

Preparing for Newcomers

Before their Arrival:

- Take time to reflect on your own personal thoughts and possible biases towards different cultures.
- Ask questions about the student's background and family life.
- Reach out to the parents and student. Meet before their first day if possible.
- Have language appropriate materials ready for their first day.
- Have a welcome packet available in the native language of the student (if possible) or have one in English with many visuals.
- Have books in the student's native language available in your library.

First Day:

- Be at the door to greet the child with a smile.
- Learn the student's name and say it correctly. If it is difficult for you to say, have the student say it on a voice memo and then practice.
- Have a welcome poster for the student in their native language.
- Have the other students practice saying hello in the student's native language.
- Have a buddy prepared to help the student for the first few weeks.
- Have a picture dictionary and welcome materials ready for the student.
- Introduce the student to all the other specialists and support teachers.
- Make a notecard with basic information for all specialists teachers.
- Have a device available with google translate.
- Have a visual schedule so the student knows what will happen throughout the day.
- Have yourself or another staff member available to walk the student to their bus or car after school.

During the first few weeks:

- Have visuals ready to use to begin communicating basic needs and phrases.
- Invite the student's family into the classroom to see what a typical day looks like.
- Repeat directions in a slower voice. Demonstrate or use pictures to help their comprehension of the task that needs to be done.
- Work closely with the ESL teacher to support the student in the classroom.
- Display work of the student, even if it differs from the rest of the classwork.
- Have lunch with the new student. Invite peers to join if they speak the same native language, and have the students help translate for you so you can get to know the student better.