

Advocacy in Action

for New Americans

Process for Enrollment of Refugee Youth in Utah's Primary and Secondary Schools

COLLABORATIVE PARTNERS INCLUDE:

- Asian Association of Utah (AAU)
 - Canyons School District
- Catholic Community Services (CCS)
 - Granite School District
- International Rescue Committee (IRC)
 - Murray School District
 - Salt Lake School District
- Utah Department of Workforce Services – Refugee Services Office
- Utah State Office of Education

The process outlined below was developed to ensure a consistent, collaborative and smooth transition into Utah's educational system for refugee youth.

Purpose:

- To create a coordinated support system and enrollment process geared towards youth with refugee backgrounds for ongoing student growth toward college, career, and life readiness.
- To support educators' efforts in serving and working with families from refugee backgrounds.

Goals are aligned to Utah's explicit commitment to education.

The 2016 strategic plan for the Utah State Office of Education (USOE) has identified educational equity as its top priority. This means that every student has access to educational opportunity.

Utah's 10-year education roadmap from the Governor's Office identifies policy priority areas for targeted investments:

1. Ensure early learning
2. Strengthen and support teachers
3. Ensure access and equity
4. Complete certificates and degrees



Clarification for identification as stated in Utah's English Language Learner (ELL) Master Plan: The term ELL children and youth means individuals who:

1. Are aged 3 to 21
2. Are NOT born in any state, the District of Columbia, or in the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico
3. Have NOT been attending one or more schools in any one or more states for more than three full academic years (grades 1-3)

Achievement Based Objectives — This process has been created in order to ensure:

- **Newly arrived refugee youth** are enrolled in school within one month of their arrival to the United States unless they are arriving during summer months, in which case they need to be enrolled upon the start of the new academic year.
- **Refugee youth** are given access to the same programs, opportunities and processes no matter which resettlement agency they come through or which school district they are placed in.
- **All refugee families** will receive the same welcome and process when changing schools or school districts, regardless of their amount of time in the U.S.

STEP 1: Identify how long the family has been in the U.S. If they are *newly resettled to the U.S. (within two years)*, follow Option 1, if they have been in the U.S. *more than two years*, follow Option 2.

Option 1 — For Newly Resettled Refugee Students

1. Designate ONE point person who will handle refugee youth enrollments, perform outreach to the family and assist with the entire process.
2. Determine which resettlement agency they came through or are currently served by. This will be the International Rescue Committee (IRC), Catholic Community Services (CCS) or Asian Association of Utah (AAU). Each of these agencies has a youth coordinator or trained case managers whose job it is to help each family get their children enrolled in school. They will often contact your district first for new enrollments.
3. Request the following documents from the resettlement agency for the enrollment:
 - a. I94 — Equivalent of a birth certificate for those with refugee backgrounds.
Note: This can be found online and/or can be obtained upon visiting the family to enroll their child(ren).
 - b. Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) — Needed for information sharing between the resettlement agencies (IRC, AAU, CCS) and schools.
 - c. Copy of Immunizations Record — Can be an immunizations card or a copy of the health screening form, which indicates vaccination history. Obtaining this record often causes delays and should be requested as soon as possible.
 - d. Family History Form — This is a new form created by the resettlement agencies in order to give schools more information about incoming refugee youth.
 - e. Utah Department of Workforce Services verification of benefits letter for free and reduced lunch forms, if applicable.
 - f. Proof of residency — Agency Facesheet (IRC), Intake Form (CCS), or Family Information Form (AAU) — This form will have names, addresses, contact information, caseworker information and alien number for each family member. **Note: These forms will be given to the teacher and also be kept as copies in the students' permanent file.**



4. Determine an appropriate time to visit the family's home with an interpreter or case manager to fill out enrollment paperwork. With the family:
 - a. Determine a time for the family to visit the school and have a tour.
 - b. Fill out any necessary paperwork for school enrollment (free and reduced lunch waiver, registration information, online forms, etc.).
 - c. Explain pertinent information such as school start date, school hours, bus route or walking information, parent teacher conference dates, back-to-school night, etc.
5. Assist the family with the first day of school.
 - a. Make sure they know where to go and when.
 - b. Assign an interpreter to accompany the student to the bus stop on the first day.
 - c. Assign a "buddy" for the student to be matched with to help them through the first day. Ideally this would be someone who is in their grade or who can speak their language.
6. Monitor ongoing success of the enrolled refugee youth.
 - a. Communicate regularly with the parents, youth coordinators at the resettlement agencies, as well as with the designated district refugee liaison. Keep track of attendance, academic performance, social issues, levels of parent/guardian involvement, behavioral issues and overall adjustment.

Option 2 — For Refugee Students in the U.S. Longer than Two Years

1. Designate ONE point person who will handle refugee youth enrollments, perform outreach to the family and assist with the entire process.
2. If you begin working with a refugee family who has been here more than two years and has found your school on their own, gather the following documentation:
 - a. I94 – Equivalent of a birth certificate for those with refugee backgrounds. Note: This can be found online and/or can be obtained upon visiting the family to enroll their child(ren).
OR Social Security/State ID card if they have been here more than two years.
 - b. Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) – Needed for information sharing between outside partners and schools.
 - c. Copy of Immunizations Record – Obtaining this record often causes delays and should be requested as soon as possible.
 - d. Utah Department of Workforce Services verification of benefits letter for free and reduced lunch forms, if applicable.
 - e. Proof of residency
 - f. Lease agreement, power/utility bills, etc.
3. Determine an appropriate time to visit the family's home with an interpreter to fill out enrollment paperwork. With the family:
 - a. Determine a time for the family to visit the school and have a tour.
 - b. Complete a family history form (can be provided by the Refugee Services Office) with the family to learn more about their background.
 - c. Fill out any necessary paperwork for school enrollment (free and reduced lunch waiver, registration information, online forms, etc.).
 - d. Explain pertinent information such as school start date, school hours, bus route or walking information, parent teacher conference dates, back-to-school night, etc.



4. Assist the family with the first day of school.
 - a. Make sure they know where to go and when.
 - b. Assign an interpreter to accompany the student to the bus stop on the first day.
 - c. Assign a “buddy” for the student to be matched with to help them through the first day. Ideally this would be someone who is in their grade or who can speak their language.
5. Monitor ongoing success of the enrolled refugee youth.
 - a. Keep track of attendance, academic performance, social issues, levels of parent involvement, behavioral issues and overall adjustment.
 - b. Utilize contacts at the Refugee Services Office and AAU for specific issues that the student/family might be facing.

Resources:

Names and contact information of refugee-serving agency personnel.

Name/Title	Agency	Specialty	Contact Info
Alexx Goeller State Refugee Youth Services Coordinator	Refugee Services Office	Coordination of services for refugee youth and families regardless of time spend in the U.S.	agoeller@utah.gov 801-347-3218
Christelle Estrada Title III Specialist	Utah State Office of Education	Coordination/allocation of Title III funding and support services	christelle.estrada@schools. utah.gov 801-538-7888
Nyuol Nyuol Case Manager	Asian Association of Utah	Coordination of services for refugee youth within AAU case management	nyuoln@aau-slc.org 801-990-9455
Krysti Nellermoe Refugee Youth Coordinator	International Rescue Committee	Coordination of services for refugee youth within two years of IRC case management (First two years of arrival in the U.S.)	Krysti.nellermoe@rescue. org
Jessica Kallin Refugee Youth Coordinator	Catholic Community Services	Coordination of services for refugee youth within two years of CCS case management (first two years of arrival in the U.S.)	jkallin@ccsutah.org

