

Bridges to Belonging Collaborative

Supporting USD 259 Newcomer Programs



Bridges to Belonging (B2B) is a collaborative initiative between USD 259 Multilingual Services, USD 259 Newcomer educators, the Wichita Public Schools (WPS) Foundation, and Ambassadors of Dignity (AOD) that supports the USD 259 Newcomer Program by connecting schools, families, and community partners in ways that help Newcomer students and their families move from arrival to belonging.

MISSION

The Wichita Public Schools Newcomer Program welcomes newly arrived students and families, helping them build the language, academic, social-emotional, and cultural skills needed for success. We support Newcomers in developing a sense of belonging, engage in rigorous learning, and becoming active members of their school and community.

VISION

We envision a Wichita community where Newcomer students, families, educators, and community members flourish together through relationships built on belonging, learning, and shared purpose. Every Newcomer is empowered to achieve academic success, contribute to their unique strengths, and thrive as a valued member of our schools and community.

WHAT WE BELIEVE

- **Every Student Brings Unique Assets** - Newcomer students bring strengths, experiences, languages, cultures, and resilience that enrich our schools and communities. By honoring these assets, understanding each student's unique journey, and providing appropriate support and opportunities, we help students thrive and expand their future possibilities.
- **Belonging Creates the Foundation for Learning** - Students learn best when they feel safe, connected, valued, understood, and accepted as important members of the school community.
- **Families Are Essential Partners** - Student success is strengthened when families are welcomed, informed, respected, and empowered to actively participate in their children's education.
- **High Expectations Unlock Potential** - Newcomer students thrive when provided meaningful access to rigorous learning alongside the language support necessary for success.
- **Schools and Communities Flourish Together** - Strong partnerships between schools, families, and the broader community create opportunities for students to succeed and for communities to grow in understanding, service, and shared purpose.

CORE VALUES

- **Welcoming & Belonging** - We foster a culture where every student and family is welcomed with dignity and respect and experiences a strong sense of belonging as a valued member of the school community.
- **Growth, Achievement & Resilience** - We believe every student can learn, adapt, persevere, and achieve at high levels. We build upon the resilience, strengths, and determination that Newcomer students and families demonstrate throughout their journeys.
- **Partnership** - We believe students thrive when schools, families, and communities work together toward shared goals.
- **Opportunity** - We seek to remove barriers and create pathways that expand educational, social, and future opportunities for students and families.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES



Academic Success & Transition Readiness - Develop the language proficiency, academic skills, confidence, and independence Newcomer students need to successfully engage in grade-level learning, transition into mainstream classrooms, and thrive in future educational opportunities.



Strengthening Academic Foundations Through Rigorous and Engaging Learning - Provide standards-based, language-rich instruction that develops critical thinking, problem-solving, academic vocabulary, and content knowledge while nurturing curiosity and a love of learning.



Promote Belonging, Well-Being, and Resilience - Create welcoming, culturally responsive, and trauma-informed environments where Newcomer students feel safe, connected, valued, and empowered to thrive academically, socially, and emotionally.



Support and Empower Families as Educational Partners - Equip Newcomer families to successfully navigate schools, community systems, and life in the United States while strengthening their ability to advocate for and support their children's success.



Mobilize Community Partnerships that Expand Opportunity - Build sustainable partnerships that provide mentoring, volunteers, enrichment opportunities, resources, and practical support while strengthening connections between schools, families, and the broader Wichita community.

B2B GUIDING OUTCOME

When Newcomer students thrive, everyone benefits.

Students gain confidence. Families build stability. Teachers and paraprofessionals receive encouragement. Volunteers discover meaningful relationships. Schools become stronger. Communities become more connected.

The B2B guiding outcome is *mutual flourishing*, where students and their families, educators, volunteers, churches, and community partners all grow together. As relationships deepen, Wichita becomes a more welcoming place for all.