

# Understanding Immigration Today

## Current Events in the Classroom

Webinar Toolkit

February 2020

### Create welcoming classrooms

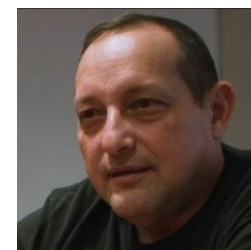
- Students learn best when they feel respected and welcomed, and that their opinion and effort matter.
  - Examine your feelings, goals and intentions before planning a new lesson.
  - Set ground rules, and clarify values before a discussion.
  - Accept that all of us hold implicit biases, so seek out strategies to address bias.
  - Lead by listening and giving students space to speak openly.
  - When discussing immigration issues, remember that immigrant students may be emotionally affected by the discussion or have traumatic memories related to news stories.
- ✦ **Mental Health: Taking Care of Yourself and Loved Ones**
- Respect differences in opinion, and understand that reasonable people may disagree with each other.
  - Be available to talk to students privately if they have more questions or needs.
- 📄 **Current Events Teacher Checklist**



**Adam Strom**  
Re-imagining  
Migration



**Laura Tavares**  
Facing History  
and Ourselves



**Manlio Mendez**  
Neighborhood of  
Affordable Housing



**An Le**  
Boston Mayor's Office for  
Immigrant Advancement

### Place current events in context



- Teach accurate terminology, and the difference between words like “immigrant,” “refugee” and “asylum seeker.”
- 🌐 **The Language of Immigration and Politics**
- Show students how to access to various streams of information including primary and secondary sources.
  - Share historical perspectives. Much of the current rhetoric about immigration is a re-packaging of ideas that have been debated or debunked throughout U.S. history.
- 📖 **Immigrant Struggles, Immigrant Gifts**
- Keep a global perspective remembering that immigrants are impacted by both “push” factors (what influences immigrants to leave their homes) and “pull” factors (incentives to move to new countries).
  - Help students to seek out the perspective of immigrants, their home communities, policy-makers, care givers and academics.
- 🌐 **Explainer: Migration**

### Build critical thinking skills

- When evaluating an information source, ask yourself who are the author, the subject and the intended audience, and how might their perspectives differ.
  - Remember that certain language or vocabulary terms, even the word “migration” itself, may have specific meanings to different readers.
- ✦ **How to Read the News Like a Fact Checker**

### Teach immigration across curricula

- Human stories are usually told in social studies classes, but immigration is also relevant to art and music, as well as in science, literature and math. It's also a great topic for extracurricular activities.
  - Present immigration with appropriate context to engage in a more meaningful way and avoid trivializing its importance.
- ✦ **Classroom Connections: Immigration in the Curriculum**