

Considerations in Developing a Newcomer Program: A Checklist

Planning

- *How do you choose to define "newcomer"?*
- *Does the written rationale for the program include:*
 - *description of current unmet needs?*
 - *description of how the district (school) meets the needs of all LEP students?*
 - *description of the specific goals of the newcomer program?*
- *What will the structure of the program look like?*
 - *place--separate site or school-within-a-school?*
 - *time--part-day or all-day?*
- *What are the entrance and exit criteria? Prioritize by need.*
- *How long will students remain in the program?*
- *Will transportation need to be provided?*
- *How will the program be funded?*
 - *permanent versus temporary funding sources*
 - *funding for staff, staff development, space, equipment, materials, etc.*
- *How will the program be administered?*
- *What will the impact be on the school, district, and community?*
 - *increased awareness and understanding across languages and cultures*
 - *sensitivity to issues of racial/ethnic/cultural conflict*
 - *integration*
- *Is there a plan to visit a newcomer program to see an example in action?*

Legal requirements

- *Is there a need for the district (school) to provide an alternative program designed to meet the needs of newcomer/LEP students?*
 - *What are the entrance and exit criteria?*
 - *What are the priorities for selection of students?*
 - *What is the maximum length of time a student will be in the program?*
- *Is the alternative program likely to be effective?*
 - *Is it based on a sound design?*
 - *Do students have access to extracurricular activities?*
 - *Is there appropriate staff?*
 - *Are there adequate resources?*
 - *Is there an evaluation process to monitor student progress?*
 - *Is there a process for parental consent and continuous communication?*
 - *How will student needs be met after exit from the program?*

Intake

- *Has a standardized process been developed for assessment and placement of LEP students?*
- *Does student assessment include oral proficiency and literacy in the primary language(s) and English?*
- *How is a student's academic background assessed (e.g., informal assessment, formal tests, transcripts)?*
- *How do you identify special needs--academic, social, health, legal?*
- *Is there parental approval?*
- *How are students placed if they arrive in the middle of the year?*

Staff, Curriculum, and Instruction

- *How will staffing needs be met?*
 - *teachers, bilingual instructional assistants, family/community liaisons, support staff*
 - *qualifications such as credentials, training language, teaching experience, cultural experiences*
 - *process of staff selection*
 - *definition of staff roles*
 - *ongoing staff development*
- *How will the program meet student needs in these curriculum areas?*
 - *language and literacy development*
 - *core academic areas*
 - *orientation to U.S. schooling, culture, and society*
- *Will the content of the courses be based on program requirements or regular district requirements?*
- *What steps will be taken to ensure that the curriculum is student-centered, valuing all cultures, languages, and life experiences?*
- *What instructional approaches will be used (e.g., primary language, bilingual, sheltered)?*
- *How will students be grouped for instruction (e.g., grade level, date of entry, primary language, English proficiency, academic ability)?*
- *What curriculum materials will be available?*
- *How will curriculum be selected/developed?*
- *What physical resources will be available (i.e., space, equipment, supplies)?*
- *How will the needs of students with little or no prior schooling (preliterate) be met?*
- *What services will be available for students with other special needs (e.g., learning disabilities, family problems, health problems, legal problems, war trauma)?*
- *What support services will be available (e.g., counseling, tutoring, health/social services)?*
- *What interaction will students have with native English speakers as language models?*
- *Will students have access to nonacademic electives and extracurricular activities?*
- *How will students' affective needs be addressed?*
 - *attitudes, expectations, behavior regarding school*
 - *emotional, cultural, and social impact of life in a new country*

- *How will students receive credit for coursework?*
- *Mainstreaming:*
 - *How will LEP students be prepared for mainstreaming?*
 - *How does the district (school) prepare mainstream teachers and students for newcomer/LEP students?*
- *How does the program communicate with parents?*
- *How do parents communicate with the program?*
- *How can parents participate effectively in the program?*
- *How are newcomer family needs met by the program?*

Evaluation

- *How will student progress be measured?*
 - *language and literacy*
 - *academic subjects*
 - *orientation to U.S. culture and society*
 - *affective needs*
- *How will individual student progress be tracked after exit from the program?*
- *How will program effectiveness be measured?*
- *How will the impact of the program on the school and community be evaluated?*

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