network, 2017). Specifically, educators can learn more about trauma's impacts on a young person's physiological, behavioral, social, and academic development and increase their capacity to recognize signs of trauma.

Resources for understanding the impact of trauma

School teams can leverage the following tools and resources to build a shared language for discussing trauma, understanding how trauma affects students, and recognizing the signs of trauma.

Resources on the **effects of trauma on students**:

- *Moving Beyond Trauma: Child Migrants and Refugees in the United States* (Murphey, 2016) provides information on immigrant and refugee children's experience of trauma and its long-term impact on their health and cognitive, social, and emotional skills.

- The *Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACES) Too High* website (ACES Too High, n.d.) provides news, research, and online learning modules on adverse childhood experiences and their connections to health risks later in life.

- The *Child Trauma Toolkit for Educators* (National Child Traumatic Stress Network, 2008) outlines the

What does it mean to be trauma-informed?

"A program, organization, or system that is trauma-informed realizes the widespread impact of trauma and understands potential paths for recovery; recognizes the signs and symptoms of trauma in students, families, staff, and others involved in the system; and responds by fully integrating knowledge about trauma into policies, procedures, and practices, and seeks to actively resist re-traumatization" (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, 2014, p. 9).

psychological and behavioral effects trauma can have on students and lists observable behaviors that can help educators recognize trauma.

Resource on **working with individuals exposed to violence**:

- *Trauma-Informed Care for Children Exposed to Violence: Tips for Agencies Working with Immigrant Families* (Safe Start, n.d.) provides guidance to community organizations and local government agencies on working with children, youth, and families who have been exposed to violence in their home country.

Engage in ongoing efforts to align practices, policies, and procedures in a continuous improvement effort aligned with the principles of trauma-informed care

Implementing a trauma-informed approach is an ongoing process that requires collective effort across a district or school (Davidson, 2017). Additionally, implementing trauma-informed approaches often requires schoolwide changes to reshape a school's culture, practices, and policies (Fallot & Harris, 2001). Trauma-informed approaches call for an entire school community to work together to help traumatized students improve their relationships, regulate their emotions and behavior, bolster their academic competence, and increase their physical and emotional well-being (Rodenbush, 2015).

Resources for engaging in ongoing efforts to align practices, policies, and procedures in a continuous improvement effort aligned with the principles of trauma-informed care

Resources for **creating an aligned trauma-informed practice**:

- *Creating, Supporting, and Sustaining Trauma-Informed Schools: A System Framework* (National Child Traumatic Stress Network, 2017) presents a tiered approach to creating a trauma-informed school environment that addresses the needs of all students, staff members, administrators, and families who might be at risk of traumatic stress.

- The *Trauma Responsive Schools Implementation Assessment* (Treatment and Services Adaptation Center for Resilience, Hope, and Wellness in Schools, 2018) helps identify and support trauma-responsive programming.

- The *Missouri Model for Trauma-Informed Schools* (Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 2019) provides guidance to help schools become more informed about trauma.

- *SAMHSA's Concept of Trauma and Guidance for a Trauma-Informed Approach* (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, 2014) outlines 10 implementation domains for schools to align their systems for developing a trauma-informed approach.

Resource for **creating a trauma-informed intervention for students**:

- Cognitive Behavioral Intervention for Trauma in Schools is a school-based intervention for trauma, depression, and behavioral problems among students. There is a free online training course and manual.

CONCLUSION

This toolkit is designed to help educators and other district and school employees develop and implement research-based, culturally responsive, and student-centered practices, policies, and procedures for welcoming, registering, and supporting newcomer immigrant and refugee students at secondary schools in the United States. The toolkit resources are meant to help districts and schools develop strong practices, policies, and procedures appropriate to their local context. With this goal in mind, the toolkit spans a wide research and literature base, and it draws on many real-world examples.

There are critical limitations in the available resources, however. Most of the research cited in this toolkit is descriptive rather than causal because there is a notable lack of rigorous research on practices, policies, and procedures for welcoming, registering, and supporting newcomer immigrant and refugee students. Therefore, conclusions cannot be drawn about the impact of newcomer practices, policies, and procedures on immigrant and refugee students' academic and social-emotional outcomes.

There is room for future research to explore the impact of newcomer practices, policies, and procedures on student outcomes that use rigorous research methods. Further, there is an opportunity and a need for districts to develop, experiment with, and share their own tools, especially in areas where resources are sparse. These include assessment of student content knowledge and home language, awarding of competency-based credits, strategic postsecondary planning templates for immigrant and refugee students, and newcomer program implementation guides.

This toolkit was developed in recognition that newcomer immigrant and refugee students come to U.S. schools with wide-ranging experiences, assets, and needs. Therefore, newcomer practices, policies, and procedures are likely to be more successful if they reflect this heterogeneity and are flexible and responsive to individual students, as well as the school context.

APPENDIX: DATA MANAGEMENT PRACTICES FOR NEWCOMER IMMIGRANT AND REFUGEE STUDENTS

Collecting and examining data on newcomer immigrant and refugee students who are entering U.S. secondary schools for the first time can help determine whether students are receiving the support they need and can also undergird the evaluation of these services. Analyzing the data can provide insights into ways to improve school processes for registering, placing, serving, and supporting these students, thereby promoting their success in secondary school, high school graduation, and postsecondary planning. Further, collecting and examining data on immigrant and refugee students can help districts and schools understand and plan for overall enrollment and graduation trends (New York State Education Department, 2019).

Supporting data management and security practices

Data entry and management staff can benefit from having a series of clear steps to follow to accurately and securely input, manage, share, and use student data to ensure alignment with district policies, as well as state and federal law (Colorado Department of Education, 2016; Idaho Department of Education, 2020; National Forum on Education Statistics, 2016). Staff might also benefit from training on how to input, manage, and share sensitive data on all students (American Federation of Teachers, 2016; Colorado Department of Education, 2016; Idaho Department of Education, 2020; National Forum on Education Statistics, 2016).

Resources for supporting data security practices

High levels of data security are required when collecting and storing most student data (U.S. Department of Education, 2020). Data on newcomer immigrant and refugee students are no different, although some states and districts have imposed additional security measures. These include limiting which staff members have access to data; adding network, hardware, and software security layers; requiring user authentication steps; encrypting data; and training staff on security measures to further protect student data, prevent data breaches,

Defining personally identifiable information

“[Personally Identifiable Information] includes, but is not limited to

(a) The student’s name;

(b) The name of the student’s parent or other family members;

(c) The address of the student or student’s family;

(d) A personal identifier, such as the student’s Social Security number, student number, or biometric record;

(e) Other indirect identifiers, such as the student’s date of birth, place of birth, and mother’s maiden name;

(f) Other information that, alone or in combination… would allow a reasonable person in the school community… to identify the student with reasonable certainty; or

(g) Information requested by a person who the educational agency or institution reasonably believes knows the identity of the student to whom the education record relates.“

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (34 CFR § 99.3) and mitigate the consequences when they occur (Colorado Department of Education, 2016; National Forum on Education Statistics, 2016).

Resources for **supporting data security practices**:

- *Protecting Student Privacy* (U.S. Department of Education, 2020) outlines data-sharing guidelines and explains the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).
- *Forum Guide to Education Data Privacy* (National Forum on Education Statistics, 2016) provides guidance for school staff on protecting the confidentiality of student data, developing privacy programs, and providing professional development.
- *Forum Guide to the Privacy of Student Information: A Resource for Schools* (National Forum on Education Statistics, 2006) helps educators better understand and apply FERPA.

Collecting data specific to newcomer students

For newcomer immigrant and refugee students, effective data collection can include data elements that might not commonly be collected for other students (table A1), including native-born English learner students (Colorado Department of Education, 2016). However, districts and schools should carefully consider which data to collect (National Forum on Education Statistics, 2016; New York State Education Department, 2019).

Table A1. Data elements to consider when gathering data for newcomer immigrant and refugee students

Data element	Detail
Refugee or asylee status	• Refugee status indicator • Asylee status indicator • Name of resettlement agency and contact person
Newcomer status	• New to the United States within the past year indicator • New to the United States within the past three years indicator
Newcomer program participant	• Newcomer program participant indicator • Program description (including length of participation), supports received, and courses taken
English learner status	• English learner status indicator • English language proficiency testing outcomes and dates • English language development supports received • Model of English language development • English language education outside the United States
Limited or interrupted formal education	• Limited or interrupted formal education indicator • Description of education gaps or interruptions • Received supports for students with limited or interrupted formal education indicator
Home language details	• Languages spoken in home • Other languages student might have been exposed to or learned • Assessment results from formal or informal language proficiency testing • Home language literacy supports received, including coursework and out-of-school supports
Content knowledge	• Courses taken outside the United States, with equivalent names and grades • Assessment results in specific content areas
Other supports and programs	• List of the academic supports and programs received • List of the social-emotional supports and programs received • List of family-level supports received

Note: List might not be exhaustive.

Source: Authors, based on a literature review.

Data on newcomer immigrant and refugee students could include specifics about a student's background, such as indicators of whether a student is a refugee or asylee, is classified as an English learner student, was new to the country within the past year or three years, and has a limited or interrupted formal education (Idaho Department of Education, 2020; Umansky et al., 2018). Data could also be included on a student's former education, such as information about home language literacy and content area knowledge (see the section "Assess home language literacy and content knowledge") and information from transcripts and on courses taken (see the section "Collect and analyze newcomer student records and transcripts" and see table A2 for a list of agencies that can evaluate and translate student transcripts).

The data can also include flags to indicate participation in specific language, social, and academic supports. In addition to data related to English learner student status, such as a student's initial English language proficiency screening results (see the section "Identify English learners and assess English language proficiency") and the model of English language development that English learner students receive, data can include information on students' participation in a newcomer program, on supports for students with limited or interrupted formal education, and on any home language support or coursework the student is receiving (New York State Education Department, 2019; Umansky et al., 2018). The data could also include information on duration of support (for example, how long a student has been participating in each program or receiving support) and dates of entry in and exit from relevant programs (National Forum on Education Statistics, 2016; Springdale Schools, 2018).

In addition, districts and schools might consider adding details about any family-level support that the district is providing, such as contacts with family or community liaisons or participation in adult English instruction or special events (New York State Education Department, 2019; Umansky et al., 2018).

Finally, districts and schools might consider creating or adopting a user-friendly database specifically for immigrant and refugee students or integrating these data points into an existing student database. Such data could allow educators to better understand their students' backgrounds and to use the data in planning instruction and support (see the section "Participate in professional learning to understand the needs, assets, and background of immigrant and refugee students"). Some states have created a statewide database from which educators can pull data (Colorado Department of Education, 2016; see box A1).

Table A2. Examples of agencies that evaluate and translate international high school transcripts for a fee

Organization	Website or contact	Notes
International Evaluation Services of the Center for Applied Research, Evaluation and Education	https://www.iescaree.com/	Online resources on transcript evaluation
Educational Credential Evaluators	https://www.ece.org/	Training on transcript evaluation
Educational Perspectives	https://www.edperspective.org/	
Educational Records Evaluation Service	https://www.eres.com/	
Foundation for International Services	https://www.fis-web.com/	
Global Credential Evaluators	https://gceus.com/	
International Academic Credential Evaluators	https://www.iacei.net/	
Josef Silny and Associates, International Education Consultants	https://www.jsilny.org/	
SpanTran: The Evaluation Company	https://www.spantran.com/	Training on transcript evaluation
Transcript Research	https://transcriptresearch.com/	
Academic Credentials Evaluation Institute Inc.	https://www.acei-global.org/	Training on transcript evaluation
Foreign Credential Evaluations Inc.	https://fceatlanta.net/	
Global Language Services Inc.	https://www.globelanguage.com/index.php	Training on transcript evaluation
InCred	https://www.incredevals.org/	Training on transcript evaluation
International Evaluation Services	http://www.iesedu.org/	
Scolaro	https://www.scholaro.com/	
Ucredo	https://ucredo.com/	

Note: This list was compiled by the Oregon Department of Education (2020) and might not be exhaustive.

Box A1. Database design for English learner students

Basic principles of database design for English learner students:

- “The development process for the data collection and management system should take into account a long range view of how the system needs to function in the future.”
- “Develop the system to accommodate changes, so that other personnel can both use and revise the system as staff and procedures change.”
- “Plan for capacity to both aggregate and disaggregate data, especially by EL status; include all students in district on database. In the Federal EL resource materials, a guiding question is, ‘Are data systems maintained that permit EL and former EL students to be compared to the population generally?’”

Source: Colorado Department of Education, 2016, pp. 138–139.

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