

Providing Information about School Systems and Policies

Newcomer students and their families may not be familiar with school systems and educational policies in our country and would benefit from **specific information provided in a language they understand**. As the families feel more comfortable and welcome in the schools, they may want to participate in the process of reviewing or creating procedures and policies to positively impact their child's academic experience.

Information Schools Should Provide to Newcomer Families to Support Integration

- Course schedules (e.g., child will have more than one teacher and more than one classroom)
- Physical layout of the school
- Homework policy and purpose
- Attendance policy (e.g., mandatory phone call and note when child is sick)
- Discipline policy
- Immunization policy
- Dress code, winter clothing, physical education uniforms
- Cafeteria options
- Subsidized lunch applications
- Transportation options to and from school
- Back to School Night information
- Progress report and report card descriptions
- Parent-teacher conference dates and purpose
- After-school clubs and sports options
- Special education services
- Summer school availability
- The role of guidance counselors and other non-teaching staff

Source: Short, D. J., & Boyson, B. A. (2012). Helping newcomer students succeed in secondary schools and beyond. Washington, DC: Center for Applied Linguistics (p. 52). Retrieved from <http://www.cal.org/resource-center/publications/helpingnewcomer-students>