



Embracing Newcomers: Strategies for Success

Dr. Tania Hogan
Dr. Cynthia Trinidad-Sheahan
Nelson Molina

Introductions

Dr. Tania Hogan | Executive Director | The BUENO Center at CU Boulder

Dr. Cynthia Trinidad-Sheahan | Executive Director | Colorado Association for Bilingual Education

Nelson Molina | ELD Specialist & Seal of Biliteracy Coordinator | Colorado Department of Education



Essential Foundations in Supporting Newcomers

- Establish a school environment that is welcoming, safe, and celebrates the richness of all cultures and backgrounds.
- Implement comprehensive supports that address students' holistic needs.
- Maintain a well-established system for placing newcomers with appropriate support, scaffolding and guidance.
- Foster strong connections with community organizations and school support services.
- Demonstrate an ongoing commitment to fostering the social and emotional well-being of both students and their families.
- Recognize and acknowledge the strengths and challenges of each newcomer student, tailoring support accordingly.



Strengths

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graph LR; Strengths --> Cultural Diversity; Strengths --> Linguistic Assets; Strengths --> Resilience and Adaptability; Strengths --> Varied Insights and Approaches to Problem-Solving; Strengths --> Strong Motivation to Learn and Succeed;
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Cultural Diversity

Linguistic Assets

Resilience and Adaptability

Varied Insights and Approaches to Problem-Solving

Strong Motivation to Learn and Succeed

Newcomer Attributes, Strengths and Values



Adaptability, Compassion, Commitment

Courage, Determination, Endurance

Flexibility, Honesty, Humility

Insight, Knowledge, Open-minded

Passion, Perseverance, Resilience

Responsibility, Sacrifice, Self-Control

Challenges

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graph LR; Challenges --- A[Limited proficiency in language of instruction]; Challenges --- B[Cultural Adjustment]; Challenges --- C[Educational gaps]; Challenges --- D[Trauma]; Challenges --- E[Social Integration];
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Limited proficiency in language of instruction

Cultural Adjustment

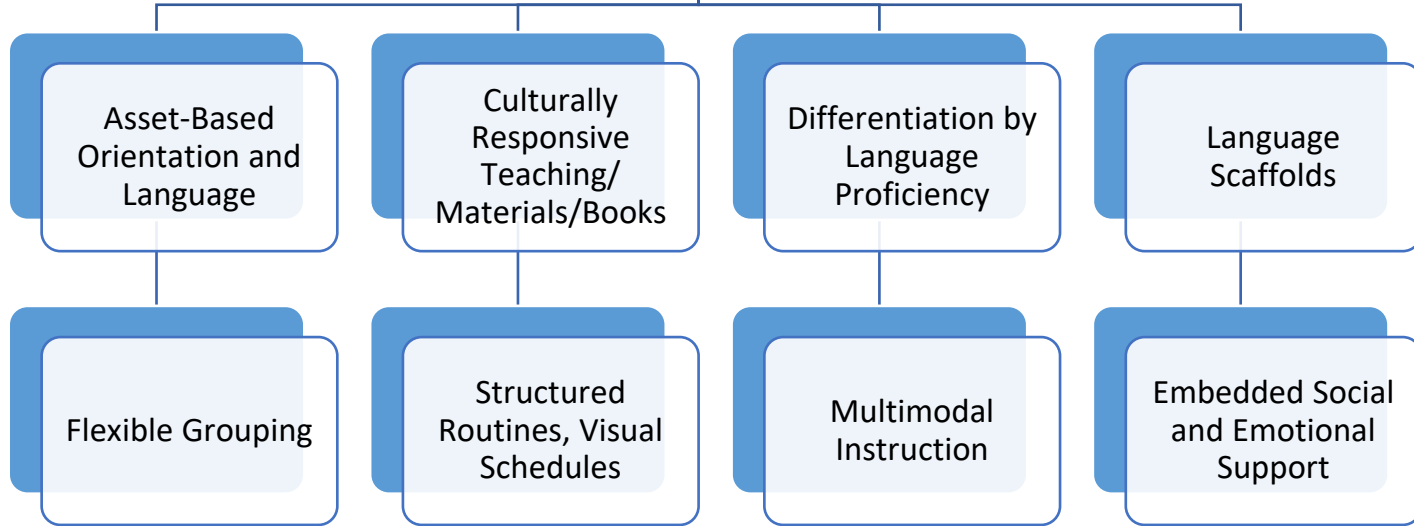
Educational gaps

Trauma

Social Integration

Teaching Newcomers with Intentionality

Thoughtful and Inclusive Approach that Adapts to Newcomers Unique Needs



We also acknowledge that students with interrupted education may need more specialized programming and assistance above and beyond what is provided to your emergent bilingual students.

Empowering Learners

Build on what students CAN DO and leverage their strengths and capacities to develop skills, competencies and confidence to encourage active learning and critical thinking.





**What does
this look like
in practice
in the
classroom?**

Science Lesson Example

Objective: Students will explore the principles of ecological interactions through a hands-on ecosystem simulation, making observations, predictions, and connections to real-world scenarios.

Provide materials like soil, plants, and small organisms. Students can role-play as scientists studying the interactions within the ecosystem, observing changes over time, and making predictions about the impact of different factors.

Lesson includes the following:

- *Active Learning:* as they engage in the exploration, fostering a deeper understanding of ecological concepts.
- *Observational Skills:* through role-playing and hands-on activities, students develop observational skills, noting changes and patterns in their simulated ecosystem.
- *Scientific Inquiry:* encourages students to ask questions, make hypotheses and conduct investigations.
- *Language Development:* students practice scientific vocabulary and language through discussions and documentation of their observations.



Adapting the Lesson to Support our Newcomer Students

Use kid-friendly language for content objective

- *I will be able to explore and understand how living things interact in a pretend world, like a mini-ecosystem, by observing and playing the roles of different organisms.*

Add a language objective

- *I will be able to use new words like 'ecosystem,' 'interaction,' and 'observation' to talk about what I see and learn.*
- *We will work together, using our new words to share ideas and make predictions about our mini-world.*



Language Supports (Scaffolds)

- Label key items (soil, plants, rocks, plastic animals) with bilingual labels
- Allow students to use simplified language to describe what they see “Plants need water.” or “Animals eat plants.”
- Use sentence frames to support language development:
 - I think the (animal) will (action) because _____.
 - As I explore the ecosystem, I can see _____.
 - When I compare _____ to _____ I see similarities in _____.
 - The way _____ interacts with _____ is interesting because _____.
 - I learned that ecosystems are made up of _____ and they rely on each other for _____.
- Teacher prompts when needed:
 - What do you think will happen next? I predict _____ or I think _____.



Translanguaging

- Students to express their observations, ideas and predictions in their native language and English.
 - Ex. "La planta necesita water"
- Compare the names of plants and animals in different languages. This will facilitate a cross-cultural exchange of vocabulary.
 - Ex. "León and Lion"
- Introduce games or activities that explicitly encourages translanguaging (ex. vocabulary matching game-English to native language or small multilingual group discussions/note-taking)



Cultural Connections

- Highlight stories and folktales about nature and interconnectedness of living things and their environment.
- Share cultural artifacts related to nature, such as tools, artwork or objects symbolizing the importance of plants and ecosystems in various cultures.
- Play cultural songs or music that celebrate nature and environment.
- Discuss cultural practices related to nature such as traditional gardening techniques, herbal medicine, or spiritual rituals involving plants.
- Allow students to share traditions, stories or practices related to plants in their culture.
 - Ask: “Are there plants that hold special meanings in your culture?”



Prompt with Higher Level Thinking Questions

Bloom's Level	Examples of Questions for "Entering Stage"
Remembering	Where is the soil located in the mini-ecosystem? Which one of the organisms is a producer in the mini-ecosystem? Point to the living organisms. Show me where water is stored.
Understanding	Put the pictures in order to show the life cycle of a plant. Which pictures shows the relationship between a predator and its prey?
Applying	Point to examples in our mini-ecosystem that provide homes for animals. Can you show what happens to plants if they don't get water? Draw or describe.
Analyzing	What is the purpose of roots in a plant? How do they help the plant survive? Show a picture of an animal. Can you use your hands to show me how its features help it live in its environment.
Evaluating	Raise your hand if you believe water is essential for the survival of living things in our mini-ecosystem? Why do you think so? Clap if you think having more plants is a good idea. What makes you think so?
Creating	What will happen if we reduce the amount of sunlight reaching our mini-ecosystem? Predict (Draw and label) what would happen to the plants and animals.

Incorporate Visuals

- Visual diagram of the mini-ecosystem illustrating the relationships between plants, animals and other components.
- Display images of plants representing plants that hold cultural significance
- Science journals—encourage icons, borders, illustrations in documenting observations and learnings.
- Prediction chart with images (graphic organizers)



Embed Social and Emotional Learning

- Role-playing component
 - emphasizing empathy and discuss how different organisms in the ecosystem might feel; consider perspectives other than their own.
- Make collaborative groups that foster a sense of belonging and shared responsibility.
- Take a mindfulness minute with nature sounds during plant observation.
- In Science Journals, prompt reflections on group experiences and empathy learning
 - “How did working in a group make you feel?”
 - “What did you learn about empathy today?”



Why should I spend the time incorporating these into my lessons?

Increases understanding and participation

Multimodal learning increases accessibility and engagement

Ensures language goals are defined and measurable

Promotes equity, sense of belonging

Supports holistic understanding of subject matter—promoting deeper learning and application of concepts

Leverages students' linguistic assets

Builds cultural awareness, values students' experiences

Visuals support comprehension and memory retention





- [OELA's Newcomer Toolkit](#)
- [Bloom's Questions by Language Proficiency Level](#)
- [Translanguaging in Curriculum and Instruction](#)
- [High Quality Instruction for Newcomer Students](#)
- [Supporting Immigrants in Schools](#)
- [Support for Immigrant/Refugee Students](#)
- [Humanizing Education for Immigrant and Refugee Youth](#)
- [Modifying Instruction for Newcomer ELLs](#)



tania.hogan@colorado.edu



Supporting Secondary Newcomer Students

Not Just an Educational Gap...A Language Gap for Families

“Take it away from the culture, and you take away its greetings, its curses, its praises, its laws, its literature, its songs, its riddles, its proverbs, its cures, its wisdom, its prayers. The culture could not be expressed and handed on in any other way. What would be left?”

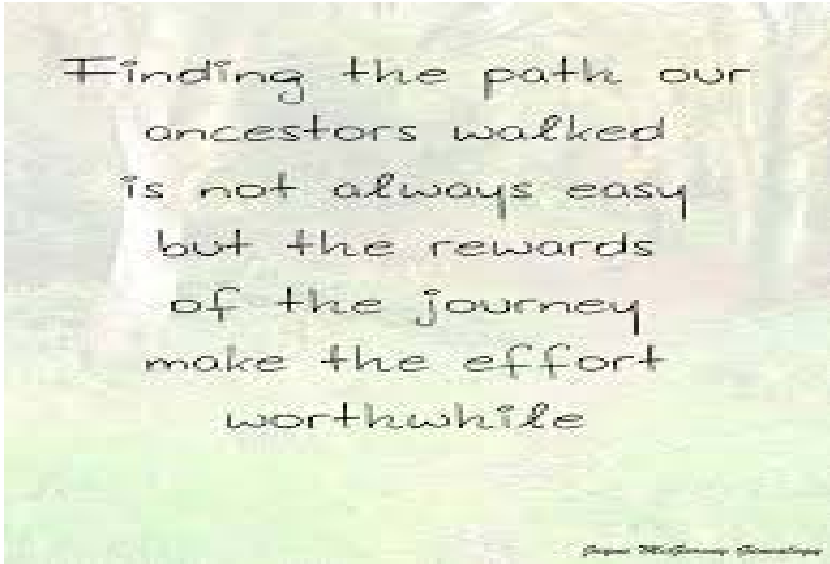
Joshua Fishman 1994



We have a story of how our families came to the United States...What is your story?

Take a minute to reflect on the journey of your family or ancestors.

What are you doing to uphold the dream they came with?



Do this/Not this...

Impact of gestures and tone of voice

Facial expressions, tone of voice and physical movements. When we use our gestures and tone of voice to help students develop trust and safety, we make space for learning.



Body language

Maintaining a calm and relaxed body posture



Value students background knowledge

Students are coming with a plethora of knowledge. Might not be academic, but problem solving skills, in their personal life is an asset to students learning.

Welcome...now what?



1

Ask questions about your students

2

How familiar are you with their home country?

3

Do you have language supports for the family?



Topic of Interest...

Emergent Bilingual Secondary Students may not have all the academic tools when they arrive to the U.S.

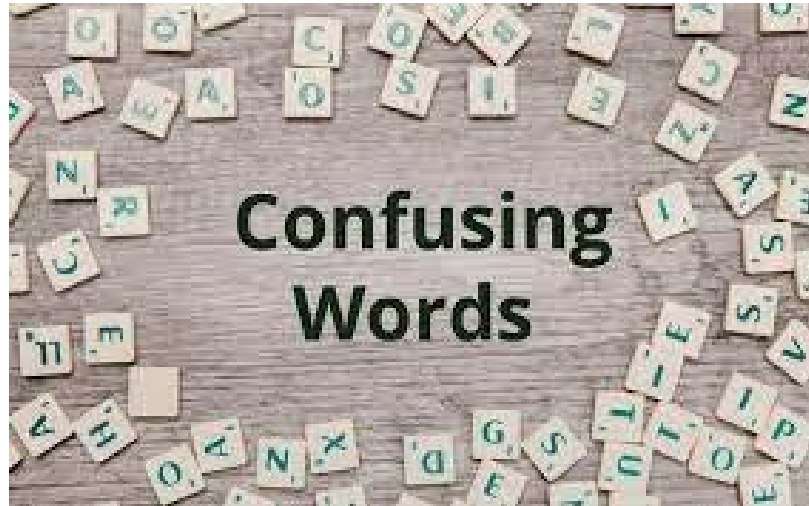
How do we support them? How do we support language, culture and the development of their identity at such a critical age.

How do we support their families? And not lead with "bias"!



At the secondary level what academic language or acronyms do we use and don't explain?

- Electives
- Credits
- "ELD classes"
- IEP
- Transcripts
- FASFA
- Alternative
- Assessment

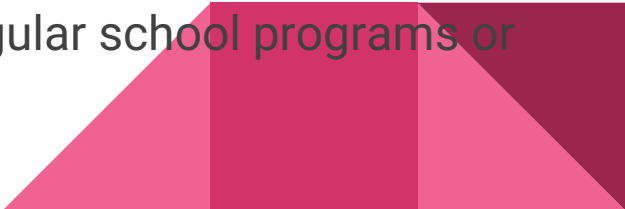


How we do things in U.S. Schools may not be the way it is done in our students home country!

- Start and end time of the school day
- Lunches/Do we provide cultural food options?
- Parent engagement/involvement
- Conferences
- Graduations
- Prom/homecoming
- Holiday celebrations



Strategies for supporting newcomer students

- Flexible scheduling of courses and students
 - Careful staffing plus targeted professional development
 - Basic literacy development materials for adolescents and reading interventions adapted for English language learners
 - Content area instruction to fill gaps in educational backgrounds
 - Extended time for instruction and support (e.g., after school, Saturday, and summer programs)
 - Connections with families and social services
 - Diagnostics and monitoring of student data
 - Transition measures to ease newcomers into the regular school programs or beyond high school
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Languages spoken by our immigrant and refugee students in Colorado schools:

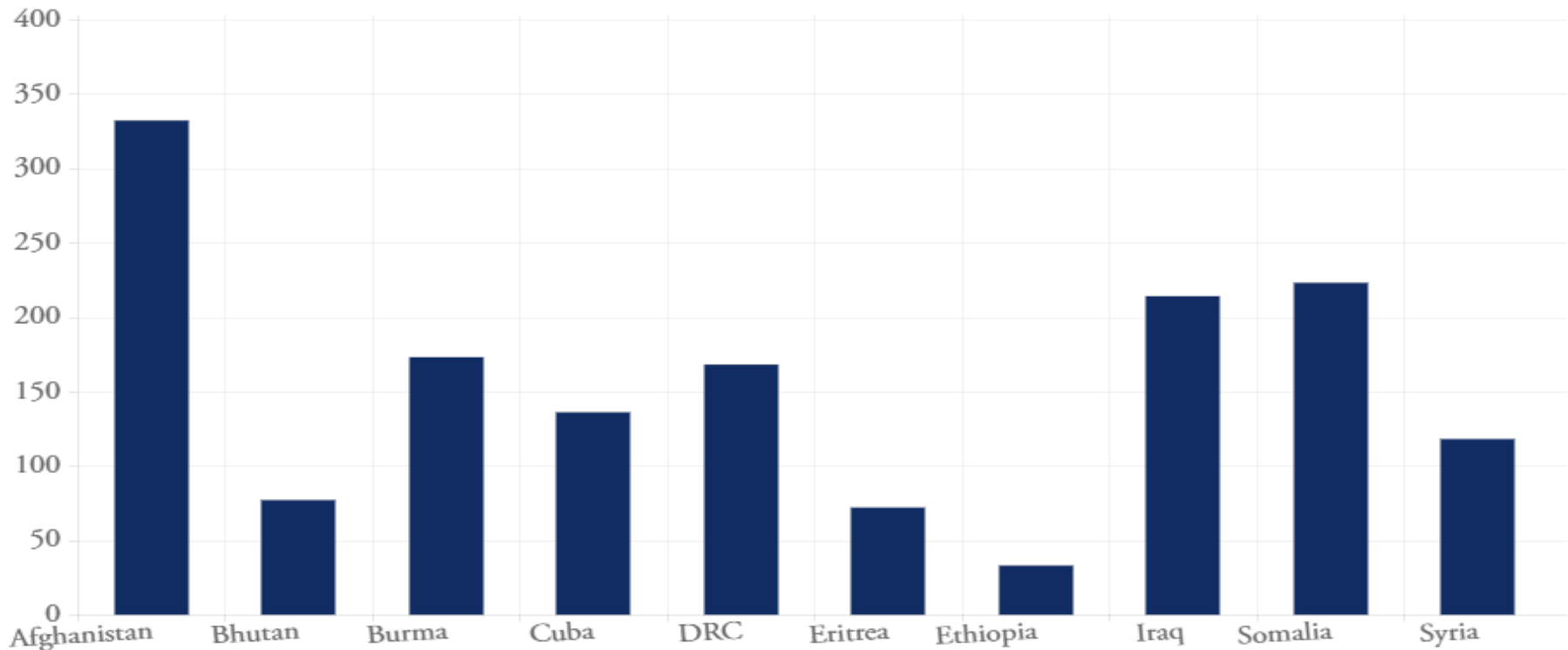
According to CDE there are 280 different languages spoken in schools by our students.

- Spanish being the most spoken language
- Somali
- Burmese
- Royhingya


[English Language Development Guidebook | CDE \(state.co.us\)](#)



10 LARGEST COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN OF PRIMARY REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT (STATE WIDE)- Colorado




With the linguistic and cultural diversity what can we do?

- Never lead or teach with assumption
 - Ask questions: Is there a case worker for refugee students?
 - Ask questions: Is there immigration support? Job, food or community connections?
 - Home visits: Community based cultures will meet as a community either at a home or at a refugee or immigrant organization.
 - Churches are great connections to have meetings
 - Invite to your school to tour and to look at what you are teaching or the school you are leading
 - Create a WRAP-AROUND team
- 

More strategies:

"But no one at our school speaks their language" : There are many organizations that will support. There are translation platforms that will support.

- **Talking points:** Great platform for translation and direct communication by text and can attach documents. <https://talkingpts.org/>
 - **Mental Health resources** works closely with families regarding trauma and assign case workers to the family or individual who speaks their language. This person can come to the school for support.
 - **Administrators** learn with staff
 - **All staff** that interacts with students needs the knowledge
- 

Create a wrap around team...Do you have one in your school?



Resources/Support:

- <https://www.ircnoco.org/stats>
- https://www.cde.state.co.us/cde_english/eld-guidebook-2021-chapter-1
- <https://talkingpts.org/>
- [Helping Newcomer Students Succeed in Secondary Schools and Beyond - Center for Applied Linguistics \(cal.org\)](https://www.cal.org/)



¡Muchas Gracias!

"Don't waste your ancestors journey!"

~ Dr. Cynthia Trinidad-Sheahan



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Hiring International Educators

2024

Nelson Molina

Conducted by the Office of Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Education

Hiring needs

- Elementary Bilingual Educators
- Foreign Language Teachers: Spanish, French, Chinese, etc
- Mathematics
- Science
- Special Education



J1 Teacher Exchange Program

- The J1 Program is a Department of State initiative that allows exchange visitors to teach in the US schools in grades K-12 for up to three years
- The program can be extended for two additional years for a total of 5 years

Note: Attorneys are not involved in this program



J1 Teacher Exchange Program Requirements

- Be qualified/certified to teach primary or secondary school in their country of nationality
- Have earned at least the equivalent of a U.S. bachelor's degree in either education or the academic subject field in which they plan to teach
- Be working as a teacher in the home country at the time of application



J1 Teacher Exchange Program Requirements

- Applicant must also have two years of full-time teaching experience within the last eight years
- Be of good character and reputation (a background check is required)
- Meet Department of Education eligibility and certification standards of the U.S. state in which they will teach
- Demonstrate proficiency of the English language
- Agree to come to the United States temporarily as a full-time teacher in an accredited primary or secondary school



J1 Teacher Exchange Program: Credential Evaluation

- Candidate must hold a Bachelor Degree (BA) in Education obtained in her/his home country that is equivalent to a BA in the US
- Candidate must complete a credential evaluation by any of the www.naces.org members
- The credential evaluation must be completed before a final approval to participate in the J1 Program is granted





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H1 B Visa

H1 B Visa

- An H-1B visa is a nonimmigrant work visa that allows U.S. employers to temporarily employ foreign workers in specialty occupations that require specialized knowledge and a bachelor's degree or equivalent. The visa is tied to the employer who sponsors it and the duration of stay is three years, extendable to six years. H-1B visa holders are subject to Social Security and Medicare taxes and can apply for employment-based green cards. The number of H-1B visas issued each year is limited by law.

- **Note:** An immigration attorney is needed



- Cap-exempt refers to jobs that are exempt from the annual cap on foreign workers with an H-1B visa¹. This exemption allows someone to obtain sponsorship from an employer and find employment in the United States even if every regular visa is taken¹. This category applies to those seeking employment in an exempt organization, an institution of higher education, or a related or affiliated non-profit entity². The H-1B nonimmigrant visa allows for foreign nationals with the requisite education to work in professional (specialty) occupations in the US.





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Implications

Cost for relocation

- Cost of visa processing at the US embassy: \$160
- Cost of SEVIS fee: \$220
- Transportation to host community: ?
- Airline ticket: ??
- Initial housing cost: ???
- Rent and deposit
- Utilities

- Estimated cost per person: 8K-10K





- Language-local community, acronyms, etc
- **Classroom management**
- **Lesson planning**
- **Parent engagement=Parent-teacher conferences**
- Teacher-to-student relationship
- Teacher-to-Principal relationship
- Classroom observations
- **Medical system**
- Taxes
- Driving



- Praxis-Language barrier
 - Take each part of the test separate: math, literacy, science, etc
- Secondary Vs. Elementary educators: Secondary educators are NOT a good fit for elementary grade levels
- Foreign Credential Evaluation: Required
- Student teaching/practicum:
- PK teachers have hard times to pass PK Praxis Test

Note: CDE has an Exchange Educator Interim Authorization that can be renewed for up to two years



Best Practices to Support International Teachers

- Provide a relocation bonus
- Provide pre arrival orientations: coordination of arrival assistance
- Provide temporary housing
- Assign a local mentor for relocation assistance
- Assign a school mentor for assistance regarding teaching licensure, school culture, lesson planning, etc
- Allow classroom observations focused on lesson planning, lesson delivery and classroom management
- Have frequent opportunities with school leader/supervisor to establish a relationship and provide ongoing assistance as needed
- Provide list of local resources: hospital, church, recreational center, libraries, stores, used furnisher, etc





Questions?