



Thankful Tree Elementary School

# UTILIZING SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING WITH AND FOR NEWCOMERS

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## Table of Contents

Acknowledgments

Executive Summary

Introduction and Context

Introduction

Organizational Context

Project Questions and Purpose

Literature Review

Introduction

Benefits of SEL

Staff Development and Impact on Student's SEL

Family Engagement and Impact on Student's SEL

Family Community Partnerships and Impact on Student's SEL

Difference in SEL between Newcomers and Non-Newcomers

Barriers to SEL

Conceptual Framework

Design and Methods

Strengths

Limitations

Surveys

Teacher Survey Design

Teacher Survey Sample

Family Survey Design

Family Survey Sample

Survey Analysis

Interviews and Focus Groups

Principal and District Administrator Interview and Focus Group Design

Teachers and Staff Interview and Focus Group Design

Interview and Focus Group Analysis

Family Focus Group Design and Analysis

Newcomer Classroom Observations

Key Findings

Research Question 1

Research Question 2

Research Question 3

Discussion

Recommendations

References

Appendix

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## Executive Summary

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Maple Walnut School District (MWSD) is a public school district in Maple, CA, serving students in grades K-8. It consists of nine elementary and two middle schools serving approximately 4,600 students. It employs approximately 280 teachers, 290 classified staff members, and 25 administrators. The district boasts incredible linguistic and racial diversity. It comprises families from an array of socioeconomic statuses. Thirty-one percent of students qualify for free or reduced lunch. Approximately twenty-three percent of students are classified as English Learners (ELs). ELs are not always the same as Newcomers. A Newcomer is defined as a student who has lived in the United States for less than six months or had no formal schooling in their home country.

Maple Walnut offers a variety of resources for Newcomers, including housing. An important service is housing assistance to families through the work of their homeless liaison. Maple Walnut has a School and Community Engagement Facilitator for every school who supports all Newcomer families and their needs. Academically, the district has designed a class, English Language Development (ELD), for K-8 Newcomer students who speak a language other than English and who score a one through four on an exam called SLPAC. There is also a sheltered English Language Arts (ELA) course this year for all Newcomer students. Additionally, Maple Walnut recently hired a Health and Wellness Coordinator who is working on determining grade-level Social Emotional Learning (SEL) goals. Currently, the district does not have an SEL curriculum.

Newcomer students and their families can face a range of challenges. As the MWSD RFA states, “schools and districts often struggle to adequately serve Newcomer students.” MWSD leadership has sought an analysis of qualitative and quantitative data to help them understand and provide the resources and support Newcomers need to succeed academically and socially. Schools may also need to provide additional social and emotional support to help Newcomer students feel welcome and connected to their new school communities.

This capstone project explored this overarching question by addressing three research questions:

- 1) What SEL supports are needed by Newcomer students and families?
- 2) How does MWSD utilize staff and staff development in supporting Newcomer social-emotional outcomes?
- 3) How does MWSD utilize family engagement and family community partnerships in supporting Newcomer social-emotional outcomes?

This project utilized quantitative and qualitative analyses to answer the above three research questions. Data for quantitative analysis were obtained through surveys of Newcomer families and Newcomer teachers at four of the 11 schools with the largest population of Newcomers. The family survey was translated into Spanish, Mandarin, and Russian, the most spoken languages in the district by Newcomers, to increase participation. Qualitative data came from four sources: 1) a focus group discussion with Newcomer families, 2) one-on-one interviews with three school principals, 3) focus groups with schoolteachers and staff, and 4) one-on-one interviews and focus group discussions with district administrators. Interviews & focus groups were conducted with

school administrators & staff of the same schools. The findings of quantitative and qualitative analyses were triangulated.

The teacher survey and interview questions were derived from Suárez-Orozco, Suárez-Orozco, and Todorova, (2010), changing the word “immigrant” to Newcomer. These questions were a combination of Likert scale and multiple-answer and covered everything from perceptions of meeting the different needs of Newcomers to comparisons between Newcomers and non-Newcomers to Professional Development and other workshops for teachers/staff aimed at supporting Newcomer students and families. The last portion of the survey was demographic questions. A total of eight usable responses were received, representing a 13% response rate.

Many questions for the Family survey came from Tool 1-5 Nebraska Migrant Education Program – Sample Focus Group Interview Questions for staff, parents, and students (Nebraska Department of Education, 2020). Others were inspired by work from the American Federation of Teachers and the National Education Association (2018). The last portion of the survey was demographic questions. The open-ended questions in the surveys above that often take longer to answer were saved for the focus groups as this qualitative information was too important. A total of eight usable responses were received, for a 9% response rate.

Because of the ordinal nature of the responses and the low number of responses, I first converted the questions related to perceptions to binary variables. Specifically, for the answers to questions related to the needs of Newcomers, I coded the answer as “1” if the respondents perceived the need to be at least “Mostly Met” and “0” otherwise. For the answers to questions related to the comparison of Newcomers with non-Newcomers, I coded the answer as “1” if the perception was that Newcomers were at least “A Little Better” and “0” otherwise. For the answers to questions related to the usefulness of professional development programs, I coded the answer as “1” if the respondent perceived it to be at least “Very Useful” and “0” otherwise. I also converted “Experience,” “Age,” “Ethnicity/Race,” and “Immigrant Status” to binary variables, coding “Experience” of more than 10 years, “Age” of more than 40, “Ethnicity/Race” of Caucasian, and at least one parent being an “Immigrant” as to “1.” I then used Wilcoxon Median test, also known as Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test, to test the differences in the perceptions of respondents across Experience, Age, Ethnicity, and Immigrant Status.

Several key findings emerged from Median tests:

1. Educators recognize the diversity within the Newcomer population and that this diversity makes it challenging to provide support.
2. Newcomers face challenges in connecting with peers and teachers.
3. Newcomer English language and communication needs are, at best, partially met.
4. Mental Health and Trauma have been one key family engagement and family community partnerships utilized by MWSD.

Aligning my work with relevant literature, I make several recommendations about how MWSD can utilize staff and staff development, family engagement, and family community partnerships to serve the SEL needs of Newcomers and their families.

1. My research revealed that: 1) Newcomers face challenges in connecting with peers and teachers, 2) MWSD’s focus on culture and trust are critical to supporting Newcomers, and 3)

Constructing Community has been a large way that MWSD has utilized family engagement and family community partnerships. Therefore, I recommend that MWSD implement transformative SEL in advisory without using affinity spaces, as explained in Jagers et al. (2019), Putbrese (1989), and McCall, Romero, Yang, and Weigand (2023).

2. My research also found that: 1) Educators recognize the diversity within the Newcomer population and that this diversity makes it challenging to provide support, and 2) Resources (people and organizations) inside and outside the school community have been critical to MWSD's family engagement and family community partnerships. Aligned with McCall, et al.'s findings, I recommend MWSD partner with school-based psychologists to ensure the components of cultural humility and social justice are utilized when making decisions around Newcomers.
3. My research found: 1) while teachers, staff, and administrators get relevant PD training, many teachers (particularly less experienced and younger teachers) believe more is needed; although MWSD has focused on Newcomer Mental Health and Trauma in staff development in the past, more training is needed; and 3) teachers recognize diversity within the Newcomer population and the challenges that this diversity creates in providing support to Newcomers. Aligned with the findings of Fletcher-Wood (2020) and Bergmark (2020), I recommend MWSD create and sustain collaborative, community of practice Professional Development opportunities by partnering with outside experts and ensuring teachers and staff have meaningful opportunities to use, practice, and apply what they have learned.
4. Based on the same two findings in 2 above, I also recommend MWSD develop an asset-based community development intake system that promotes efficiency by merging existing services. In my judgment, MWSD can merge existing services and be more efficient. By bringing Newcomer families and community partners together to talk about the services they can provide, MWSD can ensure that each partner and the services they provide will be most valuable, assets-based, inclusive, and focused to address the needs of Newcomer students and families.
5. My research also shows that Constructing Community has been a large way that MWSD has utilized family engagement and family community partnerships. Based on this and the second finding in 2 above, I recommend MWSD create more partnerships with groups involved in immigrant legal aid who can work in schools and support Newcomers. These partners could train teachers and staff to better understand the legal rights and legal difficulties that Newcomer students and their families face. A good place to look for these partnerships that could be affordable is local universities like Stanford and San Jose State, which could take cases on a pro bono basis and provide clinics for staff development.
6. Based on my findings in 2 and 4 above and Dr. Brian Barnes' workshop on Community Responsiveness in Schools, I further recommend MWSD connect families and community partners in ways that can promote direct contact with youth and families, including leading to familial employment.
7. Because the success of all the previous recommendations hinges on the availability and deployment of resources, I recommend that MWSD provide principals flexibility to serve the needs of Newcomer students and families. Unless a mid-year, emergency rainy day fund exists, MWSD cannot meet the needs of a commonly occurring influx of Newcomer students and their families. One possible option is hiring individuals with dual roles. A team of certified teachers and mental health providers with other expertise areas, such as Special Education, Math Education, or trauma informed practices, can work at the central office as

instructional coaches or curriculum and pedagogy creators. However, if there is an influx of Newcomers to a specific school site, they can pivot into schools as needed. These individuals can receive a normal salary for their work at the central office and an additional stipend if they are needed back in school.



# Introduction and Context

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## Introduction

Maple, California, has a population of 82,739 people, comprising 54.4% White, 31.8% Asian, and 18.3% Hispanic/Latino (U.S. Census Bureau). The city has three school districts. Two serve students in grades K-8, and the other high school students (9-12). The city has developed drastically over the past decade. Like other cities in Northern California, Maple has seen notable shifts in housing prices, rent, and the changing demographics of its residents. Despite these financial and other hurdles, many families have moved to the city for various reasons, including jobs (at Google and other technology companies or universities) and political turmoil and instability in their home countries.

Many recent immigrants (students and their families) need support around social-emotional skills, academics, and mental health because of culture shock, migration hardship, or traumatic experiences (Office of English Acquisition, 2023; Robertson, K., & Lafond, S. 2023). Social-Emotional Learning (SEL), defined in the literature review below, is a great mechanism for schools to improve both short- and long-term outcomes for students in both the academic and behavioral domains. SEL can be implemented in a myriad of ways, including school-based staff and staff development, family engagement, and community partnerships.

As discussed in the literature review section below, SEL has been shown to have both short- and long-term benefits. Equally important, SEL has been shown to benefit students from marginalized communities.

## Organizational Context

Maple Walnut School District (MWSD) is a public school district in the city serving students in grades K-8. MWSD consists of nine elementary and two middle schools serving approximately 4,600 students. It employs approximately 280 teachers, 290 classified staff members, and 25 administrators. The district boasts incredible linguistic and racial diversity. Students and their families speak 50 different languages. MWSD's website shows that 23% of students are White, 39% are Hispanic/Latino, 21% are Asian, 2% are Filipino, 1% are African American, and 0.5% are Pacific Islander. As expressed in their RFA, over the last couple of years, the population of Hispanic/Latino has decreased as the population of Asian students has increased. The percentage of White students has remained the same. Since 2019, student enrollment across the district is down by about 5%.

The development of Maple has resulted in an increase in the cost of living. According to the RFA, the cost of living is now 315% of the national average, with housing costs at about 772% of the national average" (2023, p. 1). Despite this apparent wealth the district comprises families from an array of socioeconomic statuses. According to the MWSD website, 31% of students qualify for free or reduced lunch. The district serves students from different linguistic backgrounds. Approximately 23% of their students are classified as English Learners (ELs). Neither the website nor the RFA states the percentage of students who are Newcomers.

Additionally, not all Newcomer students are ELs. Despite the challenges and diversity of needs of Newcomer children and their families, it is critical that districts and schools provide access to both the resources and support they need.

Maple Walnut offers a variety of resources for Newcomers, including housing. An important service is housing assistance to families through the work of their homeless liaison. MWSD defines homelessness based on the district's predetermined ratio of bedrooms to kids. A student who is either unhoused or has no permanent address is also considered homeless. MWSD's definition of homeless often includes more Newcomer families than non-Newcomers, as most Newcomer families live in multi-family households.

Maple Walnut has a School and Community Engagement Facilitator for every school. This individual often supports all Newcomer families and their needs. Additionally, the district recently hired a Health and Wellness Coordinator who is working on determining grade-level SEL goals. Currently, the district does not have an SEL curriculum or anything specific for Newcomers. Academically, the district has designed a class for these students called English Language Development (ELD). This class is specifically for Newcomers in Kindergarten through 8th grade who speak a language other than English and who score a one through four on an exam called SLPAC. There is a sheltered English Language Arts (ELA) course this year for all Newcomer students. This means that all Newcomer students only have other Newcomer students in this ELA course. This ELA course is taught by one of the newly hired Newcomer teachers.

## Project Questions and Purpose

MWSD leadership has sought an analysis of qualitative and quantitative data to help them understand and provide the resources and support Newcomers need to succeed.

The district defines a Newcomer as either a student who has lived in the United States for less than six months or who had no formal schooling in their home country. Newcomer students and their families can face a range of challenges. As stated in the MWSD RFA, “schools and district often struggle to adequately serve Newcomer students, who are recent immigrants or refugees and may have limited English proficiency and unique cultural backgrounds” (p. 3). These students may have difficulties adjusting to a new school system, dealing with culture shock, and dealing with trauma from their migratory experiences.

As stated in MWSD's RFA, schools must provide Newcomer students and their families with high-quality support and services to ensure students succeed academically and socially. Schools may also need to provide additional social and emotional support to help Newcomer students feel welcome and connected to their new school communities” (RFA, 2023, p. 3). Nevertheless, to support the academic and social growth and success of Newcomer students, schools and the district must offer excellent support and resources. This may include specialized language instruction, culturally responsive teaching practices, and targeted interventions to help students catch up with their peers” (RFA, 2023, p. 3).

Thus, the overarching question for this Capstone Project is how Newcomers' SEL outcomes compare to non-Newcomers SEL outcomes. The project will explore this overarching question by addressing three research questions:

1. What SEL supports are needed by Newcomer students and families?
2. How does MWSD utilize staff and staff development in supporting Newcomer social-emotional outcomes?
3. How does MWSD utilize family engagement and family community partnerships in supporting Newcomer social-emotional outcomes?

## Literature Review

### Introduction

The literature review focuses on the benefits of Social-Emotional Learning (SEL), arguments against it, its operationalization, its impact on students, staff development, family engagement, family community partnerships, differences in SEL between Newcomers and non-Newcomers, and its limitations. A definition for each of the key terms and their source is shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1 – Key Terms and Their Definitions

Key Term	Definition	Source
SEL	An integral part of education and human development, SEL is the process through which all young people and adults acquire and apply the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to develop healthy identities, manage emotions and achieve personal and collective goals, feel, and show empathy for others, establish and maintain supportive relationships, and make responsible and caring decisions.	CASEL
Staff Development	The processes and activities designed to increase the professional knowledge, skills, and attitudes of staff members so that they can improve the learning of students.	Minnesota Department of Education
Family Engagement	A practice in which families and school personnel collaborate to support and improve the learning and development of children.	IRIS Center at Peabody
Family Community Partnerships	A shared responsibility and reciprocal process whereby schools and other community agencies and organizations engage families in meaningful and culturally appropriate ways, and families take initiative to actively support their children's development and learning.	The National Center on Safe and Supportive Learning Environments

## **Benefits of SEL**

SEL entails both long- and short-term benefits. Long-term benefits of SEL include improved student graduation rates, increased motivation to succeed in college and career, fewer societal costs as adults, lower rates of criminal activity and arrests, reduced utilization of substance abuse, and higher wages (McClelland et al. 2017; Bridgeland, Bruce, and Hariharan 2013; Aos et al., 2004). Drug possession and use crimes disproportionately affect Black and Latinx individuals. Studies have found a significant and negative linkage between SEL competencies and substance use (Taylor et al., 2017; Guerrero et al., 2016; Furlong et al., 2014; Durlak et al., 2011). Yang and Golshirazi (2023) found the positive association between school victimization and substance use was mitigated among students with higher SEL.

Development of social-emotional skills, academic functioning, mental health, and overall health and well-being of students (Dowling et al., 2019; Jones et al., 2017) and improved attitudes, behavior, and academic performance (Durlak et al., 2011) are shown to be short term benefits of SEL.

Importantly, SEL has been shown to benefit students from marginalized communities. Jagers et al. (2019) looked at community partners who offer structured learning opportunities. They found these organizations are typically overlooked in conversations about how and where to best promote academic, social, and emotional growth among young people. "They are crucial for achieving SEL in the service of equity and excellence" (p. 37). Several similar studies have found positive outcomes among Black and Latinx youth from low- and middle-income families. Related, past research has demonstrated that the academic benefits of supportive relationships with teachers and school mentors are magnified for economically disadvantaged students, including immigrant youth (Muller, 2001; Stanton-Salazar, 2001).

SEL offers many other benefits. The first is the creation of robust and respectful relationships between young people and adults (Jagers et al., 2019). These relationships encourage co-learning. Co-learning encourages participants to "examine root causes of inequity and to develop collaborative solutions that lead to personal, communal, and societal well-being" (Jagers et al., 2019, p. 2). CASEL's wheel of competence (shown in the Appendix as Image 1) includes the following: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making. These competencies are critical because they promote individual improvement & accountability and understanding & care for others. In conjunction with CASEL's wheel, Jagers et al. highlight other benefits of SEL, including identity, agency, belonging, collaborative problem-solving, and curiosity.

Other benefits of SEL include the development of social-emotional skills, self-awareness, self-regulation, self-management, social awareness, responsible decision-making, relationship skills, academic functioning, mental health, and overall health and well-being of students (Hayashi et al., 2022; Dowling et al., 2019; Jones et al., 2017; Denham & Brown, 2010; Liew & McTigue, 2010) and better academic performance and prosocial behavior and attitudes (McCall et al., 2023; Green et al., 2021). These findings align with those of Durlak et al. (2011) that SEL programs improve attitudes, behavior, and academic performance. Along the same line, SEL programs are shown to improve the processes through which children and adults acquire and effectively apply the knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary to manage their emotions, set and

achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions (Dippold, 2021; Weissberg & Cascarino, 2013).

Teachers' perceptions of the benefits of SEL align with the benefits found in the literature reviewed above. A study by Bridgeland, Bruce, and Hariharan (2013) found more than three-quarters of teachers believe a larger focus by schools on SEL will have a major benefit for students in the crucial areas of workforce readiness (87 percent), school attendance and graduation (80 percent), life success (87 percent), college preparation (78 percent), and academic success (75 percent). Teachers also report relational and academic benefits: 94 percent say teaching social and emotional skills will probably or definitely improve relationships between teachers and students, 93 percent say it will reduce bullying, and 77 percent think social and emotional skills will improve students' academic performance.

### **Staff Development and Impact on Students' SEL**

To successfully implement SEL, teachers should be provided with high-quality professional development in teaching social and emotional skills during both pre-service (before the school year) and in-service (professional development during the year) training (Bridgeland, Bruce, and Hariharan, 2013). Kendziora and Yoder (2016) found staff needs training and support for SEL programs and practices to implement SEL practices effectively. These include: 1) providing professional development on what SEL is, why it is important, and how it connects to academic skills, and 2) collaborating with evidence-based SEL programs to give teachers the training, resources, and tools to teach social and emotional skills. Kendziora and Yoder (2016) also found that staff needs to 1) incorporate SEL practices into classroom observations, walkthroughs, and peer observations, providing feedback to educators on SEL practices, and 2) implement professional learning communities that allow educators to discuss SEL practices. Aligned, Bridgeland, Bruce, and Hariharan (2013) also found that professional development for teachers, principals, and professional and paraprofessional staff should focus on teaching explicit core social and emotional skills, embedding SEL in regular instruction, and creating opportunities for students to apply social and emotional skills throughout the day.

By ensuring staff are knowledgeable about SEL, we can ensure that students will reap the benefits of SEL (Hurd, Brinegar, & Harrison, 2021). As Bishop and Harrison (2021) found, educators who utilize SEL create a culture and community in which the school environment is inviting, safe, inclusive, and supportive of all; and health and wellness are supported in curricula, school-wide programs, and related policies. Bridgeland, Bruce, and Hariharan (2013) found four benefits for educators who implement SEL. First, the implementation of SEL can help educators implement mindfulness in affirming, culturally responsive, and trauma-informed practices. Restorative Justice Practices (RJP) is a positive approach to discipline that allows students opportunities to develop social-emotional skills such as conflict resolution and self-management. Second, SEL can also change a teacher's beliefs and mindsets about how discipline practices are necessary for implementing change around negative behaviors. Third, utilizing SEL can support educators' belief that developing social and emotional skills will help students flourish both personally and academically. Educators who use SEL can become culturally responsive educators who allow students the opportunity to take part in activities and discussions that can help foster their social awareness development. Finally, SEL improves the school climate by

establishing a safe, caring learning environment through peer initiatives, classroom management, school community building, and improved teaching techniques.

### **Family Engagement and Impact on Students' SEL**

The best way to ensure success is to find ways for children to develop SEL skills at school and home. Consistent with this argument, McClelland et al. (2017) found that SEL success is determined partially by family engagement. Jagers et al. (2019) found to successfully implement SEL, staff should: 1) engage with families as co-creators, 2) connect family engagement to learning and development, 3) honor families' funds of knowledge, and 4) create welcoming cultures. Family engagement activities can include integrating SEL curriculum content into family newsletters, home visits, or sharing curriculum activities with parents during family workshops or activities with children at school. "Family components can include instruction on how to support children's SEL skills development and how to practice and model these skills for adults at home" (Jagers et al., 2019, p. 41). Jagers et al. (2019) also found authentic family-school partnerships to be critical for students' SEL development.

Swanson, Beaty, and Patel (2021) found many ways to build trusting relationships with families. These include: 1) learning about families, whether through surveys, phone calls, or open houses, to learn about their concerns, unique talents, and likes or dislikes, 2) inviting families to create SEL goals for their children, including specific skills, listening to families' ideas about ways their children's SEL skills are benefitting them at school and home, and providing information about how SEL practices connect to learning goals for literacy, math, and other core content areas, 3) developing "a 'notes-back-and-forth' journal highlighting student successes and SEL skills, giving families [an opportunity] to reply with information about SEL in the home" (Albright et al., 2011, p. 6), and 4) creating a resource center for families, considering not only physically accessible resources but also digital ones for remote learners who may have limited in-person contact with school facility-based resources, as well as for families who have barriers to visiting the school building. To ensure equitable access for all families, educators should offer any printed or digital materials in a language-accessible format and arrange interpretive services to support meetings or events meant to engage with families (Swanson, Beaty, & Patel, 2021; Jones et al., 2018).

Jagers et al. (2019) write about the effectiveness of SEL for family engagement. In particular, they write, effective SEL will result in families: 1) engaging with educators as co-creators, 2) being supporters and encouragers, 3) serving as monitors, and 4) shaping the work as advocates and models. Building off his work, Jagers, Rivas-Drake, and Williams (2019) write that SEL creates social awareness. Specifically, "recognizing family, school, and community resources and supports for personal and collective well-being" (p. 167). An example they provide is the facilitation of communal orientation geared at family, racial/ethnic groups, or a specific community. By holding and facilitating these spaces, SEL promotes a range of positive socioemotional and academic outcomes, including school engagement, learning of academic content, and prosocial behaviors (Jagers et al., 2019; Rivas-Drake, Seaton, Markstrom, Quintana, Syed, & Lee, 2014; Tyler et al., 2005).



## **Family Community Partnerships and Impact on Students' SEL**

Just as important as family partnerships, community partnerships play a critical role in SEL development and impact. SEL curriculum and instruction have traditionally been implemented in formal learning environments such as schools or classrooms. However, activities and experiences that take place outside of the schools, such as in the home or family and the community or neighborhood, could be included, coordinated, and aligned with children's developmental needs and goals to maximize the likelihood that social skills learned in the classroom are relevant to diverse children's lives and transferable across contexts (Divecha & Brackett, 2020; Top et al., 2017).

Bridgeland, Bruce, and Hariharan (2013) found community partners can help youth develop the self-awareness and self-management they need to be successful, the compassion and attitudes they need to care about others, and the skills they need to be productive workers and responsible citizens. In a similar vein, Green et al. (2021), found successful SEL and community partnerships operate to promote a space where 1) students connect skills learned to life experiences and circumstances, 2) build relationships and connectedness that support students and the skills learned, and 3) empower students to utilize their leadership and creativity in giving back to their community.

Sometimes, community partnerships provide further out-of-school support for students and families, such as social services, mental health, and welfare. Research shows that young people see and will seek to address a range of issues relevant to their sense of personal and community well-being, including food access, community violence, and juvenile justice reforms. A critical SEL concept from Jagers et al. (2019) is a sense of belonging, "the sense of connectedness and trust needed to engage in co-constructing an equitable, thriving local community and vibrant civil society." As a result, community partnerships can impact student SEL.

Jones et al. (2018) outline strategies for SEL in partnering with family and community partnerships. They suggest having intentional activities and events that build connections between students and their community. In addition, "they believe in taking into consideration the environments and contexts in which children learn, live, and grow by building family-school-community partnerships that can support children at home and in other out-of-school settings, fostering culturally competent and responsive practices, and considering how specific educational policies may influence children" (Jones et al., 2018, p. 2). Swanson et al. (2021) suggest forming partnerships with community members and give examples of events that can promote SEL within the school community. One such example they shared is weekly wellness visits and phone calls by district and school staff to families' homes for students facing barriers to learning, such as chronic absenteeism, failing grades, food insecurity, illness, poverty, etc., and linked them to community-based supports through organizational partnerships.

## **Difference in SEL between Newcomers and Non-Newcomers**

The next section discusses previous literature relative to the barriers to operationalizing SEL for Newcomers and other marginalized groups. In this section, I look at 1) how the SEL needs of these groups are different, and 2) ways to successfully operationalize SEL for these groups.

The social-emotional needs of English Learner (EL) students are different than non-EL students. Whether EL students spend the majority of their school day in separate programs and segregated classrooms or in inclusive classrooms, their SEL needs are pervasive. In separate programs or segregated classrooms, where social contact with peers not classified as ELs is limited, SEL needs center around EL students' feelings of isolation, exclusion, and "othering" (Gándara, 2020; Hopkins & Lowenhaupt, 2016; Lowenhaupt, 2016). On the other hand, when EL-classified students are integrated with non-EL peers in classrooms, some EL-classified students have reported that non-EL "students make fun of us because we don't speak English," leading them to feel they needed to "stay silent" (Jaffe-Walter & Miranda, 2020; White, Schneider, & Mavrogordato, 2023). Providing specialized learning contexts for EL-classified students, particularly those who are new to U.S. schools and possess early levels of English proficiency, may in fact cultivate a deeper sense of belonging and provide an opportunity for such students to forge stronger relationships with teachers (Lowenhaupt, Bradley, & Davis, 2020).

The social-emotional needs of Latino immigrant youth are different from those of US-born youth (Blanco-Vega et al., 2008). Latino immigrant youth often face many social, emotional, academic, and financial challenges as they attempt to adapt to the mainstream US culture (Castro-Olivio & Merrell, 2012). Specific challenges include marginalization or perceived discrimination due to language, religion, ethnicity, or cultural differences, lower socio-economic status, familial acculturative gaps, a low sense of school belonging, grief from leaving friends and family members behind, traumatic situations before, during, or after their migration, and acculturative stress (UNHCR, 2021; Tanyu et al., 2020; Thompson, Umansky, & Porter, 2020; Cerna, 2019; Blanco-Vega et al., 2008; Suarez-Orozco & Suarez-Orozco, 2001; Gonzales & Kim, 1997).

As demonstrated below, most current SEL programs are not meant for Newcomers and other marginalized youth. Literature exists that demonstrates ways to ensure successful implementation. Castro-Olivo (2010) found that evidence-based programs used in school settings must be adapted to address the challenges that immigrant youth face and to increase the relevance of the skills that these programs teach as they relate to the cultural and ecological reality of immigrant youth. Making cultural adaptations to SEL programs can facilitate the ultimate goal of these programs, which is to promote social-emotional resiliency and academic success. In the same vein, cultural adaptations of existing evidence-based treatments (EBTs) are effective and socially valid (Bernal, Jimenez-Chafey, & Domenech-Rodriguez, 2009; Castro, Barrera, & Martinez, 2004; Griner & Smith, 2006; Huey & Polo, 2008; Martinez & Eddy, 2005; Smith, Domenech-Rodriguez, & Bernal, 2011). Cultural adaptations allow researchers and practitioners to expose members of ethnic minority groups to EBTs in a manner that is culturally aligned and relevant to their ecology (Bernal et al., 2009). Experts in cultural adaptations suggest that researchers and practitioners should follow systematic procedures for making such cultural adaptations of EBTs in SEL.

Jagers et al. (2019) looked at community partners who offer structured learning opportunities. They found these organizations are typically overlooked in conversations about how and where to best promote academic, social, and emotional growth among young people. "They are crucial for achieving SEL in the service of equity and excellence" (p. 37). Several similar studies have found positive outcomes among Black and Latinx youth from low- and middle-income families. Related, past research has demonstrated that the academic benefits of supportive relationships



with teachers and school mentors are magnified for economically disadvantaged students, including immigrant youth (Muller, 2001; Stanton-Salazar, 2001).

### **Barriers to SEL**

Fields (2022) found three arguments against SEL. First, SEL takes away time and money from academics. In his studies, Fields found close to two-thirds of Republicans, and more than half of Democrats said there is not enough time in the day to teach both academics and SEL. The second, and related to the first, is that schools need to focus on academics only and leave teaching about SEL to families. Fields' third argument is that many conservatives believe that SEL teaches and advances ideologies around race, gender, and sexuality, while liberals are fearful of the impact SEL can pose on student privacy.

Despite arguments against SEL, many districts and schools implement SEL programs. Unfortunately, because they are a microcosm of bigger societal issues, schools often promote and reproduce the wider social hierarchies defined by the ingroup/outgroup relations in the contexts of race, class, gender, and other factors (Goff et al., 2014; Salter & Adams, 2013). This is often accomplished through the prioritization of education that is culturally relevant to the White, middle-class, American point of view (Allen, Scott, & Lewis, 2013; Jagers et al., 2019) to the detriment of culturally and linguistically diverse students. "SEL curricula often follow this same model of prioritizing the majority history and experience" (McCall et al., 2023, p. 589). Simmons (2019), for example, suggests that when focusing on race and racism, SEL can be seen as "White supremacy with a hug" (p.31). As such, the SEL programs at schools often suffer from inequality, inequity, prejudice, and discrimination issues.

School-based prejudice and discrimination have been linked to negative academic and mental health outcomes for youths (Benner & Graham, 2013; Grapin et al., 2019; Ülger et al., 2018). And sadly, these issues and outcomes are more pervasive in marginalized communities. Discrimination and prejudice do not always come from other students; they also come from teachers and adults. Cho, Wang, and Christ (2019) examined teachers' perspectives on their refugee or Newcomer students' Social Emotional Skills. Their study showed that the teachers lacked a multicultural viewpoint, and so saw the students' culturally diverse behaviors as deficient. Discrimination against Black, Latinx, and immigrant-origin youths has also been linked to increased externalizing and internalizing behaviors (Cooper et al., 2013; Suárez-Orozco et al., 2018; Tobler et al., 2013), depressive symptoms (Cooper et al., 2013; Hudson et al., 2013; Tobler et al., 2013; Tummala-Narra & Claudius, 2013; Umaña-Taylor & Updegraff, 2007), and academic difficulties (Cooper et al., 2013; Griffin et al., 2017).

Although many schools have started adopting SEL programs that aim to promote resiliency in youth, many of these programs have not been validated with culturally and linguistically diverse (CLD) populations (Castro-Olivo, 2010; Huey & Polo, 2008). SEL curricula of today can reinforce extant inequities by failing to address existing power differentials. The main focus of the current SEL programs, some argue, is on increasing adult control over children through developing their compliant behavior and has become a way for students of color to be policed and penalized for being nonwhite, highlighting the need to develop supposedly needed skills (e.g., see Simmons, 2019 and 2021). This expectation for individual adaptation to the majority expectation observed between White and students of color can also be seen between other

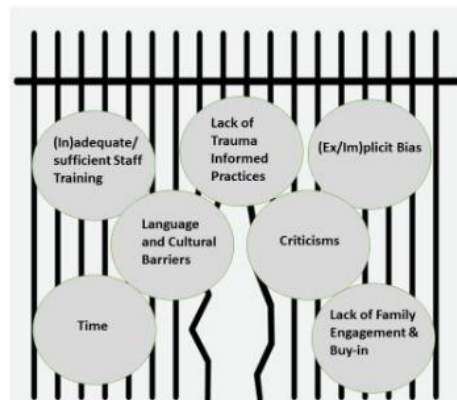
ingroups/outgroups, e.g., gender conforming: nonconforming, straight: queer, able: dis/able, etc. What is missing from SEL currently is an anti-oppressive and antiracist lens (Madda, 2019; Simmons, 2019). As currently implemented, SEL programs can inadvertently interpret as problematic the social, emotional, and behavioral skills that are common among specific, particularly minoritized or marginalized, groups of children and youth in society when they do not take learners' sociocultural contexts or neurobiological and behavioral assets or vulnerabilities of these groups into consideration (Hayashi, 2022).

Recent studies have attempted to address SEL's inherent inequities by engaging families and communities in the design of authentic and meaningful curriculum for students in marginalized communities. This shift in emphasis is consistent with situated and embodied learning approaches, defined as learning through engagement in "authentic activities, contexts, and cultures of the learners" (Liew et al., 2020, p. 645).

As stated in the project questions and purpose section of this paper, my goal is to evaluate the SEL needs for Newcomer students at MWSD and make recommendations. The recommendations will be based on an understanding of what supports are needed and how MWSD can utilize staff and staff development, family engagement, and family community partnerships. My work aligns with the literature about how to successfully operationalize SEL for Newcomers and other marginalized groups and the current limitations of SEL.

Figure 1 was inspired by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) (2018). The RWJF foundation created their own depiction of barriers to SEL. Some of their barriers and other barriers as outlined in this part of the literature review are consolidated into Figure 1 below.

Figure 1 – Newcomer Barriers to SEL



## Conceptual Framework

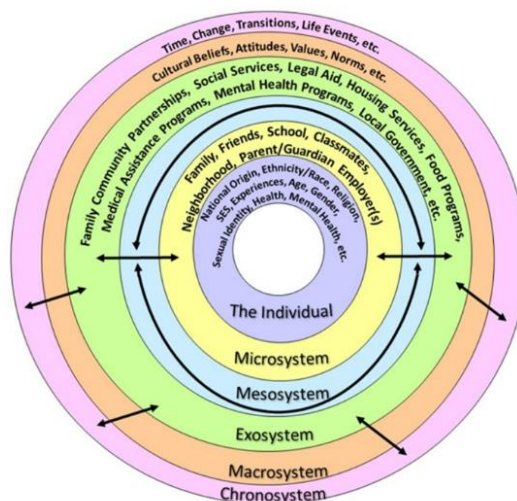
Every child makes sense of themselves, others, and the world at large, differently. Bronfenbrenner's ecological system (shown in the Appendix) looks at a child's psychological development as a system created by the relationships between multiple levels of influence. These

include but are not limited to friends, family, community partnerships, social services, cultural values, and laws. His definition of the five ecological systems and some of the components he has in each system applies to Newcomer and non-Newcomer students. Moving beyond the individual in this model, the mesosystem and Exosystem are critical ways in which the school system shapes their ecology.

Paat's study and ecology paradigm (also shown in the Appendix) utilizes Bronfenbrenner's theory and includes some Newcomer-specific elements. For example, transitions are the chronosystem. Each of these ecological levels may contain elements that inhibit or promote a Newcomer student's academic and social integration.

In my judgment, both Bronfenbrenner's and Paat's studies are missing several critical components of a Newcomers' ecology. Thus, I created Figure 2 to better represent what I believe is Newcomers' ecology. While SEL is not in Bronfenbrenner's, Paat's, or Figure 2, it does explain how an individual navigates between layers.

Figure 2 – Newcomer Ecological Model



A critical component of Newcomers' experience and support includes specialized language instruction. Specialized language instruction ensures that Newcomers are building their vocabularies, raising their grammar knowledge and skills, improving their reading and listening comprehension skills, and enhancing their written and oral communication skills. At MWSD, approximately 23% of all students are classified as English Learners (ELs). The district has a class specifically designed for these students called English Language Development (ELD). This class is specifically for Newcomers in kindergarten to 8th grade who speak a language other than English and who score a one through four on SLPAC test. Students have the opportunity to test out of this course each year by performance on this test, performance on district/state standardized readings and mathematics tests, and/or teacher recommendations.

Related to Newcomers, MWSD has established short-term, intermediate, and long-term goals. Specifically, for the former, the district is working on creating sheltered English Language Arts

(ELA) courses this year for all Newcomer students. This means that all Newcomer students only have other Newcomer students in their ELA course. An intermediate and long-term goal is to create a robust program with numerous systems for these students, including a better intake, treatment, and exit from EL services after successfully reclassifying students as non-EL. Lastly, a strictly long-term goal is to adopt a designated ELD curriculum, as the current ELD curriculum varies both by teacher and school across the district. This ELD course will include specialized language instruction to ensure that Newcomers are building their vocabularies, raising their grammar knowledge and skills, improving their reading, and listening comprehension skills, and enhancing their written and oral communication skills.

Newcomer students and their families may face a range of challenges, including adjusting to a new school system, culture shock, and trauma related to their migration experiences. As a result, schools and districts must provide Newcomer students and their families with high-quality support and services to ensure students succeed academically and socially. Additionally, schools often provide social and emotional support to help Newcomer students and their families feel welcome and connected to their new school communities.

## Design and Methods

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To answer the three research questions in this project, I utilized a mixed methods approach, quantitative and qualitative. Data for quantitative analysis were obtained through two surveys: 1) a Newcomer family survey and 2) a Newcomer teacher survey. The first survey was translated into Spanish, Mandarin, and Russian to increase participation based on the information shared by the director of equity about the most spoken languages in the district by Newcomers. Qualitative data came from four sources: 1) focus group discussion with Newcomer families, 2) one-on-one interviews with three school principals, 3) focus group discussions with schoolteachers and staff, and 4) one-on-one interviews and focus group discussions with district administrators. The findings of quantitative and qualitative analyses were triangulated. Surveys were sent to teachers & families at four of the 11 schools with the largest population of Newcomers by a district administrator at MWSD. Interviews & focus groups were conducted with school administrators & staff of the same schools.

### **Strengths**

Mixed methods and triangulation approaches have significant advantages. The first is that the mix of quantitative and qualitative analyses strengthens the reliability and validity of the findings. Reliability and validity are much stronger when the narratives and numbers tell the same story resulting in more meaningful change suggestions. This will allow for the triangulation of my findings. A second strength is that I attempted to enhance external validity by not participating in the selection of survey, interview, or focus group subjects, by having no direct ties with Maple Walnut, and by having Maple Walnut administer my surveys (Merriam & Tisdale, 2016).

### **Surveys**

Through collaboration and with the cooperation of MWSD, I created and shared two confidential surveys, the teacher survey and the family survey (see the Appendix for both surveys). The surveys contained closed and open-ended questions related to the three research questions. The purpose of these surveys was to obtain multiple stakeholders' perspectives on how SEL supports Newcomers and their families' needs and how staff, staff development, family engagement, and family community partnerships, play a role in SEL outcomes.

### **Teacher Survey Design**

Questions for the Teacher survey came from Suárez-Orozco, Suárez-Orozco, and Todorova (2010), consisting of teacher interview questions about immigrant students. To adapt the questions to this study, I changed the word immigrant to Newcomer. These questions covered everything from perceptions of meeting the different needs of Newcomers (SEL, Food Security, Basic English Language Learning Skills, etc.) to comparisons between Newcomers and Non- Newcomers (Attendance, Motivation/Effort, Liking School, etc.) to Professional Development (PD) and other workshops for teachers/staff aimed at supporting Newcomer students and families. I utilized a combination of Likert scale and multiple-answer questions. I was strategic with my question sequencing. I achieved this by clustering questions about similar topics and putting responses to those with the same response type after one another. The last portion of the survey had nine demographic questions. The open-ended questions in the survey above that often take longer to answer were saved for the focus groups as this qualitative

information was too important. Teachers/Staff are arguably the busiest individuals at schools. Therefore, the goal was to have the survey take 10 minutes or less to finish.

**Teacher Survey Sample**

MWSD’s Director of Equity distributed the survey on October 30, 2023, to all 63 teachers who teach Newcomer students. On December 14, 2023, they re-shared the survey. The teacher survey closed on January 21, 2024. This was a voluntary survey; teachers were not required to complete it. Eight usable responses were received, representing a 13% response rate. This is significantly below the approximately 75% participation rate for teachers on the annual district-wide teacher survey. There is a possibility that responses are not representative of those for the entire population. The survey was sent to four schools in the district that serve the majority of Newcomer students. I was forced to rely on convenience sampling because the Director of Equity picked the schools with the highest Newcomer populations. These factors reduce the generalizability of the results. While years of experience and race/ethnicity, the variables that the CA state report card includes, are not the only relevant demographic variables, I take comfort in my results since, as Table 2 below indicates, the sample and population characteristics are close.

Table 2 – Comparison of Population and Responding Teachers’ Characteristics

Demographic Characteristic	Population of Teachers in School Year 2018/19	Respondents in Survey
Race/Ethnicity:		
Caucasians	67.60%	75%
Asian	13.24%	12.50%
Latino(a)	12.89%	12.50%
Other	6.27%	0%
Years of Experience	11 years	11.12 years

**Family Survey Design**

Many questions for the Family survey came from Tool 1-5 Nebraska Migrant Education Program – Sample Focus Group Interview Questions for staff, parents, and students (Nebraska Department of Education, 2020). Others were inspired by work from the American Federation of Teachers and the National Education Association (2018). The Nebraska document had example answers to their questions. I left these examples in each question because all these questions were open-ended, and the surveys were administered to English-, Spanish-, Mandarin-, and Russian-speaking families. Many families work more than one job or have multiple children to care for. Therefore, the goal was to have this survey take 10 minutes or less to finish. The open-ended questions that often take longer to answer were saved for the focus group discussions as this qualitative information was very important.



### Family Survey Sample

The Director of Equity distributed the survey to 89 Newcomer families representing 136 Newcomer students on October 31, 2023, across 4 schools. On December 17, 2023, the survey was reshared with Newcomer families. It closed on January 21, 2024. Eight usable responses were received, representing a 9% response rate. This is below the approximately 18% participation rate for families on the yearly district survey. The respondents are not representative of the population of families, as indicated in Table 3 below. Thus, the results may not be generalizable.

Table 3 – Comparison of Population and Responding Families’ Characteristics

Demographic Characteristic	Population of Families in June 2023	Respondents in Survey
Race/Ethnicity:		
Latino(a)	38.78%	12.50%
Asian	23.28%	50.00%
White	21.44%	37.50%
Multiple	12.87%	0%
Other	3.63%	0%
Immigrant from Latin America:	50%	12.5%

### Survey Analysis

Before analyzing the data, I cleaned and recoded data, including new variable names and creating new variables by combining variables. Utilizing a Likert scale for most questions made it easy to calculate and compare means and identify trends.

Because of the ordinal nature of the responses and the low number of responses, I first converted the questions related to perceptions around meeting the needs of Newcomers, comparison of Newcomers with non-Newcomers, and usefulness of professional development programs to binary variables. Specifically, for the answers to questions related to the needs of Newcomers, I coded the answer as “1” if the respondents perceived the need to be at least “Mostly Met” and “0” otherwise. For the answers to questions related to the comparison of Newcomers with non-Newcomers, I coded the answer as “1” if the perception was that Newcomers were at least “A Little Better” and “0” otherwise. For the answers to questions related to the usefulness of professional development programs, I coded the answer as “1” if the respondent perceived it to be at least “Very Useful” and “0” otherwise. I also converted “Experience,” “Age,” “Ethnicity/Race,” and “Immigrant Status” to binary variables, coding “Experience” of more than 10 years, “Age” of more than 40, “Ethnicity/Race” of Caucasians, and at least one parent being an “Immigrant” as to “1.”

I then used Wilcoxon Median test, also known as Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test, to test the differences in perception of respondents across Experience, Age, Ethnicity, and Immigrant Status. Wilcoxon rank test is a non-parametric statistical test that is an alternative to the paired Student's t-test when the data cannot be assumed to be normally distributed, which is true for my responses, which are ordinal. Wilcoxon has the added advantage of being less sensitive to outliers compared to parametric tests.

### **Interviews and Focus Groups**

I created interview protocols and conducted an array of interviews and focus groups. I interviewed three school principals and five district administrators. I held a focus group discussion with two district administrators, another with a teacher and a staff member from one school, and a third with a staff member and two teachers from a different school. (See the Appendix for each protocol). These focus group discussions contained both closed and open-ended questions that looked to collect data that would answer the three research questions. The purpose of these interviews and focus group discussions was to obtain multiple stakeholders' perspectives on the SEL support Newcomers and their families need and how staff & staff development, family engagement, and family community partnerships play a role in SEL outcomes.

### **Principal and District Administrator Interview and Focus Group Design**

The Director of Equity chose the three interview candidates as these were the three schools in MWSD with the most Newcomer students. They communicated with all three of them to pick a day and time that worked best for them for a 30-minute-long in-person interview, as principals and district administrators often have very tight daily schedules. Questions for the principal and district administrator interview and focus groups came from three resources referenced above. The interviews and focus group questions started with those aligned with Newcomer needs, such as educational and support service needs. The complete list of questions appears in the Appendix. Then, I asked questions that related to the individual's role in supporting Newcomers. Next, I asked questions about what the school and district offered, from workshops to PDs to curriculum and instructional resources to support Newcomers. Finally, I shared suggestions for supporting Newcomers from research done by Colorin Colorado, so the principal had the opportunity to share what they believe they do that aligned with, or what lessons they could learn from, Colorin Colorado (see the Appendix for the interview protocol).

### **Teachers and School Staff Focus Group Design**

I conducted in-depth interviews and focus group discussions on October 30th and November 2nd (see the Appendix for the interview protocol). Questions for the teacher and school staff focus groups came from the same three sources above. The interview started with questions aligned to Newcomer needs. Then, I asked questions that related to their role in supporting Newcomers as teachers. Next, I asked questions about what the school and district offered, from workshops to PDs to curriculum and instructional resources to support Newcomers. Then, I asked them questions about the Newcomers they serve in general and specifically to find out if there are similarities or differences between Newcomers and non-Newcomers, Newcomers based on race/ethnicity, gender, or national origin. Finally, I shared suggestions for supporting Newcomers from research done by Colorin Colorado, so teachers and staff had the opportunity



to share what they believe they do that aligned or what lessons they could learn from Colorin Colorado.

One limitation of the design is a potential lack of representativeness. Teachers and staff chose whether to participate in the focus group discussions. Relatedly, another limitation is that this is not a random sample of schools. These focus groups only occurred at two schools in the district. The Director of Equity communicated with the two school principals to pick a day and time that worked best for their teachers and staff, as a 45-minute-long in-person focus group after school is a big ask. These limitations affect the generalizability of the findings.

### **Interview and Focus Group Analysis**

With the consent of each participant, I recorded the conversations and then had them transcribed. My method of data analysis followed the work of Patton (2002). Specifically, I participated in listening tours of three listens, where each listen had a specific task. The first was to listen and gain familiarity with audio recordings/notes, and transcripts. The second listen identified themes and patterns, and the third extracted key illustrative quotes. This made data organization and the coding process (shown in the Appendix) less time-consuming. I made a matrix by looking for themes or buckets in each interview to organize my findings and takeaways. I found consistent themes and buckets across interviews and focus groups and grouped these. All of these will be shared and explained in the key findings section and utilized in the recommendations section.

### **Family Focus Group Design and Analysis**

The questions for the teacher and school staff focus groups came from the same three sources. I planned to start with questions aligned to Newcomer needs. Then, I asked questions about their expectations regarding the role of the school. Next, I asked questions about the challenges they faced. Finally, I asked questions that looked at the opportunities they had to be involved in the children's schooling. I was able to conduct a focus group via Zoom with four families.

### **Newcomer Classes Observations**

While observing Newcomer classes was not originally part of my methods and design, the Director of Equity provided me with an opportunity to observe Newcomer Teachers and their classes at two different schools. After obtaining parental consent, I visited these classrooms and took notes of what was occurring. These notes will be referenced in my findings and recommendations as anecdotal support in those sections.

### **Limitations**

There are two limitations to my study. The most important is the low response rates. Only around 13% of families and teachers responded to their respective surveys. Additionally, no family came to the scheduled focus group during my visit. Fortunately, with the support of a district administrator, I was able to hold a virtual focus group with some families and used it in my analysis. The small Newcomer families' voices is an issue MWSD faces regularly and ways to address this are addressed in the Recommendations section. The second limitation of this study is that it is a snapshot and not longitudinal. Without repeating this study over some time, my findings will only be able to show correlation and not causation. This limitation should not distract from the value of my suggestions, recommendations, and next steps.

## Key Findings

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Analyses of survey, interview, and focus group data led to several key findings. These findings are described below by research question and data source and are centered around SEL competencies. Recall that CASEL identifies the following SEL competencies: 1) Self-awareness, 2) Self-management, 3) Social awareness, 4) Relationship skills, and 5) Responsible decision-making.

The main themes that emerged from my analyses are Differences Among Newcomers, Constructing Community, Communication, Mental Health and Trauma, Resources in the Community, Empathy and Resiliency, and Sustaining Culture.

### Research Question 1: What SEL supports are needed by Newcomer students and families?

#### **Finding 1: Educators recognize the diversity within the Newcomer population and that this diversity makes it challenging to provide support.**

Interviews and focus group discussions revealed a pattern of differences between Newcomers and non-Newcomers and the needs among the Newcomer subpopulations. These differences can be attributed to the country of origin, gender, socio-economic status, or simply different experiences. One school administrator shared, *“I think it’s important to notice that they [Newcomers] are different. So, I think their needs are different.”* Two different district administrators shared similar thoughts: *“It’s just learning about the ongoing needs of Newcomers because, you know, that’s obviously not like a monolithic group;”* *“So, a Newcomer is a huge group. It’s not a monolith. So, there are Newcomers that are coming to our country that aren’t socioeconomically disadvantaged, and then there are Newcomers coming to our country that have fled war zones.”* Two teachers also held similar views. *“There is really a difference between the Newcomer coming from Russia versus the Newcomer coming from South America, diversity of experience.”* *“Some Newcomers don’t have any prior schooling at all. So, for them, it’s really the basics. It’s, how does reading work? Some Newcomers are highly educated, and for them, it’s acquiring some survival English and the basics of reading.”*

In terms of gender differences, staff members and teachers alike believe that female Newcomers are more likely to be reserved and more mature in comparison to male Newcomers, who are louder and less mature. For example, one staff member said, *“The girls can [be] really shy... they’re scared to even make eye contact. And the boys can be loud, and then they want to make themselves known right away when they get here”*. In another example, a teacher said, *“The boys I currently have... lacking a little bit in maturity... My first-grade boys act more like three- and four-year-olds... The girls I currently have happen to be a little quiet.”* Another teacher agreed, noting, *“So, my Newcomers, I only have two, one’s a girl, one’s a boy...but my boy is the one who’s having the emotional issues.”*

Although SEL is not deemed an academic framework, SEL competencies can be taught in academic settings. Conversations with teachers and staff showed academic differences across

genders. For example, one staff member said, “I’ve noticed girls are more academic than boys... in writing, they’ll go ahead and try to write in English like they’ll put together full paragraphs... The boys, they’ll go ahead and copy and paste. Girl students are more academically motivated and curious.” Another staff member agreed, saying, “I think the girls have done better academically, especially in mathematics.”

Survey results, as shown in Figure 3 and Table 4, find that most teachers believe that Newcomer students are less confident in their learning abilities and much worse, a little worse, or, at best, about the same in reading and writing. For example, three out of seven teachers believe that Newcomers are less confident than non-Newcomers, and three others believe they are about the same. The mean response on self-confidence is 2.86 out of 5 with a standard deviation of 0.99, indicating a high level of consensus in beliefs.

Figure 3 - Teachers’ Perception of Newcomers vs. non-Newcomers (n=7)

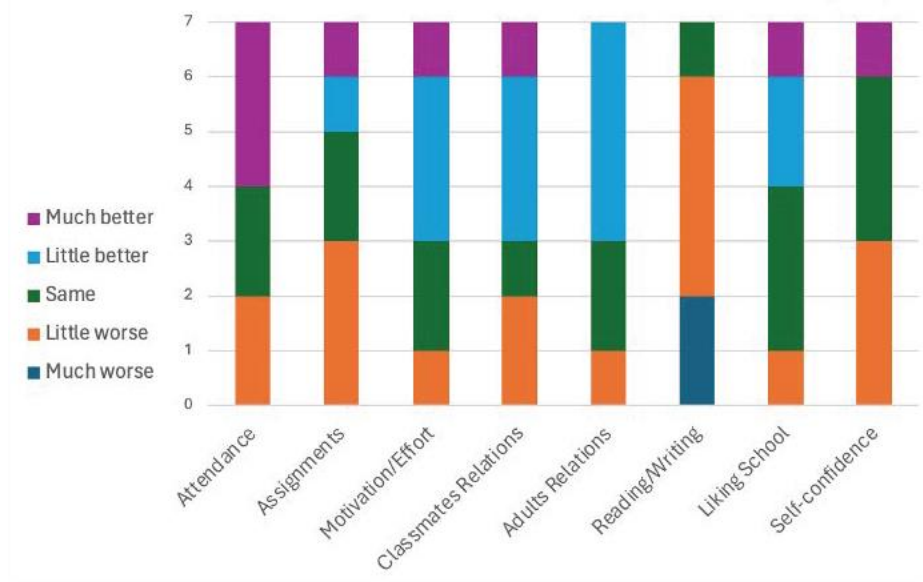


Table 4 – Teachers’ Perception of Newcomers vs. non-Newcomers (n=7)

Domain	Min*	Max*	Mean	Std Dev	VAR	Count
<b>Attendance</b>	2	5	3.86	1.36	1.84	7
<b>Completing Assignments</b>	2	5	3.17	1.07	1.14	7
<b>Motivation and Efforts</b>	2	5	3.57	0.90	0.82	7
<b>Relations with Classmates</b>	2	5	3.43	1.05	1.10	7
<b>Relations with Adults</b>	2	4	3.43	0.73	0.53	7
<b>Reading and Writing</b>	1	3	1.86	0.64	0.41	7
<b>Liking School</b>	2	5	3.43	0.90	0.82	7
<b>Self Confidence in Learning Abilities</b>	2	5	2.86	0.99	0.98	7

\* 1 = Much less/worse, 2 = A little less/worse, 3 = Same, 4 = A little more/better, 5 = Much more/better

Additionally, even though it is not academic in nature, SEL does include working towards personal goals. A goal that aligns with the needs of many Newcomer students and is agreed upon by many stakeholders is the need to learn English. This need is expanded on further in findings around communication. As one parent stated, *“We come from China, so his math is enough to handle the questions in his school, but he had very little English before coming here.”* Another Parent from South America mentioned the greatest need of their child is *“Learning English.”*

These different needs will be discussed in research questions two and three findings when examining how MWSD utilizes staff and staff development and family community partnerships in supporting Newcomer SEL needs and outcomes. These needs and outcomes encompass all five SEL competencies.

### **Finding 2: Newcomers face challenges in connecting with peers and teachers.**

The SEL competencies of social awareness and relationship skills align with the theme of Constructing Community. In interviews and focus group discussions, I detected a need for Newcomer students to understand social interactions and develop healthy relationships with other students through different opportunities and experiences to create a sense of community and belonging. School staff, teachers, school and district administrators, and even parents shared these viewpoints around Newcomers’ disconnectedness and need for building relationships. One staff member said, *“They feel disconnected from school because they don’t feel like they fit in.”* Similarly, a teacher shared, *“I have two Newcomers... because of the language barrier, it’s hard for them to integrate with the rest of the class. Even though the rest of the class isn’t intentionally isolating them... they feel intimidated... I can’t talk to them.”* A school administrator said, *“But then some need more social support and like, I don’t know how to make friends because yeah, that’s a new thing for me.”* A parent from Asia shared about his child needing, *“More opportunities to play with different grade levels.”*

The staff member went further to include relationships with teachers, and other adults they interact with. *“I realized how important the social pieces of them feeling included... I want them to feel more of a belonging... I want them to feel like, ‘Hey, you know, I can see [you] like being one of us’.”* One parent felt as though their school succeeded in connecting Newcomers by constructing community, helping them develop healthy relationships, and increasing their sense of belonging. *“All these kids from everywhere [different countries], were in a play together, and they are always there for each other now.”*

This need of Newcomer students to develop healthy relationships is just as important for their families and will be discussed in the findings for research question three, family community partnerships.

### **Finding 3: Newcomer English language and communication needs are, at best, partially met.**

Without being able to communicate, there is no way to address the SEL needs of Newcomer students and families. Interviews and focus group discussions showed that Newcomer students simply need the ability to communicate to be able to recognize their emotions and how they

affect their behavior, manage difficult emotions, understand social interactions, develop healthy relationships, or even make good decisions. One school administrator shared, *“And so, when they are here, oftentimes the need that they have is communication.”* Another school administrator had similar sentiments saying, *“The main thing is learning how to have those social conversations so that they can get to know their peers and be able to communicate with their peers.”* Aligned, a third school administrator shared, *“I think all of them need that social support because they need to know how to communicate with someone in order to get their needs met.”* One school staff member felt similarly, *“I feel like most of them still are battling learning the language. And so that’s difficult for them. And that’s no blame to them.”* A district administrator agreed that communication needs are the most important, and they shared, *“Just learning [academic and social] English is an important, probably the most important discrete academic skill. There’s English that we use in the classroom, and then there’s English that kids use on the playground.”*

Survey results, as shown in Figure 4 and Table 5, find that most teachers believe that Newcomers' basic English language learning needs are either a little or, at best, somewhat met. For example, two out of six teachers believe that Newcomers’ English language learning needs are a little met, and two others believe they are somewhat met. The mean response on meeting the English language needs of Newcomers is 3.0 out of 5, with a standard deviation of 0.76, indicating a high level of consensus in beliefs.

Figure 4 - Teachers’ Perception of Meeting the Needs of Newcomer Students (n=6)

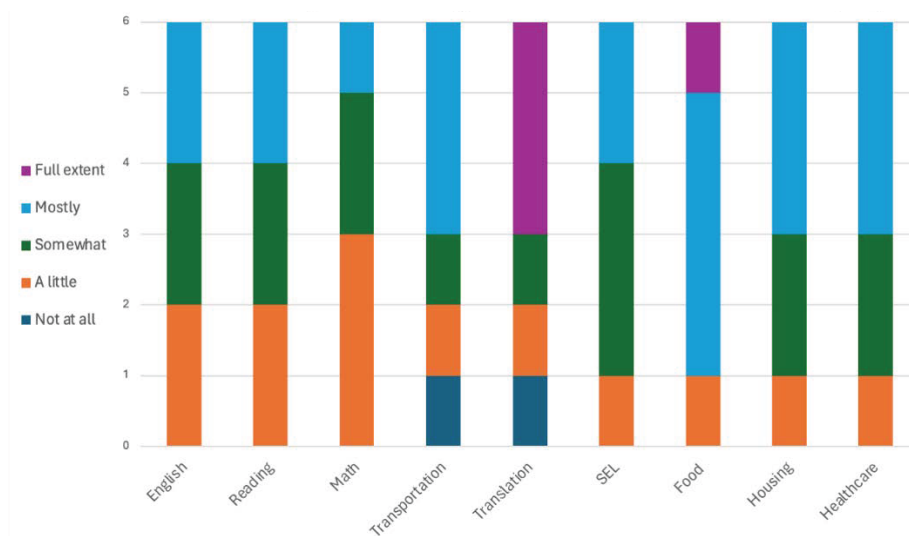


Table 5 – Teachers’ Perception of Meeting the Needs of Newcomer Students (n=6)

Domain	Min*	Max*	Mean	Std Dev	VAR	Count
<b>Basic English Language</b>	2	4	3.00	0.76	0.57	6
<b>Reading Skills</b>	2	4	3.00	0.82	0.67	6
<b>Math Skills</b>	2	4	2.67	0.75	0.56	6
<b>Transportation</b>	1	4	3.00	1.15	1.33	6
<b>Translation/Interpretation</b>	1	5	3.50	1.61	2.58	6
<b>Social Emotional</b>	2	4	3.17	0.69	0.47	6
<b>Food Security</b>	2	5	3.83	0.90	0.81	6
<b>Housing Security</b>	2	4	3.20	0.75	0.56	6
<b>Health Care</b>	2	4	3.20	0.75	0.56	6

\* 1 = Not At All, 2 = A Little, 3 = Somewhat, 4 = Mostly, 5 = Full Extent

**Finding 4: Mental health and trauma are critical Newcomer SEL needs.**

Mental Health services and addressing trauma are by far the greatest SEL needs of Newcomer students. It was abundantly clear that MWSD understands the importance of providing mental health services and addressing the traumas that these Newcomer students experienced or still experience. Furthermore, individuals at all levels, from school staff to teachers and school administrators to district administrators, understand the importance of tackling the mental health needs of Newcomers to ensure that they can achieve all five SEL competencies before even considering these students’ academic needs or expectations. A staff member shared about Newcomer students, *“They need therapists... if you don’t tackle the traumas that they come with, the learning won’t happen.”* Teachers share similar sentiments, *“We had a student who went through serious trauma in Colombia, and then when she migrated to the United States. Emotionally she was delayed in maturity. She hung out with kindergarteners and first graders because that’s where she felt comfortable.”* A school administrator shared, *“There are kids [that] come, and what they’ve seen is shocking: murders, kidnappings, real trauma. That kid yelling or destroying the classroom is dealing with something emotional. Their needs are social-emotional.”* A second school administrator shared similar thoughts. *“We have a lot of students who come with a lot of [different] traumas. The students that come to us and where they come from [have different traumas] ... They need support for those traumatic experiences.”* One district administrator shared, *“The greatest need has been the mental health and social-emotional needs of students. Many students are coming from Latin America... fleeing violence... experienced violence, both in their country of origin as well as on their journey to the United States.”* A second administrator shared, *“Newcomer immigrants are fleeing their countries. A lot of emotional and mental health support [is needed] ... mental health has been key to supporting our kiddos and giving them a stable and safe place to thrive as children.”*

Family surveys align. A family from a large Asian country answered, *“Counseling... emotional support [is] needed,”* to the question, *“What type of support services does your child(ren) need to be successful? Transportation, translation/ interpretation, counseling, referrals to community agencies, or something else (name them)?”*

Furthermore, teacher survey results show teacher immigration status is positively significantly related to their perceptions of meeting Newcomer SEL needs ( $p < .05$ ). Teachers who themselves, their parents, or both they and their parents immigrated to the United States, are more likely to believe that MWSD has addressed the SEL needs of Newcomer students. Additionally, survey results reveal teacher race/ethnicity is positively significantly related to their perceptions of meeting Newcomer SEL needs ( $p < .05$ ). Non-Caucasian teachers are more likely to believe that MWSD is addressing the SEL needs of Newcomer students. These findings are reflected in the tables below. The differences in median scores on meeting Newcomers' SEL needs between Immigrant and non-Immigrant and Caucasian and non-Caucasian teachers' responses are significant at the 5% level ( $Pr > |Z| = 0.025$ ).

Table 6 – Median Scores for Meeting Newcomer SEL Needs

Teacher Immigrant Status and Ethnicity	n	Std Dev Under H0	Median Score
Non-Immigrant	4	0.447	0.25
Immigrant	2	0.447	1.00
Non-Caucasians	2	0.447	1.00
Caucasians	4	0.447	0.25

MWSD utilizes both in-school and community partnerships to address the mental health and trauma of Newcomer students and families. This will be discussed further in the findings for research question three, family community partnerships. However, the need for mental health services and trauma-informed practices is recognized by all stakeholders.

Interviews, focus groups, and surveys all found the Newcomer students and families need resources in the Community. One family from a large Asian country wrote in their survey, “*referrals to community agencies,*” in response to the question, “What type of support services does your child(ren) need to be successful? Transportation, translation/interpretation, counseling, referrals to community agencies, or something else (name them)?” These will be further discussed in the findings for research question three, family engagement and family community partnerships. These partners provide both vital SEL and non-SEL related support for Newcomer students and families.

Interviews and focus group discussions revealed that many Newcomer students already exhibit traits of empathy and resiliency. However, these are still considered needs in all aspects of their schooling from academic to behavioral to SEL

Sustaining Culture is a need of Newcomer students and families' SEL needs. One family from a country in South America wrote the following in their survey, “*a class where they can continue seeing their native language (reading, writing, writing, and comprehension).*” This concept will



also be looked at more in research question three, family engagement and family community partnerships.

## Research Question 2: How does MWSD utilize staff and staff development in supporting Newcomer social-emotional outcomes?

Recall that the SEL needs of Newcomer students and families center around self and social awareness, communication, trusting relationships with both other students and adults, and mental health services and addressing trauma. MWSD has created specific roles to best support Newcomer students and their families. This includes but is not limited to Newcomer teachers and School Community Engagement Facilitators (SCEFs).

Inside the classroom, Newcomer teachers play a critical role for Newcomer students. A school administrator shared, *“And we also have a Newcomer teacher, and she pulls groups of students about twice a week to go over basic conversational English and English they need to survive in a school. So, that’s the main support that we have.”*

In the two Newcomer classrooms I visited, I observed the multifaceted needs that these Newcomer teachers address. Some of these needs are around social-emotional learning, while others are academics. I will list these needs and the evidence of them below, the latter in italics. For the sake of simplicity, observations from classrooms will be referred to as C1 for classroom 1 and C2 for classroom 2. It is important to note here that C1 had younger students than C2, and thus the reason for differentiated activities.

1. Teachers intentionally created incredibly supportive, positive, and welcoming classroom environments through their words, actions, and classroom signage.

*C1: A sign with the phrase “All are Welcome Here” in many different languages.*

*C1 and C2: There was a lot of praise as students gave answers and completed activities even if their answers were wrong.*

2. Teachers encouraged students who struggled to communicate their answers in English to use their native language first and go back to English afterward.

*C1: A student spoke in Spanish, the teacher listened, and then said, “And in English...” This teacher also had students who spoke languages other than English or Spanish and would always ask the Hispanic and English-speaking kids, “What about in Spanish or English?” Thus, some answers were shared in three or more languages.*

*C2: Let the students say their answer in Spanish, but then prompted back to English.*

3. There was a strong focus on making sure students knew and could communicate about the day of the week and the month.

*C1: Teacher said, “Repeat with me, today’s date...” Teacher also had students identify the weekends (no school) and weekdays (school)*

*C2: Teacher said, “Today is Wednesday; it is November 1<sup>st</sup>... Tomorrow is Thursday; it will be November 2<sup>nd</sup>.”*



4. Teachers made sure students knew their numbers and parts of the body verbally and through structured activities.

*C1: Activity 1: Head, shoulders, knees, and toes song and movements. Activity 2: Teacher had students take turns identifying parts of a human body on poster. Activity 3: Teacher had two students roll different dice. One die represented body part, and the other represented how many. Students drew a monster with the type and number of body parts that the dice gave.*

*C2: Activity 1: Head, shoulders, knees, and toes song and movements. Activity 2: Teacher had a giant skeleton on a poster, and students took turns saying, "I see (insert number and body part). Activity 3: Teacher had students create their own skeletons, but had to obtain body parts one at a time by asking the teacher, "Can I have (insert number and body part) please?"*

Newcomer teachers also support Newcomer students outside the classroom by playing a critical role in supporting and developing teachers across the district. Newcomer teachers are one of the main ways that MWSD has developed staff to understand and differentiate the services that Newcomers receive based on their differences and the needs associated with these differences. Again, while SEL is not strictly academic, differentiation of services and support allows for better SEL outcomes, specifically around self-awareness, self-management, and relationship skills. A school administrator shared, *"We have a Newcomer TOSA, [Teacher on Special Assignment] ... her focus this year has been on Newcomers. Her first few sessions were specifically focused on Newcomers and how to support Newcomers. She prepared sets of materials that teachers can just grab and take to use for their Newcomers."* A second school administrator shared, *"But we have a TOSA in our district... I brought her in a couple of times on Thursdays. So, Thursday is a short day, and then teachers have the ability to collaborate, especially based on student data and student needs. So, I've had a couple of teams reach out to her, and she comes in and supports them."* A third school administrator shared, *"We don't really have a curriculum. We have like a set of strategies... Sheltered Instruction Observation protocols, which in a way is just like planning your lessons so that students can access them. Our Newcomer teacher is also part of our ELAC and DLAC meetings, which focus on how to support all English Learners. And a large number of our English Learners are Newcomers students and families."*

SCEFs will be looked at further in findings for research question number three, family engagement and family community partnerships. A school administrator shared, *"We have our SCEFs [School Community Engagement Facilitator] district wide. They do a lot of providing support for those families."*

**Finding 1: While teachers, staff, and administrators do get relevant training, many teachers (particularly less experienced and younger teachers) think more is needed.**

As reported in Figure 5 and Table 7, survey results show that most teachers do not believe they have received adequate professional development to support Newcomer students.

Figure 5 - Teachers' Perception of Usefulness of Professional Development Programs (n=7)

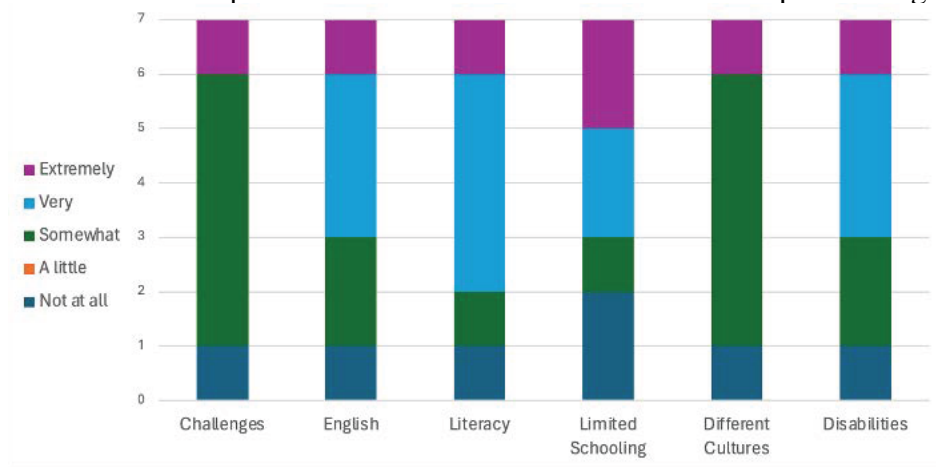


Table 7 – Teachers' Perception of Usefulness of Professional Development Programs (n=7)

Domain	Min*	Max*	Mean	Std Dev	VAR	Count
<b>Challenges Faced</b>	1	5	2.14	0.83	0.69	7
<b>Limited English</b>	1	5	2.57	0.90	0.82	7
<b>Low Literacy Skills</b>	1	5	2.88	0.93	0.86	7
<b>Limited Formal Schooling</b>	1	5	2.75	1.20	1.44	7
<b>Different Cultures</b>	1	5	2.86	0.83	0.69	7
<b>Disabilities</b>	1	5	2.75	0.97	0.94	7

\* 1 = Not Useful At All, 2 = A little Useful, 3= Somewhat Useful, 4 = Very Useful, 5 = Extremely Useful

The results also show that teacher's years of experience is positively significantly related to their perceptions of the usefulness of Professional Development and Workshops for supporting Newcomer students and families ( $p < .1$ ). Specifically, individuals with 10 or fewer years of experience find Professional Development and Workshops around supporting Newcomer students and families inadequate. The difference in median scores between more and less experienced teachers' responses is significant at the 10% level ( $Pr > |Z| = 0.066$ ).

Table 8 – Median Scores for Perceived Usefulness of PD & Workshops by Experience

Experience Level	n	Std Dev Under H0	Median Score
Ten years or less	4	0.525	0.19
More than ten years	3	0.525	0.75

Survey results further show that teachers' age is positively significantly related to their perceptions of the usefulness of Professional Development and Workshops around supporting Newcomers with disabilities ( $p < .01$ ). Similarly, teachers 40 years of age or under believe that

this training provided is not enough. The difference in median scores between older and younger teachers' responses is significant at the 1% level ( $Pr > |Z| = 0.008$ ).

Table 9 – Median Scores for Perceived Usefulness of PD & Workshops by Age

Teacher Age	n	Std Dev Under H0	Median Score
Forty years or less	3	0.567	0.25
More than 40 years	5	0.567	1.00

MWSD has already taken steps in staff development to address the communication barriers that Newcomer students face. A school administrator stated, *“Yeah, so the district does offer specific professional development for teachers to support Newcomer students... occasional PD sessions at our staff meetings to how we can help our Newcomer students.... with a big focus on ELD (English Language Development).”*

Survey results show teachers have received a lot of training in teaching students with limited English proficiency and low literacy skills. Furthermore, teacher age is positively significantly related to their perceptions of the usefulness of Professional Development around supporting Newcomers with low literacy skills ( $p < .05$ ). This indicates that teachers 40 or younger are more likely to find training around teaching Newcomers with low literacy skills insufficient. The difference in median scores between more and less experienced teachers' responses is significant at the 5% level ( $Pr > |Z| = 0.049$ ).

Table 10 - Median Scores for Perceived Usefulness of PD/WS for Newcomers w/ Low Literacy

Teacher Age	n	Std Dev Under H0	Median Score
Forty years or less	3	0.423	0.22
More than 40 years	5	0.423	0.67

Survey results also show teachers have received different amounts of professional development around teaching Newcomer children with limited schooling or disabilities. Teacher age is positively significantly related to their perceptions of the usefulness of Professional Development around Supporting Newcomers with limited schooling and disabilities ( $p < .01$ ), indicating that teachers 40 or under believe training for teaching Newcomer students with limited schooling and disabilities to be inadequate. The difference in median scores between more and less experienced teachers' responses is significant at the 1% level ( $Pr > |Z| = 0.008$ ).

Table 11 – Median Scores for Perceived Usefulness of PD/WS for Newcomers w/ Limited Schooling

Teacher Age	n	Std Dev Under H0	Median Score
Forty years or less	3	0.567	0.00
More than 40 years	5	0.567	0.80

Table 12 – Median Scores for Perceived Usefulness of PD/WS for Newcomers w/ Disabilities

Teacher Age	n	Std Dev Under H0	Median Score
Forty years or less	3	0.567	0.00
More than 40 years	5	0.567	0.80

**Finding 2: MWSD has focused on Newcomer Mental Health and Trauma in staff development in the past. However, more training is needed.**

MWSD has offered training around a variety of topics in Mental Health and Mental Health Services and Trauma for staff development. District administrators and school staff alike both feel that this training exists. One district administrator shared, *"And I think we're also having a trauma-informed approach. I think that that's something that, at least from the district level, we're giving attention to."* However, both district administrators and school staff believe more training is needed. One school staff shared, *"The most recent training that I've had was suicide prevention training... Giving us red flags of things like trauma-induced that we could see in kids... and that was a little bit before the pandemic."* A district administrator agreed saying, *"I think that our teachers are really passionate about trauma-informed practices. I don't know if we've provided enough training. But I would say that our teachers are really passionate about that."*

The district has incorporated training around SEL through the hiring of a Health and Wellness Coordinator. This individual works with school-based staff and community partners to address the physical and mental health needs of Newcomer students and families. Specifically, they shared, *"But what I do offer is just general social, emotional learning, professional development, so working with teachers and administrators on integrating social, emotional learning."*

**Finding 3: MWSD's focus on culture and trust is critical to supporting Newcomers.**

Empathy and trust building are critical to creating meaningful relationships with Newcomer students. Thus, MWSD has focused on developing staff to be empathic and on building trust. A school staff member shared, *"How they knew that they were in love, like, you can create a relationship with them so fast. And they're just so in need of any amount of love. A high five"*

*means the world to them.” A school administrator had aligned thoughts, “They’re going to push your buttons because they don’t have a safe space anywhere else. Everything they’ve ever known has abandoned them... Everyone that they’ve ever lived with has left. And so, you’re that person who’s got to be there to say I’m not gonna abandon you.”*

Aligned, MWSD recognizes the importance of realistic expectations of Newcomer students. Realistic expectations allow for empathy to be used and trust to be developed. A School Administrator said, *“A lot of our teachers feel pressure that their Newcomer isn’t doing what everyone else is doing, and they’re below grade level. No one would expect that a fifth grade Newcomer is reading at the fifth-grade level.”*

Finally, a large part of what MWSD is doing to promote SEL through staff development is through sustaining culture. Helping families sustain their home cultures ensures empathy is practiced and trust is built simultaneously to ensure positive relationships with Newcomer students and families. A district administrator told me, *“Helping the entire organization be culturally responsive or culturally sustaining. So, because people are coming from different countries and cultures. Being welcoming is one thing. But not expecting assimilation is another thing.”* They went further to say, *“I would love to see future programs like teacher [preparation] programs and professional development, talk about what it means to be a culturally sustaining leader.”*

### **Research Question 3: How does MWSD utilize family engagement and family community partnerships in supporting Newcomer social-emotional outcomes?**

There are differences among Newcomers from an SES lens, a country-of-origin lens, and an experiences lens. Interviews and focus groups found that each of these impacts how MWSD is able to utilize family engagement and family community partnerships. These specifically align with the SEL component of creating positive relationships. One school staff shared, *“We are very diverse. We have some very high-income students and some very low-income students... But it tends to be that our Newcomer students are more on the low income [side], so their availability is very low.”* A district administrator felt similarly and shared, *“The strength that Newcomers bring is the diversity of experiences. I think that families coming from different countries of origin bring different problem-solving approaches. They contribute themselves, their cultures, and their experiences, which help our schools become more global communities.”*

#### **Finding 1: Constructing Community has been a large way that MWSD has utilized family engagement and family community partnerships.**

Constructing Community includes SEL themes of creating positive relationships, empathy, and self and social awareness. MWSD has engaged families and created community partnerships with a focus on these themes. A parent from South America shared, *“The school helped by having us do activities together [with other families].”* A parent from Asia stated, *“Many nice parents and friends, that have helped with his school life.”* A parent from a different Asian country shared, *“The school is going to have a Lunar New Year celebration to also teach other kids about it.”* A parent from a different country in South America shared, *“All these kids from*

*everywhere [different countries] were in a play together and by the end are always there for each other now.” School Administrators shared some thoughts about family partnerships. One said, “All the Newcomer students and families have been supportive and positive about education. So, I think the biggest thing is just the level of support that we get in our partnership with the families’ partnership and allies.” Another shared, “But what I’ve gathered from them, and what I’ve kind of concluded, is that they just want to be involved.” One gave a specific example of an event that they held to construct community with Newcomers students and families, “A multicultural potluck... families bring dishes that meant something to them... at six when it was supposed to end, a whole new crowd came in... we’ve already planned to put more in the year.... everyone said congratulations in their home language.”*

**Finding 2: Communication is a key component of MWSD’s family engagement and family and community partnerships.**

Across the district, teachers and school and district administrators believe that family partnership is one of their strengths. When working with Newcomer students and families, Maple Walnut understands that empathy and resiliency via self and social awareness and trusting relationships are critical for these partnerships to be effective and meaningful. A teacher shared this about Newcomer students and families and their strengths, *“A lot of perseverance, I mean, those families have gone through a lot to get here. A lot of valuing education, valuing safety, and the kids. For the most part, the kids know what their families have given up even at that age... So, usually, all I have to talk about is what your mama would want, and usually the behavior stops because, no, that’s not what my mama would want.”*

MWSD has created a parent university structure to engage and communicate with Newcomer families about relevant topics. The parent university structure fosters improved relationships through information sharing with families. A district administrator shared, *“We have 15 or 20 meetings in various locations... interpreting and accessing your child’s academic results... what does it mean... how to talk to teachers about it... transitions from elementary school to middle school, from middle school to high school.”* Aligned a school administrator said, *“[Parent University teaches] things like, how do you have a successful conference with your teachers? What are some good questions to ask them when you get ready for conferences.”*

When a language barrier exists, MWSD provides language support for their teachers and families to ensure effective communication. A teacher shared, *“My coach and their coach, they’re both fluent in Spanish. With my one Newcomer, who was having a lot of difficulties at school and a lot of emotional difficulties, I would just ask the coach, can you help me call mom.”*

Parents who participated in the focus group discussion or responded to the survey had positive views about after-school programming. These after-school programs provide an opportunity for students to communicate with one another in their native language and other languages. These after-school programs help overcome the language barriers that sometimes exist between students. As stated earlier, one family loves that their son gets to speak both his Native Chinese and continue to learn English. Another parent from a different large Asian country had a similar view about these programs, *“Beyond the Belt has a lot of Spanish-speaking friends, so he is learning Spanish from his friends.”*



**Finding 3: Resources (people and organizations) inside and outside the school community have been critical to MWSD’s family engagement and family community partnerships.**

As mentioned above, the schools have SCEFs (School Community Engagement Facilitators), who are the primary support individuals for Newcomer students and their families. Through many interviews and focus group discussions, SCEFs are seen as one of the most important resources and relationships for Newcomer students and families. They connect Newcomer families to school and community resources. These community resources play a pivotal role in improving self and social awareness, self-management, making responsible decisions, and improving relationships. A school administrator shared, *“We have our SCEFs district wide. They do a lot of providing support for those families.”* They went further and added, *“We have our school community engagement facilitators meet with Newcomer families and give them resources. So, they hook them up with community organizations... let the parents and students know we’re here to help you. Making sure families get connected to what they need.”*

MWSD uses resources in the community to address Newcomer student families’ needs. These resources are fully encompassing and include rent/housing, mental and physical health services, and employment opportunities. Many district- and school-based administrators spoke about services such as the Day Work Center, the Rent Stabilization Program, and Community Services Agency. Multiple school and district administrators shared their thoughts about these programs, *“We use the Day Worker Center. We utilize the Rent Stabilization Program, Community Services Agency, which helps with things [like] a food pantry. We have CHEC, which provides counseling services... and Pacific Clinics and Uplift, which provides prevention, early intervention, and family specialists.”* A school administrator shared, *“We connect students to different doctors. There’s a whole binder of materials that our staff has that they pull out when people need it, but we’re always looking for different people, mental health [professional], mentor tutor connection.”* A district administrator shared, *“The Challenge Team brings together local agencies and local organizations [and] nonprofits... We participate in a monthly meeting to discuss some of the available resources that can be used to provide services for families.”* Another district administrator shared, *“I am part of the Advisory Committee for breaking homelessness. We have been working together unofficially for multiple years.”* A third district administrator shared, *“Newcomers who are the most disadvantaged often will require referrals to various agencies that provide basic food and shelter. Many Newcomers are McKinney Vento families, so they’re unhoused.”*

Interview, focus group, and survey data revealed that one partnership type that is needed for both staff development and family engagement and family community partnership is that of immigrant aid and rights. This includes differences between state and federal rights and policies. One school administrator shared, *“I think an area that’s completely missing [is] understanding the immigration policies and how that impacts families.”* A school staff member echoed, *“And [make] sure all staff understands Newcomers students’ rights. I think we need to actually do a little bit better job at that. Because I don’t even feel like I’m fully aware of Newcomers students’ rights.”* Aligned, a district administrator shared, *“Making sure that staff are familiar with immigration policies and just understanding immigration as a broader issue that they think is important and maybe that that will be something that would be a growth [area].”* Aligned, a teacher shared, *“I don’t think we’ve talked a lot about immigration policies and things like that,*

*so that people understand and know about family rights, or Newcomer student rights. I don't think any of that has really been talked about."* School and district administrators alike talked about the challenges and growth opportunities in immigration law. A school administrator shared, *"I would say that one of the challenges [is] immigration policies. And they're different from federal and state level, which is also complicated when you have state saying one thing [and] federal something else. Where do you align yourself?"* A district administrator shared, *I know the special ed law, but as far as you know, specifically, you need to [know] immigration policies. That's something that I think we can all learn and grow in that area."* *"I know that a lot of immigrant families need help either seeking asylum or all kinds of other things. I'm not aware of any legal organizations that we refer families to, and I think [that] could be critical."* Another school administrator said, *"Training for families and other staff and personnel... but I think families would definitely benefit in knowing what their rights are. And even like becoming really familiar with immigration policy."*

The schools in MWSD hold various functions to connect Newcomer students and families with community partners. At these functions, Newcomer students and their families are made aware of the resources and support that community partners offer. A parent shared, *"[We] started a Newcomer dinner at my school and shared basic information about the school system, including community resources. These are very well attended. They [parents] want to know how to volunteer and help the kids."* A staff member said, *"Every event that we've had here at school, like, for example, our recent one harvest festival, we had organizations that serve the community, help with rent."* A school administrator said, *"And so last year and this year, we set up an info night and so we invited different community outreaches like for homelessness for all different things. We set up booths, and they could come have dinner... and then also get information on how they could be supported in the community."*

When working with Newcomer students and families, MWSD understands the importance of having an empathic mindset. Additionally, teachers, staff, and school and district administrators recognize that family resiliency and connection via self and social awareness are critical for the family-school engagement to be effective and meaningful. A school staff member shared, *"But one thing that I can say is they're humble. How can you ask a parent to give you 20 minutes when they're at work the whole time? We're trying to get [them] involved, and it's almost impossible."* A district administrator shared, *"And it is hard to get the community to come. You know, they're super busy. They have two or three jobs to be able to afford to live here. They don't have time, they're so tired."* A school administrator shared, *"And so having that empathetic mindset and understanding like our kids aren't just coming to school, and not knowing English. They're coming to school and not having some resources that they need."* A school administrator shared, *"Definitely resilient family structure is very important to them. They've gone through a lot and made it here."* A district administrator felt similarly and shared, *"I actually see more engagement coming from Newcomer families..., especially if they've come from a difficult situation... a trauma bond forms... So that family unit kind of gets even more bonded."*

Finally, a large part of what MWSD is doing to promote SEL through staff development is through Sustaining Culture. Family community partnerships and communication needs both provide a way to ensure Sustaining Culture. A parent from Asia shared, *"I cannot pick up my son at 2:30 because I have my own work to do, but this time [after school programs] is less*

*structured than class time. That gives him more time to play with his friends, be better immersed in the English language, and have a chance to also go back to his Chinese speaking language.”*

**Finding 4: Mental Health and Trauma have been one key family engagement and family community partnerships utilized by MWSD.**

As discussed above, mental health services and trauma support are some of the greatest SEL needs for both Newcomer students and their families. All stakeholders understand the need for these services, and MWSD does a great job utilizing community partners that specialize in mental health and trauma. A school administrator shared, *“So, I’m reaching out to community organizations that understand stress and trauma can impact students of all ages, [this] is something that we’re all trying to learn and help support as well.”* A school staff member shared about an event, *“There was a stand where [teachers, staff, families] could go and talk to them [service providers] ... Learn how stress, anxiety, and trauma impacts students of all ages.”* A district administrator shared, *“[The Parent University] in October was about a partnership with a mental health agency in San Jose... the topic was how to take care of yourself. So that you can show up for [take care of] your kids, right, so like self-care.”* Another district administrator shared, *“We also have a Wellness Center at one of our elementary schools that is organized in partnership with Santa Clara County Office of Education. They run a Newcomer group there, and those have a specific curriculum [around Mental Health and Trauma].”*

Many of these services are also a way to help develop SEL skills such as empathy, building positive relationships, and improving self & social awareness. A district administrator reported *“I believe it [trauma curriculum] is designed to help kids process through trauma from immigration... it also builds community and identity... finding value in themselves and where they come from, but also community with other Newcomer kids. Other people are in similar places, even if they don’t come from the same country of origin, they’re kind of walking through this together.”*

## Discussion

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Maple Walnuts' Health and Wellness Coordinator has the difficult task of determining SEL standards across grade levels. What makes this task even harder is the variety of cultural backgrounds and other demographic differences among Newcomers and between Newcomers and non-Newcomers at MWSD. McCall et al. (2022, p. 591) identified a key problem with the implementation of SEL, "we expect SEL curriculums to be able to reach their intended goals with students who are not White, middle-class Christians living in the suburbs despite no evidence that this is true. This perpetuates systems of oppression and endorses to minoritized students that one's differences are not important and what works for one's white counterparts should work for them as well." Students are thus required to comply with and adopt manners of emotional expression and regulation that may not align with their cultural values and interpretation of emotions.

Fortunately, alternative approaches to SEL exist. Jagers, et al. (2019) and Westheimer and Kahne (2004) found three different approaches to SEL that address culture and equity: personally responsible, participatory, and transformative. Personally responsible SEL purports equity can be achieved by encouraging better individual attitudes and behaviors. The claim is that this type of SEL will achieve better outcomes for everyone. Participatory SEL claims better equity can be achieved by participating in activities that will enhance one's understanding of others and their ways of thinking. Both SEL approaches have a limitation in teaching children to conform and assimilate to social arrangements (Jagers et al., 2019; Solorzano & Bernal, 2001). Transformative SEL is the type of SEL needed. Through transformative approaches, the student's voice is more highly intertwined in the process of social-emotional learning, allowing for student cultures and experiences to be more highly valued and accepted (Jagers et al., 2019; McCall et al., 2022).

Transformative SEL is an example of a social justice framework that utilizes cultural humility. Cultural humility allows school psychologists to achieve a deeper understanding of diverse human experiences, which in turn enhances their practices in advocating for equity and culturally responsive practices in schools" (McCall et. al, 2022, p. 588). Shriberg and Clinton (2016) found that "social justice involves taking action to ensure equitable access to services to individual and system levels."

SEL generally takes place in advisory programs. These (advisory) programs benefit all stakeholders individually, jointly, and through family and community partnerships. Starting with children, Putbrese (1989) found that advisory programs 1) give students a feeling of more control over decisions, 2) promote an atmosphere of equality, 3) provide opportunities for group work, 4) improve the sharing of feelings between students, 5) help to maximize the altruistic nature of early adolescents, and 6) reduce the incidence of smoking and/or alcohol use and/or abuse which links to students' lack of belonging and mental health issues. Putbrese (1989) also found that after controlling for such variables as family and student background, region, and grade organization, principals with effective advisory programs in the middle grades reported stronger overall guidance programs and lower expected dropout rates in high school. Examining data from a Texas middle school program specifically geared to reduce absenteeism among a group of

70 chronically delinquent students, Mac Iver and Epstein (1991) found that by reaching out to parents and working closely with students in a daily advisory period, the school was able to generate “immediate and very gratifying” results.

For staff, advisory programs appear to make teachers more aware of or more attentive to student behavior (Putbrese, 1989). They also provide opportunities for staff to collaborate, debrief, and recharge (Colorin Colorado). Regarding the union of students and teachers/staff, advisory programs have been found to have 1) improved relationships between students and teachers (Espe, 1993; Totten & Nielson, 1994) and 2) increased sense of trust and belonging for students and teachers (Ziegler & Mulhall, 1994). Advisory programs also improve teacher/student relationships on a personal level (Putbrese, 1989), and result in better communication among all members of the school community (Simmons & Kiarich, 1989).

Related to family engagement, Christenson & Sheridan (2001) and Sheridan & Kratochwill (2008) view advisory programs as a Family-school partnership. In these partnerships, families and school staff engage in shared work, joint planning, and focus on promoting positive child outcomes through a strengths-based approach. Families become stakeholders and better partners in ensuring their student's success academically and behaviorally. Cooper-Crosnoe (2007, p. 374-375) explains the reasons for the observed benefits of family engagement through advisory programs, “These benefits accrue because parents’ communication with teachers and other parents gives them insight into how schools work, facilitates the flow of information between school and home, and promotes school-related discussions with their children.”

Research has shown, “When we silo children into affinity groups (e.g., race, sexuality, gender), we are implicitly reaffirming the message that it is only with those that are similar to oneself that they can feel comfortable to be their authentic self” (McCall et al., 2022, p. 592). Thus, advisory groups should be heterogeneous and comprise students from a variety of racial/ethnic, gender, sexuality, dis(ability), and other backgrounds.

There is a vast literature on the impact of teacher Professional Development on improving student academic outcomes; improving student academic outcomes, in turn, can benefit teachers in many ways, including raising income, happiness, and health (Allen et al., 2011, 2015; Chetty et al., 2014; Hanushek, 2011; Lochner, 2011). Sims and Fletcher-Wood (2020) and Bergmark (2020) review numerous studies and identify six characteristics of highly effective Professional Development: 1) PD is sustained over time (Blank & de las Alas, 2009; Cordingley et al., 2015; Desimone, 2009; Dunst et al., 2015; Timperley et al., 2007; Walter & Briggs, 2012; Wei et al., 2009); 2) teachers take part in PD as a group creating “communities of practice” (Cordingley et al., 2015; Desimone, 2009; Dunst et al., 2015; Timperley et al., 2007; Walter & Briggs, 2012; Wei et al., 2009; Taylor et al., 2012; Ampartzaki et al., 2013); 3) teachers identify with and endorse taking part in PD (Cordingley et al., 2015; Timperley et al., 2007; Walter & Briggs, 2012); 4) PD involves training in subject knowledge? (Blank & de las Alas, 2009; Cordingley et al., 2015; Desimone, 2009; Dunst et al., 2015; Wei et al., 2009); 5) PD uses outside expertise (Cordingley et al., 2015; Dunst et al., 2015; Timperley et al., 2007; Walter & Briggs, 2012; Wei et al., 2009); and 6) PD provides opportunities to use, practice, or apply what has been learned (Blank & de las Alas, 2009; Cordingley et al., 2015; Desimone, 2009; Dunst et al., 2015; Timperley et al., 2007; Walter & Briggs, 2012; Wei et al., 2009). To achieve Professional

Development goals of improving student academic outcomes and teacher well-being simultaneously, Professional Development should provide the best structures and opportunities for teachers.

The traditional approach to community development utilizes a deficit approach. Under this approach, outside agencies view communities as a collection of needs, problems, and deficiencies, rather than recognizing a community's inherent strength and existing resources (Kretzmann, 1996). The traditional approach requires organizations to show the needs they're addressing and indirectly focus on the deficits (Denning, 2023). Kretzmann and McKnight (1996), Denning (2023), and others, e.g., Boyd et al. (2008) and Kretzmann (2000), favor Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD) to the traditional approach to community development. ABCD is a great mechanism for community change for a variety of reasons. First, ABCD involves developing relationships with residents with a particular emphasis on the inclusion of marginalized groups (Boyd et al., 2008). Second, ABCD focuses on collectivism. Specifically, ABCD is about doing with individuals and communities, rather than doing to or for them (Russell, 2020). Third, ABCD shifts the dynamics and views on communities from not seeing people and communities as problems that need fixing but rather starting from people's gifts (Russell, 2020).

Lal & Phillips (2018) found students perform better academically when they are in a safe and supportive school environment, enjoy quality representation, and are not stressed by their own or their parents' immigration status. Unfortunately, many immigrants lack access to legal aid (Jordan, 2016). Although there is limited research on the effects of partnerships with legal clinics on meeting the needs of students and families, Murillo, Liboon, and Quartz (2021) found a partnership that may be effective in this regard is a legal clinic located at a school site. This type of partnership could extend the number of law students' learning opportunities and increase the number of trained lawyers who practice immigration law (Scharf, 2006; Bliss et al., 2011).

Murillo et al. (2021) found that these partnerships focus on immigration issues. However, their interviews revealed that these clinics also address intersecting issues, such as employment and tenant rights, guided by the community's needs and aligned with the clinic's philosophy on community lawyering—collaborative, community-based approaches to legal services. They suggest ways to integrate these legal clinics into schools to ensure that families and staff can utilize these supports while also ensuring trusting relationships are formed.

Reaching out to community organizations to better serve families by pointing families in the right direction and facilitating connections between families and community organizations ensures better outcomes for students. This spring, I took a course entitled Community Responsiveness with Dr. Barnes. The Founder and Principal Consultant of Reclamation Advisors LLC, Dr. Barnes provides advising and consulting services for individuals, organizations, educational and faith-based institutions, and community-based entities on strategies that help youth and communities reclaim their leadership. He believes families and communities need to move to the center and lead what is being done in schools, and schools need to become responsive to families and community needs. In the last session of this class, he shared a plethora of ways to make this happen. Moving families and communities to the center of what is being

done in schools creates authentic and lasting connections between community partners and families that are not reliant upon an individual school or the district.

Oftentimes there are not enough people in community partners to serve all individuals in need. One way to mitigate deficiency is by encouraging community partners to employ families in need of employment. These families often have skills and connections that could help the community partners have a larger reach of influence.

Giving autonomy to school leaders always creates trade-offs and tension. Too much autonomy can create issues around power and corruption, and too little autonomy can lead to an inability to meet the needs of those served. Steinberg (2014) looks at autonomy for school-based leaders and how it impacts school performance and student achievement, respectively. Hansen and Roza (2005) and Ouchi (2006) argue that school leaders need control of the four mechanisms of educational governance: school budgets, personnel and staffing, curriculum and instruction, and general operational and administrative conditions. Hill (2004); Hansen and Roza, (2005), Ouchi (2006), and Steinberg (2014) rationalized school-based autonomy based on the theory of comparative advantage. This theory argues that educational production (aka student learning) and school-based inputs (such as curriculum or classroom management) require school-level leaders to have the ability to determine ways that they can respond to student's individual learning needs. Steinberg cites Ouchi and Goldschmidt (2009) who found the provision of school autonomy is correlated with student achievement.



## Recommendations

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Based on the results from surveys, interviews, & focus group discussions, and an extensive review of the literature, the following recommendations are in order.

1. My research revealed that: 1) Newcomers face challenges in connecting with peers and teachers, 2) MWSD's focus on culture and trust are critical to supporting Newcomers, and 3) Constructing Community has been a large way that MWSD has utilized family engagement and family community partnerships. Therefore, I recommend that MWSD utilize the transformative SEL approach as discussed in Jagers et al. The best place for this transformative SEL to take place would be in advisory, which is beneficial according to many scholars, including Putbrese. These spaces should implement advisory without affinity spaces as defined by McCall et. al. One of the biggest pushbacks against advisory is time, as such, I recommend that these advisory spaces take place once a week or once every two weeks, and rotating which period of the day is replaced with advisory to ensure that it is not always the same class impacted. Therefore, my full recommendation is for MWSD to implement transformative SEL without using affinity spaces in weekly or bi-weekly advisory that alternates the period being replaced.
2. My research also demonstrated that: 1) Educators recognize the diversity within the Newcomer population and that this diversity makes it challenging to provide support and 2) Resources (people and organizations) inside and outside the school community have been critical to MWSD's family engagement and family community partnerships. Aligned with McCall's findings, I recommend MWSD partner with school-based psychologists to ensure the components of cultural humility and social justice are utilized when making decisions around Newcomers.
3. Three findings of my research are: 1) while teachers, staff, and administrators get relevant PD training, many teachers (particularly less experienced and younger teachers) believe more is needed; 2) although MWSD has focused on Newcomer Mental Health and Trauma in staff development in the past, more training is needed; and 3) teachers recognize the diversity within the Newcomer population and the challenges that this diversity creates in providing support to Newcomers. Aligned with the findings of Fletcher-Wood (2020) and Bergmark (2020), I therefore recommend MWSD create and sustain collaborative, community of practice professional development opportunities by partnering with outside experts and ensuring teachers and staff have meaningful opportunities to use, practice, and apply what they have learned. These professional developments should cover four topics: 1) how to help students with low literacy skills, 2) how to help students with limited formal schooling, 3) how to adapt teaching to children from different cultures, and 4) how to adapt teaching to Newcomer children with disabilities.
4. Two findings of my research are: 1) Educators recognize the diversity within the Newcomer population and that this diversity makes it challenging to provide support, and

2) Resources (people and organizations) inside and outside the school community have been critical to MWSD's family engagement and family community partnerships. Therefore, I also recommend that MWSD develop an asset-based community development intake system that promotes efficiency by merging existing services. In my judgment, MWSD can merge existing services and be more efficient. By bringing Newcomer families and community partners together to talk about the services they can provide, a robust in-take system can be fleshed out. MWSD can ensure that each partner and the services they provide will be most valuable, assets-based, inclusive, and focused to address the needs of Newcomer students and families.

5. My research also shows that: 1) Constructing Community has been a large way that MWSD has utilized family engagement and family community partnerships, and 2) Resources (people and organizations) inside and outside the school community have been critical to MWSD's family engagement and family community partnerships. As such, I also recommend that MWSD create more partnerships with groups involved in immigrant legal aid who can work in schools and support Newcomers. These partners could train teachers and staff to better understand the legal rights and legal difficulties that Newcomer students and their families face. A good place to look for these partnerships that could be affordable is local universities like Stanford and San Jose State, which could take cases on a pro bono basis and provide clinics for staff development. These needs could include legal services or other services while also ensuring trusting relationships are formed.
6. My research found that: 1) Constructing Community has been a large way that MWSD has utilized family engagement and family community partnerships, and 2) Resources (people and organizations) inside and outside the school community have been critical to MWSD's family engagement and family community partnerships. Based on Dr. Brian Barnes' workshop on Community Responsiveness in Schools, I also recommend that MWSD connect families and community partners in ways that can promote direct contact with youth and families, including leading to familial employment.
7. When allocating resources, school and district leaders often face trade-offs. Given the success of all previous recommendations hinges on the availability and deployment of resources, I recommend that MWSD provide principals flexibility and/or autonomy and/or implement district safeguards related to resource allocation to benefit Newcomer students and families. It was abundantly clear from interviews and focus group discussions that a quick flux of Newcomer students and families can arrive from any place at any time during the year. Unless a mid-year, emergency rainy day fund exists, MWSD cannot meet the needs of an influx of Newcomer students and their families. One possible safeguard is hiring folks with a dual role. This team can work at the central office but also serve as an emergency school response team. Forming a team of certified teachers and mental health providers with other expertise areas, such as Special Education, Math Education, or trauma-informed practices. These individuals can work at the central office as instructional coaches or curriculum and pedagogy creators. However, if there is an influx of Newcomers to a specific school site, they can pivot into schools as

needed. These individuals can receive a normal salary for their work at the central office and an additional stipend if they are needed back in schools.

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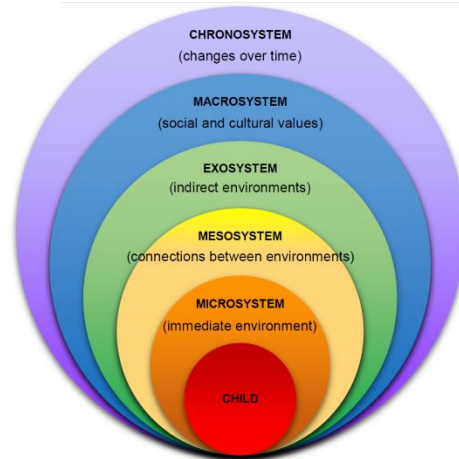
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# Appendix

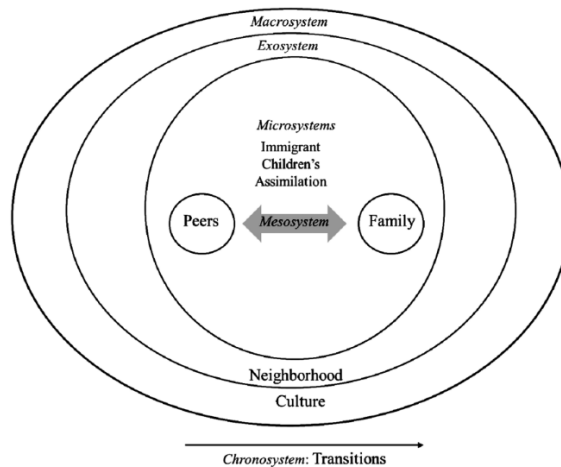
## Casel's Wheel of Competence



## Bronfenbrenner's Ecological System



## Paat's Ecological System



## Family Survey Questions

1. What do you see as the biggest educational needs of your children? Reading, math, learning English, or something else (name them)?
2. What type of support services does your child(ren) need to be successful? Transportation, translation/interpretation, counseling, referrals to community agencies, or something else (name them)?
3. What can the school provide to help you better support your child? Help with homework, strategies for reading with your child, strategies for doing math together as a family, parent involvement in school, or something else (name them)?
4. What support(s) or resource(s) did you find most helpful in assisting your children's transition to the new school system? Were there any areas where you felt additional support was needed?
5. What other non-school-based agencies or organizations could help your family? Health clinics, food banks, financial institutions (banks), faith-based organizations, or something else (name them)?
6. What opportunities have you had to work with your child(ren)'s teachers and participate in school activities?

1. How old are you?

- A. Under 21
- B. 21-30
- C. 31-40
- D. 41-50
- E. 51-60
- F. 61+

2. Ethnicity

- African American/Black
- Asian American/Pacific Islander
- Caucasian
- American Indian/Native American
- Middle Eastern
- Latinx/Hispanic American
- Multiple ethnicities/Biracial/Multiracial
- Other

3. What is your home country/countries?

4. Did you attend formal schooling in your home country? If yes, what grade level/levels



5. As a parent have you attended schooling in the United States? If yes, what grade level/levels

\*Survey also translated into Spanish, Mandarin, and Russian

## Family Focus Group Questions

1. What do you see as the biggest educational needs of your children? Reading, math, learning English, or something else (name them)?
2. What type of support services does your child(ren) need to be successful? Transportation, translation/interpretation, counseling, referrals to community agencies, or something else (name them)?
3. What can the school provide to help you better support your child? Help with homework, strategies for reading with your child, strategies for doing math together as a family, parent involvement in school, or something else (name them)?
4. What support(s) or resource(s) did you find most helpful in assisting your children's transition to the new school system? Were there any areas where you felt additional support was needed?
5. What other non-school-based agencies or organizations could help your family? Health clinics, food banks, financial institutions (banks), faith-based organizations, or something else (name them)? Why?
6. What were your initial expectations and concerns about your child(ren)'s schooling in this country? How have those expectations changed over time?
7. How have you navigated the language barrier with your child(ren)'s school? Have you encountered any communication challenges? How were they addressed?
8. How have you navigated the cultural differences with your child(ren)'s school? How were they addressed?
9. How have your children's experiences at school impacted their sense of belonging and integration into the school system, such as building friendships with their classmates?
10. What strategies (if any) have you and the school used to maintain your cultural heritage and traditions?
11. Have you encountered any instances of discrimination or prejudice towards your children due to their background? How did you handle these situations, and what support did you seek and/or receive from the school?
12. What opportunities have you had to work with your child(ren)'s teachers and participate in school activities?
13. Have there been any differences between the education system in your home country and ours? If so, what are some of those differences and how have they impacted your

children's education?

14. What do the interactions of your students and other students look like?

## Family Focus Group Matrix

Pseudonyms: (Chad, Jacob, Christine, Briana)				
		Evidence		
Research Question	Theme	Key Quotes	Documents	Observations
1) What SEL supports are needed by Newcomer students and families?	Differences among Newcomers	“We come from China, so his math is enough to handle the questions in his school, but he had very little English before coming here.” Chad	N/A	N/A
1) What SEL supports are needed by Newcomer students and families?	Differences among Newcomers	“Learning English.” Briana	N/A	N/A
3) How does MWSD utilize family community partnerships in supporting Newcomer social-emotional outcomes?	Constructing Community	“My son goes to after school programming where he gets the opportunity to speak English. He also has a chance to do homework there.” Jacob	N/A	N/A
1) What SEL supports are needed by Newcomer students and families? and 3) How does MWSD utilize family community partnerships in supporting Newcomer social-emotional outcomes?	Constructing Community	“More opportunities to play with different grade levels.” Jacob	N/A	N/A
3) How does MWSD utilize family community partnerships in supporting Newcomer social-emotional outcomes?	Constructing Community	“The school helped by having us do activities together [with other families].” Briana	N/A	N/A
3) How does MWSD utilize family community partnerships in supporting Newcomer social-emotional outcomes?	Constructing Community	“Many nice parents and friends, that have helped with his school life.” Jacob	N/A	N/A
3) How does MWSD utilize family community partnerships in supporting Newcomer social-emotional outcomes?	Constructing Community	“The school is going to have a lunar new year celebration to also teach other kids about it.” Chad	N/A	N/A
3) How does MWSD utilize family community partnerships in supporting Newcomer social-emotional outcomes?	Constructing Community	“My wife has participated in support of events at the school, such as field trips and science experiments.” Jacob	N/A	N/A
3) How does MWSD utilize family community partnerships in supporting	Constructing Community	“[We] started a Newcomer dinner at my school and shared basic information about the school system including community resources. These are very	N/A	N/A

Newcomer social-emotional outcomes?		well attended. They [parents] want to know how to volunteer and help the kids." Christine		
3) How does MWSD utilize family community partnerships in supporting Newcomer social-emotional outcomes?	Constructing Community	"All these kids from everywhere [different countries] were in a play together and by the end are always there for each other now." Christine	N/A	N/A
3) How does MWSD utilize family community partnerships in supporting Newcomer social-emotional outcomes?	Communication	Beyond the Belt has a lot of Spanish speaking friends, so he is learning Spanish from his friends." Jacob	N/A	N/A
2) How does MWSD utilize staff and staff development in supporting Newcomer social-emotional outcomes?	Communication	"345 kids at my kids' school with 38 different languages spoken." Briana	N/A	N/A
2) How does MWSD utilize staff and staff development in supporting Newcomer social-emotional outcomes?	Mental Health and Trauma	"Negative comments from peers, like go away." Jacob	N/A	N/A
2) How does MWSD utilize staff and staff development in supporting Newcomer social-emotional outcomes?	Mental Health and Trauma	"A girl who was crying, disengaged, had nobody to communicate with. This is what started the first Newcomer class at my kid's school and now the district has begun doing this [having Newcomer classes]." Christine	N/A	N/A
3) How does MWSD utilize family community partnerships in supporting Newcomer social-emotional outcomes?	ity	"The Japanese expat community is the most helpful. The leasing office is very helpful and friendly." Jacob	N/A	N/A
3) How does MWSD utilize family community partnerships in supporting Newcomer social-emotional outcomes?	Resources in the Community	"Health Clinics and other Health Care Organizations." Briana	N/A	N/A
1) What SEL supports are needed by Newcomer students and families?	Sustaining Home Culture	"I am optimistic that he is learning English day by day, but how do we make sure that he keeps his Japanese language skills?" Jacob	N/A	N/A
3) How does MWSD utilize family community partnerships in supporting Newcomer social-emotional outcomes?	Sustaining Home Culture	"I cannot pick up my son at 2:30 because I have my own work to do, but this time [after school programs] is less structured than class time. That gives him more time to play with his friends and be better immersed in the English language and have a chance to also go back to his Chinese speaking language." Chad	N/A	N/A



## Teacher Survey Questions

1. To what extent have we met the following needs of Newcomer students?  
Not at All (1), A little (2), Somewhat (3), Mostly (4), Full Extent (5)
  - a. Basic English language learning needs
  - b. Educational needs related to reading skills
  - c. Educational needs related to math skills
  - d. Transportation
  - e. Translation/interpretation
  - f. Social emotional needs
  - g. Food security
  - h. Housing security
  - i. Health care needs
  
2. To what extent do the professional developments and/or workshops the school and/or district help you with work with Newcomer students and families?  
Not at All (1), A little (2), Somewhat (3), Mostly (4), Full Extent (5)
  
3. To what extent do curriculum and/or instructional resources the school and/or district offer help you with work with Newcomer students and families?  
Not at All (1), A little (2), Somewhat (3), Mostly (4), Full Extent (5)
  
4. How would you compare Newcomer students to your non-Newcomer students:
  - 7a. Attendance  
(Much Less/Worse, A little Less/Worse, Same, A Little More/Better, Much More/Better)
  
  - 7b. Completing Assignments  
(Much Less/Worse, A little Less/Worse, Same, A Little More/Better, Much More/Better)
  
  - 7c. Motivation and Effort  
(Much Less/Worse, A little Less/Worse, Same, A Little More/Better, Much More/Better)
  
  - 7e. Relations with Classmates  
(Much Less/Worse, A little Less/Worse, Same, A Little More/Better, Much More/Better)
  
  - 7f. Relations with Adults  
(Much Less/Worse, A little Less/Worse, Same, A Little More/Better, Much More/Better)
  
  - 7g. Reading and Writing  
(Much Less/Worse, A little Less/Worse, Same, A Little More/Better, Much More/Better)
  
  - 7h. Liking School  
(Much Less/Worse, A little Less/Worse, Same, A Little More/Better, Much More/Better)



7i. Self-confidence in learning abilities

(Much Less/Worse, A little Less/Worse, Same, A Little More/Better, Much More/Better)

5. How much professional development have you engaged in that covered the following topics regarding supporting Newcomers? (Options: Less than half a day, Less than a full day, About one full day, 2-3 days, 4 or more days)
  - a. Overview of potential challenges students/families face as Newcomers
  - b. Teaching students with limited English proficiency in content areas
  - c. How to help students with low literacy skills
  - d. How to help students with limited formal schooling
  - e. How to adapt teaching to children from different cultures
  - f. How to adapt teaching to Newcomer children with disabilities
  - g. Other (Please name and how much)
  
6. How useful would you find the following staff or professional development topics about Newcomer education? (Options: Not at all useful, somewhat useful, very useful, Extremely useful)
  - a. Overview of potential challenges students/families face as Newcomers
  - b. Teaching students with limited English proficiency in content areas
  - c. How to help students with low literacy skills
  - d. How to help students with limited formal schooling
  - e. How to adapt teaching to children from different cultures
  - f. How to adapt teaching to Newcomer children with disabilities
  - g. Other (Please name and how useful)
  
7. What languages do you speak proficiently outside of English? (SELECT ALL THAT APPLY)
  - a. Spanish
  - b. Mandarin
  - c. Korean
  - d. Japanese
  - e. Portuguese
  - f. Russian
  - g. Hindi
  - h. French
  - i. Other (Name it/them)

#### Teacher Demographic Questions

1. What best describes your current school type
  - Early Childhood Center
  - Elementary School
  - Middle School

2. Teaching experience
  - 0–2 years
  - 3–5 years
  - 6–10 years
  - 11–15 years
  - 16–20 years
  - More than 20 years
3. What subject(s) have you taught in the past? (open-ended up to 30 characters)
4. Gender Identity: (open-ended up to 30 characters)
5. What grade(s) do you currently teach? *Select all that apply.*  
Pre-K, K, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8
6. What subject(s) do you currently teach? (open-ended up to 30 characters)
7. How old are you?
  - A. 21–30
  - B. 31–40
  - C. 41–50
  - D. 51–60
  - E. 61+
8. Ethnicity
  - African American/Black
  - Asian American/Pacific Islander
  - Caucasian
  - American Indian/Native American
  - Middle Eastern
  - Latinx/Hispanic American
  - Multiple ethnicities/Biracial/Multiracial
  - Other
9. Did you or your parent(s) migrate to the United States?
  - A. Both of us
  - B. My parent
  - C. Myself
  - D. Neither of us

## Teacher Focus Group Questions

1. What in your judgment are the greatest educational needs of Newcomer students that you serve? What evidence or data do you have to support your views?
2. What are the greatest support services needs of Newcomer students you serve? What evidence or data do you have to support your conclusions?
3. What is your role in supporting Newcomers and their families? How well prepared do you feel to fulfill that role? What development would help you in your role?
4. With what agencies or organizations do you need to coordinate/collaborate to provide better services to the Newcomer children you serve?
5. What professional developments and/or workshops does the school and/or district offer to provide support on working with Newcomer students and families?
6. What curriculum and/or instructional resources does the school and/or district offer to provide support for Newcomer students and families?
7. Approximately how many of your students are recent Newcomers? How many total students do you have?
8. Is the number of Newcomer children similar to previous years (or is it higher or lower)?
9. From what country (or countries) are most of your Newcomer students?
10. Have you noticed any differences between how Newcomers from different countries are doing?
11. Have you noticed any differences between how Newcomer girls are doing and how the Newcomer boys are doing in school?
12. What do the interactions of Newcomer students and non-Newcomer students look like?
13. What needs have you found that Newcomer students need to be successful when they get to high school?
14. In what ways (if any) did you try to adapt the curriculum or change your teaching style to accommodate Newcomer students?
15. How do you expect parents to support their children's education? How have your expectations of Newcomer parents shifted or not? Do they generally meet your expectations?

16. How has your teacher preparation program prepared you to support Newcomer education?
17. Do you have any other thoughts you would like to share with us about your experiences teaching Newcomer students?
18. What are the strengths of our school/district/program in supporting Newcomer families?
19. What could we improve?
20. What are our students'/families' strengths?
21. What are their challenges?
22. Who are our partners and allies at the school, district, program, and community level?

Below are key strategies that research suggests are important for supporting Newcomers. Please read through these strategies. I will ask you some questions about the extent to which they are being implemented here.

### Key Strategies

1. Help families keep their emergency contact information updated. This step can make *the* difference in whether a child goes home with a known caregiver if a family member is detained. Remind all families to [update their contact information](#) regularly.
2. Ensure all staff understand Newcomer students' rights. All K-12 staff have an obligation to protect [students' privacy and civil rights, as well as their access to an education](#), regardless of immigration status. This is critical for staff working in the front office and on enrollment.
3. Let all students and families know that they are welcome. A [welcoming environment](#) that celebrates students' cultures and [encourages family leadership](#) creates a strong foundation for relationships, as well as for identifying and addressing challenges.
4. Create different channels for communication in families' languages. Schools must [communicate in families' preferred language](#). Identifying families' preferred means of contact can also help schools communicate more effectively and efficiently.
5. Become familiar with relevant immigration policies so that you can answer questions. This may include "[sensitive locations guidance](#)" (which directs immigration enforcement to avoid activity in certain public spaces like schools and early childhood centers), [district policies on immigration enforcement, discipline policies](#), and other related program/local/state policies. Ideally, all staff should understand these policies and protocols.
6. Connect families with resources and provide opportunities for them to ask questions. It is critical to hear from your families [about their questions and concerns](#) before determining what kind of support will be most useful. At that point, educators, schools, and/or districts can identify which resources will be appropriate to share in ways that [follow district guidelines](#).

7. Reach out to community organizations that represent and serve your families. Community partners can [provide valuable support and insight regarding Newcomer families](#) – as well as volunteers! They can be especially helpful on issues related to meeting [students' basic needs](#) and connecting families to [legal resources](#).
8. Learn how stress, anxiety, and trauma impact students of all ages. The impacts of these stressors will vary based on students' ages. Learn how [different kinds of stressors affect students](#) in your age group; become familiar with age-appropriate forms of self-expression and [social-emotional support](#); and take steps to [prevent and address bullying](#).
9. Learn more about the ways immigration issues impact students. Immigration policies affect students in complex ways that students may not discuss openly. Learn more about [the immigration issues](#) that may impact your students and families, and how to extend that conversation to your school, program, or community.
10. Provide opportunities for staff to collaborate, debrief, and recharge. [Collaboration](#) gives staff the chance to draw upon different perspectives and expertise – which leads to more effective support for students and families. In addition, providing [social-emotional support for staff](#) working on challenging issues (or who are impacted by those issues themselves) can help the team sustain their work throughout the year.

### Reflection While Reviewing Strategies

- Are we already doing this strategy?
- If so, what are some examples?
- If not, what are some small steps we could take to work towards this strategy?
- Which stakeholders need to be involved when considering this strategy?
- What are some challenges in implementing this strategy?
- How can we address those challenges?
- What are some potential benefits from achieving this strategy?

## Teacher and Staff Matrix

Pseudonyms: (Randy, Yvonne, Linda, Kathy, George)				
		Evidence		
Research Question	Theme	Key Quotes	Documents	Observations
1) What SEL supports are needed by Newcomer students and families?	Differences among Newcomers	“We have one family in specific that we had to suspend a student because of physicality. And that parent came walking all the way from their home... carrying the baby. And we then realized like, they didn’t even have a stroller, anything and their basic needs and so that day was raining and so I offered I was like, hey, I noticed that you’re actually walking, and we offered a ride to her house and realized it was actually quite far away.” Randy	N/A	N/A
2) How does MWSD utilize staff and staff development in supporting Newcomer social-emotional outcomes?	Differences among Newcomers	“Academically wise from the other countries... Some of them were like, were not doing multiplications and they’re like, we already started that in first grade. And we’re like, we don’t really touch that till like the third grade. Some come a little bit higher advanced than that on the mathematics side.” Randy	N/A	N/A
1) What SEL supports are needed by Newcomer students and families?	Differences among Newcomers	“On the behavior side... We’ve always had a big issue with physicality... When they play soccer, they’re going full force right there really did tackle some people, and the girls can [be] really shy. You go into the classroom; they’re scared to even make eye contact. And the boys can be loud and then they want to make themselves known right away when they get here. And so that’s one thing I have noticed between the boys. I think the girls have done better academically, especially like in mathematics.” Randy	N/A	N/A
3) How does MWSD utilize family community partnerships in supporting Newcomer social-emotional outcomes?	Differences among Newcomers	“We are very diverse. So, we have some very high-income students and some very low-income students... If parents have more time they can be involved more. But it tends to be that our Newcomer students are more on the low income [side] so their availability is very low.” Randy	N/A	N/A
2) How does MWSD utilize staff and staff development in supporting	Differences among Newcomers	“Well, not all Newcomers are created equal, right? So, we get some Newcomers that don’t have any prior schooling at all. So, for them, it’s really the basics. It’s how does reading work. You know what letter sounds in	N/A	N/A

Newcomer social-emotional outcomes?		English... We get some Newcomers that are highly educated and for them, really, it's just a matter of acquiring some survival, English and then learning again, some of the basics of reading the difference in the sound." Yvonne		
1) What SEL supports are needed by Newcomer students and families?	Differences among Newcomers	"The boys I currently have, I would say lacking a little bit in maturity... My first-grade boys who act more like three- and four-year-olds, but the girls currently happen to be a little quiet." Yvonne	N/A	N/A
1) What SEL supports are needed by Newcomer students and families?	Differences among Newcomers	"There is really a difference between the Newcomer coming from Russia versus the Newcomer coming from South America, diversity of experience." George	N/A	N/A
1) What SEL supports are needed by Newcomer students and families?	Differences among Newcomers	"So, my Newcomers, I only have two ones a girl, one's a boy. And they're both well behaved, but my boy is the one who's having the emotional issues. And my girl she's also receiving counseling, but difference is I think another difference besides the behavior is that girls tend to warm up to female teachers more." Kathy	N/A	N/A
1) What SEL supports are needed by Newcomer students and families?	Differences among Newcomers	"I've noticed girls are more academic than boys. They'll try. Like for example, in writing, they'll go ahead and try to write in English like they'll try to go ahead and then put together full paragraphs whereas the boys not so much they'll go ahead and copy and paste I feel also, girls students are more vocal. I feel they will express. You know what they want? And they'll try. I feel like they're more academically motivated and curious." Linda	N/A	N/A
1) What SEL supports are needed by Newcomer students and families?	Constructing Community	"They feel disconnected from school because they don't feel like they fit in." Randy	N/A	N/A
1) What SEL supports are needed by Newcomer students and families?	Constructing Community	"Because we have such a high number of non-Newcomers... you can't really tell who is who. They help each other a lot here in school. And since a lot of them even though they're not Newcomers, they actually speak Spanish at home. It helps to build those relationships." Randy	N/A	N/A
2) How does MWSD utilize staff and staff development in supporting Newcomer social-emotional outcomes?	Constructing Community	"And then I realized how important the social pieces of them feeling included feeling like they belong. I think I want them to feel more of a belonging so that if it's speaking their language, learning how to talk, I want them to feel like Hey, Mr. Randy's, one of me, you know, I can see him like being one of us." Randy	N/A	N/A



3) How does MWSD utilize family community partnerships in supporting Newcomer social-emotional outcomes?	Communication	“They talk with their child. They ask questions about school. They show up to school events, if they’re able. When a suggestion is made you know I child needs glasses, your child needs to learn their sight words, whatever it is, they find a way to make that happen or contact the school. And so that’s a big one. They’re not afraid to ask the school for help for the things that they need. If their child needs it, they’re going to make sure that they get it.” Yvonne	N/A	N/A
1) What SEL supports are needed by Newcomer students and families?	Communication	“I have two Newcomers and because of the language barrier, it’s hard for them to integrate with the rest of the class. And even though the rest of the class isn’t intentionally isolating them, it’s like they feel intimidated, like, oh, I don’t speak Spanish so I can’t talk to them.” Kathy	N/A	N/A
1) What SEL supports are needed by Newcomer students and families?	Communication	“I feel like most of them still are battling learning the language. And so that’s difficult for them. And that’s no blame to them.” Randy	N/A	N/A
1) What SEL supports are needed by Newcomer students and families?	Communication	“Reading intervention, is helping a lot of our Newcomers because most of the Newcomers we get have no educational background. And so, for them to have some of the basics and reading is pretty critical. We also have a Newcomer class this year teaching that sort of survival English and I think that’s going to be a huge...” Yvonne	N/A	N/A
3) How does MWSD utilize family community partnerships in supporting Newcomer social-emotional outcomes?	Communication	“My coach and their coach they’re both fluent in Spanish. With my one Newcomer, who was having a lot of difficulties at school, and a lot of emotional difficulties, I would just ask coach, can you help me call mom and we would just have all these like phone calls with mom. I also like to try to talk to them in person. And I think with Spanish speaking families, it’s a bit easier but I do feel like with other languages, there’s more of a barrier because it is harder to get those like fluent speakers and there’s not as many, you know, resources available at the school for other languages than Spanish.” Kathy	N/A	N/A
1) What SEL supports are needed by Newcomer students and families?	Mental Health and Trauma	“They need therapists and, in that sense, where I think if you don’t tackle the traumas that they come with, the learning won’t happen. They’re running away from what you know, refugees and stuff. So, everyone’s coming in with a lot of traumas and things like that, that’s difficult to overcome to get the learning started so that first has to get	N/A	N/A

		solved before we actually can actually start education.” Randy		
3) How does MWSD utilize family community partnerships in supporting Newcomer social-emotional outcomes?	Mental Health and Trauma	“We currently offer different services like we have therapeutic services, like cheque intervention that comes, we have Pacific clinics, that’s another therapeutic that they do a full wraparound service with families. You know, teaching parents how to parent their kids, how to be you know, be more expectable from rules to just actual therapy.” Randy	N/A	N/A
2) How does MWSD utilize staff and staff development in supporting Newcomer social-emotional outcomes?	Mental Health and Trauma	“After the pandemic...that was a major curveball. I just would like to have more de-escalation trainings, building relationships with students that you know, are traumatized... it’s hard to build that relationship with them. Because if they don’t feel safe here at school, then they’re not going to want to learn, they’re not going to want to come, and so it’s training with that.” Randy	N/A	N/A
2) How does MWSD utilize staff and staff development in supporting Newcomer social-emotional outcomes?	Mental Health and Trauma	“The most recent training that I’ve had, was like, it was like a suicide prevention training that we went through. Just kind of giving us red flags of things like trauma induced that we could see in kids. So that was the last training that we went to and that was a little bit before the pandemic.” Randy	N/A	N/A
3) How does MWSD utilize family community partnerships in supporting Newcomer social-emotional outcomes?	Mental Health and Trauma	“There was a stand where they can go and talk to them... Learn how stress, anxiety, and trauma impacts students of all ages. “ Randy	N/A	N/A
1) What SEL supports are needed by Newcomer students and families?	Mental Health and Trauma	“Like training about how to respond to these situations. Because I feel like you know, like I’m not a therapist or a psychologist or I don’t know what to do with this child that’s having like an emotional breakdown and like cause every day and I give him like the I need a break card. I give him like a sketchbook to draw and I give him like the templates, okay, write down what you need. How you’re feeling, like hand it to me because he’s not expressing verbally.” Kathy	N/A	N/A
1) What SEL supports are needed by Newcomer students and families?	Mental Health and Trauma	“We had a student two years ago, who went through some serious trauma while in Colombia and then when she migrated to the United States, she also had trauma and she had ongoing trauma basically. She was reading at kindergarten level. She had no educational background in Columbia. And our big concern in fifth grade was sending a kindergartener to middle school. Yeah, emotionally, everything because she was also	N/A	N/A

		it felt like she was she was delayed in maturity. Because she basically hung out with kindergarteners and first graders, because that's where she felt comfortable." George		
1) What SEL supports are needed by Newcomer students and families?	Resources in the Community	"I know we have also other resources where we can find jobs and careers for parents are coming from different countries to try to help their needs." Randy	N/A	N/A
1) What SEL supports are needed by Newcomer students and families?	Resources in the Community	"I don't think we've talked a lot about immigration policies and things like that, so that people understand and know about family rights, or Newcomer student rights. I don't think any of that has really been talked about" (Teacher, George).	N/A	N/A
1) What SEL supports are needed by Newcomer students and families?	Resources in the Community	"We also have food distribution, to families, low-income families". Randy	N/A	N/A
3) How does MWSD utilize family community partnerships in supporting Newcomer social-emotional outcomes?	Resources in the Community	"Every event that we've had here at school, like for example, our recent one harvest festival, we had organizations that serve the community, help with rent." Randy	N/A	N/A
1) What SEL supports are needed by Newcomer students and families?	Resources in the Community	"We have someone who is in that position of making sure that families have diapers, that they have clothes, that they have a place to sleep, that they have a warm blanket. So, we do have people that do that, but those services are essential as well." Yvonne	N/A	N/A
2) How does MWSD utilize staff and staff development in supporting Newcomer social-emotional outcomes	Resources in the Community	"And [make] sure all staff understands Newcomers students' rights. I think we need to actually do a little bit better job at that. Because I don't even feel like I'm fully aware of Newcomers students' rights" (School Staff, Randy).	N/A	N/A
3) How does MWSD utilize family community partnerships in supporting Newcomer social-emotional outcomes?	Empathy and Resiliency	"But one thing that I can say is they're humble, really humble. They come from humble beginnings. How can I help you and how can you ask a parent to give you 20 minutes when they're at work the whole time? Yeah. And so, it's super, super hard. For them to give you those extra minutes where it's like, hey, can you help at the school? We're trying to get involved. We tried to get them in and push them into the classroom, and it's almost impossible." Randy	N/A	N/A
2) How does MWSD utilize staff and staff development in	Empathy and Resiliency	"How they knew that they are in love, like, you can create a relationship with them so fast? And they're just so in need of any kind	N/A	N/A

supporting Newcomer social-emotional outcomes?		of amount of love a high five for them means the world to them. And so, them just wanting to be here as a strength. I see that as a strength because if we want to get into the academics and start the academics and all, they have to want to be here.” Randy		
3) How does MWSD utilize family community partnerships in supporting Newcomer social-emotional outcomes?	Empathy and Resiliency	“A lot of perseverance, I mean, those families have gone through a lot to get here. A lot of valuing education, valuing safety, and the kids. For the most part, the kids generally know what their families have given up even at that age, even at that age to be here. And so, usually all I have to talk about is just is that what your mama would want, you know, and usually whatever the behavior is stops, because no, that's not what my mama would want.” Yvonne	N/A	N/A
1) What SEL supports are needed by Newcomer students and families?	Empathy and Resiliency	“Do I want a book in Spanish, or do I want book in English for them? And then, I decided to get a collection of books in Spanish because I felt they need when they come here, they need to have something that sounds familiar. And we did have kids who were you know, could proficiently read and so they could actually get into those books. And then, once they felt more comfortable, they will move on to the English books” Linda	N/A	N/A
1) What SEL supports are needed by Newcomer students and families?	Empathy and Resiliency, and Communication	“They still focus on the on the Spanish books, and they come to me, and they start a whole conversation in Spanish. And I’m like, sorry, but to me, you need to speak English, right? And so, they look at me and I said, you know, when I first came here, I didn’t speak English. I had to learn English... and I did. And so can you... Because I’m like, do I let them read in Spanish, but at least they’re reading or do I push them to try to choose to throw themselves into English even if they go for like very simple books, but at least get the habit of learning English.” Linda	N/A	N/A
3) How does MWSD utilize family community partnerships in supporting Newcomer social-emotional outcomes?	Empathy and Resiliency	“And it is hard to get the community to come. You know, they’re super busy. They have two or three jobs to be able to afford to live here. They don’t have time, they’re so tired.” George	N/A	N/A
1) What SEL supports are needed by Newcomer students and families?	Empathy and Resiliency	“The word of the week was refugees. We share a story and what is a refugee? It’s someone who has been forced to flee their countries. Now, it wasn't a choice and having a student will tell us the rest of the class of a personal experience as a refugee. It was so amazing, like, like the other kids never	N/A	N/A

		realized and I think that even for their age, that was a lot to take. But it was amazing the reaction. It's like, you hear all those things in the news, you may hear your parents' saying things, but this is what it is. This is a child who had was forced to leave a country, have family or relatives or friends stay behind because it wasn't safe for her." Linda		
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## School Administrators Interviews

1. What in your judgment are the greatest educational needs of Newcomer students that you serve? What evidence or data do you have to support your views?
2. What are the greatest support services needs of Newcomer students you serve? What evidence or data do you have to support your conclusions?
3. What is your role in supporting Newcomers and their families? How well prepared do you feel to fulfill that role? What development would help you in your role?
4. With what agencies or organizations do you need to coordinate/collaborate to provide better services to the Newcomer children you serve?
5. What professional developments and/or workshops does the school and/or district offer to provide support on working with Newcomer students and families?
6. What curriculum and/or instructional resources does the school and/or district offer to provide support for Newcomer students and families?
7. What are the strengths of our school/district/program in supporting Newcomer families?
8. What could we improve?
9. What are our students'/families' strengths?
10. What are their challenges?
11. Who are our partners and allies at the school, district, program, and community level?
12. How would you compare family engagement or lack thereof between Newcomers and non-Newcomers?

Below are key strategies that research suggests are important for supporting Newcomers. Please read through these strategies. I will ask you some questions about the extent to which they are being implemented here.

### Key Strategies

1. Help families keep their emergency contact information updated. This step can make *the* difference in whether a child goes home with a known caregiver if a family member is detained. Remind all families to [update their contact information](#) regularly.
2. Ensure all staff understand immigrant students' rights. All K-12 staff have an obligation to protect [students' privacy and civil rights, as well as their access to an education](#), regardless of immigration status. This is critical for staff working in the front office and on enrollment.

3. Let all students and families know that they are welcome. A [welcoming environment](#) that celebrates students' cultures and [encourages family leadership](#) creates a strong foundation for relationships, as well as for identifying and addressing challenges.
4. Create different channels for communication in families' languages. Schools must [communicate in families' preferred language](#). Identifying families' preferred means of contact can also help schools communicate more effectively and efficiently.
5. Become familiar with relevant immigration policies so that you can answer questions. This may include "[sensitive locations guidance](#)" (which directs immigration enforcement to avoid activity in certain public spaces like schools and early childhood centers), [district policies on immigration enforcement](#), [discipline policies](#), and other related program/local/state policies. Ideally, all staff should understand these policies and protocols.
6. Connect families with resources and provide opportunities for them to ask questions. It is critical to hear from your families [about their questions and concerns](#) before determining what kind of support will be most useful. At that point, educators, schools, and/or districts can identify which resources will be appropriate to share in ways that [follow district guidelines](#).
7. Reach out to community organizations that represent and serve your families. Community partners can [provide valuable support and insight regarding immigrant families](#) – as well as volunteers! They can be especially helpful on issues related to meeting [students' basic needs](#) and connecting families to [legal resources](#).
8. Learn how stress, anxiety, and trauma impact students of all ages. The impacts of these stressors will vary based on students' ages. Learn how [different kinds of stressors affect students](#) in your age group; become familiar with age-appropriate forms of self-expression and [social-emotional support](#); and take steps to [prevent and address bullying](#).
9. Learn more about the ways immigration issues impact students. Immigration policies affect students in complex ways that students may not discuss openly. Learn more about [the immigration issues](#) that may impact your students and families, and how to extend that conversation to your school, program, or community.
10. Provide opportunities for staff to collaborate, debrief, and recharge. [Collaboration](#) gives staff the chance to draw upon different perspectives and expertise – which leads to more effective support for students and families. In addition, providing [social-emotional support for staff](#) working on challenging issues (or who are impacted by those issues themselves) can help the team sustain their work throughout the year.

### Reflection While Reviewing Strategies

- Are we already doing this strategy?
- If so, what are some examples?
- If not, what are some small steps we could take to work towards this strategy?
- Which stakeholders need to be involved when considering this strategy?
- What are some challenges in implementing this strategy?
- How can we address those challenges?
- What are some potential benefits from achieving this strategy?



## School Administrators Matrix

Pseudonyms: (Tariq, Keiara, Lyndsey)				
		Evidence		
Research Question	Theme	Key Quotes	Documents	Observations
1) What SEL supports are needed by Newcomer students and families?	Differences among Newcomers	“When we group our Newcomers students...I think it’s important to notice that they are different and things and so I think the needs are different.” Tariq	N/A	N/A
1) What SEL supports are needed by Newcomer students and families?	Differences among Newcomers	“We got to probably like 25 kids from Columbia. Their educational needs are very different because some came from a fluent families and some came from non-affluent families who never went to school.” Tariq	N/A	N/A
1) What SEL supports are needed by Newcomer students and families?	Differences among Newcomers	“They come in they already know how to read in Spanish, so transferrable skills are possible. Then you have the ones who can’t read in Spanish, and it’s because they never been in the school and some of them have learning needs that we can’t really say that they need an IEP for it... They haven’t had an opportunity to learn because they ever in school.” Tariq	N/A	N/A
1) What SEL supports are needed by Newcomer students and families?	Differences among Newcomers	“And then every Newcomer student has a Newcomer student success plan that we and teachers fill out and we monitor throughout the year.” Keiara	N/A	N/A
1) What SEL supports are needed by Newcomer students and families?	Constructing Community	“And so when they are here, oftentimes the need that they have is communication and making big friendships.” Tariq	N/A	N/A
1) What SEL supports are needed by Newcomer students and families?	Constructing Community	“But then some need more social support and like, I don’t know how to make friends because yeah, that’s a new thing for me.” Tariq	N/A	N/A
1) What SEL supports are needed by Newcomer students and families?	Constructing Community	“And so, like we have a Newcomer family dinner... We we tried to explain the system we have what are called ELAC [English Learner Advisory I] meetings. And so we invite all of our families who are English learners there and that includes the Newcomers.” Tariq	N/A	N/A
3) How does MWSD utilize family community partnerships in supporting	Constructing Community	“All the Newcomer students that we’ve met with and all the families have been super supportive and super positive about education and just looking forward to really getting started here. . So, I think the biggest thing is just the level of support that we get in our	N/A	N/A

Newcomer social-emotional outcomes?		partnership with the families partnership and allies.” Keiara		
3) How does MWSD utilize family community partnerships in supporting Newcomer social-emotional outcomes?	Constructing Community	“But what I’ve gathered from them, and what I’ve kind of concluded, is that they just want to be involved.” Lyndsey	N/A	N/A
3) How does MWSD utilize family community partnerships in supporting Newcomer social-emotional outcomes?	Constructing Community	“We hosted a multicultural potluck. And so, all the families would bring different dishes that meant something to them... Then at six when it was supposed to end, a whole new crowd came in.... We gave them awards and that was fantastic. So it was such a success that we like decorated with all the flags and everything. But it was such a success that next time we’ve already planned to put more in the year and then next time what I want to do is to include them a bit more, is they’re gonna get to speak about their dish. Everyone said congratulations in their home language.” Lyndsey	N/A	N/A
1) What SEL supports are needed by Newcomer students and families?	Communication	“The main thing is learning how to have those social conversations so that they can get to know their peers and be able to communicate with their peers.” Lyndsey	N/A	N/A
1) What SEL supports are needed by Newcomer students and families?	Communication	“We have a student who speaks Swedish, no one in our school speak Swedish, not another single person. And so they go through their day, not really being able to communicate. And their needs are a little different, because you can’t say, oh, partner them with them or send them something they don’t have any time in their day. And it’s really using Google Translate to help but it’s not the same in that communication skills and you can see some frustration on certain things.” Tariq	N/A	N/A
1) What SEL supports are needed by Newcomer students and families?	Communication	“You know, just learning basic also conversational English.” Keiara	N/A	N/A
1) What SEL supports are needed by Newcomer students and families?	Communication	“I think all of them need that social support because they need to know how to communicate with someone in order to get their needs met.” Tariq	N/A	N/A
1) What SEL supports are needed by Newcomer students and families?	Communication	“So for example, there are kind of basic needs and so there are some cards that we can give to the students so like if they’re out at recess, they can say bathroom, or I would like to play with you things like that. Communication Tools,	N/A	N/A

		right? And so there's like a sense of what a Newcomer needs in their first 25 days of school, right, essentially, like I need to know how to communicate my basic needs." Tariq		
1) What SEL supports are needed by Newcomer students and families?	Communication	"And so I think we communicate in students preferred language for the most part and we have the capability of bringing in different things and so we have Spanish interpretation so it's in every email communication we send out we send that both English and Spanish... I'm using Spanish [as an example] because that's our largest chunk of parents... We have a Turkish family and so we use a program called language line because we don't have a Turkish interpreter. And then similarly, just last week, we had a parent who spoke Punjabi and we had to have a language line to do that." Tariq	N/A	N/A
2) How does MWSD utilize staff and staff development in supporting Newcomer social-emotional outcomes?	Communication	"Yeah, so the district does offer specific professional development for teachers to support Newcomer students. And we do offer occasional PD sessions at our staff meetings to how we can help our Newcomer students.... with a big focus on ELD." Keiara	N/A	N/A
1) What SEL supports are needed by Newcomer students and families?	Communication	"And we also have a Newcomer teacher, and she pulls groups of students about twice a week to go over just basic like conversational English and English they would need to survive in a school. So that's the main support that we have." Keiara	N/A	N/A
3) How does MWSD utilize family community partnerships in supporting Newcomer social-emotional outcomes?	Communication	"For the families, we have more, we call them parent universities in our district. There's outside parent universities that we publicize and our SCEFs [School Community Engagement Facilitators] go to and then there's ones that the school puts on, we put on three a year. This isn't necessarily targeted for just those families. It's for all families. But like some things I've done in the past is okay, how do you have a successful conference with your teachers? What are some good questions to ask them when you get ready for conferences." Keiara	N/A	N/A
1) What SEL supports are needed by Newcomer students and families?	Mental Health and Trauma	"Then their kids come and what they've seen is just shocking, right, murders, kidnappings, things like that real trauma. There's severe trauma and so their needs are social emotional in terms of getting to know people around them, but also, how do you process trauma?" Tariq	N/A	N/A
1) What SEL supports are needed by Newcomer students and families?	Mental Health and Trauma	"Pain, trauma impact.... And so there's no processing trauma and the impact of what it is, right? Like, we think, oh, it's no big deal and it really does impact kids in ways that we can't understand. Right? And so, that kid who is,	N/A	N/A

		you know, yelling out in your classroom or destroying the classroom is dealing with something super emotional and like, I know that destroying your classroom doesn't solve the issue. But for them, it's providing something that they need to get out." Tariq		
2) How does MWSD utilize staff and staff development in supporting Newcomer social-emotional outcomes?	Mental Health and Trauma	"But there's also trauma and things that they're dealing with and they're going to push your buttons because they don't have a safe space anywhere else. Everything they've ever known, has abandoned them and there's no consistency. So you have to be that consistency. And they're going to test you because maybe in their life, everyone that they've ever lived with has left. And so you're that person who's got to be there to say I'm not leaving, I'm not gonna abandon you. I talked about all the parents caring. Some of the parents haven't even really been around their kid, and they're bringing them here for the first time... Your parents have been with you and we have kids who have lived with their grandmother for the last eight years. This is the first time they're living with the parent. And now they're expected to like listen to this random adult...They have no connection with and so now you're trying to talk to this parent who doesn't know this kid." Tariq	N/A	N/A
1) What SEL supports are needed by Newcomer students and families?	Mental Health and Trauma	"Um, we have a lot of students who come to us with a lot of trauma, just on the nature of the students that do come to us and where do they come? Where did they come to us from? Then also support for those traumatic experiences that some of them have gone through." Kieara	N/A	N/A
3) How does MWSD utilize family community partnerships in supporting	Mental Health and Trauma	"We also have Pacific clinics and CHEC which are two different like more on the mental health side. Pacific clinics really reaches out to the whole family and that's typically more like a family support system. And then CHEC is more like in the classroom." Lyndsey	N/A	N/A
3) How does MWSD utilize family community partnerships in supporting Newcomer social-emotional outcomes?	Mental Health and Trauma	"So, I'm reaching out to community organizations that are reason to stress and trauma can impact students of all ages, I think that just in general after the pandemic [this] is something that we're all trying to learn and help support as well." Lyndsey	N/A	N/A
2) How does MWSD utilize staff and staff development in supporting Newcomer social-emotional outcomes?	Resources in the Community	"Training for families and other staff and personnel... but I think families would definitely benefit in knowing what their rights are. And even like becoming really familiar with immigration policy" (School Administrator, Kierra).	N/A	N/A

3) How does MWSD utilize family community partnerships in supporting Newcomer social-emotional outcomes?				
1) What SEL supports are needed by Newcomer students and families?	Resources in the Community	“I think an area that’s completely missing [is] understanding the immigration policies and how that impacts families” (School Administrator, Tariq).	N/A	N/A
3) How does MWSD utilize family community partnerships in supporting Newcomer social-emotional outcomes?	Resources in the Community	“We have a person whose job it is to reach out to families... On her shortlist there are students who are the unhoused students or non-permanent housing students and the Newcomers.” Tariq		
3) How does MWSD utilize family community partnerships in supporting Newcomer social-emotional outcomes?	Resources in the Community	“So, in supporting Newcomers, the first thing we do is we have our we have a school community engagement facilitator, and they’ll meet with Newcomer families and give them resources. So they hook them up with community organizations. And you know, give them a backpack and just let the parents and students know like, you know, we’re here to help you. So, just making sure that those families get connected to what they need.” Kieara	N/A	N/A
3) How does MWSD utilize family community partnerships in supporting Newcomer social-emotional outcomes?	Resources in the Community	“We use the day Worker Center. We utilize the Rent Stabilization Program, Community Services Agency, which helps with many things, including they host a food pantry here. Every two weeks on a Wednesday, we have our CHEC counseling which is community health agency. And so they provide counseling services, and Pacific clinics and uplift provide prevention, early intervention, family specialists, and so we’re able to hook those agencies up with our Newcomer families. If we just had more people available in those agencies, it’d be wonderful.” Kieara	N/A	N/A
3) How does MWSD utilize family community partnerships in supporting Newcomer social-emotional outcomes?	Resources in the Community	“My role in supporting Newcomers is to help connect families to resources, and then create an environment where students can thrive based off of that.” Tariq	N/A	N/A
3) How does MWSD utilize family community	Resources in the Community	“And then we have another school and community engagement facilitator who is for our unhoused students, and they help connect	N/A	N/A

partnerships in supporting Newcomer social-emotional outcomes?		with different outside organizations. So, there are food bank services that we have CHEC, which is our Community Health and it's a counseling service that we have for students. We do connect students to different doctor organizations that we have. And so there's a whole binder of materials that our staff has that they pull out when people need it, but we're always looking for different people, mental health [professional], mentor tutor connection, MTC. They [MTC] also bring in volunteers to help with tutoring of students." Tariq		
3) How does MWSD utilize family community partnerships in supporting Newcomer social-emotional outcomes?	Resources in the Community	"We have our SCEFs [School Community Engagement Facilitator] district wide. They do a lot of providing support for those families." Kieara	N/A	N/A
2) How does MWSD utilize staff and staff development in supporting Newcomer social-emotional outcomes?	Resources in the Community	"We have a Newcomer TOSA, Teacher on Special Assignment, that is specifically for English learners. And her focus this year has been on Newcomers. Every Monday there is professional development opportunities for all English Learners. Her first few sessions were specifically focused on Newcomers and how to support Newcomers. She prepared sets of materials that teachers can just grab and take to use utilize for their Newcomers." Tariq	N/A	N/A
3) How does MWSD utilize family community partnerships in supporting Newcomer social-emotional outcomes?	Resources in the Community	"And so, the biggest support services are, first of all basic needs, ensuring that they have housing, food, clothing," Kieara	N/A	N/A
2) How does MWSD utilize staff and staff development in supporting Newcomer social-emotional outcomes?	Resources in the Community	"We don't really have a curriculum so much as we have like a set of strategies... Sheltered Instruction Observation protocols, which in a way is just like planning your lessons so that students can access them. And our Newcomer teacher, also part of our ELAC and DLAC meetings focus on how to support all English Learners. And a big amount of our English Learners are Newcomers students and families." Kieara	N/A	N/A
2) How does MWSD utilize staff and staff development in supporting Newcomer social-emotional outcomes?	Resources in the Community	"I think doing more PD on five and two would definitely be helpful."	N/A	N/A
3) How does MWSD utilize family	Resources in the Community	"I don't have a primary care doctor, what do I do for all of those things. And I think that the	N/A	N/A

community partnerships in supporting Newcomer social-emotional outcomes?		data that just supports that are the amount of people who make appointments with my staff or make appointments at the district office to really understand the system. Because for example, like if you don't have I tests, then we can't have you start school without getting those medical tests." Lyndsey		
3) How does MWSD utilize family community partnerships in supporting Newcomer social-emotional outcomes?	Resources in the Community	"We connect with CSA, which is a community service agency in Maple Walnut. And so last year and this year, we set up an info night and so we invited different community outreaches like for homelessness for all different things. We set up booths and they could come have dinner. It was like a fun atmosphere, and then also get information on how they could be supported in the community." Lyndsey	N/A	N/A
2) How does MWSD utilize staff and staff development in supporting Newcomer social-emotional outcomes?	Resources in the Community	"But we have a TOSA [Teacher on Special Assignment] in our district for ELD. Her name is Margaret... And I've brought her in for staff meetings. We have a staff meeting every Wednesday afternoon, once a week or 20 of them throughout the year. And I brought her in a couple of times my teachers can collaborate with her during collaboration time on Thursdays. So Thursday is a short day and then teachers have the ability to collaborate, especially based on student data and student needs. So I've had a couple of teams reach out to her and she comes in and supports them. And it turns out to be like once every, maybe two weeks once every three weeks, she holds a PD session specifically for ELD and how to help support with ELD." Lyndsey	N/A	N/A
2) How does MWSD utilize staff and staff development in supporting Newcomer social-emotional outcomes?	Empathy and Resiliency	"And so having that empathetic mindset and understanding like our kids aren't just coming to school, and not knowing English. They're coming to school and not having some resources that they need." Tariq	N/A	N/A
2) How does MWSD utilize staff and staff development in supporting Newcomer social-emotional outcomes?	Empathy and Resiliency	"There's a sense of resilience, right? The fact that their students are enrolled in the US school and still come daily. That's a sense of resilience." Tariq	N/A	N/A
2) How does MWSD utilize staff and staff development in supporting Newcomer social-emotional outcomes?	Empathy and Resiliency	"And so a lot of our teachers feel pressure that their Newcomer isn't doing what everyone else is doing, and they're below grade level. No one would expect that a fifth grade Newcomer is reading at the fifth-grade level." Tariq	N/A	N/A
2) How does MWSD utilize staff and staff development in	Empathy and Resiliency	"Definitely resilient family structure is very important to them. They've gone through a lot and made it here." Kieara	N/A	N/A



supporting Newcomer social- emotional outcomes?				
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## District Administrators Interviews and Focus Groups

1. What in your judgment are the greatest educational needs of Newcomer students that you serve? What evidence or data do you have to support your views?
2. What are the greatest support services needs of Newcomer students you serve? What evidence or data do you have to support your conclusions?
3. What is your role in supporting Newcomers and their families? How well prepared do you feel to fulfill that role? What development would help you in your role?
4. With what agencies or organizations do you need to coordinate/collaborate to provide better services to the Newcomer children you serve?
5. What professional developments and/or workshops does the school and/or district offer to provide support on working with Newcomer students and families?
6. What curriculum and/or instructional resources does the school and/or district offer to provide support for Newcomer students and families?
7. What are the strengths of our school/district/program in supporting Newcomer families?
8. What could we improve?
9. What are our students'/families' strengths?
10. What are their challenges?
11. Who are our partners and allies at the school, district, program, and community level?

Below are key strategies that research suggests are important for supporting Newcomers. Please read through these strategies. I will ask you some questions about the extent to which they are being implemented here.

### Key Strategies

1. Help families keep their emergency contact information updated. This step can make *the* difference in whether a child goes home with a known caregiver if a family member is detained. Remind all families to update their contact information regularly.
2. Ensure all staff understand immigrant students' rights. All K-12 staff have an obligation to protect students' privacy and civil rights, as well as their access to an education, regardless of immigration status. This is critical for staff working in the front office and on enrollment.
3. Let all students and families know that they are welcome. A welcoming environment that celebrates students' cultures and encourages family leadership creates a strong foundation for relationships, as well as for identifying and addressing challenges.

4. Create different channels for communication in families' languages. Schools must communicate in families' preferred language. Identifying families' preferred means of contact can also help schools communicate more effectively and efficiently.
5. Become familiar with relevant immigration policies so that you can answer questions. This may include "sensitive locations guidance" (which directs immigration enforcement to avoid activity in certain public spaces like schools and early childhood centers), district policies on immigration enforcement, discipline policies, and other related program/local/state policies. Ideally, all staff should understand these policies and protocols.
6. Connect families with resources and provide opportunities for them to ask questions. It is critical to hear from your families about their questions and concerns before determining what kind of support will be most useful. At that point, educators, schools, and/or districts can identify which resources will be appropriate to share in ways that follow district guidelines.
7. Reach out to community organizations that represent and serve your families. Community partners can provide valuable support and insight regarding immigrant families – as well as volunteers! They can be especially helpful on issues related to meeting students' basic needs and connecting families to legal resources.
8. Learn how stress, anxiety, and trauma impact students of all ages. The impacts of these stressors will vary based on students' ages. Learn how different kinds of stressors affect students in your age group; become familiar with age-appropriate forms of self-expression and social-emotional support; and take steps to prevent and address bullying.
9. Learn more about the ways immigration issues impact students. Immigration policies affect students in complex ways that students may not discuss openly. Learn more about the immigration issues that may impact your students and families, and how to extend that conversation to your school, program, or community.
10. Provide opportunities for staff to collaborate, debrief, and recharge. Collaboration gives staff the chance to draw upon different perspectives and expertise – which leads to more effective support for students and families. In addition, providing social-emotional support for staff working on challenging issues (or who are impacted by those issues themselves) can help the team sustain their work throughout the year.

### Reflection While Reviewing Strategies

- Are we already doing this strategy?
- If so, what are some examples?
- If not, what are some small steps we could take to work towards this strategy?
- Which stakeholders need to be involved when considering this strategy?
- What are some challenges in implementing this strategy?
- How can we address those challenges?
- What are some potential benefits from achieving this strategy?
- How would you compare family engagement or lack thereof between Newcomers and non Newcomers?

## District Administrators Matrix

Pseudonyms: (Brad, Maggie, Gavin, Paula, Minnie)				
		Evidence		
Research Question	Theme	Key Quotes	Documents	Observations
1) What SEL supports are needed by Newcomer students and families?	Differences among Newcomers	“It’s just learning about the ongoing needs of Newcomers because, you know, that’s obviously not like a monolithic group, and so is just learning about the different experiences and needs that people from different communities have coming in.” Brad	N/A	N/A
1) What SEL supports are needed by Newcomer students and families?	Differences among Newcomers	“So, a Newcomer is a huge group. It’s not a monolith. So, there are Newcomers that are coming to our country that aren’t socioeconomically disadvantaged and then there are Newcomers coming to our country that have fled war zones.” Maggie	N/A	N/A
3) How does MWSD utilize family community partnerships in supporting Newcomer social-emotional outcomes?	Differences among Newcomers	“I think that the strengths that Newcomers bring, are a diversity of experience. And I think that enriches our school communities. You know, having people with different experiences. I think that families coming from different countries of origin, whether they’re Newcomers through immigration, or just people that have immigrated other ways to the United States, bring different problem-solving approaches. They enrich our understanding of the world around us. They contribute themselves and their cultures and their experiences which help our schools become more global communities.” Brad	N/A	N/A
1) What SEL supports are needed by Newcomer students and families?	Differences among Newcomers	“Well, our Newcomers are quite a diverse group themselves.” Gavin	N/A	N/A
1) What SEL supports are needed by Newcomer students and families?	Mental Health and Trauma and Constructing Community	“I believe it [trauma curriculum] is designed to help kids process through trauma from immigration... it also builds community and identity... finding value in themselves and where they come from, but also community with other Newcomer kids. Other people are in similar places, even if they don’t come from the same country of origin, they’re kind of walking through this together.” Brad	N/A	N/A
1) What SEL supports are needed by Newcomer students and families?	Constructing Community	“Conversation always comes first. Kids just want to play with their friends, especially the little ones.” Paula	N/A	N/A

1) What SEL supports are needed by Newcomer students and families?	Constructing Community	“And then we’re constantly working on how we let people know that they’re welcome. Because it’s not really about communication or messaging. It’s about how we act. And it’s about how other students act. So you can send out a million welcome messages and you could translate them in every language and it’s going to do diddly squat compared to how do I show people that they’re welcome. And how do I show them that their experience and their perspective is valued here?” Maggie	N/A	N/A
2) How does MWSD utilize staff and staff development in supporting Newcomer social-emotional outcomes?	Constructing Community	“We talk about inclusive, welcoming climate, and anti-bullying. What about our Newcomers? How do we provide specific target supports around bullying and culture and climate for them?” Maggie	N/A	N/A
2) How does MWSD utilize staff and staff development in supporting Newcomer social-emotional outcomes?	Constructing Community	“Monday afternoon series isn’t strictly about Newcomers, but it’s all English learner focus.” Maggie	N/A	N/A
3) How does MWSD utilize family community partnerships in supporting Newcomer social-emotional outcomes?	Constructing Community and Communication	“The Parent University is our parent education arm and through that yearly we have 15 or 20 different sessions in various configurations in various locations...the one in October, was about a partnership with a mental health agency in San Jose, just down the road. And the topic was actually how to take care of yourself or how to show up for yourself. So that you can show up for your kids, right, so like self-care. The next one was about parenting in the digital era, that was all about technology. And then we have another one coming up after Thanksgiving. That will be about interpreting and accessing your child’s academic results and what does it mean and how to talk to teachers about it. And then moving ahead into the spring, we will talk about transitions from elementary school to middle school, from middle school to high school.” Gavin	N/A	N/A
1) What SEL supports are needed by Newcomer students and families?	Communication	“Just learning English is an important, probably the most important discrete academic skill, but learning academic and social English. There’s English that we use in the classroom and then there’s English that that kids use on the playground.” Brad	N/A	N/A
1) What SEL supports are needed by Newcomer students and families?	Communication	“So to me, they’re equally important learning the language and then getting acclimatized... and so it’s really difficult to navigate a new place, especially as a kid without use of the	N/A	N/A

		language. So the ideal is that they develop simultaneously." Maggie		
1) What SEL supports are needed by Newcomer students and families?	Mental Health and Trauma	"So, I think mental health is extremely important." Minnie	N/A	N/A
1) What SEL supports are needed by Newcomer students and families? and 3) How does MWSD utilize family community partnerships in supporting Newcomer social-emotional outcomes?	Mental Health and Trauma	"The greatest need that has come across my desk has been the mental health and social emotional needs of students. So many of our students are coming from Latin America. Families who are fleeing violence, families who have experienced violence, both in their country of origin as well as on their journey to the United States. What we've done is create partnerships with our mental health partners. [We have] created targeted groups that support helping those kids process trauma." Brad	N/A	N/A
1) What SEL supports are needed by Newcomer students and families?	Mental Health and Trauma	"We've been getting a lot of Newcomers immigrants that are fleeing their countries. So, a lot of emotional and mental health support [is needed]. Like we've had a lot of kiddos that's have seen things that I hope I never see, even as an adult, death of family members just fleeing their countries. It's been a lot so mental health has been key to supporting our kiddos and giving them a stable and safe place for them to be able to thrive as children." Paula	N/A	N/A
3) How does MWSD utilize family community partnerships in supporting Newcomer social-emotional outcomes?	Mental Health and Trauma	"CHEC. It's a local organization. And every school has this, has clinicians at their site." Brad	N/A	N/A
2) How does MWSD utilize staff and staff development in supporting Newcomer social-emotional outcomes?	Mental Health and Trauma	"And I think we're also having a trauma informed approach. I think that that's something that at least from the district level, we're giving attention to." Brad	N/A	N/A
2) How does MWSD utilize staff and staff development in supporting Newcomer social-emotional outcomes?	Mental Health and Trauma	"I think that our teachers are really passionate about trauma informed practices. I don't know if we've provided enough training. But I would say that our teachers are really passionate about that." Maggie	N/A	N/A
1) What SEL supports are needed by Newcomer students and families?	Mental Health and Trauma	"I think that there are support services that could help, such as mental health support services." Maggie	N/A	N/A

3) How does MWSD utilize family community partnerships in supporting Newcomer social-emotional outcomes?	Resources and Community	"I know that a lot of immigrant families need help either seeking asylum or all kinds of other things. I'm not aware of any legal organizations that we refer families to and I think [that] could be critical" (District Administrator, Maggie).	N/A	N/A
3) How does MWSD utilize family community partnerships in supporting Newcomer social-emotional outcomes?	Resources and Community	"We have partner agencies that we work with and a number of different partner agencies that provide specific services to Newcomers." Brad	N/A	N/A
3) How does MWSD utilize family community partnerships in supporting Newcomer social-emotional outcomes?	Resources in the Community	"We also have a Wellness Center at one of our elementary schools that is organized in partnership with Santa Clara County Office of Education. They run a Newcomer group there and those have a specific curriculum." Brad	N/A	N/A
2) How does MWSD utilize staff and staff development in supporting Newcomer social-emotional outcomes?	Resources in the Community	"But what I do offer is just general social emotional learning, professional development, so working with teachers and administrators on integrating social emotional learning." Brad	N/A	N/A
2) How does MWSD utilize staff and staff development in supporting Newcomer social-emotional outcomes?	Resources in the Community	"Making sure that staff are familiar with immigration policies and just understanding immigration as a broader issue that they think is important and maybe that that will be something that would be a growth [area]" (District Administrator, Brad).	N/A	N/A
3) How does MWSD utilize family community partnerships in supporting Newcomer social-emotional outcomes?	Resources in the Community	"I think that we're very good at connecting families with resources and working with community organizations." Brad	N/A	N/A
2) How does MWSD utilize staff and staff development in supporting Newcomer social-emotional outcomes?	Resources in the Community	"Making sure that staff are familiar with immigration policies and just understanding immigration as a broader issue that they think is important." Brad	N/A	N/A
1) What SEL supports are needed by Newcomer students and families?	Resources in the Community	"Do they have what they need to survive in terms of clothing, shelter, food and health care?... transportation...language... but it has to start with the basic human needs." Maggie	N/A	N/A
3) How does MWSD utilize family community	Resources in the Community	"We need to reach out to community organizations better. To better serve our families. We can point them in the right	N/A	N/A

partnerships in supporting Newcomer social-emotional outcomes?		direction, but boy if we could facilitate connections with people, I think that would be a lot more helpful." Maggie		
3) How does MWSD utilize family community partnerships in supporting Newcomer social-emotional outcomes?	Resources in the Community	"I've been getting emails from the teacher saying, Hey, can you check on this family? I've seen you know, dirty clothes coming to school, you know the child coming with dirty clothes multiple times. Can you double check if they need support?" Paula	N/A	N/A
3) How does MWSD utilize family community partnerships in supporting Newcomer social-emotional outcomes?	Resources in the Community	"I actually am part of the Advisory Committee for breaking homelessness here in Maple Walnut. We have been working together unofficially for multiple years, but yesterday was our official first meeting. We sat down at the table, almost 30 plus people representing at least 20 different organizations from the business to nonprofit community organizations, and schools. That was really nice to be able to sit down at the table and be able to say, hey, this is who we are. This is who we're working with. We're all working with the same people in different capacities. So how can we really merge our services and be more efficient?" Paula	N/A	N/A
3) How does MWSD utilize family community partnerships in supporting Newcomer social-emotional outcomes?	Resources in the Community	"The support services needs for the families that have the least right I would say housing and food. we do provide maybe not direct services... we have services through our school community engagement facilitators... but Newcomers who are the most disadvantaged, often will require referrals to various agencies that provide basic food and shelter. Many Newcomers are McKinney Vento families, so they're unhoused, technically speaking. And so those are support services." Maggie	N/A	N/A
3) How does MWSD utilize family community partnerships in supporting Newcomer social-emotional outcomes?	Resources in the Community	"I play a management role in ensuring that the right services are being provided in a timely manner or at least support is, or at least communication is, flowing between school and our families and supporting them. So, my role is to support those who support the families directly." Gavin	N/A	N/A
2) How does MWSD utilize staff and staff development in supporting Newcomer social-emotional outcomes?	Resources in the Community	"I know the special ed law, but as far as you know, specifically, you need to [know] immigration policies. That's something that I think we can all learn and grow in that area" (District Administrator, Minnie).	N/A	N/A
3) How does MWSD utilize family community	Resources in the Community	"We have a local agency called the Community Services Agency. They're a local, nonprofit service provider for primarily	N/A	N/A



partnerships in supporting Newcomer social-emotional outcomes?		for low-income families, recent immigrants, you know, folks who are down on their luck and so they play a vital role in our community. We refer to them often and they work with us closely and coordinated with the city... they provide food, they have a food pantry. They also have a day Worker Center, which is connected to a lot of the service so can we serve the day worker like if somebody needs a job, they can help with job placement services" Gavin		
3) How does MWSD utilize family community partnerships in supporting Newcomer social-emotional outcomes?	Resources in the Community	"You know, there's also a local kind of umbrella organization called The Challenge Team. And that is a group of individuals who bring together all sorts of local agencies and local organizations of the school districts, plus a whole bunch of other nonprofits that I haven't mentioned yet, who all care about kids and who all want to help solve problems surrounding kids and their needs. We actively participate in a monthly meeting that all people get together around a table or virtual table to discuss some of the available resources that can be used to provide services for families." Gavin	N/A	N/A
1) What SEL supports are needed by Newcomer students and families?	Empathy and Resiliency	"First of all [Newcomer students' and families' strengths include] tenacity and resilience based on what they've been through a lot of times they have an incredibly strong bond and relationship with one another because of what they've been through." Maggie	N/A	N/A
3) How does MWSD utilize family community partnerships in supporting Newcomer social-emotional outcomes?	Empathy and Resiliency	"I actually see more engagement coming from Newcomer families..., especially if they've come from a difficult situation. There's a type of kind of people have a trauma bond, but a trauma bond forms where the parents become very protective of their children because they've been through this really difficult process. So I see that but I also see just when families come over and are, you know immigrating from somewhere else, again, they don't know anyone else, they have to rely on each other. So that family unit kind of gets even more bonded." Maggie	N/A	N/A
1) What SEL supports are needed by Newcomer students and families?	Empathy and Resiliency	"They're resilient. They want to succeed. They're worried about their children's education. They want the best for them. And they really work hard." Paula	N/A	N/A
2) How does MWSD utilize staff and staff development in supporting Newcomer	Sustaining Home Culture	"So, my role really is helping the entire organization be culturally responsive or culturally sustaining. So because people are coming from different countries and cultures. Being welcoming is one thing. But not	N/A	N/A

social-emotional outcomes?		expecting assimilation is another thing." Maggie		
2) How does MWSD utilize staff and staff development in supporting Newcomer social-emotional outcomes?	Sustaining Home Culture	"I would love to see future programs like teacher [preparation] programs and professional development, talk about what it means to be a culturally sustaining leader." Maggie	N/A	N/A