MITIGATING THE IMPACT OF SCHOOL MOBILITY

An Effective Practices Model and Guide for Educators

CPRL
Columbia University Center for Public Research and Leadership

MILITARY CHILD EDUCATION COALITION™

HOW WAS THE GUIDE CREATED?

The resources here represent the culmination of an 18-month effort to understand school mobility among military children and to develop a Model for how schools or districts can help mitigate the impact of frequent school changes on students.

SPRING 2017

RESEARCH ON IMPACTS AND EFFECTIVE PRACTICES

In Spring 2017, MCEC commissioned CPRL to document how military-connected children experience multiple school transitions and what is currently known about the negative academic and socioemotional impacts of those transitions and about effective practices for moderating the impacts. Based on a comprehensive literature review, interviews, focus groups, and a site visit, CPRL's report, linked HERE and HERE on MCEC's and CPRL's websites, describes the challenges facing mobile families and children as well as the schools or districts that serve them. It also describes some promising practices encountered in the research and offers initial suggestions for systemic improvement. Overall, the report concludes that schools or districts nationwide would benefit from a flexible Model and a compendium of strategies, practices, and tools for mitigating the negative impact of mobility on children.

FALL 2017

REVIEW OF THE RESEARCH AND MODEL PROTOTYPING

In Fall 2017, CPRL began to envision an effective district and school support structure for mitigating the common impacts of frequent school transition. Based on its prior research, CPRL inventoried the potential harms from school transition, catalogued effective responsive practices, and sought to organize the wealth of tacit and often undocumented craft knowledge of these effective practices. CPRL then conceptualized and drafted several prototypes of mobility-mitigation Models, and consolidated them into a single version for consideration by key practitioners.

SPRING 2018

MODEL ADAPTATION AND TESTING

In Spring 2018, CPRL shared the draft Model with a working group of school-, district-, and state-level practitioners and MCEC staff with significant school-based experience all of whom are knowledgeable about mobile military-connected students. Through an iterative feedback process, CPRL and the working group revised the content and form of the Model to align more closely to practitioners' experiences and needs. CPRL and the working group of practitioners also identified a set of needed mitigation tools, which CPRL undertook to design and submit to short-cycle testing by the practitioners.

SUMMER 2018

MODEL FINALIZATION AND TOOL DEVELOPMENT

During Summer 2018, CPRL developed and refined a number of mobility-mitigation tools through a process of short-cycle testing with practitioners followed by indicated adjustments. Many of those tools are included in this Toolkit. The short-cycle testing and feedback process also resulted in important modifications to the Model itself.

WHO SHOULD USE THE GUIDE?

The Model and Tools included in this Guide are designed primarily for adaptation and use by school- and district-level personnel responsible for supporting highly mobile student populations. The Guide will also be helpful to state department of education personnel seeking to devise state-level supports for mobile students and to assist districts and schools in designing and implementing their supports.

Additionally, while this Guide was developed primarily with military-connected students in mind and with the help of schools or districts that serve military-connected populations, its Model and tools were designed to be easily adapted to other highly mobile populations. Suggested adaptations are described throughout the Guide, and APPENDIX A directly addresses a number of other highly mobile populations.

Throughout, the Guide references different SCHOOL OR DISTRICT ROLES and the ASSOCIATED PERSONNEL who may perform those roles. It is understood that a single user at a school may fulfill multiple roles and that schools or districts may assign personnel differently from how positions are imagined here. Users should identify all roles described here that are encompassed by their day-to-day responsibilities and consider all of the tools described here that are aligned with those roles.

For example, District A has enough students to employ a dedicated Family Support Specialist. That person would likely benefit most from referring to the resources identified for Family Support Staff. District B, on the other hand, is a fairly small district, in which counselors act as both student advisors and family liaisons. A counselor in District B should review resources identified for both Student Support Staff and Family Support Staff.

A THEORY OF ACTION

FOR SUPPORTING MOBILE STUDENTS

This Guide and Toolkit are premised on the following theory of action.

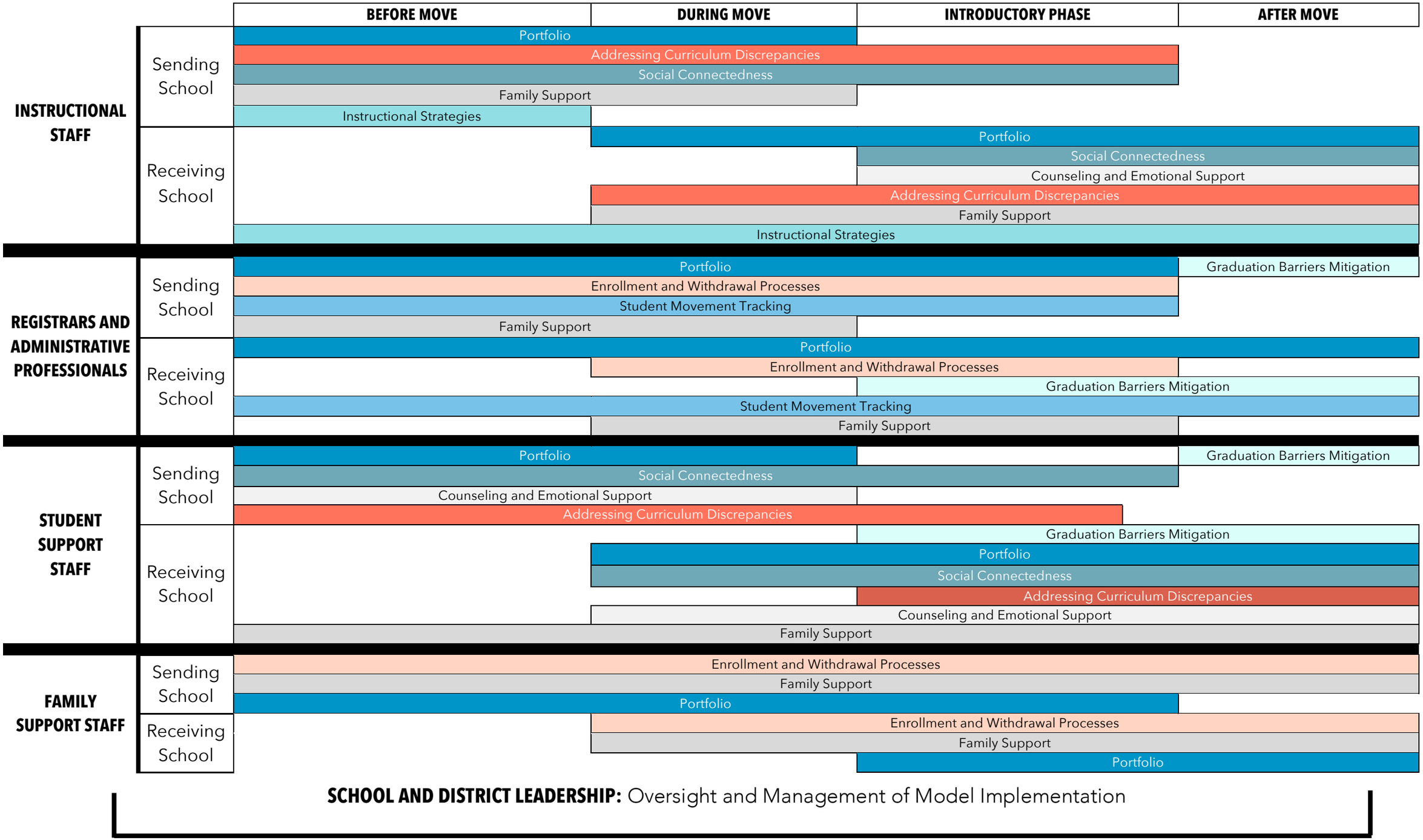
IF SCHOOLS OR DISTRICTS…	cooperate to streamline and standardize administrative practices for transfer and enrollment between and within schools;
	implement a standardized system of academic and socioemotional practices that provide consistent support for students and families in transition;
	educate staff, faculty, and families on both research-supported effective practices and legal or administrative protections for mobile students;
THEN…	student transfer will occur more quickly and seamlessly, expediting enrollment and integration into school life;
	staff and faculty will be better equipped to address fully the academic and socioemotional needs of highly mobile students and families;
	families and school personnel will share a common understanding of effective practices for mitigating the impact of mobility; and
OVER TIME…	highly mobile students will receive the support necessary to achieve their full academic and socioemotional potential; and
	other student populations, educators, and other school staff will also benefit

HOW CAN THIS RESOURCE GUIDE HELP YOUR SCHOOL/ DISTRICT MITIGATE THE IMPACT OF HIGH MOBILITY?

This guide aims to help schools or districts:

1. Understand the academic and socioemotional impacts of high mobility on students
2. Become familiar with research on effective practices for schools seeking to mitigate the impacts of high mobility
3. Self-assess strengths and areas of growth in relation to supporting highly mobile students and families
4. Set goals for and plan new supportive practices for highly mobile families
5. Implement and assess the effectiveness of new supportive strategies and practices

The guide also informs and advises state departments of education on some state-level tools for supporting mobile students and for encouraging and helping schools or districts to develop and assess the effectiveness of mobility-mitigation practices.


BEFORE MOVE
DURING MOVE
INTRODUCTORY PHASE
AFTER MOVE
INSTRUCTIONAL STAFF
Sending School
Portfolio
Addressing Curriculum Discrepancies
Social Connectedness
Family Support
Instructional Strategies
Receiving School
Portfolio
Social Connectedness
Counseling and Emotional Support
Addressing Curriculum Discrepancies
Family Support
Instructional Strategies
REGISTRARS AND ADMINISTRATIVE PROFESSIONALS
Sending School
Portfolio
Graduation Barriers Mitigation
Enrollment and Withdrawal Processes
Student Movement Tracking
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SCHOOL AND DISTRICT LEADERSHIP: Oversight and Management of Model Implementation

MOBILITY MITIGATION MODEL

SCHOOL & DISTRICT LEADERSHIP

1 PORTFOLIO

DEVELOP AND REQUIRE THE USE OF PORTFOLIO PROTOCOLS

Collaborate with staff in designing a robust student portfolio system for collecting curriculum explanations, grades, work samples, teacher notes, and IEP documents. Such portfolios are useful for all students but are especially valuable, and should have extra explanatory detail, for highly mobile students. Consistently update portfolio, including based on input of staff and families

2 SOCIAL CONNECTEDNESS

ENLIST COMMUNITY STAKEHOLDERS

Leverage community resources connected to or aligned with your district's schools—e.g. town youth centers—to establish supplementary programming for integrating new students socially. Compile a list of organizations and resources and work with them to develop a process for introducing students and families to them.

3 ENROLLMENT PROCESSES

IMPLEMENT COMMUNICATION PROTOCOLS

Develop intra-staff and intra-school communication protocols to ensure that a standard set of information related to the student's academic and social needs is shared with all relevant school personnel at both the sending and receiving schools. Consider implementing tools like the Transcript Cover Letter to support these efforts.

4 COMMUNICATION

DEVELOP AND USE FAMILY COMMUNICATION PROTOCOLS

Develop protocols for communicating clear enrollment and withdrawal expectations with families. Work with school liaison officers to educate parents on the importance of notifying the school as soon as possible once learning of a confirmed move. Make clear that the school and military have resources to help facilitate a smooth transition and provide ongoing support. If districts have school choice options, ensure that these are made clear on district webpage for incoming, off-cycle mobile students. Consider developing a standard one-stop-shop information session where parents can take care of all enrollment needs simultaneously.

5 GRADUATION BARRIERS MITIGATION

BE FLEXIBLE WITH REQUIREMENTS

As required by MIC3, develop appropriately flexible standards, equivalencies, principled exceptions, and other practices to enable mobile students to graduate from your or possibly from their sending school district and to participate in special programs, sports and other extracurricular activities. Work with your board, central administrative staff, school counselors, and others to draft and apply these policies in a manner that is sensitive to special burdens faced by mobile students.

6 INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES

TAILOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Identify, sponsor, or create professional development sessions for all staff—including teachers, counselors, and registrars—on transitioning and integrating mobile students into a new school, including explicit training on MIC3 guidelines. Work with state leaders to ensure that training is consistent state-wide.

7 STUDENT MOVEMENT DATA

DEVELOP DATA SYSTEMS

Collaborate with knowledgeable data support staff in your and other schools and districts to establish a process for tracking data on transition pathways for mobile students—e.g., what schools and districts they come from or go to and what curricular, credit, graduation, IEP, and other issues arise with their sending and receiving schools and districts. Use the data to identify predictable transition patterns, needs, and supports that are associated with particular categories of mobile students and with particular sending and receiving districts and schools. Develop plans, including in collaboration with the relevant sending and receiving schools, to keep predictable problems from arising or to provide the supports needed to address them.

MOBILITY MITIGATION MODEL

STATE LEADERSHIP

1 COMMUNICATION

HELP DEVELOP A PRACTITIONER SUPPORT NETWORK

Connect and foster a network of schools and districts that serve highly mobile populations in your state. Encourage collaboration and develop venues where practitioners can share practices, concerns, and questions. Use feedback from this group to help shape state policy.

2 INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES

DESIGN SUPPORTIVE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Ensure that state-sponsored professional development (PD) for both faculty and administrative staff includes regular required training on the needs of highly mobile student groups. Ensure that all state personnel are trained on state and federal protections for mobile students, such as the MIC3, the McKinney-Vento Act, and the Migrant Education Program. Consider creating engaging standardized training scripts and materials for distribution to schools/districts. Require that school staff in districts with large highly mobile populations complete mobility-related PD units annually.

3 PORTFOLIO

DEVELOP STATEWIDE PORTFOLIO RECOMMENDATIONS

Develop recommendations for a consistent student portfolio format for use statewide. Enlist school/district practitioners and leadership to help develop and format implementation protocols.

4 STUDENT MOVEMENT DATA

DEVELOP DATA SYSTEMS

Collaborate with schools and districts to design a robust data collection system to gather information on common student transition pathways and issues. Use collected data to uncover predictable transition patterns, common needs, and effective supports for different highly mobile populations. Regularly distribute data findings to districts, schools, and practitioners; ensure that data is presented clearly and in an engaging manner; for example, consider developing a map that illustrates concentrations of particular mobile populations across the state. Advocate for legislation and policy choices that are informed by your findings.

5 COMMUNICATION

BUILD STRONG RELATIONSHIPS WITH MOBILITY-AFFILIATED INSTITUTIONS

Build strong networks of state-level institutions that work closely with highly mobile populations, including military installations, the Department of Justice and juvenile detention centers, foster care agencies, and immigration and homelessness support and advocacy organizations. Facilitate and provide spaces for reciprocal expertise exchange.

6 GRADUATION BARRIERS

PREPARE FOR EXCEPTIONS

When drafting and updating state-level standards and requirements for graduation, acknowledge that highly mobile students graduating in your state will benefit from reasonable flexibility. Use your collected student transition data to preemptively draft counseling guidance for credit and course equivalencies for states from which students commonly transfer. Ensure that schools and districts have clear instruction on when and how federal or state regulation may allow them to waive or adjust requirements for particular highly mobile student groups. Establish and publicize a support hotline or email for counselors and school/district leadership to inquire directly about more complex cases.

7 CURRICULUM DISCREPANCIES

COORDINATE WITH OTHER STATES

Using the data collected on student transition pathways, work with states from and to which students commonly transfer and establish guidelines on how schools/districts can navigate common curriculum discrepancies. Consider longer-term, cross-state working groups to devise for-

MOBILITY MITIGATION MODEL

COUNSELORS & STUDENT SUPPORT STAFF

1 SOCIAL CONNECTEDNESS

IMPLEMENT WELCOMING PRACTICES

In collaboration with your student ambassador club or other student volunteers, offer new students first-day tours, a buddy to sit with at lunch, time during the day to check in with a staff member, teacher introductions, a map of the school, and other important welcoming information, including details about extracurriculars. Administer emotional assessments and **student questionnaire** or interview within a week of the students' arrivals. Include copies of these documents in student portfolios within bounds of legal regulations.

2 SOCIAL CONNECTEDNESS

PROMOTE CONSISTENCY AND LOOPING

Connect students with adult mentors and staff, such as a military-specific counselor, who can provide spaces for students to talk about worries and challenges. If possible, keep highly mobile students with at least one teacher for two years in a row, in either homeroom or academic classes. Alternatively, match students with counselors or extracurricular sponsors with whom they can maintain consistent contact between grades.

3 CURRICULUM DISCREPANCIES

TAILOR ACADEMIC RECOMMENDATIONS

In giving curricular advice to mobile students, note discrepancies between sending and receiving schools' curricula using sending school's curriculum explanation if available, and create action plan to close gaps in students' knowledge/ skills. Based on common mobility patterns for particular categories of students or individual students' likely moves, alert students (1) to the impact of course choices on credit requirements in likely receiving districts and (2) to the impact of starting courses of study they may not be able to complete in future schools.

4 ENROLLMENT PRACTICES

EXPEDITE ENROLLMENT

Honor hand-carried records and/or reach out to the sending school to inquire about missing records/ portfolios to expedite record transfer process. Honor course placements, gifted/talented and special needs status upon initial enrollment and, if further assessment is required, create a low-barrier process specific to highly mobile students.

5 GRADUATION BARRIERS MITIGATION

BE FLEXIBLE WITH REQUIREMENTS

As appropriate, identify equivalencies with testing and graduation requirements or alter requirements (i.e. credits needed or required coursework) for mobile juniors and seniors who face barriers to on-time graduation. Consider whether it is possible to arrange for students to graduate and receive their diploma from their sending school.

6 WITHDRAWAL PRACTICES

COMPLETE WITHDRAWAL PROCEDURES

Provide withdrawal checklists to families to ease transition for both their child and schools. For students with particularly complex enrollment needs, proactively contact new school or district where the family expects to enroll their student to communicate important registration details. Complete and forward Transcript Cover Letter and other documentation to receiving school in a timely fashion. As possible, send families off warmly with a farewell luncheon or other event.

MOBILITY MITIGATION MODEL

FACULTY & INSTRUCTIONAL STAFF

1 CURRICULUM DISCREPANCIES

DIFFERENTIATE IN THE CLASSROOM

Integrate differentiation techniques to help accommodate students who may have uneven knowledge and skills as a result of mobility. If available, reserve time to review incoming student portfolio and work samples to assess incoming student level. Use all available student movement data to inform planning.

2 INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES

BE PREPARED

Maintain extra school supplies or school supply starter kits for new students, particularly for those enrolling off-cycle. If possible, keep additional textbooks and workbooks available so new students do not have to share materials on their first day.

3 CURRICULUM DISCREPANCIES

OBSERVE, REFLECT, TAKE ACTION

Carefully observe mobile students' skill sets and take steps to proactively observe student skill sets and knowledge and, if necessary, create action plans to close any gaps in a timely fashion. Use sending school's course description guide if available or reach out to sending school contact or students themselves for background.

4 SOCIAL CONNECTEDNESS

BE A LIFELINE

As the staff member the student sees more regularly than others, be a support resource. Make efforts to form relationships with new students and remain available even if they seem reticent at first. Follow your school's communication protocol to compare notes regularly with other staff—and particularly student support—about how well the student seems to be integrating into classes and school life.

5 FAMILY SUPPORT

REMAIN AVAILABLE

Open and maintain communication channels with families and proactively check in with them, recognizing that transition demands may be keeping them from initiating contact with you.

6 PORTFOLIO

UPDATE PORTFOLIO REGULARLY

For students known to be highly mobile, maintain student subject portfolio with curriculum explanations, work samples, teacher notes, and IEP documents that provide more explanatory detail than may be needed for students expected to stay in the same school and district.

MOBILITY MITIGATION MODEL

REGISTRARS AND ADMINISTRATIVE PROFESSIONALS

1 SOCIAL CONNECTEDNESS

ORDER EXTRA SUPPLIES

Order extra instructional materials, school supplies, yearbooks, school t-shirts, athletic equipment, and other materials so students who arrive after the ordering deadline or leave before they receive their mementos will not miss out on those items.

2 FAMILY SUPPORT

PROACTIVELY REACH OUT

Initiate communication with families before the student starts school, if possible, and consistently in the first weeks after enrollment, and subsequently as needed. Schedule and invite parents to an info session or open house specifically targeted to military-connected families, or other mobile families as appropriate.

3 ENROLLMENT PROCESSES

WELCOME AND ORIENTATE FAMILIES

Greet and welcome new arrivals warmly when they come in to register and connect them to appropriate staff and programming—such as first day tours —that will help them feel comfortable in the school community. Remember you are likely families' first touch point at their new school and, as such, you have the ability to set a positive tone for families and students. As families enroll, communicate the importance of notifying the school about a subsequent relocation as soon as possible to ensure a smooth transition.

4 STUDENT MOVEMENT DATA

COLLECT AND USE DATA

Ask students to self-identify as military-connected or otherwise highly mobile upon enrollment and include in mobile student data tracking. Communicate findings on likely transition paths to school and district leadership so they can assess information regarding potential academic or social emotional transition patterns and to assess potential areas or tools of support for transitioning students.

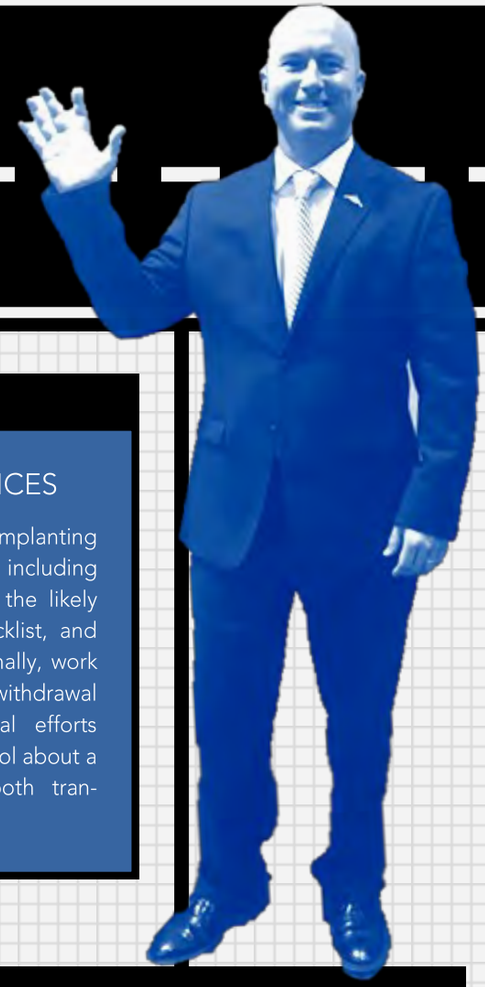
5 PORTFOLIO

MAINTAIN PORTFOLIOS

Assist in the maintenance of a portfolio for each student. Check in with all contributing staff regularly to ensure that they are updating portfolios according to your school's protocol.

MOBILITY MITIGATION MODEL

FAMILY SUPPORT STAFF



1 PARENTAL SUPPORT

COMMUNICATE EARLY AND OFTEN

If possible, initiate and maintain consistent communication with families of a new student before the student starts school and throughout the first weeks of attendance. Connect families with the PTA and parent support groups. Continue consistent engagement with families through phone calls, email, texts, social media posts, invitations to social events, and educational counseling sessions.

2 FAMILY SUPPORT

IMPLEMENT A WELCOME PROTOCOL

Create a mobile family resource page on the school or district website with enrollment and withdrawal information and familiarize families with it. Provide other supports, including a welcome room on campus, orientation binders with information about the school and the larger community, and a designated staff contact. Host an orientation event for mobile families before the start of and in the middle of the school year, with the schedule of the second event based on common transition timing patterns.

3 PORTFOLIO

UPDATE PORTFOLIOS REGULARLY

Maintain student portfolios with appropriate information related to socio-emotional factors and familial situation. Seek to form close relationships with mobile families to form a fuller picture of students. Communicate important familial information with key staff via portfolios or other communication protocols.

4 WITHDRAWAL PROCESSES

STUDENT WITHDRAWAL PRACTICES

Support school leadership in developing and implanting consistent exit practices to support parents, including preliminary identification of and contact with the likely new school, completion of a withdrawal checklist, and advice about their rights under MIC3. Additionally, work with school leadership to communicate clear withdrawal expectations with families. Consider educational efforts to inform mobile families that notifying the school about a relocation as soon as possible is crucial to a smooth transition.

5 FAMILY SUPPORT

COMMUNICATE AFTER RELOCATION

Reach out to parents after they have transitioned to a new school to provide continuing support as needed. Fostering these relationships will allow you to garner feedback about how your school and district's practices regarding mobile students might be improved based on families' experiences with subsequent schools.

MOBILITY MITIGATION MODEL

PARENTS & FAMILIES

1 PORTFOLIO

COLLECT RECORDS

In collaboration with staff and faculty at all schools, collect and keep a personal file of essential academic, extracurricular, and socio-emotional information. Unofficial transcripts, report cards, progress reports, academic assessments and work samples, IEPs/504 plans, extracurricular recommendations, medical and immunization records, and other documentation can provide receiving schools with the critical information needed to start placing your child into classes even if the transfer of official documentation from previous institutions is slow.

2 PARENTAL SUPPORT

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS AND SHARE KNOWLEDGE

Take time to educate yourself and other parents on the federal and state regulations that require schools to provide support to military-connected families. Particularly familiarize yourself with the Military Interstate Compact, which establishes guidelines in regard to issues like credit transfer, graduation, and extracurriculars. For support, contact the School Liaison Officer at your local installation.

3 ENROLLMENT PROCESSES

COMMUNICATE EARLY AND OFTEN

High-volume transfer periods can be a hectic time even for schools and districts with robust mobility protocols and supports. Communicating your intention to enroll at a school as early as possible ensures that staff has enough time to process your children's transfer with care. If you haven't heard back from a school after an email or call, check back in to ensure that your communication was received.

4 COMMUNICATION

ACT AS A LIAISON

Not all schools have had the capacity to establish strong communication protocols with schools in other districts and states. As such, it may be beneficial to establish friendly relationships with counselors or other staff at each school your family enrolls in and act as a liaison to connect school personnel as necessary.

5 WITHDRAWAL PROCESSES

GIVE SCHOOL STAFF ADVANCE NOTICE

Highly-mobile families often do not have advance notice about moves, but whenever possible, inform your school that a relocation may be in your future. Early notification allows administrative personnel to more thoroughly audit your child's paperwork and documentation and insure that it's ready for transfer to the receiving school as quickly as possible.

MOBILITY MITIGATION MODEL

TEMPLATE

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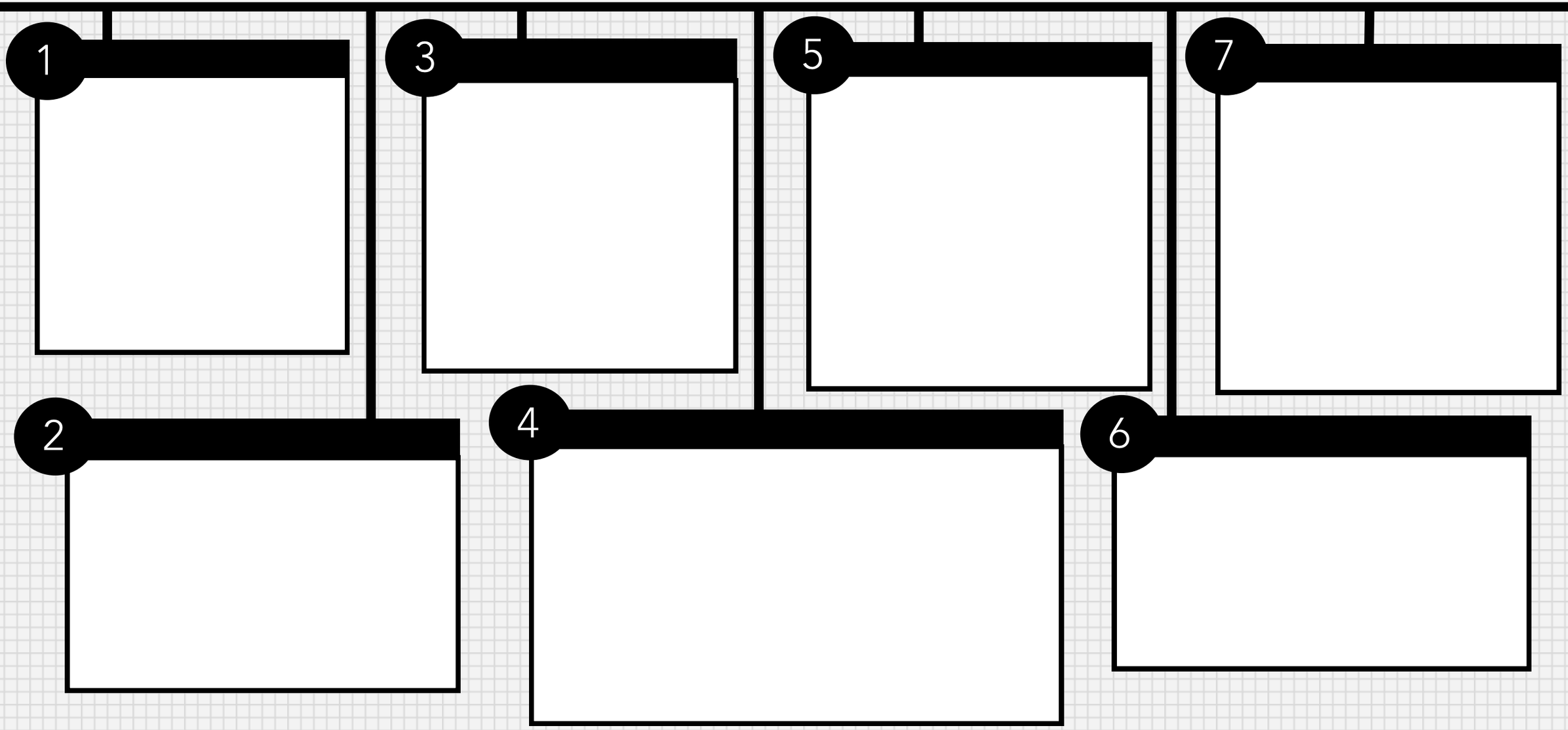

THE TOOLKIT

HOW TO USE THE TOOLKIT

The Toolkit is organized into four overlapping sections: PREPARATORY ACTIVITIES, DURING MOVE, INTRODUCTORY PHASE, and AFTER MOVE.

The PREPARATORY ACTIVITIES section includes tools that schools or districts can use to develop their systems to better support mobile students. After the Preparatory Activities section, the tools are organized in alignment with phases of the Mobility Mitigation Model, generally following a student's typical transition path.

Tools in the DURING MOVE section are generally targeted to Counselors and Student Support Staff and primarily address school withdrawal and enrollment activities. The INTRODUCTORY PHASE tools involve all levels of school personnel and focus techniques to welcome and integrate the new students quickly and consistently. Finally, the AFTER MOVE Tools suggest ways to continue supporting the new students and to provide school personnel with information to better serve the new students.

For each tool, there is an introduction which explains the need for the tool, a description, a list of the intended primary users, and an implementation checklist.

	TOOL	TARGET USERS
PREPARATORY ACTIVITIES	**A.** Pre-Implementation Assessment	School or District Leadership
	B. Tool Implementation Planning Worksheet	School or District Leadership
	C. MIC3 Training and Package and Protocol	School or District Leadership, State Leadership, Counselors, Parents/Families
	D. Memorandum of Understanding	School or District Leadership, State Leadership
	E. Website Layout	School or District Leadership
DURING MOVE	**F.** Transcript Cover Letter	Counselors & Student Support Staff
	G. Withdrawal/Enrollment Checklist	Counselors & Student Support Staff
INTRODUCTORY PHASE	**H.** Communication Protocol Brainstorming Framework	All
	I. Welcoming Practices Packet	School or District Leadership, Counselors & Student Support Staff, Family Support Staff
	J. Student Questionnaire	Counselors & Student Support Staff
AFTER MOVE	**K.** Portfolio Checklist	All
	L. Identifying Transition Pathways	School or District Leadership, State Leadership; Counselors; School or District Leadership; Data Specialists

Because schools or districts are complex systems with unique contexts and methods of operation, the tools provided here should not be understood as "quick-fix," one-size-fits-all solutions to the challenges of mobility, even if those challenges are ubiquitous and common across school and district environments. And, too, the challenges faced by highly mobile students are complex; even in one school or district, a web of strategies which are consistently assessed and improved, rather than a one-time silver bullet, is needed to support highly mobile students effectively.

A.

MOBILITY SUPPORT PRE-IMPLEMENTATION ASSESSMENT

THE NEED

Before schools or districts implement any practices, programming, or strategies, it is important that they understand the quality and reach of support they already provide for highly mobile youth and families, identifying both strengths and gaps. This tool guides schools or districts in a review to develop a clear sense of their current state.

TOOL DESCRIPTION

The Pre-Implementation Assessment is intended to help schools or districts identify areas of strength and growth and guide goal-setting, resource allocation, and outcome measurement. School and district leadership should complete the assessment honestly, inviting the input of key school personnel and other stakeholders. Upon completion, convening to review results and map priorities and goals is recommended.

PRIMARY USERS

School and District leadership

MOBILITY SUPPORT

PRE-IMPLEMENTATION ASSESSMENT

Before taking steps to implement supportive tools, it is recommended that schools or districts complete a pre-implementation assessment to understand the quality and reach of support they already provide for highly mobile youth and families. This assessment will help identify areas of strength and growth and guide goal-setting, resource allocation, and outcome measurement.

1	2	3	4
NEVER / NO PRACTICE IN PLACE	SOMETIMES	MOST OF THE TIME	ALWAYS

For each section in the assessment, read the statements and rank your school or district using the scores above. The statements in each category are broken into two subsections: action steps and continuous improvement steps. Action steps are practices or protocols in each category that support students or families. Continuous improvement steps are processes that help schools or districts use data and feedback to strengthen the supportive practices listed in the action steps subsection.

In each section, there is also space included for open-ended reflection on current practices and gaps in service.

Some practices included in the survey may not be feasible for all schools or districts either due to available resources or rules or restrictions in place. In that case, note the barrier and think through how the practice could be adapted in the context of your school or district.

After completing each section, tally the score, divide by the number of questions in the section, and list the percentage in this chart. Sections with lower scores are areas that need strategic focus for improvement.

A. PORTFOLIO		**E.** FAMILY AND PARENTAL SUPPORT	
B. COUNSELING AND EMOTIONAL SUPPORT		**F.** ENROLLMENT AND WITHDRAWAL PROCEDURES	
C. SOCIAL CONNECTEDNESS		**G.** GRADUATION BARRIERS MITIGATION	
D. CURRICULUM ISSUES & COURSE PLACEMENT		**H.** INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES	

A. PORTFOLIO

ACTION STEPS

School or district collects relevant student academic data and documentation—academic assessments, IEPs/504s, and transcripts—in a student portfolio that is easily accessible and transferable either to families or a receiving school.	1 2 3 4
School or district collects representative academic samples, such as writing and classwork, in a student portfolio that is easily accessible and transferable to both families and a receiving school.	1 2 3 4
School district collects relevant, non-sensitive socio-emotional notes and extracurricular information in a student portfolio that is easily accessible and transferable to both families and a receiving school.	1 2 3 4
School or district leadership provides sufficient resources to support the upkeep of the portfolio system.	1 2 3 4
School or district follows a consistent protocol that prompts faculty and staff who work most closely with a student to update portfolios in a timely manner.	1 2 3 4
Portfolios are regularly audited, and incomplete portfolios are flagged for completion by appropriate staff.	1 2 3 4

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT STEPS

School or district leadership conducts a review of the portfolio system annually, asking faculty and staff for feedback on protocols and format. Leadership meaningfully considers suggestions and implements improvements as appropriate.	1 2 3 4
School or district conducts a mental and emotional health screening for all incoming students upon arrival.	1 2 3 4

In what ways could your school or district improve in this category?

If your school or district does not engage in practices listed above, why not? What barriers to implementation exist? How could they be mitigated with support from school, district, or state leadership?

B. COUNSELING AND EMOTIONAL SUPPORT

ACTION STEPS

School or district assigns all incoming students a primary counselor and communicates direct contact information with family.	1 2 3 4
School or district conducts a mental and emotional health screening for all incoming students upon arrival.	1 2 3 4
School or district has a protocol that triggers a counseling follow-up with any students flagged for support by intake screening administrator.	1 2 3 4
School or district has a standardized practice of communicating school and community mental health resources to incoming families, regardless of immediate need.	1 2 3 4
School or district has strong ties with mental health care providers in the community and a standardized process for referrals to those external providers.	1 2 3 4
School or district has a standardized process for following up on referrals to external providers.	1 2 3 4
School or district has military-connected crisis counselors (or appropriately trained crisis counselors for other relevant mobile student populations) available for emotional support on campus and notifies all incoming families, regardless of immediate need of availability of these counselors.	1 2 3 4
Within the bounds of privacy regulations, school or district has a protocol for communicating appropriate mental health information with staff and faculty who interact with the student and may be able to provide emotional support.	1 2 3 4

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT STEPS

School or district leadership regularly conducts a review of counseling and emotional support protocol, asking faculty and staff for feedback. Suggestions are meaningfully considered and implemented as appropriate.	1 2 3 4
Students and family who use school mental health resources are surveyed and asked for feedback. Suggestions are meaningfully considered and implemented as appropriate.	1 2 3 4
Partner and referral organizations are surveyed and asked for feedback. Suggestions are meaningfully considered and implemented as appropriate.	1 2 3 4
School or district collects data on referrals and identifies and fills gaps in service.	1 2 3 4

In what ways could your school or district improve in this category?

If your school or district does not engage in practices listed above, why not? What barriers to implementation could be mitigated with robust support from school, district, or state leadership?

B.

TOOL IMPLEMENTATION PLANNING WORKSHEET

THE NEED

Because schools or districts across the United States vary tremendously, any tool provided in this planning Guide will need modification before it is suited for use in a particular context. Tools should be systematically evaluated before implementation and adjusted to fit the context-specific needs of students, families, and staff.

TOOL DESCRIPTION

The Tool Implementation Planning Worksheet provides school or district leadership with a customizable template to plan for the implementation and continuous improvement of tools. The Planning Worksheet may be used in a variety of ways, including as an agenda outline for a working group meeting, a worksheet for individual school leaders, or as a rough brainstorming template. Regardless of the selected mode of use, the themes and questions raised by the guide are essential considerations before the use of any new tool from this Toolkit.

PRIMARY USERS

School or district leadership

TOOL IMPLEMENTATION PLANNING GUIDE

TOOL OR PRACTICE:	
BRIEF DESCRIPTION:	
IMPLEMENTATION DATE:	

1. RATIONALE: Describe why you are choosing to implement this tool.

2. ADAPTATIONS: If you are considering a pre-designed tool or template, what adaptations will you make to fit your local context and ensure that your students are effectively supported?

3. VISIONING: How will you know that your tool is working? What result would you consider "success"?

4. GOALS & OUTCOMES: In the table below, set two measurable goals for the implementation of your tool. Then, think through a plan for how you will tackle accomplishing those goals.

GOALS	OUTCOME	MEASUREMENT TOOL & PLAN	IMPLEMENTATION	ACCOUNTABILITY & OVERSIGHT
What are you aiming to achieve through the implementation of this tool or practice?	What will indicate success?	How will you measure your outcomes and progress towards your goals?	Who will own designing and implementing the tool and what deadlines should they meet?	Who will own the measurement process, report findings to leadership and other staff, and help design adaptations to your tool or practice?

5. KEY ACTORS: In the table below, plan out the key responsibilities different staff will assume when you implement this tool during different stages of a student's transfer. Reference to the MOBILITY MITIGATION MODEL may help organize this process.

	BEFORE A STUDENT MOVES	DURING THE STUDENT'S MOVE	INTRODUCTORY PHASE	AFTER THE STUDENT MOVES
STATE LEADERSHIP				
SCHOOL OR DISTRICT LEADERSHIP				
INSTRUCTIONAL STAFF				
REGISTRARS AND ADMINISTRATIVE PROFESSIONALS				
STUDENT SUPPORT STAFF				
FAMILY SUPPORT STAFF				

6. FOUNDATIONAL CLIMATE AND PROCESSES

What foundational practices or resources need to be in place before you implement this tool?

What roadblocks can you anticipate encountering? What support will you need to mitigate those obstacles, and from whom?

What practices need to be in place to ensure active communication and partnership with families and students?

F.

TRANSCRIPT COVER LETTER

THE NEED

Curricula, GPA practices, credit requirements, course notations, schedules, and transcript layout often vary widely from school to school, making the process of interpreting transcripts and placing new students into appropriate classes difficult, potentially inaccurate, and time-consuming. Further, counselors report that it is frequently unclear which staff at a sending school should be contacted with questions or how to reach knowledgeable staff during critical school breaks when students may often be transitioning between schools.

TOOL DESCRIPTION

The Transcript Cover Letter provides a standardized template through which schools can communicate helpful descriptive information about curriculum, student level, and staff contact.

The tool was developed in collaboration with counselors at schools with mobile student populations and refined following a pilot of mock transfers where counselors used the cover letter to help place "new" students.

PRIMARY USERS

Counselors and student support staff; instructional staff

IMPLEMENTATION CHECKLIST

PRE-IMPLEMENTATION		☐ Counselors customize the Transcript Cover Letter template to include school-specific information that will remain constant for each student ☐ Customized Transcript Cover Letter template is made available to all counseling and administrative staff
BEFORE MOVE	Sending School	☐ Student's primary counselor fills in student specific data and updated contact information on Transcript Cover Letter template ☐ Primary counselor contacts instructional staff to clarify any curricular questions, such as student progress for mid-term transfer or unclear course content
DURING MOVE	Sending School	☐ Staff responsible for forwarding student documentation to receiving school includes Cover Letter in documentation packet
	Receiving School	☐ Staff responsible for receiving student documentation sends receipt of confirmation to sending school ☐ Counseling staff uses Cover Letter and transcripts to place student into appropriate classes, communicating with sending school contact about any questions
INTRODUCTORY PHASE	Sending School	☐ Primary counselor remains available to field questions from receiving school

TRANSCRIPT COVER LETTER TEMPLATES

The templates below provide examples of two types of cover letters: one, for districts/schools that have online accessible course description guides with information on scheduling and credit requirements; and two, for districts/schools that either do not have an online accessible course description guide or that have online guides that may be missing key information needed for receiving school enrollment.

TEMPLATE 1

[SCHOOL OR DISTRICT LETTERHEAD]

TO:	
FROM:	*Primary Contact Name*
Contact Phone:	*Primary Contact Phone*
Contact Email:	*Primary Contact Email*
School Name:	
Address:	
Phone Number:	*School Contact Phone, including extensions*
District Code:	
RE:	Transcript Information for *Student Name*

STUDENT NAME:	
STUDENT BIRTHDATE:	
SPECIAL NEEDS (IEP OR 504 PLAN)	Provide brief description
HIGHLY MOBILE POPULATION?	☐ Military-connected ☐ Migrant ☐ Foster child ☐ Experiencing homelessness ☐ Justice-system-involved

This memorandum accompanies the high school transcripts of a student transferring from a school in School District Name and is intended to support the rapid enrollment of that student into a new district. This document attests that Student Name attended School Name, located in City, State.

You can find an electronic copy of our district or school course description guide here:

Course Description Guide web link

If you have questions, please contact the school counselor: Counselor Name at Counselor Phone Number and Direct Email. If you are unable to reach the school counselor during the summer/school break, you may contact Summer/Break POC.

Sincerely,
Signature
Name and Job Title

TEMPLATE 2

[SCHOOL OR DISTRICT LETTERHEAD]

TO:	
FROM:	*Primary Contact Name*
Contact Phone:	*Primary Contact Phone*
Contact Email:	*Primary Contact Email*
School Name:	
Address:	
Phone Number:	*School Contact Phone, including extensions*
District Code:	
RE:	Transcript Information for *Student Name*

STUDENT NAME:	
STUDENT BIRTHDATE:	
SPECIAL NEEDS (IEP OR 504 PLAN)	Provide brief description
HIGHLY MOBILE POPULATION?	☐ Military-connected ☐ Migrant ☐ Foster child ☐ Experiencing homelessness ☐ Justice-system-involved

This memorandum accompanies the high school transcripts of a student transferring from a school in School District Name and is intended to support the rapid enrollment of that student into a new district. This document attests that Student Name attended School Name, located in City, State.

In the table below, you can find information regarding course descriptions, credits, and grading policies:

COURSE NAMES AND INTERPRETATION (SHORT AND LONG NAMES OF COURSES, AS NEEDED)	Example: "Course 001 U.S. History" covers history of the U.S. from 1400 to 2000. By [month], instruction has typically reached [year]. Example: "Course 002 Pre-Algebra" covers concept x, y, and z. By [month], instruction has covered x and y and students are prepared to solve z equations.

INSTRUCTIONAL SCHEDULE (INCLUDE MINUTES PER CONTENT AREA PER WEEK)	
MIDDLE SCHOOL CREDIT POLICY DO MIDDLE SCHOOL COURSES COUNT TOWARD GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS?	*Example: "Middle-school completion of civics fulfills high school civics requirement"*
GRADING POLICIES AND WEIGHTS, INCLUDING GPA METHODOLOGY	

If you have questions, please contact the school counselor: Counselor Name at Counselor Phone Number and Direct Email. If you are unable to reach the school counselor during the summer/school break, you may contact Summer/Break POC.

Sincerely,
Signature
Name and Job Title

I.

WELCOMING PRACTICES PACKET

THE NEED

Frequent relocation can make it difficult for families to integrate successfully into schools and communities. A warm welcome creates an immediate sense of inclusion, which can help support academic integration and socio-emotional stability for students and families. However, the sheer number of tasks that school staff must complete during high volume transfer periods–like the beginning of the school year–can make ensuring the consistency of welcoming practices difficult. A standardized welcoming practices protocol and materials packet offers a simple, low-cost approach to ensuring that all new families feel warmly supported as they join their new school.

TOOL DESCRIPTION

The Welcoming Practices Packet includes a list of effective practices, along with descriptions and ideas for materials, to guide schools through the customization of their own process of greeting new families.

The tool was developed following brainstorming and prototyping at workshops with education professionals based on their own practices and expressed needs, as well as research into other effective practices.

PRIMARY USERS

School or district leadership; counselors and student support staff; instructional staff; registrars and administrative staff; family support staff

IMPLEMENTATION CHECKLIST

PRE-IMPLEMENTATION		☐ School or district leadership reviews list of welcoming practices and identifies those that already exist and can be incorporated into a Welcoming Practices Packet ☐ School or district leadership reviews samples provided below and customizes based on their own needs and capacity ☐ School or district leadership designs protocols for implementation of welcoming practices to ensure consistency and ensure staff training on welcoming practices ☐ School or district leadership provides supportive resources as program is implemented, monitoring staff feedback and adjusting program as needed ☐ School or district prepares supply of packets and other materials to keep on hand for new arrivals
DURING MOVE	Receiving School	☐ Staff implements chosen welcoming practices
AFTER MOVE	Receiving School	☐ Administrative staff reaches out to family with survey regarding welcoming practices ☐ Leadership reviews feedback and integrates suggestions into practice

EFFECTIVE WELCOMING PRACTICES

PRACTICES	DESCRIPTION AND EXAMPLES
WELCOMING BINDER OR PACKET	While many schools or districts have moved to digital enrollment processes, having a packet of physical materials from your school can be a helpful touchpoint for families upon their first visit, especially since families may not have consistent internet access while resettling. This package might include: ☐ a WELCOME LETTER ☐ student handbook and school FAQ ☐ a school calendar, including dates for popular student events like a back-to-school party, extracurriculars fair, and homecoming celebrations ☐ a schedule of upcoming events for new families, including new family orientation, student info sessions, new parent and student mixers, and the new student breakfast ☐ a staff directory, including a highlights of key contacts for the new family ☐ a welcome letter and meeting/event schedule from the PTA and Military Parent's Club or other relevant parent group ☐ an area map and coupons from recommended restaurants, businesses, and local attractions ☐ a school t-shirt and planner
ACADEMIC INFORMATION	High school students often receive reading and assignments over the summer, but transferring students may not be in the loop about work they're missing. Schools should consider keeping extra copies of summer books and homework packets on hand to pass along to incoming students.
VIRTUAL AND IN-PERSON TOURS	Before students arrive, it can be helpful for them to get a sense of their new school through a virtual tour on the school or district website or social media platforms. Tours could be videos led by student or faculty leaders. Alternatively, if your school has an Instagram or Twitter page, you could let a student leader "take over" your feed for a period of time and post pictures and videos about their favorite spots on campus and in the community. When families arrive at your school, both parents and students should receive a tour of the campus led by staff or students.

WELCOME CENTER	Moving is often a chaotic and stressful process; having a calm and welcoming space for new families can be a critical support. Simple touches like fun posters, candy bowls, comfortable chairs, and friendly staff can make all the difference in making families feel at home. In buildings with limited space, even a dedicated corner of an office or dedicated bulletin board can be useful Large districts—and particularly those with multiple schools to choose from—may benefit from having a designated, centralized "one-stop-shop" where families can ask questions and enroll children of different ages simultaneously. If not at a district office, this Welcome Center might be located on the campus of one school, but should have staff who are familiar with a district's full range of school and program options and enrollment practices at each.
WELCOME TABLE	Even if a school does not have the space or resources for a Welcome Center, a Welcome Table can serve the same purpose. Staffed by school personnel or parent or community volunteers, the Welcome Table can be a hub for all sorts of school visitors but particularly for incoming families. Training at such a station is essential: volunteers should be prepared to answer guest questions accurately and thoroughly, or have access to and be familiar with the contact information and office location of someone who can.
OPEN HOUSE	Open houses offer students and families an opportunity to explore the campus; get a sense of typical coursework; meet faculty, staff, and students; and learn about extracurriculars. It is recommended that schools/districts with multiple high-volume transfer periods host open houses several times throughout the year to accommodate as many incoming families as possible.
CLASSROOM VISITS FOR MID-YEAR TRANSFER STUDENTS	While students transferring at the beginning of the year enter classes with students who are also acclimatizing to a new classroom environment, those who transfer mid-year often enter spaces with classmates who have already settled into a routine. Allowing mid-year transfers to preview classes before their first day of school can help them more fully anticipate what their day-to-day experience might be like.
NEW STUDENT EVENTS	Welcoming events, like a breakfast or mixer, can be a great way to link up new students. To make these events appealing to students, have your Student2Student® or other student group plan and attend them.
NEW PARENT EVENTS	Parents who relocate frequently benefit from networking events as much as students do. Offering both casual meet-ups and more formal school-sponsored events can help families connect.
WELCOME POSTCARD	If a student's schedule is solidified before they begin classes, have one or several of their teachers send them a brief postcard—or even a personal email or text—welcoming them to the school. If a schedule is not yet created, a similar note from counseling staff or students can similarly welcome them.

SAMPLE WELCOME LETTER

[SCHOOL OR DISTRICT LETTERHEAD]

SCHOOL NAME
ADDRESS

Dear LAST NAME family,

I am writing to extend a warm welcome as you begin your academic journey with the SCHOOL NAME community! We are thrilled that you have chosen to join us at SCHOOL NAME and look forward to helping you get settled into our dynamic, supportive community.

We know that a move can be an incredibly busy and stressful time both for students and their families, so our goal at SCHOOL NAME during this time is to ensure that enrollment and your first days are as easy as possible for you. If you have any questions or concerns whatsoever throughout this process, please do not hesitate to reach out to your personal school contact, NAME [EMAIL ADDRESS, PHONE NUMBER].

Enclosed in this Welcome Packet are a variety of resources, including:

- ☐ a student handbook and school FAQ
- ☐ a school calendar, including dates for popular student events like the Back-to-School Party, Extracurriculars Fair, and the Homecoming Celebrations
- ☐ a schedule of upcoming events for new families, including new family orientation, student info sessions, new parent and student mixers, and the new student breakfast
- ☐ a staff directory
- ☐ a welcome letter and meeting/event schedule from our PTA and Military Parent's Club
- ☐ an area map and coupons from recommended restaurants, businesses, and local attractions
- ☐ a school t-shirt and planner

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to reach out to me. COUNSELOR NAME can also be a great first stop for you. S/he can be reached by phone at PHONE NUMBER or EMAIL ADDRESS.

We are always trying to improve our support for you and others in a similar position. If, as you join our community and navigate your family's entry into our school, you think of ways we could better support incoming families, please let us know by either informing a staff member directly or filling out our anonymous feedback form at TINYURL.CO/SURVEY.

Again, we're so pleased to welcome you to our school and look forward to getting to know you!

Warmly,

PRINCIPAL NAME

J.

STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE

THE NEED

Faculty and staff are best able to connect students with beneficial resources, activities, and supports when they know about students' interests, background, and goals for the future. For highly mobile students, the typical process of getting to know faculty and staff naturally over time is cut short or rushed. The typical set of transition documents usually sent with highly mobile students is unlikely to provide a full picture of the student or give the counselor a prompt to learn more about the student. A student questionnaire used during the enrollment or intake process addresses this gap and provides a prompt for a counselor to connect with the student.

TOOL DESCRIPTION

The Student Questionnaire aims to help faculty and staff quickly get to know students better, while also providing a helpful prompt for the counselor to connect with the student. The questionnaire is designed as an entrance survey or interview that can be administered to all incoming students as a face-to-face interview during a meeting with a counselor. Once completed, the survey should be used to connect new students, according to their interest and with their permission, with faculty and staff, student clubs, and community resources that might support their goals and interests.

The questionnaire was developed in response to the need expressed by counselors and other professionals participating in workshops. It was refined with the collaboration of counselors and students who reviewed the questionnaire and provided feedback.

PRIMARY USERS

Student support staff and counselors; instructional staff

IMPLEMENTATION CHECKLIST

PRE-IMPLEMENTATION		☐ Customize and/or draft new version of student questionnaire to give to incoming students ☐ Review protocol with school staff to ensure successful implementation and follow through
DURING MOVE	Receiving School	☐ Administer student questionnaire to learn more about the student and their interests ☐ As appropriate, distribute questionnaire results to relevant staff and connect student with staff and students
AFTER MOVE	Receiving School	☐ Conduct follow up to ensure that results were distributed and that relevant staff contacted student

OTHER POPULATIONS SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS

When implementing the communication protocol–particularly in districts/schools serving non-military, high-mobility populations–consider the importance of confidentiality and sensitivity. Think carefully about how you administer the survey and postpone questions that may be difficult for students until you have had a chance to gauge their comfort level.

STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE

The following questions will help us get to know you a little and get you connected with school activities you're interested in. If there are questions you'd prefer not to answer, skip them!

STUDENT INFORMATION

Name	
I prefer to be called…	
Preferred Pronouns	☐ She/ Her ☐ He/Him ☐ They/Them ☐ Other
Age	
Date of Birth	
Grade	☐ 7th ☐ 8th ☐ 9th ☐ 10th ☐11th ☐12th
Email Address	
Primary Language	
Secondary Language(s)	

SCHOOL INFORMATION

What was the name of the last school you attended?	
How many schools have you attended?	
How many times have you and your family moved?	

INTERESTS AND GOALS

1. **List three words that describe you:**

2. **What are two things you're really good at?**

3. **Were you involved in any clubs or activities at your previous school? If yes, please list them below.**

4. **Which sports would you be interested in participating in? Check all that apply**

- ☐ Volleyball
- ☐ Cross Country
- ☐ Basketball
- ☐ Track
- ☐ Tennis
- ☐ Golf
- ☐ Baseball
- ☐ Football
- ☐ Cheerleading
- ☐ Softball
- ☐ Other: _____

5. **Which clubs or activities would you be interested in participating in?**

- ☐ Art Club
- ☐ Student Council
- ☐ National Honor Society
- ☐ Orchestra
- ☐ Band
- ☐ Drama Club
- ☐ Student 2 Student
- ☐ Other: _____

6. **What are your favorite subjects in school?**

7. **What are your least favorite subjects in school?**

8. **What is your dream career or job?**

9. **What are your plans after graduating from high school? Check and answer questions about all options that that you are considering.**

☐ Attend a 2-year college

Which college? _____
What would you like to study? _____

☐ Attend a 4-year college

Which college? _____
What would you like to study? _____

☐ Complete technical/specialized training for a trade job (i.e. electrician, plumber, commercial driving)

What job are you interested in pursuing? _____

☐ Start working

What type of work are you interested in pursuing? _____

☐ Enlist in the military

Which branch of the military are you interested in enlisting in? _____
When are you planning on enlisting? _____

10. **What make you interested in pursuing that post-graduation pathway?**

FAMILY INFORMATION

11. **My guardian(s) right now is/are my:** ☐ Parents ☐ Mom ☐ Dad ☐ Grandparents ☐ Other

12. **Is your parent / guardian / sponsor associated with a branch of military service? If yes, which one?**

13. **If you answered yes to question 12, is your parent / guardian/ sponsor in a deployment cycle?** ☐ Yes ☐ No

QUESTIONS AND CONCERNS

14. **This school transition feels**

- ☐ Great! I'm not nervous at all.
- ☐ Pretty good. I have some concerns, but I'm sure I'll be able to handle them.
- ☐ Not great. I'm pretty nervous about starting at this school.
- ☐ Awful. I'm struggling with this transition.
- ☐ Other: _____

15. **What are you most excited about in your transition to this school?**

- ☐ Starting classes
- ☐ Meeting new friends
- ☐ Joining clubs
- ☐ Trying out for sports teams
- ☐ Meeting new teachers
- ☐ Other: _____

16. **What are you most nervous about in your transition to this school?**

- ☐ Starting classes
- ☐ Meeting new friends
- ☐ Joining clubs
- ☐ Trying out for sports teams
- ☐ Meeting new teachers
- ☐ Other: _____

17. **Do you have any questions for staff or teachers?**

K.

STUDENT PORTFOLIO CHECKLIST

THE NEED

Traditional transcripts rarely paint a full picture of a transferring student or his or her coursework and progress towards graduation requirements. With additional types of information that can be gleaned from academic samples, case notes, testing data, and entrance and exit questionnaires, schools can better and more quickly gain a more complete picture of who the student is, enroll him or her in appropriate classes, and connect him or her with resources to facilitate integration into school life. The additional information can make it less likely that mobile students will repeat course content and more likely that they have access to the opportunities and supports they want and need.

TOOL DESCRIPTION

The Portfolio Checklist aims to guide schools in the creation of a Student Portfolio. Such a portfolio would be developed throughout a student's tenure at a school, requiring the input of instructional, counseling, extracurricular, and administrative staff. Ideally, when a family informed a school of their departure, the portfolio would be audited and subsequently provided either to the family or directly to the receiving school.

In the event that the implementation of a portfolio system is not immediately feasible at your school, consider adapting the Portfolio Checklist as a guide for parents to create their own portfolios for students.

The idea for the Portfolio Checklist arose out of workshop sessions with educators who expressed a desire for more information, organized succinctly, about a mobile student to better enable them to serve the whole child. The workshop participants developed prototype portfolios and guidelines for how to create and maintain the portfolios.

PRIMARY USERS

School or district leadership; counselors and student support staff; instructional staff; registrars and administrative staff; parent support staff

IMPLEMENTATION CHECKLIST

PRE-IMPLEMENTATION		☐ School or district leadership, in collaboration with a working group, decides on a template for portfolios and designs detailed protocols for the submission of documentation ☐ School or district leadership designs protocols for storage of documentation, keeping in mind and ensuring compliance with student privacy regulations ☐ School or district leadership trains staff on portfolio protocols ☐ School or district leadership provides supportive resources as portfolio protocols are implemented, monitoring staff feedback and adjusting program as needed
BEFORE MOVE	Sending School	☐ Teachers, counselors, extracurricular staff, and administrators add documentation to Student Portfolio at intervals determined by protocol and as needed ☐ Administrative staff (or other designated personnel) regularly audit portfolios according to protocol and request missing documentation as necessary ☐ When informed of a student's upcoming move, administrative staff completes thorough audit of individual portfolio and ensures that missing information is added
DURING MOVE	Sending School	☐ Staff responsible for forwarding student documentation to receiving school sends Portfolio or gives to parents
	Receiving School	☐ If Portfolio is not included with transcript or other enrollment documentation from sending school, administrative or counseling staff reach out to sending school for Portfolio or missing information
INTRODUCTORY PHASE	Sending School	☐ Primary Portfolio point of contact (POC) remains available to field questions from receiving school
	Receiving School	☐ Counselors or other relevant personnel review Portfolio and ensure that relevant information is disseminated to appropriate staff
AFTER MOVE	Sending School	☐ Primary Portfolio POC remains available to field questions from receiving school
	Receiving School	☐ Teachers, counselors, extracurricular staff, and administrators regularly add documentation to Portfolio ☐ Administrative staff (or other designated personnel) regularly audit portfolios, requesting missing documentation as necessary ☐ When informed of a student's upcoming move, administrative staff completes thorough audit of individual portfolio and ensures that missing information is added

STUDENT PORTFOLIO CHECKLIST

This tool is intended as a customizable template for use by schools/districts considering the implementation or enhancement of a portfolio system. Schools/districts should adapt this checklist based on need and capacity. Once the checklist is customized, it is recommended that schools or districts thoughtfully design a portfolio completion and audit protocol in order to ensure that all essential information is regularly updated.

DOCUMENT	✔	NOTES
Official/Unofficial Transcripts		Include any transcripts you received from previous sending schools (even if your school or district's transcripts include comprehensive information) if you are the first school to create a portfolio for the student.
Report Cards and Mid-semester Progress Reports		If student is moving mid-semester, progress reports from the current semester are particularly important.
Course Description List		Course Description Guides (CDGs) should be referenced on the Transcript Cover Letter, but should be linked in the portfolio as well. Students may move several times throughout middle and high school, and schools beyond the immediate receiving institution may not receive your cover letter.
Class Textbook List		Add if not already included in CDG.
Special Needs Evaluation and Assessments		
Gifted and Talented Assessment[s]		
State and District Standardized Testing Summaries		
Important School-Based Assessments		
Mathematics		Work samples included in Portfolio should represent the typical work level of the student in each subject.

English/Language Arts/Writing		
Science		
Social Studies/History		
Foreign Language		
Art/Design		
Other		
Instructional Case Notes		Teachers and other instructional staff should note any particular academic strengths or needed supports.
List of Extracurricular Activities		
Extracurricular Recommendations		In the case a student moves mid-semester or mid-season, they may benefit from letters of recommendation or evidence of previous participation for try-out based extracurriculars, such as sports, band/orchestra, and debate.
Counseling Case Notes		If student has special emotional needs, counselors should include case notes and recommendations for support.
PSAT/SAT/ACT Score Sheets		If available, include score sheets for both practice and official tests.
AP Score Sheets		If available, include score sheets for both practice and official tests.
Letter of Recommendation Reference Sheet		Securing college or other recommendations may be a laborious process for students who have transferred several times throughout high school. Encouraging students to speak with teachers about recommendations and record their contact information on a reference sheet before they move can help ease stress as students apply for college or special opportunities.

L.

IDENTIFYING TRANSITION PATHWAYS PROTOCOL

THE NEED

Although schools or districts may support a large number of highly mobile students, they often have not collected or reviewed data to better understand patterns among these students' transitions. Instead, when a student moves to a new school, the school must determine, based on the individual case details, how to place and support that student in classes, award credits for previous coursework, and provide socioemotional support. Often, each new student is treated as an entirely discrete "event," which makes enrolling and supporting the student less efficient for the school and possibly more complicated for the student. If schools or districts could track basic information about their highly mobile students to determine whether they often receive students from certain schools, districts, or states and/or that they often send students to certain districts, schools, or states, they may begin to identify patterns in the transitions and thus develop supports for the students, counselors, and instructional staff tailored to those common patterns.

This recommended protocol focuses on data collection and assessment, with the idea that by tracking certain characteristics of all the students who enroll or leave the school at non-standard times, patterns will start to emerge. Of course, any single student is a unique child with unique family and mobility circumstances. However, using data in this way will actually allow schools to better serve the individual needs of each child by making routine those things which can be systematized, allowing school and district staff to devote time, attention, and energy to the elements of a student's needs that are unique.

TOOL DESCRIPTION

This recommended protocol provides a set of prompts and recommendations for how schools or districts can begin identifying transition patterns. It, then, provides suggestions on how the information could be used to support mobile students.

The tool was developed following brainstorming and prototyping at workshops with education professionals based on their own practices and expressed needs, as well as research into other effective practices.

PRIMARY USERS

District personnel; registrars; data and evaluation specialists; counselors

IMPLEMENTATION CHECKLIST

PRE-IMPLEMENTATION		☐ Student enrollment forms include data field on previous school, district, and state ☐ Student withdrawal process includes collection and recording of data ☐ Student information systems include searchable data on previous school or district/state and withdrawal data
BEFORE MOVE	Sending School	☐ Obtain and record information on location of new school, if available, in student information system
DURING MOVE	Sending School	☐ Obtain and record information on location of new school, if available and not previously provided, in student information system
	Receiving School	☐ During enrollment process, record information on previous school, district, and state
INTRODUCTORY PHASE	Sending School	☐ Obtain and record information on location of new school, if not previously recorded, in student information system ☐ When official transcript request is received, confirm location of new school, district, state
	Receiving School	☐ During enrollment process, record information on previous school, district, and state ☐ Use data to place student and provide proper academic supports
AFTER MOVE	Receiving School	☐ Collect data to identify academic transition patterns among students moving from same schools/districts/or state

IDENTIFYING TRANSITION PATHWAYS

A Recommended Protocol

In schools or districts with high mobility, the continual inflow and outflow of new students can strain the schools, the counselors, and instructional staff. Often each enrolling student is treated as an entirely "new event" even though the school or district may have worked with other new students from that sending school, district, or state numerous times in the past. If school or district personnel are able to identify common patterns, they may be able to better support mobile students and move through their own processes, by more effectively and efficiently interpreting transcripts and awarding credits, placing students in courses and programs, identifying and providing academic and socioemotional support needs.

This recommended protocol provides simple prompts for schools or districts to begin identifying transition patterns and then suggests ways to use that information. Because enrollment practices and student information systems vary widely across the country, the suggestions here, while based on interviews with school personnel from a number of districts of different sizes, should be customized to suit local policies and practices.

1) Identify moments in enrollment/withdrawal processes that could be systematized without sacrificing quality of support

- ☐ Identify what processes are conducted for all new students
- ☐ Identify which documents all students (or families) need to complete, and what information is collected
- ☐ Identify which types of students take longest to acclimate to your school or district and why
- ☐ Identify what processes are conducted for all exiting students
- ☐ What else?

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2) Identify and define what data you want to collect to facilitate more efficient supports for students and families?

- ☐ Determine whether you want information on a new student's previous school, district, and state
- ☐ Assess whether you want to review historical data or only collect new data
- ☐ Identify the other information about the student that you would like to link with information on the previous school, district, or state, such as:
    - ☐ Grade level
    - ☐ Military status
    - ☐ Number of moves and previous locations
    - ☐ Special education status
    - ☐ Homeless, migrant, or foster status
    - ☐ Other
- ☐ Determine whether you want information identifying the new school a withdrawing student enrolls in
- ☐ Determine whether you want to identify patterns about timing, such as
    - ☐ What times during the year students enroll or withdraw
    - ☐ How much preparation time you usually have between learning of a student's enrollment or withdrawal and the day that student arrives or leaves
- ☐ What else?

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3) Review your current data collection tools and compare them to the data you want to collect (school or district enrollment forms/ withdrawal forms and questionnaires, teachers' collection practices, etc.)

- ☐ Review your enrollment forms to determine whether they request the information/data that you want to collect
- ☐ Consider whether your enrollment specialists (registrars, counselors, secretaries, others) have a protocol to confirm that the information is properly entered
- ☐ Determine whether your withdrawal forms collect information on the new school and family's new address
- ☐ Consider whether you have a practice in place to collect transfer information based on transcript requests from schools

4) Meet with your student information and/or information technology teams

- ☐ Identify what information is currently available
    - ☐ Determine whether the school or district already collects information on previous school or district/state for new students
    - ☐ Determine whether that information collected or stored in a searchable format and whether it is consistently entered
    - ☐ If it is, identify a time period and obtain reports on student transitions
    - ☐ If that information is not collected or is not in searchable format, work with the team and enrollment specialists to determine what steps need to be taken to collect or organize the data
- ☐ If appropriate, enlist the student information and/or information technology teams to assist in the development of a reliable protocol to collect and store the identified information
- ☐ Work with the student information and/or information technology teams to determine the most effective and efficient ways to report the identified information

5) Bring together student information/technology teams, enrollment personnel, and instructional coordinators to review and analyze the information

- ☐ Create general guidelines on how to define a pattern
- ☐ Review the collected information, if it already exists, to identify whether there are transition patterns
- ☐ Develop a protocol for reviewing information to update patterns

6) Meet with student support staff and instructional coordinators to review the collected information and evaluate how it can be used

- ☐ Where patterns appear to exist:
  - ☐ Learn more about the emerging patterns: in what ways are they clear and in what ways do they reflect nuance?
    - ☐ Collaborate with instructional staff and student support staff to assess whether there are academic patterns or recognizable curriculum issues linked with the transition patterns
    - ☐ Collaborate with instructional staff, student support staff, and extracurricular staff to assess whether there are socio-emotional or cultural adjustment patterns linked with transition patterns
  - ☐ Consider how patterns illuminate a student's or the school's experience at various stages of the transition process
  - ☐ Formalize contacts and communication practices with common sending schools or districts, including informing them of the transition pattern
  - ☐ Identify practices to help streamline enrollment and the provision of support for students and families who are transferring within an identified pattern
  - ☐ Consider outreach to the state Department of Education and/or developing guidance on credit transfers, if it is common to receive students from a certain state
  - ☐ If the transitioning children are military-connected, inform relevant School Liaison Officer of identified pattern
  - ☐ If the transitioning children are homeless, inform relevant social service agency of identified pattern
  - ☐ If the transition children are migrant, inform common sending state/school or district and discuss potential collaboration
- ☐ If the data do not suggest that there is a pattern of common schools/districts/states for new students or if there is insufficient data
  - ☐ Create general guidelines on what level of transfers would create a pattern
  - ☐ Continue to collect data and develop a protocol to spot check for changes in transition patterns

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: OTHER MOBILE POPULATIONS

Military-connected students are only one of many highly mobile student populations that can benefit from the practices and tools outlined by the CPRL Model. Migrant, homeless, foster, justice-involved, immigrant, and refugee children and youth also face the stresses of high mobility and, further, may be less poised for resiliency than their military-connected peers and therefore may be particularly well-served by improved transition supports. As part of the research for and development of the MOBILITY MITIGATION MODEL. CPRL reviewed literature on these other populations, the particular harm they potentially face in school transitions, and existing practices used to mitigate those effects. The Model and most of the Tools in our Guide can also be used to support non-military mobile populations. Throughout the Guide, we indicate where specific aspects of a tool or analysis might be modified to better address the needs of some of the other mobile student populations. This chart provides an overview of special considerations for schools and districts that serve these other highly mobile student populations. Below the chart are more detailed explorations of some of the areas where schools can provide support for these students, a list of resources, and relevant scholarship for further reading.

OVERVIEW OF OTHER POPULATIONS

POPULATION	MOBILITY DETAILS	UNIQUE RISKS. ASSETS. AND NEEDS	EFFECTIVE MOBILITY-RELATED PRACTICES

MIGRANT STUDENTS	☐ Families of migrant workers move frequently and typically follow the calendar of farming seasons
	☐ Many migrant students start the school year late each year
	☐ Periods out of school for migrant workers' children—who may be working themselves—are often lengthy
	☐ Migrant students may move in and out of one school district multiple times within a school year
		☐ Socioeconomic Status:
		  ☐ Often suffer material or economic hardships that may foundationally impede learning
		☐ Age:
		  ☐ Are often overage due to frequent relocations
		☐ Language:
		  ☐ Are often English Language Learners, bilingual
		  ☐ Often require translated materials and services for family members
		  ☐ May receive less support and assistance schoolwork and navigating school community due to language barriers
		☐ Other Responsibilities:
		  ☐ May work in addition to attending school
			☐ Cultural Competency:
			  ☐ Create a bilingual website and school materials
			  ☐ Hire bilingual staff or offer opportunities for staff to study languages common to families and students
			  ☐ Require professional development that prepares teachers for linguistically diverse classrooms
			  ☐ Require intensive staff training on migrant education program
			  ☐ Design curriculum that celebrates diversity
			☐ Family Support:
			  ☐ Provide educational opportunities—like English as a Second Language (ESL) and high school equivalency classes—for family members

POPULATION	MOBILITY DETAILS	UNIQUE RISKS. ASSETS. AND NEEDS	EFFECTIVE MOBILITY-RELATED PRACTICES
		☐ Often responsible for siblings or other tasks at home while parents work ☐ Home Support: ☐ May live with guardians rather than parents ☐ May have parents or and guardians who are not familiar with the United States education system ☐ Rely on parental or familial support that may manifest differently than support offered by families that are native to the United States ☐ Rely more extensively on support structures beyond immediate family and draw heavily from community ☐ Perspectives on Education: ☐ Families typically place high value on education	☐ Hire and support staff willing to form close bonds with parents ☐ Host support groups for parents ☐ Welcoming Practices: ☐ Foster safe spaces to enable students to form community with other students more quickly ☐ Provide opportunities for students to stay connected with peers after moves, like school-sponsored pen-pal relationships or opportunities to connect on-line ☐ Create student ambassador clubs with students who share similar backgrounds ☐ Data-Informed Practice: ☐ Track data and use data to build relationships and communication practices with staff at schools with high migrant populations
STUDENTS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS AND/OR EXTREME POVERTY	☐ Students experiencing homelessness often move throughout the school year – sometimes several times ☐ The relocations can be sudden and unpredictable ☐ Frequent moves between schools within a district or between districts within a state or region are common ☐ Living situations vary and include temporary housing such as a shelter, staying with family members or friends, motels, or no shelter	☐ Socioeconomic Status: ☐ Often suffer persistent and extreme material or economic hardships that may foundationally impede learning ☐ Trauma, Racism, and Mental Health: ☐ Frequently have experienced trauma ☐ May have significant mental health issues as a result of trauma ☐ May externalize mental health conditions through behavior like drug abuse and self-harm ☐ Social Stigma: ☐ Often experience social stigma attached to poverty and homelessness that may	☐ Flexibility with Requirements: ☐ Acknowledge the challenges of homelessness and avoid punitive repercussions for affected students ☐ Be flexible around residency verification and identification ☐ Allow partial credit accrual for mid-semester moves ☐ Strong Relationships with Community: ☐ Accurately identify students through strong relationships with social service agencies in the community ☐ Foster strong school connections with community stakeholders

POPULATION	MOBILITY DETAILS	UNIQUE RISKS. ASSETS. AND NEEDS	EFFECTIVE MOBILITY-RELATED PRACTICES
		impede building healthy, open social relationships ☐ Parental Involvement: ☐ May have parents or other family members overburdened with tasks related to basic survival and thus unable to engage actively with school ☐ May not have supervisory family members to help them enroll and stay engaged in school ☐ Academics: ☐ Experience high mobility, truancy, mental health issues, and school discontinuity that can severely impact foundational academic skills and knowledge ☐ Are often at high risk of academic frustration, disengagement, and eventual withdrawal ☐ Resiliency and Grit: ☐ With appropriate support, may develop exceptional ability to persist in the face of adversity	☐ Alternative Credit Options: ☐ Offer summer programming ☐ Offer and promote online courses and digital learning tools ☐ Appropriate Staffing and Training: ☐ Require regular staff training on McKinney-Vento regulations ☐ Make homeless liaisons available at schools ☐ Transportation: ☐ Build a strong transportation infrastructure to support children who commute longer distances to maintain school stability
COURT-INVOLVED STUDENTS	☐ Court-involved students experience two dimensions of mobility: ☐ Between schools in juvenile justice institutions ☐ Between schools in juvenile justice institutions or prison and traditional schools upon release ☐ Mobility varies greatly depending on length and degree of involvement with justice system	☐ Socioeconomic Status: ☐ Come disproportionately from low income backgrounds ☐ Costs of court processes may further disadvantage families ☐ Trauma, Racism, and Mental Health: ☐ Have high incidence of trauma before incarceration ☐ Early exposure to systemic and institutionalized racism, race-related	☐ Interagency Cooperation: ☐ Encourage interagency cooperation between traditional school, school in corrections facility, court agencies, and relevant social services to ensure quick reintegration into schools ☐ Alternative Credit Options: ☐ Allow for student choice in decision making regarding school options

POPULATION	MOBILITY DETAILS	UNIQUE RISKS. ASSETS. AND NEEDS	EFFECTIVE MOBILITY-RELATED PRACTICES
	☐ Most incarcerated youth return to their communities after incarceration ☐ Incarcerated youth disproportionally live in high-poverty neighborhoods where residential mobility is high and often have experienced or will experience school moves before and after incarceration	trauma based in part on disproportionate incarceration of Black and Hispanic children ☐ Often have high instance of untreated mental and behavioral disorders stemming in part from exposure to trauma ☐ Social Stigma: ☐ Experience severe social stigma attached to incarceration ☐ Move Frequency: ☐ Move frequently between correctional and traditional schools with little or no notice ☐ Experience difficult transition between life inside correctional institutions and to life outside ☐ Academics: ☐ Experience high incidence of developmental and learning disabilities ☐ Typically enter correctional classrooms significantly behind the average expected performance of students their age ☐ Majority never return to traditional schools upon release ☐ Educational Intervention: ☐ May receive intervention through appropriately supportive educational services within and outside of prisons and increase chance of success across the lifespan ☐ Resiliency and Grit: ☐ With appropriate support, may develop exceptional ability to persist in the face of adversity	☐ Include credit recovery and GED options for returning students ☐ Offer online coursework, including online syllabi to allow students to have access to the entire course in case of moves ☐ Robust Counseling and Support: ☐ Provide intensive academic and social case-management services for up to a year post release ☐ Provide opportunities to develop social capital through mentorships with adults ☐ Strong Community Ties: ☐ Design protocols to keep students connected with home, school, social life, and schoolwork during incarceration ☐ Encourage continued involvement of parents and support networks in student's academic life during and after incarceration ☐ Peer Support: ☐ Design peer mentoring activities ☐ Data-Informed Practice: ☐ Collect data on transition patterns in order to build communication between schools and facilities and to better support the students

POPULATION	MOBILITY DETAILS	UNIQUE RISKS. ASSETS. AND NEEDS	EFFECTIVE MOBILITY-RELATED PRACTICES

IMMIGRANT AND REFUGEE STUDENTS	☐ Immigrant and refugee students may move with less frequency than other highly mobile student groups
	☐ Experiences before move are often highly traumatic, exacerbating the risks of school mobility
	☐ Students may face significant cultural barriers
		☐ Socioeconomic Status:
		  ☐ Often suffer material or economic hardships that may foundationally impede learning
		☐ Acculturative Stress:
		  ☐ Often experience stress, depression, anxiety frequent and culture shock as student adjusts to new environment
		  ☐ Integration into new community lower priority for involuntary immigrants
		☐ Language:
		  ☐ Are often English Language Learners, multilingual
		  ☐ Family members may require translated materials and services
		  ☐ Family members may be less able to assist with schoolwork due to language barriers
		☐ Trauma, Racism, and Mental Health:
		  ☐ May have experienced severe trauma and material hardship related to conflict in their home country
		  ☐ Often experience labeling, stereotyping, and racism upon relocation; often relocate to racially homogenous locales in which they are classified as outsiders
		  ☐ Experience high incidence of post-traumatic stress and untreated mental and behavioral disorders
		  ☐ May be fearful or distrustful of authority figures, including teachers
		☐ Home Support:
			☐ Interagency cooperation:
			  ☐ Build on connections between local, national, and international organizations involved in educating refugee children
			☐ Socioemotional Support:
			  ☐ Provide extensive counseling and supportive programming in schools
			☐ Community Integration:
			  ☐ Host programming that integrates recent immigrants into the broader school community
			  ☐ Design ESL programs for families that are integrated with non-ESL programs when possible
			☐ Academic Support:
			  ☐ Be flexible in classroom assignments to help children make up lost years of schooling while still providing interactions with peers their own age
			  ☐ Celebrate diversity
			☐ Community Partnerships:
			  ☐ Foster strong ties with community organizations that can offer students and families support

POPULATION	MOBILITY DETAILS	UNIQUE RISKS. ASSETS. AND NEEDS	EFFECTIVE MOBILITY-RELATED PRACTICES
		☐ May have support structures that extend beyond immediate family to draw heavily from community ☐ May have support that manifests differently than support offered by families native to the United States ☐ May live with guardians rather than parents ☐ May have parents or guardians who are more familiar with education systems outside of the United States ☐ Perspectives on Education: ☐ Place high value on education	
STUDENTS IN FOSTER CARE	☐ Students in foster care experience extremely high incidence of school transfer throughout childhood and adolescence ☐ Highly mobile foster children often miss large portions of the school year as they move between different foster living situations or between foster and biological or adoptive parents ☐ Relocations are often sudden and unpredictable, frequently occurring mid-semester	☐ Socioeconomic Status: o Often have suffered material or economic hardships that may foundationally impede learning ☐ Trauma, Racism, and Mental Health: o Frequently have experienced some form of trauma o Often have untreated mental and behavioral disorders as a result of trauma ☐ Social Stigma: o Have often experienced severe social stigma attached to foster care ☐ Academics: o Often experience high mobility, truancy, mental health issues, and school discontinuity that severely impact foundational academic skills and knowledge	☐ Transportation: ☐ Follow federal guidelines to cover transportation costs for students after a move so students can continue attending the same school ☐ Interagency Cooperation: ☐ Foster increased cooperation between foster care agencies and schools, particularly in regard to record transfer ☐ Include educators on intake teams to explain records and provide additional assessment as needed ☐ Expansion of statewide data collection and monitoring systems: ☐ Ensure consistency of record keeping to make sure schools have adequate information when student transfers ☐ Flexibility with Requirements:

POPULATION	MOBILITY DETAILS	UNIQUE RISKS. ASSETS. AND NEEDS	EFFECTIVE MOBILITY-RELATED PRACTICES
		○ At high risk of academic frustration, disengagement, and eventual withdrawal ☐ Health: ○ Often suffer from poor physical health ☐ Parental Involvement: ○ May have limited parent or guardian involvement in academic and school life because of temporary or transitory relationships ☐ "A Fresh Start:" ○ New school or setting may give student chance to "start over" and distance self from past traumas or disappointments ☐ Resiliency and Grit: ☐ With appropriate support, may develop exceptional ability to persist in the face of adversity	☐ Remain flexible with enrollment requirements ☐ Allow partial credit accrual for mid-semester moves if possible ☐ Appropriate Staffing and Training: ☐ Appoint educational liaisons to help students navigate the enrollment and withdrawal processes if guardians are unavailable ☐ Host professional development on new ESSA requirements for schools serving foster children and youth

MODIFYING THE GUIDE TO SERVE OTHER POPULATIONS

To optimize the impact of the Guide's effective practices as they are modified or used to support other mobile populations, school and district leaders and other practitioners should strategically assess which practices in the Model and Toolkit should be prioritized and which contextual adjustments may be necessary when serving other mobile populations. This discussion addresses some of the key areas of challenge for schools and districts supporting other mobile students.

IDENTIFICATION, STIGMA, & SUPPORTIVE PRACTICES

A foundational aspect of offering appropriate supports to students is EARLY IDENTIFICATION OF MOBILITY STATUS. However, some highly-mobile populations may be reluctant to share their status upon arrival at a new school for a variety of reasons. Most high-mobility populations face ingrained and ubiquitous social stigmas (Kidd, 2007; Kirk & Sampson, 2014) that make early identification and the implementation of supportive practices crucial but potentially hard to trigger. Seeking to avoid prejudice associated with homelessness or justice-involvement, for example, families may choose to conceal their status from school authority figures (Abamu, 2017; Kirk & Sampson, 2014). In cases where a child is undocumented or is living with an undocumented parent or family member, concealing immigration status may in fact be critical to family stability and safety (Wald, et al., 2017). Legally and ethically, the preferences of the family must be honored in all situations.

In the long term, the IDENTIFICATION AND DATA TRACKING OF MOBILE STUDENTS may enable the improvement of school services by unveiling the existence of patterns within student mobility by allowing schools that often share students to develop communication protocols and more quickly implement academic and socioemotional supports. It may also facilitate improved identification of students, thus allowing the school or district to provide targeted support. For instance, the Migrant Student Record Exchange (MSIX) is an information exchange system that supports students whose parents are migrant workers and the schools that serve them in part by providing explicit tools for identifying the students as they move from district to district. Additionally, the Migrant Interstate Cooperative Program provides supports for migrant students who are based in Texas but often attend school elsewhere for at least part of the year.

Nurturing an immediately INCLUSIVE AND WELCOMING CLIMATE for all new families is especially essential to creating a space where families feel comfortable sharing their mobility status. Schools are better able to serve mobile students and families if details about mobility status are available. Cultivating a safe and inclusive school culture may also help families and students feel more comfortable being open about their life at home. School leaders should sponsor MANDATORY CULTURAL COMPETENCY TRAININGS to better equip staff to identify and support the mobile sub-groups they interact with most often at their school. Further, schools should actively recruit and hire staff with backgrounds similar to the students and families they serve; often, contact with a relatable school official can make families feel more comfortable sharing important information. The confidentiality of this information is essential for all students, but should be noted particularly when designing protocols for practices that will include more vulnerable highly mobile student groups.

COMMUNITY & SCHOOL CONNECTION

Research also suggests that CLOSE RELATIONSHIPS WITH FACULTY AND STAFF may serve as lifelines for students facing instability outside of school. Generally, because military families by definition include at least one consistently employed head of household, they tend to have greater access to the economic and material resources—e.g.

steady income streams, housing, high-quality healthcare, childcare, and tuition assistance—that support home stability than other highly mobile groups (Hosek & Wadsworth, 2013). As such, when supporting other mobile populations who may not have similar stability at home, schools should take particular care to enhance elements of the Model and Tools that will connect non-military mobile families with needed supportive resources whether school-based or in the community. Non-military mobile student groups would benefit from CLOSER TIES BETWEEN SCHOOLS AND COMMUNITY SUPPORT ORGANIZATIONS, much as military-connected students and families benefit from strong ties between schools and the military installation. Districts should work actively to open communication with the government agencies, local social service providers, housing organizations, state and federal juvenile justice institutions, and child welfare organizations that mobile students interact with and receive support from outside of the classroom (Mendenhall, Russell, & Buckner, 2017; Taylor & Ravinder, 2012; Gibson & Hidalgo, 2009; Risler & O'Rourke, 2009; Zetlin, Weinberg, & Luderer, 2006). To reach their full potential, children—and their parents or guardians—must be deeply nurtured and supported holistically. Schools simply do not have the resources to do the work alone, which makes partnerships essential.

ENROLLMENT & WITHDRAWAL PROCESSES

From an administrative perspective, the difficulties highly mobile students face with respect to enrollment at a new school are remarkably similar across populations. All mobile students will benefit from efforts to INSTITUTIONALIZE AND STANDARDIZE PROCESSES that will expedite enrollment, prevent gaps in student records, and facilitate their efficient transfer. Establishing STUDENT PORTFOLIO SYSTEMS may simplify this process (Astor et al., 2017). Nevertheless, the practices recommended in this Guide will require adjustment if schools and districts are to support non-military mobile populations fully in response to school transitions.

In some cases, facilitating smooth enrollment (including record transfer and other practices detailed in the Toolkit) will involve FORGING CONNECTIONS WITH EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS OUTSIDE OF THE TRADITIONAL PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM. If a school serves a high volume of justice-involved youth, for example, it may be necessary to build bridges with the juvenile justice institutions through which a high volume of students have passed. Research suggests that the dearth of communication between traditional schools and educational institutions in youth prisons contributes to the high school disengagement rates of formerly-incarcerated youth (Geib et al., 2011); as such, the hard work of building these relationships has the potential to significantly affect educational outcomes.

All mobile populations will benefit from the design of USER-FRIENDLY PROCESSES—like an accessible portfolio system—that make it simple for both educators and guardians to access student records. For some mobile students, however, access to records can present particularly complex challenges. While federal law requires that schools enroll foster children and homeless children even when paperwork is unavailable, schools may struggle to place these students appropriately without the proper documentation. School records for foster children can be particularly hard to track down as responsibility for the child is transferred between agencies and guardians (Zetlin, Weinberg, & Shea 2006). While it is often recommended that military parents hand-carry back-up records, foster children often will not have a consistent guardian to do so, making the development of robust school data transfer systems and flexible standards of access to such documentation especially essential. Such portfolio systems are not without precedent. Migrant students, for example, have benefitted immensely from the Migrant Student Record Exchange (MSIX), which provides electronic access to school records even as families cross state lines.

CLASSROOM AND INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES

Perhaps most importantly, upon transfer, schools should strive to IDENTIFY STUDENT ACADEMIC NEEDS as quickly as is feasible. This process is particularly crucial for economically and racially marginalized mobile students who are at higher risk of academic disengagement than their military-connected peers (Popp, Grant, & Stronge, 2011).

Teachers play an incredibly important role in ensuring student success by balancing both emotional needs and academic needs (Popp, Grant, & Stronge, 2011). CONSISTENTLY ASSESSING STUDENT SKILLS and appropriately DIFFERENTIATING INSTRUCTION and assignments to account for gaps in knowledge is essential for highly mobile students who have often spent a great deal of time out of school (Popp, Grant, & Stronge, 2011). Similarly, teachers should plan to give new students EXTRA TUTORIAL TIME, either personally or with the help of teaching assistants or school volunteers (Vacca, 2008). Finally, engaging in CULTURALLY SUSTAINING PEDAGOGY (Ladston-Billings, 2014) and adjusting curriculum to include culturally-relevant and engaging content (Popp, Grant, & Stronge, 2011) are practices instructional leaders can use to not only integrate mobile students into their new learning environment but also to lay the groundwork for caring, responsive relationships.

SOCIAL CONNECTION

Highly mobile students will require support in a variety of types of social connections.

The DEVELOPMENT OF ADULT CONNECTIONS is especially critical for mobile children—like those in foster care—who may not have an abundance of consistent relationships with adults in other areas of their lives (Ahrens, et al. 2001). Teachers and administrators should be particularly cognizant of creating classroom spaces where mobile students feel safe and supported (Popp, Grant, & Stronge, 2011).

Similarly, schools should actively foster SPACES FOR PEER CONNECTION, a particularly important intervention for mobile populations whose relationships at home may be inconsistent. While school-wide awareness efforts—equivalent to the Month of the Military Child for military-connected youth—may serve to further isolate more stigmatized mobile student populations, TARGETED INCLUSION STRATEGIES in the weeks after a move can be the difference between social alienation and successful integration. SCHOOL NAVIGATION BUDDIES during the first weeks of school, lunch tables hosted by student council representatives, and "SAFE ZONES" for after-school activities such as homework help can help mobile students connect with friends (Astor et al., 2017). Schools should take particular care to ensure that students who are members of socially marginalized groups feel empowered to seek out extracurricular activities that will provide them with built-in support networks (Astor et al., 2017).

RESOURCE LIST

COLLABORATIONS

Building Successful Collaborations: Ten Principles of Sustainable Partnerships

STUDENTS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS

TOOLS

EDUCATION LAW CENTER: Toolkit for Parents and Providers

FAMILY SERVICE PROVIDER NETWORK: Promising Practices for Agencies Serving Homeless Students

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE EDUCATION OF HOMELESS CHILDREN AND YOUTH: College Access for Students Experiencing Homelessness

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF STATE DIRECTORS OF SPECIAL EDUCATION: Homeless and Special Education Administrative Collaboration

NATIONAL CENTER FOR HOMELESS EDUCATION: McKinney-Vento Toolbox

NATIONAL CENTER FOR HOMELESS EDUCATION: Housing and Education Collaborations to Serve Homeless Children, Youth, and Families

NATIONAL CENTER FOR HOMELESS EDUCATION: Supporting School Success for Homeless Children of Veterans and Military Service Members

NATIONAL CENTER FOR HOMELESS EDUCATION: The Educational Rights of Children and Youth Experiencing Homelessness: What Service Providers Need to Know

RECOMMENDED TEXTS

Cunningham, M., Harwood, P., and Hall, S. (2010). Residential instability and the McKinney-Vento Homeless Children and Education Program: What we know, plus gaps in research. New Jersey: Urban Institute.

Masten, Ann S., et al. (2015). Educating homeless and highly mobile students: Implications of research on risk and resilience. *School Psychology Review, 44,* 315-330.

Miller, P. (2011). An examination of the McKinney-Vento Act and its influence on the homeless education situation. *Educational Policy, 25*, 424-450.

COURT-INVOLVED STUDENTS

TOOLS

CHILDREN'S ACTION CORPS: "Student-First" Approach: A Paradigm Shift for Professionals Working with Children and Young People Involved with the Juvenile Justice System

COUNCIL FOR A STRONG AMERICA: Juvenile Justice Practitioners' Toolkit

NATIONAL TECHNICAL ASSISTNCE CENTER FOR THE EDUCATION OF NEGLECTED OR DELINQUENT CHILDREN OR YOUTH: Transition Toolkit 3.0: Meeting the Educational Needs of Youth Exposed to the Juvenile Justice System

NATIONAL TECHNICAL ASSISTNCE CENTER FOR THE EDUCATION OF NEGLECTED OR DELINQUENT CHILDREN OR YOUTH: Improving Educational Outcomes for Youth in the Juvenile Justice and Child Welfare Systems through Interagency Communication and Collaboration. Practice Guide

US DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION: Educational Pathways for Youth Transitioning from Juvenile Justice Facilities

US DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION: Improving Outcomes for Youth With Disabilities in Juvenile Corrections

RECOMMENDED TEXTS

Cavendish, W. (2014). Academic attainment during commitment and postrelease education–related outcomes of juvenile justice-involved youth with and without disabilities. *Journal of emotional and behavioral disorders, 22*(1), 41-52.

Geib, C. F., Chapman, J. F., D'Amaddio, A. H., & Grigorenko, E. L. (2011). The education of juveniles in detention: Policy considerations and infrastructure development. *Learning and Individual Differences*, *21*(1), 3-11.

Nemoy, Y. (2013) *Promoting postsecondary success of court-involved youth: Lessons from the NYEC postsecondary success pilot*. National Youth Employment Coalition.

Risler, E., & O'Rourke, T. (2009). Thinking exit at entry: Exploring outcomes of Georgia's juvenile justice educational programs. *Journal of Correctional Education*, 225-239.

MIGRANT STUDENTS

TOOLS

PENNSYLVANIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION: Pennsylvania Migrant Education Program Toolkit

EDUCATION WORLD: Meeting the Educational Needs of Migrant Students

COLORIN COLORADO: Migrant Students: What We Need to Know to Help Them Succeed

RECOMMENDED TEXTS

Branz-Spall, A. M., Rosenthal, R., & Wright, A. (2003). Children of the road: Migrant students, our nation's most mobile population. *Journal of Negro Education*, 55-62.

Free, J. L., Križ, K., & Konecnik, J. (2014). Harvesting hardships: Educators' views on the challenges of migrant students and their consequences on education. *Children and Youth Services Review, 47*, 187-197.

Garza, E., Trueba, E. T., & Reyes, P. (2015). *Resiliency and success: Migrant children in the US*. New York: Routledge.

Gibson, M. A., & Hidalgo, N. D. (2009). Bridges to success in high school for migrant youth. *Teachers College Record, 111*(3), 683-711.

Lundy-Ponce, G. (2010). Migrant students: What we need to know to help them succeed. LD online: The Educators' Guide to Learning Disabilities and ADHD.

STUDENTS IN FOSTER CARE

TOOLS

US DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION: Foster Care Transition Toolkit

LEGAL CENTER FOR FOSTER CARE AND EDUCATION: Blueprint for Change

ALLIANCE FOR CHILDREN'S RIGHTS: Foster Youth Education Toolkit

FOSTER CLUB: For Students Aging Out of Foster Care: Transition Toolkit

RECOMMENDED TEXTS

Conger, D., & Finkelstein, M. J. (2003). Foster care and school mobility. *Journal of Negro Education,* 97-103.

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STUDENTS WHO HAVE IMMIGRATED

TOOLS

ACLU: FAQ for Educators of Immigrant Children in Public Schools

THE INSTITUTE FOR EDUCATION AND SOCIAL POLICY (NYU): Race, Immigration, and Poverty

PENNSYLVANIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION: Education Access Toolkit for Undocumented Students

THE OFFICE OF FAMILY AND COMMUNIY ENGAGEMENT: Supporting Immigrant And Refugee Students And Families

UNITED WE DREAM: Here to Stay Toolkit

US DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION: Newcomer Toolkit

RECOMMENDED TEXTS

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