

Global Migration and Local Integration: Government Efforts to Integrate Immigrants in Houston, Seattle, and Raleigh

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Acronyms

ACS	American Community Survey
BOCs	Bilingual Orientation Centers
DHIC	Downtown Housing Improvement Coalition
ELL	English Language Learner
ESL	English as a Second Language
GED	General Education Development
GLAD	Guided Language Acquisition Design
HACA	Housing Authority for the City of Austin
HATC	Housing Authority of Travis County
HCCDD	Harris County Community and Development Department
HCDD	City of Houston Housing and Community Development Department
HCHA	Harris County Housing Authority
HEP	High School Equivalent Program
HHA	City of Houston Housing Authority
HISD	Houston Independent School District
HUD	US Department of Housing and Urban Development
IDHA	International District Housing Alliance
IRC	Seattle International Rescue Committee
LEP	Limited English Proficient
LIHI	Low Income Housing Institution
LPACs	Language Proficiency Assessment Committees
MOIRA	City of Houston Mayor's Office of Immigrant and Refugee Affairs
NCLB	No Child Left Behind
OED	Seattle Office of Economic Development
SIOP	Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol
SOH	Seattle Office of Housing
SPL	Seattle Public Library
SPS	Seattle Public Schools
TANF	Temporary Assistance for Needy Families
TELPAS	Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System
WCPSS	Wake County Public School System
WIA	Workforce Investment Act of 1998
WLPT	Washington Language Proficiency Test

Preface

This report was prepared for the Migration Policy Institute in Washington, DC as part of a semester-long, graduate-level policy workshop at Princeton University's Woodrow Wilson School of International Affairs. The opinions expressed in this report are solely those of the authors.

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Executive Summary

Since the late 1980s, nearly one million immigrants, on average, have moved to the United States each year. While the proportion of the US population born abroad was higher at the turn of the 20th century than it is today, the absolute size and magnitude of growth of the foreign-born population in the United States over the past 20 years is unprecedented.

These trends are more than just interesting facts. They are transforming towns and cities across the United States. And with the federal government unable to implement effective immigrant admissions policies, let alone take on a greater role in helping immigrants to adjust to life after they arrive, states and localities are increasingly passing laws and regulations related to immigrant integration.

This report seeks to further the understanding of local policy responses to immigration as a step toward improving future policy. We look at how three cities—Houston, Texas; Seattle, Washington; and Raleigh, North Carolina—are handling issues of immigrant integration in the area of K-12 education and through immigrant-specific initiatives that are horizontal in nature such that they involve multiple agencies and departments and touch multiple policy areas. We also touch briefly on immigrant integration policies related to housing and workforce development. Based on these case studies, we then try to draw some general conclusions about how to think more systematically about evaluating policies and programs related to immigrant integration.

We find that all three cities are implementing policies and programs that aim to integrate immigrants into their communities, but the resources devoted to these efforts and how these efforts are structured varies considerably. Our research does not address the implementation or impact of policies and programs to integrate immigrants, but this is an important next step for research. We suggest the standard program evaluation tool of the logic model as a framework for evaluating immigrant integration policies and programs and offer a short example of how this framework could be applied to evaluate a school district's policies and programs related to immigrant integration.

We conclude by offering some thoughts on best practices, supported by our research. These include having staff who are knowledgeable about immigrant issues, speak multiple languages, and represent various cultural backgrounds; dedicating staff to the development and coordination of internal policies and practices related to immigrant integration; training staff to work with immigrant populations and to understand policies and procedures related to immigrants; providing translation and interpretation services; partnering with community-based organizations; and setting up mechanisms for monitoring and evaluation.

INTRODUCTION

The demographic trends are striking. From 1955 to 1975, an average of 330,000 legal immigrants entered the United States each year. Over the next decade, this number rose to about 525,000 immigrants annually. Since the late 1980s, however, nearly one million immigrants, on average, have moved to the United States each year.¹ While the proportion of the U.S. population born abroad was higher at the turn of the 20th century than it is today, the absolute size (nearly

¹ These numbers refer only to legal permanent residents, and do not include persons on temporary visas or unauthorized immigrants. Office of Immigration Statistics. Department of Homeland Security. *Yearbook of Immigration Statistics: 2006*. September 2007.

38 million people²) and magnitude of growth of the foreign-born population in the United States over the past 20 years is unprecedented.

The geography of immigration to the United States has also shifted dramatically in recent years, both in terms of where immigrants come from and where they choose to settle. In 1960, roughly three-quarters of the US foreign-born population was from Europe; in 2000, three-quarters of those born abroad were from Latin America or Asia.³ And while new immigrants continue to settle in the traditional receiving states of Texas, California, New York, and New Jersey, they are also moving in large numbers to states with relatively little previous experience with international migration, such as South Carolina, Nevada, and Georgia (which ranked second, third, and fourth as the states with the largest % growth in their foreign-born populations between 2000 and 2006).⁴

Finally, the number of unauthorized immigrants in the United States has risen substantially in recent years. An estimated 11.6 million unauthorized immigrants were living in the United States as of January 2006, with well over one-third of these immigrants having entered the United States within the preceding five years.⁵

But these trends are more than just interesting facts. They are transforming towns and cities across the United States. And with the federal government unable to implement effective immigrant admissions policies, let alone take on a greater role in helping immigrants to adjust to life after they arrive, states and localities are increasingly passing laws and regulations related to immigrant integration. State legislatures in all 50 states considered 1,562 pieces of legislation related to immigrants in 2007, and 244 of these bills became law, a threefold increase over the number of bills considered and enacted in 2006.⁶ Of course, not all state and city policies aim to facilitate immigrant incorporation into the community; in many cases, the intent is to discourage the integration of immigrants, particularly in the case of immigrants without legal documentation.

This report seeks to further the understanding of local policy responses to immigration as a step toward improving policy in the future. We look at how three cities—Houston, Texas; Seattle, Washington; and Raleigh, North Carolina—are handling issues of immigrant integration in the area of K-12 education and through immigrant-specific horizontal initiatives. We also touch briefly on immigrant integration policies related to housing and workforce development in the three cities in Appendix 1. Based on these case studies, we then try to draw some general conclusions about how to think more systematically about evaluating policies and programs related to immigrant integration.

2 American Community Survey. US Census Bureau. 2006.

3 MPI Data Hub. "Foreign-born Population by Region of Birth As a percentage of the Total Foreign-born Population for the United States: 1960 to 2000." <http://www.migrationinformation.org/datahub/charts/fb.2.shtml>

4 MPI Data Hub. "States Ranked by % Change in the Foreign-born Population: 1990, 2000, 2005." <http://www.migrationinformation.org/datahub/acscensus.cfm>

5 Hoefer, Michael, Nancy Rytina, and Christopher Campbell. "Estimates of the Unauthorized Immigrant Population Residing in the United States: January 2006." Office of Immigration Statistics. Department of Homeland Security. August 2007.

6 National Conference of State Legislators. *2007 Enacted State Legislation Related to Immigrants and Immigration*. 29 November 2007.

Executive Summary

We focus on K-12 education because it represents the largest expenditure of local governments (close to 40% of local budgets, on average)⁷ and because it is one of the most essential areas in terms of immigrant integration. Ensuring that immigrant children have the skills necessary to succeed and be engaged in a larger community is fundamental and we posit that local government initiatives are essential in creating opportunities to engage these immigrant initiatives. This is not always easy as local government initiatives related to immigrant integration are often necessarily horizontal in nature—meaning that they must involve multiple departments in the bureaucracy and span multiple policy areas.

Because our primary interest is in public policy, we focus only on government involvement in immigrant integration. While non-governmental organizations (NGOs) spearhead many innovative efforts to assist immigrants, we address NGO programs only to the extent that they are publicly funded.

The report is divided into four sections. The first section discusses terminology and methodology and provides an overview of the cities in the study. The second section outlines local government policies and programs related to immigrant integration in the area of K-12 education. The third section reviews broad government initiatives that are immigrant-specific, such as the Houston Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs. A final section identifies next steps for research and offers some general thoughts on methods for evaluating the effectiveness of local policies. The report also includes an appendix that provides a synopsis of immigrant integration measures related to education and housing in the three cities.

⁷ Lee, Robert D., Jr., et al. *Public Budgeting Systems*. 8th edition. Sudbury, MA: Jones and Bartlett, 2008: 48.

SECTION I: TERMINOLOGY, METHODOLOGY, AND CITY OVERVIEWS

The term “immigrant” can mean many things. For the purposes of this report, we employ a broad definition of immigrant, using the term to refer to first and second generation immigrants. First generation immigrants are individuals who were born outside the United States, while second generation immigrants are individuals who were born in the United States but are the children of first generation immigrants.

We generally make no distinction between an individual who is lawfully present in the United States—through naturalized citizenship, permanent residence, student visa, or other legal status—or is unlawfully in the United States. An exception to this is when immigration status relates directly to a program or policy in our study, such as in the case of programs for refugees or federal housing programs that expressly prohibit the participation of unauthorized immigrants.

We also focus on limited English proficient (LEP) individuals. It is important to note that not all LEP individuals are foreign-born. However, because most LEP individuals meet our broad definition of immigrant and because information on LEP populations is often easier to obtain than information on the foreign-born, we devote significant attention to the LEP population.

Immigrant integration, the central theme of our study, can be a nebulous term. We use the definition put forward by Rinus Penninx based on his earlier work with Hans Vermeulen. He defines integration as the “process by which immigrants become accepted into society, both as individuals and as groups.” As opposed to unidirectional assimilation, Penninx stresses integration as a two-way process, involving both immigrants and the receiving society: “responsibility for integration rests not with one particular group, but rather with many actors—immigrants themselves, the host government, institutions, and communities.”⁸

We approach the topic of immigrant integration from the standpoint that ensuring immigrant inclusion in society is important and necessary, and government should play some role in this process. We take this position not out of moral conviction, but from a pragmatic policy perspective. Although some immigrants may be able to adjust to US society and be accepted without much outside assistance (particularly those who are highly educated), many immigrants and their children are not able to “catch up” to their native counterparts on their own. The costs of large segments of society falling behind are manifold: higher crime, lower economic productivity, higher health care expenses.

Some people argue that supporting immigrant integration is acceptable as long as immigrants are in the country legally, but that unauthorized immigrants should be excluded from government assistance. This approach is problematic. Immigration status is not as clear-cut as it might seem, given that a large proportion of unauthorized immigrants are part of families with members who have legal status (children who are citizens with parents who are unauthorized, for example). Another consequence of denying unauthorized immigrants government services is the unintended spillover effect: legal immigrants and naturalized citizens may be denied services or discriminated against because they are assumed to be unauthorized or because administrators do not want to take the risk of them potentially being unauthorized.

⁸ Penninx, Rinus. “Integration: The Role of Communities, Institutions, and the State.” Migration Information Source. October 2003. <http://www.migrationinformation.org/Feature/display.cfm?ID=168> ; Vermeulen, Hans and Rinus Penninx. *Immigrant Integration: The Dutch Case*. Amsterdam: Het Spinhuis, 2000.

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Finally, limiting integration efforts according to immigration status does not cause unauthorized immigrants to disappear. Many immigrants have community ties, such as jobs and children in school, which are not easily broken. Mass deportation—besides being morally questionable, prohibitively expensive to implement, and leading to the loss of needed workers—is complicated by the fact that so many families are mixed status families, often with children who are US citizens.

Because the units of government involved in the policy areas of our study vary in geographic makeup, we do not use a single geographic definition for each city. When we refer to cities, we are usually referring to the metropolitan area. When we discuss relevant government entities, however, the corresponding geographic area may be larger or smaller than the metropolitan area. For example, in Raleigh, social services and school services are conducted at the county level.

METHODOLOGY

The main goal of our research was to outline in a systematic way some of the challenges and opportunities that local governments are facing with respect to immigration, devoting special attention to education as a case study. In doing this, we did not attempt to be comprehensive, but we did try to gather information that would provide as representative a picture as possible. Our research aim was not to evaluate specific programs or policies, but rather to collect information that would lay the groundwork for future evaluation.

We gathered information on policies and programs through interviews with government officials, staff of community organizations, advocates, and academics. These interviews took place during field visits to each city in October 2007 and by phone from October 2007 to January 2008. We used a common interview guide, but interviews were open-ended and loosely structured. For a list of some of the people who provided information for this report, please see the Preface. We also relied on organization publications and web-sites for basic information, but confirmed the currency and accuracy of information with other sources wherever possible. Finally, we relied on a range of secondary sources, which we document in footnotes throughout this report.

Table 1: The Foreign Born Population and LEP Population in Seattle, Houston, and Raleigh, 2006

	Seattle	Houston	Raleigh
Total population	3,263,497	5,542,048	1,566,334
Total foreign born	516,941	1,193,931	166,699
Percent foreign born	15.8%	21.5%	10.6%
Foreign born, Naturalized citizen	239,716	388,820	43,519
Percent of foreign born naturalized	46.4%	32.6%	26.1%
Percent of total population age 5 or older who speak a language other than English at home	19.5%	35.9%	13.6%
Percent of foreign born age 5 or older who speak a language other than English at home	81.8%	91.2%	82.4%
Percent of total population age 5 or older who speak English less than “very well”	9.0%	17.2%	6.4%
Percent of foreign born age 5 or older who speak English less than “very well”	47.5%	60.1%	46.5%
Percent of households that are linguistically isolated	5.3%	10.3%	3.9%
Percent of foreign born households that are linguistically isolated	30.2%	37.9%	33.4%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2006 American Community Survey

Note: Seattle and Houston numbers are for Seattle-Tacoma-Bellevue and Houston-Sugar Land-Baytown Metropolitan Statistical Areas, respectively. Raleigh numbers are for the Raleigh-Durham-Cary Combined Statistical Area

CITY DEMOGRAPHICS

Houston, Seattle, and Raleigh represent a range of experiences with immigration. Each city has different history of immigration, different immigrant population, and different approach to government. We borrow Audrey Singer’s categorization of cities as types of immigrant “gateways”⁹ to compare the immigration experiences of Houston, Seattle, and Raleigh.

Houston is a Post-World War II gateway, meaning that it began receiving large numbers of immigrants in the latter half of the 20th century. The proportion of Houston’s population that was foreign-born averaged around 10% during the early part of the 20th century, fell to below 5% during the middle of the century, and then increased steadily and dramatically after 1970.¹⁰ Today, over 20% of metropolitan Houston’s population is foreign-born.¹¹

Seattle, a re-emerging gateway, experienced a boom in immigration at the beginning of the twentieth century (when 30% of its population was foreign born) followed by slowed growth throughout the twentieth century (with the proportion foreign born reaching a low of below 10% in 1970). After 1970, immigration levels increased significantly.¹² Today nearly 16% of the population in metropolitan Seattle is foreign-born.¹³

9 Singer, Audrey. “The Rise of New Immigrant Gateways.” Living Cities Census Series. Center on Urban and Metropolitan Policy. The Brookings Institution. Washington, DC. February 2004.

10 Ibid.

11 US Census Bureau. American Community Survey 2006.

12 Singer 2004.

13 US Census Bureau. American Community Survey 2006.

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Raleigh, a pre-emerging gateway, has only been receiving large numbers of immigrants since the 1990s.¹⁴ In 1990, only 5% of the population of the city of Raleigh was foreign-born. In just ten years, this number nearly doubled to 9%.¹⁵ Today, nearly 11% of the Raleigh-Durham metropolitan area is foreign-born.¹⁶

As shown in Table 1, both the absolute and relative size of the foreign born population varies by city, as does the size of the total population of the cities. With 5.5 million people--over one million of whom are foreign born--Houston is the largest city in our study and has the largest foreign born population in both absolute and relative terms. Seattle is a mid-size city with a population of 3.3 million, over half a million of whom are foreign born. Raleigh is the smallest city, with a total population of 1.6 million, and also has the smallest absolute and proportional number of foreign born residents.

The composition of the foreign-born population also varies by city. A majority of the foreign born in Houston and Raleigh are originally from Latin America and the Caribbean (72% and 55% respectively). Seattle also has a significant population from Latin America (21%), but a much larger proportion of immigrants in Seattle are originally from Asia (48%). Asians represent 21% of the foreign born in Houston and 26% of the foreign born in Raleigh. Seattle also has a large population of European origin (18% of the foreign born), particularly from Eastern Europe.¹⁷

Mexico is the top country of origin for the foreign born populations in all three metropolitan areas. For Houston, the remaining top four sending countries after Mexico are El Salvador, Vietnam, India, and Honduras. In Seattle, Vietnam, the Philippines, Korea, and China are the top countries of origin after Mexico. For Raleigh, no other country of origin comes close in population size to Mexico (which represents 35% of the foreign-born population), but India, El Salvador, China, and Canada make up the remaining top four sending countries for the metropolitan area.¹⁸

Both Seattle and Houston are among the top cities in the country for refugee resettlement, ranking fifth and fifteenth respectively for number of refugees resettled from 1983 to 2004. Close to 50,000 refugees have been resettled in Seattle and over 30,000 have been resettled in Houston between 1983 to 2004. The majority of these refugees in Houston are from Southeast Asia. In Seattle, Southeast Asians also account for a large share of refugees, but persons from the former USSR are the largest group.¹⁹

Other characteristics of the foreign born population also vary significantly across cities. Nearly half of the foreign born in Seattle are US citizens, compared to about a third of the foreign born in Houston and about a quarter of the foreign born in Raleigh (see Table 1). These naturalization figures are particularly important to keep in mind in the context of

¹⁴ Singer 2004.

¹⁵ US Census Bureau. 1990 and 2000 Decennial Censuses.

¹⁶ US Census Bureau. American Community Survey 2006.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Singer, Audrey and Jill H. Wilson. "From 'There' to 'Here': Refugee Resettlement in Metropolitan America." Living Cities Census Series. Center on Urban and Metropolitan Policy. The Brookings Institution. Washington, DC. September 2006.

local government's relationship with foreign born residents, since citizenship is a major factor in access to government services.

Another factor that can influence access to government services is language. In all the cities, an overwhelming majority of the foreign born population and a significant proportion of the total population speak a language other than English at home (see Table 1). In Seattle and Raleigh, almost half of the foreign born population speak English less than “very well” and around a third of the foreign born live in linguistically isolated households, meaning that no person aged 14 or older in the household speaks English at least “very well.” Houston has a larger proportion of LEP individuals and linguistically isolated households among the foreign born: 60% and 38% respectively.

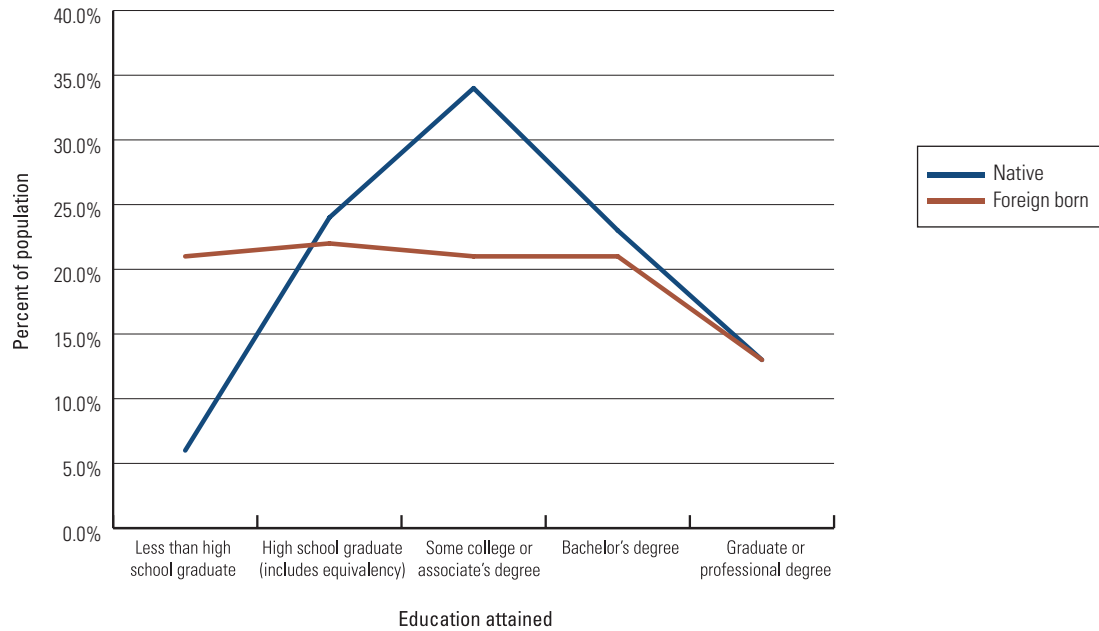
Labor market characteristics of the foreign born also differ across the cities. In Houston and Raleigh, the foreign born are more likely than the native born to participate in the labor market, but in Seattle the foreign born are slightly less likely to work than the native born. These differences are most likely due to differences in the age structures of the foreign born populations in these cities, rather than behavior differences. In Houston and Raleigh, the foreign born are heavily concentrated in prime working age groups and have lower or comparable percentages in the older age groups as the native born. In Seattle, however, a higher percentage of the foreign born are age 65 to 84 than the native born.²⁰

In terms of educational attainment, the foreign born populations in both Seattle and Houston are generally less educated than the native born populations, except at the graduate degree level where proportions are comparable for native and foreign born (see Chart 1). However, while the foreign population is fairly evenly distributed across educational levels in Seattle, in Houston the foreign born population is concentrated much more heavily at lower educational levels (with 42% having less than a high school degree). In Raleigh, as in Seattle and Houston, the foreign born are much less likely to have finished high school than the native born, but unlike in Seattle and Houston, the foreign born in Raleigh are much more likely to hold a graduate degree than the native born (18% vs. 13%).

²⁰ US Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2006.

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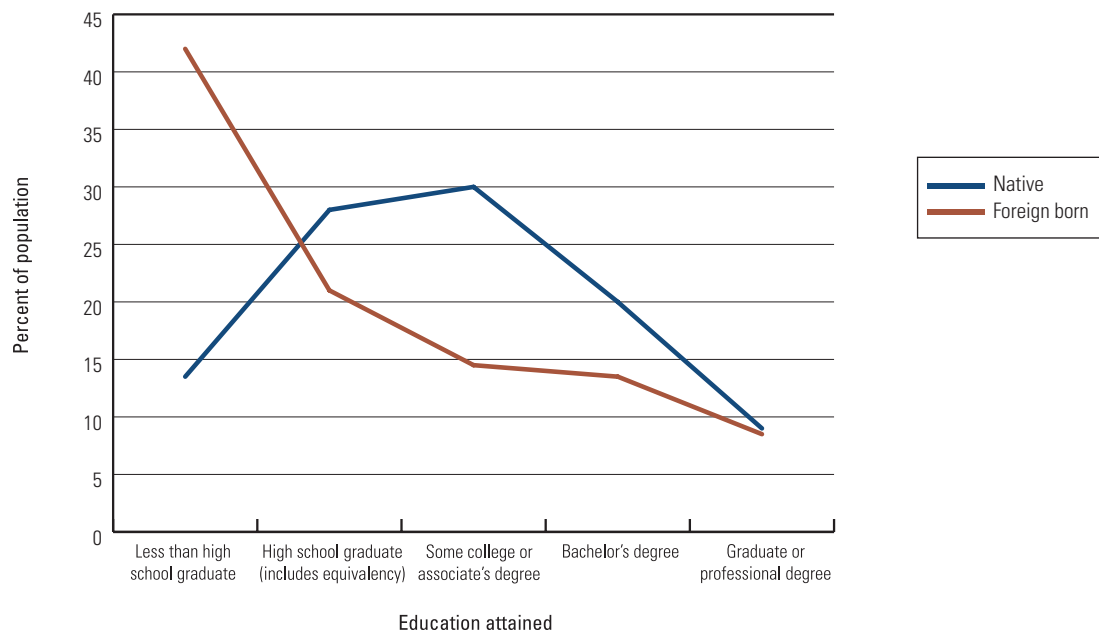
Chart 1: Educational Attainment for Native vs. Foreign Born, Seattle



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2006 American Community Survey

Note: Seattle and Houston numbers are for Seattle-Tacoma-Bellevue and Houston-Sugar Land-Baytown Metropolitan Statistical Areas, respectively. Raleigh numbers are for the Raleigh-Durham-Cary Combined Statistical Area

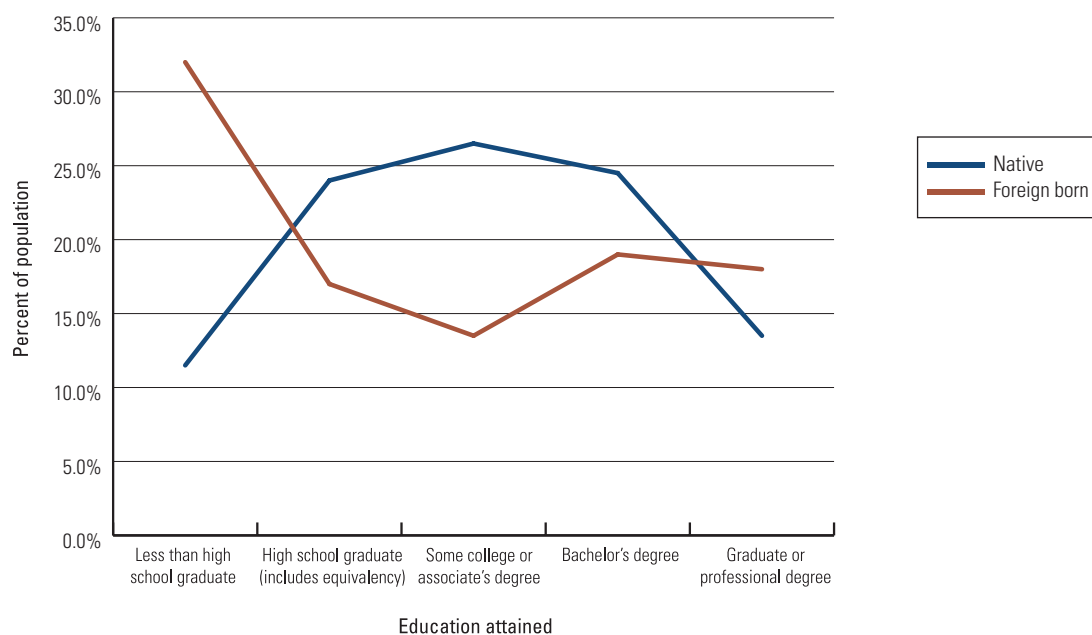
Chart 2: Educational Attainment for Native vs. Foreign Born, Houston



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2006 American Community Survey

Note: Seattle and Houston numbers are for Seattle-Tacoma-Bellevue and Houston-Sugar Land-Baytown Metropolitan Statistical Areas, respectively. Raleigh numbers are for the Raleigh-Durham-Cary Combined Statistical Area

Chart 3: Educational Attainment for Native vs. Foreign Born, Raleigh



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2006 American Community Survey

Note: Seattle and Houston numbers are for Seattle-Tacoma-Bellevue and Houston-Sugar Land-Baytown Metropolitan Statistical Areas, respectively. Raleigh numbers are for the Raleigh-Durham-Cary Combined Statistical Area

With respect to occupation, over a third of the foreign born in Seattle and Raleigh and over a fifth of the foreign born in Houston are in professional or managerial jobs. Approximately a fifth of the foreign born in all three cities are in service occupations. A large proportion of the foreign born work in construction and maintenance jobs in Houston and Raleigh (22% and 24% respectively), but only 10% work in these jobs in Seattle. In both Seattle and Houston, 16% of the foreign born work in sales and office jobs, compared to 12% in Raleigh. Production, transportation and material moving jobs represent 16% of occupations of the foreign born in Seattle, 17% in Houston, and 9% in Raleigh. Less than 1% of the foreign born work in fishing, farming, and forestry occupations in Seattle and Houston, compared to close to 2% in Raleigh.²¹

In all three cities, the foreign born have much lower median incomes and much higher rates of poverty than the native born (see Table 2). The foreign born are also much more likely to be living in near poverty than the native born in the three cities. The level of poverty among the foreign born is highest in Houston (18%), but the gap between native and foreign born poverty levels is most pronounced in Seattle (with the foreign born being 1.7 times more likely to be poor than the native born).

²¹ Ibid

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Table 2: Labor Market and Income Characteristics of the Foreign Born vs. Native Born in Seattle, Houston, and Raleigh, 2006

	Seattle	Houston	Raleigh
Percent of population age 16 years and older in labor force			
Total population	69.0%	68.2%	69.4%
Native	69.5%	67.4%	68.8%
Foreign Born	66.7%	70.5%	73.8%
Median household income (dollars)			
Total population	60,633	50,250	51,852
Native	61,810	55,201	52,193
Foreign Born	51,230	38,160	48,163
Percent of population below the poverty level			
Total population	9.6%	14.9%	12.1%
Native	8.6%	14.1%	11.8%
Foreign Born	14.5%	18.1%	15.1%
Percent of population at 100 to 199 percent of the poverty level			
Total population	13.2%	20.8%	15.7%
Native	12.1%	18.0%	14.5%
Foreign Born	19.4%	31.1%	25.4%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2006 American Community Survey

Note: Seattle and Houston numbers are for Seattle-Tacoma-Bellevue and Houston-Sugar Land-Baytown Metropolitan Statistical Areas, respectively. Raleigh numbers are for the Raleigh-Durham-Cary Combined Statistical Area

SECTION 2: EDUCATING CHILDREN, INTEGRATING FAMILIES

One of the main, and arguably most important, ways that state and local governments are involved in immigrant integration is through the public education system. Schools teach immigrant children language skills and social skills, help non-immigrant children and teachers to learn about other cultures, and involve immigrant parents in a larger community. With access to appropriate instruction and support, children who enter school with poor English language skills or little understanding of US culture can graduate high school with the same (or superior) skills as their non-immigrant peers and go on to great success in higher education or work. On the other hand, the public education system can also reinforce or exacerbate existing divides between immigrant students and their peers. Without access to adequate resources, immigrant students can end up on a path where they never catch up with their non-immigrant peers, dropping out of school and facing limited job prospects.

Immigrant education is an issue of growing importance. Children of immigrants accounted for 19% of school-age persons in the United States in 2000, up from 6% in 1970.²² Three-quarters of these children are second-generation immigrants, meaning they were born in the United States. Notwithstanding the large proportion of children of immigrants born in the United States, many are LEP. According to Department of Education statistics, 10% of children enrolled in school are LEP.²³

At the individual school level, however, the proportion of LEP students is often much higher, since LEP populations tend to be concentrated in certain neighborhoods. In theory, concentration should make it easier to target policies and resources to those who need it most. In reality, the schools where LEP students are most highly concentrated tend to be located in poorer neighborhoods, with less qualified teachers and a host of other challenges.²⁴

The rapid growth of the school-age LEP population in some states also poses unique challenges. In North Carolina, for example, the number of LEP students grew 372% from 1995 to 2005.²⁵ But even in states that are more traditional immigrant destinations, such as California, the school-age LEP population is growing more rapidly than the overall school-age population.²⁶ This growth in the LEP student population can be difficult for schools to manage if resources and expertise are not able to keep pace with the changes.

Unfortunately, in many cases the educational system has not been adequately meeting the challenge of educating LEP students. Nationally, LEP students perform below their native speaking counterparts on most academic measures. For example, a recent Migration Policy Institute study found that 71% of LEP eighth-graders taking the National Assessment of Educational Progress exam²⁷ scored below “basic” on the reading test and only 4% were deemed

22 Fix, Michael. *Securing the Future: US Immigrant Integration Policy, A Reader*. Washington, DC: Migration Policy Institute, 2007: 126.

23 The definition of LEP varies. The US Census measures only spoken English proficiency, while schools generally measure writing and reading skills as well.

24 Gershberg, Alec Ian. “Immigrant Integration and ‘Bilingual’ Education.” *Education and Immigrant Integration in the United States and Canada*. Washington, DC: Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, 2005.

25 Batalova, Jeanne, et al. “Measures of Change: The Demography and Literacy of Adolescent English Learners.” Washington, DC: Migration Policy Institute, 2007.

26 Ibid.

27 A standardized test is given in all states at the 4th, 8th, and 12th grade levels.

Section II: Educating Children, Integrating Families

“proficient.”²⁸ In many states, LEP students are also much more likely to drop out of high school than non-LEP students.²⁹

It is important to note, however, that aggregate figures on LEP students can mask some important differences among students. An LEP student whose parents are from a rural village and are illiterate faces a different set of educational hurdles than does an LEP student whose parents are highly educated. The age of LEP students also affects their educational outcomes, with younger LEP students being more likely to catch up to their non-LEP peers.

Finally, the role of public education in immigrant integration extends beyond teaching LEP children language and math skills. Schools are an important mechanism for socialization, teaching intangible cultural skills. To the extent that immigrant parents have contact with the school system, schools can also play a role in the integration of adults. Among linguistically isolated households, schools may be the only mainstream institution that families interact with on a regular basis and therefore play an important role in connecting these families with a larger community.

POLICIES TOWARD LEP AND IMMIGRANT STUDENTS

A range of public education policies and programs exist to assist immigrant and/or LEP students. At the federal level, the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act has several provisions that have direct bearing on immigrant and LEP students. Specifically, the Act “requires that English language learner (ELL) students, with few exceptions, be included in state academic assessments just like their English-speaking counterparts; compels schools to disaggregate and report ELL student scores on standardized tests, imposes tough sanctions on schools if ELL students do not make progress; imposes a first-time federal requirement that ELLs make progress in English; requires that every bilingual and ESL classroom have a qualified teacher; and requires parent involvement efforts targeted to ELL and low literate parents.”³⁰

Under Title III, NCLB also provides English Language Acquisition and Language Enhancement formula grants of at least \$500,000 to states for English language instruction, services for LEP and immigrant students, family literacy and parent outreach, and staff professional development. This Title III funding combines two earlier programs, the Emergency Immigrant Education Program (funding intended to offset state and local costs related to immigration) and the Bilingual Education Program (funding tied to the Bilingual Education Act of 1968).³¹

The federal government also funds a set of programs aimed at the education of the children of migrant farm workers, the vast majority of whom are immigrants—The Migrant Education Program, Migrant Head Start, and Migrant Education Even Start.³²

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ McHugh, Margaret. “Commentary: Policies in the United States.” *Education and Immigrant Integration in the United States and Canada*. Washington, DC: Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, 2005.

³⁰ Fix, Michael, et al. “Leaving Too Much to Chance: A Roundtable on Immigrant Integration Policy.” Washington, DC: Migration Policy Institute, 2005.

³¹ Fix, Michael. *Securing the Future: US Immigrant Integration Policy*, A Reader. Washington, DC: Migration Policy Institute, 2007: 70–73.

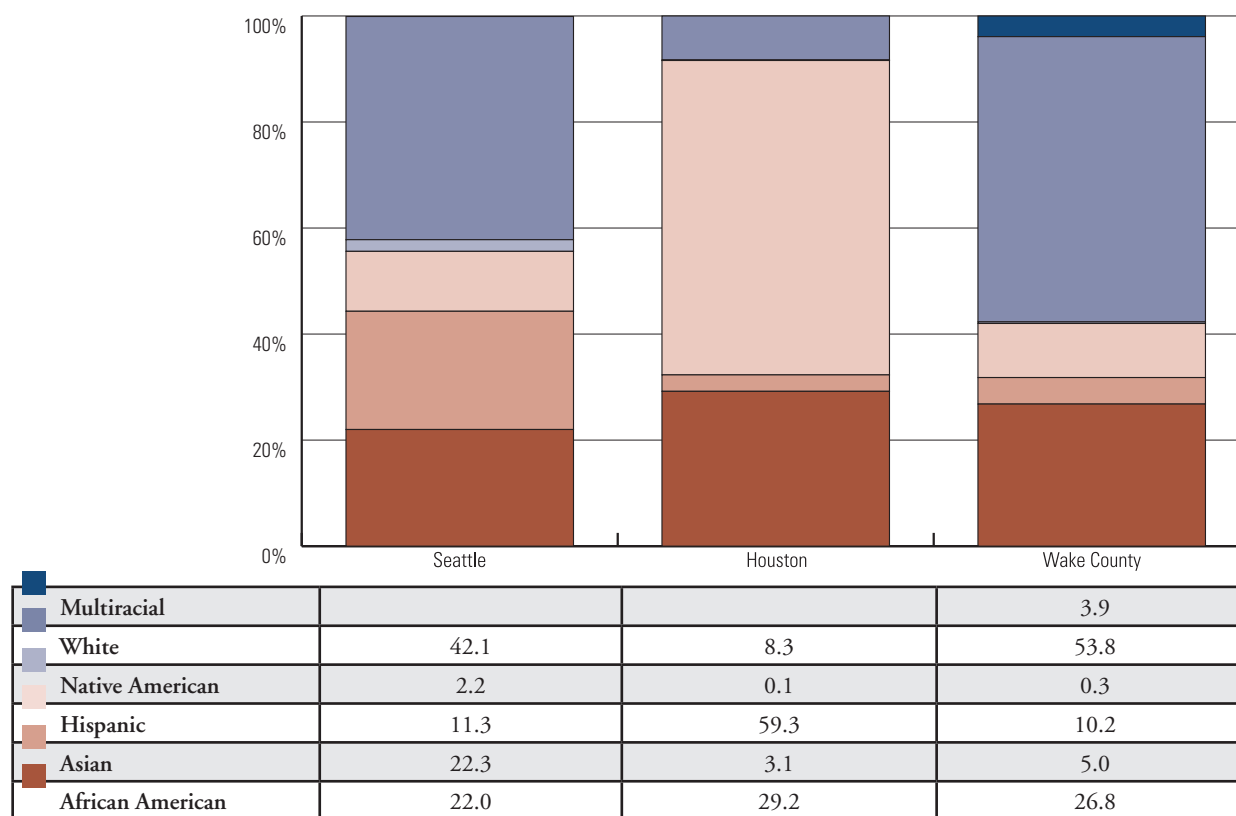
³² Ibid.

Federal funds support school services to assist refugees through the Office of Refugee Resettlement's Refugee School Impact Program. The program provides grants to states to give to impacted school districts "for activities that will lead to the effective integration and education of refugee children... activities that include English as a Second Language instruction, after-school tutorials, programs that encourage high school completion and full participation in school activities, after-school and/or summer clubs and activities, parental involvement programs, bilingual/bicultural counselors, interpreter services and other services."³³

States also have their own policies and programs related to immigrant education. Most notable in recent years, perhaps, was the passage of Proposition 227 in California, which makes English-only instruction the preferred method of teaching for LEP students in California public schools. State governments are also responsible for distributing federal funds and state funds to school districts. The level of oversight authority that state governments have over local schools varies by state.

Most policies and programs for LEP and immigrant students are at the local level: either at the school district level or individual school level. Municipal property taxes account for the majority of school funding in most places. And even where federal and state funding are involved, local school districts and schools usually have a great deal of discretion in how they use these funds.

Chart 4: Ethnic Composition of School Districts, By Percent, 2006-07

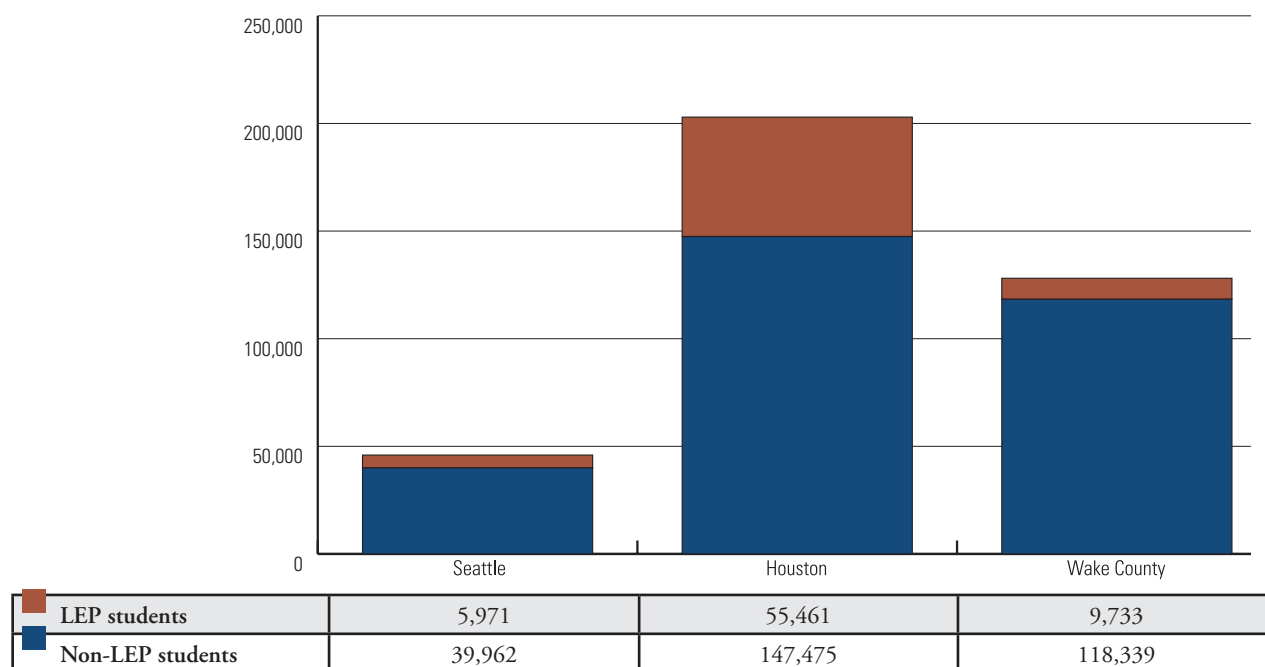


Source: Houston Independent School District, Seattle Public Schools and Wake County Public School System administrative data, 2006

33 Administration for Children and Families. <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/orr/about/divisions.htm>

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Chart 5: Number of LEP and Non-LEP Students, By District, 2006-07



Source: Houston Independent School District, Seattle Public Schools and Wake County Public School System administrative data, 2006

In the analysis that follows, we look at specific programs and policies in three cities to illustrate some of the challenges and opportunities that local communities are facing in educating immigrants. The cities and counties in our study do not necessarily map to single school districts. We focus on the following school districts in Houston, Seattle, and Raleigh, respectively: the Houston Independent School District (HISD), Seattle Public Schools (SPS), and the Wake County Public School System (WCPSS).

All of the school districts in this report are sizeable districts—within the top 50 largest districts in the country and the largest districts in their respective states. With a total student enrollment of over 200,000 at 295 schools and a geographic span of 301 square miles, the Houston Independent School District (HISD) is by far the largest of the three districts by all counts, including the size of its LEP population. The next largest district, Wake County, has 128,000 students at 147 schools, while Seattle Public Schools enrolls nearly 46,000 students at 106 schools.³⁴ Chart 2 shows the LEP population and the total student population for each district. In Seattle, 13% of students in the district are LEP; in Houston, 27% are LEP; and in Wake County, 8% are LEP.

The Houston, Seattle, and Wake County school districts vary significantly in terms of the ethnic composition and socioeconomic makeup of their students (see Chart 3). HISD is heavily Hispanic (59%), while Seattle has a large Asian

³⁴ Unless otherwise noted, all data for school districts is for the 2006-07 school year and was obtained from the following sources: SPS, Research, Evaluation and Assessment <http://www.seattleschools.org/area/siso/distsum.xml>; HISD, Department of Research and Accountability <http://www.houstonisd.org/portal/site/ResearchAccountability/menuitem.202624dcf397db8fb2c39f3be041f76a/>; WCPSS, Demographics Resource Center, <http://www.wcpss.net/demographics/>.

population (22%). Wake County's growing immigrant population is evident in the 10% of students who are Hispanic. A significant portion of students face economic hardship in all of the districts, but the numbers in HISD are by far the highest, with 78% of students qualifying for free or reduced lunches (as compared to 38% in Seattle and 28% in Wake County).

DISTRICT PROGRAMS AND POLICIES FOR LEP AND IMMIGRANT STUDENTS AND FAMILIES

Below we outline school district programs and policies related to LEP and immigrant students and families in the following areas: ESL/ bilingual programs, translation and interpretation services, family engagement initiatives, and newcomer programs. We also touch on several other noteworthy areas, such as programs for the children of migrant farm workers and programs for refugees.

ESL and Bilingual Programs

English-as-a-second-language (ESL) and bilingual programs aim to teach limited English proficient (LEP) students English and other core subject areas. ESL programs rely on English as the language of instruction, whereas bilingual programs teach children in both English and the students' native language. Even within these two categories, instructional models vary in form and delivery, and debate over which methods are most effective is contentious. The school districts we visited use a range of methods to teach LEP children. HISD stresses bilingual education; WCPSS offers ESL instruction; and SPS falls in between the two, employing ESL methods but supplementing them with bilingual support services. Below we outline these approaches in more detail.

HOUSTON

HISD has a district-wide goal of promoting bilingualism among LEP students, formalized through a 1999 school board policy.³⁵ Nearly 69% of LEP students are in bilingual programs, 26% are in ESL programs, and 5% are not enrolled in language programs because their parents signed a waiver exempting them from special language instruction.³⁶

Texas state law requires that if a school district has 20 or more students district-wide in a single grade at the elementary level, who speak a given language, elementary schools must provide a bilingual program for any student who speaks this language. If the district has less than 20 students who speak a given language at a given grade-level, elementary schools must offer an ESL program with a certified ESL teacher to students speaking this language.³⁷ At the secondary school level, schools are only required to offer ESL or sheltered English and sheltered content programs for LEP students.³⁸

Because of the size and scope of the LEP population in HISD, the vast majority of schools offer ESL or bilingual language programs (281 of 306 schools). Of the schools with language programs, 41.6% offer only ESL programs,

³⁵ Multilingual Programs Department, HISD. *Bilingual/ESL Program Guidelines*. August 2007.

³⁶ HISD, *Facts and Figures*. February 2007.

³⁷ Schools can apply to the state for exception to the bilingual program requirement and the ESL teacher certification requirement.

³⁸ Texas Education Code 29.051 and Subchapter BB (Commissioner's Rules Concerning State Plan for Educating Limited English Proficient Students). Texas Administrative Code, Title 19, Part II, Chapter 89 (Adaptations for Special Populations).

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13.2% offer only bilingual programs, and 45.2% offer both ESL and bilingual programs. Bilingual programs are overwhelmingly concentrated at the elementary school level. Over half of the language programs at HISD elementary schools are bilingual. Most of these programs are for Spanish-speakers, but bilingual programs are also offered in Vietnamese, Chinese, Arabic, and Urdu. At the middle school level, roughly one in ten language programs is bilingual. At the high school level, only one bilingual program exists (compared to 35 ESL programs).³⁹

Despite the official focus on dual language instruction, ESL programs are a significant part of LEP instruction in HISD for several reasons. ESL programs are sometimes a practical necessity given the diversity of languages spoken. Only 4% of LEP students in the district are native speakers of a language other than Spanish, but these students speak 84 different languages. A shortage of qualified bilingual teachers also limits dual language programming in Houston.⁴⁰

In terms of bilingual programs, HISD employs three main models: traditional bilingual, developmental bilingual, and two-way immersion bilingual. Under the traditional model, transitioning to English is the main goal of the program, with native language instruction assisting in this transition. In contrast, under the developmental model, students are encouraged to fully develop and maintain their native language while learning English.⁴¹ The third model, two-way immersion, brings together English-speaking children and LEP children in equal numbers in a single classroom, and students are taught in two languages. Of the 38,025 LEP students in bilingual programs in HISD in 2007, 45% are in traditional programs, 51% are in developmental programs, and two % are in two-way immersion programs.⁴²

Of note is that all ESL and bilingual programs in HISD are late exit. This means that students leave the program at fourth or fifth grade, in contrast to the typical approach which has the goal of exiting students early on in their education. If students reach English proficiency before fourth grade, they are mainstreamed into an English classroom earlier, unless a parent chooses to keep them in the bilingual or ESL program. If students enter a bilingual program at an older age (generally beyond third grade), they may be kept in an ESL or bilingual program beyond fourth or fifth grade.

HISD assesses the progress of LEP students in several ways. The district measures growth in English language proficiency through the Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System (TELPAS). Texas created TELPAS to meet NCLB requirements. The test measures: listening, speaking, reading, and writing through a written exam and teacher observation. HISD administers TELPAS annually to LEP students in grade K-12. Most LEP students⁴³ also take the following standardized exams given to all HISD students: Texas Primary Reading Inventory (TPRI)/ El Inventario de Lectura en Español de Tejas (Tejas LEE) for grades K-3; High Frequency Word Evaluation (HFWE) for grades 1-2; Stanford/Aprenda for grades 1-11; and Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) for grades 3-11.

39 Rohatgi, Irma and Terrie Armstrong. "The Impact of Restructured Language Support Programs for English Language Learners: Dual Language Programming." Presentation at the Region Dual Language Symposium, 2007.

40 The district has a program to give bilingual teachers hiring bonuses

41 In HISD English instruction increases gradually so that by 5th grade 40% of instruction is in a student's native language and 60% of instruction is in English.

42 Rohatgi and Armstrong.

43 LEP students can be exempted from certain tests if they meet specific criteria.

Exams are offered in both English and Spanish,⁴⁴ with students generally tested in whichever language is the primary language of instruction for the subject being assessed.⁴⁵

In addition to tracking student progress, HISD monitors implementation of its bilingual and ESL programs. Responsibility for ongoing monitoring lies with school principals, in conjunction with regional district Title III staff. The district's Multilingual Programs Department provides principals and regional staff with a list of areas and schedule of activities that should form the basis of their program evaluation. HISD also conducts more formal reviews of school programs by committee on a periodic basis. These reviews include on-site visits and document and file inspection. Finally, HISD's Research and Accountability Department publishes an annual report on the performance of bilingual and ESL programs in the district.

The main administrative body responsible for coordinating and overseeing bilingual and ESL programs is the Multilingual Programs Department. The department provides schools, parents, students, and district staff with detailed information on the district's programs and policies related to LEP students through published handbooks and guidelines and through trainings and consultations. For example, the department provides all schools with a Bilingual/ESL Program Guidelines Handbook. The handbook, which is well over 100 pages, outlines relevant state and federal laws and explains district policy—from curriculum requirements for ESL and bilingual programs to documentation requirements for LEP student files.

At the school level, Language Proficiency Assessment Committees (LPACs) play an important role in the education of LEP students. Every school with LEP students has an LPAC, composed of a school administrator, certified bilingual teacher, certified ESL teacher, and a parent of an LEP student, at minimum. The LPAC identifies and places students in bilingual and ESL programs, reviews the progress of both current and former students in bilingual and ESL programs, and serves as an advocate for LEP students who require special education services.

HISD employs approximately 2,710 bilingual/ESL teachers,⁴⁶ most of which are certified.⁴⁷ The district provides teachers with various training opportunities. For example, two-years ago, the Multilingual Programs Department instituted a mandatory day-long training for all ESL/Bilingual teachers in the district. Houston has also invested Title III funds to provide differentiated training for its ESL and bilingual teachers. The trainings are offered both at the district level by teacher type and grade level, as well as at the individual school level. One of the topics of the training is Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP). SIOP training is a research-based method for instruction that is designed for LEP children as well as other children.⁴⁸ HISD also offers trainings in the areas of diversity and multiculturalism, student assessment mechanisms, Spanish reading, and ESL accommodations and modifications.

⁴⁴ The TAKS is only offered in Spanish in grades three to 6.

⁴⁵ Non-LEP students in Spanish-English dual language/ immersion programs are tested in both Spanish and English.

⁴⁶ Rohatgi and Armstrong.

⁴⁷ To obtain ESL certification in Texas, teachers must take four required courses, complete a practicum in an ESL classroom or have a year's experience teaching in an approved ESL or bilingual program, and pass an exam (TExES). For bilingual certification, teachers complete similar requirements, but also must pass an additional exam that measures their proficiency in another language (TOPT).

⁴⁸ See <http://www.siopinstitute.net/> for more info on details of training and method.

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Title III funds support Lead Teachers at every HISD campus. These teachers are charged with the responsibility of serving as the building liaison for Title III, helping to organize and model best practices and training for ESL/Bilingual teachers. They also are responsible for ordering classroom and training materials for ESL/Bilingual teachers and for helping to decide how school level Title III allocations are spent in conjunction with the school principal.

SEATTLE

SPS offers two options for LEP students who require language instruction: bilingual orientation centers (BOCs) and English language learning (ELL) center schools. Bilingual orientation centers are schools designed for LEP students with the lowest levels of English proficiency. We discuss these schools in more detail later on. Students usually do not stay at a bilingual orientation center longer than one or two semesters before moving to an ELL center school. ELL center schools are regular schools that offer ESL programs.

At the elementary school level, most ELL center schools teach ESL using the pull-out method. With this method, children spend most of their day in a mainstream classroom and then spend a short period of time (usually 30 to 40 minutes) working with an ESL teacher as part of a small group. Some elementary schools in Seattle use the inclusion method, which keeps LEP children in a mainstream classroom the entire day, but offers them additional support. In an inclusion classroom, teachers are trained in ESL methods or co-teach lessons with an ESL teacher. At the middle and high school level, Seattle uses a content ESL model. LEP students are in mainstream classrooms for most of their subjects, but are taught certain subjects in special classes using ESL methods.

Although SPS offers only ESL programs (with the exception of a few immersion programs discussed below), the district employs bilingual instruction assistants who help students with school work in their native language and assist teachers in the classroom. The district assigns a bilingual instruction assistant to a school if the school has a significant number of students in a single language group. The assistants are paid employees of the district (either full-time or part-time), and each full-time assistant generally works with 28 students at one or two schools.

SPS runs a handful of language immersion programs at the elementary school level. In Fall 2007, Concord Elementary began a Spanish dual language program, with a curriculum split equally between Spanish and English. The John Stanford International School offers Japanese and Spanish immersion (although mainly for non-LEP children), and Beacon Hill Elementary will begin offering language Chinese and Spanish immersion in Fall 2008.

The district assesses how well students in ESL programs are progressing in their mastery of English through the Washington Language Proficiency Test (WLPT). Most students also take the Washington Assessment of Student Learning (WASL), a test that measures the reading, writing, mathematics, and science abilities of students in third to eighth grade and tenth grade.

SPS requires all of its ESL teachers to be state-certified in ESL.⁴⁹ The maximum student-teacher ratio for ESL teachers in the district is 17:1 at the primary-school level, and 45:1 at the secondary-school level. The district also provides

⁴⁹ For certification, teachers must complete 25 quarter credits of specialized coursework and pass the Praxis II ESL examination.

ESL teachers and other teachers who work with LEP children with optional training in Guided Language Acquisition Design (GLAD)⁵⁰ at the primary-school level and SIOP (see page 23 for a description) at the secondary-school level. Finally, schools can request “cultural cues” trainings for staff, which are panel discussions put together by the Bilingual Student Services Office on how to work with students and families from a particular culture.

The administrative unit that oversees LEP education in the district is the Bilingual Student Services Department. The staff includes four bilingual coaches who provide professional development and curriculum support to teachers and principals. The office also runs the Bilingual Family Center, which we discuss later on.

RALEIGH

WCPSS has a concerted instructional focus on English learning and instruction, with the goal being to move children into mainstream classrooms full-time as quickly as possible. At the elementary school level, students are taught ESL using either the pull-out or push-in method of instruction. At the middle and high school level, students receive sheltered ESL instruction (and in some cases sheltered content ESL), generally as part of a single course in their schedule. The district also recommends “sensitive placement” for ESL students at the secondary school level, meaning that LEP students are placed in mainstream classes that do not require strong language skills, such as art classes.

Neither WCPSS nor the state of North Carolina has extensive regulations governing LEP education. Unlike in Texas and Washington, the only state regulations that North Carolina has issued pertaining to the education of LEP children focus on the allocation of state funds. The state has no requirements on language programs or teaching methods. WCPSS’s central administration also has limited involvement in the program models that schools use, and implementation varies widely. For example, some elementary schools offer pull-out ESL to students twice a week, while others offer it twice a day.

Prior to the 2006-07 school year, ESL services were only available at certain schools, and LEP children were bused to these schools. With the rapid growth in the LEP student population in recent years, however, this approach became untenable.⁵¹ In the 2006-07 school year the district changed to a new ESL delivery model under which all schools receive LEP students.

Wake County employs 110 ESL teachers at the elementary school level, 40 ESL teachers at the middle school level, and 42 ESL teachers at the high school level.⁵² The district does not require its teachers to have ESL certification, although it encourages certification. Every high school and middle school has at least one trained ESL teacher. At the elementary school level, not all schools with LEP students have trained ESL teachers; in some schools, teachers who are in the process of receiving ESL training instruct LEP children.

50 GLAD methods “promote English language acquisition, academic achievement, and cross-cultural skills.” See <http://www.projectglad.com/> for more information.

51 At one Raleigh elementary school, for example, a single ESL teacher was responsible for teaching over 100 students in the year before the shift.

52 Figures provided by WCPSS Office of ESL.

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Like Houston and Seattle, Raleigh utilizes its Title III funding, along with state and local dollars, to provide SIOP training for teachers and administrators as well as Ruby-Payne diversity training. While trainings are available to all teachers (both ESL and mainstream), they are not mandatory. The district's Prevention Services Department also provides a training for teachers and administrators on "Understanding the Latino Culture." The day-long training has been offered at over 20 schools. The training provides a demographic overview of the Latino population in North Carolina and Wake County, discusses cultural issues such as family roles and communication style, addresses strategies for engaging Latino parents, and gives an overview of the Mexican educational system since a majority of LEP students in Wake County have ties to Mexico.

In Wake County, as in the rest of North Carolina, LEP students in grades K-12 must take the Idea Proficiency Test (IPT), which measures English language proficiency in writing, listening, speaking, and reading. Most LEP students⁵³ also take the following general state exams: End-of-Grade (EOG) tests in reading and mathematics for third grade to eighth grade, End-of-Course (EOC) tests for students in 10 selected courses in ninth grade to twelfth grade, a writing test in fourth, seventh, and tenth grades, and a computer skills test in eighth grade. All tests are in English, but LEP students with low IPT scores can receive special accommodations (such as an extended exam period) or be tested using alternate methods if they are new to the US.⁵⁴

WCPSS's Office of ESL oversees the district's language programs and provides curriculum and professional development support to teachers and administrators. The office has expanded as the LEP population in Wake County has grown. The office currently has six full-time ESL staff,⁵⁵ in contrast to the two staff persons it had a mere three years ago.

Translation and Interpretation Services

Providing interpretation and translation services at schools is fundamental to ensuring LEP student and parent access to the educational system. Under NCLB and Title VI of the Civil Rights Act, schools are legally obligated to provide translation and interpretation for non-English speakers in many cases. Beyond fulfilling legal duties, offering these services enables LEP parents to be involved in their child's education—from reading their child's report card, to attending parent-teacher conferences.

When schools do not provide adequate translation and interpretation services, children are often relied upon to serve as interpreters for their parents. This is problematic for several reasons. Young children might not be able read or comprehend conversation at the level needed to translate school business. Older children might be motivated to conceal information from their parents, such as poor grades. And asking children to serve as interpreters can have harmful psychological effects for parents and children by reversing traditional parent-child roles.

53 LEP students who are in their first year in a US school and who have low IPT reading scores are exempt from several of the reading and writing tests.

54 The North Carolina Checklist of Academic Standards (NCCLAS) is an alternate assessment for LEP students whom meet the criteria for alternate assessment. With NCCLAS, teachers use a checklist to evaluate student performance.

55 Staff includes a director, senior administrator, two Title III lead teachers, a staff development trainer, and a staff person working to create newcomer centers.

Every district in this report provides some interpretation and translation support to schools and families, but the level of services offered and the extent to which translation and interpretation responsibilities are clearly spelled out by the district varies considerably. HISD has the most centralized approach and the most developed policies on translation and interpretation, but does not devote sufficient resources to support these policies; SPS devotes more resources to translation and interpretation both centrally and at the school level; WCPSS allocates few resources to translation and interpretation, but has developed some innovative programs to support translation and interpretation. We discuss each of these efforts in more detail below.

HOUSTON

As part of its Communication Services Department, HISD runs a Translation Services division, which provides written translation and oral interpretation in Spanish, French, Italian, and Vietnamese. Translation Services is responsible for translating district-wide documents, maintaining Spanish and Vietnamese district web-sites, and publishing Spanish and Vietnamese versions of the district's parent newsletter. The division also provides interpretation at public meetings and disciplinary reviews.⁵⁶ The office has four full-time staff—two Spanish interpreters, one Vietnamese interpreter, and a manager who can provide interpretation in Spanish, French, and Italian. The office is in the process of hiring one to two additional Spanish interpreters. Translation Services does not have its own budget, and funding for staff salaries comes from both Title III and district funds.

At the school level, principals decide which documents require translation. According to an internal directive issued by the Superintendent, all interpretation and translation at the school level is supposed to go through the Translation Office to ensure uniform quality. But, in a district with over 50,000 LEP students, four translators cannot possibly meet the need for translation at all areas schools. This severe understaffing is likely why the department ranked fourth from the bottom (out of 31 central departments) in a recent survey of principals about satisfaction with district services.⁵⁷

SEATTLE

Of the districts we visited, SPS offers the most extensive translation and interpretation services. At the school level, bilingual instructional assistants translate documents and interpret for families and teachers. If a bilingual instructional assistant is not available, schools or families can contact the Bilingual Family Center. The Center, which is part of the district's Bilingual Student Services Office, has staff interpreters who speak seven languages other than English: Amharic, Chinese, Somali, Spanish, Tagalog, Tigrigna, and Vietnamese.

While the main function of the Center is to assist LEP families who are new to the district with enrollment and placement, staff also are available on a limited basis to interpret for parents at school meetings, translate school documents for parents, and advise and interpret for parents in proceedings related to discipline, truancy, retention, or

⁵⁶ HISD lays out formal guidelines for translation requests and services in two memorandums: HISD Standard Practice Memorandum 7201.C, Guidelines and Practices Regarding the Translation of Documents, 11 August 2006 and HISD Standard Practice Memorandum 7201.1C, Procedures for Requesting Translation of Documents, 11 August 2006.

⁵⁷ The survey ranked departments by percent rated as above average or exemplary. 27.6% of principals rated translation services as above average or exemplary, as opposed to the median score of 48% and the mean score of 47% for all departments combined. "Survey Helps HISD Central Office Better Serve Schools." HISD Connect. 27 July 2007.

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special education. In addition to providing individual services, the Center also offers interpretation and information at community events and meetings. The Center's website contains basic information for parents on topics such as registration in nine languages.

The Bilingual Family Center has seven staff members, two of whom are full-time. The Center does not have its own budget, relying on Bilingual Student Services for program costs. The Center was founded in 1998 in response to a lawsuit brought against the district by Evergreen Legal Services on behalf of several LEP families.

The district's newly created Family and Community Engagement Division, which is part of the Department of Equity and Race Relations, coordinates the translation of district and school documents, in addition to numerous other activities designed to promote interaction between families, educators and community organizations. The division works with a team of trained interpreters to translate documents into the top seven to ten languages in the district. Translations are checked by two people to ensure quality. The division also has simultaneous interpretation equipment available for schools and administrators to borrow.

SPS does not have a single set of funds dedicated to translation and interpretation; rather, individual school and program funds cover the costs of these services. Unlike Houston, SPS does not have a formal protocol outlining translation and interpretation procedures, but it is considering developing one.

RALEIGH

WCPSS approach to translation and interpretation can best be described as patchwork. The district does not have a formal policy or set of guidelines on translation and interpretation, other than trying to adhere to federal laws, and responsibility for translation and interpretation is not clearly defined within the bureaucracy.

The Prevention Services division (part of Student Services) handles most Spanish translation and interpretation for district-wide matters and occasionally for individual schools upon request. The office contracts out its written translation work, and it has been trying to develop a central clearinghouse for translated documents. Prevention Services also purchased several interpretation kits with headsets for simultaneous interpretation, which schools or district departments can borrow for meetings. Prevention Services does not have a special budget for translation and interpretation and must fund these activities out of its general \$30,000 annual budget.

The ESL Office also fields requests for translation, particularly in languages other than Spanish. However, the office generally tries to discourage schools from translating documents except where federal law mandates translation, in part because the demand for translation is overwhelming. Other specialized units, such as Special Education, have their own funds and contracts for translation and interpretation. The district also has a \$20,000 annual contract with TransACT, an online service that provides common education documents and parent notices translated into over 20 languages. All district employees can access these documents.

Prevention Services maintains a list of bilingual staff willing to serve as interpreters and translators and has initiated

a process for staff to become certified as interpreters. The office contracted with a professional Spanish interpreter to create a written and oral examination to assess Spanish ability in the field of education. The exam was administered for the first time in 2007 to 109 bilingual staff. In addition to taking the voluntary exam, the staff participated in a training session on working as interpreters in the school system. The Prevention Services division has also developed a Spanish-English glossary of frequently-used education terminology for interpreters.

At the school level, bilingual parent liaisons assist with translation and interpretation at some schools. In other schools, ESL teachers or other bilingual staff, parent volunteers, community organizations, and students themselves provide translation and interpretation, usually on an ad hoc basis.

Family Engagement Initiatives

Recognizing the importance of increased parental engagement for improved student achievement, districts and schools across the country have been working to find meaningful ways to involve parents in the educational process. For immigrant families to be truly integrated into their educational communities, it often takes an active role on the part of the school district. Below we discuss the most notable parent engagement initiatives serving immigrant parents in the districts we visited.

HOUSTON

HISD offers a variety of workshops and classes to encourage immigrant parents to be active partners in their children's education. For example, the Family Leadership Institute (FLI), which is offered to parents of middle and high school students in both Spanish and English, consists of a ten-module curriculum that covers a variety of topics. The topics range from the cultural challenges of "living in two worlds" to the value of a college education. The curriculum was designed by a Nevada organization, Educational Achievement Services. HISD first instituted the program in 2004. During the 2006-07 school year, 300 parents participated in the district program, and approximately 250 graduated. In addition to the district-run FLI program, approximately 30 schools offer FLI to parents.

Another notable program is HISD's partnership with the Mexican Institute of Greater Houston and Monterrey Tech to offer computer classes for parents in Spanish. This program, which began in 2003, currently serves over 800 parents annually and is offered at 62 schools and community colleges.⁵⁸ By providing parents with training on basic computer usage, HISD hopes that parents will be able to help their children with their school work—much of which requires computers.

SEATTLE

Of the districts we visited, Seattle has the most extensive parent involvement strategy. As discussed on page 27, the district runs a Bilingual Family Center to assist LEP families and students with enrollment, school transportation, transcripts, testing, and many other school related activities. In addition, SPS has two family outreach units that focus heavily on LEP families: the Family and Community Partnerships Project, which is part of the Family Support and Community Partnerships Program, and the Division of Family and Community Engagement.

⁵⁸ "Board Approves Two Adult-Education Initiatives." HISD Connect. 12 October 2007.

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The Family and Community Partnerships Project began in 2000 and is funded from the City of Seattle's Families and Education Levy and United Way. The project works directly with 21 elementary schools to increase family involvement. For 10 of these schools, the office awards grants to community organizations for their staff to devote between 10 and 15 hours per week to family involvement work at each school.⁵⁹ All four of the community-based organizations involved—Neighborhood House, Refugee Women's Alliance, Urban Impact, and Southwest Youth and Family Services—work extensively with immigrant communities and have multilingual staff. Each of these schools also has access to an additional \$5,000 stipend for providing resources that remove barriers to family involvement, such as offering family dinners, child care at parent events, interpretation services, and transportation as needed. For the 11 remaining schools, the project funds family community partnership coordinators at each school. Coordinators, who are often parents themselves, are given a \$5,000 annual stipend for a commitment of 8 to 10 hours per week.

In addition to working with schools, the Family and Community Partnerships Project also offers materials designed specially for LEP and immigrant families. The project distributes two handbooks for parents in nine languages: a guide for bilingual families that provides an introduction to the school system and a handbook that provides parents with tools for becoming involved in their children's education based on Joyce Epstein's six best practices of family involvement. Portions of these guides are also available in audio in eight languages so that non-literate parents can access this information.⁶⁰

The project has also worked to translate math, literacy, and WASL kits into nine languages. The project distributes several thousand of these kits to families at the elementary school level each year. The kits include tips, activities, and games that parents can play with their children to help them learn math, reading and writing. Families learn to play the games together at Family Nights held at their schools; often these events are organized by language group (e.g., Somali Family Math Night or Latino Family Literacy Night).

What sets the Seattle school district apart, however, is not its activities, but the fact that these activities are part of a comprehensive strategy of parent involvement that incorporates the central administration, schools, parents, and community organizations. The School-Family Partnerships Policy,⁶¹ passed by the Seattle School Board in 2004, lays out the framework for this strategy.

The policy establishes a School-Family Partnership Committee composed of parents who "reflect the diversity of Seattle Public Schools families," including linguistic and cultural diversity. The committee, which reports to the superintendent, developed a district-wide School-Family Partnership Plan in 2005 and currently meets monthly to oversee the implementation of this plan. Both the School Board policy and district plan state that schools and the district must provide translated information to parents. The plan also outlines measurable outcomes, and schools must report each semester on their compliance. The School-Family Partnership Committee then evaluates each school annually and reports the results to the superintendent and the School Board.

⁵⁹ Community groups receive \$14,000 per year for each school that they work with. The grants are for a three-year period and end in 2008.

⁶⁰ See <http://www.nhwa.org/gethelp/community-resources.php>

⁶¹ Seattle School Board Policy E10.01

Although the district has yet to implement many parts of the School-Family Partnership Plan, it did create the Division of Community and Family Engagement in 2007 in response to the plan. The division consists of a manager and two family liaisons, one who works with the East African community and another who works with the Southeast Asian community. All staff members are native speakers of languages other than English. The division is in the process of hiring two additional liaisons to work with the South Pacific Islander and African American communities.

RALEIGH

WCPSS reaches out to immigrant parents primarily through its parent liaisons program. Currently the district employs 21 parent liaisons (17 full-time, four part-time), half of whom are bilingual.⁶² One-third of the schools in the district have parent liaisons, with each liaison assigned to two or three schools. The main role of the parent liaisons is to serve as a link between teachers and parents, and home visits are a large part of the work. Assisting schools and parents with translation and interpretation is also a primary responsibility for bilingual parent liaisons. Additionally, parent liaisons hold Spanish language information sessions on various educational topics in neighborhoods with a high concentration of Latinos. The parent liaison program started through a private grant in the late 1990s with just four liaisons, targeting schools with high numbers of children that are struggling or need more assistance and LEP families. The district then took over funding responsibility for the program and expanded it. The district also has a parent engagement program for its Title I schools with its own parent liaisons, but this program is not designed specifically for LEP and immigrant families.

Prevention Services runs a five-week workshop for Spanish-speaking parents to educate them about the educational system, their rights, and how to become involved in their children's education. The workshop is taught in Spanish and provides free child-care to the 10 to 20 parents who participate in each session. Classes were offered at 20 schools during the 2006 school-year, and the district is hoping to double this number in 2007.

Another resource for immigrant parents is the district's Customer Service Center, which parents can visit or call. The Center has staff members who speak Spanish, as well as written information in Spanish. Staff members provide parents with school enrollment information, or they direct parents to other services, such as ESL classes.

Newcomer Services

Most of the initiatives we have discussed thus far are designed for LEP parents and children, who may or may not be born outside the United States. Many school districts have programs for recent immigrants that not only focus on English language instruction, but also provide general support for students that are transitioning to a new country and culture. Increasingly, cities are establishing special schools for immigrant students, often known as "newcomer schools." Below we discuss special programs for newcomers in HISD, SPS, and WCPSS.

HOUSTON

HISD opened Newcomer Charter High School (recently renamed Liberty High School) in January 2005 to serve immigrant students who had dropped out of high school or were at risk of dropping out. The school operates on a

⁶² Nine speak Spanish, and one speaks French.

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year-round basis with flexible hours in order to accommodate students who hold jobs. Many of the school's students are older than traditional high school age. The school generally enrolls about 200 students each year, offering them intensive English classes as well as instruction in other subjects. Given that students are at various points in completing their diplomas, fewer than a dozen students graduate each year.

In addition, HISD also offers group counseling programs for newly arrived immigrant students who are having trouble adjusting to their new school environments. This counseling program is offered at five HISD high schools, which were selected as a result of their large numbers of newly arrived immigrants. Each program has 30 participating students for a total of 150 immigrant students being served annually.

As part of the program, Counselor María Magdalena Rustomji has her students write a weekly reflection. Often these reflections are about each student's experience with immigration and their related fears for their family's welfare. After several years of having students write their reflections, Rustomji decided to put these stories together in a published book. This not only has provided students with a way to share their experiences with each other, but the book has also been used for training purposes to help make teachers and principals more aware of the diverse social, emotional, and academic needs of immigrant youth. We include an excerpt from this book in the box on page 33.

SEATTLE

SPS has set up Bilingual Orientation Centers (BOCs), which are designed to support immigrant students who know very little English and/or may be preliterate in their own language. The stated mission of the BOCs is threefold: 1) maximize basic English language proficiency in as short a period as possible; 2) orient students to American customs and the Seattle Public Schools culture; 3) continue student growth in academic courses such as math, science, and social studies. Because most of these students are new to the country and many have come from war-torn areas of the world, the BOCs programs work to fill in general educational gaps while also increasing student literacy skills. Students are mainly taught in English, with native language instruction in some subjects such as math. After one to three semesters at a BOC, students transition into a regular school.

At the elementary school level, BOCs are housed in three schools: The Thurgood Marshall, John Stanford International and West Seattle elementary schools. Elementary BOCs students attend their own classes, but participate in school-wide activities with non-BOCs students. At the middle and high school level, the district runs a single Secondary Bilingual Orientation Center (SBOC) with its own campus. The SBOC was established in 1980 to accommodate an influx of immigrants from Southeast Asia. Today, between 500 and 600 students from all over the world attend annually. With students speaking over 30 languages, instruction is primarily in English, but students have a "native language advisory" period each day in which they can ask for help with their school work or with general concerns in their own language. Students are assigned to classes by language ability, rather than by age (which differs from the elementary BOCs where students are assigned by age). The school is staffed primarily with bilingual teachers, many of whom have specializations in counseling. Teachers work in teams to integrate the curriculum across subjects, incorporating English-language learning into all classes. In addition to public funding, the SBOC has a grant from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation to research best practices for ELLs.

RALEIGH

While Raleigh has not yet implemented a newcomer program, it has plans to open three pilot programs for the Spring 2008 semester aimed at LEP high school students with interrupted learning. The idea is to target children most at risk of dropping out. Students who are nominated by their principal or teacher will attend classes at the center and then will transition to regular ESL classes at a regular school. Centers will be located inside of regular schools but will operate independently. The district is currently in the process of recruiting qualified, experienced ESL teachers for the centers. Under the pilot phase the district will place 20 students at each center for a total of 60 students. The newcomer programs are supported by a special state fund, the Disadvantaged Student Supplement Fund (DSSF),⁶³ for Spring 2008, and will subsequently be funded by Title III.

I was born in Chengdu, Sichuan, China. I love my city, it is very beautiful. My first language is Chinese. I like Chinese, for it is a beautiful language. I'm seventeen years old but perhaps I look younger. I live here with my dad. He came here four years ago, he was a doctor in China for 20 years. He is an excellent doctor and father. My mother is a college teacher in China. When my father told me that I would come to the United States, I thought I would miss my mother, all my friends and all of my life because I had never lived in another city all by myself. On February 20, 2005, I left my mother and all my friends. I will never forget that day.

When I came here to the United States, I didn't have any friends, I didn't speak English, I went to Bellaire High School a week later after arriving in Houston. The students were very nice, we were all ESL students, from different countries and speaking different languages. However, some American students would laugh at me when they heard me speaking funny. My ESL friends who had been here longer, helped me a lot. As days went by, I make more friends. They would help me when I did not understand. I like it here very much but I will never forget my native land, my family, my mom and all my friends back in China.

Houston Independent School District. "Mi mundo en palabras: A Celebration of Student Writers." Libro Ocho. Title III Writing Festival. Spring 2006, 108.

Other Noteworthy Programs

In addition to the above-mentioned support services for immigrant students, many school districts have developed other noteworthy programs that are helping to integrate immigrant students and their parents into the public school system. These programs include federally-funded programs for migrant farmworkers and refugees, after-school and summer programs targeted to LEP students, and pre-kindergarten programs. Our research did not focus on these programs, but we touch briefly on a few of these efforts in HISD, SPS, and WCPSS below.

Both HISD and SPS receive Refugee Impact Grants from the federal government. In HISD the Office of Refugee Programs provides a variety of support services to refugee students, including in-class group tutoring, translation services for refugee parents, teacher training on diversity and multiculturalism, referrals to refugee resettlement programs, and materials for classrooms with refugees (such as audio tapes and picture dictionaries).

⁶³ The state established DSSF in 2004 to allow school districts to attract and retain qualified teachers and to provide instructional programs for "at risk" students. For 2006-07, the legislature allocated \$49.5 million for DSSF state-wide.

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Title I-Part C migrant education funding supports activities designed to help migrant students in both Houston and Seattle. HISD uses its migrant education funding to provide after-school tutoring and enrichment services for migrant students, credit recovery programs for students who need to “make up” credits in order to graduate, additional translation services, uniform vouchers for migrant students to purchase mandatory elementary school uniforms and outreach and trainings for parents.⁶⁴ SPS’s migrant programs include a year-round Saturday program that is open to all migrant and bilingual students in grades K-12 that provides students with assistance in core subject areas; a five-week summer school program for high school migrant students; and a PASS program, which offers high school students a chance to earn full or partial credit for missed courses (with some of the courses offered to students in both English and Spanish).⁶⁵

WCPSS, in contrast, does not have any district-wide programs for refugees or migrants. The district used to have a migrant education program, but the program was discontinued in June 2006 because of decreasing migrant enrollment in the district.

All three cities offer a wide array of additional learning opportunities for students, usually through Title III funds. For example, HISD offers Title III summer programs for immigrant students, including intensive English classes that are open to all LEP students at the middle and high school level and accelerated ESL coursework to help LEP students, many of them past traditional school age, make up credits in order to graduate.

And finally, each city offers early childhood learning opportunities for LEP students. For example, HISD has opened early childhood education centers that offer full-day pre-kindergarten classes to low-income and LEP children, serving over 2,000 children per year.⁶⁶

⁶⁴ HISD currently has 700 migrant students, half the number of migrant students it had in the system a mere four years ago.

⁶⁵ Seattle Public Schools Website: <http://www.seattleschools.org/area/migrant/programs.htm>

⁶⁶ Houston Independent School District: <http://www.houstonisd.org/HISDConnectDS>

SECTION III: HORIZONTAL INITIATIVES TO INTEGRATE IMMIGRANTS

In addition to addressing immigrant issues through sectoral policies and programs, such as those focused on K-12 education, many local governments have government initiatives across policy areas that focus on immigrants. The Houston mayor's office has an Office of Immigrant and Refugee Affairs (MOIRA), and the City of Seattle recently developed an Immigrant and Refugee Action Plan that includes several initiatives to increase access to government services for immigrants, including the creation of an Immigrant and Refugee Advisory Board. Neither Raleigh nor Wake County has a centralized government body dedicated to immigrant issues, although the Raleigh city government runs a small Latin American Services program as part of its Community Services Department, and Wake County government has a Title VI Language Access Action Policy that outlines a plan for improving access for LEP individuals to government services. We discuss these initiatives below.

HOUSTON

Houston's MOIRA was established in May of 2001 and aims to connect immigrants and refugees with city services. With only one full-time staff member and no budget of its own, the office has limited influence. The office's main function is to promote positive community relations. It publishes a service directory in six languages and provides referrals on a more individual basis to city staff and immigrants. The office also helps to organize a range of events, including immigration and citizenship forums that provide free legal assistance to immigrants. Finally, MOIRA runs an advisory group made up of community organizations, which is tasked with providing the Mayor's office with feedback on city services to immigrants.

SEATTLE

Seattle has launched several initiatives related to immigrant integration. Seattle was the first city in the country after September 11 to pass legislation restricting the enforcement of federal civil immigration laws. Ordinance 121063, passed in 2003 by the City Council and signed into law by the Mayor, prohibits city employees from inquiring about immigration status, except in the case of a criminal investigation. Seattle's Mayor, Greg Nickels, has issued two executive-orders on immigrant issues: Executive Order 04-03 that directs all city departments to recognize the Mexican Consular Identification Card as a valid form of identification for seeking city services, and Executive Order 01-07 that institutes a city-wide translation and interpretation policy. The translation and interpretation policy requires city departments to translate all documents "that provide essential information for accessing basic city services and benefits" into Spanish, Vietnamese, Cantonese, Mandarin, Somali, Tagalog, and Korean.⁶⁷ Departments must translate documents into additional languages under other circumstances, such as when a program is targeting a specific community whose language is not one of the seven required languages.

In 2007, the Mayor released an Immigrant and Refugee Action Plan, which "sets out short and long-term actions that represent the City's next steps in its efforts to integrate immigrants and refugees into our community."⁶⁸ This plan was prompted in part by city-wide consultations with the immigrant community that were undertaken as part of a wider Race and Social Justice Initiative. These consultations showed that access to city services is a problem for many

67 City of Seattle Translation and Interpretation Policy. 28 September 2006. http://www.seattle.gov/mayor/issues/rsji/docs/Translation_and_Interpretation_Policy.PDF

68 City of Seattle, Immigrant and Refugee Report and Action Plan. June 2007. http://www.seattle.gov/mayor/issues/rsji/immigrants/docs/I&R_Report.pdf

Section III: Horizontal Initiatives to Integrate Immigrants

immigrants, particularly because of language and cultural barriers.⁶⁹ The Immigrant and Refugee Action Plan calls for numerous steps, including complete implementation of the city's translation and interpretation policy by December 2008, modification of city hiring policies to recruit more bilingual staff, and the creation of an immigrant and refugee advisory board that will report to the mayor, city council, and city departments.

To oversee implementation of the Immigration and Refugee Action Plan, the Mayor created a staff position in his office of Immigrant and Refugee Program Planner. Furthermore, each initiative in the plan has a lead department, which is responsible for forming interdepartmental teams as necessary to work out implementation. Every city department must also designate a staff person to be a translation/interpretation liaison. Finally, the Immigrant and Refugee Advisory Board will also help to oversee implementation of the plan.

RALEIGH

Raleigh City government's Community Services Department began a Latin American Services program in 2000. Without its own budget or any full-time staff of its own, Latin American Services is not a stand-alone program; rather, it could be described as a program category for Community Services Department activities that are targeted to the Latino community. Most of these are outreach efforts that, in the words of the Latin American Service's mission, "actively seek out members of the Latin American community in an effort to facilitate their integration into our culture."⁷⁰ Typical activities, conducted primarily in Spanish, include going door-to-door to explain about city trash and noise regulations, and participating in community festivals. Latin American Services also provides information and referrals for city and county services (particularly social services).

Wake County Government does not have any central programs targeted to immigrants, but it does have a language access policy. The county instituted a Title VI Language Access Action Policy in 2004 to ensure compliance with Title VI of the US Civil Rights Act, which prohibits discrimination or denial of benefits based on a person's race, color, or national origin for any program receiving federal funding. The policy stemmed from a 2001 review by the Office of Civil Rights of the US Department of Health and Human Services that found North Carolina's health and human services to be out of compliance with Title VI. The state entered into a voluntary compliance agreement with the Office of Civil Rights, which required counties to draft language access policies. Wake County's policy includes provisions for multilingual signage in public areas, annual assessments of language needs in the county, procedures for interpretation and translation such as a requirement to inform people of the right to free interpretation and a prohibition on interpretation by minors, staff training, and mechanisms for monitoring and complaints. It is not clear, however, that this policy has been fully implemented, even though implementation was supposed to be completed by December 2005. For example, in our brief visit to the public offices of Wake County Human Services, we saw little evidence of multilingual signage—one of the most basic provisions in the policy.

69 City of Seattle, Immigrant and Refugee Community Engagement Project Summary Report. January 2007. <http://www.seattle.gov/mayor/issues/rsji/docs/061205IRCommEngagementExecSummaryFINAL.pdf>

70 Raleigh.org http://www.raleighc.org/portal/server.pt/gateway/PTARGS_0_0_306_202_0_43/http://pt03/DIG_Web_Content/category/Resident/Neighborhoods/Cat-1C-2005110-153235-Hispanic_and_Latino_Amer.html

SECTION IV: NEXT STEPS AND LESSONS LEARNED

The main purpose of this report is to identify local government programs and policies related to immigrant integration. It is important to note, however, that having a program or policy in place does not mean that the program or policy is being implemented properly or that it is having the intended impact. The next step after identifying programs and policies is to evaluate their effectiveness. While we touch on the implementation or impact of the programs and policies where we were able to gather relevant information, evaluation of specific programs is beyond the scope of this study. We do, however, offer some thoughts on methods for evaluating government programs and policies related to immigrant integration. We also draw on program evaluation tools to provide some analysis of best practices in the area of immigrant integration.

Rather than attempting to develop an evaluation framework from scratch, we turn to the field of program evaluation for guidance on evaluation methods. One of the most basic tools in program evaluation is the logic model.⁷¹ Simple yet powerful, the logic model is a means for organizing complex information about programs and policies. The model can be used for two purposes: as the first step in a formal evaluation of an individual program or group of programs, or as a program planning tool.

Logic models vary, but a basic model consists of the following elements: goals, resources, activities, outputs, and outcomes. Goals are the aims of the program or policy. Resources are the physical elements required to run a program or policy, such as funding, staff, buildings, materials. Activities are the actions that make up the program or policy, such as providing services and publicizing services. Outputs are the direct or proximate results of activities and are usually expressed in the form of an indicator, such as number of people receiving services. Outcomes are the impacts of a program or policy, such as a service's effect on employment. Each element of the logic model follows from the previous element. Every activity should have corresponding resources, for example, and outputs should relate to activities. To illustrate the connection between elements, logic models are often depicted as flow charts.

As mentioned above, the logic model is just an initial step in an evaluation. Once an evaluator has fitted the program's functions and expected results into a logic model,⁸⁷ the evaluator can use the model to develop an evaluation plan. Evaluations can focus solely on implementation (resources, activities, and outputs but not outcomes), solely on impacts (outcomes), or on both implementation and impacts. Evaluation methods range from experimental designs with randomized treatment and control groups to simple observational studies.

How can the logic model be employed in the evaluation of local government efforts to integrate immigrants? We provide a stripped-down logic model for evaluating a school district's immigrant integration programs and policies as a whole to show the basic approach (see page 38). Our model is not as detailed or comprehensive as would be necessary for a proper evaluation, but we offer it to illustrate the general concept of a logic model. To evaluate a school district's programs and policies based on this model, one would need to design a study to gather information on implementation and outputs (e.g., how are resources allocated? are planned activities being conducted?) and measure outcomes (e.g. are the programs meeting the broader goal of immigrant integration?). The research in this report on school districts provides some basic information in a few of these areas, but an evaluation would require a much more thorough approach. We hope that the information we have gathered, however, will assist future researchers (or school districts themselves) to design a more systematic study.

71 Innovation Network, Inc. "Logic Model Workbook." http://www.innonet.org/client_docs/File/LM_workbook.pdf.

W.K. Kellogg Foundation. "Logic Model Development Guide." December 2001. <http://www.wkkf.org/Pubs/Tools/Evaluation/Pub3669.pdf>

Section IV: Next Steps and Lessons Learned

Goal: To ensure that immigrant children graduate from school with the skills to become productive and engaged members of society and that non-immigrant children learn the skills and values, such as respect for other cultures, required in a diverse society

RESOURCES

- Funding
- Facilities
- Transportation for students, staff, and parents
- Qualified teachers, administrators, interpreters, and other staff who work effectively with immigrant children and their parents
- Children who are ready to learn
- Involved parents
- Curricula and other guidance for staff training, student instruction, and parent outreach
- Books and other materials for staff training, student instruction, and parent outreach (translated into multiple languages as necessary)
- Computers and other technologies for instruction, data storage, and translation and interpretation
- Data on students, parents, and staff that can be used for planning and assessment
- Translated official documents, such as report cards and school notices
- Mechanisms to assess program implementation and outcomes, including teacher and student performance
- Formal policies that outline expectations, division of responsibilities, and procedures for programs

ACTIVITIES

- Teach LEP children English
- Help immigrant children adapt to US culture
- Teach non-immigrant students respect for other cultures
- Ensure that immigrant children are ready to learn
- Work to engage immigrant parents in their children's education
- Translate written documents and provide oral interpretation for parents
- Train teachers, administrators, and interpreters to work with immigrant and LEP children and families
- Make effective use of existing staff language skills
- Recruit bilingual and multicultural staff and trained teachers
- Gather and analyze data to identify the needs of immigrant students and how to better meet these needs
- Assess performance of immigrant students and their teachers
- Monitor program implementation and outcomes
- Develop clear policies to guide programs and activities

OUTPUTS

- # of children participating in a given program
- # of hours children participate in a given program each week
- # of months/years a child spends in a given program on average
- # of parent outreach activities undertaken and % of immigrant parents participating in outreach activities
- % of documents translated
- % of interpretation requests fulfilled
- # of times interpretation was provided in a year
- # of staff and teacher trainings offered and % of staff trained
- % of bilingual staff who use their language skills in their job
- # of bilingual and multicultural staff
- % of immigrant and LEP student records with proper tracking of home language
- % of immigrant and LEP students who have taken a given assessment test
- % of teachers who have undergone a given assessment process

OUTCOMES

Short-term

- Immigrant and LEP children meet a given performance standard in English and other subjects
- Immigrant children advance to the next grade level on par
- Non-immigrant children develop a better understanding of other cultures
- Immigrant parents are more engaged in their children's education
- Staff are more effective at working with immigrant students and their families

Medium-term

- Most immigrant children meet the same performance standards as their non-immigrant peers in English and other subjects
- Immigrant children graduate from high school
- Immigrant children go on to college or find stable jobs

Long-term

- Immigrants achieve the same level of economic success as their non-immigrant peers
- Immigrants feel part of society and are civically engaged

As mentioned above, logic models have a second function in addition to program evaluation—program planning. In the following section, we use concepts from the logic model to draw some broad conclusions about what elements should be considered in government efforts to integrate immigrants. These conclusions are based on our research in Houston, Seattle, and Raleigh, and we highlight specific programs and policies in each city to support our analysis.

KEY GOALS OF GOVERNMENT INVOLVEMENT IN IMMIGRANT INTEGRATION

While individual program and policy goals will differ, programs and policies should be directed toward the broader goal of immigrant integration as a two-way process. Of course, not all government programs and policies are related to immigrant integration, and the question of what should be the scope of government involvement in immigrant integration is a complex one—and beyond the purview of this report. But where the connection between government and immigrant integration is clear (either with programs targeted to immigrants or general programs that serve significant numbers of immigrants), we argue that immigrant integration should be viewed as a process involving both immigrants and non-immigrants.

Racism and discrimination against immigrants remain significant challenges, as do general misperceptions about immigration (e.g. automatically assuming a person of Mexican background is an unauthorized immigrant). Public perceptions of immigrants can change naturally if immigrants are engaged in a wider community. The more immigrant and native-born residents “know each other,” the more likely they are to see each other as distinct individuals, rather than stereotypes. Government can play an important role in this process through many of the integration efforts that we discuss in this report. Educating all children about the value of diversity and how to handle cultural differences is another proactive step government can take.

A final comment on goals is that just because a program or policy focuses on immigration or immigrant issues, it does not mean that the program or policy has the goal of immigrant integration. Many times government offices and programs related to immigrants are created for other purposes: to gain votes, to co-opt a movement or issue, or to appease critics by appearing to take action. People interested in implementing policies that have a real impact in the area of immigrant integration, whether they be policymakers, advocates, or bureaucrats, should pay close attention to the actual goals of programs, not only the stated goals.

REQUIRED RESOURCES AND OPTIMAL ALLOCATION

Decisions about what resources are needed and how to distribute these resources are central to any program or policy, and these decisions are inherently political. Whether a program has its own budget, for example, can be an important indicator of the priority a government places on that activity and the ability of a program to have a wide-scale impact. Funding is not the only element that defines a program’s resources; resources include staff, facilities, technology, and materials. A program’s resources also include “donations” from other organizations or people—such as when a community-based organization provides voluntary interpretation for a program event. Decisions about resources involve more than determining the amount of resources. Programs need the right resources, and they need to use them

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wisely. Below we discuss some resource considerations of particular relevance to immigrant integration policies and programs and provide examples based on our research.

One of the most basic resource decisions that governments must make related to immigrant integration is how to structure their approach. Should a government create specific programs dedicated to immigrant integration issues or should the government dedicate resources to improving immigrant integration efforts within general programs? Where the purpose of a program is very specific or requires extensive specialized knowledge, such as translation and interpretation, having a separate office can be preferable because it allows a government to concentrate scarce resources and better control quality of services. However, if the goal is broader, such as providing general social services to immigrants, it is often better to direct resources toward improving the effectiveness of general programs at serving immigrants. A main reason for this is political: programs that serve a narrow constituency are much easier to under-fund or to eliminate than programs that serve a broad base. If a government's goal is to develop policies and programs that will have a real impact on immigrant integration and will be sustainable, the government should set up mechanisms within existing structures to achieve this goal. The challenge is for these mechanisms to be sufficient to ensure that immigrants are not marginalized within the larger structure.

Our research provides support for these conclusions, albeit anecdotal. The Houston Mayor's Office of Immigrant and Refugee Affairs, an office specifically designed to serve immigrants, has only one staff person, no budget of its own, and could be discontinued with the next change in mayoral administration. The broader approach of Seattle's mayor offers more promise. In June 2007, Mayor Greg Nickels established an Immigrant and Refugee Action Plan that takes a comprehensive, city-wide approach to immigrant integration. The Plan requires city departments to take specific steps related to translation and interpretation, the hiring of bilingual staff, and consultation with immigrant communities on city policies and services.

Leadership and political will matter in resource allocation. Stand-alone programs dedicated to immigrants need funding and a mandate in order to have a real impact, both of which require support from higher authorities. Improving the ability of general-population programs to work with immigrants often requires a rethinking of procedures and even agency culture—changes that are difficult to make without leadership. But, the incentives for authorities to not only support new policy approaches but to ensure their effectiveness are not always strong.

Politicians are often the initiators of offices or advisory groups dedicated to immigrant issues. The incentives for politicians are clear: these efforts cater to a specific constituency and can win votes. But the same incentives that lead politicians to set up these initiatives can also result in these initiatives being shallow and short-lived. If one's ultimate goal is to gain as many votes for oneself or one's party as possible, spreading resources around as widely as possible is often the wisest strategy. This strategy leads to the creation of many programs and policies with few resources for each. And the fact that many immigrants are not eligible to vote means that the incentive for politicians to dedicate significant resources to immigrant issues is small, particularly in areas of the country where few immigrants are naturalized citizens. With election cycles generally ranging from two to four years, incentives to set up sustainable structures are minimal. Another factor that limits sustainability is the motivation to set up structures that are closely

tied to a politician's administration. Being closely linked to an initiative gives politicians more control over the outcomes and enables them to claim credit for these outcomes. This tendency works against program longevity because subsequent administrations are likely to discontinue or marginalize programs that are closely associated with a preceding administration.

Politicians can also be more likely than other actors to cater to anti-immigrant sentiment and institute policies that hinder immigrant integration, if the political benefits that can be gained from implementing anti-immigrants policies are stronger than the benefits that can be gained from supporting policies that help immigrants.

An example of how political incentives can work against setting up structures with sustained impact is the North Carolina Governor's Office of Hispanic/Latino Affairs. Governor Hunt created the office in 1998, and it was continued by his successor, Governor Easley. The office has no budget of its own and a limited staff. It is attached to an advisory council, made up of 15 appointed members from the Latino community and 12 ex-officio members representing various state government offices. The council meets several times a year and issues recommendations on various issues. In the late 1990s, the office and council were instrumental in several key policy changes, including the granting of driver licenses to unauthorized immigrants and reforming the marriage licensing process to be more accessible to immigrants. With a change in governor and in political climate after September 11, the office's influence waned. Governor Easley reversed the driver license policy without consultation with the office or council. Today the office mainly focuses on public relations.

Even in the case of Mayor Greg Nickel's ambitious effort to make immigrant integration a priority across Seattle city government, only time will tell if it is able to meet its goals and be sustainable. Although the mayor calls for several concrete steps, some of which are backed by Executive Orders, and outlines a specific implementation plan for many of these, the plan does not include funding to support its initiatives. And many of the proposed actions are vague enough in scope and implementation that they may not lead to real change.

Politicians are not the only actors with the authority to enact change that facilitates immigrant integration—political will and leadership can also come from the bureaucracy. Agency heads and program directors often have a great deal of discretion in the allocation of funds, setting of priorities, and creation of policies and procedures. They also have control over program implementation, which can dictate how effective a program is.

The incentives for bureaucrats to support immigrant integration efforts are even less clear than for politicians. The benefits of policies and programs to integrate immigrants are often diffuse, long-term, and do not accrue directly to the agency that offers the policy. Without external incentives to offer policies and programs to integrate immigrants, such as funding earmarked for translation and interpretation or laws that require agencies to undertake certain activities, departments have little reason to offer these services or make them a priority.

Of course, agency heads and program directors can and do undertake actions without strong internal or external incentives, often because of a belief (either personal or agency-wide) that the program or policy is the right thing

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to do. However, because personal values and agency cultures vary, this can lead to inconsistent and unsustainable policy approaches to immigrant integration. And enacting policies without backing from explicit internal or external incentives can be difficult, even for the head of a department.

Wake County Human Services, for example, has several staff in positions of leadership who are committed to providing services to help immigrants. Many of these individuals have lobbied for improved translation and interpretation, bilingual signage, and hiring of bilingual staff. However, with an elected County Board of Commissioners that has made cracking down on unauthorized immigrants a priority and with few direct internal or external incentives for offering such services, garnering support and funding for measures to help immigrants, even documented immigrants, is an uphill battle. An internal committee has tried to use Title VI to incentivize action in the area of translation and interpretation, but has had only modest success.

If the incentives for individual government actors to implement meaningful policies and programs to integrate immigrants are inherently weak, what is the solution? Alter the incentives for government actors. Government itself can change incentives through regulation or through the allocation of funds. Outside actors, such as advocacy groups, can also affect incentives by applying pressure on government. We discuss this in more detail under the activities section below.

We turn now away from issues of how resources are allocated toward a discussion of what specific resources are necessary for immigrant integration efforts to be successful. Rather than producing an exhaustive list, we focus on human resources that are particularly relevant to immigrant integration. We enumerate these below.

Staff members who are knowledgeable about immigrant issues, speak multiple languages, and represent various cultural backgrounds are crucial. Here recruitment, training, and effective use of existing staff skills all play a role. Having systems in place to identify and track staff language skills and incorporating this information into decisions about job duties are basic steps that government offices can take to improve their services for LEP populations. Rethinking personnel policies so that language skills are better rewarded is another action local government institutions can take.

Staff members who provide translation and interpretation services are important. The skills required to interact with people in a given language and the skills required to provide translation and interpretation in that language are not one in the same. For offices to ensure adequate translation and interpretation services, they must hire qualified translators and interpreters, provide bilingual staff with special training to serve as translators and interpreters, or contract with outside service providers. An office need not have a large budget to put in place these kinds of initiatives. For example, the Prevention Services Division of Wake County Public School System, which has an annual budget of only \$30,000, established a district-wide program to formally assess the language skills of bilingual staff and provide them with special training on interpretation and translation.

Staff members who develop and coordinate internal policies and practices related to immigrant integration are valuable. Formal policies and procedures facilitate consistent implementation of services related to language access and the handling of immigration status. Dedicating staff resources to developing and overseeing these policies helps to ensure that these policies are effective. For example, the Seattle’s mayor has created a full-time staff position of Immigrant and Refugee Program Planner in his office and required each department to designate a staff person as a translation/interpretation liaison in order to coordinate the implementation of his Immigrant and Refugee Action Plan.

Partnerships with non-governmental organizations are critical. Community-based organizations often have specific expertise and language skills, as well as strong relationships with the communities they serve. By establishing relationships with nongovernmental organizations through formal contracts or informal partnerships, government can capitalize on these resources and expand its own capabilities to serve immigrants. All of the cities we visited had programs that relied on community partnerships. For example, Seattle’s Department of Neighborhoods has a Neighborhood Matching Fund that offers \$3.2 million in grants annually to community organizations for neighborhood-based projects, many of which are in immigrant communities. Projects funded range from after-school tutoring for Spanish-speaking immigrants to the creation of multilingual road signs.⁷²

ACTIVITIES

The main activities that programs or offices engage in related to immigrant integration will vary—education activities will clearly differ from housing activities, for example. However, there are several activities that are relevant across program areas: staff training, interpretation and translation, outreach and consultation, and monitoring and evaluation. We discuss each below.

Training staff to work with immigrant populations and to understand policies and procedures related to immigrants:

Translation and interpretation services are useless if staff do not know that they are available or how to access them. And in the case where certain classes of immigrants are eligible for services while others are not, staff need to be trained in how to determine eligibility so that eligible immigrants are not turned away. Most of the offices in the cities we visited offered staff trainings related to general issues of diversity. But it is important to distinguish between training that is offered on a limited basis and training that is widespread and systematic. For staff training to have a broad impact, it must involve all staff who work with the public and administrators that run these departments. For example, the Houston Independent School District instituted a mandatory training for all ESL and bilingual teachers on district guidelines for ESL and bilingual instruction.

Translation and interpretation: Ensuring that LEP immigrants are able to access government services includes having key written materials available in multiple languages, both on the internet and in hard copy, and providing mechanisms for LEP individuals to access interpreters, either in-person or over the phone. Other activities include developing clear policies and procedures that explain when translation and interpretation is available and how these services can be utilized and communicating these policies and procedures to staff and immigrants. For example, the

⁷² More information on the program and past awards can be found at <http://www.cityofseattle.net/neighborhoods/nmf/>

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Houston Independent School District has policies issued by the School Board and superintendent and communicated through formal memoranda that instruct staff on translation and interpretation procedures. Technology can be a useful tool, particularly where resources are very limited or where language needs are diverse. Several private companies offer phone interpretation services in over 100 languages or online libraries of translated materials. For example, the Wake County Public School System contracts with TransAct, an online service that provides standard education-related documents in multiple languages. However, technology should be used thoughtfully and with close attention to quality, particularly in the case of automated translation and interpretation.

Outreach and consultation: Every organization struggles with outreach. Immigrants do not all speak and understand English, and they may not have access to the internet. Often information about government services is passed through word of mouth. Many immigrants also have fears about interacting with government institutions, either because of attitudes toward government in their home countries or because they are in the United States illegally and fear deportation. Outreach activities are often necessary in order for immigrants to be aware of and feel comfortable accessing government services. Involving immigrants and community organizations in the policy process through consultation is also important for ensuring that government services are effective at meeting immigrant needs. Several of the cities in this report had structures set up to involve immigrants in the policy process. For example, every HISD school has a committee made up of LEP parents and school staff that is tasked with determining the placement of children in bilingual and ESL programs.

Monitoring and evaluation: Policies are meaningless if they are not implemented. And policies that are implemented but are implemented poorly may not achieve their intended outcomes. Governments can reduce this problem by setting up internal mechanisms to monitor implementation and evaluate effectiveness. For example, Seattle Public Schools has a parents' committee that includes parents who speak languages other than English and reports to the School Board and the Superintendent on the implementation of the district's parent engagement plan. The risk in government not being proactive at monitoring and evaluation, besides wasted tax dollars on ineffective programs, is that government offices can face lawsuits or other penalties for failing to meet their commitments. Outside monitoring in the form of lawsuits can be a powerful force for change in the area of immigrant integration. For example, the Bilingual Family Center in Seattle, which provides translation and interpretation services for LEP families, was created by the school district in response to a lawsuit. But lawsuits are time-consuming and expensive for all involved. It is preferable for government to take proactive steps to ensure that its programs and policies are being implemented properly.

EXPECTED OUTPUTS AND OUTCOMES

Outputs and outcomes are very specific to individual programs or policies, making generalizations across programs or policies difficult. Although we cannot offer any broad statements about which outputs and outcomes should be considered in the area of immigrant integration, we can draw some conclusions about assessing outputs and outcomes. Measuring program outputs and outcomes related to immigrants is particularly important in programs that serve a wider constituency to ensure that immigrants and LEP have adequate access to general services. Also, we must note that the time frame of evaluation is very important and it is difficult to measuring medium to long term success of

programs/policies where results are best seen in the longer term horizon. Nevertheless, to even begin an evaluation, three key steps in assessing outputs and outcomes, including:

Identifying intended outputs and outcomes related to immigrant integration. Decisions about what information to collect and how to collect it, particularly in the case of personal information, are never simple; this process is even more complicated when it involves immigrants—both because of the politics surrounding immigration issues, particularly related to immigration status, and because of fears immigrants may have about sharing information with government. Government entities should be sensitive to these complexities as they identify expected outputs and outcomes. Putting in place explicit confidentiality policies on the collection and use of information related to immigration status also helps to address these issues.

Tracking information related to immigrant integration. Designing and implementing systems to track outputs and outcomes can be a complex process. Tracking involves people and technology, neither of which are simple operators. On the people side, staff must understand what information needs to be tracked, know how to record it, and have the time and motivation to collect it. With respect to technology, databases must be configured to hold the required information and be designed to minimize human error (e.g. ensuring that important measures, such as language preference, are mandatory entry fields).

Using the information gathered to improve policies and programs. If government entities want to ensure the effectiveness of their policies and programs, they should create mechanisms to translate the information they collect into useful assessments of their program's or policy's performance and to apply these assessments to future program and policy decisions. For example, a key output for any service program would be the number of immigrants served in the program. Once a program has tracked how many immigrants it serves, how does it use this information? One important use would be to assess whether immigrants are accessing services as expected. If numbers indicate underutilization of services, the program could investigate whether this is due to lack of access, insufficient outreach, or some other factor unrelated to the program and take steps to remedy the underutilization if necessary.

Appendix:

A First Look at Workforce and Housing

WORKFORCE

In order to integrate as fully participating members of society and benefit from the rich opportunities available in the United States, immigrants must be able to find and maintain jobs, adapt and succeed in the workplace environment and have access to opportunities where they can utilize their skills and talents to their maximum potential. Support programs that enhance workforce integration provide immigrants with the tools to improve their welfare. The economic independence that results from workforce integration is central to providing security, sustainability and prosperity to immigrants.

Immigrants comprise a significant portion of the US labor market. For example, in 2004, immigrants constituted 14% of the labor market (with 21 million immigrants working in the US out of 150 million workers total.)⁷³ About 40% of these immigrant workers were from Mexico and Central America while 25% come from Asia.⁷⁴ Therefore, while Mexican and Central American immigrants comprise a plurality of the non-native workforce, there are certainly immigrant workers from other backgrounds.

According to the Department of Labor, foreign-born workers tend to have higher labor-force growth rates (i.e. they are rising as a percentage of the workforce), lower levels of educational attainment, and lower pay. In addition, the majority is also employed in a narrower number of industries (compared to the breadth of industry employment among native workers)⁷⁵. These differences in the immigrant workforce and the issues that language barriers present make the workforce integration of immigrants a challenging task.

Workforce Policies That Support Immigrants

Given the importance of ensuring a productive and effective workforce, the federal government enacted The Workforce Investment Act (WIA) in 1998 as a national initiative dedicated to worker training. Replacing the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA), the Workforce Investment Act is a federally funded employment and training program that aims to provide universal access to services, inter-agency coordination, governance organizations, local planning and market system information and service provider accountability.

The goals of WIA are to improve the quality of the US workforce, to reduce welfare dependency, and to enhance the productivity and competitiveness of the workforce. WIA believes that these goals can be achieved by supplying development services for individuals—such as access to labor and employment information, training providers, education and courses at a single location.

In what labor integration concerns, WIA has two main provisions that accomplish its goals of “workforce investment.” First, Title I of WIA authorizes a workforce investment system that includes a series of programs and activities administered by the Employment and Training Administration of the US Department of Labor. These programs

⁷³ Congressional Budget Office, The Role of Immigrants in the US Labor Market November 2005.

⁷⁴ The Role of Immigrants in the US Labor Market

⁷⁵ Department of Labor, Labor Force Characteristics of Foreign-Born Workers in 2006 Summary. <http://www.bls.gov/news.release/for-brn.nr0.htm>

include the creation of Workforce Investment Boards and one-stop centers intended to provide workforce training to meet the demand of employers. We will refer to this further in this section. Additionally, Title II of the legislation establishes the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act of 1998 that reauthorizes programs to help adults to become literate, to complete secondary school education and obtain instruction and employment skills. There are also programs that encourage parents to participate in the educational development of their children. Under these programs are included Adult Basic Education, Adult Secondary Education, and English as a Second Language.

In this section of the report, we will provide a review- albeit not an exhaustive one- of the different workforce development programs that Houston, Seattle and Raleigh are implementing to ensure immigrants are fully integrated into the workforce. We begin with a review of ESL and other basic education classes for adult immigrants.

Adult ESL and Education Programs

ESL and education programs are offered by the education system in each state, generally through a network of community colleges but also widely through educational agencies and community based organizations, such as churches and ethnic and cultural groups. The Federal Government allocates funds and grants to states to provide workforce education programs. However, funding also comes from the state, the city or private sources, including companies, unions, and ethnic organizations. Furthermore, each city designs different funding alternatives, including systems of scholarships and waivers for the students. Overall, the ESL programs play a crucial role in allowing immigrants to obtain jobs and otherwise fit into the workforce. Language competence is a prerequisite for certain types of employment, and many of the adult ESL programs below have a special focus on English for the worksite.

HOUSTON

Houston has a number of ESL programs that benefit the city's growing immigrant population. First, the Texas Education Association has an agreement with the Harris County Department of Education, a nonprofit tax-assisted organization in Houston consisting of program providers, community agencies, the workforce development board, business representatives, fifteen public school districts and career development centers. These two agencies created the Texas Learns program to oversee and provide nondiscretionary grant management and program assistance to Texas Adult Education and Family Literacy providers. And through the initiative, eight Project GREAT Adult Education and Family Literacy Regional Centers were established to supply professional development training to adult education and family literacy providers in Texas.

In Houston, The Coastal Region GREAT Center provides Adult Basic Education, General Education Development, ESL, literacy and basic skills, workforce literacy, learning disabilities, cross-cultural communication, and other initiatives promoted by Texas LEARNS through eight Adult Education Co-ops, including Beaumont Independent School District, the College of the Mainland, the Harris County Department of Education, the Houston Community College System, the North Harris Montgomery Community College District, the Port Arthur Independent School District, Region 4 and Region 5 Education Service Center for Adult Education. It also serves twenty Adult Education Co-op Affiliates, eight Adult Education for TANF Recipients Programs, three Corrections Education Programs, twelve EL Civics Programs (integration of civic education contents with ESL), nineteen Even Start Programs, two Faith-

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Based Literacy Programs, four Local Literacy Councils, one The First Lady Family Literacy Initiative, and thirteen other Adult Education and Family Literacy Programs.⁷⁶

In addition, Houston's Mayor Kathy Whitmire and the City Council funded the city-level Houston READ Commission in 1988 to address the literacy needs of the city's adult population. Through this nonprofit coalition, the Commission provides free literacy services for adults and families, including adult basic education (ABE), English as a Second Language (ESL), GED preparation, and family, financial, and computer literacy. These programs are funded with mixed funds of government grants, fees and private contributions and are provided through a vast network of organizations (more than seventy in the Houston area). In 2004, this Commission served a population of almost 2000 participants of which the majority is Hispanic (71%). Most of the students participated in ESL programs (60%).⁷⁷

Besides the Houston READ commission, the city also provides ESL programs through a number of providers. For the area of Houston there are approximately fifty-three providers, including the Houston Community College System, which serves permanent US residents, unauthorized residents, and citizens.⁷⁸ In 2006, of 57,168 students enrolled in the programs, 17,957 were of Hispanic origin and 6,879 were Asian Pacific.⁷⁹ This system provides financial assistance to immigrant students through such awards as the Hispanic Education Leadership Committee scholarships and federally funded Pell Grants. While many of the above-mentioned funding opportunities are not open to unauthorized immigrants, a vast network of organizations exists in Houston to provide ESL programs at low or no cost for limited English proficient adults, irrespective of their documentation status.

SEATTLE

Seattle has a number of similar language education programs. For example, the Seattle Public Library ESL Program, funded by the city of Seattle, is an important ESL initiative. The program was established in 1995 offering expanded ESL book collections and language programs that support immigrants and refugees. Specifically, the Seattle Public Library ESL Program involves:

1. Talk Time: a conversation program providing speaking and listening practice on daily life topics. Volunteers lead small group conversations with learners;
2. Computers For English program, where English language learners practice and improve their language skills, prepare for the citizenship test, and develop keyboarding skills using software; learners receive one-on-one support;
3. Wired for Learning (WFL) classes, providing computer skill classes, Internet, and email, in three languages: Chinese, Russian, and Spanish.

These services are available at the Central Library, branch libraries, and community sites. In addition, through a program called the Citizenship Resources Information, the library also assists immigrants as they prepare documents

⁷⁶ Coastal Region Great Center. <http://www-tcall.tamu.edu/projectgreat/coastal/coastalabout.htm>

⁷⁷ Houston Read Commission, Annual Report 2004. "Educating - Empowering - Enriching".: http://www.houread.org/docs/1-2004_Annual_Report.pdf

⁷⁸ Texas Center for the Advancement and Literacy of Learning. <http://www-tcall.tamu.edu/provider/comap/mapclick.asp?CountyID=21>

⁷⁹ Houston Community College System. "HCCS Fall 2001-2006 Enrollment by Headcount and Contact Hours". http://www.hccs.edu/hcc/System%20Home/Departments/OIR/Reports/Reports_PDFs/Enrollment_Data_PDFs/Enroll01-06_hdctcontacthrs.pdf

and applications in English. And regular instruction programs and information workshops are also provided at no cost. These programs are organized by the Seattle Public Library's ELS Program Coordinator, who is in charge of the operation and success of a number of ESL programs. This coordinator is also responsible for "community connection," which involves linking the library's ESL services and resources to the community providers. Since its inception, the Seattle Library ESL Program has served over 10,500 adult learners.⁸⁰

Additional ESL programs are offered through the Department of Parks and Recreation of the City of Seattle. The Department of Parks has developed partnerships with community organizations and colleges to provide free ESL courses, including the Asian Counseling and Referral Service, which offers a two-week intensive vocational ESL/job skills hospitality course.

This organization serves more than 20,000 citizens (56%), immigrants (36%) and refugees (8%), most of them of Asian origin (87%), that uses their programs of education, information and referral, naturalization and immigration assistance, vocational services, leadership and development, nutrition and elderly assistance. In what education concerns, the organization served 997 students in 2006.⁸¹

Another partnering community organization, the Neighborhood Housing Highline Community College, offers an eight-week vocational ESL/job skills janitorial course. This Department administers seven programs striving to improve the English language skills and computer abilities of immigrants and refugees. These programs are delivered in public parks, community centers or computer labs of the City at a low cost and are open to the public. These specialized ESL programs operate alongside even further city ESL courses that are taught in "Family Centers," where families can also access a variety of services provided by social agencies immediately before or after their class time.

RALEIGH

Raleigh has a number of ESL and language training resources, which benefit its small but growing immigrant population. The single most significant ESL provider in Raleigh is the Wake Tech Adult Education Center, which is part of the community college system. The Center provides continuing education and literacy programs, basic skills courses, ESL instruction, and the High School Equivalence program (HEP) for immigrants at no cost. The High School Equivalency Program (HEP) is made possible through a grant from the United States Department of Education to Wake Technical Community College. The grant provides migrant and seasonal farm workers and their families with the necessary training to obtain the General Educational Development Diploma (GED).⁸² This program includes free materials and books, financial aid, assistance with childcare expenses related to travel, and other funds for related costs.

The Wake Tech programs are all funded federally and by the state (one third federal funding and two thirds state matching funds). The funds are allocated based on a formula, depending on the percentage of the population served,

80 Mary Turla, ESL Program Coordinator, Literacy, ESL and World Languages (LEW), Seattle Public Library.

81 ACRS, Asian Counseling and Referral Service. 2006 Asian Counseling and Referral Service Annual Report 2006. <http://www.acrs.org/about/annualReport.htm>

82 Wake Tech Community College. <http://basicskills.waketech.edu/HEP/index.php>

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how many GED and adults high school diplomas are awarded, and contact hours. The funds are distributed through the main community college office and then distributed to local programs and private nonprofits organizations (there are fifty-nine community colleges that serve one hundred counties). The Wake Tech Adult Education Center has a \$3.5 million budget for all of basic skills with flexibility to allocate the funds, depending on the demand. Half of the funds are allocated to ESL training.⁸³

The Wake Tech program prides itself in its outreach efforts and the number of sites that host classes throughout the county. ESL classes are held in multiple community center, churches, different campus and public schools. They also have classes in homeless shelters, and the staff emphasizes the efforts to “reach the population where they are.” As a result of the decentralized structure and the marketing efforts, Wake Tech Adult Education Center has been able to offer ESL programming to approximately 4,000 immigrants annually.

Specifically, the College has six levels of ESL programming, with students ranging from illiterate to extremely literate in their first language. There are 150 different countries represented in the program, and many students are non-Spanish-speaking. The Center also has GED courses, which are offered online with a nominal fee. By being offered online, the transportation cost is eliminated for immigrants with internet access.

The city has also taken some steps to supplement the current course offerings. At the city level, the Department of Parks and Recreation of Raleigh offers ESL courses and ESL Accent Reduction, the latter of which is designed for advanced-level, non-native speakers and is aimed to improve communication skills by reducing native accent. More expensive than the community college programs with nominal fees, this program is \$130. Excepting this single city-level program, the community college of Wake County provides the vast majority of ESL services for Raleigh.

Workforce Development Programs

In addition to the ESL and other adult education programs, Houston, Seattle and Raleigh provide a number of services for workforce development. The WIA programs have a variety of services. These frequently include basic services (access to job listings as well as information about careers, the local job market, and employers), intensive services (such as life-skills workshops, one-on-one case management, comprehensive assessment and development of individual employment plans), and training services (including employer-linked programs and classroom-based skills training).

Under the WIA, much attention is now “focused on creating user-friendly one-stop career centers that provide job seekers and employers with access to a broad range of employment and training services at particular locations or through electronic linkages⁸⁴. The system combines federal, state and local funds and the programs include core services for job seekers, like assistance in resume preparation, review of local job announcements, counseling, and other training. By creating “One-Stop Career Centers,” WIA hopes to provide individuals with enhanced access

83 Interview with Lourdes Shelly, Dean of Basic Skills, Wake Tech Adult Education Center <http://www.waketech.edu>

84 Pindus, Nancy; Koralek, Robin; Martinson, Karin and Trutk, John. “Coordination And Integration Of Welfare And Workforce Development Systems”. The Urban Institute, March 20, 2000. http://www.urban.org/UploadedPDF/coordination_FR.pdf

to information and services from different federal agencies, including the Employment Security Department, Department of Labor, the Department of Education, the Department of Health and Human Services, and the Department of Housing and Urban Development.

HOUSTON

Houston has a number of workforce integration programs, most of which are run by WorkSource, an agency that is part of the Texas Workforce Development department. WorkSource provides numerous services, including apprenticeship programs, job search assistance, application preparation, resume development, interviewing skills courses, job-loss recovery techniques, labor market information, and a number of personal-finance seminars, among other programs. In 2007, this system supported early education and care for 30,000 children through financial aid for their parents and guardians.⁸⁵ WorkSource is supplemented by a number of local programs, including the Houston Community College System, which offers continuing education and degree-prep courses. Additionally, community based organizations such as YMCA International Services, Interfaith Ministries of Greater Houston, the Alliance for Multicultural Community Services and Catholic Charities, provide workforce development programs to immigrants and refugees in Houston.

SEATTLE

Like Houston, Seattle has WorkSource Centers as well. WorkSource Seattle-King County is a joint venture of the Workforce Development Council of Seattle-King County, a non profit organization that funds providers of employment and educational services, local and state government agencies, community and vocational colleges, business, labor and community based organizations. WorkSource Seattle King-County Centers provide information and services for employers and job seekers, including training programs and initiatives, through partners like Asian Counseling Referral Services, CARES of Washington, Neighborhood House, North and South Community Colleges and YMCA.

In addition to these WorkSource Centers, Seattle's Office of Economic Development (OED) looks to develop programs in different areas, including vocational English (training in a specific skill area coupled with ESL), curricula development, workplace customs, rights and rules, and domestic violence prevention. It also promotes access to credit and grants for small immigrant-and-refugee-run service organizations. The OED Neighborhood Business District (NBD) Program offers financial assistance to support organizations and their member businesses with training and organizational development needs. This Department can reimburse 70% of the costs incurred by these organizations for training classes, conferences, books, materials, software and others expenses related to instruction.

Also, this Department uses Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds to promote economic development and opportunity for the city. One use of the block grants is the Rainier Valley Community Development Fund, a project that aims to protect refugees and immigrants by mitigating the effects of closure and/or relocation of businesses during the construction of a light rail line that is under way. OED estimates that immigrants and refugees own and operate approximately 270 businesses – 50% of all businesses in that area.

⁸⁵ The WorkSource. <http://www.theworksource.org/about/workforceboard.html>

Appendix

RALEIGH

Immigrants in the city of Raleigh draw on a number of programs that facilitate workforce integration. Most of these programs are administered at the larger county level by the Capital Area Workforce Development Board. The Board, located in Raleigh, serves the counties of Johnston and Wake. It has eight full service job-help centers, with materials translated into different languages and staff translators for Spanish-speakers. They manage a budget of \$5 million dollars, most of which comes from the federal government and other grants. The job-help centers offer a number of programs oriented towards building work-related skills (such as interviewing etiquette). Training services are offered to US citizens or legal residents. While there is no program designed specifically for immigrants, the Executive Director of Wake County Workforce Development Board, Regina Crooms, emphasized that a large percentage of the participants are immigrants.⁸⁶

The Capital Area Workforce Development Board has a system of Job-Link Career Centers, the “one-stop center” under the WIA in Raleigh. Those centers offer information on job availability, general workforce education programs, and training specifically for certain employees and job seekers. According to Regina Crooms, the Job-Link centers work with private companies and providers like Telamon Corporation, which serves Hispanic and Latino populations.

In addition to the ongoing programs that are available, the Workforce Development Board also has a pre-emptive “Rapid Response” services program to assist workers who have been dislocated due to closing facilities or other sudden massive job losses. The program includes meetings with employers and workers to provide information on all the available public services. Part of their funding also comes from the Governor’s Office as part of an effort to entice large businesses to come to Wake County. As part of this strategy, the county also provides limited funds to businesses for translation services.

Besides providing general training and workforce integration assistance to workers, the Capital Area Workforce Development Board develops individualized partnerships with businesses to offer job-specific training and workforce education. Under the Incumbent Workforce Development Program, administered cooperatively by the North Carolina Commission on Workforce Development, the Division of Employment and Training, and the state’s 24 Local Areas, the Workforce Development Board provides a up to of \$37,000.00 (with a maximum lifetime funding of \$50,000) to companies to train their workers. All these funds are federal funds under the WIA. A total of \$3,000,000 has been designated for the program year ending June 30, 2008. The majority of the Board’s programs have either assigned county staff or participants from partner organizations. The partners and providers for Job-Link Career Centers are community colleges, employment security commissions, county social services agencies, vocational rehabilitation services, public schools, and other non-profit organizations.

The Department of Human Services of Wake County also promotes vocational and work services, disseminating information primarily on work availability and policies regarding equal employment opportunities. This department works with communities, agencies and organizations to promote self-sufficiency for families and individuals. One of their programs, Working with Kids, seeks to assist non-custodial parents in obtaining employment with high

⁸⁶ Interview with Regina Crooms, Executive Director, Wake County Workforce.

or sufficiently high wages to support themselves. This program has job readiness training, job placement advice, counseling, and assistance in cases of child support.⁸⁷ These services are offered to families that have children receiving TANF aid or other types of assistance. Funds for this program come from Wake County Human Services Department, TANF, and the Wake County general fund. Additional funding for support group events and client support services was provided through an Access and Visitation grant from North Carolina Division of Child Support.⁸⁸ Other services offered by the Human Services Department include economic assistance for food and financial aid for furniture purchase.

The city of Raleigh's effort to lure businesses to the area has contributed greatly to the number of the workforce integration programs offered to immigrants. There are a wide variety of programs to choose from, all of which—together—are designed to help the area's immigrants to find, keep, and succeed in jobs for which they are suited.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Housing is a basic human need, but access to affordable housing constitutes one of the biggest challenges for immigrants in the United States.⁸⁹ While this challenge is not unique to the immigrant community, barriers to affordability are felt more acutely by immigrants than by the native born (see Graph 4). Nationally, the foreign-born 46% of homeowners and 50% of renters are cost burdened.⁹⁰ These disparities are due in part to the lower socioeconomic status of immigrants on average, the absence of culturally sensitive and needs-based programs targeted to the immigrant community, and eligibility restrictions for federal housing assistance.

Addressing the above-mentioned barriers to affordable housing is important to immigrant integration because affordability promotes community. Homeownership is one of the best ways for immigrants to integrate into the fabric of their host communities and become civically engaged because owning a home gives people a sense of belonging. Furthermore, the value of home is the largest source of wealth for families in the US and is therefore a great inequality equalizer.⁹¹ Currently, however, there is little support from government to help immigrants obtain affordable housing through homeownership or renting which results in a financial strain for many households.

Housing Programs

The main strategies for affordable housing by public housing authorities are to address renter needs and promote homeownership. The main rental programs are public housing and rental assistance vouchers. For homeownership the program is two-fold, addressing affordability and educating people about the complex process of homeownership. Public housing is multifamily and single family housing that is owned and managed by a public government agency.

87 Anthony Zarcone, Program Coordinator, Working for Kids, PRO-Familia. Wake County Human Services: Vocational Services. <http://www.wakegov.com/humanservices/economic/employment/working.htm>

88 Wake County Human Services. Working For Kids Program. Annual Program Report FY 2006-2007. <http://www.wakegov.com/NR/rdonlyres/5B1EF879-150F-4B2C-A3BC-7B4ABA6E5BE1/0/WFK20062007AnnualReport.pdf>

89 Other housing challenges that disproportionately affect immigrants include predatory lending, poor quality housing, and overcrowding. Though important, these are beyond the scope of this report.

90 American Community Survey 2006.

91 Joint Center for Housing Studies. *The State of the Nation's Housing:2007*. Cambridge, MA: Joint Center for Housing Studies, Harvard University, June 11, 2007.

Appendix

Rents for public housing are set at the federal levels of not more than 30% of household income. Public housing is largely sustained through the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) grants for development, operation, and maintenance.⁹² Rental assistance vouchers are a second form of assisting individuals gain access to affordable rental units. The vouchers are accepted by participating landlord in the private rental market as a supplement to cover market level rental costs. Because of this, voucher holders are left to compete for units in the open rental market, and often time rents will result at levels beyond 30% of household income even with voucher usage. Because the voucher assistance is authorized through the Section eight of the US Housing Act of 1932, the program is popularly referred to as Section eight housing or Section eight vouchers. This is the case, even though local housing authorities have formal names for the housing voucher programs.⁹³

The US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) provides the majority of funding for homeowner education programs administered by local housing authorities. Through funding made available by HUD programs such as HOPE I, Turnkey, Mutual Help, and Homeownership Section 5h, public housing authorities are able to tailor programs that help their constituencies to purchase homes. Programs range from first-time homebuyer education to down payment assistance. Some of the important aspects of homebuyer education programs are to teach potential homeowners how to improve their credit and open savings accounts. Down payment assistance programs vary from agency to agency but they can include features like providing a grant for down payment or partnering with a bank that provides matching dollars that have been save for the purpose of down payment. For the construction of affordable housing, public housing authorities administer the federal low income housing tax credit. Through a competitive process, nonprofit and for profit developers, obtain credits that they sell off to help generate the capital necessary to build affordable housing.

In terms of homeownership, the foreign-born have lower homeownership rates than native born residents. While affordability products such as subprime loans, mortgages with interest only loans and payment options, have helped increase homeownership among immigrants, these products are also dangerous and can be quite costly in the long run. Over the last several years, abusive practices in the mortgage lending market have been growing. Borrowers accept unfair loan terms due to their lack of complicated terms and contracts. Poor and immigrant communities are likely to be targeted because better loans are not available to them.

As a result, since 1999, HUD has been implementing policies to ban predatory lending through regulation and consumer education.⁹⁴ Education for homeownership is also provided by city and state agencies – programming that is available to everyone. And in addition to education programs, financial assistance programs for low-income first time homebuyers are offered, but the assistance is usually available only to documented residents.

92 HUD website and Travis County website. http://www.hatctx.com/public_housing.html

93 HUD website <http://www.hud.gov/progdsc/voucher.cfm>

94 HUD Predatory Lending. <http://www.hud.gov/offices/hsg/sfh/pred/predlend.cfm>

Housing Policies Toward Immigrants and Mixed Families

The shared mission of public housing authorities is to provide access to affordable housing, to help families and individuals become self sufficient, and to transform communities. The avenues to affordability, however, are largely restricted due to the requirements set by federal funding sources, which is the largest financier of housing programs nationally. Most local housing programs are funded by the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), and consequently for many HUD programs there are requisite legal statuses that prevent unauthorized immigrants from participating in the programs.

Participants of Section 8 and public housing must be US citizens or have an eligible immigration status. In the situation where a family has a mix of immigration statuses then they are eligible for assistance equivalent to the number of eligible members in that household instead of the total number of people in that household. ADD The result is a lower level of assistance than would have been available if the family members were all documented residents. Therefore, although many of the barriers to affordable housing are not unique to the immigrant population, many are excluded from accessing housing programs strictly because of their documentation status. This represents a major challenge that is unique to immigrants and a major obstacle to integration.

Public Housing Authorities

The main government agencies that are charged with providing affordable housing for Houston are the City of Houston Housing Authority (HHA), the City of Houston Housing and Community Development Department (HCDD), the Harris County Housing Authority (HCHA) and the Harris County Community and Development Department (HCCDD). HHA and HCCDD focus solely on the needs of Houston residents while HCHA and HCCDD service all cities within Harris County, including Houston.

Seattle also has three main organizations committed to assist low-income families in accessing housing. The Seattle Office of Housing (SOH), under the auspices of the Seattle municipal government, is the primary service provider for immigrants and refugees in the municipality. SOH's main goal is to assist in the creation of affordable housing. The International District Housing Alliance (IDHA) and the Low Income Housing Institution (LIHI) are the main partner organizations of SOH that work specifically with refugees and immigrants to facilitate housing placements.

In Raleigh the Community Development Department of the City of Raleigh provides affordable housing programs for Raleigh residents through partnerships with other funding sources and local partners such as Wake County Housing Assistance, Downtown Housing Improvement Coalition (DHIC), Raleigh Housing Authority, the North Carolina Housing Finance Agency, and Habitat for Humanity. These agencies are funded heavily through federal HUD initiatives. General funding through local municipalities is also used to provide operation costs. Programs are administered by the housing agencies as well as subcontracted to community organizations to widen reach.

Appendix

Rental Housing Programs

HOUSTON

Housing demographics for immigrants who rent in Houston show that they are a disadvantaged group. In Houston, the % of cost burden is highest for immigrants that are not naturalized at 51%, while immigrants that are naturalized and native born both hover at 44.6%. Additionally, a majority of immigrants, 64%, live in rental housing—a figure that jumps up to 74% for the foreign-born who are not US citizens, but decreases to 37.1% for the naturalized foreign-born. The rental percentage for the native born is 49.9%.⁹⁵ These numbers reflect that the non naturalized foreign-born is the group that relies the heaviest on rental housing.

Immigrant households in Houston are also bigger in size at 3.1 people per household in comparison to 2.27 for native born households. Additionally, 16% of foreign-born households have more than one person per room, while only 3.5% of native households have occupancy of more than one person per room. This number is again highest for immigrant households that are not US citizens at 20.9%.⁹⁶

The affordable rental housing stock provided by the Houston Housing Authority is 19,000 units of affordable housing through its various programs.⁹⁷ Despite this large volume a shortage in affordable housing remains. Rental housing programs for the Houston Housing Authority include low rent public housing, and housing choice vouchers (Section 8). As mentioned above, both of these programs are federally funded and thus have legal residency requirements for beneficiaries. The Housing Authority manages and owns 4,000 rental units and 200 single-family homes for the low rent housing program. However, the Housing Authority states on their website that there is insufficient housing supply to meet the demand for public housing needs. Currently the Housing Authority has a two to four year waiting list for participation in this program.⁹⁸

Only 18% of the housing stock in Houston was built in the 1990s making most buildings nearly 20 years old or more.⁹⁹ This raises the question of warranty of habitability since structures may not have full amenities and may be in need of repair. The rehabilitation programs help to refurbish rental units and single-family homes. Additionally, housing development organizations that are community based compete for grants to build affordable housing units. Funds for construction are made available through the HOME program—a federally funded HUD initiative.

95 American Community Survey 2006 for Houston, Texas. http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/SAFFacts?_event=&geo_id=16000US4835000&_geoContext=01000US%7C04000US48%7C16000US4835000&_street=&_county=houston&_cityTown=houston&_state=&_zip=&_lang=en&_sse=on&ActiveGeoDiv=&_useEV=&pctxt=fph&pgsl=160&_submenuId=factsheet_1&ds_name=null&_ci_nbr=null&q_r_name=null®=null%3Anull&_keyword=&_industry

96 American Community Survey 2006 for Houston, Texas http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/SAFFacts?_event=&geo_id=16000US4835000&_geoContext=01000US%7C04000US48%7C16000US4835000&_street=&_county=houston&_cityTown=houston&_state=&_zip=&_lang=en&_sse=on&ActiveGeoDiv=&_useEV=&pctxt=fph&pgsl=160&_submenuId=factsheet_1&ds_name=null&_ci_nbr=null&q_r_name=null®=null%3Anull&_keyword=&_industry

97 Houston Housing Authority Website

98 Houston Housing Authority Low Rent Public Housing <http://www.hach.org/content/index.cfm?fuseaction=showContent&contentID=22&navID=22>

99 Census Bureau. http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/NPTable?_bm=y&-geo_id=16000US4835000&-q_r_name=ACS_2006_EST_G00_NP01&-ds_name=&-redoLog=false

Both, the Houston Housing Authority and the Harris County Housing Authority administer the housing choice voucher program. This program provides tenants with a voucher that is used toward rent payment to a participating landlord in the private housing market. Beneficiaries pay 30 to 40% of their income toward rent in addition to the voucher to avoid being cost burdened. Additionally, participants are encouraged to take part in self-sufficiency programs that include homeownership education and work force training administered by the voucher program. The demand for the housing choice voucher program in both agencies has reached capacity and has generated waitlists. While the specific number of people served was not acquired, the Houston Housing Authority's website announces that they are only serving numbers 1-3000 on the wait list and that numbers higher than 3001 will have to wait.¹⁰⁰ This announcement gives some idea of the great demand this program generates and also of the need.

SEATTLE

The foreign-born in Seattle reflect similar patterns as in Houston. They earn significantly less than do the native born, they have higher rental rates and live in more crowded housing units. For example, the median income of foreign-born households is about 14,000 dollars lower than that of native born households. In addition, the average foreign-born household size is 2.95, which is larger than the 2.24 average household size of the native born. Only 0.7% of native born households have more than one occupant per room in contrast with 8% of foreign-born households.¹⁰¹

Like Houston, Seattle does not provide housing programs specifically targeted to immigrants and refugees. However, they do offer programs and website information in 10 other languages besides English, making it easier for eligible immigrants to benefit from city housing agency programs. The SOH, at the municipal level, supports affordable housing development for developers and nonprofit owners of affordable housing. Affordable housing development includes incentive programs for commercial and residential developers to build, preserve, or contribute funding for affordable housing in certain parts of the city. SOH is committed to ensuring that immigrants and refugees have access to these services, specifically through translation efforts.

In terms of multi-family rental production and preservation, SOH has funded buildings in Seattle neighborhoods that are predominantly inhabited by immigrants and refugees, including: Rainier Valley, the International District and parts of West Seattle. In this effort, SOH has committed over \$101 million of funds to build 4,000 units in largely immigrant and refugee neighborhoods. IDHA and LIHI assist refugees and immigrants in accessing these units, training them in tenant rights and obligations. Additionally, LIHI owns and operates housing for the benefit of low-income families and individuals, and advocates for just housing policies at the local and national level.

The Seattle Housing Authority (SHA) also provides and administers the public housing program and the housing voucher program (Section 8). Like in Houston there is great demand for both programs. SHA manages 5300 public housing units, serving several thousand residents. The waiting list for the housing voucher program has reached an

¹⁰⁰ Houston Housing Authority website <http://www.hach.org/content/index.cfm?fuseaction=showContent&contentID=201&navID=134>

¹⁰¹ American Community Survey 2006 Characteristics Foreign-born Population for King County, Washington <http://factfinder.census.gov/>

Appendix

overwhelming 4,000 people and is now closed.¹⁰²

RALEIGH

Similar to Houston and Seattle, the city of Raleigh and Wake County do not have housing services specifically targeted to immigrants or refugees. The city and county do offer various programs to provide affordable housing to low-income households—a large percentage of which are immigrants.

The Community Development Department of the city of Raleigh has a program to subsidize affordable housing. The city of Raleigh owns affordable rental housings for households whose income are below 50% of the area's median household income, and rents them for about \$450 per month. The city also provides housing developers with funding to create affordable housing units. Both nonprofit and profit developers can apply for these funds as long as they are willing to rent the units to persons whose income is below 60% of the Wake County median income.

Currently, the Raleigh Housing Authority owns and manages nearly 2,000 public housing units and administers over 3,500 Section eight vouchers. The occupancy rate for public housing is over 98%, and the Section eight Program is 100% utilized. In fact the demand for the voucher program exceeds the supply, and as such, there is a waiting list of 4-5 years for the voucher program.¹⁰³

One advantage of North Carolina that is not available to the other cities in this study, is that it is still considered a reasonably priced housing market. As a result, the gap of cost burdened households in Raleigh between the native born and foreign-born is smaller than in the other cities. For native born households only 24% are cost burdened, while the foreign-born have 30% of households that are cost burdened.¹⁰⁴ This percentage is much lower than the national foreign-born average of 46%.

Homeownership Programs

HOUSTON

The homeownership rate for native born residents in Houston is 50.1%. Immigrants, however, are only reaching rates of 38.6%. When this number is divided into naturalized immigrants and non-naturalized immigrants a higher homeownership rate for naturalized immigrants emerges (62.9%). This is contrasted with 26% for non-naturalized immigrants. Household size in Houston shows the same patterns. The native born have lower numbers, at 2.56, than that of the foreign-born at 3.87. Even when the foreign-born is separated into naturalized immigrants and non naturalized immigrants, the household size is still larger than the native born, at 3.45 and 4.4 respectively. In terms of cost burden, the foreign-born show greater housing costs than the native born. Among the native born, 27% spend more than 30% of their income on housing, compared to 36% of the naturalized foreign-born and 38% of the non-naturalized foreign-born. What these statistics show is that immigrants in Houston are achieving lower

¹⁰² Seattle Housing Authority <http://www.seattlehousing.org/Housing/programs/section8/intro.html>

¹⁰³ Raleigh Housing Authority website <http://www.rhaonline.com/about.htm> Last accessed 12/08/07

¹⁰⁴ American Community Survey 2006 Characteristics Foreign-born Population for North Carolina, <http://factfinder.census.gov>

homeownership rates in comparison with the native born. While there is a higher rate homeownership for the foreign-born who are naturalized, this population is still significantly more cost burdened than the native born.

To help increase homeownership rates, the Houston Community Development Department administers two homeownership down payment assistance programs. These programs are the American Dream Initiative, administered in conjunction with HUD, and the Single Family Mortgage Assistance, which is funded through HUD, Community Development Block Grants and tax increment financing. The city of Houston also provides information on how to avoid predatory lending, and advises individuals to see HUD approved housing counselors.

SEATTLE

The foreign-born in Seattle is also disadvantaged in homeownership. Sixty-five percent of native born own housing in contrast with 51% of foreign-born residents. Additionally, 44% of the foreign-born are cost-burdened in comparison with 34% of native born. Although the city of Seattle does not specifically target homeownership programs to immigrants and refugees, they do benefit from the programs that the city and other housing agencies provides.

The SOH offers programs on homeownership assistance for first-time lower-income homebuyers. They also provide down payment assistance loans for first-time home homeownership. The maximum loan given out is \$45,000 per household, and is given out to eligible individuals through partnerships with local nonprofits and lending institutions. In addition, SOH has committed over \$2 million to homeownership programs through the following organizations that assist immigrants and refugees: IDHA, LIHI, Urban League, Habitat for Humanity, Homestead and Community Land Trust. Further, SOH has a Sound Families program, which has committed \$2.7 million to capital and services funding for supportive housing units for homeless families that primarily serve refugees and immigrants.

The SOH also has a program called “Don’t Borrow Trouble” that provides information to refugees and immigrants on predatory lending. Additionally, SOH created Seattle/King County Coalition for Responsible Lending, which provides information on predatory lending practices, as well as assistance to people who have committed to unfair loans. The SOH web site offers information and materials in ten major languages to homeowners, housing professionals and others to help prevent predatory lending.

Finally, SOH funds several non profit developers whose central mission is to serve immigrant and refugee communities, including: Inter*Im, SCIDPDA, SeaMar, El Centro de la Raza and the Consejo Housing Development Association. SOH committed over \$19 million to these non-profit community developers for over 500 units. The SOH provides affordable housing to low-income households in cooperation with non profit organizations.

In addition to SOH, the IDHA committed to improving the quality of life for the residents of the International District (the area mostly populated by Asian immigrants, and located in southeast of downtown) and Pacific Islanders of greater Seattle. They provide low-income housing, homeownership education and counseling, financial literacy, tutoring and support, job skills and related services.

Appendix

RALEIGH

Although in North Carolina the gap of cost burdened households between the native born and foreign-born is smaller than in the other cities, the rate of homeownership of foreign-born is 20% lower than that of the native born. While this gap exists, neither Raleigh nor Wake County offer housing programs specifically targeted to immigrants. But like Seattle and Houston, city, county and state agencies do offer various programs to support homeownership among low-income populations. Eligible immigrants can benefit from these programs.

Additionally, the North Carolina Housing Finance Agency provides legal state residents with services such as below-market interest rate mortgages and down payment assistance, or second mortgages of up to \$20,000 for first-time home buyers. These services for first-time home buyers are made available through nearly 700 participating lenders in North Carolina. The Agency also offers information and assistance to avoid predatory lending. North Carolina protects people through its predatory lending law. The law mandates that individuals considering high-cost home loans must see a counselor who is approved by the Agency, before contracting the loan. This free counseling service helps people understand the terms, fees and costs of the loan.

In addition, DHIC, a private nonprofit housing development company, offers counseling on financial planning to potential home buyers. Wake County holds monthly comprehensive homebuyer's workshops that are open to any resident, irrespective of their immigration status.

