Ten Successful Strategies for Newcomer Students

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Introductions ...

https://medium.com/@ramsey.belanoff_79778/who-are-these-people-c666773efd1d
Carla Llewelyn-Vasquez

- I am an immigrant from Panama
- Educator in SFUSD for 23 years
- Classroom teacher in both Spanish Bilingual and ELD setting, Coached and provided Professional Learning and curriculum development in English Language Development and Spanish-English Biliteracy Transference
- Lead designer and writer for district’s professional learning series focusing on Implicit Bias, Stereotype threat and Culturally Responsive Teaching Practices
- Principal of Mission Education Center Elementary School
Victor Tam

- I am an immigrant
- Educator in SFUSD for 28 years
- 14 years in the classroom.
- 1 year as a resource teacher
- 13 years as a principal – last 10 years at CEC/EALNS
OBJECTIVE for today’s presentation:

To share 10 “tried and true” strategies to work more effectively with newcomer students.

Newcomer Student: a student new to this country who has been residing here three years or less.
Keep in mind during our conversations today ...

- immigration issues may be divisive, but let’s keep our focus today on how to better serve the students who attend our schools.
Four corners
Stand by the picture that represents how you feel when...

- In 60 seconds (60 seconds per person), introduce yourself to a partner:
  - Your name
  - Your district
  - Your role
  - Length of time you have been in your present role
  - Length of time you have been associated with your present district
  - WHY you chose this picture

San Francisco Unified School District’s Elementary Newcomer Centers
MISSION EDUCATION CENTER
Elementary School
A Spanish Biliteracy Newcomer School in SFUSD
MEC  NEWCOMER Pathway Overview

■ MEC opened in 1972 due to a need for a specialized program for large numbers of Spanish speaking immigrant students arriving in San Francisco.

■ Transitional program for one to two years.

■ Focus: build foundation, accelerate SLA-reading comprehension, math skills, vocabulary, ELD, support transition to new culture and create conditions for seamless transition to students’ new school site
Our teachers are Spanish bilingual and credentialed to work with our newcomer population. Most are immigrants.

- Academic subjects are taught in **primary language** (Spanish) in grades Kindergarten – 5th grade
- One hour of daily structured **English Language Development** as per the Lau Plan.
MEC NEWCOMER Pathway Overview

- Welcoming environment; staff spends at least an hour with each family as they register at our school.

- We connect or provide a wrap around support system to benefit our students and their families.

- We encourage parents to become engaged in and supportive of their child’s education, through bi-weekly parent education workshops and support groups.

- Support students and their families to navigate and understand our education system.
MEC Community Demographics

- Students enroll *throughout* the year from Latin America at varying skill & grade levels, creating split grades
- 98% of students arrive far below grade level, under-schooled/interrupted schooling & many are pre-literate. Many have experienced trauma before and en-route to US
- 99% of students qualify for free and reduced lunch
- 100% of students are CELDT Level 1 2% of students have IEPS
- 95% Latino, 5% Other Non-White
- Out of 10 classroom teachers, 9 teachers are native Spanish speakers
Snapshot of MEC

Staffing:

- 10 classroom teachers (this year)
- Instructional Reform Facilitator – half time*
- Resource Teacher – half time
- Full time Social Worker (.5)*
- Full time Family Liaison (.5)*
- Librarian – 2 days per week*
- PE Teacher – 2 day per week*
- Music, Dance, and Art Teachers*
- Half time RSP
- Nurse- .5 FTE*
- Therapist- on site
- 5 Paraprofessionals
- Outside Education Instructor – Science/Garden
- Afterschool Program and Before School Program

Budget for 2017-18
- $1,597,823.34
Parent involvement

• Bi-monthly workshops, principal chats, and support groups led by Family Liaison, Social Worker, Staff, and Outside Organizations.

• Active Parent Group, SSC (School Site Council) and ELAC (English Language Acquisition Committee)

• Parent Education Events: Literacy Night, Math Night, Nutrition Night, ELD Night

• Volunteer Activities: field trips, garden work days, cafeteria, art class, weekly bulletin/folder, etc…
Community, friendship, and belonging
EDWIN AND ANITA LEE NEWCOMER SCHOOL
An Elementary Newcomer School for Chinese Speaking Students in SFUSD
LNS Demographics

- All students generally come from China.
- Families are all in transition.
- 100% of students arrive far below grade level in English. 100% of students are ELPAC Level 1 Emerging. Students come at varying skill & grade levels.
- Many are under-schooled or have interrupted schooling.
- 99.9% of students qualify for free and reduced lunch.
- Students enroll throughout the school year.
- None of our students arrive with IEPs.
- Students typically transition to Biliteracy / General Pathway after 1 year.
- Of our 5 classroom teachers, four teachers are native Chinese speakers.
Snapshot of LNS

Our staff:

• 5 classroom teachers
• Resource Teacher
• Half-time School Social Worker *
• Full-time Family Liaison (0.5)*
• Librarian – 2 days per week*
• PE Teacher – 1 day per week*
• Music, Dance, & Art Teachers*
• 1 Paraprofessional
• After-school Program*

Budget: $942,795.00
LNS

- LNS opened in 1969 in San Francisco's Chinatown to address the needs of the large influx of Chinese speaking immigrant students arriving in San Francisco.
- Transitional one-year program
- Focus:
  - build solid foundation in English skills
  - focus on all academic areas
  - support students through their transitions.
Focus on **Foundational English Language Development** with an emphasis on phonics and vocabulary building.

FOUNDATIONAL, FOUNDATIONAL, FOUNDATIONAL.

(Systematic ELD and SIPPS (Systematic Instruction in Phonological Awareness, Phonics, and Sight Words))

Focus on **Social Emotional Learning**, to maintain and build the student’s self-confidence based largely on Coach John Wooden’s *Pyramid of Success* and Harper for Kids.

[Image of Coach Wooden’s Pyramid of Success](http://www.brainfrost.com/pyramid-of-success.html)
• “Relationships matter”
• Welcome and inclusive community of learners, supporting the students’ and families’ culture and language.
• Support and navigate families through the complex system of SFUSD.
• Essentially, we individualize support for our students and families.
Family Involvement

- Monthly workshops and family support groups led by Family Liaison, Social Worker, and staff.

- Active Parent Group, SSC (School Site Council), and ELAC (English Language Acquisition Committee)

- Ongoing Family Information Workshops covering homework, positive parenting, health and nutrition, Common Core Math, etc.

- Multiple ways to maintain open communication
Reminders of some “basics”
When the head and the heart are simultaneously engaged, optimal learning takes place.
Some things possibly clouding a Newcomer’s:

- Home sick
- Missing loved ones
- Missing friends

- Teacher
- Classmates
- Self-confidence
- Self-esteem
- Self-concept
Some things possibly clouding a Newcomer's 

- home sick
- missing loved ones
- missing friends

- Teacher
- Language
- Classmates
Ten+ Successful Strategies for Newcomers in a mainstream classroom

https://blog.mass.gov/osd/commbuys-market-center/buyers-support-commbuys-adoption/
Intention + Planning
+ Practice + Reinforce
+ Constant check-in
= Desired State

NORMS and EXPECTATIONS
SYSTEMS to bridge and connect students
Ways to maintain and sustain these inside AND outside the classroom
Build a Safe and Caring School Community

Where all students, especially a newcomer student, can:

- Feel Valued (as a student, language, culture)
- Connect (self + others + teacher + content/lesson)
- Engage (self + others + teacher + content/lesson)
- Share (others + teacher + content/lesson)
Make learning visual

https://www.teachingchannel.org/tch/blog/visual-scaffolding-tips-ells
Group work

https://www.youcubed.org/resource/group-work/
Tap into experience of colleagues

https://www.productboard.com/blog/how-to-build-trust-with-your-colleagues-by-focusing-on-the-customer-experience/
The Silent/Receptive or Pre-production Stage

Handout #2-1

- This stage can last up to six months.
- Characterized by a silent period during which the learner is unable to produce language but may respond with non-verbal gestures, (such as nodding, pointing, or responding with yes/no).
- The learner is very receptive to language input as the learner may understand up to 500 words at this level.

Honor the “silent period”
Allow some scaffolding through L1

https://study.com/academy/lesson/l1-l2-literacy-development.html
Direct Vocabulary Instruction

Selecting words to teach

Select 3-5 vocabulary words to teach from books you are reading aloud, from text that students are reading independently, or that are related to the content of instruction (e.g., science, social studies).

Target vocabulary should include:

- Words that are important for understanding the text or content (and that are not explained within the text).
- Words that students will encounter often, functionally important words.

(Stahl, 1986)
Sentence Frames

I like ______.

likes are going to ______.

I like ______ with ______.

My favorite ______ is ______.

have ______.

don't have ______.

https://sites.google.com/a/appletreeinstitute.org/afl/home/language-acquisition/ell-support/sentence-frames
When possible, pre-teach

https://www.youtube.com/watch?reload=9&v=ZqK2CA-iclc
Use a sense of humor

http://www.rummuser.com/sense-of-humour-2/
Practice, practice, practice

https://my2tor.com/practice-makes-perfect/
Don’t dismiss suspicions of learning challenges, but be extremely careful in approaching them!!!
Our ultimate goal . . .

https://elementaryenglishlanguagelearners.weebly.com/blog/dont-underestimate-an-emergent-bilingual
Academic

• Primary language
• Comprehensible Input
• English Language Development
• Opportunities to practice language
• Learn “how to do school”
• Positive school adjustment
• On-going monitoring of academic growth and progress
Socio-Emotional Learning and Support

• Connect families with mental health services
• Intentional community building and inclusion
• Stay “in-tune” with the students and families
Family Support and Engagement

• Greet and welcome each family
• Personal outreach and invitations
• Community building
• Value bilingualism/biculturalism
• Recognize individual challenges for families
District Level Advocacy

• District level policy supporting immigrant and newcomer students

• Differentiated approach toward newcomer programs

• Measures for success must be differentiated—there are some benchmarks for success that cannot be measured

• Understanding of hierarchy of basic needs
Please be cautious of the “one size fits all” and “silver bullet” solutions.

https://partnersinexcellenceblog.com/there-are-no-silver-bullets/
Questions