



Getting Ready for Multilingual and Newcomer Students

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Community schools are reflective and responsive to the needs and assets of their students and their broader community. To understand the complex identities and impacts that students and families have, it is important to be clear about understanding what adults (teachers, staff, leadership) know about their students and community. For multilingual learners and newcomer students, the face value of these designations isn't enough. Part of unpacking the experiences of these students is recognizing the layered experiences of what they bring with them and what our schools need to be and do so as to build safe, welcoming, and inclusive learning environments that facilitate success for all our students.

These tools were adapted from pages 22-32, **Volume II EL Roadmap Implementation Guide and Toolkit for Administrators** in partnership with Californians Together and Community Schools Learning Exchange.

Knowing Our Students

The single category, “English Learner” includes students who differ markedly in their experiences, needs, and contributions to the school community. Teachers, counselors, and administrators need to be aware of common experiences and trends that may be factors for different types of multilingual learners. These experiences often impact students’ participation and achievement in school. Students may have experienced factors like culture shock, war trauma, immigration as an unaccompanied minor, undocumented legal status, arriving as an adolescent, family separation and/or reunification, different economic responsibilities and work dynamics in family structures, transnationalism, and migrant life. Students with these experiences may need specific supports and services in order to engage in and do well in school.

Schools that are needs-responsive have practices, habits and structures that support knowing who their students are and using that information to respond with the right supports, opportunities and practices. The following tool is designed to help you and your teams understand what you already have in place, and what may yet need to be addressed.

Action	Not present, not happening, not addressed	Aware of this, but it's not a focus	Working on this, but still a lot to do.	This a strength.	Not sure, needs inquiry, clarification.
Responsive to Various Typologies of MLs					
We understand that there are different types of multilingual learners (ML) , with a variety of types of needs requiring different responses.					
When we look at ML data or talk about ML needs, we routinely ask and push for more specificity : "Which groups of MLs?" rather than lump them all together.					
Our district Master Plan has clear definitions of typologies of multilingual learners—including newcomers, Long-Term English Learners, students at risk of becoming Long-Term English Learners.					
Our data teams collaborate with others to provide information for each ML, which typologies may apply, level of English proficiency, and history of progress towards English proficiency.					
We have clearly defined programs, systems, services and approaches for supporting newcomer students like cultural orientation, SEL support for culture shock, assessment, and placement (e.g. a Welcome Center).					
We assess newcomer students upon arrival to ascertain prior education, language and literacy skills in English and in home language.					
We have clearly defined services and supports for newcomer students with Interrupted Formal Schooling — such as extended time programs, foundational literacy, and math, etc.					
We have clearly defined programs, systems, services, and approaches for identifying and supporting Long-Term English Learners and students at risk of becoming Long-Term English Learners.					
We have clearly defined programs, systems, services, and approaches for assessing and supporting multilingual learners who may also have special education needs .					



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Our counselors understand the different typologies of MLs and their needs, and approach placement accordingly.					
Teachers receive information about the ML students like English proficiency levels and which of their students are in each typology.					
Teachers are provided professional learning and materials needed to adapt instruction and support to meet the needs of the multilingual learners in their classes.					
Additional Needs, Realities of Multilingual Learners in Immigrant Families					
Our staff is aware of the impact of immigration experiences on the lives, needs, and school engagement of students.					
Our staff is thoroughly versed in and knows about Plyler v. Doe and the rights of students to attend school, and that staff cannot ask about immigration status.					
We have resource and referral mechanisms to connect families to health, legal, housing, and other supports.					
Teachers receive professional development about the experiences of cultural, national, and language groups in our school.					
Multilingual Learners with Special Needs					
Assessment accommodations for multilingual learners are used when screening for learning disabilities.					
When administering the ELPAC, we have assessment accommodations for students with disabilities.					
We have clear guidance and appropriate special education referral processes for multilingual learners.					
We monitor for continuous inquiry regarding the proportion of MLs referred to special education, and for IEPs within our ML population.					
Teachers receive guidance and training related to appropriate pre-referral and referral criteria and processes for multilingual learners with special needs.					
We have multilingual special education assessors , knowledgeable about multilingual learner language development, the interplay of culture, language, and special needs.					

