Re-Imagining MIGRATION

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Belonging Ecosystem Initiatives Guide

A resource to support educators in developing and evaluating a local initiative to build belonging for immigrant-origin youth

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Introduction

Every young person who enters a classroom, a library, a museum, or a youth program is answering a question: Do I have a place here? The answer shapes whether they speak up, take intellectual risks, return tomorrow, and come to see themselves as contributors to a shared community. Belonging is the ground that learning and civic life grow from. Immigrant-origin youth ask that question with particular urgency, and this guide is built around them.

The wider moment adds to that urgency. Young people report high levels of loneliness and disconnection. Trust in public institutions has eroded, and public life rewards sorting people into "us" and "them." Democracy depends on people who see themselves as members of a common project, with a stake in it and a responsibility to it. Schools are among the few institutions where people from very different backgrounds meet every day, often for years, which makes them a central practice ground for pluralism. A young person's belonging also grows in libraries, museums, youth programs, early-childhood settings, resettlement networks, faith communities, and families. Together, these places form an ecosystem of belonging, and this guide is written for the people who tend it.

Centering immigrant-origin youth strengthens that whole ecosystem. About one in four children in the United States lives in an immigrant-origin family. They move between languages and cultures, read context with care, and hold perspectives that reach across borders, which are capacities every young person needs. They also meet the question of belonging amid enforcement fears, family separation, and public debate about who is welcome. Just as a curb cut built for wheelchair users ends up serving everyone, practices built with immigrant-origin youth in mind serve the whole community, and a belonging that holds for the newest arrival holds for everyone.

Belonging also runs in both directions, and everyone gains. A family's hardware store becomes the place the whole block trusts, a new student's language gives the morning announcements a second voice, and a librarian's shelf fills with the stories new neighbors bring. Each generation of newcomers has added something lasting to American life, from the kindergarten German immigrants brought to our schools to the corner pizzerias, Chinese restaurants, and taco stands that became neighborhood gathering places.

– Adam Strom, Executive Director Re-Imagining Migration

This guide helps you turn that belief into action through a Belonging Ecosystem Initiative.

About This Guide

This guide is for anyone who wants to become an Initiative Leader: someone who designs a Belonging Ecosystem Initiative and measures its growth. A Belonging Ecosystem Initiative (called an *initiative* throughout) is any sustained project in your community that responds to an observed need.

Every pathway in this guide asks one question: how can immigrant-origin youth, who are most often positioned outside the norm, help reset the norm for everyone?

How the Guide Is Organized

Belonging work takes many forms, and this guide organizes it into seven pathways. A pathway is a type of initiative, defined by the main approach it uses to build belonging. When building out an initiative, educators usually follow one primary pathway, however, you may choose to blend multiple pathways.

Each pathway has a rubric that tracks growth across four levels, from Discovering to Sustaining. The rubrics are modular: in addition to your primary pathway's rubric, you can add rows from any other pathway that capture an outcome you want to measure. You can also add the universal Language Access rubric to any pathway. Every resource here is editable, so you can tailor it to your context and your data needs.

This is for all educators! The rubrics often refer to a "school," "principal," or "classroom." If you work in a library, museum, youth program, or other setting, read these as your institution, its leadership, and your program space.

Getting Started: Three Steps

1 Find your pathway.

Begin by listening to young people and families. Then reflect on three questions:

- Where does my current role give me the most leverage to create change?
- Which youth and family population do I most want to center?
- What kind of impact do I want to be able to document by the end of my initiative?

Use your answers and the pathway overview to find the place where a change would matter most.

2 Make strategic choices.

- **Set a realistic timeline.** Belonging work moves at the pace of community trust and capacity, which may differ from the pace of a school calendar. Sketch a timeline that fits your role, your bandwidth, and the community you work with.
- **Choose your data-collection periods.** You'll measure progress at four checkpoints (P1 through P4). Set them based on your timeline, for example aligned to semester breaks, program milestones, or quarterly reviews. If you're part of an official fellowship, decide the dates with your cohort and/or your cohort coordinator. Set your dates before you take your baseline score so that P1 reflects a real starting point.
- **Select your rubric rows.** Decide which pathway rubric, and which additional rows, fit your role, your capacity, and your community's priorities.

3 Measure your impact.

Score your baseline at P1, gather evidence at P2 through P4, and track your movement on the rubric. Use what you learn to adjust your work and share your model.

A Note on Language

To capture the range of youth needs and the communities this work serves, we use the following terms throughout this guide. We use acronyms for readability in the rubrics, but we champion person-first language that does not reduce a person to one piece of their humanity.

Immigrant-Origin Youth (IOY): youth who have at least one parent born outside of the United States, including U.S.-born youth from immigrant families and youth born outside the U.S. who arrived at any age.

This is the umbrella term used throughout this guide to refer to Immigrant-Origin, Multilingual Learner, and Recently Arrived Youth collectively.

Youth: both IOY and their peers. Our mission is to create an ecosystem where all youth thrive.

We understand IOY's experiences as a litmus test for collective belonging: their access to belonging shows how well an ecosystem serves, includes, and uplifts all young people.

Multilingual Learner (MLL): youth developing proficiency in English alongside one or more other languages. This term centers linguistic assets. We use MLL throughout this guide because it is the term most schools and districts currently use. Where you have the latitude, we encourage the framing Ofelia García offers in emergent bilinguals — language that names what youth are building rather than what they are still acquiring.

Recently Arrived Youth (RAY): youth who are new to the country (within the past year) or to our school systems. This term replaces "newcomer" and is intended to center the experience of transition and resilience.

Several rubric rows (particularly in Curriculum & Classroom Culture) score against the **RIM Five Dispositions for a World on the Move**. Those dispositions aren't reprinted in this document; read the linked resource before scoring any disposition-related row, since the rubric assumes familiarity with them.

Belonging Ecosystem Initiative (Initiative): any sustained project in your community that responds to an observed need

Initiative Leader: someone who designs a Belonging Ecosystem Initiative and measures its growth.

Pathway: a type of initiative, defined by the main approach it uses to build belonging. Each pathway has its own rubric.

Rubric: the full set of dimensions for one pathway, grouped into sections. The Language Access rubric is a universal add-on that can be paired with any pathway.

Dimension: one aspect of belonging that a rubric measures. Each dimension is one rubric row, scored from 1 (Discovering) to 4 (Sustaining).

Impact Tracker: the companion spreadsheet where you record your scores and evidence for each dimension at each data-collection period (P1 through P4).

Belonging Barometer: a ten-question survey tool developed by Over Zero and the American Immigration Council that measures people's sense of belonging across settings. Barometer results are one form of evidence you can use in several rubric rows.

ABOUT THIS GUIDE

The Seven Pathways

The overview table below gives a quick sense of each pathway and the kinds of impact each one measures.

These seven pathways and their associated rubrics are entirely editable and meant to be tailored to your data tracking needs.

PATHWAY	CORE QUESTION FOR YOUR GROWTH	WHAT SUSTAINING LOOKS LIKE
01 **Curriculum & Classroom Culture** *Curriculum design & classroom norms*	What do all learners need to know and understand about migration? How does curriculum and classroom culture position every student as an intellectual contributor and what targeted practices ensure IOY, who are most often positioned otherwise, help set that norm rather than being fit into it?	Curriculum creates space for students to bring their whole selves to what they are studying, including making cross-cultural connections and sharing insights from their experiences and perspectives. Practices grow from and outlast the initiative.
02 **Educator Professional Development** *Educator learning & practice change*	How do we build educators' capacity to evaluate their own context, advocate, and create belonging for all students by developing the specific expertise to meet IOY, whose belonging tests whether the practice actually works?	Educators across the staff know how to create belonging for every student, including what it takes to reach IOY. Their knowledge is integrated into the curriculum and shared with colleagues allowing the work to go on without the Initiative Leader.
03 **Family & Community Engagement** *Family and community power*	How does the school move families from recipients of information to collaborators with real power? How can we use targeted approaches to building access so that IOY families, often furthest from that partnership, help set the standard for all families?	Families and the institution share power through formal structures designed to include IOY families, and those structures are co-led and continue without the Initiative Leader.
04 **Local Organization Partnership** *Org-school co-design*	How does the partnership transform both school and organization so the whole community's civic life is strengthened? How is this partnership built around the IOY community members most often left outside such structures?	The partnership is self-sustaining and mutually transformative. Because it is built to give IOY community members ongoing civic voice, it strengthens civic voice broadly through structures that operate independently of the Initiative Leader.
05 **Youth Leadership & Action** *Youth agency & civic leadership*	How do youth move from participating in belonging work to designing and leading it with IOY, most often positioned as recipients, among those setting the direction?	Youth leadership is distributed and self-sustaining. Because IOY are positioned as designers rather than participants, peer leadership carries forward. Structures, norms, or artifacts created by youth outlast the implementation and do not depend on the Initiative Leader.
06 **Institution-Wide Belonging** *Systems change & safety infrastructure*	How do institutional changes make belonging and protection the norm for every student? What language, policies, or protections does your institution have that specifically and intentionally name the safety of IOY? What steps are in place for immediate remediation of policies for the protection of all student identities when needed?	Multiple institutionalized changes are in place and no longer dependent on the Initiative Leader. Because they meet the bar that protects IOY, they raise the floor of safety and belonging for every student. Data from the initiative informs ongoing school decisions and policies. Policies protect every aspect of students' identities, and protecting belonging is part of how the institution operates.
07 **Coalition Building** *Civic agency & coalition power*	How does the coalition build shared civic power to shape decisions, systems, and narratives? Are there targeted leadership pathways so that IOY, often excluded from those tables, are among those who shape them?	Leadership and civic agency are distributed and self-sustaining. The coalition operates through structures that persist beyond the Initiative Leader, with IOY among named leaders creating a distribution of power that strengthens the coalition for everyone.

ABOUT THIS GUIDE

The Scoring Scale

All rubrics in this guide use the same four-level scale. The scale is designed to describe growth. Most self-assessments begin at 1 (Discovering) or 2 (Practicing) on most dimensions at the start of the Belonging Ecosystem Initiative implementation. That is expected.

If rows from other pathways capture outcomes you want to evaluate, use them. Each pathway has several dimensions for evaluation; they are broken out in the rubric rows on a scale from Discovering to Sustaining. Some rubric dimensions appear across multiple pathways; that is intentional. This guide is built around a coherent theory of belonging; each pathway approaches it from a different angle.

The full scoring guidance appears only on this page, so return here as you score. See the example below for what a rubric row looks like in practice.

1 Discovering

Engagement stage. The practice has yet to take shape, and this is your true baseline. Your work at this level is to look and listen: notice what is happening in your community and gather specific voices from youth and families. What you learn shapes your first plans. Most Initiative Leaders' self-assessments begin here on at least one dimension, and it is where the deeper community picture begins. *For many Initiative Leaders, naming what still needs to be discovered is a powerful first step.*

2 Practicing

Emerging. You have begun to notice and name the practice, and early indicators of the desired impact are present, but they are not yet consistent or documented. Strengthen the community data connection — that is where most Initiative Leaders move from Practicing to Integrating.

3 Integrating

Solid foundation. The core practice is in place, working, and backed by evidence, but it still relies on one person. Strengthen community ownership: that is where most Initiative Leaders move from Integrating to Sustaining.

4 Sustaining

Robust and community-aligned. The work is embedded, documented, and able to access community resources in a manner that allows the work to continue without relying on one specific person / leader.

A note on Discovering vs. Practicing: these two levels are the most common place Initiative Leaders find themselves at the start of an initiative. The distinction is awareness. Discovering means the practice is not yet present or named — it is a true baseline. Practicing means the Initiative Leader has begun to notice and name the practice, but it is not yet consistent or documented. Both are valid starting points.

Example rubric row — here is one dimension from 01 | Curriculum & Classroom Culture, Section 1

Youth see themselves reflected with dignity AND encounter perspectives meaningfully beyond their own

EVIDENCE TO GATHER:
Do youth both see themselves reflected AND encounter perspectives beyond their own? Does instruction avoid collapsing into dominant-culture-only content? Are IOY positioned as intellectual contributors — not only as subject matter?

1 Discovering	2 Practicing	3 Integrating	4 Sustaining
IOY's cultures and experiences are absent or decorative; youth neither see themselves reflected with dignity nor encounter perspectives meaningfully beyond their own.	You have begun to include IOY voices, but not yet consistently; youth may see themselves reflected or encounter others' perspectives, but not both at the same time.	Youth experience is treated as primary source material, functioning as content with equal intellectual seriousness to all other texts & media used; IOY are consistently treated as intellectual contributors.	Youth move fluidly between seeing themselves reflected, encountering others' experiences with curiosity, and imaginatively entering those experiences in ways that expand their capacity to understand and act. The texts and sources that make this possible are part of the school's curriculum documents, so new classes and new teachers carry them forward.

ABOUT THIS GUIDE

Frequently Asked Questions

01

Can I do more than one pathway?

Yes — Initiative Leaders may select more than one pathway if their work spans multiple areas. However, we encourage you to identify one primary pathway that reflects your main focus. The rubric is designed to measure depth, not breadth: a single well-documented initiative will generate richer evidence of belonging impact than several lightly documented ones.

02

What if my initiative does not fit neatly into one pathway?

Many strong initiatives blend elements of multiple pathways — for instance, a curriculum initiative that includes a family circle component, or a youth initiative that generates school-wide system change. Choose the pathway that best reflects where you are investing the most time and where you most want to document growth.

03

When and Where do I score my initiative?

The Impact Tracker has four data-collection periods (P1 through P4). You do not need perfect evidence at P1 — your P1 score is your baseline, a starting point, not a judgment. Begin scoring as early as you can and update your scores as you gather evidence.

04

What is the Impact Tracker?

The Impact Tracker is the companion spreadsheet that turns these rubrics into a record of growth — one tab per pathway, and four data-collection periods (P1 through P4) you set at the start.

- Completing an initiative as part of a Re-Imagining Migration fellowship? Use the Impact Tracker provided by your cohort coordinator.
- Measuring impact as an independent Initiative Leader? Use the linked Impact Tracker.

05

What counts as evidence?

Evidence can take many forms: an IOY quote, an observation note, a survey result, a meeting agenda, a communication artifact, or a Belonging Barometer score. Specificity matters more than quantity; one vivid, documented moment is more useful than a general impression.

06

What is the connection to community data?

As you work through each dimension's evidence-to-gather questions, connect your evidence to a community finding. This connection is what moves a score from Practicing to Integrating in most pathways. If you are not yet clear on your community data, that is a good early focus for your initiative work.

UNIVERSAL RUBRIC

Language Access

Who it is for: Anyone leading an initiative that serves MLL and/or RAY and wants to measure whether the work is accessible in both its use of language and how it is delivered. **This rubric is designed to be added to any of the seven pathways below; it is not an initiative on its own.**

WHAT LANGUAGE ACCESS CAN LOOK LIKE

- Language access plans are supported in the budget and with staffing
- Family engagement materials translated into the languages that youth and their families speak at home, not just English, with a translated cover sheet
- Live interpretation available by default at sessions where youth and their families participate, not only when requested in advance
- The languages families speak are present in all visible communication inside the building
- All forms and school communications are available and thoughtfully distributed in the languages spoken by families and caretakers of students
- A distinct intake and orientation process for RAY, built around their specific language and transition needs rather than folded into general new student onboarding
- Interpretation, translation, or family-liaison roles held by multilingual community members, not only by bilingual staff filling a gap
- Awareness of the role of informal language, context, and concepts such as idioms, jargon, and colloquial language, conveyed in a manner that expresses meaning, intention, and relevance

WHAT YOU ARE BUILDING TOWARD

Language access is measured through two dimensions, presented below. The first dimension centers MLL generally, measuring whether the initiative's materials, communications, and participation structures are accessible by design. Because RAY are transitioning to a new school, country and social system at the same time, the second dimension centers their experience specifically. Initiative Leaders may score neither, either, or both dimensions depending on the population their initiative most directly reaches.

Centering Multilingual Learners

Language access is built into the initiative's design — not added as an accommodation

EVIDENCE TO GATHER:

Are materials, communications, and participation structures available in the languages MLL families need from the start of planning, not after the fact? Is interpretation available at key points of participation by default, not only on request? Do multilingual learners and their families describe the initiative as something they can fully access, not partially follow?

1 Discovering	2 Practicing	3 Integrating	4 Sustaining
Materials and communications exist only in English; the initiative leaves families without a structured way to access information beyond informal peer translation.	Some materials are translated after initial development, or interpretation is available only if requested in advance; access is inconsistent across sessions or materials.	Language access is planned into the initiative from the start for at least one major component — a family session, a set of materials, an intake process; interpretation and translated materials are available by default, not only on request.	Language access is built into every component of the initiative; multilingual learners and families describe full participation, and the structures — translation workflows, interpretation booking, multilingual staff roles — continue independent of the Initiative Leader.

Centering Recently Arrived Youth

Recently arrived youth's distinct transition needs are named and addressed — not folded into general onboarding processes

EVIDENCE TO GATHER:

Does the initiative distinguish between a student who is new to English and a student who is new to the country and its school systems? Is there a specific point of contact, intake step, or orientation process for RAY? Are transition needs — unfamiliar school systems, routines, and documentation — addressed alongside language needs, not treated as someone else's job?

1 Discovering	2 Practicing	3 Integrating	4 Sustaining
RAY's needs are addressed only as a subset of general new student access efforts; no distinct intake, point of contact, or orientation exists for their specific transition needs.	A specific accommodation for RAY exists — an intake conversation, a welcome packet — but it is informal, inconsistent, or dependent on one staff member's initiative.	A documented intake or orientation process exists specifically for RAY and addresses both language and transition needs together; at least one RAY or family can describe using it.	The intake and orientation process for RAY is institutionalized — built into school structures, not dependent on the Initiative Leader; RAY and families describe feeling specifically welcomed and oriented, not just accommodated.

PATHWAY 01

01

Curriculum & Classroom Culture

Who it is for: Initiative Leaders developing or substantially adapting a unit, lesson sequence, or course, and the classroom culture that surrounds it, around migration, identity, and/or belonging.

WHAT AN INITIATIVE CAN LOOK LIKE

- A lesson sequence on identity and belonging that builds dispositions for a world on the move
- A course redesign that embeds IOY perspectives — not only in a dedicated diversity unit or limited to a separated learner group
- An interdisciplinary redesign of academics using human movement as a lens, showing how migration shapes a subject area all year
- A curriculum architecture shift: a text-selection protocol ensuring migration and belonging are embedded across all units rather than siloed in a dedicated “migration unit”
- A reading or writing curriculum that centers IOY community narratives alongside published texts, grounded in the dispositions

WHAT YOU ARE BUILDING TOWARD

The Curriculum & Classroom Culture pathway is measured on three areas: how well texts, entry points and practices build dispositions and center IOY voices (Section 1: texts, sources & dispositions); how deeply youth knowledge shapes what happens instructionally (Section 2: instruction from youth knowledge); and whether classroom culture — its norms for collaboration, community-building, and navigating disagreement — reflects belonging as a structural condition, not an add-on (Section 3: classroom culture).

SECTION 1

Texts, Sources & Dispositions

Youth see themselves reflected with dignity AND encounter perspectives meaningfully beyond their own

EVIDENCE TO GATHER:
Do youth both see themselves reflected AND encounter perspectives beyond their own? Does instruction avoid collapsing into dominant-culture-only content? Are IOY positioned as intellectual contributors — not only as subject matter?

1 Discovering	2 Practicing	3 Integrating	4 Sustaining
IOY's cultures and experiences are absent or decorative; youth neither see themselves reflected with dignity nor encounter perspectives meaningfully beyond their own.	You have begun to include IOY voices, but not yet consistently; youth may see themselves reflected or encounter others' perspectives, but not both at the same time.	Youth experience is treated as primary source material, functioning as content with equal intellectual seriousness to all other texts & media used; IOY are consistently treated as intellectual contributors.	Youth move fluidly between seeing themselves reflected, encountering others' experiences with curiosity, and imaginatively entering those experiences in ways that expand their capacity to understand and act. The texts and sources that make this possible are part of the school's curriculum documents, so new classes and new teachers carry them forward.

Instruction builds dispositions for a world on the move through rich, balanced texts

EVIDENCE TO GATHER:
Does curriculum use IOY experience as one text among many — alongside primary sources, historical narratives, literary texts, data, journalism, and community knowledge? Are disposition-oriented outcomes from the Re-Imagining Migration Framework named and visible in the unit design?

1 Discovering	2 Practicing	3 Integrating	4 Sustaining
Instruction focuses solely on knowledge acquisition with no disposition-oriented outcomes; texts reflect the dominant culture only, or over-rely on students' personal sharing as the primary content.	Some disposition-oriented outcomes are identified, but text selection is imbalanced — underrepresenting IOY experience, or substituting personal sharing for developmentally complex content.	Disposition-oriented outcomes are explicitly integrated; text selection ensures that IOY see their own stories reflected with dignity and encounter migration experiences beyond their own.	The dispositions and the text-selection approach are named in school or department curriculum documents that other teachers use. Students are embodying the dispositions in their daily life without prompting.

Curriculum disrupts deficit framing — IOY family and community knowledge is positioned as necessary content, and asset-framing coexists with intellectual and developmental depth/complexity

EVIDENCE TO GATHER:
Does the curriculum treat IOY backgrounds as intellectually and civically serious — built into how a unit is designed, not added as decoration? Does asset-framing coexist with high intellectual demand, or does representation displace sustained intellectual curiosity?

1 Discovering	2 Practicing	3 Integrating	4 Sustaining
Curriculum is culturally neutral at best or deficit-framed at worst; IOY backgrounds are not positioned as intellectually relevant; representation, when present, is decorative; no intellectual and developmental depth/complexity alongside cultural content.	Asset-framing is present but not structural — visible in some lessons but does not shape the unit's overall intellectual stance; high intellectual demand and cultural responsiveness are present separately but not yet integrated.	At least two lessons explicitly position IOY family and community knowledge as content expertise; asset-framing is structural; high intellectual demand is maintained alongside cultural responsiveness — neither displaces the other.	The entire unit treats IOY community knowledge as intellectually serious content; deficit framing is actively disrupted; together, community and academic knowledge create a richer understanding than either could alone; all youth work from a position of intellectual strength. Other educators teach the unit or use its approach, and it is part of the school's adopted curriculum.

SECTION 2

Instruction from Youth Knowledge

IOY knowledge is seen as intellectually serious content — not just context or background

EVIDENCE TO GATHER:
Do you go beyond acknowledging youth identities — do you actually use IOY knowledge as something to be engaged with, built upon, held alongside other sources? Can you describe a specific moment where youth knowledge changed where the lesson went?

1 Discovering	2 Practicing	3 Integrating	4 Sustaining
The unit is delivered regardless of youth identities; you cannot describe a moment where IOY knowledge shaped instructional direction; youth experience is neither sought nor treated as intellectually relevant.	You acknowledge youth identities and make some adjustments, but describe IOY experience as background context rather than content to be built upon intellectually.	You can describe at least one specific moment where IOY knowledge was treated as intellectually necessary— engaged with, analyzed or held alongside other texts rather than simply validated.	You can describe multiple moments where IOY knowledge changed the intellectual direction of instruction; youth perspectives function as text — read, interpreted, held in tension with other sources. Other educators in your school describe moments like these in their own classrooms as well.

Instructional practice is visibly impacted by what youth bring into the space

EVIDENCE TO GATHER:

Can you describe a specific moment where what IOY brought changed where the lesson went? Can you articulate what you learned from them — not just what you adjusted for them?

1 Discovering	2 Practicing	3 Integrating	4 Sustaining
No evidence of practice improving in response to IOY knowledge; instruction is unchanged regardless of what youth bring.	You make surface adjustments but cannot describe a moment where IOY knowledge changed the intellectual direction of a lesson.	At least one lesson shifted direction based on what IOY contributed to the learning space.	Your practice demonstrably improves across teaching contexts; you can articulate what you learned from IOY, not just what you adjusted for them and your colleagues share what you learn from students, in team meetings or written notes, so the learning belongs to the school.

SECTION 3

Classroom Culture

Classroom structures actively build genuine collaboration — IOY are positioned as contributors, and peer relationships reflect mutual trust across differences

EVIDENCE TO GATHER:

Are youth expected and supported to work across linguistic, cultural, and experiential differences? Do IOY have visible, valued roles in collaborative work? Are there deliberate structures for building connection — not only academic productivity?

1 Discovering	2 Practicing	3 Integrating	4 Sustaining
Collaborative structures are absent or ad hoc; no deliberate community-building practices. IOY are positioned as observers or peripheral contributors rather than intellectual partners; they describe feeling isolated or on the margins.	Collaboration occurs but is not designed to bridge differences; some community-building practices exist but are surface-level or infrequent; IOY participate but are not explicitly positioned as knowledge contributors and describe limited genuine connection.	At least one structured collaborative routine is designed to center IOY strengths; at least one sustained community-building practice is in place; IOY can name a specific peer relationship or collaborative moment that grew from classroom structures.	Collaborative culture is visible and asset-framed throughout the room; IOY initiate and lead collaborative learning; cross-cultural friendships are visible; all youth describe the class as a space where different backgrounds and languages make the work richer and where they are known as full people. Structures and practices that build collaboration and connection across differences are shared across classrooms, so youth meet them in more than one class and in each new year.

Classroom norms equip youth to navigate challenge and disagreement with compassion and inquiry — and you model this

EVIDENCE TO GATHER:

Are there explicit norms for disagreement? Can youth name how the class handles tension or challenge? Do IOY feel safe taking intellectual risks and sharing dissenting views?

1 Discovering	2 Practicing	3 Integrating	4 Sustaining
No explicit norms for navigating disagreement; challenge or conflict is avoided or shut down; IOY describe feeling unsafe taking intellectual risks; you treat discomfort as a discipline or management issue rather than an intellectual one.	Norms exist but are not practiced consistently; youth describe challenges as uncomfortable and unresolved; IOY hold back views that might invite conflict; you acknowledge discomfort but defuse rather than explore it.	Explicit norms for compassionate inquiry are visible and practiced; youth can describe at least one moment when disagreement was navigated well; IOY can name a specific risk they took because the space felt safe; you can describe at least one specific moment of navigating a challenge in a way that deepened learning and maintained dignity.	Productive disagreement grounded in care and inquiry is a defining feature of classroom culture; IOY lead and model respectful challenge; you consistently model inquiry-grounded response; all youth describe the class as a place where hard questions are welcomed, and dignity is maintained. The norms are shared across classrooms and introduced to new teachers and new classes, so they continue without you.

PATHWAY 02

02

Educator Professional Development

Who it is for: Initiative Leaders designing and facilitating learning experiences for other educators — colleagues, department or grade-level teams, district networks, or peer learning communities.

WHAT AN INITIATIVE CAN LOOK LIKE

- A workshop series on culturally sustaining instruction, using IOY as partners to surface community data and set learning goals
- A peer learning community built around community assessment: educators learn alongside IOY to understand what belonging looks, sounds, and feels like in their context
- A co-design process with colleagues to revise school communication and family engagement practices, grounded in what IOY families describe as barriers to participation
- A Professional Development (PD) series that explicitly connects immigration enforcement climate, IOY safety, and classroom belonging as interconnected teaching conditions
- A professional learning cycle in which educators learn to facilitate their own belonging assessments and take action on findings with IOY as co-investigators

WHAT YOU ARE BUILDING TOWARD

The Educator Professional Development pathway is measured on three areas: whether participating educators develop the capacity to assess belonging conditions and take action alongside IOY (Section 1: educator capacity); whether school culture and structure shift beyond participating educators (Section 2: school culture & structure); and whether the PD you design builds educator knowledge of reciprocal family and community engagement with IOY families as partners — not recipients (Section 3: family, community & civic engagement).

A note on scoring: Section 1 describes what participating educators develop as a result of your PD. Section 2 describes how school culture and structure shift beyond participating educators. Section 3 describes what the PD you design builds in educators' family and community engagement practice.

SECTION 1

Educator Capacity for Belonging Assessment & Action

Participating educators develop the capacity to conduct their own community and belonging assessments — with IOY as co-investigators

EVIDENCE TO GATHER:
Can participating educators describe how they would gather belonging data in their own context? Have they used IOY voice, observation, or community knowledge as data? Do they treat IOY as co-investigators rather than subjects?

1 Discovering	2 Practicing	3 Integrating	4 Sustaining
The PD delivers content about IOY but gives educators no opportunity to practice community assessment; IOY are the subject of the PD, not partners in it.	Educators begin to see the value of community assessment but have not yet applied it in their context; IOY voice is referenced but not actively gathered or used in PD design.	At least one educator has conducted a belonging assessment in their context with IOY as active contributors; findings were shared with the PD group and shaped at least one practice change.	Multiple educators conduct ongoing belonging assessments as a regular practice; IOY are co-investigators who help design the inquiry, gather data, and present findings; educators describe the shift from teaching about IOY to learning alongside them.

Participating educators strengthen their capacity to recognize and disrupt deficit framing of IOY

EVIDENCE TO GATHER:
Can participating educators identify deficit framing in curriculum, communication, and practice? Do their instructional and relational practices visibly shift to center IOY strengths?

1 Discovering	2 Practicing	3 Integrating	4 Sustaining
Educators use deficit framing without awareness; IOY linguistic and cultural assets remain unrecognized in their practice.	Educators begin to recognize deficit framing in others' practice but cannot yet identify it consistently in their own; some asset-framing language appears but is not yet structural.	Educators can name specific moments where they disrupted deficit framing in curriculum or communication; at least one practice change centers IOY strengths; home language is treated as an intellectual resource.	Asset-framing is visible and structural in participating educators' practice; IOY describe a documented change in how their strengths are named and used; educators advocate for asset-framing with peers and in institutional decisions.

The PD you design equips educators to take action on belonging and safety conditions — including those affecting IOY

EVIDENCE TO GATHER:
Do participating educators leave with the skills and confidence to take at least one concrete action on belonging conditions in their context? Does your PD address how immigration enforcement climate, documentation status, and family safety concerns shape classroom belonging for IOY?

1 Discovering	2 Practicing	3 Integrating	4 Sustaining
The PD builds awareness but not capacity to act; the relationship between safety, immigration-related stress, and classroom belonging for IOY is not addressed.	The PD names action as a goal but does not build structured capacity for it; educators are aware that some IOY carry safety-related stress but leave without a specific practice adjustment.	At least one educator takes a documented action on belonging conditions in their context as a direct result of your PD; at least one PD session explicitly connects immigration enforcement climate to classroom belonging for IOY and names a concrete response.	Participating educators advocate for institutional safety structures — enforcement protocols, youth information protections, anonymous reporting — and name these as belonging infrastructure; each educator can describe a specific action taken and its visible effect on IOY.

SECTION 2

Changes in School Culture & Structure

Change moves beyond participating educators into the broader school

EVIDENCE TO GATHER:
Is change staying siloed in participating educators' rooms, or beginning to move through the school? Look for peer adoption, administrator engagement, and structural shifts that benefit IOY.

1 Discovering	2 Practicing	3 Integrating	4 Sustaining
Change is confined to participating educators; no evidence of broader school awareness or structural response.	At least one non-participating educator notices or asks about practice changes; or administrator acknowledges the work informally.	School-level evidence of change: at least one structural shift (family communication practice, library programming, club formation, policy conversation) or peer educator adoption documented; at least one change explicitly benefits IOY.	School culture visibly shifting: multiple non-participating educators adopt practices; administrator actively supports and names belonging for IOY as a school priority.

Structural changes are institutionalized — not dependent on you alone

EVIDENCE TO GATHER:
Are changes being embedded in school structures, policies, or regular practices — or do they depend entirely on your continued presence?

1 Discovering	2 Practicing	3 Integrating	4 Sustaining
No structural response to the work; all change depends on you.	Administrators and/ or colleagues are aware but no formal structural shift has occurred.	At least one formal structural change (policy, program, communication practice) is documented and underway.	Structural changes are institutionalized, not dependent on your continued presence.

SECTION 3

Family, Community & Civic Engagement as PD Content

The PD you design builds educator capacity for reciprocal family and community engagement — with IOY families as knowledge-holders

EVIDENCE TO GATHER:
Does your PD build educator capacity to engage families as genuine partners and knowledge sources — not just recipients of information? Are IOY families positioned as experts whose knowledge informs educator practice?

1 Discovering	2 Practicing	3 Integrating	4 Sustaining
Your PD treats family engagement as a logistics or communication problem; IOY families are not positioned as knowledge sources; educators do not leave with tools or dispositions for genuine reciprocal engagement.	Your PD acknowledges the importance of IOY family and community knowledge but does not build educator capacity to gather it; IOY are referenced but not actively engaged in PD design or delivery.	At least one PD session builds educator capacity to gather community knowledge and engage IOY families as co-investigators; at least one educator can describe a specific way IOY family knowledge changed their practice.	Your PD consistently positions IOY families as experts whose knowledge transforms educator practice; educators can describe how community assessment findings — gathered with IOY as partners — shaped their instructional or relational decisions.

The PD you design supports educators in building civic engagement structures alongside IOY

EVIDENCE TO GATHER:
Does your PD prepare educators to support IOY in exercising civic voice — not just giving input, but shaping decisions? Do educators leave with tools to build participation structures that are linguistically and culturally accessible?

1 Discovering	2 Practicing	3 Integrating	4 Sustaining
Your PD does not address civic engagement or IOY voice as an educator competency; participation structures are not discussed.	Your PD acknowledges IOY voice as important but does not build educator capacity to create accessible participation structures for them.	At least one educator has created or revised a participation structure that is accessible to IOY; IOY can describe a specific way their voice shaped a decision.	Educators design and sustain participation structures in which IOY exercise ongoing civic voice; IOY community input shapes school decisions; educators can trace a line from community assessment to action.

PATHWAY 03

03

Family & Community Engagement

Who it is for: Initiative Leaders building genuine partnership between school and the families and people who make up the communities surrounding IOY — through structured, two-way engagement in teacher interactions, family circles, advisory structures, parent leadership pipelines, and/or sustained community-school relationships. Community here means everyone who lives and exists within a youth's ecosystem — not just formal organizations (consider libraries, community centers, religious organizations).

WHAT AN INITIATIVE CAN LOOK LIKE

- A family circle that meets regularly to share experiences, advise on school climate, and build community across IOY families
- A multilingual parent advisory structure for IOY families
- A parent leadership pipeline that moves IOY families from participants to co-facilitators to advocates
- A community listening project in which the school reaches out to the people in a neighborhood — elders, caregivers, neighbors, local community members — and incorporates what they share into school decisions
- A school-community partnership in which IOY families co-design communication practices with school staff
- Events co-planned with IOY families that highlight their cultures and countries of origin (such as a film night or street fair), with families shaping what is shared

WHAT YOU ARE BUILDING TOWARD

The Family & Community Engagement pathway is measured on three areas: whether IOY families and the people in youth's wider community experience genuine power-building — not just participation (Section 1: power-building); whether school communications and staff practice shift toward authentic partnership (Section 2: staff practice & communication); and whether youth see the people in their lives as visible and valued, and structures outlast the implementation timeline (Section 3: youth visibility, civic agency & sustainability).

SECTION 1

Family & Community Power-Building

IOY families experience school as a place that actively seeks their knowledge and centers their voice

EVIDENCE TO GATHER:

Do IOY families describe themselves as advisors, or still as recipients? Is family input sought on substantive matters — curriculum, climate, communications, and parent associations — not just events and logistics?

1 Discovering	2 Practicing	3 Integrating	4 Sustaining
Engagement is one-directional; the school informs IOY families but does not seek their input; no accessible pathway to voice or leadership.	IOY families are consulted on peripheral matters (events, logistics) but not on substantive decisions; participation structures are not accessible across language groups.	IOY family input is sought on at least one substantive matter; input is documented and a response given; participation structures are accessible across language groups.	IOY families function as genuine civic actors and leaders: their knowledge drives school decisions; they move from supplicants to advisors to organizers — creating or leading new structures.

People in the broader community — neighbors, elders, caregivers, and others in youth's ecosystem — are treated as knowledge-holders

EVIDENCE TO GATHER:

Does your work reach beyond formal family structures to engage the wider community in which IOY live? Are the voices of community members — not just parents or guardians — sought and incorporated?

1 Discovering	2 Practicing	3 Integrating	4 Sustaining
Your engagement is limited to formal parent/guardian structures; the broader network of people in IOY's lives has not been sought out. This is a common baseline — it is where most school-family work starts.	You are aware that IOY's community extends beyond formal family but have not yet created a structure to engage those voices; community members show up but are not positioned as knowledge-holders.	At least one deliberate effort has been made to gather knowledge from the broader community in which IOY live — elders, neighbors, caregivers, local community members; their input shaped at least one school decision.	The school actively treats the full community ecosystem as a knowledge resource; multiple voices from IOY communities — including those not formally connected to the school — have shaped belonging decisions; IOY describe seeing their whole community reflected in school life.

Specific school decisions are changed by IOY family and community voice and at least one decision has been shaped by their input

EVIDENCE TO GATHER:

Can you name a specific decision that was changed because of IOY's family or community input? Is at least one IOY family member active in a school committee or advisory body?

1 Discovering	2 Practicing	3 Integrating	4 Sustaining
No evidence of IOY family or community input being sought or used; IOY families are positioned as audience, not contributors.	IOY families attend meetings or events where decisions are discussed, but participation is not structured to shape outcomes; no family member holds a formal role; IOY families are present but not shaping decisions.	At least one IOY family member is an active member of a school committee, organization, or advisory body.	You can name specific decisions changed by IOY family and community voice; IOY family leadership is self-sustaining and no longer dependent on your facilitation.

SECTION 2

School Staff Practice & Communication

School communications shift toward genuine partnership — in language and tone

EVIDENCE TO GATHER:

How many communications are now translated? Does tone shift from directive to inviting? Are communications responsive to the structure of daily life for IOY families? Do they incorporate gathering options with multilingual assistance?

1 Discovering	2 Practicing	3 Integrating	4 Sustaining
Communications are untranslated; tone is transactional or deficit-oriented, or not in all needed languages.	Translation has been added to some communications; tone is neutral but not inviting; IOY family engagement work is siloed.	Significant increase in translated communications (documented change from P1 to your latest checkpoint); at least one communication has been reviewed and revised by IOY family members for tone.	All major communications are translated; tone reflects IOY family as partner; IOY family members co-authored at least one official school communication; principal publicly acknowledges the family or community partnership structure as a school resource.

Staff and principal visibly support and engage with family and community partnership structures

EVIDENCE TO GATHER:
Do educators see the family or community partnership structure as an asset in their own work? Does principal language shift? Does the principal attend or send a representative?

1 Discovering	2 Practicing	3 Integrating	4 Sustaining
No staff attendance at IOY family or community sessions; staff are unaware of or resistant to IOY family engagement.	Some staff are aware of the work, but it remains siloed and not institutionally supported.	The principal attends or sends a representative; at least one staff member attends an IOY family or community session as a listener.	The principal and multiple staff attend IOY family or community sessions; at least one educator references IOY family or community insight in their own classroom planning.

SECTION 3

Youth Visibility, Civic Agency & Sustainability

IOY see their families and communities as visible, valued members of the school

EVIDENCE TO GATHER:
Do IOY reference family or community involvement in their own words? Are IOY family members and community members publicly recognized at school events or in communications?

1 Discovering	2 Practicing	3 Integrating	4 Sustaining
No evidence that IOY notice or are affected by family or community engagement work.	A few IOY mention family or community involvement; no public recognition of IOY family or community members at school events.	IOY comment informally on family or community presence; at least one IOY family member or community member is publicly recognized or featured in a school event or communication.	Multiple IOY mention family or community involvement in their own words; IOY family members and community members are recognized at events; IOY artifacts reflect community as a school resource.

Community civic agency is self-sustaining and structures outlast the implementation timeline

EVIDENCE TO GATHER:
Is there a memorandum of understanding, recurring structure, or institutional handoff that does not require your presence to sustain the partnership? Are IOY community members exercising civic voice on substantive matters?

1 Discovering	2 Practicing	3 Integrating	4 Sustaining
No institutional documentation or handoff structure exists; partnership and civic participation end when you leave.	You have discussed sustainability with IOY community partners but nothing is formalized; partnership would likely end if you left.	At least one formal sustainability structure is in place: MOU, recurring calendar invite, introduction to school admin, or shared planning document; at least one IOY community member exercises civic voice on a substantive matter.	Multiple sustainability structures are in place; the school administrator can describe the partnership's value and continuation plan independently; new civic structures have emerged that carry IOY community voice forward.

PATHWAY 04

04

Local Organization Partnership

Who it is for: Initiative Leaders developing sustained, reciprocal relationships between their school and a specific local organization — a community-based organization, faith community, cultural institution, or civic body — that co-designs belonging work rather than merely delivering services.

WHAT AN INITIATIVE CAN LOOK LIKE

- A sustained partnership with a local refugee resettlement or immigrant services organization that co-designs programming for IOY and families
- A school-library or school-museum collaboration that positions IOY community members as knowledge-holders and co-curators
- A school-faith community partnership that builds trust, creates accessible pathways for engagement, and names shared belonging goals
- A partnership with a local immigrant rights or civic action organization that connects school belonging conditions to broader civic life
- A youth-community bridge initiative in which a local organization serves as co-educator and IOY serve as co-designers

WHAT YOU ARE BUILDING TOWARD

The Local Organization Partnership pathway is measured on three areas: whether organizational partners are genuine co-designers with documented reciprocal benefit (Section 1: partnership quality & reciprocity); whether IOY community cultures and ways of knowing reshape the substance of the work (Section 2: community knowledge & cultural affirmation); and whether IOY community members develop self-sustaining civic agency that outlasts the implementation timeline (Section 3: community voice & civic power).

SECTION 1

Partnership Quality & Reciprocity

Organizational partner(s) are genuine co-designers — not vendors or invited guests

EVIDENCE TO GATHER:
Do partners have a defined role beyond showing up or providing a service? Did partners help shape goals, not just logistics? Is your posture one of learning from the organization and its IOY community?

1 Discovering	2 Practicing	3 Integrating	4 Sustaining
The partnership is extractive: you gain resources, programming, or visibility; the org has no co-design role; the relationship is transactional.	Partners were consulted during planning but decisions are made by you; partner role is advisory in name only.	At least one partner has a defined co-design role — co-facilitated a session, reviewed and revised materials, or helped set outcome goals.	Partner(s) have active co-design roles throughout the initiative lifecycle; partner input changed the design in documented, specific ways.

The partnership is mutually transformative — the organization gains something concrete

EVIDENCE TO GATHER:
Did the partnership benefit the organization too? Can you name a specific way the org gained capacity, connection, or resources? Does org leadership describe it as transformative?

1 Discovering	2 Practicing	3 Integrating	4 Sustaining
The organization gains nothing documented from the partnership.	You acknowledge reciprocity is important but cannot name a specific way the org benefited.	You can name at least one concrete way the organization gained capacity, connection, or resources through the partnership.	The partnership is visibly mutual — org leadership describes it as transformative for their own work, unprompted; you can articulate what you learned from the IOY community, not just what you provided.

SECTION 2

IOY Community Knowledge & Cultural Affirmation

IOY community members' cultures and ways of knowing are honored as the substance of the partnership — not decoration

EVIDENCE TO GATHER:
Are IOY community members' histories and knowledge reshaping how the partnership operates?

1 Discovering	2 Practicing	3 Integrating	4 Sustaining
IOY community culture is present as decoration only — flags, food, performance; no evidence that IOY community members' experiences shape the substance of the partnership.	IOY community cultures and experiences are added to programming but do not change its structure or direction.	IOY community members' cultures, experiences, and perspectives substantively reshape at least one element of the partnership's design or direction.	IOY community members are positioned as experts and civic actors whose ways of knowing transform both the partnership and the school's understanding of itself.

IOY community knowledge changes how belonging is defined and pursued — not just what is celebrated

EVIDENCE TO GATHER:

Are IOY community members' experiences of migration, resilience, and belonging treated as intellectual and civic resources — not just as diversity content?

1 Discovering	2 Practicing	3 Integrating	4 Sustaining
IOY community members may feel represented but not honored; their knowledge does not shape how belonging is defined.	IOY community knowledge is invited and discussed, but it has not yet changed how belonging is defined or pursued.	At least one documented decision about how belonging is defined or pursued changed because of IOY community knowledge, not just what is celebrated.	Social action is visible — IOY community perspectives drive decisions, challenge assumptions, and connect outward to broader belonging conditions for IOY and families.

SECTION 3

Community Voice, Agency & Civic Power

IOY community members move from recipients of programming to shapers of it

EVIDENCE TO GATHER:

Who defined what success looks like — you, the org, or IOY community members themselves? Are IOY community members exercising voice on substantive matters?

1 Discovering	2 Practicing	3 Integrating	4 Sustaining
You defined success alone; org and IOY community members had no input into outcome goals; IOY community voice is absent from how the partnership defines belonging.	The org was consulted on outcomes but IOY community members themselves were not asked to define success.	IOY community members — not just org staff — contributed at least one definition of success that shaped initiative goals; their perspectives are visible in how the partnership measures impact.	IOY community agency is self-sustaining: IOY community members co-own the partnership's goals and can articulate its impact in their own words.

Civic agency is self-sustaining and grows beyond the implementation timeline

EVIDENCE TO GATHER:
Is there evidence that IOY community members' agency is growing and self-sustaining? Are structures in place that make participation accessible regardless of language, logistics, or immigration status concerns?

1 Discovering	2 Practicing	3 Integrating	4 Sustaining
No civic structures exist; participation depends entirely on your facilitation.	Participation structures exist but are not yet accessible to IOY community members across language groups.	At least one IOY community member exercises civic voice on a substantive matter beyond events or logistics.	New civic structures have emerged — advisory roles, leadership pipelines, or community-school governance bodies — that carry IOY community voice forward beyond the implementation timeline.

PATHWAY 05

05

Youth Leadership & Action

Who it is for: Initiative Leaders supporting IOY in designing and leading their own belonging initiatives — clubs, campaigns, peer programs, showcases, public installations, or civic actions.

WHAT AN INITIATIVE CAN LOOK LIKE

- A Youth Belonging Alliance Club that designs and leads school-wide belonging campaigns
- A youth-led community showcase or cultural celebration where IOY are curators and storytellers
- A peer mentorship or ambassador program for RAY, designed and run by IOY
- A public installation — mural, podcast, zine, documentary — that brings IOY community stories into school and civic spaces
- A civic action initiative in which IOY research a belonging issue affecting their community and present to decision-makers

WHAT YOU ARE BUILDING TOWARD

The Youth Leadership & Action pathway is measured on three areas: whether IOY move from participants to designers and decision-makers (Section 1: youth agency & leadership development); whether the initiative visibly changes belonging conditions for the youth who most need it (Section 2: belonging impact); and whether IOY act as asset-grounded civic bridge-builders connecting school and community in both directions (Section 3: youth as civic bridge-builders).

SECTION 1

Youth Agency & Leadership Development

IOY move from participants to designers and decision-makers

EVIDENCE TO GATHER:
Who is making decisions — you or the IOY? Can youth describe the initiative as theirs? Is your adult role facilitative rather than directive?

1 Discovering	2 Practicing	3 Integrating	4 Sustaining
Youth participate in an adult-led initiative; you make all significant decisions; IOY execute, not design.	IOY are consulted on some elements but initiative structure and goals are set by you; their voice is decorative.	IOY designed at least one significant component independently; your adult role is facilitative; IOY can name specific skills and dispositions they are developing.	IOY are primary designers and decision-makers throughout; your role is coach and resource-provider; peer leadership is distributed.

IOY's cultures and ways of knowing drive the initiative

EVIDENCE TO GATHER:
Are IOY's cultures, experiences, and ways of knowing positioned as the intellectual and creative driving force — not just as subject matter?

1 Discovering	2 Practicing	3 Integrating	4 Sustaining
IOY's cultures and experiences are present as subject matter but do not drive the work.	Some IOY begin to name their own experiences as relevant but cannot yet connect them to the initiative's direction.	IOY's cultures, experiences, and perspectives are visibly shaping the initiative's substance and direction.	IOY are positioned as the intellectual and civic driving force; they demonstrate growing capacity to understand perspectives, recognize power, communicate across difference, and take action.

SECTION 2

Belonging Impact

The youth lead initiative visibly changes belonging conditions — not just produces an event or output

EVIDENCE TO GATHER:

Is there a before/after? Can IOY, peers, families, or community members point to something that is different — in how a space feels, how people are seen, or how a community understands itself and can they point to the youth leadership that lead the change?

1 Discovering	2 Practicing	3 Integrating	4 Sustaining
The initiative produced an event or output; no evidence that belonging conditions shifted in any space; little to no evidence of youth leadership.	Peers, staff, or community members are aware something happened and that it was youth initiated; positive reception; but no observable change in how any space feels or operates.	At least one documented change in belonging conditions is traceable to the initiative and the youth leaders driving it— a new norm, a shifted practice, a community space that feels different.	Multiple documented changes across at least one space; the initiative created a lasting artifact, norm, structure, or civic presence; belonging improvement ripples outward to the broader IOY community and can be traced back to youth leadership.

IOY report a specific change in how they are seen or valued

EVIDENCE TO GATHER:

Are the IOY who most need to belong the ones most affected? Belonging Barometer data, peer observation, and community member testimony are all valid evidence.

1 Discovering	2 Practicing	3 Integrating	4 Sustaining
IOY report no specific change in how they are seen or valued.	Some IOY took part in the initiative but cannot describe a specific moment of feeling seen or valued.	At multiple IOY describe a specific moment where their identity, story, or knowledge was publicly valued.	Belonging improvement is visible for IOY and ripples outward; IOY, peers, families, and IOY community members can each describe what is different.

SECTION 3

Youth as Civic Bridge-Builders

The initiative is asset-framed — centering IOY strengths, cultures, and community knowledge as the driving resource

EVIDENCE TO GATHER:
Is the initiative built on IOY's cultures, family wisdom, migration stories, and community knowledge as the driving intellectual and creative resource — rather than on deficit or hardship framing?

1 Discovering	2 Practicing	3 Integrating	4 Sustaining
The initiative is deficit-framed; IOY are raising awareness about hardship without centering their own assets and strengths.	The initiative is well-intentioned but additive — IOY cultural content is present but does not change the initiative's structure or direction.	The initiative explicitly centers IOY strengths — cultural knowledge, family wisdom, migration story as valued, and at least one IOY community voice is formally incorporated.	The initiative is built entirely on asset-framing; IOY describe their cultures, identities, and community knowledge as the driving intellectual and civic resource.

IOY act as civic bridge-builders — connecting school and community in both directions

EVIDENCE TO GATHER:
Does the initiative bridge in both directions — school into community, and community back into school?

1 Discovering	2 Practicing	3 Integrating	4 Sustaining
No IOY community voices are included; no evidence of bridging between school and community.	IOY mention families or community but do not formally include their voices or knowledge; no formal bridging in either direction.	IOY can describe their initiative as bridging school and community in at least one direction; social action is emerging.	The bridge runs both directions — IOY community voices shape the initiative and school learning reaches outward into community and civic spaces; IOY describe themselves as civic actors; the initiative creates conditions for belonging that extend beyond the implementation timeline.

PATHWAY 06

06

Institution-Wide Belonging

Who it is for: Initiative Leaders implementing initiatives that reach beyond individual classrooms — institution-wide systems, belonging conditions, sustainability, safety infrastructure, and structural equity for IOY and families.

WHAT AN INITIATIVE CAN LOOK LIKE

- An institution-wide welcome system for RAY: intake protocol, multilingual orientation materials, peer buddy program reaching all incoming youth
- An institution-wide belonging audit followed by a public action plan co-developed with IOY, families, and staff
- A multilingual signage and communication overhaul that shifts how the school presents itself to IOY families
- An institution-wide Belonging Barometer data collection and response cycle that informs ongoing school decisions
- An equity audit of IOY access to advanced coursework, followed by a documented advocacy effort and at least one structural response
- A review and revision of the school's immigration enforcement response protocol, developed with administrators and communicated to all staff

WHAT YOU ARE BUILDING TOWARD

The Institution-Wide Belonging pathway is measured on three areas: whether the initiative reaches IOY by design and engages all staff equitably (Section 1: institution-wide reach & equitable access); whether it changes at least one institution-wide system, policy, or communication practice — including safety infrastructure (Section 2: systems change, safety & communication); and whether it creates shared ownership and generates data that informs future decision-making (Section 3: sustainability, shared ownership & data). Safety infrastructure for IOY is understood as belonging infrastructure throughout.

SECTION 1

Institution-Wide Reach & Equitable Access

The initiative reaches all youth — including IOY — not just participating classrooms or self-selected groups

EVIDENCE TO GATHER:
Are IOY specifically named in the design? Is there documentation of who was and was not reached? Does the initiative include a linguistic access strategy?

1 Discovering	2 Practicing	3 Integrating	4 Sustaining
The initiative is implemented in some classrooms or with willing staff only; IOY have no documented pathway to access or participate.	The initiative reaches most youth in participating spaces; some accommodations for IOY exist but are inconsistent; they are reached opportunistically, not by design.	The initiative design explicitly incorporates IOY in its structure and function; necessary learning accommodations are accessible and documented for all youth.	Youth are centered in the process of how future design is developed; multiple learning accessibility strategies and accommodations are documented and evaluated for effectiveness for all

All staff — not only you or participating educators — are aware of and engaged with the initiative

EVIDENCE TO GATHER:
Has the initiative been communicated to the full staff? Do non-participating educators or administrators reference it? Has staff input been sought and incorporated?

1 Discovering	2 Practicing	3 Integrating	4 Sustaining
Only you and immediate collaborators know about the initiative; no institution-wide communication or staff engagement.	At least one staff-wide communication about the initiative exists; some non-participating staff are aware but not actively engaged.	The initiative has been presented to or discussed with the full staff body; at least one administrator publicly supports it; staff feedback was solicited at least once.	Multiple staff members — including non-participating educators and support staff — can describe the initiative and its purpose; school leadership publicly champions it; staff input shaped at least one design element.

SECTION 2

Systems Change, Safety & Communication

The initiative changes at least one institution-wide system, policy, or institutional practice

EVIDENCE TO GATHER:
Is there a new process, protocol, or policy that exists because of this initiative? Would the change persist if you left tomorrow?

1 Discovering	2 Practicing	3 Integrating	4 Sustaining
No institutional change is documented; the initiative exists as a one-time event or individual practice change only.	You have proposed a system change; administrators are aware, but no formal adoption has occurred; change depends on your continued presence.	At least one formal system change is in place — a new intake protocol, updated communication procedure, recurring event on the school calendar, or a revised policy document.	Multiple institutional changes are documented; at least one has been adopted into school operations without requiring your facilitation; an administrator can describe how the system now works differently.

The school has clear, communicated protocols for immigration-related situations — named as belonging infrastructure

EVIDENCE TO GATHER:
Does a written protocol exist for immigration enforcement, family detention, or IOY distress? Do all staff — not only administrators — know what it says? Have IOY families been informed?

1 Discovering	2 Practicing	3 Integrating	4 Sustaining
No documented institutional guidance exists; staff respond to immigration-related situations without consistent protocols; your initiative does not address this gap.	You have identified that guidance is absent or inadequate and named the gap in your initiative plan, but have not yet raised it with an administrator.	You have surfaced the gap to at least one administrator and connected it to belonging data or IOY community feedback; at least one preliminary step toward a written protocol has been documented.	A written protocol exists, gives staff clear guidance, and has been communicated to all staff and to IOY families; you can trace a line from IOY community input to the institutional response.

The initiative visibly shifts how the school communicates belonging to IOY families

EVIDENCE TO GATHER:
Has public-facing communication, signage, or tone changed institution-wide? Do IOY families report feeling more seen or welcomed? Is there a before/after that can be documented?

1 Discovering	2 Practicing	3 Integrating	4 Sustaining
No change in how the school communicates to or about IOY communities; communications remain untranslated or deficit-framed.	Some visible changes — a translated newsletter, multilingual signage — but limited in scope and not yet institutionalized.	Documented shift in at least one major communication channel — language access, tone, or representation — that reaches all IOY families.	Multiple channels show visible change; IOY families can name specific ways the school now communicates differently; staff describe the shift as a new institutional standard.

SECTION 3

Sustainability, Shared Ownership & Data

The initiative is jointly owned — by IOY, families, staff, or community partners — and does not depend on you alone

EVIDENCE TO GATHER:
Who would run this if you left? Can an IOY, staff member, or family leader describe their role in sustaining it? Is there an MOU, committee, or institutional structure?

1 Discovering	2 Practicing	3 Integrating	4 Sustaining
You are the sole driver; no evidence of shared ownership; the initiative would end if you left.	At least one other person (IOY, staff, or family member) is involved in running the initiative, but no formal structure or succession plan exists.	At least one formal shared-ownership structure is in place — co-leadership by an IOY group, staff committee, or family advisory — with a documented plan for continuation.	Multiple stakeholders hold ownership roles; the initiative has a formal structure that does not require you; a succession plan or institutional charter is documented and acknowledged by administrators.

The initiative generates institution-wide data that informs future decision-making about belonging and equity for IOY

EVIDENCE TO GATHER:
Is there a survey, attendance log, Belonging Barometer result, or IOY community feedback document? Has anyone used that data to make or change a decision?

1 Discovering	2 Practicing	3 Integrating	4 Sustaining
No data is collected or documented beyond your own notes; no artifact that another stakeholder could use.	Some data is collected — an attendance sheet, informal survey, or anecdotal feedback — but not synthesized or shared with anyone who could act on it.	Documented data (Belonging Barometer, survey, IOY community input) has been collected and shared with at least one decision-maker — principal, department, or school committee.	Data has been used to make at least one concrete decision about school practice, policy, or programming; multiple stakeholders reference the data; the process is documented and replicable for future years.

PATHWAY 07

07

Coalition Building

Who it is for: Initiative Leaders building a multi-stakeholder coalition that rallies people, policy, and power around belonging conditions for IOY. This initiative is for Initiative Leaders whose work requires bringing together diverse actors — educators, families, community organizations, civic leaders, faith communities, or policymakers — and moving them from shared awareness to coordinated action and sustained influence.

WHAT AN INITIATIVE CAN LOOK LIKE

- A school-community coalition that unites IOY families, educators, and local organizations around a shared belonging agenda — moving from community mapping to public advocacy
- A civic table that connects schools, cultural organizations, faith communities, and immigrant services providers to coordinate IOY welcome and support structures
- A cross-institutional coalition that develops and presents a belonging policy platform to school board or district leadership, grounded in IOY community data
- A coalition-led public campaign — storytelling series, data report, media effort — that shifts public narrative about IOY in the community
- A multilingual family leadership network that graduates IOY community members from participants to co-facilitators to civic advocates
- A coalition that builds shared infrastructure for belonging — a coordinated rapid-response network for immigration enforcement situations, a multilingual crisis communication protocol, or a community-school data-sharing agreement

WHAT YOU ARE BUILDING TOWARD

The Coalition Building pathway is measured on three areas: whether the coalition has a clear shared purpose with IOY experiences at its center and genuine power-sharing structures (Section 1: shared purpose, representation, and relationships); whether the coalition moves from convening to coordinated action and can point to specific external influence on decisions, systems, or narratives (Section 2: collective action, civic influence, and narrative); and whether leadership is distributed and structures exist to sustain the coalition beyond the implementation timeline (Section 3: sustainability and distributed leadership). Throughout, the core question is: are IOY community members positioned as civic actors who shape the coalition's direction — not just as the population it serves?

SECTION 1

Shared Purpose, Representation & Relationships

The coalition is grounded in a clear, shared purpose — with IOY experiences at the center

EVIDENCE TO GATHER:
Do members share a common understanding of the problem, goals, and desired outcomes? Who defined what success looks like? Are IOY experiences the starting point — not an addition?

1 Discovering	2 Practicing	3 Integrating	4 Sustaining
The initiative work is underway but no shared purpose has been articulated across members; the Initiative Leader defines goals alone; IOY experiences are mentioned but do not shape the coalition's focus.	A draft purpose statement exists and has been shared with members; IOY are referenced in the framing but have not yet been active contributors to defining shared goals.	Coalition members — including at least one IOY community member — have co-authored or meaningfully revised the shared purpose; there is documented alignment on goals and at least one decision has been grounded in that shared framing.	The coalition's shared purpose is living — revisited and sharpened through regular member input; IOY community perspectives are the anchor for how goals are evaluated and revised; members can articulate the purpose in their own words.

Directly impacted communities — IOY — hold influence in the coalition, and key stakeholders are engaged without overriding community voice

EVIDENCE TO GATHER:
Who is at the table, and who holds influence? Are IOY shaping priorities and decisions — not just attending? Are institutional stakeholders engaged in ways that support rather than override community voice? Who is notably absent?

1 Discovering	2 Practicing	3 Integrating	4 Sustaining
The coalition is primarily composed of institutional actors; IOY community members are absent or token; no structures exist to center directly impacted voices in decision-making.	At least one IOY community member participates regularly; their presence is valued but their role is consultative — they are asked for input on decisions already shaped by others.	IOY community members hold at least one named co-leadership or decision-making role; there is at least one documented instance where their input changed coalition direction; key institutional stakeholders are engaged and their participation supports — rather than displaces — community voice.	Power is deliberately shared: IOY community members co-own the coalition's agenda; structures are in place to ensure their voices are centered when tensions arise with institutional stakeholders; the coalition can point to decisions made because of — not in spite of — impacted community input.

The coalition builds and sustains trust through intentional structures and shared accountability

EVIDENCE TO GATHER:
Are there structures for relationship-building, navigating conflict, and maintaining accountability? Can members name moments of trust, repair, or collective problem-solving? Does the coalition have a way of working together that people have agreed to?

1 Discovering	2 Practicing	3 Integrating	4 Sustaining
No intentional trust-building structures exist; relationships are transactional; conflict is avoided or unaddressed; the coalition functions as a meeting, not a learning community.	Some relationship-building practices exist — shared agreements, check-ins, or community norms — but they are inconsistently used; conflict surfaces but is not yet navigated with a shared process.	The coalition has documented working agreements; at least one instance of conflict or tension has been navigated using a shared process; members can name a specific moment of trust-building or repair that strengthened the coalition's work.	Trust is structural: the coalition has shared accountability practices that members return to regularly; new members are oriented into the culture; the coalition has navigated disagreement in ways that deepened rather than fractured relationships; members describe the coalition as a genuine learning community.

SECTION 2

Collective Action, Civic Influence & Narrative

The coalition moves from convening to coordinated, strategic action — with clear roles and shared contributions

EVIDENCE TO GATHER:
Is the coalition able to mobilize members toward shared actions — campaigns, advocacy efforts, public events, or institutional interventions? Are roles, responsibilities, and contributions clear and aligned? Does action connect back to the shared purpose?

1 Discovering	2 Practicing	3 Integrating	4 Sustaining
The coalition meets regularly but has not moved into coordinated action; conversations happen but no collective decisions are implemented; the Initiative Leader is doing most of the work.	The coalition has identified at least one shared action and members have taken some steps; roles are loosely defined; collective action is emerging but not yet coordinated or sustained.	The coalition has completed at least one coordinated action — a public event, advocacy effort, institutional presentation, or campaign — with clear roles and documented contributions from multiple members; the action is traceable to the coalition's shared purpose.	The coalition moves fluidly from learning to action; multiple coordinated actions have been completed; members initiate and lead actions without prompting from the Initiative Leader; collective momentum is visible and self-sustaining.

The coalition influences decisions, systems, or public narratives — and can point to specific evidence of external impact

EVIDENCE TO GATHER:
Can the coalition point to specific decisions, policies, or narratives shaped by its work? Is there evidence of impact beyond the coalition itself — in institutions, policy processes, media, or public conversation? Has the coalition's work changed something outside the room?

1 Discovering	2 Practicing	3 Integrating	4 Sustaining
No evidence of external impact; coalition work is internal — building relationships and learning — with no documented influence on decisions or narratives outside the group.	The coalition has made its work visible — through a presentation, public communication, or meeting with decision-makers — but cannot yet point to a specific decision or narrative shift that resulted.	The coalition can name at least one specific external impact: a policy decision influenced, a school practice changed, a public narrative shifted, or an institutional commitment secured as a direct result of collective action.	The coalition is recognized externally as a force for change; multiple documented impacts are traceable to its work; decision-makers seek out the coalition's input; IOY community perspectives have visibly shaped public understanding of belonging conditions.

The coalition contributes to shifting narratives and building a broader movement — amplifying community voices beyond its own work

EVIDENCE TO GATHER:
Is the coalition amplifying IOY community voices in public spaces — in media, policy forums, school communications, or civic life? Is it contributing to a larger ecosystem beyond its immediate work? Are IOY members positioned as civic actors and storytellers?

1 Discovering	2 Practicing	3 Integrating	4 Sustaining
The coalition's work is internal; IOY voices are not yet amplified beyond the group; no connections to broader movement or ecosystem exist.	The coalition has shared its work publicly in at least one space — a presentation, community forum, or written communication — with some IOY voice included; connections to broader movement are emerging but not yet formalized.	IOY community members have told their stories or presented their perspectives in at least one public or civic space as a result of coalition work; the coalition has connected with at least one other organization or movement working on belonging conditions.	The coalition is a visible contributor to a broader movement: IOY community members are recognized as civic actors and public voices; the coalition's narrative work has shifted how issues are understood in at least one public forum; it actively contributes to and draws from a wider ecosystem of belonging work.

SECTION 3

Sustainability & Distributed Leadership

Leadership and ownership are distributed — the coalition does not depend on any one person, including the Initiative Leader

EVIDENCE TO GATHER:
Are leadership roles distributed across members? Can the coalition function if the Initiative Leader steps back? Are there named roles, rotating responsibilities, or shared facilitation? Who would run this if you left tomorrow?

1 Discovering	2 Practicing	3 Integrating	4 Sustaining
The Initiative Leader drives all coalition activity; no distributed leadership exists; the coalition would stop functioning if the Initiative Leader stepped back.	At least one other coalition member has taken on a visible role — facilitated a meeting, led an outreach effort, or represented the coalition externally — but leadership remains concentrated.	At least two coalition members hold named roles or responsibilities that do not require the Initiative Leader's initiation; the coalition has functioned without the Initiative Leader's direct facilitation at least once; a succession or transition plan has been discussed.	Leadership is genuinely distributed: multiple members hold formal roles; the coalition has its own momentum independent of the Initiative Leader; a documented succession structure or leadership pipeline exists; IOY community members are among the named leaders.

Structures, partnerships, and processes are in place that sustain the coalition beyond the initiative timeline

EVIDENCE TO GATHER:
Is there an MOU, recurring calendar structure, institutional handoff, or shared planning document that does not require your presence to activate? Have partner organizations or institutions made commitments that outlast the initiative timeline? Are structures accessible across language and logistics barriers?

1 Discovering	2 Practicing	3 Integrating	4 Sustaining
No sustainability structures exist; the coalition exists through the Initiative Leader's personal relationships and effort alone; it would end if the Initiative Leader left.	Sustainability has been discussed with coalition members; at least one partner or institution has expressed willingness to continue; but nothing is formalized or documented.	At least one formal sustainability structure is in place: a recurring calendar invite, an MOU or letter of commitment, an institutional host, or a shared planning document with named responsibilities; IOY community members are part of the continuation plan.	Multiple sustainability structures are in place and functioning; an institutional partner or host has formally committed to supporting the coalition's work; IOY community members can describe their ongoing role; the coalition is structured to be accessible across language, logistics, and documentation-status concerns.