

Title: Information on supporting pre-emergent/emergent secondary EL students

Date: December 2016

Question: Could you provide information on supporting pre-emergent and emergent English learner (EL) students in secondary schools?

Response:

We have prepared the following memo with information on supporting pre-emergent and emergent secondary EL students (including newcomer students and students with interrupted formal education [SIFE]) in secondary schools. Citations include a link to a free online version, when available. All citations are accompanied by an abstract, excerpt, or summary written by the author or publisher of the document. We have not done an evaluation of the methodological rigor of these resources, but provide them for your information only.

References

DeCapua, A., Smathers, W., & Tang, L. F. (2007). Schooling, interrupted. *Educational Leadership*, 64(6), 40–46.

Abstract: As the ranks of English language learners swell in the United States, the number of students with interrupted formal education (SIFE) is on the rise. In 2004–05, New York City schools estimated that 10 percent of their English language learners were students with interrupted schooling. According to the New York State Department of Education, students with interrupted formal education come from homes in which a language other than English is spoken, have entered a U.S. school after 2nd grade, have had at least two fewer years of schooling than their peers, and function at least two years below grade level in reading and math. Pull-out programs, push-in programs, and after-school and Saturday programs can help this population of students improve their English language skills and fill in the gaps in their learning. Best practices for students with interrupted formal education include sheltered instruction, content ESL, bilingual instruction, and collaborative learning. Successful programs have committed teachers; are well planned; focus on meaningful, standards-based learning; educate the whole child; and have full administrative support.

Faltis, C., & Coulter, C. (2007). *Teaching English learners and immigrant students in secondary school*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Book description: *Teaching English Learners and Immigrant Students in Secondary Schools*, written for traditional, non-ESL classroom teachers, is the most up-to-date book on teaching secondary English learners and newcomer immigrant students in the content areas. Teachers will find it filled with practical, research-based approaches and strategies based in recent sociocultural theories on teaching and learning. It is organized around five principles to effective teaching and learning

known as Commitments in Practice and emphasizes engaging English learners in academic communities of practice. This practical classroom resource helps teachers address the needs of students with non-parallel schooling, and immigrant English learners who are two or more years below grade level when they enter secondary school. It addresses standards and high stakes testing, arguing that teachers need specialized knowledge to assess English learners in literacy and academic content. This book also features an introduction to the theoretical reasons for the commitments, which are contextualized within historical and political developments within education programs for English learners. It then goes on to show how teachers can use the commitments in practice within real classroom settings for teaching English language arts, science, social studies, and math to English learners.

Gunderson, L. (2007). *English-only instruction and immigrant students in secondary schools: A critical examination*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Book description: This book is for teachers, teacher educators, school and district administrators, policy makers, and researchers who want to know about literacy, cultural diversity, and students who speak little or no English. It offers a rich picture of the incredible diversity of students who enter secondary school as immigrants—their abilities, their needs, and their aspirations. The studies reported are part of a large longitudinal study of about 25,000 immigrant students in a district in which the policy is English-only instruction. These studies: (1) provide multiple views of the students' lives and their success in schools where the language of instruction differs from the languages they speak with their friends and families; (2) explore the students' views of teaching and learning; (3) describe the potential differences between the students' views and those of their teachers; (4) look at issues related to students' views of their identities as they work, study, and socialize in a new environment; and (5) examine different reading models designed to facilitate the learning of English as a second language (ESL). Educators and researchers will find the descriptions of students' simultaneous learning of English and of academic content relevant to their view of whether instruction should be English only or bilingual. For teachers who view multicultural education as an important endeavor, this book may on occasion surprise them and at other times confirm their views. The author does not attempt to develop a particular political viewpoint about which approach works best with immigrant students. Rather, the objective of the studies was to develop a full, rich description of the lives of immigrant high school students enrolled in classes where the medium of instruction is English. The reader is left to evaluate the results. Following a preface entitled, Hopes and Aspirations, this book is divided into three parts. Part I, Background and Design, presents the initial chapters of the book: (1) Increasing Diversity and English and Academic Achievement; (2) Reading, Language and Immigrant Achievement; and (3) The Setting, the Population, and the Measures. Part II, Findings of the Studies, continues with the next chapters: (4) Demographic and Descriptive Findings; (5) Reading Models and Traditional Analyses; (6) Multiple Case Studies, Students' Views, and Secondary Achievement; and (7) One Immigrant—One Story. Part III, Conclusions and Implications, closes the book with the final chapter: (8) Summary, Conclusions, Speculations, Observations, and Conundrums.

Hersi, A. A., & Watkinson, J. S. (2012). Supporting immigrant students in a newcomer high school: A case study. *Bilingual Research Journal*, 35(1), 98–111.

Abstract: Many school districts in the United States have developed special schools or programs designed to meet the specific language, academic, and social needs of recent immigrant students. In this article, we examine the experiences of six immigrant students who were enrolled in a U.S. high school designed specifically for adolescent immigrants. Using a qualitative case study research design, we explore the students' experiences in the school and their perceptions of the three teachers they identified as particularly supportive. We also draw on interviews and observations of

these three teachers to explore the specific practices that supported the students' academic and social success in the school. The findings suggest that both school context and positive teacher-student interactions facilitated by the teachers' use of culturally and linguistically responsive teaching practices were significant contributors to students' learning. We discuss the study implications for practice and offer recommendations for educators working with immigrant students.

McHugh, M., & Sugarman, J. (2015). *Transatlantic symposium report: Improving instruction for immigrant and refugee students in secondary schools*. Washington, DC: Migration Policy Institute. Retrieved on November 29, 2016, from <http://www.migrationpolicy.org/research/transatlantic-symposium-report-improving-instruction-immigrant-and-refugee-students>

Abstract: The growing enrollment of pupils with migrant backgrounds—including newcomers and the children of immigrants and refugees—has brought unique opportunities and challenges for school systems in Europe and the United States. These include how to create school environments that welcome and support the aspirations of students from diverse cultural backgrounds, fill gaps in students' formal education, and help those without strong host-country language and literacy skills to acquire them. Providing the instruction and support that language-minority (LM) students need in order to access grade-level academic content is particularly complex in the secondary grades. Too often, students with a migrant background fall behind their nonmigrant peers, contributing to comparatively high numbers of immigrant students who leave school early. To promote the sharing of best practices and analyses on how to address the varied needs of these youth, the Migration Policy Institute's National Center on Immigrant Integration Policy brought together approximately 30 leading policymakers, teacher educators, and researchers from the United States and Europe in June 2015 for a symposium in Brussels titled "Improving Instruction and Support for Students with a Migrant Background and Language-Minority Pupils in the Secondary Grades: A Transatlantic Symposium on Improving Teacher and Administrator Capacities." The symposium explored the imperative of improving educational outcomes for students from migrant and LM backgrounds, with a particular focus on the initial and ongoing training of teachers and school leaders as well as elements of school and policy design that promote effective instruction for migrant and LM students in the secondary grades. This paper synthesizes the themes and central questions raised during the presentations and discussions that took place over the course of the symposium. Relevant presentations and background information available to participants in the symposium are linked throughout.

Menken, K. (2013). Emergent bilingual students in secondary school: Along the academic language and literacy continuum. *Language Teaching*, 46(4), 438–476. Retrieved on November 28, 2016, from <https://katemenken.files.wordpress.com/2011/10/menken-2013-language-teaching.pdf>

Abstract: This article offers a critical review of research about emergent bilingual students in secondary school, where the academic demands placed upon them are great, and where instruction typically remains steadfast in its monolingualism. I focus on recent scholarship about the diversity within this student population, and center on "students with interrupted formal education" (SIFE, new arrivals who have no home language literacy skills or are at the beginning stages of literacy learning) and "long-term English language learners" (LTELLs, primarily educated in their receiving country yet still eligible for language support services). Little has been published about these students, making this a significant area of inquiry. Moreover, both groups are characterized by poor performance and together illustrate the characteristics of secondary students at various points along an academic language and literacy continuum. While existing research provides important

information to help us improve secondary schooling for emergent bilinguals, it has also perpetuated deficit views of these students by focusing solely on their perceived academic shortcomings. Grounded in a new body of research in applied linguistics that examines the students' complex, creative, and dynamic language and literacy practices, I apply a translanguaging lens to critique the positioning of such students as deficient, with implications for research and practice.

Ruiz-de-Velasco, J., & Fix, M. (2000). *Overlooked and underserved: Immigrant students in U.S. secondary schools*. Washington, DC: The Urban Institute. Retrieved on November 28, 2016, from <http://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/alfresco/publication-pdfs/310022-Overlooked-and-Underserved-Immigrant-Students-in-U-S-Secondary-Schools.PDF>

Abstract: The Program in Immigrant Education (PRIME) was created in 1993 by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation to focus on immigrant secondary education and the challenges faced by older limited English proficient students and the high-poverty schools they attend. This report documents the changes in immigrant student populations and notes the challenges faced by demonstration projects created by PRIME, responses of participating schools and their reform partners, and lessons learned. The report emphasizes immigrant teens who arrive in American schools with significant educational gaps and students from language minority homes who have been in American schools longer but have not mastered basic language and literacy skills. PRIME involved a series of studies of how the children of immigrants fare in American schools. Research for this report involved quantitative analyses of aggregate databases and qualitative analysis of policy and practice issues facing PRIME demonstration projects. Researchers visited project schools, interviewing and observing teachers, administrators, and project leaders. Eight chapters examine: (1) "Overlooked and Underserved: Immigrant Students in U.S. Secondary Schools: Core Findings and Conclusions"; (2) "A Profile of Immigrant Students in U.S. Schools" (Jennifer Van Hook and Michael Fix); (3) "The Program in Immigrant Education, Demonstration Sites and Communities"; (4) "New Faces, New Challenges"; (5) "Organizational Barriers in Secondary Schools"; (6) "LEP Immigrant Youth: Standards and School Accountability"; (7) "Responding to the Challenges: The Program in Immigrant Education"; and (8) "Policy Lessons."

Short, D. J., & ERIC Clearinghouse on Languages and Linguistics. (1998). *Secondary newcomer programs: Helping recent immigrants prepare for school success. ERIC Digest*. Washington, DC: ERIC. Retrieved on November 28, 2016, from <http://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED419385>

Abstract: School districts across the country are facing increasing numbers of secondary immigrant students who have low level English or native language skills, and in many cases, have had limited formal education in their native countries. These students must learn English, take the required content courses, and catch up to their native-English-speaking peers before high school graduation. How are schools meeting the needs of these students, many of whom are placed below the expected grade level for their age? This digest reports on data collected through a study of secondary newcomer programs, sponsored by the Office of Educational Research and Improvement as part of the Center for Education, Diversity, & Excellence. It answers the following questions: (1) "Who are the newcomer students?"; (2) "Where are the programs located?"; (3) "How are newcomer programs designed?"; (4) "How do newcomer programs address students' language learning and academic needs?"; (5) "How do newcomer programs address students' acculturation process?"; and (6) "How do newcomer students make the transition out of the program?"

Short, D. J. (2002). Newcomer programs: An educational alternative for secondary immigrant students. *Education & Urban Society*, 34(2), 173.

Abstract: This article examines the small but growing presence of newcomer programs being implemented in urban middle and high school settings across the United States. The article provides the rationale for the development of newcomer programs for recent immigrant English language learners and a detailed summary of the data collected and analyzed during the course of a national study. The article describes the program designs in urban schools, their educational goals, their instructional practices, their acculturation strategies, and other issues. Vignettes about selected programs will illustrate the data. Implications for current and future education policy and practice will be identified, such as the need for opportunities for fledgling programs to gather information to develop successful practices, the need for more rigorous evaluation of these programs within and across school districts, and the need for more research to help identify the optimal program design for a given group of newcomer students and educational goals.

Short, D. J., & Boyson, B. A. (2012). *Helping newcomer students succeed in secondary schools and beyond*. Washington, DC: Center for Applied Linguistics. Retrieved on November 28, 2016, from <http://www.cal.org/resource-center/publications/helping-newcomer-students>

Abstract: Adolescent newcomer students are at risk in our middle and high schools funded by the Carnegie Corporation of New York, and districts across the United States have been looking for effective program models to serve them. *Helping newcomer students succeed in secondary schools and beyond* has been written for educators and policymakers to focus attention on these newcomer adolescent English language learners at the middle and high school grades and to communicate promising practices for serving their educational and social needs. The report is based on a 3-year national research study, Exemplary Programs for Newcomer English Language Learners at the Secondary Level, conducted by the Center for Applied Linguistics on behalf of the Carnegie Corporation of New York. This research project consisted of a national survey of secondary school newcomer programs; compilation of program profiles into an online, searchable database; and case studies of 10 of these programs, selected for their exemplary practices. *Helping newcomer students succeed in secondary schools and beyond* addresses the successes, challenges, and day-to-day implementation of newcomer programs, drawing from information provided by the programs that participated in the national survey and those that served as case study sites. This report shows how successful newcomer programs develop students' academic English literacy skills, provide access to the content courses that lead to college and career readiness, and guide students' acculturation to U.S. schools and their eventual participation in civic life and the global economy. The findings in this report show that there is no one set model for a newcomer program. Diverse designs can be very effective providing that a program considers the varied characteristics of their middle and high school newcomer students and is carefully designed to meet the learners' academic and social needs. The differences in the newcomers' literacy skills and educational backgrounds prove to be the most important factors to consider when planning such a program. The report highlights design features and policies that are working well to promote academic rigor and put newly arrived adolescent learners on the path to high school graduation and postsecondary opportunities.

Spaulding, S., Carolino, B., & Amen, K.; Smith, K. B. (Ed.). (2004). *Immigrant students and secondary school reform: Compendium of best practices*. Washington, DC: Council of Chief State School Officers. Retrieved on November 28, 2016, from <http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED484705.pdf>

Abstract: The Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO), through the Immigrant Students and Secondary School Reform project, seeks to strengthen the capacity of state education agencies and districts to improve delivery of educational services to English language learners (ELLs) enrolled in high schools undergoing reform. This compendium was developed as one of the means to achieving this objective. This document highlights research and programs in the education of English

language learners (ELLs), based on the work of the Immigrant Students in Secondary School Reform project. Recommendations for best practices in six areas crucial to the successful inclusion of ELLs in secondary school reform are presented. These areas are discussed in six sections of the compendium: (1) Immigrant Students with Limited Formal Schooling; (2) Academic Literacy; (3) Parent Involvement; (4) Summer Programs; (5) Professional Development; and (6) Special Education. This compendium attempts to bring the good work of bilingual/ESL educators and researchers into mainstream discussions of high school reform.

Suárez-Orozco, C., Onaga, M., & Lardemelle, C. D. (2010). Promoting academic engagement among immigrant adolescents through school-family-community collaboration. *Professional School Counseling, 14*(1), 15–26.

Abstract: Schools are receiving students of immigrant origin in unprecedented numbers. Using an ecological framework, the authors reviewed the community, school, familial, and individual challenges that immigrant adolescent students encounter. They examined cognitive, relational, and behavioral dimensions of student engagement as well as culturally sensitive strategies for parental involvement. Varying academic trajectories were identified revealing that although some students performed at high or improving levels over time, others showed diminishing performance. The implications for school counselors' roles in school-family-community collaboration and intervention and practice are discussed.

Tuchman, O. (2010). *Effective programs for English language learners with interrupted formal education*. Indianapolis, IN: Indiana Department of Education, Office of English Language Learning & Migrant Education. Retrieved on November 29, 2016, from <http://www.brycs.org/documents/upload/ELLswithInterruptedFormalEducation.pdf>

Excerpt: Common features of an effective program for SIFE students:

- Literacy and content courses that are thematically coordinated and encourage transfer of learning across content areas;
- Follow-up on thematic content and skill development, provided by double-period ESL classes;
- Small classes that allow individualized attention from teachers;
- Common planning periods that give bilingual and ESL teachers an opportunity to coordinate their work;
- Modified course structure that allows students to learn at their own pace;
- Effective programs put together a team to work with students with interrupted formal education;
- In addition to that, many SIFE students may need extensive long-term remedial instruction and tutoring.

U. S. Department of Education, Office of English Language Acquisition. (2016). *Newcomer tool kit*. Washington, DC: Author. Retrieved on November 29, 2016, from <http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/oela/newcomers-toolkit/ncomertoolkit.pdf>

Excerpt: This tool kit can help U.S. educators and others who work directly with immigrant students—including asylees and refugees—and their families. It is designed to help elementary and secondary teachers, principals, and other school staff achieve the following:

- Expand and strengthen opportunities for cultural and linguistic integration and education.
- Understand some basics about their legal obligations to newcomers.
- Provide welcoming schools and classrooms for newcomers and their families.

- Provide newcomers with the academic support to attain English language proficiency (if needed) and to meet college- and career-readiness standards.
- Support and develop newcomers' social-emotional skills.

The Newcomer Tool Kit provides (1) discussion of topics relevant to understanding, supporting, and engaging newcomer students and their families; (2) tools, strategies, and examples of classroom and schoolwide practices in action, along with chapter-specific professional learning activities for use in staff meetings or professional learning communities; and (3) selected resources for further information and assistance, most of which are available online at no cost.

Walsh, C. E. (1999). *Enabling academic success for secondary students with limited formal schooling: A study of the Haitian Literacy Program at Hyde Park High School in Boston*. Providence, RI: Northeast and Islands Regional Educational Laboratory at Brown University. Retrieved on November 29, 2016, from <https://www.brown.edu/academics/education-alliance/publications/enabling-academic-success-secondary-students-limited-formal-schooling-study-haitian-lit>

Abstract: This publication documents a successful literacy program for a specific at-risk group, the Haitian Literacy Program at Hyde Park High School, Boston, Massachusetts. In operation since 1988, the Haitian Literacy Program is the longest running high school literacy program in the region for bilingual students with limited formal education. Through a case study approach, the educational success of these students and the program traits that staff and students believe have enabled academic achievement, high school graduation, and participation in higher education are examined. The program is designed for secondary school students with less than a fourth-grade level of formal education or no literacy skills in their native language or English. It is an intensive, self-contained program focused on developing the skills needed to participate in bilingual education classes. In its 9 years of operation, the program has averaged 20 students each year. Data were collected through case study and collaborative approaches from document reviews, ethnographic observations, interviews, and focus group discussions. Key elements of program success were identified as: (1) the commitment and dedication of the native language teacher; (2) the relationship between English as a second language and native language teachers and instruction; (3) the interdisciplinary, thematic, and self-contained instructional format; and (4) the self-determination of the students. Three appendixes contain discussions of data sources and initial literacy assessments and a literacy checklist.

Walqui, A. (2000). *Access and engagement: Program design and instructional approaches for immigrant students in secondary schools*. McHenry, IL, and Washington, DC: Delta Systems and Center for Applied Linguistics. Retrieved on November 29, 2016, from <http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED438727.pdf>

Book description: This book describes the characteristics of secondary schools in the United States that make it difficult for immigrant students to succeed. These include the following: fragmented school days and instructional programs in which English-as-a-Second-Language and content area teachers work in separate departments and rarely interact; the complex system of courses and of graduation and college entrance requirements; the practice of placing students in classes chiefly according to age, and tracking students learning English into courses that may not grant the credits they need; and inadequate methods to document student achievement. Six high school students (from El Salvador, Brazil, Haiti, Russia, Mexico, and Vietnam) are profiled. Common misconceptions about adolescents' second language acquisition and academic skills are addressed, and what current research reveals about these problems are discussed. Ten priorities for the design of programs that can foster effective teaching and learning for immigrant youth are put forth,

including creating a community of learners in the classroom and ensuring immigrant students are part of that community, contextualizing new ideas and tasks, and giving students multiple opportunities to extend their understandings and apply knowledge. Recommendations for program development and practice are made, as are suggestions for future research. Extensive references and an index are included.

Walqui, A. (2000). *Strategies for success: Engaging immigrant students in secondary schools*. San Francisco, CA: WestEd. Retrieved on November 29, 2016, from http://www.esc16.net/users/0020/Student%20Achievement/Strategies%20for%20Success_%20Engaging%20Immigrant%20Students%20in%20Secondary%20Schools.pdf

Excerpt: High dropout rates among language-minority secondary school students are one indication that many schools are failing to adequately support the needs of these students. The belief that student dropout is due to a lack of proficiency in English often leads educators to overlook the economic, cultural, academic, and personal issues that immigrant adolescents must confront on a daily basis. To be effective, programs must begin with a compassionate understanding of these students and recognize and build on the identity, language, and knowledge they already possess. Instruction developed for native-English-speaking students may not be appropriate for students who are still learning English. To engage immigrant adolescents in school, educators must provide them with avenues to explore and strengthen their ethnic identities and languages while developing their ability to study and work in this country. This digest discusses 10 principles for developing effective teaching and learning contexts for immigrant adolescents and profiles one program that has been successful in promoting the academic success of its students by implementing these principles.

Wisconsin Center for Education Research, University of Wisconsin–Madison. (2015). *WIDA focus on SLIFE: Students with limited or interrupted formal education*. Madison, WI: Author. Retrieved on November 29, 2016, from http://www.matsol.org/assets/reports/wida_focus_on_slife.pdf

Excerpt: This bulletin focuses on the needs of students who have limited or interrupted formal education. Because the vast majority of students in this group are enrolled in Grades 6 through 12, we will focus on those grade levels. However, many of the tips and suggestions can be applied in lower grade levels as well. Throughout the bulletin we will explore academic and social-emotional factors that may affect this group of students, examine the benefits of building community partnerships, address how to assess student readiness levels, and offer a checklist of considerations for instructional planning.

Zimmerman-Orozco, S. (2015). BORDER KIDS in the home of the brave. *Educational Leadership*, 72(6), 48–53. Retrieved on November 29, 2016, from <http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational-leadership/mar15/vol72/num06/Border-Kids-in-the-Home-of-the-Brave.aspx>

Abstract: The article discusses the experiences of unaccompanied refugee children from Central America in U.S. schools. Topics include the identity of such English language learners (ELLs) as Students with Interrupted Formal Education (SIFEs), challenges facing the Anne Arundel County, Maryland school district in educating such students, and student engagement for elementary, middle school, and high school students is addressed.

Methods

Keywords and Search Strings Used in the Search

- Newcomer students AND secondary school OR high school
- Immigrant students AND secondary school OR high school
- Students with interrupted formal education AND secondary school OR high school
- Pre-emergent OR emergent English learner students and secondary school OR high school

Search of Databases

EBSCO Host, ERIC, PsychInfo, PsychArticle, Google, and Google Scholar

Criteria for Inclusion

When REL West staff review resources, they consider—among other things—four factors:

- **Date of the Publication:** The most current information is included, except in the case of nationally known seminal resources.
- **Source and Funder of the Report/Study/Brief/Article:** Priority is given to IES, nationally funded, and certain other vetted sources known for strict attention to research protocols.
- **Methodology:** Sources include randomized controlled trial studies, surveys, self-assessments, literature reviews, and policy briefs. Priority for inclusion generally is given to randomized controlled trial study findings, but the reader should note at least the following factors when basing decisions on these resources: numbers of participants (Just a few? Thousands?); selection (Did the participants volunteer for the study or were they chosen?); representation (Were findings generalized from a homogeneous or a diverse pool of participants? Was the study sample representative of the population as a whole?).
- **Existing Knowledge Base:** Although we strive to include vetted resources, there are times when the research base is limited or nonexistent. In these cases, we have included the best resources we could find, which may include newspaper articles, interviews with content specialists, organization websites, and other sources.

This memorandum is one in a series of quick-turnaround responses to specific questions posed by educators and policymakers in the West Region (Arizona, California, Nevada, Utah), which is served by the Regional Educational Laboratory West (REL West) at WestEd. This memorandum was prepared by REL West under a contract with the U.S. Department of Education's Institute of Education Sciences (IES), Contract ED-IES-12-C-0002, administered by WestEd. Its content does not necessarily reflect the views or policies of IES or the U.S. Department of Education nor does mention of trade names, commercial products, or organizations imply endorsement by the U.S. Government.

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