

3-8 Newcomer English Program



for
Limited English Proficient
students

August 2011

What students does the Newcomer Program serve?

The program serves level 1 English Language Learners who have been in U.S. schools for 1 year or less who have very limited to no English language skills.

How are students placed in the Newcomer Program?

The decision to enroll a student in the Newcomer Program is made on a case by case basis considering:

- length of time in U.S. schools
- English proficiency level determined by the placement tests given at the Welcome Center or the school
- sociocultural and educational background in native country
- sociocultural and educational background while enrolled in U.S. schools

How is the Newcomer Program different from other language support programs?

- The Newcomer program is a self-contained classroom. This enables the teacher to focus on cohesive language development goals throughout the school day.

The self-contained classroom also offers a nurturing, yet challenging

- environment that fosters risk-taking to accelerate language learning.
- Instructional themes center on the U.S. culture, acclimation to the U.S. school system, academic study skills, and social language skills needed to communicate with English speaking peers and teachers.
- Students receive individual attention from expert ESL teachers in a small group rather than in a large class.

What are the instructional goals of the program?

The Newcomer teachers teach social and academic language through the four content areas. Instruction is hands-on and interactive. This program is not meant to be a permanent placement for the academic year, but rather a transitional program meant to facilitate the rapid acquisition of basic English language skills.

The program prepares students for their grade level content classes and mainstream electives by:

- developing students' essential basic English language listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills.
- assisting students with acculturation to U.S. schools, community, and culture.
- developing students' school study and social skills.

How are students graded?

Students receive a progress report every 9 weeks. The report includes topics centered around the instructional themes.

When will the newcomer students interact with native English speakers?

Newcomer students join English speaking peers for physical education, lunch, and elective classes such as art, music and computer. Some students may join other classrooms for math.

How long is a student in the Newcomer Program?

The decision to exit a student from the Newcomer Program is made on a case by case basis considering teacher observations, formal and informal student assessments, and the student's portfolio of class work. We consider the whole learner, as well as the levels of support available at the home schools. The student transitions into his grade level classes with continued language support through sheltered instruction.

A student can remain in the program up to 12 months from his or her arrival date if needed. Each transition is as unique as each of our learners.

Where is the Newcomer Program?

The 3-4 program is located at Smithland Elementary School and the 5-8 program is located at Skyline Middle School. All eligible newcomer students in the division are bused to these locations to participate in the program. When students meet the social and instructional goals they transition to their home school to join other language support programs.

Smithland Elementary School
474 Linda Lane
Harrisonburg, VA 22802
540-434-6075

Skyline Middle School
470 Linda Lane
Harrisonburg, VA 22802
540-434-6862

For more information contact:

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How can parents help their children learn English?

Research shows that children who are literate in their first language perform much better in school than children who are not literate in their first language. Parents should continue to interact with their children in their first language and to encourage them to become bilingual.

- **Talk with your child about school in your language.**
- **Read to your child in your language.**
- **Ask your child to read to you in English and expect your child to read every day.**
- **Tell your child stories in your language.**
- **Encourage your child to complete homework assignments.**
- **Encourage your child to read and write in your language.**