

# Immigrant / Refugee / Asylee / Migrant

Great diversity exists within our population. Various terms help us better understand and serve the students we teach, but in no way do mere terms define them. We recognize and respect the sheer depth of diversity in the community and encourage our teachers to take the time to get to know an individual student's background to inform instruction.

**Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CLD)** – CLD students are those whose culture or language differ from that of the dominant group in the larger community.

**Immigrant** – Immigrants are people who settle in a country where they were not born. Harrisonburg has a relatively low number of immigrants in our schools. Approximately 60% of our ELLs were actually born in the United States. Puerto Rico is a U.S. territory and therefore Puerto Ricans are U.S. citizens. Students are only identified as immigrants for fiscal purposes for three years. Children of immigrants may have spent little or no time in their parents' countries of origin, but may be very heavily influenced by their parents' primary culture(s). Some of our immigrant families travel frequently to their home country.

**Refugee** – Refugees are defined as people unwilling or unable to return to their country of origin because of persecution or a well-founded fear of persecution on account of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion. Once they have fled to a neighboring country, refugees are interviewed by staff of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) to determine their status. Those who meet the established criteria are documented as refugees and allowed to remain in that country, usually in a refugee camp. Then they wait for many months, even years, for a solution to their situation. Some refugees return to the home country or stay in the country to which they have fled. Resettlement in a third country is considered for those who cannot return home and cannot be integrated in the second country to which they fled. Resettlement is an option for less than one percent of the world's refugees.

Each year, the President of the United States establishes the U.S. refugee admissions ceiling in consultation with Congress and the State Department. Candidates must be interviewed and screened thoroughly by the U.S. State Department and by the Department of Homeland Security's Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services. Those approved for admission are allocated among 10 U.S. voluntary resettlement agencies. The placement cities and numbers of refugees are proposed annually by each of those agencies, and are subject to approval by the U.S. Department of State. Each national voluntary agency maintains a network of affiliate refugee resettlement agencies in various U.S. cities. There are more than 450 local faith-based and other resettlement agencies operating throughout the country that receive referrals from the national agencies and coordinate the resettlement of refugees in local communities.

**Asylee** – Asylum seekers must be in the United States or applying for admission at a port of entry, rather than from a third country. They, like refugees, are persons who are unable or unwilling to return to the home country because of persecution or well-sounded fear of persecution.

**Migrant** – Migrants are persons age 3 to 21 who have not yet graduated from high school nor obtained a GED and have moved from one school district to another in the past 3 years to enable the child or a parent, guardian, or spouse to seek or obtain agricultural or fishing work. This work must be temporary or seasonal and it must play an important part in providing a living for the worker and his or her family. In the Harrisonburg/Rockingham County area, this includes some workers with certain poultry shifts and positions.