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National Charter School Resource Center

at American Institutes for Research

Students With Interrupted Formal Education

Students with interrupted formal education (SIFE) are students who have immigrated to the United States and, for a variety of reasons, have gaps in their formal education. SIFEs may not have the same level of literacy in their native language or the same academic knowledge as their grade-level peers because they have not had the same level of educational experience. If they experienced gaps in schooling because of civil conflicts or political crises in their home countries, these students might need counseling or other social or emotional support services in addition to intensive academic supports.

National Charter School Resource Center resources:

- ***Exemplary Programs for Secondary Newcomer English Language Learners.***

<http://www.charterschoolcenter.org/webinar/exemplary-programs-secondary-newcomer-english-language-learners-0>

In February 2012, the National Charter School Resource Center hosted a webinar that explored exemplary programs for secondary newcomer English language learners. The featured presenter was Deborah Short, Ph.D., a senior research associate affiliated with the Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL).

- ***Helping Newcomer Students Succeed in Secondary Schools and Beyond.***

<http://www.cal.org/pdfs/newcomer/helping-newcomer-students-succeed-in-secondary-schools-and-beyond.pdf>

In the full report, the authors provide an overview of the diversity of the newcomer population, review the findings from their case studies of exemplary programs for newcomers at the secondary level, and outline recommendations to improve the quality of programs, supports, and services for newcomers.

- ***Newcomer Database for Secondary School Programs.***

<http://www.cal.org/CALWebDB/newcomer/>

CAL developed this searchable database of secondary newcomer programs that participated in the CAL newcomer research study during the 2008–09 school year.

Helpful guidebooks or reports:

- ***Guidelines for Educating Limited English Proficient Students With Interrupted Formal Education.***

<http://www.p12.nysed.gov/biling/docs/NYSEDSIFEGuidelines.pdf>

These 2011 guidelines were developed by the New York State Education Department as a resource for educators who serve SIFEs.

- ***Students With Interrupted Formal Education: A Challenge for the New York City Public Schools.***
<http://www.advocatesforchildren.org/SIFE Paper final.pdf>
 In this 2010 report, the Advocates for Children of New York describe the current situation for SIFEs in New York City and recommend strategies to improve programs and services for SIFEs.
- ***Supporting English Language Learners With Limited Prior Schooling.***
http://www.nassauboces.org/cms/lib5/NY18000988/Centricity/ModuleInstance/390/Supporting_ELLs_with_Limited_Forma_Schooling.pdf
 This resource for educators in Ontario, Canada, was created by the Ontario Ministry of Education in 2008.
- ***Immigrant Students and Secondary School Reform: Compendium of Best Practices.***
<http://www.eric.ed.gov/PDFS/ED484705.pdf>
 This 2004 report, published by the Council of Chief State School Officers, includes a section about immigrant students with limited formal schooling.

Resources that provide overviews about SIFEs and links to further resources:

- ***Students With Interrupted Formal Education.***
<http://www.brycs.org/clearinghouse/Newcomer-Programs-and-Students-with-Interrupted-Formal-Education.cfm>
 This webpage, developed by Bridging Refugee Youth and Children's Services, provides links to a variety of useful resources for educators.
- ***Bilingual/ESL Technical Assistance Center.***
<http://www.nassauboces.org/site/Default.aspx?PageID=100>
 This webpage, which lists SIFE resources for educators, was developed by the Nassau Board of Cooperative Educational Services in New York State.
- ***How to Support ELL Students With Interrupted Formal Education.***
<http://www.colorincolorado.org/article/27483/>
 Kristina Robertson and Susan Lafond authored this helpful overview about SIFEs for Colorín Colorado in 2008.
- ***Students With Interrupted Formal Education: Best Practices.***
<http://prezi.com/qikkik4izy72/students-with-interrupted-formal-education-best-practices/>
 This presentation was delivered by Christine Rowland at the 2011 TEACH conference, which was hosted by the American Federation of Teachers.