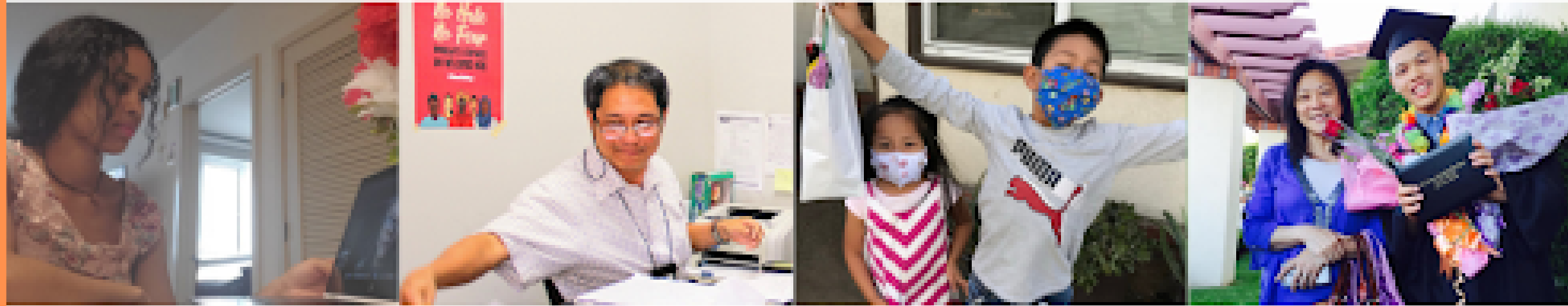




WELCOMING NEWCOMER STUDENTS

MT. DIABLO UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

PRESENTER: KAJAL SHAHALI



refugee & immigrant transitions

Education • Family Engagement • Community Leadership





MISSION



RIT'S MISSION IS TO WELCOME AND PARTNER WITH
PEOPLE WHO HAVE SOUGHT REFUGE,
EMPLOYING STRENGTHS-BASED EDUCATIONAL APPROACHES
AND COMMUNITY SUPPORTS, SO THEY MAY THRIVE
IN OUR SHARED COMMUNITIES.



PROGRAMS+ IMPACT

RIT Programs fall into 3 areas:



Education (for youth and adults):

- Home-Based or Virtual Tutoring/Mentoring
- School-based programs (3 high schools)
- English, vocational, citizenship classes
- Women's Initiative



Family engagement:

Case management, wellness programming, workshops, support groups.



Community leadership:

Paid internships for community members connecting & uplifting their communities; collaboration for program input/design; capacity building for ethnic community based organizations.



STRENGTH-BASED APPROACH

Our agency's mission is to welcome and partner with people who have sought refuge, employing **strengths-based** educational approaches and community supports so they may thrive in our shared communities.

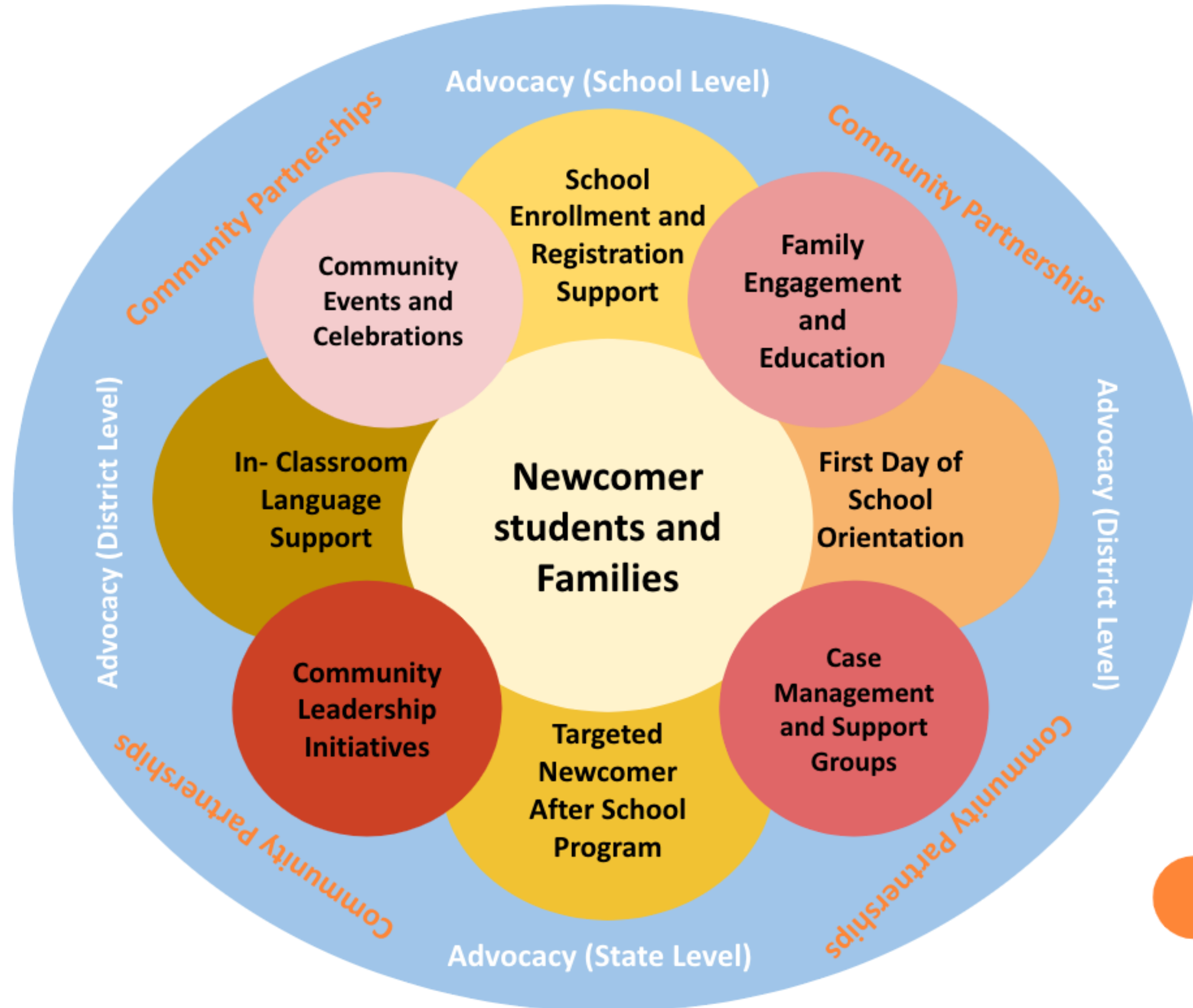
“Strengths-based” is a term that comes from social work. It emphasizes and celebrates the clients/students' strengths, resilience, and self-determination.

Principles of strengths-based approach:

- ★ “Doing *with* client”, not “doing *for* client”
- ★ Non-hierarchical approach
- ★ Mutual learning and exchange
- ★ Each individual is an expert in their own experience and situation.
- ★ Valuing clients' cultural practices and knowledge as strengths.



STRENGTH-BASED APPROACH+ CURIOSITY







“

NEWCOMER IS AN UMBRELLA TERM FOR FOREIGN-BORN STUDENTS WHO HAVE RECENTLY ARRIVED IN THE UNITED STATES. NEWCOMER STUDENTS MAY INCLUDE, BUT ARE NOT LIMITED TO, **ASYLEES, REFUGEES, UNACCOMPANIED YOUTH, UNDOCUMENTED YOUTH, MIGRATORY STUDENTS, AND OTHER IMMIGRANT CHILDREN AND YOUTH IDENTIFIED BY THE LOCAL EDUCATIONAL AGENCIES (LEAS).**

California Department of Education



IN CALIFORNIA

- ONE IN FORTY STUDENT IS CONSIDERED A NEWCOMER STUDENT
- HIGHEST CONCENTRATIONS OF NEWCOMER STUDENTS ARE IN:
Los Angeles, San Diego, Orange, Santa Clara, and Alameda Counties
- 67% OF NEWCOMER STUDENTS ARE SOCIOECONOMICALLY DISADVANTAGED



IN MDUSD

- THERE ARE 1303 NEWCOMER STUDENTS (3 YEARS OR LESS)
- TOP 5 LANGUAGES: SPANISH, DARI/FARSI, PASHTO, RUSSIAN, ARABIC
- TOP 5 BIRTH COUNTRIES: AFGHANISTAN, MEXICO, EL SALVADOR, PERU, GUATEMALA



IMPORTANT IMMIGRATION STATUSES TO REMEMBER

REFUGEES

ASYLUM SEEKERS

AFGHAN SIVS AND PAROLEES

UNACCOMPANIED MINORS

IMMIGRANTS

(DOCUMENTED AND
UNDER-DOCUMENTED)

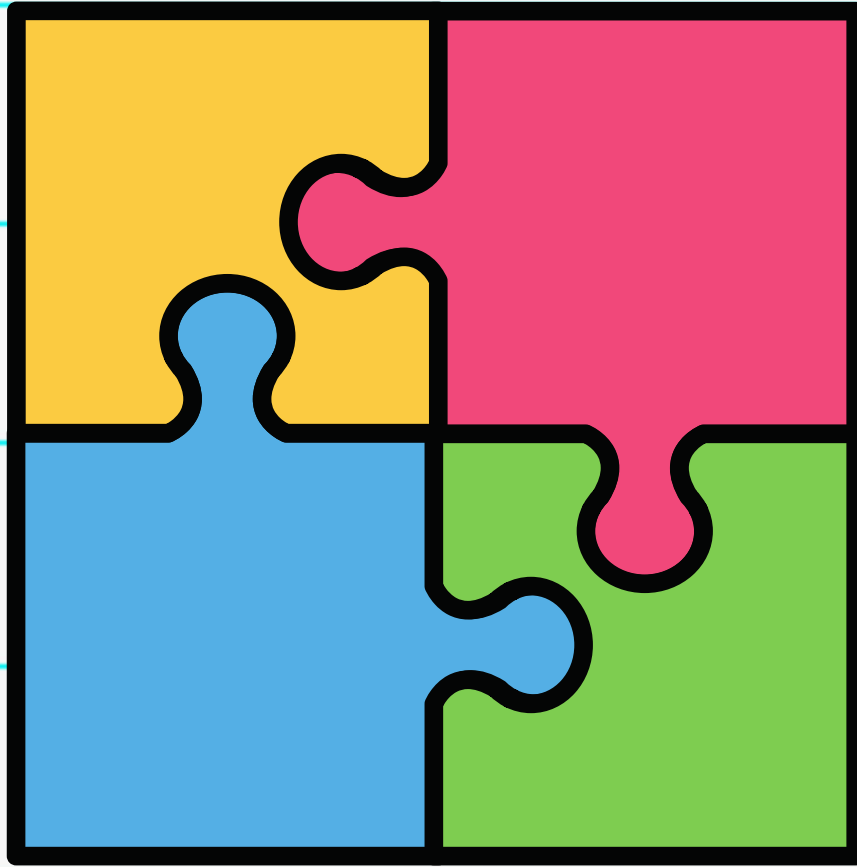




NEWCOMER STUDENTS ARE:

- *Resilient*
- *Resourceful*
- *Determined*
- *Committed to Community*
- *Hopeful and with dreams*





ASSIMILATION VS. INTEGRATION



CREATING WELCOMING SPACES WITH CURIOSITY AND CULTURAL HUMILITY





OBSERVATIONS

District Level:

- *Complicated and unwelcoming enrollment procedures*
- *Issues of overflow and transportation*
- *Disintegrated systems of support*





OBSERVATIONS

School Site Level:

- Need for *bi/multilingual* staff to welcome and transition students to their new environments
- *Counselors* often not familiar with how to look at / interpret transcripts and or placement for newcomer students
- Need for *targeted* support specifically for *Students with Limited & Interrupted Formal Education (SLIFE)*
- Need for *restorative practices before and after incidents* to address discipline, behavior or any type of group conflict
- Need for *targeted and community centered* parent / caregiver engagement





OBSERVATIONS

Classroom Level:

- Need for *classroom language support/ aid for ELD classes/ cohorts*
- Need for *restorative practices to address discipline and or behavior*
- Need for *targeted after-school, peer leadership, and wellness programming*





RECOMMENDATIONS

(WITH CURIOSITY AND CULTURAL HUMILITY)



SHORT TERM

- ✓ • *Secure* funding for Newcomer students
- ✓ • *Hire* a Newcomer student point of contact (Social Worker and CWA) at the district level
- ✓ • *Observe* welcoming district and school models
- *Build* a comprehensive list of community resources and *Connect* to communities of support for Newcomer students and Families
- *Train* school Administrators, CWAs, Office Staff, Registrars, Counselors and Parent Liaisons
- *Revisit* enrollment center's welcoming protocols and practices





LONG TERM

- *Partner with Community Based Organizations (CBOs)/ Community or Hire for*
 - *Day Time Push in / Teacher Support in classrooms (academic)*
 - *Bilingual/Trilingual Case management Support*
 - *Newcomer specific After-School support*
 - *Newcomer Youth/Community leadership pathways*
 - *Identity and community building spaces and events*
- *Build:*
 - *SLIFE support at schools with most number of newcomer students*
 - *districtwide communities of practice for administrators and teachers working with Newcomer students*
- *Revisit:*
 - *ELAC meetings and goals*
 - *Districtwide welcoming protocols and practices*





WHAT RESOURCES DO YOU INDIVIDUALLY AND OR COLLECTIVELY NEED TO CREATE MORE WELCOMING SPACES IN YOUR CLASSROOM, SCHOOL, DISTRICT FOR NEWCOMER STUDENTS AND FAMILIES?





FEDERAL AND STATE LEVEL RESOURCES

- Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR)
- California Department of Social Services: Refugees Program Bureau and California Newcomer Education and Well Being
- California Department of Education : Newcomer Students
- California Newcomer Network
- Californians Together



LOCAL AND COMMUNITY LEVELS RESOURCES

- Newcomer Program:Oakland Unified School District (OUSD)
- Oakland International High School (OIHS)
- Fremont High School NEST program
- East Bay Refugee & Immigrant Forum (EBRIF)



BOOKS AND RESEARCH

- *"Supporting Newcomer students : Advocacy and Instruction for English Language Learners"* - Samway et al, 2020- K-8 Education
- *"Humanizing Education for Immigrant and Refugee Youth"* - (Monisha Bajaj et al)



THANK YOU!

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QUESTIONS?

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