2019 IMMIGRANT STUDENT SUCCESS
Strategies and Tools for K-12 and Adult Educators

Migration is the Human Story

Migration is the story of who we are and how we got here. It is a phenomenon that has impacted every human in many ways. Educators can help students to see the effect of migration in all areas of study, and understand how unique and diverse communities each have a place in a collective history.

Strategies for Building Common Narratives

Ask students to tell stories about their family migration experiences.
- Focus on personal experience and emotion.
- Ask students to reflect on how their history is part of larger narratives.
- Emphasize that migration and movement are normal parts of life.
- Depoliticize words by examining their meaning and the emotions they evoke.

Use art, food, music or other artifacts to bring stories to life.
- Allow students to show the unique and beautiful aspects of their culture.
- Remember that emotions can be expressed through various mediums.

Tell migration stories from sources outside of your classroom.
- Use videos to see into the world of immigrants who are affected by current policies.
- Read literature with themes of diversity and social justice.
- Use books and movies to teach the perspective of people or groups who may not be present in the classroom.

Lesson Plan: Everyday Borders

Demonstrate that migration is a part of everyday life by taking your students for a walk. Pay attention to boundaries you encounter.

Are there places where you know you are welcome or unwelcome without being told? Do you act differently depending on where you are? Who gets to set these boundaries?

Rachel Peric, Welcoming America
John Rogers, Institute for Democracy, Education and Access, UCLA
Sarang Sekhavat, Mass. Immigrant and Refugee Advocacy Coalition
Theo Rigby, iNation Media
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Classrooms and Schools are Safe Spaces

Nearly 70 percent of principals report that the negative political environment on immigration is impacting their students.

- Create space for emotional processing and build empathy.
- Provide information and build critical thinking skills to help students interpret this climate.
- Tell students and their families about mental health and social support resources for trauma, anxiety or stress.
- Ensure that diversity is encouraged and celebrated among staff and school administration.
- Build trust so students are comfortable reaching out for help.

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Immigrant and Refugee Children: A Guide for Educators
Welcoming Schools Toolkit

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Reflect on your Learning Ecosystem

Examine your implicit biases, and reflect on your own hopes, fears or sensitivities before speaking with students.

- Be informed, and seek out a wide variety of news and educational materials.
- Ensure the environment reflects your school’s diversity through flags, murals, or music and theatre performances.
- Think about the differences in age, religion, ethnicity, sexual orientation, ability, class and gender expression that are present in your learning environment.
- Remember that your school is part of a larger ecosystem of ideas. How are you and your students affected? How do you effect change?

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Identity Mosaic

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Teach the Full Context of Immigration

Immigration is a long story, not just a current event. Use these tools to build context.

- Poetry of Angel Island
- Understanding Chinese Exclusion

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