



**STRENGTH**  
through Diversity

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## Children of Immigration

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BETTER POLICIES FOR BETTER LIVES

## CHILDREN OF IMMIGRATION

1. In the twenty-first century, immigration is the human face of globalisation: the sounds, colours, and aromas of a miniaturised, interconnected, and fragile world. According to the United Nations there are approximately 244 million international migrants (UNICEF 2016, 92), upward of 760 million internal migrants and millions more kith and kin left behind. The largest international corridors of human migration today are in Asia, Europe, and the Americas. The largest chains of internal migration occur in Asia: by 2015, China had an estimated 280 million internal migrant workers, and in India well over 320 million people – over a quarter of the country’s population – were internal migrants between 2007 and 2008 (UNICEF 2016).
2. The global cities of the 21st century encompass growing numbers of diverse immigrants. There are now well over a dozen global cities with more than a million immigrants. From Hong Kong to Melbourne, from Toronto to Los Angeles, from Moscow to Singapore, and in more than two dozen global cities, immigrants now account for more than one-quarter of the population, inter alia, Amsterdam, Auckland, Muscat, and Perth (see Migration Policy Institute, 2016).
3. Immigrants today are more diverse than ever before. They arrive from every continent on earth and with a range in levels of education and skill. In the U.S. and Canada, for example, immigrants are among the most educated people. In the U.S., they comprise a quarter of all physicians, 47 percent of scientists with doctorates, and 24 percent of science and engineering workers with bachelor’s degrees. Other immigrants have low levels of education and gravitate to sectors of the labour market relying on “low-skilled” workers, such as agriculture, service industries, and construction.
4. Mass migration is generating a deep demographic transformation—giving rise to the children of immigrants as the fastest growing sector of the child and youth population in a number of high and middle-income countries across the world. The U.S. and Canada—countries where immigration is at once history and destiny are a case in point. In the U.S. over 25 percent of children under the age of 18, a total of 18.7 million children, have an immigrant parent. In Canada by 2016, “close to 2.2 million children under the age of 15, or 37.5% of the total population of children, had at least one foreign-born parent.”<sup>1</sup>
5. Countries without long histories of immigration are also witnessing the growth of their immigrant-origin child populations: in Amsterdam, Rotterdam and The Hague 2/3 of the children in schools come from immigrant & refugee origin homes. In Berlin, the number is close to 40 percent. Over a third of the children in the Reggio Emilia Schools come from immigrant and refugee headed households.
6. How the children navigate the migratory transition will in a large part determined by a constellation of factors associated with *pre-migration* circumstances, the nature of

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<sup>1</sup> See <http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/as-sa/98-200-x/2016015/98-200-x2016015-eng.cfm>

the *journey* itself and the *post-migration* experiences (Suárez-Orozco & Suárez-Orozco, 2013). A family's particular pre-migration resources—financial, educational, social, and psychological—will provide very different starting points for children as they settle in a new country. The journey itself—legal or unauthorised, family migrating together or via multiple separations and re-unifications, will shape the child's experience. Further, the contexts into which children and youth arrive—the economic, legal, neighbourhood, and school settings—will be in varying degrees welcoming and conducive to success. In some cases the reception is arid and daunting while in others it is verdant and welcoming.

## SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING

7. Immigrant students are not from the other side of the moon—in fundamental ways they are like all students. As a rule, what works for all students, works for immigrant students? A growing body of research has come to show that student success is associated with learning environments that nurture socio-emotional development (SEL). Social, emotional, cognitive, linguistic, and academic domains of child development are all intertwined, both in the brain and in behaviour, and are essential to the learning process. Socio-emotional development includes several sets of skills that serve to facilitate learning (or conversely impede learning if ignored);

- Social and interpersonal skills enable students to navigate social situations, read social cues, demonstrate compassion and empathy for others, work collaboratively with others, and resolve interpersonal conflicts;
- Emotional competencies enable students to recognise and manage emotions, understand others' emotions and perspectives, and cope with frustration;
- Cognitive skills include attitudes and beliefs that guide students' sense of self and approaches to learning as well as executive functioning (working memory, attention control, and flexibility), and inhibition and planning.

8. After reviewing the state of the field on SEL, a Consensus Statement was released by the National Commission on Social, Emotional, & Academic Development, noting the following important points:

- Learning cannot happen effectively if SEL issues are not attended to.
- SEL develops throughout the lifetime and is essential to success not only in school but also in the workplace, home, and community.
- SEL can be taught and nurtured throughout childhood, adolescence, and beyond.
- Schools can have a significant influence on SEL.
- Engaging in informed SEL practices can improve teacher effectiveness as well as their well-being).
- SEL development is “an essential part of pre-K-12 education that can transform schools into places that foster academic excellence, collaboration, and communication, creativity, and innovation, empathy and respect, civic engagement, and other skills and dispositions needed for success in the 21st Century.”
- Students are most likely to benefit from SEL when training and support is provided to schools, administrators, and teachers and when social emotional

learning are embedded in everyday interactions and school culture beyond the classroom.<sup>2</sup>

## FAMILIES ON THE MOVE

9. The family is the unit of migration. Indeed migration can be defined as an ethical act of and for the family. Migration is a transformative process with profound implications for the family as well as the potential for lasting impact on socio-emotional development. By any measure, immigration is one of the most stressful events a family can undergo, removing family members from predictable contexts—community supports and ties, jobs, and customs—and stripping them of significant social ties—extended family members, best friends, and neighbours. New arrivals that experienced trauma (either prior to migrating or as events secondary to the journey – such as undocumented border crossings) may remain preoccupied with the violence and may also feel guilty about having escaped while loved ones remained behind. Those who are undocumented face the growing realities of workplace raids, and traumatic and sudden family separations. The risk of deportation is ever present for some families.

10. The dissonance in cultural expectations and the cumulative stressors, together with the loss of social supports, lead to elevated affective and somatic symptoms. Due to their own struggles in adapting to a new country, many immigrant parents may be relatively unavailable psychologically, posing a developmental challenge to their children. Immigrant parents often may turn to their children when navigating the new society; they are frequently asked to take on responsibilities beyond their years, including sibling care, translation, and advocacy, sometimes undermining parental authority but also often stimulating precocious development. Additionally, immigrant children and youth face the challenges of forging an identity and sense of belonging to a country that may reflect an unfamiliar culture while also honouring the values and traditions of their parents. Nonetheless, many immigrant-origin children demonstrate extraordinary resilience and resourcefulness as they navigate their developmental journey.

## UNDERTOW: POVERTY, SEGREGATION AND UNAUTHORISED STATUS

11. The children of immigrants have “greater market-income poverty rates than children in native-born families” (Hernandez, Macartney, & Blanchard, 2010, p. 425). In affluent countries worldwide, poverty among children of immigrants has increased steadily in recent years with gaps between native-born and immigrants ranging from 7% in Australia and Germany, to 12% in the United States and to 26-28% in England and France (Hernandez et al., 2010). Differences among ethnic groups are also prevalent. In the United States, by 2006, the poverty rate for Latino immigrant children was nearly double that of White native-born children (28% and 16%, respectively) (Fry & Gonzales, 2008). U.S. data reveal that the children of immigrants are more likely than native-born children to live in crowded housing conditions (7% vs. 2%, respectively), and experience inadequate nutrition (25% vs. 21%, respectively - Chaudry & Fortuny, 2010). Children

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<sup>2</sup> See Jones, S.M. & Kahn, J. (2017). The Evidence Base of How We Learn: Supporting Students' Social, Emotional, and Academic Development. (Consensus Statement). Aspen Institute: National Commission on Social, Emotional, and Academic Development. <https://casel.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/SEAD-Research-Brief-9-12-web.pdf>

raised in poverty are also vulnerable to instability of residence as well as to an array of distresses including difficulties concentrating and sleeping, anxiety and depression, as well as a heightened exposure to delinquency and violence. Poverty has long been recognised as a significant risk factor for poor educational outcomes (Luthar, 1999; Weissbourd, 1996).

12. Poverty coexists with a variety of other factors that augment risks, such as single parenthood, residence in sub-par neighbourhoods, gang activity, and drug trade as well as school environments that are segregated, overcrowded, understaffed, and poorly funded (Suárez-Orozco, Yoshikawa, & Tseng, 2015). Poverty and segregation are often compounded by unauthorised status. The United Nations estimates that there are between 30 and 40 million unauthorised migrants worldwide (Papademetriou, 2005). The United States has a very large concentration of undocumented immigrants—as of 2017, approximately 11.3 million people (or 3.5% of the nation’s population) were unauthorised (Krogstad & Passel, 2015), and about 775,000 were children, according to 2012 data (Passel, Cohn, Krogstad, & Gonzalez-Barrera, 2014).

13. Research suggests that undocumented youth often arrive after multiple family separations and traumatic border crossings (Suárez-Orozco, 2015). They may continue to experience fear and anxiety about being apprehended, separated again from their parents, and deported (Suárez-Orozco & Marks, this volume; see also Chaudry et al., 2010; Suárez-Orozco et al., 2008).

14. Unauthorised migrants do not access social services that could serve to mitigate the harshest conditions of their poverty (Yoshikawa, 2011). Psychological and emotional duress takes a toll on the experiences of youth raised in the shadow of the law (Cervantes, Mejía, & Mena, 2010), which has also been documented through narrative and qualitative research (Bagley & Castro-Salazar, 2010; Gonzales 2009; Suárez-Orozco, 1989).

15. Protracted poverty, segregation, and unauthorised status are the ingredients for immigration dystopia and alienated belonging of the second-generation in many immigrant-impacted societies. At the very least, structural factors accelerate the processes of racialisation via cultural disparagement (De Vos & Suárez-Orozco, 1990) and negative “social mirroring” (Suárez-Orozco, 2004) of new immigrants of colour. C. Suárez-Orozco has examined how the barrage of derogatory portraits of immigrants (such as undocumented immigrants in the U.S. and the children of Muslim immigrants in Europe) in the media, in schools, and community settings, will shape at the individual level a number of critical developmental outcomes for these children and youth.

16. As they enter new schools immigrant-origin children and adolescents, especially newcomers, face an array of socio-emotional challenges, including acculturative stress and rebuilding family relationships following long separations (Suárez-Orozco, Suárez-Orozco, Todorova, 2008), and, often, unauthorised status. Some of the challenge of adjustment is related to language acquisition (Olsen, 2010). Before the child acquires the ability to competently express herself she often goes through a silent phase where she becomes invisible in the classroom (Merchant, 1999; Suárez-Orozco, Suárez-Orozco, Todorova, 2008). This is a period of time when students can also become vulnerable to peer bullying (Scherr & Larson, 2010; Suárez-Orozco, Suárez-Orozco, Todorova, 2008; Qin, Way, & Mukherjee, 2008) as well as low teacher expectancies (Weinstein, 2002).

17. Understanding and then addressing student needs during the critical transition phase for newcomer students is an important area for intervention. Emerging research shows that schools that are strategic in their approaches to helping newcomer

youth adjust to their new environs may be poised to help them be more successful in their psycho-social adaptation and educational performance (Sadowski, 2013; Suárez-Orozco, Martin, Alexandersson, Dance, & Lunneblad, 2013). It is well established that a safe environment is vital for learning for all students, but findings from our case studies pointed to ways to address safety and belonging that specifically support immigrant students and their families. One of the impediments to learning a new country is entering a context where students feel unsafe or that they don't belong. These feelings can lead to low motivation, low self-esteem, and debilitating anxiety that can combine to create an "affective filter" that can shut down the language learning process. While not sufficient by itself, a positive affect facilitates language acquisition to take place.

## LANGUAGE

18. Mass migration is adding linguistic diversity to nations the world over. More broadly, in countries like Canada, the United States, Belgium, the Netherlands, Germany and Israel, the new super-diversity in language and identity challenges modernist ideologies linking self-hood and belonging to a single national language, cultural tradition, or religious affiliation. In the United States where Bureau of the Census data suggest there are over 350 languages spoken, over half of them are spoken by immigrants (U.S. Census Bureau, 2015).<sup>3</sup>

19. How to best develop the means to communicate in the dominant language, thereby developing advanced academic language skills required for higher-order cognitive work, and the matter of maintaining immigrant languages are fiercely debated the world over – Canada included (McAndrew, 2007). Language acquisition and academic trajectories are bound together with processes of identity formation, family systems, acculturation, assimilation, and economic integration (Portes & Fernández-Kelly 2008; Portes & Hao 1998, 2002; Portes & Zhou 1993; Suárez-Orozco, 1989, 1991; Suárez-Orozco et al., 2008).

20. Suárez-Orozco and Marks (2017) argue that academic language proficiency is central to any understanding of educational trajectories of immigrant youth in high-income countries with strict accountability regimes of the high-stakes-testing variety. Scholarly research has shown a high correlation between proficiency in academic language skills and academic achievement as measured by standardised tests (Suárez-Orozco et al., 2008). First- and second-generation immigrant youth are often found to score lower than their native-born peers on standardised tests in the United States as well as in European contexts (Barth, Heimer, & Pfeiffer, 2008). A recent report on the "Resilience of students with an immigrant background" by the Organisation for Economic Development and Co-operation (OECD), has shown that in 36 out of 54

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<sup>3</sup> Languages with more than a million speakers in the U.S. were Spanish (38.4 million), Chinese (three million), Tagalog (1.6 million), Vietnamese (1.4 million), French (1.3 million), and Korean and Arabic (1.1 million each). In the New York metropolitan area, approximately half of all children and youth from immigrant-headed households spoke an estimated combined 192 different languages (see U.S. Census Bureau, 2015). In Los Angeles —where 185 different languages are spoken at home, 54% of the population age five and over speak a language other than English. In the Los Angeles Unified School District, the nation's second largest, over 62% of the children and youth are English Language Learners (see California Department of Education, 2016).

countries and economies with reliable data, immigrant students (first- and second-generation) were less likely than native students to attain baseline levels of academic proficiency (at proficiency level 2 in the PISA core domains of mathematics, reading and science). On average across OECD countries, first-generation immigrant students were 24 percentage points less likely and second-generation students 12 percentage points less likely than native students to attain such levels of academic proficiency (OECD, 2018).<sup>4</sup> Although there are cross-country differences in the academic trajectories of immigrant-origin youth (Borroni et al., forthcoming) and although, over time, some immigrant-origin youth do remarkably well (Kasinitz, Mollenkopf, Waters, & Holdaway, 2008), the general trend is worrisome, especially as the share of immigrant-origin students continues to grow in a number of countries.

21. Research on second-language acquisition and bilingualism informs debates on educational models that promote success for immigrant youth, especially which language should be used for instruction, under what circumstances, and for how long. One recurring finding (see Collier 1995; Cummins, 2000; Hakuta, Butler, & Witt, 2000; National Research Council and Institute of Medicine, 1997) is that it takes approximately five to seven years for immigrant language learners to develop the academic language proficiency required to compete fairly with native speakers in standardised-assessment regimes at the centre of education reforms the world over. Another consistent finding suggests that “balanced bilinguals” that is, youth who continuously develop their home language as they acquire a second academic language, tend to have better educational trajectories over time (Callahan & Gándara, 2014; Portes & Rumbaut, 2001).

22. Research suggests that immigrant-origin youth often serve as “language brokers” (translators, interpreters, advocates, etc.) for family members and others, while at the same time navigating new schools and acquiring academic language and cultural skills (see Orellana, 2009; Suárez-Orozco & Marks, 2017). Language brokering not only shapes the routine lives of immigrant youth and adults alike, but also is linked to academic outcomes (Dorner, Orellana, & Li-Grining, 2007). Language brokering has been found to be positively linked to standardised test scores (Dorner et al., 2007). Consequently, researchers suggest that cultivating similar experiences at school might improve bilingual students’ achievement (Dorner et al., 2007); as well as mitigate some of the psychological and developmental pressures these youth face as language brokers (e.g., isolation, marginalisation; Suárez-Orozco & Marks, 2016).

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<sup>4</sup> Suárez-Orozco and Marks (2017) note that underestimates of immigrant students’ abilities and competencies are often a result of timed, biased language and educational assessments that fail to consider cultural knowledge or culture-of-origin content knowledge and penalize second language learners who process two or more languages before settling on an answer.

### Second-language acquisition

Research in second-language acquisition suggests that when students are well grounded in their native language and have developed reading and writing skills in that language, they are able to efficiently apply that knowledge to the new language when provided with appropriate instructional supports. Many immigrant students do not enter schools with this advantage, however. Further, English learner (EL) students often cannot receive support for learning English from their parents. These students may also have limited opportunities for sustained interactions with highly proficient native English-speaking peers in informal situations – contact that is strongly predictive of academic second-language proficiency outcomes.

Less developed academic English or French proficiency, however, can mask the actual knowledge and skills of immigrant second-language learners (SLLs), which they are unable to express and demonstrate. Even when second-language learners are able to participate and compete in mainstream classrooms, they often read more slowly than do native speakers, may not understand double-entendres, and simply have not been exposed to the same words and cultural information as native-born middle-class peers. Their academic language skills may also not allow them to be easily engaged with academic content and to perform well on “objective” assessments designed for native French or English speakers. Thus, it is not surprising that limited English or French proficiency is often associated with poor performance on standardized tests, lower GPAs, repeating grades, and low graduation rates.

Further, the strong emphasis on high-stakes assessments in the U.S.—first with No Child Left Behind and the Common Core—presents a particular challenge for SLLs. There is considerable debate about whether and how educational assessments, and high-stakes assessments in particular, may lead to unequal outcomes for English and French learners. Standardized tests used to screen for learning differences or for making policy decisions were largely designed for and normed with middle-class populations or were adapted from work with those populations. Such tests assume exposure to mainstream cultural knowledge and may fail to recognize culture-of-origin content knowledge. This perspective can lead to underestimation of students’ abilities and competencies.

In a climate of high-stakes educational assessment, such as is now the case in U.S. schools, districts are sometimes pressured to prematurely reclassify students from ELs to fluent English proficient. In other cases, immigrant students suffer as “long-term ELLs.” With poorly implemented school assessments and an assortment of language-learning policies, there is wide variability among districts and states in this classification. Seldom is reclassification tied to the research evidence on what it takes for a student to attain a level of academic-language proficiency required to be competitive on standardized assessments. As higher stakes have become attached to standardized tests, this issue has heightened consequences for ELs and the schools that serve them.

Research on second-language acquisition indicates that emerging bilingual students are most successful when placed in progressive and systematic programs of instruction that first identify their incoming literacy and academic skills, and provide continued transitional academic supports—like tutoring, homework help, and writing assistance—as they integrate into the learning environment. Furthermore, consistency of language instruction is essential for students as frequent transitions between classes and schools can place them at a considerable disadvantage. In addition to developing communicative proficiency in the new language, emerging bilingual students need to simultaneously build content literacies across the academic disciplines, which can be a challenge for students to learn and an instructional challenge for teachers as well.



## MAKING MIGRATION WORK FOR ALL CHILDREN

23. Successful school programs tailor their second language-learning programs to the language backgrounds of their student populations. Depending upon the concentration of language learners served, English or French as a second language may be appropriate. When large concentrations of students share the same first language, well-implemented bilingual approaches have been shown to be highly effective. These can range from transitional bilingual methods, where the focus was primarily on building literacy skills first in for example Spanish or Chinese and then incrementally in English or French, to offering bilingual literacy courses and bilingual coursework in the content areas, to dual-language programs that matched native English with native Spanish (or Mandarin, for example) teachers to team teach students content and literacy in both languages. When many different languages are represented, an ESL approach may be the most feasible approach. Optimally, ESL should be integrated throughout the curriculum with first language literacy supported by having ample reading materials available in a students' first language; curriculum should encourage the use of students' first language to foster literacy in both languages while supporting content instruction.

### *Language-Learning Accommodations*

24. Research has shown that immigrant students are highly motivated to learn the language of their new land though they find the process daunting. They will often pass through a silent phase and will learn more quickly if they can draw on their skills from their native language. Native speaking peers who are a little further along in their English or French language development can often serve as effective language brokers for learning. This is helpful for both the students who act as language brokers (as it builds their confidence and skills) and the newcomer students (as they are not lost and can participate, keep learning, and stay engaged). This is an important strategy for educators to recognise and implement.

25. Teachers should provide supports for students to use their first language to help them learn their second language, even if the teachers did not speak the student's first language. For example, during a writing activity, students can write a first draft in their first language, and then translate their writing into English or French. Informally, teachers should encourage students to translate for their newest immigrant students, and freely use bilingual dictionaries and translation software, while systematically encouraging them to use their new language.

### *Embedding Language Learning Across Subjects*

26. Research has shown that it essential to provide consistent school-wide literacy strategies across all content areas. Teachers should receive extensive training in language-intensive curriculum to embed language learning across the curriculum. Team teaching is particularly effective in order to establish shared strategies and protocols, and then to collectively reflect upon the effectiveness of their literacy lessons implementation. Reading comprehension strategies can be built on oral literacy and can be employed across subjects. For example, when determining the meaning of a math problem, students can be asked to plan a solution strategy, which they can communicate orally. The technique of communicating and justifying to partners solutions serves to promote higher order thinking and literacy simultaneously and can be implemented across subjects.

### ***Cultural Belonging***

27. Schools should intentionally nurture strategies to foster a sense of cultural belonging. A basic symbolic approach is to display student work and hang flags and other representations in hallways and classrooms in multiple languages and cultures. Hallways should be allowed to echo many languages, spoken by both students and adults; while English and French are clearly to be encouraged, native language use should not be frowned upon. Multicultural community culture can be especially salient in schools with bilingual or dual language programs where many of the faculty come from the same language backgrounds as their students. Even when faculty and staff do not reflect the identities of their students, there are many things school staff can do to reinforce a sense of belonging. Respecting and valuing student and familial heritage in a welcoming way can go a long way to establishing rapport and making students feel a part of the fabric of the school and classroom.

### ***Curriculum Matters***

28. Culturally responsive teaching and social and emotional learning practices should be reflected throughout the curriculum. What we teach, as well as how we teach, sends strong messages to students about who belongs and who does not. Literature teachers often talk about books as ‘windows’ and ‘mirrors’ for our students, windows into new worlds and mirrors reflecting student identities and place in society. While we might start by finding ways for students to share their own stories, these exercises can be easily dismissed if they are not connected to the broader curriculum.

29. We should make sure the literature that we choose to include in our classrooms is selected to provide opportunities for students to see themselves and learn about the experiences as others. The histories we teach, and our approach to curriculum as a whole, matters as well. While migration is central to the human experience, teaching about immigration is often relegated to one of two lessons a year. It is worth rethinking our approaches to teaching about migration. As I have written elsewhere, “Immigrant stories are narratives of resilience, grit, and optimism. They are quintessentially Canadian and American stories that invite classroom dialogue about themes that can be found throughout the nation’s history and literature. Indeed, the story of migration is the story of our shared experience of humanity.”

### ***Parents, Strategic Community Partnerships and Supplemental Programming***

30. Schools must engage parents as an integral part of developing an inclusive multicultural ethos. Inviting parents to attend workshops, seminars, and discussion groups about topics of interest to them can be effective in building trust. One bilingual school replete with immigrant students established a dedicated weekly, Spanish-language discussion group to support parents and family adjustments to life in the U.S. Such events recognised challenges faced by parents and provided them with important tools to help their children navigate their schooling. As attested to by participating parents, these responsive practices sent clear messages that the school embraced parents and their children by creating welcoming and open spaces for them. Purposeful community school partnerships can bring together diverse groups of service providers, including schools, community-based organisations, universities, health and human service agencies, community members, parents, and youth groups. Research indicates that a shared goal of magnifying opportunities for students may strengthen the effectiveness of schools. Health, legal, and social supports may be especially important for immigrant families

who may not know how to access government benefits or are fearful of seeking assistance because of documentation status or other reasons. Social supports may also bridge the perceived gap in parental involvement that is more often a product of cultural mismatch and misunderstanding than lack of parental interest in their children's education.

31. Across schools, principals, teachers, parents, and students attest to the importance of leveraging local community-based providers to form partnerships and combine resources to serve immigrant families in a streamlined, integrated way. Notably, every school we studied had at least one community partnership whose primary purpose was to address an academic, social or family need.

32. A willingness to address social, familial, and health needs in the form of a community school model can go a long way to optimizing success for students. Some successful schools offer on-site second-language instruction for caretakers, and others provide school-based health care. By taking the time to walk families through the process and provide services in a safe space, the partners worked together to bring services to their immigrant families in a one-stop shop. Creative partnerships with local non-profits can serve to help deliver health, mental health care, dental, legal and or other services as an invaluable way serving students and their families. The Bertelsmann Prize-winning public schools in Toronto embody many of the practices outlined above.

### ***Bicultural Instructional Leadership***

33. Another salient theme that emerged across our research has been the importance of instructional leaders who had a skillset that prepared them to serve newcomer students. Immigrant-oriented administrators at many of the schools we studied had strong instructional backgrounds in bilingual or second language instruction. Many are bilingual or of immigrant origin themselves which provide them with insights into the educational experiences of immigrant students and a deep commitment to addressing their needs. As one principal summed it up, "the more we understand our students, the more we can guide them."

34. Effective principals articulated comprehensive school-based policies and procedures on how to introduce and integrate newcomer students into their schools that went beyond legal or district requirements. They laid out formal procedures for the practices we described from intake to ongoing assessment, and many provided professional development to keep faculty and staff current on emerging practices and research. Second, many tended to be very hands-on in terms of curriculum and pedagogy. They maximised the strengths of their faculty through requiring teamwork among teachers and included scheduling time for teachers to adapt and develop original curriculum that aligned with their vision of high-quality instruction for their newcomer students. They invested time and resources on teacher development, nurturing instructional leadership among the faculty. Successful principals build relationships with their local government representatives, district leaders, local businessmen, and sometimes even journalists to advocate for funding, resources, and to raise awareness of the needs of their immigrant students.

35. In school that are effective in serving immigrant origin students, administrators, faculty and staff can readily identify strategies that are essential for minimizing isolation, post-traumatic growth, encouraging relationships, as well as facilitating a sense of school belonging. In some such schools, as new students come in, cross-subject teams should meet to discuss new students, to discuss a suitable transition plan. Teachers make every effort to reach out to parents, caretakers, or guardians to take a detailed educational

history.<sup>5</sup> Parent-teacher conferences are another opportunity to reach out to families though it is important to be flexible in the strategy including language accommodations, phone and Skype accommodations during flexible hours. Any information gleaned from these conferences can then be shared as teachers meet across teams working with each student.

36. Advisory groups can play a particularly important role, especially in middle school and high school to help students to adjust to their new school under the guidance of an advisor who is looking out for them. A productive guideline for forming advisory groups is to have newcomer/beginning learners of English or French in the same group as at least one student who shares the same native language and is also proficient in English or French so that the more advanced English/French speaker can translate. In advisory groups, students are encouraged to talk about a range of topics ranging from difficulties with a class and missing families and friends back home to relationship issues. Students are particularly encouraged to share their personal experiences both in their old and new countries and in their transition from one to the other.

37. For instance, advisory programs that partner students with one another and with older peers can foster communities of learning and emotional support. In these advisory groups, students are encouraged to openly discuss a range of topics, from difficulties with a class to missing families and friends back home to interpersonal issues. As part of classroom instruction writing prompts may also serve to encourage students to share their personal migration experiences and engage them in class discussions. Activities like these help students recognise that they are not alone in facing the difficulties of transition, and also help teachers get to know their students (Suárez-Orozco et al., 2013). Little research has been done, however, to determine what works for what students under what circumstances in school contexts.

38. Immigrant and refugee origin youth are the fastest growing student population in disparate high and middle-income countries. They often arrive sharing an optimism and hope in the future that must be cultivated and treasured—almost universally they recognise that schooling is the key to a better tomorrow. Over time, however, many immigrant youth, especially those enrolling in impoverished, segregated, and mediocre schools, face negative odds and uncertain prospects. Too many leave schools without developing and mastering the higher order skills, communication skills, and cultural sensibilities needed in today's global economy and society (Levy & Murnane, 2007).

39. The shared fortunes of immigrant and native citizens alike will be tied to successfully linking our youngest new arrivals to the educational and economic opportunity structure, to civic belonging, and full democratic participation. Embracing immigrant children and cultivating their full potential is the education challenge of our generation. The stakes are high: their future is our future.

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<sup>5</sup> It is important, however, to not interpret failed attempts at securing meetings as a lack of interest on caretakers' part—it is often related to other factors like inflexible work schedules, unfamiliarity with Canadian or U.S. school/parent involvement expectation norms, or worries around detention or deportation exposure in a volatile political era.

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