

## School Level Policies for Migrant Education Pointers for policy development

### STRENGTHEN LANGUAGE SUPPORT

- Provide continuous and systematic language support across different grades and education levels. Develop a clear language policy with principles and goals for language development support across the entire school system. Pay special attention to newly arrived older immigrants.
- Design curricula and guidelines that define goals and standards for language acquisition. The guidelines should aim to integrate language and content learning.
- Design assessment criteria and procedures carefully to identify the individual language support needs of each student and develop practical tools such as assessment kits and guidelines that are age and culturally appropriate. Establish guidelines on how to share student information across transitions.
- Provide additional financial resources or additional teachers to schools with immigrant students who need language support.
- Train all teachers in second language acquisition to ensure smooth transition from induction to integration and extend support measures for migrant students beyond the initial settlement phase.
- Provide an early start in language stimulation, and support parents in reading at home both in their mother language and the language of instruction.
- Communicate clearly with parents about language support opportunities. Encourage schools to find local and cost-effective solutions to provide translated materials and interpreters. Encourage immigrant communities and parents to be involved in mother language teaching and as role models.
- Value mother languages of immigrant students. Offer elective subjects in the mother language as foreign language learning and/or allow the mother language as a subject in the state examination system.

### SUPPORT EFFECTIVE TEACHING AND LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS FOR MIGRANT STUDENTS

- Ensure that all teachers have specific knowledge about second language development, understanding of language and literacy development, second language acquisition and academic language growth.
- Provide guidelines and support for school leaders and teachers in multicultural schools to help them address diversity issues and organise second language development across the curriculum.
- Strengthen the diagnostic competencies of teachers and develop diagnostic tools and materials that teachers can use to monitor progress and performance of their students.
- Review existing policies on initial and in-service teacher education to ensure that they consistently and explicitly address the needs of immigrant students. Include modules on formative assessment, differentiated instruction and dealing with diversity in mandatory teacher training courses.
- Offer targeted initial and in-service training on diversity for school leaders, as well as in whole-school professional development opportunities.
- Encourage the distribution of leadership in schools by offering training possibilities for leadership teams and by recognising and rewarding teachers' contributions to leadership.
- Strengthen the capacity of teachers and school leaders in assessment and evaluation. Provide tools, incentives and feedback mechanisms for schools to engage in school-self evaluation and continuously improve performance.
- Monitor and evaluate how teacher and school-leader training for diversity translates into practice, to find out which types of training are most effective.

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- Support research on effective practice in teaching immigrant students. Designate a research body or clearinghouse to bring together evidence and examples of good practice and disseminate to schools.
- Increase school co-operation and ideas sharing, especially among schools with similar proportions of immigrant students. Provide for formalised networks of schools and especially school leaders to allow school professionals to learn from each other.
- Hire additional teachers in schools with highly diverse student populations to:
  - create smaller classes
  - enable teachers to provide more individualised support
  - collaborate with classroom assistants and second language teachers
- Increase the share of immigrant-origin students in teacher training and recruit more teachers with immigrant backgrounds, especially in schools with high proportions of immigrant students.

## ENHANCE PARENTAL AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

- Ensure that information on the education system and on existing support is accessible for immigrant parents and their children. Provide information in major immigrant languages and disseminate information through multiple channels.
- Develop a national platform to promote and support immigrant parent involvement, and to help schools and local education authorities involve immigrant parents in their children's education.
- Support and evaluate experimental programmes in municipalities and schools to involve parents in their children's education. Identify good practices and disseminate such practices to other schools.
- Provide initial teacher education and in-service training on how to build partnerships with parents and communities.
- Ensure that schools, in co-operation with relevant authorities, where possible, develop plans for parental involvement. Evaluate adequacy of plans and monitor progress towards achieving their objectives.
- Consider establishing home/school/community liaison coordinators within schools to facilitate contact between teachers, families and communities. Capitalise on the resources of immigrant parents in reaching out to other immigrant parents (e.g. as home visitors).
- Encourage schools to draw on local businesses and community members (particularly immigrants) as additional resources for immigrant education and as role models for immigrant students.
- Engage college students with immigrant backgrounds to help immigrant students in primary and secondary schools through mentor programmes.
- Enhance cross-sectoral co-operation between schools, social welfare, health and housing to improve education outcomes of immigrant students.

## FURTHER READING

These general pointers for policy development are drawn from the OECD Reviews of Migrant Education, which covered policy examples from 22 countries. The findings of this review are presented in *Closing the Gap for Immigrant Students: Policies, Practice and Performance*, published in April 2010. Policy reviews in 6 countries (Austria, Denmark, Ireland, the Netherlands, Norway and Sweden), background reports prepared by 12 countries and other documents of the review are also available on the OECD website [www.oecd.org/edu/migration](http://www.oecd.org/edu/migration).