

UCLA

UCLA Previously Published Works

Title

Promising Practices: Preparing Children of Immigrants in New York and Sweden

Permalink

<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/4692f5p2>

ISBN

9780814760949

Authors

Suarez-Orozco, Carola E

Martin, Margary

Alexandersson, Mikael

et al.

Publication Date

2013-11-01

DOI

10.18574/nyu/9780814760949.003.0006

Peer reviewed

Marcello & Carola

This book reminds me about
very good times being together!
Maurice

The Children of Immigrants at School

A COMPARATIVE LOOK AT INTEGRATION
IN THE UNITED STATES AND WESTERN EUROPE

Edited by Richard Alba and Jennifer Holdaway

For Marcelo,
With friendship and admiration,
Richard

Dear Marcelo,
What an honor to
finally have
met you!
To Carola +
Sonia,
Maurice

A joint publication of the Social Science Research Council
and New York University Press

2013

Promising Practices: Preparing Children of Immigrants in New York and Sweden

*Carola Suárez-Orozco, Margary Martin, Mikael Alexandersson,
L. Janelle Dance, and Johannes Lunneblad*

Immigrant-origin students bring to schools a variety of academic and linguistic challenges. Many of the schools that receive them provide far from optimal educational opportunities (Ruiz-de-Velasco and Fix 2001; Suárez-Orozco, Suárez-Orozco, and Todorova 2008; Valenzuela 1999). While it is not a challenge to critique the myriad of ways that schools fail to meet the needs of these students, it is decidedly more difficult to identify promising practices that serve them well (Lucas 1997; Walqui 2000). Although most studies focus upon the hidden curricula and agendas in schools that serve to marginalize students (Apple 2004a; Bowles and Gintis 1976, 2002; Loewen 2009; Orenstein 1995), in this study we seek to illuminate overt curricula and programs that prepare students from immigrant backgrounds to be active and empowered actors in the multicultural, global contexts of their receiving nations. This research sheds light on the strategies that teachers, students, and administrators develop as they attempt to meet the educational challenges of preparing immigrant-origin youth for this global era in two quite distinct social, political, and educational contexts—large cities in Sweden, and New York City (NYC) in the United States.

The United States, and New York City in particular, has a long-standing history of incorporating immigrants to its shores. Currently, half of the students in New York City public schools have an immigrant parent and nearly 10 percent arrived in the United States within the past three years (NYSED 2006). The vast majority of these students are poorly served; many are attending schools suffering from “savage inequalities” (Kozol 1991) between school

contexts. While the 1954 US Supreme Court decision *Brown v. Board of Education* legislated equal access for students regardless of racial background, the requisite investments in schools serving different subpopulations have not been made (Heubert 1998).

Swedish schools make for an interesting point of comparison because of their explicit commitment to provide equal access to all students. The Swedish Education Act of the 1940s legislated that: “All children and youths shall have equal access to education.” As a result, Swedes invest heavily in their schools and in their most challenged students. Hence, second-generation students in Sweden have significantly lower secondary-school dropout rates as well as higher rates of university participation than in other OECD nations (OECD 2006, 2008). However, once immigrant students graduate in Sweden, they encounter a low glass ceiling and find it difficult to enter the employment sector (OECD 2008). Sweden is relatively new to large numbers of immigrants from countries outside of Northern and Western Europe. It also has taken in a much higher proportion of refugees than has the United States. This population represents a significantly different set of incorporation challenges (Athey and Ahearn 1991; Lustig et al. 2004). Refugees face significant psychological trauma; while some are highly educated (e.g., Chileans), others suffer from high levels of illiteracy (e.g., Somalis); and many live in a liminal psychological space hoping to return to the homeland when ‘things settle down.’ Further, many of the new immigrants are of Muslim origin, which has resulted in a considerable degree of ambivalence, backlash, and social unrest (Cesari 2006).

Both the United States and Sweden share a contentious climate of debate over immigration (see Chavez 2001 for an example in the United States; see Mattsson and Tesfahuney 2002 for an example in Sweden). These two nations also share a similar pattern of low achievement by minority students from low-income backgrounds (Bunar 2001). Both countries exhibit the problem of a gender achievement gap—girls consistently outperform boys (Suárez-Orozco and Qin 2006; Öhrn 2002). Further, in both contexts, students of minority ethnic backgrounds are likely to be taught by teachers of mainstream backgrounds (Ingersoll 2003; Ingersoll and Smith 2003; Ljungberg 2005). Schools in both Swedish cities and New York are subject to marketplace-driven school reforms, which place high value on testing, performance, and accountability (Apple 2004b; Hargreaves 2003). This emphasis on “objective” measures does not take into account that second-language

acquisition presents a unique set of challenges. The lack of consideration for these challenges takes a particularly high toll on immigrant-origin students and the schools that serve them (Menken 2008; Suárez-Orozco et al. 2008). Finally, while in most parts of the United States, students attend neighborhood high schools, in Swedish cities and New York alike, another market-based reform, "school choice," provides students with the option to "apply" to high schools. This process allows students to rank a number of schools and thereafter go through a selection process that can include entrance or standardized exams, interviews, audition, and/or lottery, and neighborhood demographics.

Methodological Strategy and Guiding Questions

The guiding questions for this research were:

What school-based practices are implemented in innovative, "promising" school settings to:

- a—ease the transition and integration of immigrant-origin youth?
- b—foster and enhance the academic performance of immigrant-origin youth?

We used a case study methodological strategy (Yin 2003) for this study in order to describe in detail each school context serving immigrant-origin youth. This approach allows us to illustrate findings in the lived experiences of diverse adolescent youth and to shed light on the processes and causal links that emerge from the data. The multiple-case study approach also provides the advantage of allowing analytical theoretical generalizations to emerge from empirical findings (Burawoy 1991; Stake 2005; Yin 2003) and provides insight into the "crucial role of pattern and context" (Yin 2003, x) in determining phenomena. The "replication logic" (Yin 2003, 4) of the multiple-case study approach allows for cross-case comparisons and conclusions.

In each context—New York City in the United States and large cities in Sweden—we identified two schools that were lauded locally as being particularly innovative in their approach to immigrant-origin students, providing this study with a total of four research sites (see below). Our research team used a variety of methodical strategies to gather data across sites. We conducted ethnographic fieldwork as the primary data collection strategy in order to gather information about innovative school practices, and assess the

school ethos, teacher/student, teacher/teacher, and student/student relationships, school climate and intercultural understanding, as well as impediments to the implementation of innovative practices. Every school site included informants from three mixed cultural groups based on variation in: (1) demographic proportions in the school, (2) social status at each school, and (3) success in terms of grades and performance. The selected students were studied in *four different contexts* (classrooms during lessons, groups working on specific subjects, groups discussing general issues, and groups working together) for a period of twelve to twenty weeks (i.e., three to four months of data collection at each school). Semistructured interviews and focus groups with teachers and administrators were also conducted to learn about their perspectives on the implementation of innovative practices and the impediments that they encounter along the way. We examined the performance of schools on quantitative indicators gathered from school records and city education statistics, which included student retention and graduation rates, and university entry rates. Lastly, the team conducted structured *focus-group* interviews with students in order to contextualize emerging findings. The triangulated data from each site was coded according to innovative practices important for all immigrant students along with those specific to the needs of newcomers or second-language learners.¹ In addition, we examined theoretically relevant analytic themes (e.g., preparation vs. remedial agenda; significance of relationships; and priority of immigrant student needs) (Yin 2003).

We use several criteria to select our case-study "innovative" schools (see Table 6.1).

The schools had to serve a high proportion of immigrant-origin youth. They had to have a reputation within the broader educational community for being innovative and attaining superior outcomes on standard performance indicators in comparison to other schools with high proportions of "low-status" immigrant kids (e.g., student stability rates, teacher/student ratios, graduation rates, recruitment of highly qualified teachers, and retention of teachers). Also, three of the four schools were part of *networks* of innovative schools. We purposefully did not use standardized testing results as a criterion, since such tests underestimate the skills of second-language learners (Menken 2008). All schools had an institutional commitment to prepare students for the new global era by confronting core educational challenges. All of the selected schools claimed a grand narrative of providing engaging and relevant learning environments in order to foster personally meaningful

TABLE 6.1. School Site Characteristics

	New York High Schools		Swedish Gymnasiums	
	World Citizen	Progressive	Ekdalsskolan	Bergslunden
SCHOOL SITE INCLUSION CHARACTERISTICS				
Publicly recognized for its innovative approaches	✓	✓	✓	✓
Serves significant numbers of immigrant-origin youth	✓	✓	✓	✓
Does not have entrance exams	✓	✓	✓	✓
Academic relationship building narrative	✓	✓	✓	✓
Higher than average graduation rates compared to schools serving similar populations in the area	✓	✓	✓	✓
Higher than average results on performance indicators compared to schools serving similar populations in the area	✓	✓	✓	✓
Part of network	✓	✓	✓	
COMPARISONS TO OTHER CITYWIDE SCHOOLS ON PERFORMANCE INDICATORS				
Student Graduation Rates in 4 years ^{1,2}				
-City Rate	FB= 57.5% All=50.6%		74.5% ³	73.1%
-Site Rate	64.8	95.5	85.2	67.0
Prepared to Enter University ⁴				
-City Rate ¹	36.5%	36.5%	89.5%	86.4%
-Site Rate ⁵	41.4	84	70.7	82.9

Sources: New York City—NYSED (2006). Sweden—Swedish Department of Education (Skolverket) (Footnotes to Table 6.1)

relationships and constructive habits of work shown to contribute to academic performance. These schools also claimed to prepare youth to successfully navigate in a multicultural world.

The Educational Settings

New York City

According to the American Community Survey, as of 2007 over a third (36.7 percent) of the over 8.2 million people who reside in New York City are foreign born. Nearly half, 44.9 percent, of all households with children under eighteen years old have a foreign-born parent in the home. While there are no exact figures available, large numbers of children of immigrants can be found in New York City schools, and, in particular, its public school system. New York City is the largest public school district in the United States, serving close to 1.1 million students. It is a "minority-majority" school district; as of 2008 the majority of students come from nonwhite ethnic groupings, with 36.7 percent reported as Latino/Hispanic, 34.7 percent black/African American, 14.3 percent Asian, and 14.2 percent white. The district has one of the most diverse student populations in the country, and virtually every country on the globe is represented. Approximately 40 percent of its students live in households whose first language is not English, over half of whom are children of immigrants (NYCDOE 2008). Major languages are Spanish, Chinese, Urdu, Russian, Bengali, Haitian Creole, Korean, and Arabic. Almost one in seven students (13.4 percent) is classified as an English-language learner (ELL). Of

- ¹ In Sweden, upper secondary education (i.e., high school) consists of three years instead of four. However, the statistics for students who have completed their upper secondary education are calculated within a four-year time frame.
- ² In both the US and Sweden, students may remain in public secondary schools up to the age of 21. It is quite common for newcomer youth, and especially SIFE students to take longer to complete their high school education. In the US, graduation rates are typically reported in terms of both 4-year and 7-year rates; however, the cohorts of students participating in the study will not be at 7 years until 2011; therefore these data are not provided. Note that the 7-year graduation rate for the World Citizen Network is 90%.
- ³ So that we can have comparable statistics from the Swedish Department of Education (Skolverket), the rates reported are for the 07/08 school years. (Skolverket, Skolblad Avseende Ekdalsskolan och Bergslunden, 2007/08).
- ⁴ For NYC, we report the percent of students who passed the Regents Diploma—a comprehensive exam that represents college readiness. For Sweden, we report the percentage of students who, based on their performance in high school, qualify for entry into University.
- ⁵ Note that the World Citizen Network graduation rate is 90%.

the more than 200,000 ELL students in New York State, more than 70 percent (140,000) attend schools in New York City (NYCDOE 2008).

US and NYC School Reform and Its Impact on Children of Immigrants

New York is subject to high-stakes testing educational reform, both federal and local in origin, with particular implications for English-language learners. Standards-based reform is premised on the idea that the combination of setting high standards and establishing measurable goals can improve individual outcomes in education and reduce the achievement gap of underserved populations such as minority students, in particular black and Latino students, and "special populations," which include special education students and ELLs. The No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) is a federally mandated standards-based education reform, first enacted in 2002. NCLB requires states to develop assessments of basic skills to be given to all students in certain grades, if those states are to receive federal funding. While NCLB has been instrumental in revealing subpopulations of students from different economic, racial/ethnic, and language backgrounds who are not well served in schools, it has at the same time narrowed the focus of concern to measurable outcomes based on the mastery of limited tasks not necessarily aligned with the skills one needs to be successful in college or the world beyond it (Goldrick-Rab and Mazzeo 2005).

Less well known is how NCLB changed the federal regulation of the education of English-language learners (Capps et al. 2005). Under NCLB the term "Limited English Proficient" is applied to students in elementary or secondary schools who have difficulty in speaking, reading, writing, or understanding English to the extent that it may affect their ability to participate fully in society and to succeed in school and on standardized tests. These students must be given a Home Language Survey that identifies bilinguals and provides a diagnostic assessment to determine English proficiency. NCLB requires annual English Language Proficiency (ELP) exams for ELL students.

All students are tested in math and science beginning in their first year of enrollment; however, accommodations can be made to provide the exams to ELL students in their mother tongue. More contentious is the federal regulation of English Language Arts (ELA) and reading assessments for these students. In particular, ELP and ELA are not supposed to be tested using the same exam; however, the regulations do not dictate to states the contents of the ELA exam.

Until 2007, New York State used its ELP exam, called the New York State English as a Second Language Achievement Test (NYSESLAT), to measure also ELA and reading performance. In the summer of 2006, for eighteen states, including New York, the US Department of Education questioned whether the alternative math and reading tests used for ELLs were comparable to the regular tests used for Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) purposes. New York State's exams were determined to be "not comparable," and the state was ordered to be in compliance for the 2006-7 school year (NYSED 2006). Rather than create a new ELA exam, New York State mandated that all ELLs take the standard ELA exam after one year of enrollment. Given that research has consistently shown that no matter the age, developing academic English-language learning takes time, an impossible benchmark was set for schools, potentially hurting those schools with high numbers of ELLs and low-income students and placing them at risk of losing standing and funding under NCLB.

In 2002, the New York State legislature granted the mayor of New York City control over the New York City public schools. This action allowed the mayor to appoint the school system's chancellor and to restructure the administrative structure of the system, and set in motion a series of reforms beginning with the centralization of the system administration and the elimination of local community school boards. This broad accountability reform, known as Children First, was premised on market-based accountability innovations from the business world. Children First has led to a number of accountability reviews on top of what is required by NCLB. Teams of administrators visit schools midyear to conduct "quality reviews," and school performance is now measured in the form of progress reports, which assign schools A-F grades based upon a complicated mathematical equation that emphasizes improvements in performance exams but also includes perceptions of teachers, students, and parents of the "learning environment," measures of teacher quality, and allowances for special populations including ELLs. The progress reports have been highly controversial, and questions have been raised about how grades are calculated and their relevance. Further, at specific points in the elementary and middle school years, new retention policies have kept students who do not meet proficiency thresholds on standardized exams from advancing to the next grade. Given the Herculean task for ELLs of reaching high levels on the ELA and reading exams, these sanctions place them at a higher risk for grade retention. Taken together, the reforms place great pressures on administrators, teachers

and, therefore, students alike. There is increased pressure for teachers to "teach to the test," in order to comply with accountability reforms at the school level as well as to prevent sanctions for individual students.

New York City Innovative School Sites

World Citizen High School This school is a part of a New York City-based network of schools that serves exclusively newcomer immigrant youth, specifically youth who have been in the United States for less than four years and have limited proficiency in English. The formal network, a non-profit organization, was first established in 1985 through collaborative efforts between the city schools and a local community college and quickly evolved and expanded. The network of eleven World Citizen schools now includes eight small schools across the New York boroughs and three recently opened in California. With tremendous rates of success, the network serves 3500 overwhelmingly low-income, limited-English-proficient, recently arrived, adolescent students. While the New York City public school graduation rate for ELLs is a dismal 23.5 percent (NYSED 2006), the network sends 90 percent of its entirely first-generation student population to college within seven years of entrance; its exceptional success rate earned a national award from the Migration Policy Institute for "Exceptional Immigrant Integration Initiatives" (MPI 2009). The World Citizen High School featured in this chapter is one of the newest sites (established in 2004).

Central to the network's approach to teaching recent immigrant youth is the premise that language is learned best when embedded across the content areas. At the policy level this is expressed as: "Language skills are most effectively learned in context and emerge most naturally in purposeful, language-rich, experiential, interdisciplinary study" (school website). English-as-a-second-language curriculum is integrated in all content areas, including in electives and in all school activities and events. In addition, strategies are employed to provide students with opportunities to develop their mother-tongue skills through peer-mediated instructional activities and instructional materials and books in their native languages. Members of the network attribute their success partly to the diversity of the languages spoken by their students. English becomes the unavoidable common language, and diversity serves as a motivator to learn social English.

The school's educational program, designed and implemented by interdisciplinary teams of teachers, incorporates innovative approaches to help

students acquire academic English language skills as well as content knowledge. This curriculum is grounded in five core tenets: "Commitment to heterogeneity, language and content integration, autonomy and democracy, one model for all and schooling beyond the four walls." The curriculum is mirrored in the way the school is organized. The teachers play an active role in curriculum development and school decision-making. They meet regularly to plan lessons, discuss individual students' learning needs, develop instructional materials, and organize field trips that provide experiential learning opportunities. All classes are heterogeneous (i.e., students are not grouped by language level, achievement level, or age), and students work collaboratively in small groups on projects that provide opportunities to learn from each other. Students' progress and learning are assessed through performance-based tasks such as presentations and portfolios. These assessments are used to support students' mastery of state standards and skills they need to pass the standardized exams required for graduation. (See Table 6.2 for demographic details.)

Progressive High School Progressive High School is one of the pioneers from the early small-schools progressive movement in New York City. The sixth-to-twelfth grade school is a member of the Progressive Coalition Network (PCN), a national network of schools dedicated to small class sizes and project-based, student-centered learning that has had both a major influence on progressive education and schools in the United States. In line with the PCN, the school is organized around a core set of guiding principles in the areas of school design, classroom practice, leadership, and community connections. At the center of the network's philosophy is building a curriculum, beginning with "essential questions." The school, along with other 1990s small-school pioneers in the city, is renowned for the use of portfolio assessment and student exhibition, which are similar to thesis defenses, and in the 1990s, students were allowed to substitute these alternative assessments for the state-required Regents exams.

The school prides itself on having demonstrated success via traditional assessment standards through the use of a "context-based" curriculum rather than through traditional preparation for standardized tests. This pride seems well founded. According to statistics for 2006–2007, 96 percent of its students met proficiency on the state ELA exam, compared to 88 percent in schools identified by the state as "similar"; these performance rates were comparable by gender and by racial background (ranging from

TABLE 6.2. School Populations

	New York High Schools		Swedish Gymnasiums	
	World Citizen	Progressive	Ekdalsskolan	Bergslunden
Grade level served (est. age)	9–11 (15–21)	6–12 (12–18)	11–13 (16–20)	10–13 (16–20)
# Students enrolled	330	697/ 398 grades 9–12	679	1050
# Teachers	20	42	46	110
% Male/females	55/45	48/52	42/58 ¹	32/68
# Nationalities represented ²	32+	16+	20+	26+
% Newcomer students ³	56.1%	1.2%		
Foreign born (Sweden)			44%	25% (estimate)
% Children of immigrants/foreign background ⁴	100%	43% ⁵	87%	46%
% Students low income ⁶	89.1%	34%	Not available	Not available

¹ siris.skolverket.se, 2006/2007 Academic Year.

² These numbers are based on best estimates from information supplied from the individual schools, or from student surveys (World Citizen, Progressive, & Ekdalsskolans).

³ New York City defines newcomer students as those who have been in the United States less than 4 years. Note that only newcomers are admitted to World Citizen but the school includes sophomores and juniors who are now technically beyond the 4 year newcomer delineation.

⁴ In the U.S. the term *children of immigrants* is used to include the foreign-born as well as having at least one parent born abroad while in Sweden the term *foreign background* refers to students with 1 or 2 parents born outside of Sweden.

⁵ New York State does not require schools to report data on the immigration/generational status of students, with the exception of recently arrived immigrants; hence, the numbers reported are based on student reports in a survey administered to 10th and 11th graders (N=86). These numbers, when matched to census data, appear to be representative of the city. Language representation also comes from student reports from the survey. In Sweden, the percentages are based upon estimates provided by school officials.

⁶ Low income for participating New York City schools in the study is measured by the percentage of students who, according to the annual school report to the state, qualify for free or reduced-priced school lunch as this status is determined by family income. Given that Sweden provides general welfare support for all citizens, there is no official classification that differentiates students based upon income level.

Many of the students who attend Ekdalsskolan and Bergslunden High Schools come from communities where parents have a high likelihood of being blue-collar workers or unemployed. In 2006, the average disposable income was 129,650 Swedish Crowns. In both the Ekdalsskolan and Bergslunden communities, the disposable incomes were considerably lower. The average disposable income was approximately 79,000 Swedish Crowns in the Ekdalsskolan community and 66,000 in Bergslunden (Ungdomsstyrelsen, 2008:44–46).

81 to 100 percent). Graduation rates were consistently over 90 percent, with 95.5 percent of students graduating in four years compared to 50.4 percent of students citywide. Equally high percentages of students move onto the university, including to highly selective colleges. Given these outstanding outcomes, it is no surprise that in 2005, Progressive was chosen as a national mentor school of the Progressive Coalition Network as part of a Gates-Foundation-funded effort to improve schools nationwide with a small-schools initiative.

Located in an affluent neighborhood on the east side of Manhattan, Progressive Secondary School gives preference to students who live within the school's community district, but draws students from all five boroughs in New York City. The school has the luxury of being the only school in its building, which is increasingly rare in New York City as comprehensive high schools are being closed and multiple autonomous small high schools and charter schools are sharing the same building. The physical space, in addition to the school's location, contributes to its success at both generating a sense of community and establishing strong partnerships with neighborhood organizations, businesses, and residents. Situated at the intersection of two highly trafficked streets and sharing the block with a number of high-end restaurants, apartment buildings and small office buildings, Progressive occupies a historic turn-of-the-century building that originally served as the site of a trade school for girls. Once outside of the school doors, students have immediate access to the hustle and bustle of Manhattan.

The Swedish Context

Over the last fifty years, Sweden has changed from a largely homogenous society to one more and more defined by cultural, ethnic, religious, and other multicultural differences. The multicultural changes began with labor-market-driven immigration in the 1950s (largely from adjoining nations), and continued with the arrival of numerous groups of political refugees over the past three decades (Sawyer and Kamali 2006). Today, 13.8 percent of the people living in Sweden were born or have parents born outside of the country (Statistiska Centralbyrån 2009).

The 1960s and 70s were characterized by assimilation politics, some of which culminated in governmental policy related to immigrant children and the educational system. By the mid-1970s, assimilation was no longer

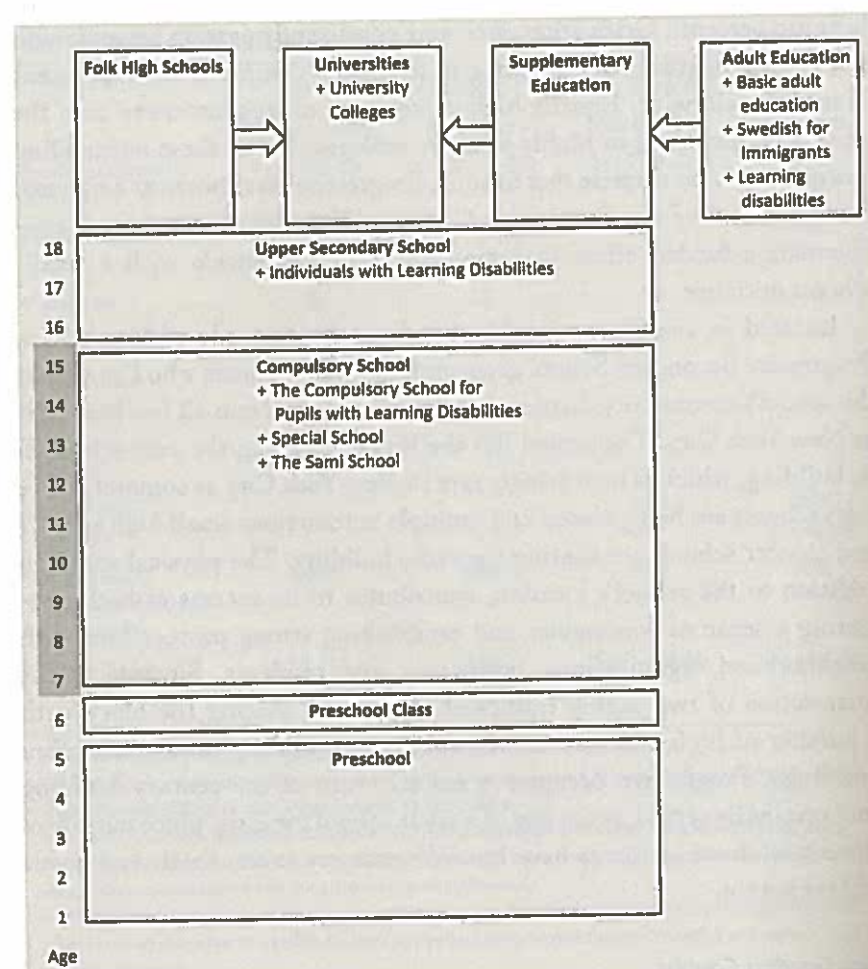


Figure 6.1. Structure of the Education System in Sweden
Created by: Mikael Alexandersson

the goal. Instead, new policies reflected three goals: (1) immigrants should have the same opportunities as Swedes and equal opportunities to develop their own cultural identity; (2) immigrants should have freedom to choose the degree to which they would develop a Swedish cultural identity; and (3) and there should be support, contact, and solidarity between the Swedish population and immigrants (Prop. 1975:26). These goals spurred educational reforms, which included adding teachers who could instruct in students'

first languages and other supports for immigrant children. Also, during this period, developmental psychology was held in high regard in Sweden and affected the discourse on immigrant children. For example, this perspective engendered concerns about the difficulties immigrant children had in learning Swedish, the risks associated with losing their first languages, and the consequences that language difficulties could have upon children's cognitive development (Skolverket 2002).

From 1980–90, the country's policies with regard to immigrants were increasingly critiqued as too focused on cultural differences and ethnicity, resulting in a dichotomy between "Us" (the Swedes) and "Them" or the "Other" (the immigrants). By 1996, there was a call for a new policy—an "Integration Policy"—founded upon a broad concept of diversity. This new policy eschewed the concept "immigrant" and no longer explicitly focused upon the importance of maintaining first languages (Prop. 1997/98:16).

After compulsory schooling, almost all of native Swedish youth continue onto the upper secondary gymnasium (approximately 97 percent), whereas this rate is significantly lower for the children of immigrants (approximately 80 percent) (Skolverket 2002). Figure 6.1 shows the Swedish educational system. Instead of entering one of the seventeen national gymnasium programs, many immigrant-origin students begin an individualized preparatory program to ready them for upper secondary school (Skolverket 2002). In bigger cities such as Stockholm, Gothenburg, and Malmö, these programs are commonly referred to as the "Immigrant Program" because most of those children who leave the compulsory education system without the qualifications for upper secondary education have family histories of immigration.

The challenges associated with successful school outcomes for immigrant/ethnic minority children are not the only educational problems facing Sweden. Inequalities of social class and gender persist as well. To make matters worse, according to data from the PISA (2003), ethnicity and social class interact to impose the highest risk of school failure on children born in countries other than Sweden and coming from low-skilled, blue-collar families. Both the Swedish gymnasiums in our study confront these contentious sociopolitical debates regarding "immigrant" schools, low-income families, and marginalized suburban communities.

The Challenging Context of Swedish School Reform and Its Impact on Children of Immigrants

National Reform Efforts: The Suburbs, The Million Program, and School Choice Reforms In the 1960s, the Swedish government implemented a housing program called "Miljonprogrammet" or the "Million Program," which aimed to create one million apartments to remedy the rising housing shortage that accompanied urban industrial growth. At this time, there was a shortage of both adequate residential spaces in general, and modern spaces in particular, to meet the projected numbers of working-class residents that were relocating from rural areas to cities (Ericsson, Molina, and Ristilammi 2002). By the early 1970s, however, industrial growth slowed but not as many persons moved from rural areas to cities as was predicted, leaving many apartments empty. As immigrant populations began to increase, they were often relocated to these uninhabited apartments. Because of negative portrayals in the Swedish news media, the neighborhoods created by the Million Program, typically located in suburbs, were characterized as "unfriendly" and "uninviting" almost from the very beginning (Sernhede 2002).

In addition, since the mid-1980s, there has been a deregulation and a decentralization of the Swedish welfare system. Sweden has tried nevertheless to maintain the tradition of inclusive educational reforms, assuring access to equivalent education for everyone regardless of ethnicity, social class, or place of residence (Englund 1996). The economic crises of the 1990s contributed to cutbacks in the social welfare system and an increase in the privatization of the educational system. By 1992, the Swedish government mandated school-choice reform measures (Friskolreform²), thereby making it possible for parents and students to choose schools other than those in their communities (Schierup and Urban 2007).

School choice eventually led to new forms of educational governance, budget cuts, and increased competition between schools. This increased competition has had the by-product of school closings that are indirectly related to student performance on the National Tests. In suburban schools with disproportionately large numbers of immigrant students—who face the mainstream biases of the National Tests—more students fail them. Since the test outcomes are reported by the media, the schools run the risk of being labeled as "bad" or "low achieving." This creates a downward spiral as students leave the schools and fewer enroll the next year (Bunar 2001; Kallstenius 2007). Suburban schools then receive smaller amounts of funding

because the money follows the students. Suburban schools struggle to draw new students from mainstream neighborhoods and to maintain enrollments of ethnic Swedish students and high-status immigrant students.

This legacy of neighborhood, social welfare, and school reforms impacts Ekdalsskolan and Bergslunden Gymnasiums, the two schools in our study. Suburban schools in Sweden are often stereotyped as "problem" schools with "immigrant students" who are "in the risk zone" (i.e., "at-risk" students in US terms). In 2006, the year we began our research, the foreign-born population in Sweden was 13 percent; during that same year, in both the communities in which Ekdalsskolan and Bergslunden are located, the percentage of foreign born was over 60 percent (Ungdomsstyrelsen 2008). It is against this backdrop of marginalization that our findings about innovations at the two Swedish schools should be considered. Both gymnasiums have adopted innovative strategies for serving their immigrant-origin students and attracting students from other neighborhoods in an era of school choice.

Swedish Innovative School Sites

Ekdalsskolan Gymnasium Ekdalsskolan Gymnasium is located outside a large city in central Sweden, and serves almost exclusively immigrant-origin youth, most of whom are of refugee origin. Most students reside in the suburb where this upper secondary school is situated, or in nearby suburbs whose residents are also predominantly of immigrant origin. In fall 2003, the school launched its comprehensive school reform, which was modeled on a private American lab school in Long Island, New York. The fundamental idea at the center of the reform derives from Howard Gardner's theory of multiple intelligence (1983). History and integrated learning are emphasized across the curriculum and supplemented with integrated "units." Technology integration is at the center of the futuristic reform, and all students receive laptops to use during the school day. In addition, the school has growing mentorship and internship partnerships with local businesses and universities. With the individual learner at its center and a philosophy that focuses on the needs of the "whole child," both academic and nonacademic, the reform built a new school from the bottom up, designed to allow for maximum collaboration in lounges and group areas where students can socialize or work in individual study rooms. In addition, the school cafeteria was reorganized to serve only healthy food, and a sports program was put in place to support student learning. As part of

its partnership with the Long Island school, Ekdalsskolan receives professional development and mentoring support from the lab school's newfound network to implement its program. Every year students from the Swedish school visit the host school in New York, as do teachers for the purpose of professional development. With much fanfare and support from the city's Central School District Office, this school reform has brought attention to the school (perhaps a bit prematurely, before the reform effort could be fully realized) in Sweden, Europe, and the United States. As with other high schools in Sweden, Ekdalsskolan houses several programs, similar to the education reform in the United States in the early 1990s that divided large schools into smaller "houses" where teams of teachers are responsible for teaching, advising, and supporting a smaller segment of the school population throughout its academic career. In addition, the school has a program for newcomer youth who are second-language learners.³

Bergslunden Gymnasium Bergslunden Gymnasium is located outside one of Sweden's largest cities, in a suburban community made up of several neighborhoods, and the school sits among several important community resources, including a local transit station, a cultural center for musical and theatrical performances, and approximately, seventy different shops. It was created under Swedish social democratic policies, which call for high schools to provide equal opportunity for lower-income youths. Some teachers and other school officials joined the staff because they were dedicated to teaching working-class and immigrant students.

In 2005, Bergslunden reorganized its curriculum under two broad approaches referred to as "Passions" and "Problem-Based Learning" (PBL). Passions are attractive programs that resemble magnet-school activities in the United States. In addition to the traditional subject areas, students can choose special interests such as "Professional Dance," "Textiles, Fashion, and Design," "Computer-Based Game Development," and "Soccer" for a portion of the credits needed to graduate. Teachers at Bergslunden Gymnasium work in teams. The teachers meet regularly to develop instructional materials, organize the content and goals of Problem-Based Learning assignments, and discuss the academic challenges and successes of individual students along with their general welfare and social/peer interactions. Problem-Based Learning privileges an active, hands-on approach to learning instead of a reliance on textbooks alone. Students engaged in PBL assignments collaborate in small groups together with a teacher who acts as supervisor to answer questions. Bergslunden

students work with topics that incorporate several subject areas into one project. This allows students to learn how different subjects are interrelated even if they receive different grades in the traditional subject areas.

Some demographic details of student enrollment are in Table 6.2. As a matter of policy, Swedish school districts do not keep counts of the ethnic backgrounds of students; therefore, we cannot provide the ethnic distribution of students' enrollment in various programs. However, our ethnographic data from Bergslunden reveal that the immigrant students tended to cluster in certain program areas such as the social science and business programs, while ethnic Swedish students tended to cluster in the theater and music programs. In addition, Bergslunden has a special program for students who have recently arrived (as voluntary immigrants or refugees) in Sweden. Teachers in this program work exclusively with newly arrived students to prepare them to pass the Swedish National Tests in Swedish, English, and math and transition into the formal high school programs.

School Practices Conducive to Positive Outcomes for Immigrant-Origin Youth

Across schools we sought to identify approaches and strategies implemented in the various school sites that would serve to ease the adaptation and meet the educational needs of immigrant-origin youth. We began with overarching conceptual categories based on previous research in the field. As part of the iterative process of fieldwork, we added new practices to our conceptual categories as we encountered them. We then sought to determine if these practices occurred in each site.

We found that some practices were sound, promising, or innovative for immigrant-origin students whether they were second generation, newcomers, or second-language learners. Arguably, some of these practices are simply sound for students in general, regardless of whether they are of immigrant origin. We organized the conceptual categories along the lines of: (1) curriculum; (2) pedagogical approaches; (3) school structures; (4) school climate; (5) assessment strategies; (6) educational supports and enrichment outside of class; and (7) preparation for higher education and the workplace. Other practices were very specific to the needs of newcomer students and second-language learners, serving to ease their negotiation of the cultural transition and learning a new language.

TABLE 6.3. Cross-Case Comparisons of Innovative Practices Important for *All* Immigrant-Origin Students

	New York High Schools		Swedish Gymnasiums	
	World Citizen	Progressive	Ekdalsskolan	Bergslunden
<i>Curriculum</i>				
Integrated curriculum	✓	✓	✓	✓
- Interdisciplinary	✓	✓	✓	✓
- Project-based learning	✓	✓	✓	✓
- Inquiry-based learning	✓	✓		
Relevant curriculum				
- Social justice teaching	✓	✓		✓
- Culturally responsive	✓	✓		✓
- Building on interests		✓	✓	✓
<i>Pedagogical Approaches</i>				
Multimodal instructional	✓	✓	✓	✓
Student-centered instruction	✓	✓	✓	✓
Differentiated instruction	✓	✓	✓	✓
Integration of technology			✓	✓
<i>School Structures</i>				
Shared teacher planning	✓		✓	✓
Teacher involvement in curricular decision making	✓	✓	✓	✓
Advisory program	✓	✓	✓	✓
<i>Enhancing Positive School Climate</i>				
Safe school environment	✓	✓	✓	✓
Caring & respectful relationships	✓	✓	✓	✓
<i>Assessment Approaches</i>				
Multimodal assessments	✓	✓	✓	✓
Dedicated exam preparation	✓	✓	✓	✓
Public presentation of competencies	✓	✓	✓	✓
<i>Supports and Enrichment Outside of Class</i>				
Tutoring & homework support	✓	✓	✓	✓
Extracurricular enrichment	✓	✓	✓	✓

TABLE 6.3 (continued). Cross-Case Comparisons of Innovative Practices Important for *All* Immigrant Origin Students

	New York High Schools		Swedish Gymnasiums	
	World Citizen	Progressive	Ekdalsskolan	Bergslunden
<i>Preparation for Higher Education and the Workplace</i>				
Explicit college pathway instruction for students	✓	✓	✓	✓
College pathway information for parents	✓	✓		
Internships	✓	✓	✓	✓
Instruction in soft skills for success in the workplace	✓	✓	✓	✓

We will describe these sets of practices in separate sections. Below we provide a comparison between sites and then give some specific examples from the field to illustrate how practices were implemented and experienced in the everyday lives of students.

All four schools practice reforms founded on progressive multicultural education (Banks and Banks 2007; Nieto 2003). Interdisciplinary, project-based, and student-centered approaches to curriculum and instruction are central to teaching and learning across the schools. All four schools utilize an integrated curriculum in some form, and the two Swedish schools place particular emphasis on the integration of technology into the curriculum. The four schools have attempted to create curricula that are relevant to the lives of the diverse students they serve. To successfully deliver content, the schools use decentralized pedagogical strategies designed to place the student at the center of learning and move away from traditional teacher lectures for at least part of the time. In addition to rethinking content and delivery, the schools seek multiple strategies to assess their students as well as ways to prepare them for the high-stakes testing where immigrant origin youth are at a notorious disadvantage. All of the schools have implemented some kind of academic supports to help them to be successful. And finally, several of the schools place particular focus on the postsecondary school experience.

Curriculum

Numerous studies have shown that the rigor of curriculum is a critical contributor to the achievement gap (Bryk, Holland, and Lee 1993; Chubb and Moe 1990). In the United States, underrepresented racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic minorities typically are enrolled in the least rigorous courses (NCES 2001). Students who take algebra, geometry, trigonometry, chemistry, physics, higher-level English, and other challenging courses tend to have higher test scores than their peers (NCES 2000; Ford and Harris 1994; Frazier et al. 1995). In the schools we examined, providing access to rigorous curricula is an equity issue they have systematically addressed with their immigrant-origin students. Notably, consistent with recognized good practice (Gardner 2004; Gates 2006; Suárez-Orozco and Qin-Hilliard 2004), several of the administrators we spoke to explicitly told us that providing a curriculum that was rigorous and relevant to prepare their students to be educated citizens for the twenty-first century was central to their mission.

To accomplish the schools' goals, at the center of their strategic visions are student-centered, project-based strategies that are implemented and interpreted in multiple ways. All four schools have developed some form of Integrated Thematic Interdisciplinary Learning. At several sites, addressing particular issues, topics, or problems and integrating learning across disciplines and subjects are keys to the strategy for engaging students. As mentioned earlier, at Bergslunden, students participate in Problem-Based Learning; for example, during our period of observation, a social studies/history project that spanned six weeks focused on the "Metrocity: Then and Now."⁴ This project had many, clearly stated functional and cultural literacy goals that included teaching students about how living conditions changed as their city developed from an agricultural society to an industrial metropolitan area. The assignment served to make students more aware of the influence of historical context. They also learned about the processes of doing field research and gathering information through site visits and from city officials. In addition, they developed new vocabulary and concepts related to the project's topic.

Similarly, Progressive High School utilizes a thematic, integrated approach to the curriculum. For example, the school has created a "Senior Institute" for all of its eleventh- and twelfth-grade students. Rather than take traditional English, history, and social science coursework, students at Progressive are offered courses based on a theme or topic such as "Philosophy of Life," "Ethics of Fear," or "Food" that integrates the humanities and

social science material into a single course. Students thus learn their core subjects through a topic area. This inquiry-based approach encourages students to think deeply and fundamentally about real-life problems or concerns and examine problems from multiple standpoints and disciplines. For example, in the "Food" class, the teacher explained, the Senior Institute was designed to help students "notice things on a more fundamental level . . . notice things we are not usually conscious of" by using food as a way to provide insight into our own culture. We saw this approach in action during our classroom observations in the first week of the class as reflected in our field notes: "The teacher sliced up apples and distributed pieces to each student and asked students to draw what they saw. . . . During the next part of the activity students wrote eight questions related to the apple from the following list of categories of questions: phenomenological; gastronomical; historical; ecological; political; biological; economical; futuristic; technological; philosophical; spiritual; psychological; sociological, leading to a topical discussion." This example, from the Progressive High School's food class, points to another feature of the curriculum across the four schools—a focus on topics relevant to students' lives, even something as mundane as an apple.

At other times, the topic was more gripping. As noted by a teacher at Progressive High School, "I think that in other schools they spend way too much on the textbook and trying to make sure that students remember a whole bunch of facts from a textbook. And I'll sit here and tell you that as a thirty-year-old I don't remember most of what I learned in high school. These students, they're very conscious because we'll talk about genocide and the different areas in the world where there have been mass situations of genocide. That's something that they'll always remember." By taking theme- or topic-based courses, students have an opportunity to explore topics of interest to them as a vehicle to gain the humanities and social science knowledge they are expected to learn. In typical classes we observed across these schools, the teacher begins units with "essential questions" like "What is justice?" or "What is gender?" (see Wiggins and Tighe 2001). According to a group of seniors at World Citizen High Schools who spoke to us in a focus group, they often explore fundamental questions of life, interrogating their own views, the views of philosophers and literary figures from past to present, and media opinions, and actively discuss diverse perspectives in class, often in the form of formal debates.

Topics of social justice are a theme that often serves to engage the students in their learning. At Bergslunden Gymnasium, social studies and language

teachers use media misrepresentations and stereotypes of the Bergslunden community as a starting point for discussions about social justice while simultaneously teaching social studies or language-based topics. An English teacher at World Citizen High used a recent shooting of an innocent black American by New York Police officers as a springboard for discussion about the current-day impact of past racist institutions like apartheid and American slavery. Debate is another means by which teachers introduce social justice topics. A debate coach at World Citizen High explained: "I know my team. They do a lot of research . . . and the material itself becomes inspiring to learn."

The debate format is used beyond the debate team. An English teacher interviewed at Ekdalsskolan mentioned that one of the barriers to improving her students' language abilities is their insecurity or "shyness" to speak the new language. Her primary goal for her students, she notes, is that they "feel secure speaking and writing." To encourage their speaking, she often uses debate as a tool to get her students going. Through debate, she explains, students

have to speak and have an opinion. They have to take sides, because there is nothing wrong or right. . . . We looked at a dilemma involving a black nurse . . . in the 1960s . . . she came to a family and the daughter was having a baby . . . and they made her go to the back door. So she left and the baby died. Did she do the right thing? She was offended and insulted. Or should she have saved the baby? . . . We had a great conversation. And they really all had opinions and from every perspective from the left and the right. . . . Everyone was drawn into the discussion.

Across the four sites, we saw evidence of the schools providing rigorous curricula to their students. These schools are providing their immigrant students with an education meant to teach them to think and engage with the twenty-first-century marketplace.

Pedagogical Practices

Across school sites, the primary preference for instructional delivery was collaborative and cooperative learning. While not always consistently according to our observations, there was generally an ethos of collaboration and working together evinced by the students in each school; small-group work was

the norm across school sites. In addition, each school developed innovative activities to improve the literacy and critical thinking skills of their students.

In the New York City sites, emphasis is placed on differentiated instruction. Differentiated instruction is based on the premise that instruction should vary according to the needs of students of differing abilities within the same class (Hall 2009). This approach to teaching provides students with multiple options for presenting knowledge as well as making sense of ideas, and requires teachers to present information in a variety of ways and to be flexible in modifying assignments (Hall 2009). A teacher at World Citizen High told us:

I do assign more advanced kids the more challenging questions . . . [they can] organize everything, summarize everything, and they need to take it to the next step . . . whereas low level kids, . . . I have them just do things like find pictures. So it depends on the students. . . . And even though they don't do the same tasks, they will still need to bring back whatever they're supposed to do and explain it to the whole group. By explaining their parts, they *have* to understand it, and then, which will also help them to practice their speaking, which most of them need.

While technology is utilized across all four school sites, the two upper secondary schools in Sweden, with their superior facilities and access to technology, *integrate technology* in many aspects of their curriculum. At Ekdalsskolan Gymnasium, all students are given laptops. In a philosophy course in Ekdalsskolan, student debates were videotaped and then accessed through the school's virtual classroom server. Students could rewatch the debate and write a reflective critique on their performance. Through its Frontier server, students have full access to their classes. While not fully implemented during our time at the school, many teachers use their virtual classrooms as a place where students can see and upload assignments, communicate with teachers and other students, track their missing assignments and progress in a class, and access teacher-linked resources.

At Bergslunden, The Knowledge Portal is a technology support center. According to one of the school officials, an acronym for The Knowledge Portal could be HTOSLC: High Tech Open Space Learning Center. In this sense, teachers can use computers as tools or instruments of knowledge similar to the use of a pen or pencil. But this "tool" facilitates active pedagogical interaction. Furthermore, staff members of The Knowledge Portal are highly

skilled and diverse in both their professional competencies and social/ethnic backgrounds. In terms of professional competencies, there are two teachers/pedagogues who are specialists in working with children/teens with special needs, one teacher who has a master's in modern language, and two who are working on doctoral degrees (one in pedagogy and literature and the other in science and civil engineering); additionally, there is a teacher who is a Spanish and didactics specialist, and a teacher who speaks and reads Arabic, Kurdish, Turkish, Swedish, and English. The ethnic/national/religious origins of The Knowledge Portal staff include the Middle East, Latin America, Sweden, as well as Christian, Jewish, and Muslim faiths. Though The Knowledge Portal was designed to accommodate students with learning disabilities, it is useful to a broad range of students, including immigrant-origin students and second-language learners.

School Structures: Facilitating Optimal Conditions for Learning

In order to implement school-wide academic reforms, schools also have to rethink the ways in which their structures affect the conditions in which innovation can occur. Many of these conditions—including everything from school staffing to the design and utilization of physical space—are often overlooked by social-science researchers, but are well known in the practitioner world to make or break innovation no matter how well intended (Balfanz, Jordan, McPartland, and Legters 2002; Comer 1995). Each of the schools in our study has experimented with structural ways of implementing curricular and instructional innovations while working explicitly to create a positive school climate inside the school. Three of the four schools were part of a larger network of schools that had experimented with many innovations: therefore, they were not reinventing the wheel and had the luxury of being mentored through the process.

While in both Swedish cities and New York City the content of teaching has largely become prescribed in order to prepare students for high-stakes tests, nonetheless, all the schools managed to find ways to allow for teachers to be part of the curriculum decision-making process. A teacher at World Citizen High School observed:

My old school, it was just, we were treated in such a condescending way. . . . Here, the administration, we're just treated with respect. . . . They trust that we know our content, and we're motivated to teach our kids and

we have some ability to do that. And sure, we might need some professional development and we're always encouraged to learn more or learn from each other. . . . And we always help each other; we are expected to work together, to plan together, to develop curriculum, and we build binders of our curriculum so that next year there's something to work off of. So, there's accountability, but it's not like a McDonald's management style.

Although there were some big differences in the size, staffing, and resources available to the Swedish schools versus those in New York City, organizationally there is a surprising amount of similarity in how all four schools structure teaching and learning. All have interdisciplinary teacher teams responsible for small groups of students, with shared planning time to allow for collaborative curriculum planning. One teacher said of the interdisciplinary planning: "I love having to work in a team. It's definitely not easy, but I feel like I've learned so much from my co-workers. And also I don't know what I would do without my co-workers in terms of creating a curriculum. I work with the English department to create everything I do." The teams are also used as opportunities to discuss the individual needs of students. At Bergslunden Gymnasium, students are assigned both a base-group leader and a mentor; these two teachers coach students through projects and assignments. Both schools in New York City have advisory programs in place whereby small groups of students are assigned to a teacher who serves as a mentor and coach to students as they navigate through high school. An English teacher, expressing sentiments that existed across all four sites, described in detail the way in which the teams serve to deepen the understanding of students' learning challenges and to strategize solutions to better meet the needs of each student:

All the teachers in our team get together and we, you know, discuss students' behavior, academic improvement, and being there with their advisors and their teachers I really feel like it's a great way to combat, you know, problems that the kids have, and really kind of identify struggles that the kids have. And that's, to me, one of the most amazing things that we do. That the teachers really have a time every week when we sit down and talk about it. So, what we do in guidance, we bring up kids that we're having problems with usually. And we talk about what's going on and ask each other if anyone is more successful with them, like what they're doing. And so, we try to figure out ways to work with the kid.

A ninth/tenth-grade teacher at World Citizen High explained that the team meetings, along with the advisory program, play a critical role in the school's high graduation rate: "We need to know everything that has been done [and] want to make sure that the kids are getting all the help they need." The school structures are organized at these sites in such a way that teachers have time to systematically communicate about students and collaborate around curriculum development and teaching. This allows a spirit of collaboration between colleagues and a collective focus on the needs of the students.

Enhancing Positive School Climate

All the schools work intentionally to create a school climate where students feel welcome, respected, cared for, and safe. The advisory groups clearly help to foster a connection among students as well as between students and teachers. A twelfth-grade math teacher at World Citizen High School summed up the school's ethos by saying: "I think our school . . . it expects us to know our students, and push them. And to care about them." And another teacher echoed this sentiment: "One of the things that I love about this place, . . . it's so much based on relationships, your personal relationships with kids, building that relationship, and being there for the kids, I think it's really important. . . . I really think this school is very holistic in its approach." Students tended to report a positive climate at their schools. Students at both Bergslunden and World Citizen High Schools spoke highly of the learning environments of their respective schools. Second-language learners at Bergslunden felt that for the most part, their teachers were great at meeting students' needs. The second-language learners did not merely feel that their teachers were facilitating linguistic competencies but were also sensitive to how students were or were not adjusting to their new homeland. During interviews and conversations, students reported that they could approach their teachers not just for help with language improvement, but for other types of assistance. One female student enthusiastically explained, "When I have problems in my studies, I am free to go to my teachers and tell them. . . . I am free to go to the teachers, the nurse, everything. . . . I can talk to them and I feel comfortable." Generally speaking, second-language learners felt immersed in a supportive learning environment and were eager to follow the directives of teachers. At World Citizen High, similar to Bergslunden, the second-language learners expressed positive sentiments about teachers always being accessible

to students. For example, students knew that they could get assistance from teachers during teachers' "down time" like lunch breaks, breaks between classes, and even after school. Our observations and interviews suggest a high degree of trust between teachers and students at both schools.

Likewise, during a focus group with ninth graders at World Citizen High, one student mentioned that she was motivated to do her work to please her teacher: "I like doing work for this class because I like my teacher. . . . I like [her] because although we all come from different countries she tries to explain so that we understand each other." To this, another participant added, "Yeah, some teachers, they always try to help you, and they respect you. They make you really want to come to school."

This climate of support extends to a philosophy of encouraging students to support one another. Students noted that they liked learning when there was a mix of levels so that the more advanced students could help the beginners. Teachers encouraged active collaboration. For example, at Progressive, we observed teachers advising their students to help one another through the rigorous exhibition process: "Identify someone in the advisory to check in with you later in the week . . . read your draft, give you feedback and encouragement."

Notably, unlike in many schools that serve diverse populations in the United States, students at these schools overwhelmingly reported feeling safe (Johnson, Arumi, and Ott 2006; Zeldin 2004). At Bergslunden, students spoke repeatedly about the amount of diversity, the lack of bullying, and how Calm Streets—a program within the school that uses youth workers from the community to maintain discipline—does a great job of preventing and mediating disputes and fights among students. A sentiment frequently expressed across student interviews was that the reputation of Bergslunden as a "bad school" with a lot of criminals and fighting is unjustified; in their view, there are few to no criminals and far more interactions based upon friendship than fighting. A second-language student in Bergslunden's program for newcomer immigrants explained that when she first got there, she asked to transfer because she had only known the school through its reputation. A few months later, she got a letter saying she could go to another school with fewer immigrants. At this point, however, she told us: "I didn't want to leave. . . . The reputation of [Bergslunden Gymnasium] is not true."

At Ekdalsskolan, the students were very proud of how their diverse population got along so well. For example, two friends from different backgrounds

explained in an informal interview: "We have been best friends since third grade. We study Arabic together. We are different religions but it doesn't matter to us. The people at this school are really different, from all over the world, but they all get along really well. There are not many fights here. We are family here." Another student, whose family is from Sri Lanka, transferred from an elite school—where she was academically successful—to Ekdalsskolan even though she would be required to repeat her first year. Her reasons were based on a desire for a school that was, as she describes, "more than a school"—that is, somewhere where the relationships between teachers and students were personalized. As she explains, "You should be where you are comfortable . . . the environment and teachers are better at Ekdalsskolan . . . students have a more special connection with the teachers and students here, I feel." Positive student sentiments, like those presented above, were frequently expressed across all four sites.⁵ The sense that teachers and administrators cared, served to keep students connected and engaged.

Assessment Approaches

Complementing progressive approaches to content and delivery is a corresponding approach to student assessment. The decisions about *what* to assess have been adapted to match instructional goals. Yet each school also recognizes that students are required to show certain forms of competency as demonstrated through high-stakes national (Sweden) or statewide (New York) exams in order to graduate. Consequently, the schools employ various ways of assessing students in line with their visions, while at the same time working to prepare students for standardized exams.

In day-to-day coursework, students have opportunities across all the school sites to be assessed in multiple ways intended to allow them to display competency and to accommodate different learning styles, or to be more representative of what students may find in the "twenty-first-century" world. These *multimodal assessments* have included student-created video documentaries, graphic novels or other multimedia representations (Progressive, World Citizen, and Bergslunden); classroom presentations using PowerPoint (all four schools); laboratory experiments; portfolios; and, of course, traditional papers and exams.

Several of the schools used portfolio assessments as a way to evaluate student progress. A chemistry teacher at World Citizen High told us:

We have a portfolio presentation at the end of the semester, where we have different panels. Each panel will have four students and the teacher for the advisory group. So each person will actually sit there and then defend him or herself . . . [and] explain what they did for the particular category. So, for example, for the research and reporting category, they have to put an entry sheet, . . . explaining why did I choose this work for this particular category. And what kind of work is that . . . basically explain their work . . . the rest of the students will be asking questions. Why did you choose this project for this category? What did you learn from this project, and so on and so forth.

Several of the schools also require each student to complete a culminating project that has been initiated and carried out entirely by him or her. In the natural-science research program at Ekdalsskolan, for example, students are mentored by doctoral students from the Karolinska Institute, an internationally renowned medical school and research center, as they work on self-initiated science projects that begin in their second year of the program and are completed in the fall of their final year. One of Ekdalsskolan's most highlighted job-work partnerships is in this program, where students have the opportunity to work with professionals in the science discipline of their choice.

Students at Progressive High School complete self-initiated projects known as exhibitions, which are designed to be akin to a "mini-thesis defense." At the end of each year, students write extensive papers to demonstrate both knowledge of a particular content area and the ability to think deeply about a selected topic using higher-order skills. The projects in Ekdalsskolan's science research program are similar, involving a thesis that is defended during the fall of the student's third (and final) year of school. The formal presentation takes place in a public forum at the Karolinska Institute's amphitheatre, where students present their research and, as at Progressive, then take questions from the audience of students, teachers, and Karolinska mentors and professors who participate in the partnership.

Ideally, high-stakes standardized exams are a way for students to show that they have mastery over required content. For a number of reasons, however, students who are in the process of acquiring a second language may not be able to demonstrate their knowledge on standardized tests though they may well understand the content knowledge. The reasons are varied and

include issues related to lack of cultural familiarity with the testing format (Solano-Flores 2008), language acquisition, vocabulary knowledge, timed-testing (Amrein and Berliner 2002; Menken 2008; Solano-Flores 2008), and stereotype threat (Steele 1997). Second-language learners are particularly disadvantaged when taking standardized exams; hence, time spent explicitly in preparing students for exams can make a difference in how they perform, regardless of their knowledge of the content being tested (APA 2012; Menken 2008).

At World Citizen, for example, in a history class we observed, a quiz incorporated questions resembling the format of questions on the state-mandated Regents exam (multiple choice, studying a document and answering questions related to it, requiring the student to state an opinion with supporting evidence, etc.). At Progressive, portfolio assessment is privileged over standardized exams as a way to evaluate student competency. That said, teachers still set aside time to prepare students for exams, generally in the form of practice tests that are reviewed in class. Likewise, teachers at Bergslunden Gymnasium set aside time to give students assignments and pretests that will help prepare them for the National Tests.

While test preparation was viewed as instrumental and important, many teachers chafed at simply "teaching to the test." Two English teachers at World Citizen talked about how they tried to teach beyond the exams: "I think the two of us are here to give a real kind of steroid to their literacy, so that they can do well on all their exams. Not because all the exams are great but because they have to pass them to graduate from high school." Thus, the teachers in the schools were not happy about having to use precious teaching time to prepare their students for the high-stakes tests; nonetheless, they conscientiously took on the challenge, viewing it as another learning opportunity. In addition, they sought alternative assessment strategies and taught their students to present publicly—a skill that should serve their students well in the world of work.

Providing Academic Supports and Enrichment Outside of Class

All four schools provide supplementary academic support in some form for their students. In recent years, there has been a renewed interest in the role of after-school programming (Noam 2004). The students in several of the schools in this study were encouraged to participate in multiple after-school activities. The most common types of academic support provided by the

schools in our study are formal and informal homework support and tutoring; enrichment opportunities including field trips, arts-related programs with community partners, and discipline-related clubs such as a national science club, or author's club; and clubs related to students' ethnic or cultural backgrounds.

At World Citizen, for example, extracurricular activity clubs included Chinese language classes, Chinese calligraphy, and Brazilian martial arts. When these clubs hosted events such as a lunch celebrating Bengali Independence Day or Chinese New Year's Day, the guidelines were that everyone in the school is invited, and that the hosts/hostesses of the event share their cultural knowledge with others in the community. As a counselor at World Citizen noted: "I think the more students do outside of class, the more they'll be ready for college."

The school day alone rarely gives these students enough time to catch up with their peers; and immigrant parents dealing with language challenges are often unable to help their children academically. After-school academic programs, where immigrant students work individually or in small groups, represent a critical resource that may make all the difference in their academic trajectory. After-school activities provide immigrant-origin students the opportunity to receive personalized assistance with schoolwork and structure their time.

Preparation for Higher Education and the Workplace: Navigating Life-Stage Transitions

Explicit in the educational visions across the four school sites are the goals of preparing their students for the "twenty-first century" and a "global world." A social studies teacher at Progressive spoke of the school's focus on global consciousness and the students' keen interest in this area: "They're very current-event conscious and focused on the world and how to change it; how they can be an active participant in the world."

The goals of this preparation agenda are operationalized in specific strategies employed at each school, and are particular to the local and national contexts in which the schools reside. The processes of both applying to university and learning skills for the workplace in the host country require explicit and dedicated instruction by secondary schools. All four schools have programs to help students apply for the university and to gain the "soft skills," or workplace behaviors, that are culturally expected in each country and considered

critical for the twenty-first century—such as the ability to work collaboratively with others. In the following paragraphs, we describe some of the practices the four schools employ to help their students navigate the transitions to university and the workplace.

Preparation for University Studies In both the United States and in Sweden, there are specific processes to follow to apply and gain acceptance to the university. These processes require what is referred to in the US literature as “college pathway knowledge,” or the tangible know-how to successfully navigate the process into the university. College-pathway knowledge is often seen among the privileged dominant group as something that is “self-evident” or “common sense,” but schools that work with immigrant-origin youth or marginalized populations understand that for newcomer families, especially those with no experience with higher education, how to get into a university can be a mystery.

While both Sweden and the United States offer multiple pathways, full of “second chances,” to higher education, the college-pathway process in Sweden is much more transparent and easier to follow than in the United States. It is based on a point system calculated in terms of courses completed in high school and performance in those classes as measured by the national exams. While the process is fairly straightforward, there are nonetheless a number of hurdles students must cross to get to a college or university. For example, immigrant-origin students might need to learn more about the kinds of options they have for higher education as well as about the schools themselves, have a clear understanding of the kinds of courses they need to take and the grades they will need to be accepted at the school of their choice, and get help completing the applications. Further, they need exposure to the expectations and culture of college/university life, which may be quite different from their personal experience.

At Ekdalsskolan Gymnasium, explicit preparation begins in the senior year. Each student meets with one of the college counselors to discuss options and the application process. At the beginning of the second semester, the school holds a university fair during the school day. Universities, technical colleges, and vocational schools from across the country send representatives to encourage application by immigrant-origin youth. After an initial presentation, the representatives disperse to classrooms, and students can choose three different schools to check out through question-and-answer sessions. In addition, the college counselor schedules campus visits for students. During

our interviews with seniors, we asked them about the process for getting into a postsecondary school in Sweden. All appeared quite familiar with the on-line process and what they needed to do, even if they were less certain of their own plans.

At Bergslunden, the process of providing information about college is also explicit and built into the curriculum. For example, in the social science program, teachers arrange for students to visit colleges. More generally, guidance counselors make themselves available to answer questions and work one-on-one with students interested in attending college. Also, Bergslunden provides a special college-pathway course for newcomer immigrant students who already have high school diplomas from their country of origin but need additional preparation to transition into the Swedish postsecondary system. Thus, promising students are provided with both advice and coursework needed to supplement their high school degree.

In the United States, students need to learn all of the above and more. Unlike Sweden, getting into the university is a much more complicated process, much of it “hidden” from view, especially for the elite universities. Beyond grades and performance on college-entry exams, students are expected to sell themselves to schools. For example, students can show they possess desirable soft skills such as personal responsibility and social skills associated with success (e.g., leadership, social responsibility, etc.) in the university or workplace as a result of the extracurricular or employment positions they have held outside of school. A wide range of activities displays “well-roundedness.” In addition, students obtain recommendations from teachers and others who can attest to their abilities and personality traits, and provide personal statements or respond to prompts to attest to how they are uniquely qualified to attend certain institutions.

While marketing oneself, especially for elite universities, requires a lot of know-how on the part of students and their families, even more prohibitive is the cost of higher education. That is the biggest barrier to access to a postsecondary school in the United States; hence, knowledge about ways for paying for college, as well as tangible help in the process of obtaining financial assistance, must be provided by high schools to their immigrant-origin students.

Progressive High has a comprehensive college-pathway program designed to address all of these obstacles to college access. The college-pathway process at Progressive is publicly celebrated as evidenced by the bulletin board

outside of the guidance counselors' office, which shows off photos and names of alumni according to the colleges they are attending. The school provides both group and individualized information, clearly articulating the college's access to the hidden "game."

All eleventh and twelfth graders are required to take a "college prep" class, which is run by the guidance counselors. In the class, students explore options for their university education and learn how to complete applications, including applications for loans and scholarships. During their junior year, the students take a class trip to a well-known test preparation company, where they complete surveys to identify what they are looking for in college. These interests, combined with performance information provided by the students (e.g., grade point average), are matched by the company to universities in tiers, ranging from "reaches," schools where students have only a modest chance of acceptance, to "safety schools," where they have a high probability of getting in. In addition, the guidance counselor gives students a list of summer programs where they can take college classes, explaining that this can enhance their resumes and college applications. Other examples of in-class activities include: practice filling out financial-aid applications, searching for universities, and lessons on deciding how many colleges to apply to, on writing application essays and statements, and on procuring recommendations. Acceptances and rejections are shared and discussed in the more intimate setting of the advisory program with their peers.

Formal instruction in college-pathway knowledge stands side by side with a structured approach to providing individual support not just to the student but to the parents as well, involving explicit instruction in college-pathway knowledge and tangible help while fully engaging them in the process. This approach also begins in junior year. A guidance counselor meets with every eleventh grade student and his/her parents for thirty minutes in the spring to discuss the application process/questions/next steps/how to choose a college. One guidance counselor we interviewed explained that immigrant parents often want their children to go to big-name schools. But he also noted that Hispanic parents probably knew less about the process and the names of schools than did Asian parents, who seemed to enjoy better exchange of college information across socioeconomic class lines (Louie 2004). Thus, he confided that he strove to focus particular energies to helping lower-income immigrant families. He also told us that while it was often difficult for immigrant parents to come in to see him during the workday,

he estimated that, nonetheless, 85 percent of the parents managed to make a daytime meeting.

The costs for university entry start at the very beginning of the process with fees for standardized tests (SAT or ACT) and application costs. In addition, middle-class students in the United States often take expensive test preparation courses that give them an additional advantage on test day. To level the playing field, Progressive High School subsidizes SAT test preparation courses for its students.

Preparation for the Workplace

All four schools have specific programs or strategies designed to provide students with opportunities to gain practical skills in preparation for the workplace. Primary among these opportunities are internships and explicit connections to mentors that are arranged through university or community partnerships. At both World Citizen and Progressive High Schools, students are involved in internships that build on their interests. At the time of our data collection, Ekdalsskolan Gymnasium was piloting a mentorship program through a Stockholm business association, matching seniors in the economics program with Swedish business professionals. The school was planning to expand this program in the following year to all social science seniors. In its innovative entrepreneurial program, students are matched with community members in a school-to-work program that seeks to connect businesses with students who share compatible interests. As another example, a well-known commercial law firm provides up to three students from Bergslunden Gymnasium with: (1) scholarship funds of thirty-thousand SEK that they share; (2) mentors from the law firm; (3) funds to pay for textbooks while they attend law school; (4) summer jobs after their second year in law school; and (5) guaranteed internships (*praktikplats*) while in school. These innovative internships and practicums help to keep students academically motivated, serve to model the soft skills of the world of work, and provide crucial networks for connections to future positions.

School Factors Particularly Conducive to Better Outcomes for Newcomer Immigrant Youth and Second-Language Learners

In addition to the practices described above, newcomer immigrant youth and second-language learners have additional academic and socio-emotional needs, different from those of the typical second-generation immigrant

student. At the forefront is the need to develop both the social and academic language of their new country while mastering the content knowledge necessary to be successful in the new society. Most graduation pathways are quite unforgiving of the five to seven years it takes for most students to develop the academic language to the point of competitiveness with native peers (Cummins 2000; Hakuta, Butler, and Witt 2000). This is the level of language competence required to be competitive on a timed multiple choice test, write a well argued essay, or confidently join in a class discussion. Thus, immigrant students often are tracked into non-college-bound courses, falter in confidence, and fall behind their nonimmigrant peers (Menken 2008; Ruiz-de-Valasco, Fix, and Clewell 1998; Suárez-Orozco et al. 2008).

Further, it is important to keep in mind that immigration is a stressful event (Falicov 1998; Suárez-Orozco 2001), which removes youth from predictable contexts while stripping them of significant social ties (Suárez-Orozco et al. 2008). Many have been separated from their parents for protracted periods of time and may face emotionally complex reunifications (Suárez-Orozco, Todorova, and Louie 2002). Immigrant children must contend with the particular acculturative challenges of navigating two worlds (Berry, Phinney, Sam, and Vedder 2006). They are often asked to take on responsibilities beyond their years, including sibling care, translation duties, and advocacy for their families (Faulstich-Orellana 2001), which at times undermine parental authority. These often highly gendered roles may have both positive and negative consequences for development (Smith 2002; Suárez-Orozco and Qin 2006). Children of immigrants also face the challenge of forging an identity and developing a sense of belonging to their new homeland while honoring their parental origins (Suárez-Orozco 2004). This acculturative stress has been linked both to psychological distress (APA 2012; García-Coll and Magnuson 1997) as well as to academic problems (Suárez-Orozco and Suárez-Orozco 1995).

Thus, we examined particularly innovative and promising practices that served to ease the emotional and linguistic transitions of newcomer and second-language learners at two school sites: World Citizen High School, which serves only newcomer immigrant youth, and Bergslunden, whose dedicated second-language-learners team gave the researchers full access to their work and their program. These schools employ the following innovative strategies to address both the academic needs of newcomer youth as well as their acclimation to their new environment: (1) support in helping students navigate the cultural transition to the new country; (2) support for students who had gaps

in literacy or due to interrupted schooling; (3) language-intensive instruction across the curriculum; and (4) language-learning accommodations.

Negotiating Cultural Transitions

World Citizen High School is highly strategic in its approach to help newcomer youth adjust to their new environs. As new students come in, teacher teams meet to discuss each one, and a series of assessments are conducted and discussed in order to develop the best plan for him or her. The teachers try to meet with as many of the parents as possible. Parents are asked to bring in signed forms/health records at the beginning of the school year. Teachers also meet with parents sometime around the end of the first grading period in late October. This is when students first get to see their report cards, and it is an opportunity for teachers to get a sense of what their students' home and family situations are like. The information gleaned from these conferences is then shared when teachers meet across the teams working with each student.

The ongoing transition is primarily the responsibility of the advisory program, which helps students to adjust to their new school under the guidance of an advisor who is looking out for them. One of the guidelines for forming advisory groups is to have a newcomer/beginning learner of English in the same group as at least one student who shares the same native language and is also proficient in English so that the more advanced English speaker can translate. In advisory groups, students are encouraged to talk about anything they like. According to a mentor teacher, her advisees talk about anything from difficulties with a class, missing families and friends back home, to boyfriend/girlfriend issues:

I think . . . that the culture of the classroom is very important. . . . At the beginning, it's a tradition in our school, you spend a lot of time on community-building activities, where they get to know each other as students. . . . Like background, and through that, what comes out is that some of them went to school so much longer . . . because of war or whatever. Some of them didn't get to go to school [at all]. So they start seeing and understanding much more about why some of them are more advanced than others. . . . Then the other kids help [each other because] they understand why. . . . It is very important that . . . you develop that trust and you make them comfortable.

TABLE 6.4. Cross-Case Comparisons of Two Schools with Innovative Practices Specific to Newcomer or Second-Language Learners

	<i>World Citizen</i>	<i>Bergslundens</i>
Help in negotiating cultural transitions	✓	✓
Support for gaps in interrupted schooling & literacy	✓	✓
Language-based teaching across content areas	✓	✓
Language-learning accommodations	✓	✓

Further, aligned with the language-intensive and student-centered-learning approaches, instructional tasks, in particular writing tasks, encourage students to share their personal experiences both in their old and new countries and in the transition from one to the other. For example, in one English assignment, students were given the task of sharing their experiences of moving from their native country to the United States. They are encouraged to share their stories with each other. Such activities help them to recognize that they are not alone in the difficulties of transition.

Supports for Gaps in Interrupted Schooling and Literacy

Some students enter secondary school with limited prior education or significant interruptions in their schooling. These may occur for a variety of reasons including socio-economic or gender inequities in original educational access, political strife that could have interrupted schooling, or hiccups in the migratory process that may have led to a sustained period out of school before reentry in the new land. Whatever the cause of an interruption in schooling, the consequence is often students who are over-aged and under-skilled and have considerable catching up to do in the classroom. This takes significant creativity, flexibility, and sustained effort on the part of school administrators and teachers. Students with interrupted formal education (SIFE) are encouraged to use every learning opportunity: "I tell [SIFE students], if you are on the subway, and you are just sitting, do your onesies, twosies, and threesies in your head till you can say it . . . and I suppose that's a form of homework." Understanding is shown for these students' sensitivity about being over-aged. They are encouraged to be as

independent as possible and to constructively seek help from peers. A math teacher at World Citizen High School said:

When a kid comes to me with . . . asking for help, I'll say who have you asked to help you first? . . . I want them to be independent. . . . This SIFE student, for a long time, I couldn't get her to work with anyone else . . . and I think a part of it was that she was embarrassed of how much she didn't know, and I finally got her to a point where she is now reliant on two or three other people in the class that she relates to and can get assistance from.

SIFE students receive the same supports provided to other newcomer students and more. Particular emphasis is placed on literacy. Typically, these students take longer than the standard four years to graduate from high school—often stretching to seven years. With the right amount of scaffolding, the daunting tasks of learning a new language, acquiring literacy, mastering content knowledge of a new culture, accruing graduation credit courses, and passing high-stakes tests are achievable for many students who would have given up in another setting.

Second-Language Learning

While not all immigrant students are second-language learners, many if not most are; and, in some cases, immigration requires learning three or more languages. As noted earlier, learning a second language to a competent academic level takes considerable time (Christensen and Stanat 2007; Collier 1995; Cummins 2000; Cummins, Brown, and Sayers 2007; Hakuta, Butler, and Witt 2000; Thomas and Collier 2002). Students with limited literacy in their native language will need further time to solidify their academic skills in a new language. An English teacher at World Citizen High School voiced this as one of the challenges that teachers face on a regular basis:

We have students who are reading at grade level in English and they have only been in the country for three or four years. And, we have students who still struggle with basic spelling and sentence composition issues. All in the same classroom, meeting their needs well with content that still is interesting and stimulating and kind of addressing all of these different issues; I think it is incredibly challenging.

A teacher in Bergslunden Gymnasium's newcomer program offered a similar observation:

Some immigrant students succeed, but some need more time [to learn Swedish, English, or Math]. For example, those who come from Bosnia or China have usually been in educational systems of high quality that are comparable to Sweden and can be prepared in one or two years. But other students, like those from Afghanistan, who have grown up during wartimes when the schools were closed, come needing far more time to prepare to take the National Tests. . . . There is a general expectation that we can prepare all students in one base year. . . . [but] the needs of our students vary.

Thus, immigrant students entering upper secondary schools with little background in the language of instruction require systematic and effective long-term curriculum plans for language education. Unlike schools in Sweden, schools in the United States typically do not have systematic or consistent bilingual or second-language acquisition policies and practices; this lack places ELL students at a disadvantage.

Second-language instruction is most successful when learners are placed into a progressive and systematic program of instruction that first identifies their incoming literacy and academic skills (Christensen and Stanat 2007). Research shows that consistency of instruction is essential for students as frequent transitions place them at considerable disadvantage (Gándara and Contreras 2008). Second-language learning is most successful when high-quality second-language instruction is provided with continued transitional academic supports—like tutoring, homework help, and writing assistance—as the language learners integrate into mainstream programs (Christensen and Stanat 2007). In order to ensure a smooth transition between grades as well as the continual development of skills, teachers need to both understand and conform to the instructional model ascribed to by the school or district (Sugarman and Howard 2001). Further, assessment of skills growth should be done annually using portfolio assessment as well as testing in order to measure progress and adjust interventions (Christensen and Stanat 2007). In Sweden, these supports are consistent with government policy; we also found these supports available at World Citizen High School though they are certainly not the norm in US public schools.

Teaching across Content Areas

In addition to developing communicative proficiency in the language of their new country, second-language learners (SLLs) need to simultaneously build content literacies; many of them also have low cognitive academic-language proficiency skills (CALP). Second-language acquisition programs (e.g., bilingual education, self-contained SLL programs) primarily focus on literacy development in terms of language proficiency, with only limited attention to academic second-language acquisition in content areas (August and Hakuta 1997; Chamot and O'Malley 1994; García 1993). It is a challenge for students to learn content across the academic disciplines while at the same time acquiring new language and literacy skills, and it poses an instructional challenge to many teachers as well (August and Hakuta 1997; Chamot and O'Malley 1994; García 1993; NCES 1999). The teachers at World Citizen High in particular were able to draw on the rich experience of the network of World Citizen schools. The network had developed a well-thought-out, rigorous teaching approach with an excellent track record of success over its decade and a half of operation.

A mentor teacher at World Citizen High School explained the school's strategy to teach the new language across subjects to new second-language learners:

You bring in articles about the topic you're covering. . . . Teach them explicitly how to summarize, and what it means to summarize, what it means to paraphrase. . . . We explicitly teach, what does it mean to analyze something. We go over the steps for different ways you can analyze in different content areas. Sometimes different teachers in the team would say they want to target this word . . . it's a skill, it's a process-type word, and they need to know what it means, so we'd all do it in our classes. . . . And we found that when we ALL do it, and we all show them how to use it in different content areas, in different content, they are able to get it better. But it has to be explicitly taught, like we are studying this now. And tell them how we're going to do it. And ALWAYS bring it into the lesson that particular word so they keep seeing it. . . . Tons of writing, tons of presenting.

All teachers in the World Citizen network receive extensive training in language-intensive curriculum, where language learning is embedded across the entire curriculum. Writing is not simply an activity for language-arts classes.

Students are pushed daily to write and use their developing language skills in every class.

A twelfth-grade math teacher stressed the importance of pushing the second-language learners to be constantly writing in every class as a way to develop their new language skills. Notably, teachers push kids to write in essay format in preparation for their transition to college. Thus, second-language instruction is embedded across every subject in every possible learning opportunity throughout the high school experience. In this way nothing is taken for granted, language learning is constantly reinforced, and students are explicitly prepared for college entry.

Language-Learning Accommodations

At World Citizen High School students are encouraged to use their first language to help them learn the second language, even if others don't know their mother tongue. Informally, students are encouraged to translate for the newest immigrants, read and write in their first language during silent reading times, and carry bilingual dictionaries, but gently prodded toward English over time. The mother tongue is thus used strategically to aid the development of the new one. As one teacher at World Citizen High explained: "We encourage our kids to continue to develop their native language. [We encourage this] because we believe it develops the second language and it [acknowledges that] the base is the native language, and . . . it becomes so much more difficult to build their second language if there is no foundation. So because we encourage our kids so much, our kids feel free to speak whatever language they speak." Examples of the use of first languages are commonplace at World Citizen and Bergslunden. At World Citizen, after one small-group assignment, students were told to assess their group with a twist; they had to answer questions such as "What worked well in your group?" and "Who made the group work particularly successful?" On one side of a sheet of paper, students first had to translate the questions into their native language; on the other side, they answered the questions in English. At Bergslunden, second-language learners are not only encouraged but expected, during Problem-Based Learning assignments, to write key concepts in both their first language and Swedish. Teachers encourage and expect individual students to maintain first-language fluency. The tolerant attitude facilitated by Bergslunden teachers has had an unanticipated, yet welcome consequence. The diversity of language backgrounds

means that Swedish becomes the lingua franca, the language spoken in the hallway that allows students to converse with one another. In other words, speaking Swedish to friends becomes something that second-language learners do by choice instead of by force.

In addition to the use of first languages as a teaching/learning tool, a ninth/tenth-grade math teacher shared her strategy for making sure that every student is keeping up and understands: "I think it helps if I spend five minutes before the end of the class, reading the question, or the writing prompt, reading it to them . . . and have them talk amongst themselves to make sure that they understand it, and have other kids translate for the ones who may not understand English. So make sure they understand the homework, and . . . think about where kids are going to get stuck."

Assignments are continually modified to make them accessible to students. An eleventh-grade science teacher explained:

We have team meetings where we sit down and talk. . . . You know, we'll talk about our students and we'd pick . . . we study five students. It's something that we do for each team, where each team will identify five students, where they have very, very low literacy skills and they pretty much struggle with every single class. And then we'll take out the work from each content area and then we'll put them together and we'll talk about the questions, the assignment itself, and also the way students respond, and we also talk about how could we modify this particular assignment, and then we'll set up a model of, in general, how we are going to modify this.

These accommodations provide the much-needed scaffolding to newcomer students as they make the transition to their new educational setting. They begin to gain confidence in themselves and take the necessary strides in their new language to gain the academic skills they will need to be successful in their new land.

Implications for Policy and Practice

Immigrant-origin students bring a myriad of challenges to the classroom, which are compounded by the late twentieth-century climate of school reforms (Meier and Wood 2004), which has had a series of unintended consequences for this population. Clearly there are no facile solutions to the complex problems facing many of these students. The four schools examined in

this chapter, however, exemplify beacons of opportunity. Our multiple-case research strategy revealed a number of common denominators of promising practice.

Many of the principles essential to serve immigrant students, highlighted in this chapter, are simply sound educational practice. At the very core is a confluence of rigorous standards and high expectations coupled with a "pedagogy of care" (Noddings 2003). Rather than taking a remedial approach, this education is *preparatory* in nature. Rather than an education that is good enough for "other people's children" (Delpit 2006), it is an education that one would be happy to see provided to *one's own children*. Further, the education is framed within an ethical, relational, caring context. These principles, we would argue, are sound canons of pedagogy to serve all students, whether or not of immigrant origin. In addition, the schools described here provide an added layer of services that address the specific needs of students from immigrant families.

Preparing Students for the Twenty-First-Century Global Era

More than ever before, education in the twenty-first century requires the development of higher-order cognitive skills in order to be able to engage with the marketplace realities of our global era (Bloom 2004; Suárez-Orozco and Qin-Hilliard 2004). However, the educational practices we presented in this chapter are not limited to providing students with skills for the marketplace. Teachers diligently work to prepare students for life in general, regardless of whether they are interested in going on to college or taking other professional paths.

The four schools we studied are rich with innovations that allow youth to develop the ethics, skills, sensibilities, and competencies needed to identify, analyze, and solve problems from multiple perspectives. These schools nurture students to be curious and cognitively flexible, and to synthesize knowledge within and across disciplines (Gardner 2004; Schleicher and Tremley 2006; Suárez-Orozco and Sattin 2007). The schools have an explicit agenda to prepare their students to successfully navigate in a multicultural world and impart skills deemed essential not merely to survive but to thrive in the global era (Bloom 2004; Gardner 2004). These promising schools put rigor, relevance, and relationships (Gates 2006) at the core of their pedagogy. What we found in them was the standard of rigor that we would hope for our own children. Unfortunately, however, rather than featuring such a preparation agenda, all too many schools serving immigrant-origin youth, like schools

that serve other disadvantaged students, are those that are relegated to teaching "other people's children" (Delpit 2006)—such suboptimal schools typically offer the very least to those who need the very most (Kozol 1998, 2006).

In all of the schools we examined, we found a commitment to marginalized and disadvantaged students. The schools offer a stimulating, rigorous, and relevant curriculum but also provide a number of supplemental resources (such as after-school programs, tutoring, high-stakes test preparation, homework help, explicit college entry information, and so forth) to at-risk students in order to ease their educational transition and ameliorate their outcomes. Teachers make their pedagogies transparent, and there is a wealth of initiatives taken from different levels in the school system as a whole. The schools promote an alignment of instructional methods, content, and assessments and foster collaborative efforts to raise students' achievement levels and reduce barriers to educational equity. Notably, these services are helpful not only for immigrant-origin students but for other at-risk youth as well.

Our findings reveal that the four schools are learning communities with regular, rich encounters of exchange between students and teachers, teachers and teachers, and students and students. Teachers meet frequently to discuss student well-being and encourage their students in managing their learning and personal development. Students are treated as valued members of the learning community. The preparation agenda emphasizes a "caring" approach to teaching (Noddings 2002), whereby teachers' concern about students transcends mere subject matter. Essential values that are often stressed as part of the schools' ethos include: openness, communication, trust, respect, empathy, truth, participation, and a sense of justice. These values are not simply encouraged in school but are to be carried into life as a basis for nurturing ethical relationships with others. Notably, these core values are consistent with the kinds of values endorsed by John Dewey a century ago as fundamental for a participatory democratic society soliciting the full civic engagement of all citizens (Dewey 1909/1975).

These promising schools place positive relationships at the very core of the educational enterprise. Relationships between the administration and the faculty are respectful and teachers work in collaborative teams, reducing the sense of isolation that so often plagues the classroom teacher. Students are encouraged to support one another's learning and develop collaborations as well. The class and school environments of collaborative learning play a critical role in sustaining effortful student learning (Pianta 1999; Suárez-Orozco,

Pimentel, and Martin 2009). The educational enterprise is characterized by reciprocal interactions between teachers and students, in which teachers see their own destinies linked to the success of their students (Dance 2002).

In the schools we have highlighted, we saw students reflected daily in the eyes of their teachers. In addition, these promising schools all have faced head-on the specific challenges that immigrant-origin students bring to schools that must operate within citywide and nationwide contexts of sometimes-heedless school reform. In this chapter, we pointed to a number of fundamental ways by which accommodations were made for newcomer immigrant students and second-language learners, providing them the opportunity to catch up with their native-born peers. These efforts include assisting immigrant-origin students in making psycho-social and cultural adjustments during their initial transitions. They also involve tangible aid to make up gaps in interrupted schooling. Further, these schools provide a series of language-based accommodations while the academic language of the new land is being acquired.

Though we have found most teachers and other school officials at the four schools eagerly engaged in the implementation of the preparation agenda, there are still challenges and obstacles to be overcome. For example, the needs of immigrant students and the expertise of their teachers, which are central to the preparation agenda, are not the ultimate arbiters of pedagogical practices and curriculum content. Instead, due to the requirement that schools conform to standardized and/or national test regulations, it is the state/nation-centered testing mandates that have the final word. Even worse, the tests are not designed with the unique needs of second-generation or newly arrived students who are second-language learners in mind (APA 2012; Menken 2008). The demands of these standardized tests interrupt and hinder teacher efforts to achieve the goals of the preparation agenda.

Successful schooling that encompasses a preparation agenda is not facilitated by standardized examinations, which privilege superficial knowledge, skills, and competencies. Successful schooling goes "beneath surface meaning, first impressions, dominant myths, official pronouncements . . . to understand the deep meaning, root causes, social context, ideology, and personal consequences of any action . . . text, subject matter, policy, mass media, or discourse" (Shor 1992, 129). A preparation agenda relies upon ethical and dialogical pedagogical processes between

teachers and students that empower students (Delpit 2006; Freire 2000, 2004; Shor 1992).

The best efforts will be those that will take a systematic approach to incorporation. In Sweden, there is a clearer recognition of the importance of providing systematic services to those with greater need, with promising if somewhat uneven results, as policy alone cannot eradicate marketplace discrimination. Nonetheless, it is an important first step. In the United States, there is no systematic strategy to ease the transition of newcomer immigrant-origin youth into secondary schools or colleges or to the labor market. This current "non-policy" of integration in the United States fails our neediest immigrant-origin students; it also robs the economy and other important societal sectors of many promising future contributors (Bertelsmann Stiftung 2008). World Citizen High School (embedded within a network of such schools), however, provides a tangible example of a model school that takes a systematic approach with remarkable success, despite the national absence of policy (MPI 2009).

To best serve immigrant-origin students, policymakers and educators should work together to face head-on the challenges that have been created by a combination of structural barriers, cultural and linguistic challenges, schoolwide problems, and school reform efforts. Immigrant-origin students arrive with optimism and hope for the future that should be cultivated and treasured—they are the first to understand that schooling is their key to a better tomorrow (Kao and Tienda 1995; Suárez-Orozco et al. 2008). Harnessing their energy, optimism, and faith in the future is arguably one of the most important challenges to our countries' democratic promises. Providing the kinds of promising practices offered by the innovative schools highlighted in this chapter is essential to help immigrant youth become incorporated into the fabric of their new lands.

Notes

We would like to thank Hee Jin Bang for her insightful observations at World Citizen High School as well as Alexandra Cordero and Carolyn Sattin for their assistance at Progressive High. We would also like to thank Greta Gibson and Silvia Carrasco for their careful reading of our chapter and their suggestions for framing our conclusion.

1. In Sweden, these students are referred to as students with Swedish as a second language (S2 students) and in the United States as English-language learners (ELLs).

The Swedish Government mandated, via "Propositionen om valfrihet och fristående skolor (Prop. 1991/92:95)" that students had a right to choose elementary and secondary schools.

Due to language constraints and the school administrators' preference, this program was not included in this research study.

"Metrocity" is a pseudonym. We learned about this project while holding follow-up meetings at Bergslunden during the spring of 2008 and thought it typical of the effort that second-language teachers invest in integrating language and content.

We should note, however, that there were small groups of students to whom we did not gain adequate access—namely, those students who were frequently absent from class. Though they were a clear minority, their opinions and experiences are important, yet we have no data on how these students viewed their relationships with teachers.