

Enrolling and Welcoming Newcomers and Their Families

October 24, 2024

2:00-3:00pm

We will be recording this webinar.



**We will share slides and the recording
with participants after the webinar.**

Today's Agenda

- ❑ Welcome and framing
- ❑ Presentation from the Attorney General's Office
- ❑ Presentation from DESE: Resources for welcoming newcomers and their families
- ❑ Q&A

Put all Questions in the Padlet

bit.ly/Oct24NewcomerWebinar

102424 DESE Newcomer Webinar

Questions for Attorney General's Office

Questions for DESE

Resources Referenced in DESE Presentation

Resources Referenced in Attorney General's Office Presentation

Closing Survey

DESE's Educational Vision

Attorney General Advisory: Equal Access to Public Education for All Students Irrespective of Immigration Status (April 2022)

Closing Survey

US DOE Newcomer Toolkit (June 2023)

QR Code

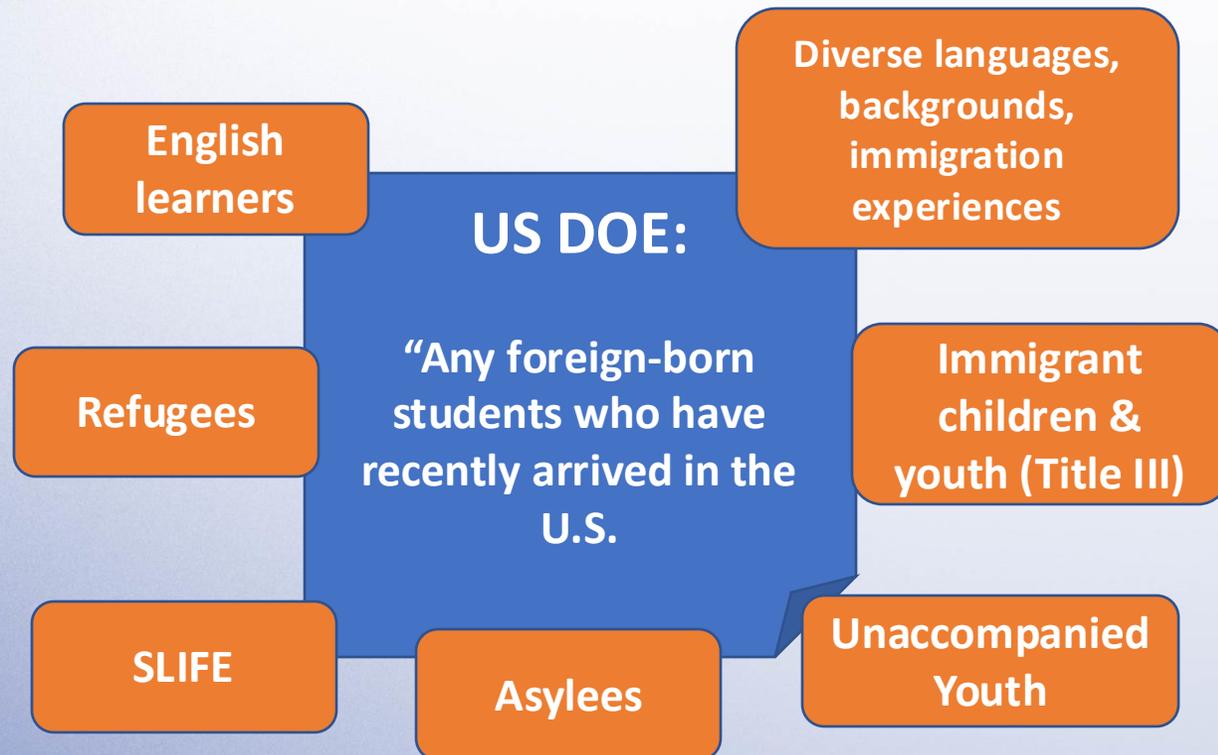
Please add any general questions you have for today's presenters.

We are not able to respond to questions about specific students or cases.

Welcome and Framing

Why are we here today?

Who are newcomer students?



For purposes of analyzing MA data, we're defining newcomers as **ELs in their first year in US schools.**

DESE's Educational Vision



All students in Massachusetts, particularly students from historically underserved groups and communities, will have equitable opportunities to excel in all content areas across all grades. Culturally and linguistically sustaining classroom and school practicesⁱ will support students to thrive by creating affirming environments where students have a sense of belonging, engage in deeper learningⁱⁱ, and are held to high expectations with targeted support.



Focus on Equity

Questions to ask ourselves when doing this work with students & families:

- How am I promoting diversity, equity and inclusion, particularly racial equity?
- How does my identity influence my work?
- Whose voice should be included? How will I seek multiple perspectives?
- How am I using reflective listening in my interactions with individuals?
- Who benefits from this support/work? Who is burdened?
- Who might be harmed? How might I mitigate harm to students & families?

Our Commitment



All students are known & valued

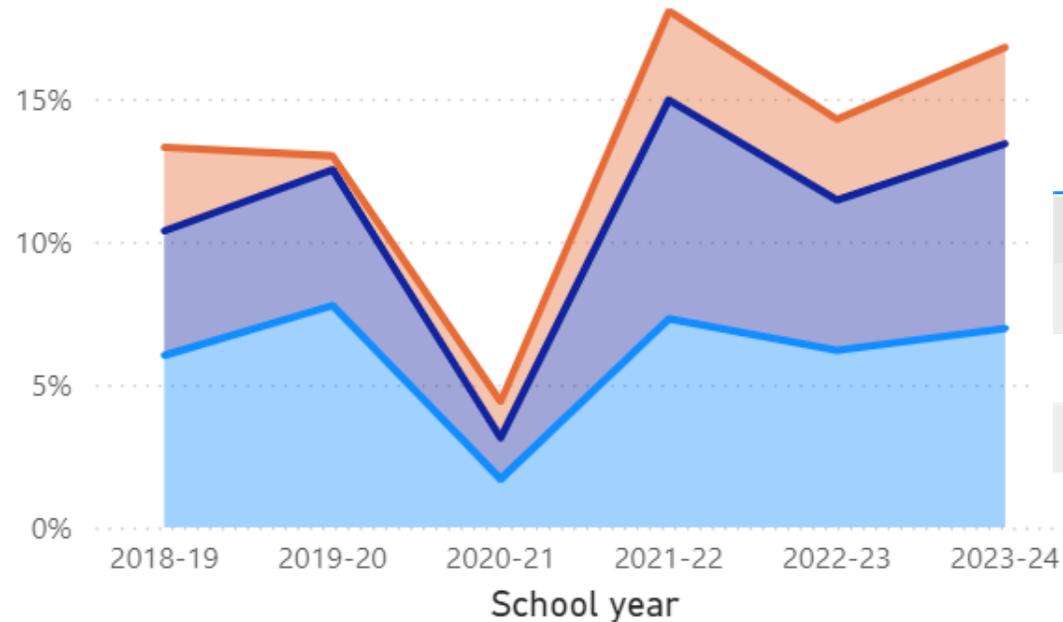
Students are known

- Students and families have a sense of belonging: they are known, respected, and valued for who they are and what they bring to the school community, including their unique identities, strengths, interests, needs, languages, exceptionalities, and backgrounds.
- Students attend safe and supportive schools that tend to their overall wellbeing.
- Students gain awareness of how they think, learn, relate, and communicate, including in multiple languages/dialects.

Newcomer ELs are a rapidly growing student group.

Percent of EL students who are newcomers

Collection ● Oct ● Mar ● Jun



State Profile for SY 2023-24

116,306

English Learners

18,226

Newcomers

16%

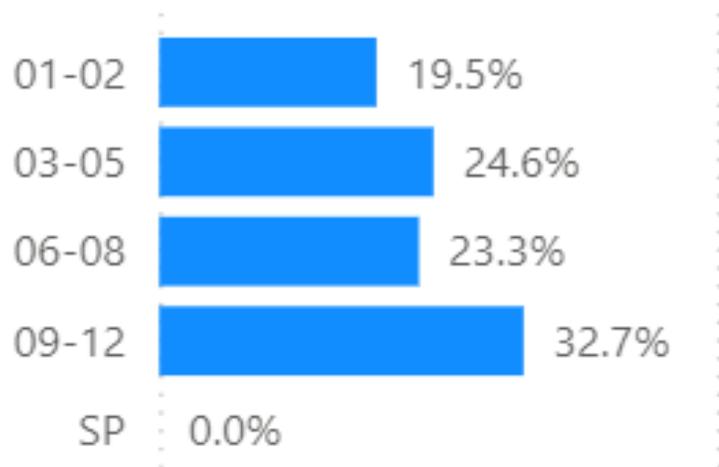
Newcomers %

Collection	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
All collections					
Total ELs	95,623	88,937	101,100	105,897	116,306
Newcomers #	11,394	3,636	16,247	14,354	18,226
Newcomers %	12%	4%	16%	14%	16%

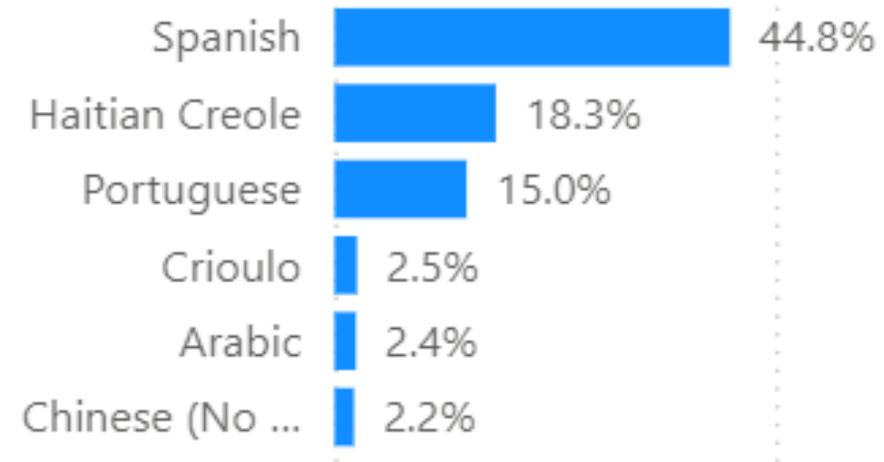
NOTE: For this analysis, Newcomers are defined as ELs in their first year in US schools. Pre-K and K are excluded.

Newcomer ELs are a diverse group.

Gradespan



First Language



“The number of high school newcomers has nearly **tripled** since 2008.”

(Annenberg Institute, 2023)

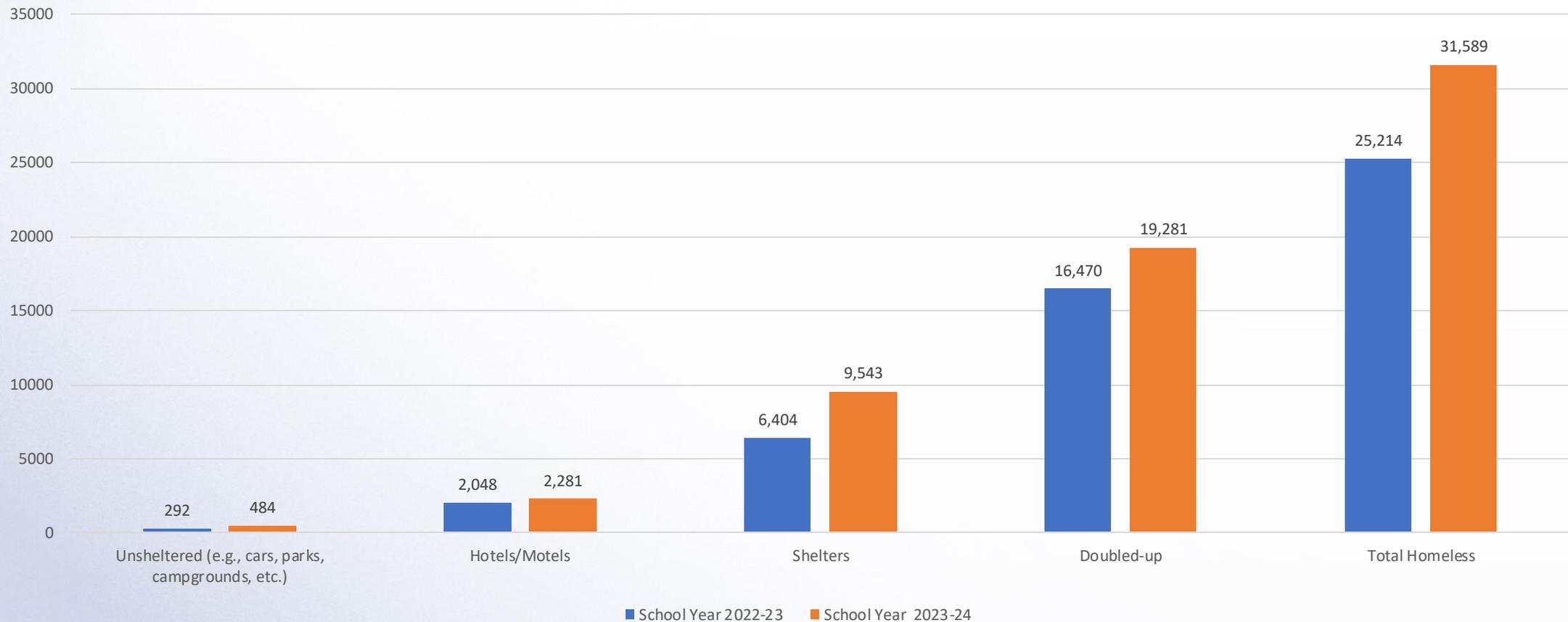


Students Experiencing Homelessness



- More than 31,000 Massachusetts public school students experienced homelessness in 2023-2024.
- ~85% of Massachusetts public schools served at least one student experiencing homelessness this year.
- Some (not all) of our newcomer students are experiencing homelessness.

How Students Experience Homelessness





Our goal is that as a result of their public education in Massachusetts, students will:

Attain academic knowledge and skills: achieve in a comprehensive and diverse range of subjects and apply their competencies in relevant, real-world contexts

Understand and value self: know their own strengths, interests, and areas of growth, be self-aware, be a self-advocate, and make responsible decisions

Understand and value others: understand differences and multiple perspectives, empathize with others, and build connections with peers and adults

Engage with the world: understand and think critically about local, national, and world events and societal systems; and create positive change through civic action

Ensuring Equal Access to Public Education Irrespective of Immigration Status

Presentation from Attorney General's Office



Ensuring Equal Access to Public Education Irrespective of Immigration Status

*Welcoming and Enrolling
Newcomers Webinar*

October 24, 2024



AGO Guidance (2022)

Attorney General's Advisory Regarding Equal Access to Public Education for All Students Irrespective of Immigration Status

All students in Massachusetts have equal access to public education.

- Public school districts **may not** deny access to education to any child based on immigration status.
- Applicable laws:
 - Federal: Title IV, Title VI, and EEOA
 - State: Student Anti-Discrimination Act, Anti-Bullying Law, MA Constitution
- Link to Guidance: <https://www.mass.gov/doc/ags-education-guidance-2022/download>



AGO Guidance: Equal Access to Education Irrespective of Immigration Status

Policies and practices **must not**:

– *Explicitly bar* the enrollment of immigrant children

OR

– *Have the effect* of discouraging immigrant children
from enrolling in school



Enrollment "Dos and Don'ts" to Ensure Equal Access

- Schools may not:
 - Require information or records about immigration status
 - Accept only a narrow list of documents to demonstrate age or residence (e.g. U.S. government-issued photo ID or U.S. birth certificate)
 - Impose burdensome requirements that prevent, discourage, or delay immigrant families from enrolling their children in school
- Schools should:
 - Help families to find alternative ways to show their child's age and residence if they don't have the standard documents
 - Immediately enroll students who are homeless, including those who are doubled-up (afterward assist with verifications)
 - Communicate with families in their preferred language



Immediately Enrolling Homeless Students under the McKinney Vento Act

- Districts must *immediately* enroll students experiencing homelessness, *with or without documents*.
- The legal definition of “homeless children and youth” includes:
 - Children who are doubled-up (*i.e.*, sharing housing with others due to economic hardship or similar reasons).



Language Access Requirements

- Under federal and state laws, school districts must communicate information about enrollment and educational programs in a language that parents/guardians understand.
- School districts must provide qualified oral interpretation services and translated documents.

Resources for Welcoming Newcomers & Their Families

Presentation from DESE



District-Level Needs Assessment: Building a Supportive Infrastructure for Newcomer Students & Families

bit.ly/NewcomerDistrictNeedsAssessment

District-Level Needs Assessment:

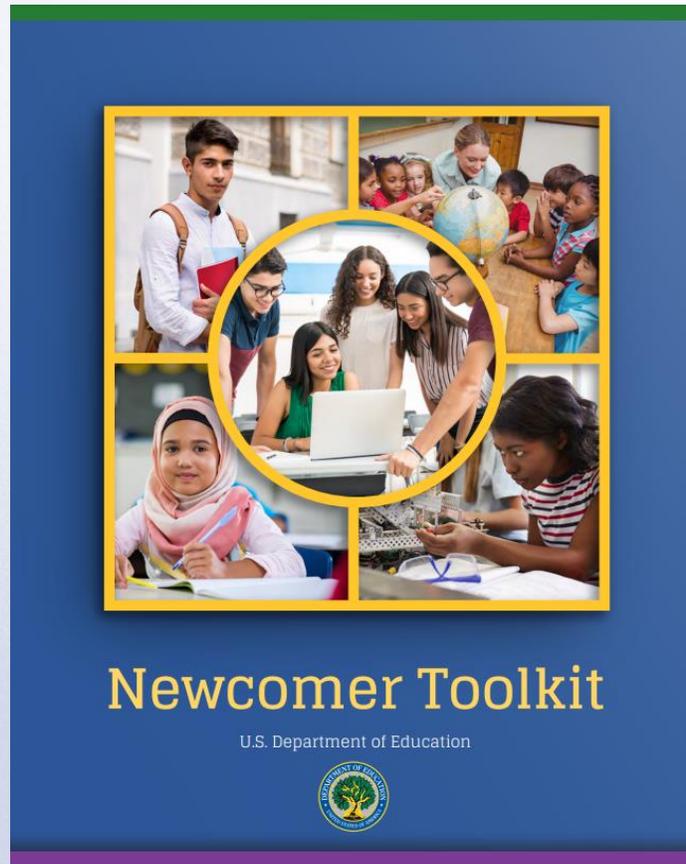
Building a Supportive Infrastructure for Newcomer Students & Families

This needs assessment has been developed based on the U.S. Department of Education's [Newcomer Toolkit](#) (June 2023) and MA DESE's Office of Language Acquisition's [Guidance](#) and [Instructional Resources](#).

Welcoming Newcomers to a Safe and Inclusive School Environment ¹	
Legal Requirements	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All children, regardless of their citizenship or residency status, are entitled to equal access to a free public education. Schools cannot ask for documentation that would prohibit or unlawfully discourage a student from enrolling in or attending school. Schools must ensure meaningful communication with limited English proficient parents – in a language they understand – of information about any program, service, or activity that is called to the attention of parents who are proficient in English. Schools must identify EL students who need services to learn English and provide these services to any student who is eligible. Schools must notify parents of their child's eligibility for EL services, and parents have the right to opt-out of these services. 	
Implementation Questions	Additional Resources/Tools
<p>Establish Two-Way Communication with Newcomer Families in Their Preferred Language</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Does your district have a system to quickly identify family's preferred language? <input type="checkbox"/> Does your district have an active interpretation system (either vendor or in-house) in the identified languages? <input type="checkbox"/> Does your district have an active translation system to ensure that important school documents translated into their preferred language? 	<p>DESE Guidance on Language Access Services for Families</p>
<p>Develop an Orientation for Newcomer Students and Families</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Does your district provide an orientation to newcomer students and families? (e.g., through an in-person meeting at the school, a home visit, or via a welcoming video in the family's home language or in English accompanied by translated subtitles) <input type="checkbox"/> Does this orientation address school policies (e.g., homework/grading, attendance, discipline), logistics (e.g., lunch options, transportation), and programs, such as school clubs, sports, gifted education, and special education? 	<p>Welcoming and Orienting Newcomer Students to U.S. Schools – BRYCS</p>

¹ See U.S. Department of Education's [Newcomer Toolkit](#), "Chapter 2: Welcoming Newcomers to a Safe, Inclusive, and Thriving School Environment" for more information, resources, and professional learning activities you can do with your faculty.

US DOE's Newcomer Toolkit (June 2023)



Newcomer Toolkit - Chapters

- ✓ Chapter 1 - Who Are Newcomers?
- ✓ Chapter 2 - Welcoming Newcomers to a Safe, Inclusive and Thriving School Environment
- ✓ Chapter 3 - Supporting Newcomers' Social, Emotional, and Mental Health Needs
- ✓ Chapter 4 - Providing High-Quality Instruction for Newcomers
- ✓ Chapter 5 - Establishing Partnerships with Families

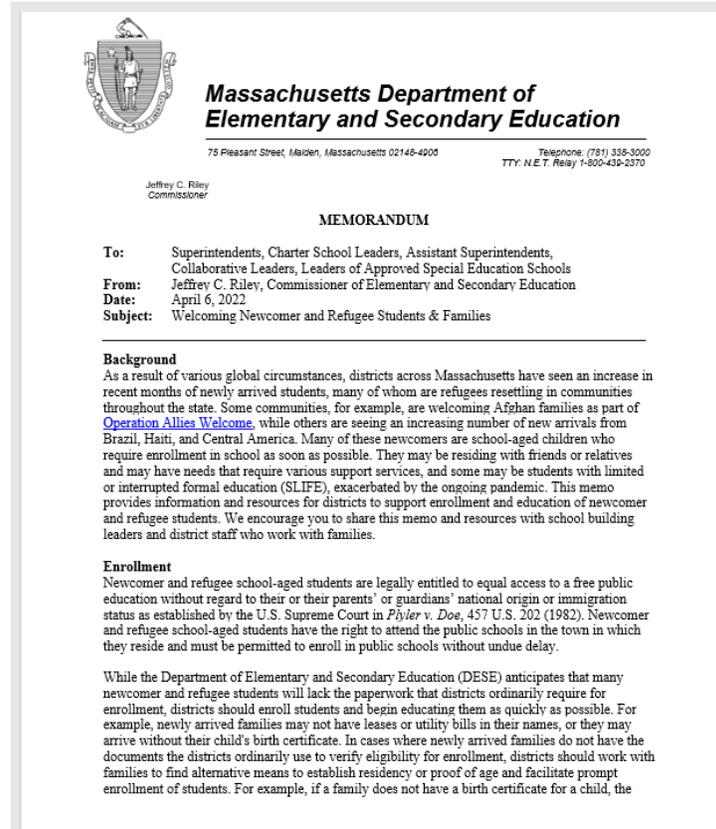
Federal law and guidance, along with practical resources for educators, school and district leaders, counselors and family engagement staff, etc.

<https://ncela.ed.gov/educator-support/toolkits/newcomer-toolkit>

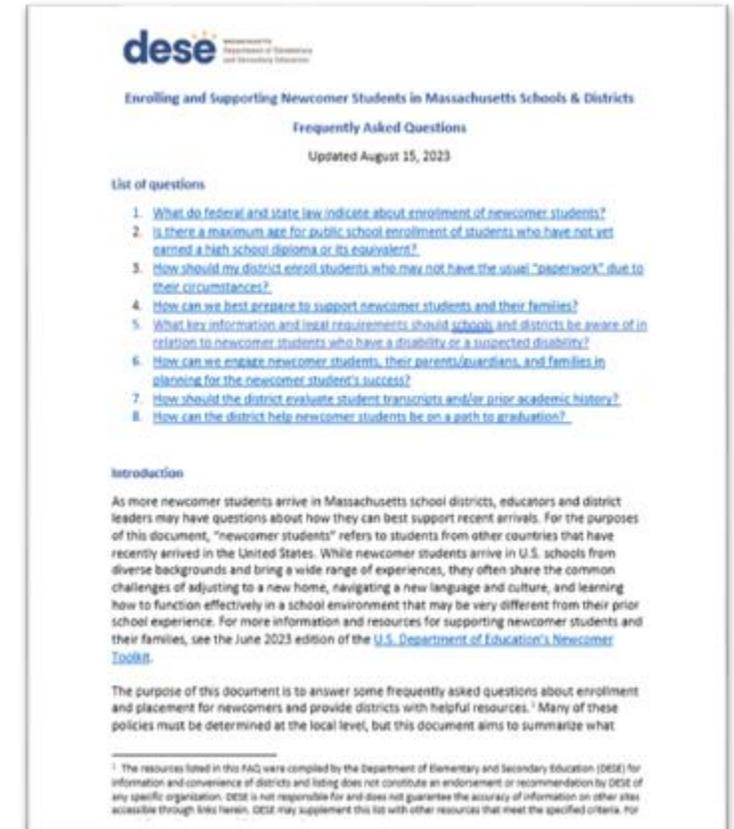


DESE Newcomer Guidance

“A Memo from the Commissioner: Welcoming Newcomer and Refugee Students and Families” (4/6/22)



“Enrolling and Supporting Newcomer Students in Massachusetts Schools & Districts FAQ” (7/31/24)



For more information about programming and services for newcomers, see DESE's general guidance on ELE programming: [2024 Guidance on English Learner Education Services and Programming](#)



DESE Guidance on Supporting Homeless Students During the State of Emergency

Guidance on Supporting Homeless Students During the State of Emergency

Revised: September 9, 2024

On Tuesday, August 8, 2023, Governor Healey declared a [state of emergency](#) due to rapidly rising numbers of newly arrived families arriving in Massachusetts in need of shelter and services, coupled with a severe lack of shelter availability in the state. As the shelter system reached capacity, in November 2023, the Administration declared that the Emergency Assistance shelter system had reached its maximum capacity of 7,500 families. On August 1, 2024, the overflow sites transitioned to Temporary Respite Centers (TRC) which allow families to stay for up to 5 full business days with some limited administrative extensions possible beyond that. Many of the individuals in EA shelters and TRCs are school-aged children. Governor Healey's emergency declaration called for urgent action, including solicitation of federal resources from Congress and the Biden Administration.

This guidance document provides information on:

- State homelessness policy context, state of emergency, and impact on [districts](#);
- Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's (DESE) [New Student Assistance - Center for School and District Partnership \(CSDP\)](#) which provides resources for school [districts](#);
- DESE's [homeless student and family support](#) resources for school districts; and
- Supplemental funding available to support school districts with homeless students.

State homelessness policy context, state of emergency, and impact on districts

Massachusetts, the only "right to shelter" state in the country, is required to house eligible families facing homelessness.

The Healey-Driscoll Administration has set up a command center to address the crisis, employing a cross section of state agencies, including the Executive Office of Health and Human Services (EOHHS), the Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities (EOHLC), the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency (MEMA), the Executive Office for Administration and Finance (A&F), the Department of Public Health (DPH), the Executive Office of Education (EOE), the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) and the Department of Early Education and Care (EEC).

When DESE learns of a planned shelter expansion within a given community, DESE alerts impacted school districts with outreach to the Superintendent; however, given the on-demand nature of EA shelters, DESE's ability to provide advance notice to districts is limited. DESE staff are available to provide technical assistance to impacted districts and schools and can serve as a liaison to share information from local stakeholders with the Commonwealth's Incident Command Center Team.

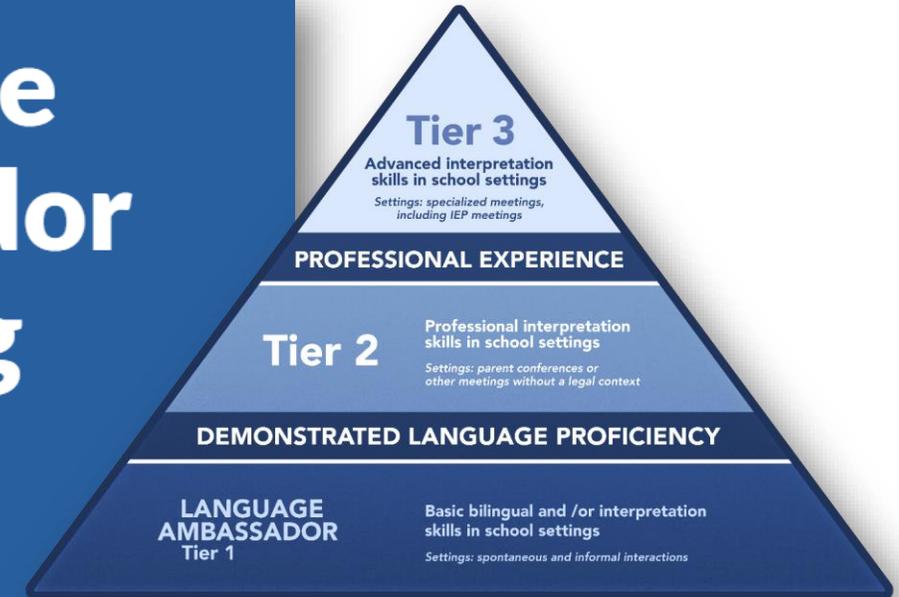


Language Access Resources

Interpreters in the Education Setting

Language Ambassador Training

[START HERE](#)



The Language Ambassador training has been created to support high-quality interactions between school-based staff and families who speak a language other than English. The training is designed to serve a dual purpose:

- ✓ Guidance
- ✓ Language Ambassador Training Course
- ✓ Resources for families about language access

Family Communication Toolkit



Welcoming Newcomer Families Resource Hub



Transform Your School's Communication with Our Welcoming Families Toolkit

Resources for Educators, Tips and Tools, Tools and Strategies

Enhance Your School's Communication Practices with Proven Strategies and Templates

Get started!



This toolkit is designed to help educators and family engagement professionals reflect on your current communication practices. Our goal is to provide inspiration and concrete tools that will enhance the important work you are already doing. We recommend that you explore these sections sequentially the first time through this toolkit. At the top of each page, you will find icons guiding you through the topics in this toolkit, beginning with "Listen" and ending with "Plan."



Listen



Welcome



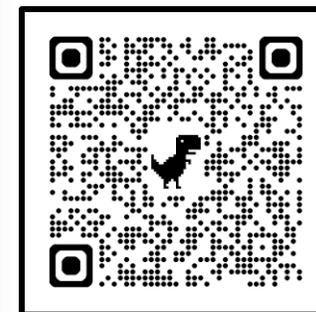
Include



Craft



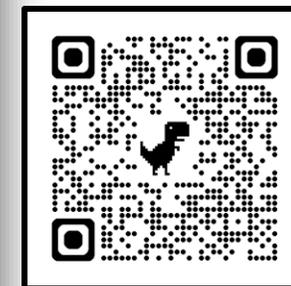
Plan



Welcoming Newcomer Families

A space for educators to discuss and share resources on how to welcome newcomer families to school districts.

Register for free!





NEW SLIFE Guidance & Toolkit



Students With Limited or Interrupted Formal Education (SLIFE)

Guidance for SLIFE Identification,
Services, and Support

June 2024



**Massachusetts SLIFE
Toolkit**

START HERE

bit.ly/MASLIFEToolkit

Additional Resources from the Office of Student & Family Support



Mental and Behavioral Health and Wellness Supports

<https://www.doe.mass.edu/sfs/mental-wellness/default.html>



Safe and Supportive Schools

<https://www.doe.mass.edu/sfs/safety/default.html>



Social and Emotional Learning

<https://www.doe.mass.edu/sfs/sel/default.html>



Additional Family Engagement Initiatives and Resources

<https://www.doe.mass.edu/sfs/?section=family>

Q & A

NOTE:

We will address some of the questions from the Padlet at this time. We will also compile the questions to add to the FAQ and seek out additional resources as necessary.

Closing & Next Steps

Closing Survey

- Please complete a brief survey to share any additional questions from today's session and provide input on future webinar topics.



<https://bit.ly/WelcomingNewcomersOct2024>

