



# *You Are Welcome Here:*

## **Supporting the Social and Emotional Needs of Newcomer Immigrant Students**





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## School Responses to COVID-19: ELL/Immigrant Considerations

By [Lydia Breiseth](#) (2020)



How can schools and districts ensure that ELLs and their families are included in all communications and school closure plans related to COVID-19? Here are some considerations that can help individual educators, schools, and districts.

As the situation quickly evolves around community and school responses to COVID-19 (coronavirus), educators are juggling multiple concerns and questions. It is critical to keep the impacts of this situation on English language learners (ELLs) and immigrant students in view so that they can be included in all responses and plans.

We strongly encourage districts to look for ways in which to partner with families throughout this time of uncertainty and to draw upon the expertise of ELL educators, family liaisons, and community partners who work closely with these student populations and communities. Not only do they know their students well, they are an important bridge and source of continuity during a time of tremendous uncertainty.

### On this page

- [Access to essential COVID-19 information](#)
- [Updates related to school closures](#)
- [Unique perspectives and concerns](#)
- [Food security, health care, finances, and safety](#)
- [Learning at home and staying connected](#)
- [Speaking out against bullying and discrimination related to COVID-19](#)





## Coronavirus: Multilingual Resources for Schools



It's important that schools share accurate information about coronavirus with all school staff and families, including families of English learners. These resources include multilingual fact sheets and infographics. We'll update this page as new resources becomes available.

Photo: The CDC's Emergency Operations Center assists public health partners in responding to the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) outbreak.

James Gathany/CDC

## Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

### Coronavirus Resource Center

- [English](#)
- [Chinese](#)
- [Spanish](#)



We want to hear from you!

Is your district taking





# Survey: School Closures and ELLs





# Updates from Dearborn



# Newcomer Support in Dearborn Public Schools

- Professional Development
- Instruction
- Culturally Responsive Practice
- Social-Emotional Support
- Outreach and Partnerships (Family, Community & Union)



# Dearborn Public Schools

22 Elementary Schools

7 Middle Schools

3 High Schools

Other programs:

- Early College
- Dearborn Center of Math, Science and Technology (DCMST)
- STEM
- Collegiate Program





# District Demographics

Total student population: **20,740**

**ELs**

9,766

**Immigrant**

1,931

**Refugee**

403



# District EL Department Staff

- EL Director and EL Coordinator
- 4 District Language and Literacy Trainers and ELD Coaches
- 48 English Language Development (ELD) Specialists: In all elementary, middle, and high schools
- 38 Title I Resource Teachers: In some elementary, middle, and high schools
- ELD specialists and Title I teachers work directly with EL students both in groups and co-teach in classrooms with teachers. In addition, the ELD Specialists and Title I teachers communicate and support EL families.



# Professional Development Opportunities & Training



# Professional Development Opportunities

The EL & Compensatory Education Department provides ongoing professional development for the ELD Specialists and the Title I RT/Interventionists on a monthly basis. In addition, the department also provides building level professional development during staff meetings, late starts, and PLCs that include:

- WIDA
- SIOP
- Language & Literacy
- Academic Language
- Essential & disciplinary Literacy Practices
- Culturally Responsive Teaching

- Oral Language Development
- Common Core State Standards (CCSS)
- Thinking Maps
- Partial Tuition reimbursement for ESL classes
- ESL partnerships with local universities for ESL courses (Wayne State, University of Michigan)



# Instruction



# SPECIALLY DESIGNED INSTRUCTION (SDI) FOR NEWCOMERS

## Specially Designed Instruction for Newcomers (SDI)

Focus	Ideas and Resources
<p><b>Oral Language Development</b> <i>Focus on Speaking/Listening and applicable Language Standards</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Let's Talk About It - posters</li> <li>• Visual Thinking (VTS)</li> <li>• Oral Retelling Task</li> <li>• Sentence Frames</li> <li>• Discussions 4 Learning</li> </ul>
<p><b>Phonics and/or Word Work</b> <i>Focus on Reading Foundational Standards— Phonological Awareness, Phonics &amp; Word Recognition</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Word Sorts</li> <li>• Words Meanings</li> <li>• Frayer Model</li> <li>• Cut-up sentences</li> <li>• High Frequency words</li> <li>• Alphabet Charts/Magnetic Letters</li> <li>• Letter Books</li> </ul>
<p><b>Guided Reading</b> <i>Focus on Reading Foundational Standards— Print Concepts and Fluency</i>  <i>Focus on RL and RI Standards (CCSS)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Set a Purpose for Reading</li> <li>• R.A.N. strategy</li> <li>• THIEVES</li> <li>• Thinking Maps</li> <li>• Comprehension</li> <li>• Accuracy</li> <li>• Fluency</li> <li>• Expand Vocabulary</li> </ul>
<p><b>Writing</b> <i>Focus on Language and Writing Standards</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide a prompt and support with sentence stem or paragraph frame</li> <li>• Oral Rehearsal before writing</li> <li>• Quick Writes</li> <li>• 12 Minute Research Paper</li> <li>• Interactive Notebook</li> <li>• Thinking Maps</li> <li>• Exit Tickets</li> </ul>



# Newcomer Support and Instruction

EL and Compensatory Education Department  
Specially Designed Instruction & Progress Monitoring

ELD Specialist: \_\_\_\_\_ Students: \_\_\_\_\_ Week of: \_\_\_\_\_

Guidelines					Day #1		Day #2	
<p>ASSESSMENT: Administer a running record on <u>one</u> student using the guided reading text from <u>previous</u> day's lesson or a cold read.</p> <p>INDEPENDENT READING: Students read familiar text</p>					<p>Student: Book Title/Level:</p> <p>Accuracy Rate: _____ Self-correction: _____ TEACHING POINT:</p>			
CCSS STANDARD: RF or L					CCSS STANDARD:		CCSS STANDARD:	
O R A L L A N G U A G E D E V E L O P M E N T	<b>PHONICS AND/OR WORD WORK</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Word sorts</li> <li>• Elkonin boxes</li> <li>• Word Families</li> <li>• Select 2-3 partially know letters and/or Dolch words to bring to fluency</li> </ul>				<b>PHONICS AND/OR WORD WORK</b>		<b>PHONICS AND/OR WORD WORK:</b>	
	<b>GUIDED READING</b> Before <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduce 2-3 academic vocabulary words</li> <li>• Set a purpose for reading</li> <li>• Book preview/walk</li> <li>• Visual Thinking Strategies (VTS)</li> </ul> During <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fluency, Decoding, and Comprehension Strategies</li> </ul> After <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussion prompt</li> <li>• Sentence stems/frames to support oral discourse</li> </ul>				<b>GUIDED READING</b> Title _____ Level _____		<b>GUIDED READING</b> Title _____ Level _____	
	<b>WRITING</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Set purpose for writing</li> <li>• Sentence stems and/or paragraph frame</li> <li>• Oral rehearsal before writing</li> <li>• Guided response using words from lesson</li> <li>• Share writing with partner</li> </ul>				<b>WRITING</b> Prompt/Stem: _____		<b>WRITING</b> Prompt/Stem: _____	
	<b>NOTES</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Observations</li> <li>• Next steps</li> </ul>				<b>NOTES</b>		<b>NOTES</b>	



# Culturally Responsive Teaching



# Culturally Responsive Practices

- “Embracing Students in Poverty and Refugees”
- “Cultural Proficiency--
- “Are We There Yet?”
- “Examining the Mismatch between Home Culture and School Culture”
- “Understanding a Refugee”
- “*Classroom Strategies for Getting to Know Your Students*”
- “Our Words Matter”
- “Getting to know your Arab Students”
- “Dimensions of School Climate”
- “Imagining Equity Literacy”
- “Background Conditional Factors and Poverty”
- “Growth Mindset: Keeping our EL and ED Students in Mind”





# Social-Emotional Support



# Social-Emotional Support for Newcomers

- Strong emphasis on building student relationships as part of staff training
- Professional development on trauma for different staff positions
- Mental health support through school services and community partners



# Outreach



# How can you support your parents?

- Be visible and available
- Welcoming
- Consistent Parent Meetings (*Example, coffee with the principal*)
- ESL classes, *if applicable*
- Parent Education
- Building Trust
- Staff that are familiar with the student culture and speak the language of the families



# Student and Family Opportunities

- Extended Day Programs (Before/After School)
- Extended Year Programs - Accelerated Summer Academic Program (ASAP)
- English Language Development (ELD) Specialist who speaks a native language at every building
- District Parent Meetings
- Enrichment Opportunities



# Community and Union Partnerships

- The EL Director and Coordinator work closely with the Union president for staffing needs.
- The district consistently collaborates with community programs to enhance our student and family experiences.
  - ACCESS
  - Hype Athletics
  - Amity Foundation
  - Zaman
  - Education Foundation
  - Local businesses





## Film: *You Are Welcome Here*



<https://www.colorincolorado.org/dearborn>





## More than a Warm Welcome

Supporting Immigrant Students in Dearborn, Michigan



BY LYDIA BREISETH

**O**n the wall outside her first grade classroom, teacher Mitega AfHala has posted a letter to her students. It reads:

- You are important.
- You are loved by
- many people.
- You are respected.
- You can be the
- strongest.
- You put your mind to
- learning.
- You are in a safe school.

*Mitega AfHala is the director of Colorín Colorado, where she manages content on LinkedIn, colorincolorado.org, colorincolorado.org, and social media, and partnerships, including collaboration with major partners, the American Federation of Teachers.*

Even,  
Ms. AfHala

Many elementary school teachers spend welcoming or reassuring messages outside their classroom doors. But for some of AfHala's students, this message holds particular meaning.

As refugees from Yemen, a country torn apart by a ongoing civil war, many of these children have felt unsafe. In their homeland in recent years, amid frequent bombings and incessant fighting, school was in session only sporadically. More often than not, it was simply too dangerous to attend.

Now the students are in a public school that many of them will soon consider a second home, where they will learn under the care and instruction of AfHala and her colleagues.

Their school, Salina Elementary, is in Dearborn, Michigan. In some ways, it's fitting they are learning what it means to become American in a heartland city in the middle of America, the home of Henry Ford. Long a haven for immigrants, Dearborn has welcomed its latest newcomers with a record of ongoing support. The success of this effort comes in part from a strong labor-management collaboration between Dearborn Public Schools and the local union, the Dearborn Federation of Teachers (DFT), which has enabled education to meet

## A warm welcome for immigrant families in the front office

Norieah Ahmed, the Child Accounting Secretary at Salina Elementary School in Dearborn, MI, talks about her role in welcoming newcomer immigrant families to the school from the moment they walk in the door.



## Looking at the whole child: Conversations with an award-winning social worker

Meet Dr. Rola Bazzi-Gates, a special education coordinator for Dearborn Public Schools and Michigan's 2016 Social Worker of the Year. Learn how her personal experience living through conflict helped prepare her to support students and families today.

