Appendix A: Intake Interview for English Language Learners, K-12

Important Considerations for the Interview of newly arrived students:

- The initial interview is a significant opportunity for dialogue among the family, the student and the school.
- Adequate time should be allocated so all parties can comfortably exchange necessary information and ask appropriate questions.
- Where possible, the interview should be conducted in the family’s home language, with the support of an interpreter or settlement outreach worker (e.g. TR Leger Immigrant Services) in order to elicit and clearly understand information being shared, as well as to respect family culture and traditions.
- Whenever appropriate, direct questions to the student as that allows for informal assessment of the student’s ability to meet the demands of everyday conversation in his or her home language and in English.
- Some parents may not be accustomed to answering personal questions from school officials or may not understand the purpose of the questions. When asking for detailed and personal information, everyone should be informed that this is for educational purposes, and will be shared only with personnel approved by the school board.
- Some newcomer families may have left their last country of residence under conditions of urgency and may not have brought important documents with them, including academic records.
- Where records are available, be aware that the grading system and passing marks of other countries can vary from those in Ontario.
- Keep in mind that the order in which curricula is organized and presented in other countries could be different from the sequence of the Ontario curriculum.

The intake interview may present more of a challenge for parents who are acquiring English. Some strategies to consider are:

- Use language that is concrete as possible.
- Use language that is free of jargon and acronyms (e.g. accommodations, modifications, EQAO, IEP).
- Speak in short segments with pauses that allow parents time to process and respond to the information.
- Leave time for parents to ask questions.
- Encourage parents to call whenever they have a question, and not wait for an interview.
- Develop a one-page information sheet or a small brochure about the school and have it translated into the languages of the community. Ensure the information made available to parents is inclusive, free of jargon and written in clear language.

APPENDIX A INTERVIEW QUESTIONS HAVE BEEN TRANSLATED INTO SEVERAL LANGUAGES. PLEASE PROVIDE THE APPROPRIATE TRANSLATED QUESTIONS TO PARENTS WHERE POSSIBLE.

(Content adapted from Supporting English Language Learners in Grades 1-8, Many Roots Many Voices, and Supporting English Language Learners in Kindergarten.)

APPENDIX A
Student Name: __________________________________________________________

Preferred Name: ____________________________ Date of Interview: ____________________________

Country of Birth: ____________________________ Date of Entry into Canada: ____________________________

Parents/Guardians: _______________________________________________________________________

What are the names and ages of the student’s brothers and/or sisters?

Name ____________________________ age: _____ Gender: _____

Name ____________________________ age: _____ Gender: _____

Name ____________________________ age: _____ Gender: _____

How does he/she enjoy living in Canada (for Newcomer and International students only)?
________________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________________

Health History:

Describe any health issues that the student has (e.g., illness, allergies, conditions).
________________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________________

Has the student had his/her hearing tested? _________ If so, at what age? ____________________________

Has the student had his/her vision tested? _________ If so, at what age? ____________________________
Languages:

What language(s) does the student understand (listening)? How well?

____________________________________________________________________________________________

What language(s) does the student speak? How well?

____________________________________________________________________________________________

What language(s) does the student read? How well?

____________________________________________________________________________________________

What language(s) does the student write? How well?

____________________________________________________________________________________________

What language is spoken in the home and with whom?

___________________________________________________________________________________________

Does the student enjoy reading and writing at home (any language)? If so, please describe.

___________________________________________________________________________________________

Does the student have access to a computer? If so, what does he/she do on the computer?

___________________________________________________________________________________________

What was the language(s) of instruction in the student’s previous school(s)?

___________________________________________________________________________________________

Has the student studied English before? How many years/how many hours a week?

___________________________________________________________________________________________
Previous Schooling:

In your home country, when did the school year begin and end?
___________________________________________________________________________________________

Could you describe a typical school day and the classroom environment in your home country?
___________________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________________

How are parents involved in school in your home country?
___________________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________________

At what age did the student start school?
___________________________________________________________________________________________

Did the student attend regularly?    Yes    No

If no, was schooling interrupted for any reason (e.g., illness, political or social conditions, time spent in transit before arrival in Ontario, migrant worker families)?
___________________________________________________________________________________________

Where has the student attended school (e.g., urban, rural, refugee camp, private or public schools)?
___________________________________________________________________________________________

What are the student’s strongest subjects or special interests?
___________________________________________________________________________________________

APPENDIX A
Does the student require extra help in any subject?

________________________________________

What are the student’s educational and career goals?

________________________________________

Do you have school records, report cards, or special certificates to share with us?

________________________________________

Is there anything else you would like to share about the student (e.g., hobbies, skills, personal stories, community involvement, etc.)?

________________________________________

Are there any cultural or religious traditions that we need to be aware of to help the student feel welcome?

________________________________________